Call published by:

EMSO ERIC

European Multidisciplinary Seafloor and water column Observatory - European Research Infrastructure Consortium

Corporate Headquarters: Via Giunio Antonio Resti, 63 - 00143 Rome

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Invite for Manifestations of interest

Invitation to submit expressions of interest to carry out an internal assessment of the procedures implemented by EMSO ERIC for the financial reporting of the R&D projects funded by the European Commission.

EMSO ERIC (European Multidisciplinary Seafloor and water column Observatory – European Research Infrastructure Consortium) is a pan-European distributed research infrastructure established by the European Commission in 2016. Its mission is to provide long-term, high-quality, multidisciplinary ocean observations in support of scientific research, environmental monitoring and evidence-based decision-making. EMSO ERIC operates through a network of 14 Regional Facilities across European seas, from the Northeast Atlantic to the Mediterranean and Black Sea. Hosted and operated by national research institutions and organisations, these facilities provide scientific expertise, technical personnel, observing platforms, equipment and other resources essential to EMSO ERIC's activities.

EMSO ERIC, with its registered office at Via di Vigna Murata 605, Rome, Italy, tax identification number 97908370584 and VAT number IT14062811006, in accordance with its Statutes, invites expressions of interest from international auditing and law firms for the provision of an internal assessment of the procedures implemented by EMSO ERIC for the financial reporting of the R&D projects funded by the European Commission considering the following tasks:

- Validation of the procedures and policies adopted by EMSO regarding the cost reporting activities towards the European Commission also in its role of coordinator of other entities in R&D projects. The validation will be conducted with reference to EMSO internal structure (such as bylaws) and to the legal perimeter of the Grant and of the applicable rules of Horizon Europe Framework programme of the European Commission.
- In case validation needs remedies to be adopted, support EMSO in the adoption of such remediation plan.
- Provide EMSO ERIC with a legal opinion regarding the compliance of the procedures and policies in terms of results, data and process flows, registration of the information and data resulting from the procedures and policies

The completion of the assignment should approximately be within three months from the starting date.
Expected deliverables:

- Final assessment report including compliance, risk-gap analysis, and remediation plan
- Opinion letter specifying the compliance with applicable EU grant agreements of the Horizon Europe Framework programme and financial-reporting requirements.

1. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The assignment concerns the *internal assessment of the procedures followed by EMSO ERIC for the financial reporting in the framework of the R&D projects funded by the European Commission.*

2. EXPECTED REMUNERATION

Considering the nature, complexity and volume of EMSO ERIC's activities, the envisaged all-inclusive fee shall not exceed EUR 10,000.00.

3. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY & SELECTION REQUIREMENTS

Interested firms must meet the following requirements:

- Registration with the relevant Chamber of Commerce or other appropriate business register for activities consistent with the services covered by this Notice;
- Absence of grounds for exclusion under 2023 Public Contracts Code and Article 57 of Directive 2014/24/EU of 26 February 2014.
- Significant aggregate turnover of at least EUR 1,000,000 from financial assessment during the last three completed financial years (2023, 2024 and 2025);
- Significant aggregate turnover from financial reporting services provided to research consortia or national and/or international public bodies during the last three completed financial years (2023, 2024 and 2025);

4. SUBMISSION PROCEDURE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Firms meeting the requirements set out in Section 3 must submit an expression of interest, together with the supporting documentation listed below, no later than 30 November 2026.

The expression of interest must take the form of a letter signed by the firm's legal representative, expressly confirming the firm's interest in participating in the procedure and declaring that the eligibility requirements are met.

The letter must be submitted exclusively by certified electronic mail (PEC) to eric-emso@legal.email.it , with the subject line: "Expression of interest – *internal assessment of the procedures followed by EMSO ERIC for the financial reporting to the European Commission*". It must specify a contact person, postal address, telephone number and PEC address for subsequent communications.

The following supporting documentation must be enclosed:

- A list of the principal similar engagements undertaken for research consortia or national and/or international public research bodies during 2020–2025, indicating the value of each engagement.
- Details of the professionals proposed to perform the services, together with an indicative work plan and the estimated number of hours required to complete the assignment.

This Notice is issued solely to gather expressions of interest and encourage participation by potentially qualified economic operators. It does not constitute an invitation to tender or create any obligation on the part of EMSO ERIC. An expression of interest indicates only a firm's willingness to be invited to submit a proposal.

EMSO ERIC may invite an appropriate number of suitably qualified firms to submit a proposal through a subsequent letter of invitation on the basis of the fulfilment of the criteria under point 3).

The consultant will declare the absence of possible conflicts of interest and the handling procedures of sensitive financial information.

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

EMSO ERIC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to discontinue the procedure at any stage without giving rise to any entitlement to compensation or reimbursement of costs incurred by interested firms in preparing expressions of interest or undertaking preliminary activities.

The publication of this Notice, and any related or subsequent activity, does not oblige EMSO ERIC to award a contract. In particular, EMSO ERIC reserves the right to:

- Decide not to proceed with an award if none of the expressions of interest received is considered suitable;
- Suspend, cancel or amend the procedure or its conditions, without any obligation to compensate participants;
- Invite other established international auditing firms that have not submitted an expression of interest.

Requests for clarification concerning this Notice must be sent by email to recruitment@emso-eu.org. Any amendments or clarifications will be published exclusively on the EMSO ERIC website.

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