



**MDIA**  
Malta Digital Innovation Authority

## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

for

**Professional Consultancy Services**

intended for the development of a

**Technology Assurance Assessment Framework**

for the

**Malta Digital Innovation Authority.**

*EOI PUBLISHING DATE – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021*

*SUBMISSION DEADLINE – 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 13:00 (CET)*

## About us

Malta Digital Innovation Authority (MDIA), further referred to as the Authority in this document, is the primary Authority responsible for government policies that promote Malta as the centre for excellence for technological innovation, while setting and enforcing standards that ensure compliance with any other international obligations. The Authority encourages all types of technological innovation, whilst seeks to protect users of such technologies. It strives to cater for maximum agility through its certification of Innovative Technology Arrangements (ITAs) and the forthcoming MDIA Technical Assurance Sandbox to ensure maximisation of the value attained through the consumption of its services.

The Authority encourages the development of regulatory processes in relation to innovative technology arrangements to support all national competent authorities regulating different sectors to administer better the laws entrusted to their Administration, for the ultimate benefit and wellbeing of the society and general public.

## MDIA - Technology Assurance Assessment Framework

The Authority has implemented a strategic decision to further widen its mandate from its previous remit to certify DLT arrangements solely. Legal Notice 389 of 2020 (LN389/2020) has extended the definition of Innovative Technology Arrangements<sup>1</sup> (ITAs), enabling the Authority to establish technological assurances for solutions and/or infrastructures in sectors or areas deemed to be risky or critical in nature, through a certification program or similar mechanisms.

Given such development in the Authority's operations, MDIA is requesting the provisioning of external consultants to develop a **Technology Assurance Assessment Framework for Technological Solutions and/or Infrastructures (newly defined ITA)** in order to widen the scope of the existing MDIA guidelines, identifying the aspects, criteria and control objectives to be addressed in the auditing of such solutions seeking MDIA certification or MDIA Technology Assurance Sandbox (TAS) Residency Programme. Such an exercise shall be conducted in collaboration with the Authority and in consultation with local and international stakeholders originating from the public, private, industry, and academic sectors, including but not limited to Authority officials, MDIA licensed Systems Auditors and potential ITA Applicants. Existing documentation related to DLT Technology Arrangements' regulation include a suite of Control Objectives and accompanying guideline documentation. The complete set of documents can be accessed and downloaded from the regulation tab on the MDIA official website <https://www.mdia.gov.mt>.

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<sup>1</sup> Defined to cover "solutions in sectors and areas which are deemed to be of a risky or critical nature, where their failure or misuse could amongst other things result in loss of life, grave prejudice to the well-being and rights of natural persons, significant asset loss or damage and significant damage to the environment."

## Deliverables of Engagement

- i.* Through consultation and discussion, the service provider is to identify how through its widening of scope, MDIA certification can be renewed to maximise the assurance value to solutions and/or infrastructure stakeholders such as investors, manufactures, suppliers, end-users and the general public.
- ii.* Structure and define a *Technology Assurance Assessment Framework* capable of providing technological assurance to a wide spectrum of ITAs deployed in various sectors.
- iii.* The framework should define a number of Audit Control Objectives (ACO) organised into ACO Groups, including:
  - *Business Requisite ACO Group* (such as Organisational & Management, Blueprint Verification and Legal & Regulatory ACOs),
  - *Universal Technology-Agnostic ACO Group* (including, but not limited to Risk Management, Business Continuity, Disaster Recovery, Information Security, Service Management, Privacy ACOs),
  - *Technology-Specific ACO Group* (which would include ACOs specific to technologies including, but not limited to IS Cloud Services, Application Security, Network Security, DLT Based Technologies, Engineering/Control Applications, Artificial Intelligence, IoT and BIG Data),
  - *Application Domain ACO Group* (including, but not limited to, Finance, Health, Education, Communication, Transport, Voluntary Organisations, Critical Solutions & Infrastructures, Public Administration Solutions & Infrastructures).

The ACO Groups are to be organised in a modular manner to ensure that audits are conducted using mandatory ACOs and any other elective ACOs that may be applicable for that particular ITA.

- iv.* The framework should define suitable Control Statements (CS) for each ACO, compatible with recognised International Auditing Standards and/or guidelines (ISO, BS, EN, IEEE, IET, OWASP, ITIL) as per current MDIA Control Objective Guidelines. The Systems Auditors (SA) responsible for the audit shall assess applicant ITA for all CS (mandatory and elective) applicable for the particular ITA.
- v.* Define an impartial *Mapping Mechanism* to identify which of the elective ACOs shall be employed for the particular ITA being assessed.

- vi. Assess the MDIA Forensic Node guidelines and identify how they are to be extended and adapted for the new scope of ITAs and within the ACO framework defined. The Forensic Node guidelines are to be amended to reflect these changes.
- vii. Coordinate a post-draft *Consultation Exercise (an implementation program for such, shall be submitted by the service provider for the Authorities approval following signature of contract)* with existing and potential SAs and other identified stakeholders, to collect and document pertinent feedback and alignment, as necessary.
- viii. Create or amend all pertinent *current Authority certification documentation* to reflect the implementation of the Technology Assurance Assessment Framework. All changes are to be done in consultation with the Authority and will require MDIA approval.
- ix. Identify and document three (3) dissimilar ITA use cases applicable to private and public sectors and how the framework can be applied to such use cases.

## Timelines

The Authority is expecting a proposal from each respective service provider responding to this EOI detailing how they envisage to attain each of the documented requirements, and the related overall costs. Such a proposal is to be received by the authority until **12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 13:00 (CET)**. Following evaluation and selection of most appropriate service provider, a contract will be signed between the selected service provider and the Authority.

## Service Provider Team Composition

The service provider team should be composed of a team of consultants with proven track record and certification in a number of domains including Business and Technical Auditing and Risk Management together with Technical Domain Expertise in a number of emerging and innovative technology domains such as Cloud computing, AI, Cyber Security, BIG Data and IoT. A Curriculum Vitae of each of the consultants proposed on the team should be attached to the proposal. Proposals are to include concrete evidence of familiarity of the service provider team with the MDIA certification and audit processes, and the inner workings of the MDIA. Proposals should include the service provider's vision and instances of concrete proposals on how the objectives identified in this document will be addressed and achieved.

## Fee Structure

MDIA requires that the fee for such a service shall be a one-time fixed price that is all-inclusive (including VAT/other applicable taxes) and encompassing for the service provider to attain all the expected deliverables listed in this EOI.

Time and material (T&M) quotations shall **not** be accepted.

## Disclaimer:

All EOI participants are hereby being notified that MDIA reserves the right to select the most economically advantageous offer or not to procure any of the submitted proposals. It also reserves the right to re-issue this EOI as it deems fit and proper. The scope of this EOI is to evaluate the interest and cost related to the production and work required to meet and execute the documented minimum requirements and upon such response, consider procuring such a service.