Request for proposals

Assessor Oversight Body and Complaints Administrator

Issue date 20 November 2026

Invitation and procurement structure

The Global Battery Alliance (GBA) invites proposals for two separately awardable service lots supporting its Battery Passport certification scheme. Organisations may bid for either lot or both. Each lot will be evaluated and awarded independently. An award of Lot 1 will not depend on completion of Lot 2 procurement.

Lot 1 covers the Assessor Oversight Body (AOB). It includes applicant assessment, provisional and full approval recommendations, first witness assessments, continuing oversight, corrective-action follow-up and periodic re-approval assessments.

Lot 2 covers the external Complaints Administrator. It includes intake, admissibility screening, conflict assessment, case assignment or referral, communications, administrative records, deadline tracking and reporting under the GBA Complaints Policy.

GBA targets AOB selection in December 2026 and contract signature in early January 2027, with applications opening during January ahead of the planned February 2027 scheme launch. The Complaints Administrator has a longer procurement timetable and must be operational by 1 February 2027.

Timetable and submission

Milestone	Lot 1 AOB	Lot 2 Complaints
RFP publication	20 November 2026	20 November 2026
Bidder questions due	30 November 2026	14 December 2026
GBA publishes answers	3 December 2026	18 December 2026
Proposals due at 17:00 Brussels time	11 December 2026	4 January 2027
Evaluation and reference checks	14–18 December 2026	5–11 January 2027
Appointment approval target	21 December 2026	15 January 2027
Contract signature target	8 January 2027	18 January 2027
Operational readiness	Week of 11 January 2027	1 February 2027

Proposals and questions should be sent to the GBA Secretariat at secretariat@globalbattery.org. The subject line must identify the lot or lots. Proposals must be in English and remain valid for 90 days after the relevant submission deadline. Any extension will be published for all bidders for the affected lot. Bidders bear proposal preparation costs. GBA may cancel or materially revise a lot with reasons.

Bidders must request copies of the Handbooks and other governing scheme documents applicable to their chosen lot(s) from the GBA Secretariat at secretariat@globalbattery.org before submitting their proposals.

Lot 1 AOB scope and deliverables

Governing requirements and decision boundaries

The Conformity Assessment Body Oversight Handbook v0.5 is the bid baseline, particularly Sections 5, 6, 9–11 and 15. Its applicable requirements are incorporated by reference. These documents are available from the Secretariat on request. GBA will provide the same document versions to all requesting bidders and communicate material clarifications equally to all bidders. Any material scope change before award will be communicated with an appropriate opportunity to revise bids. GBA will issue a versioned document list with this RFP, distinguishing binding requirements from material provided for information.

The contractor must demonstrate a management system aligned with ISO/IEC 17011, recognised experience with ISO/IEC 17065 and 17029 schemes, relevant sustainability or responsible-sourcing assurance experience, global capacity and competent assessors. It must demonstrate the independence, information security, confidentiality, legal standing, financial stability and insurance described in Section 15.

The AOB makes independent technical findings and recommendations. The Board retains final decisions on approval, scope, suspension and withdrawal of Certification and Verification Bodies (CBs/VBs). The contract covers the whole AOB lifecycle, including the transition from provisional to full approval and continuing oversight. Delivery partners may be proposed, but the appointed AOB remains accountable for the mandate.

Mobilisation and service delivery

- The contractor will establish an application route, evidence checklist, assessment procedures, findings and recommendation templates, fee arrangements and secure records. It will identify the assessors and reviewers available for January applications.
- The contractor will process applications, undertake the required assessments, verify corrective action and training evidence, and submit reasoned recommendations and scope records to GBA. It will plan first witness assessments and track the requirements and deadlines for full approval.
- The contractor will establish risk-based oversight plans, undertake the required surveillance and sampling, investigate provider concerns, verify corrective action and recommend measures. It will manage scope changes and periodic re-approval assessments under the Handbook.
- The contractor will provide aggregate and body-level reports that allow GBA to govern the scheme while preserving the decentralised evidence model. Underlying certification and verification files will remain with the relevant bodies, subject to required AOB access.

Outputs and acceptance

Before intake opens, GBA will review the mobilisation plan, named staffing, operational forms, secure access arrangements, charging arrangements and escalation contacts. Readiness requires a successful test of an application from receipt to a draft assessment plan and recommendation record.

The contractor will provide a monthly progress report during mobilisation and initial application processing. Thereafter, it will provide quarterly performance reports and immediate escalation of material integrity risks. Reports must distinguish contractor processing time from delays caused by missing applicant information. Assessment turnaround commitments and capacity limits must be proposed in the bid.

GBA will provide scheme documents, interpretations, training requirements and decision contacts. Bidders must identify further GBA inputs. Contract signature is targeted for 8 January 2027; signature by 31 December is not required. Bidders must propose a credible mobilisation plan for intake during the week of 11 January, or justify an alternative January date that supports the planned February launch, and identify critical dependencies. No application intake or operational approval decision may take place before signature and acceptance of the relevant readiness tests.

Lot 2 Complaints Administrator scope and deliverables

Governing requirements and decision boundaries

The GBA Complaints Policy v0.29 is the bid baseline and is incorporated by reference. The contractor must demonstrate competence in administering sensitive complaints, assessing institutional and individual conflicts, communicating with affected stakeholders, protecting confidentiality and maintaining a secure and auditable case record.

The Administrator administers cases. GBA Case Managers or appointed independent panels undertake substantive investigations and determine outcomes. The Multistakeholder Review Mechanism (MRM), or the Board in its designated fallback role, provides the oversight and appeal functions specified in the Policy. The Administrator does not take over those investigative or decision-making responsibilities. At launch, the MRM will build on the Board, complemented by external experts and stakeholder representatives, with documented recusals and independent appeal reviewers.

Mobilisation and service delivery

- The contractor will configure the intake and case-management arrangements required by the Policy. Its proposal must state how it will support the online form, email, WhatsApp, WeChat and postal routes, anonymous submissions, English and Mandarin forms, and the required translation and accessibility arrangements.
- The contractor will register complaints, acknowledge receipt, screen admissibility, assess and record conflicts, assign or refer cases, and escalate serious risks. It will monitor deadlines, maintain communications and record the reasons for extensions and case closure under the Policy.
- The contractor will maintain the administrative case record, support GBA's ten-year retention requirement, prepare twice-yearly reports for the Board and MRM, and supply anonymised reporting material for GBA's public disclosures.

Independence and readiness

The service must be operational by 1 February 2027. GBA will review the named case administrators, channel ownership and access arrangements, confidentiality and security controls, conflict register, referral protocol and records arrangements. Readiness requires successful tests of an anonymous complaint, a translated submission, an urgent concern and a case involving a conflict.

If the same contractor wins both lots, its proposal must explain staffing and access separation and the independent route for complaints concerning its AOB or complaints-administration work. GBA must be able to use an unconflicted alternative when the contractor has an institutional conflict. The Administrator must refer relevant matters to the MRM in accordance with the Policy. Separate teams and information barriers alone do not resolve an institutional conflict. Complaints or appeals concerning the contractor's own CB/VB oversight decisions must be routed to an unconflicted alternative; no person involved in the original decision may determine its review.

GBA will identify its Case Managers, MRM or Board contacts and decision authorities. It will confirm interim complaint and appeal arrangements before body applications open in January. Those arrangements will not defer the permanent Administrator's February readiness deadline.

Proposal response and commercial model

Bidders must provide a technical response for each lot, an AOB funding and tariff proposal for Lot 1, and a financial proposal to GBA for Lot 2. The technical response should not exceed ten pages per lot, excluding CVs, references and evidence.

Required response

- The bidder must identify its legal entity, ownership, delivery partners, relevant experience and two comparable references per lot.
- It must explain its method, competence, named team, availability, mobilisation, coverage, dependencies and contingency arrangements.
- It must disclose conflicts involving GBA and scheme interests, and describe independence, security, financial standing and insurance.

It must identify each departure from the scope, documents, timetable and terms, propose alternative wording, and state its effect on fees and readiness. Each lot's commercial proposal must stand alone.

Bidders may also demonstrate capacity to receive and assess applications from Digital Solutions Providers (DSP) against the DSP Oversight Handbook, including technical requirements and any mandatory supplier training and Gateway qualifications, and recommend approval to the GBA Board. This is a desirable additional capability, not a requirement for award or part of the core mandate; any future assignment would be agreed separately.

Lot 1 AOB funding and tariff proposal

Section 5 of the Oversight Handbook places all costs of AOB assessments on Certification and Verification Bodies. For CB/VB work, commercial agreements will be concluded directly between the AOB and applicant or approved CBs/VBs, which pay GBA-approved assessment and continuing oversight tariffs. GBA will not pay these costs or guarantee activity or revenue.

- The bidder must propose its charging model and complete tariff, including initial assessment, witness work, surveillance, re-approval, follow-up, scope changes, annual charges and expenses. It may propose fixed, daily, tiered or other fees, with the basis and inclusions clearly explained.
- It must explain estimated effort and cost drivers, provide worked examples using its stated assumptions and the standardised illustrative pricing scenarios in the evaluation section, and demonstrate affordability and financial viability at different activity levels. GBA does not prescribe actual application volumes, caseloads, prices or a single charging model; the evaluation scenarios are not forecasts or commitments.
- Lot 1 must be delivered without fees or financial support from GBA, including setup payments, retainers or minimum-revenue guarantees. There is no fixed total contract value or guaranteed provider volume. Bidders must identify what each provider tariff finances and demonstrate viability at low uptake.

GBA must approve the tariff and subsequent changes before they take effect. Bodies must receive clear estimates, explanations of extra work and expense rules before charges arise. Fees must be applied consistently, be independent of a favourable approval outcome, and have a documented

billing-review route. Fee controls must preserve required risk-based oversight and technical independence. The relevant agreements must establish payment, access and confidentiality arrangements.

Lot 2 financial proposal to GBA

GBA will pay for Lot 2 services. There is no fixed total contract value; expenditure will depend on the agreed fee structure and the number and complexity of complaints. The bidder must propose a financial model for GBA, identifying setup, availability, case administration, translation, channels, reporting and any additional charges. It must state assumptions, inclusions, limits, expenses, adjustment rules and how charges vary with activity. GBA provides no caseload forecast or volume guarantee. Investigation, expert-panel and appeal-decision costs remain outside the Administrator's scope. Bidders may propose alternative models with clear benefits and tradeoffs. The proposal must include a rate card and arrangements for GBA's written authorisation of additional or exceptional charges, including an agreed procedure for urgent cases.

Evaluation award and contractual conditions

Evaluation of each lot

GBA will first check eligibility, required competence, independence, compliance with the governing documents and ability to meet the relevant readiness requirements, taking account of justified Lot 1 alternatives. These are mandatory pass/fail requirements, assessed before comparative scoring. An unmanageable conflict or material inability to meet the mandate makes a bid ineligible. A fundamental deficiency cannot be offset by a competitive price or a higher score elsewhere. Only eligible bids proceed to comparative scoring, which assesses the quality and robustness of the evidence against the subcriteria below. Each lot will be scored separately by two unconflicted evaluators using the following weights. Bidders must structure their responses against each subcriterion for the relevant lot, with evidence cross-references; existing response page limits remain unchanged. Category weights are subtotals, not additional scores.

Lot 1 AOB evaluation matrix

Criterion	Weight	Evidence assessed
Technical capability and approach	**50%**	**Relevant lot experience, method, competence and practical delivery arrangements.**
Accreditation and conformity assessment expertise on comparable schemes	10%	Evidence of relevant schemes, standards and assessment practice.
Sustainability and responsible-sourcing experience demonstrated through accrediting or or other services for comparable schemes	8%	Comparable sustainability and responsible-sourcing assurance work.
Initial assessment and approval methodology	12%	Application review, assessment, witness planning and reasoned provisional/full approval recommendations.
Continuing oversight and surveillance	10%	Risk-based oversight, sampling, corrective action and re-approval.

Criterion	Weight	Evidence assessed
Operational systems and reporting	6%	Secure records, workflows, performance tracking and usable reports.
Quality assurance	4%	Internal review, consistency checks and improvement arrangements.
Independence and conflict safeguards	**15%**	**Institutional and individual conflicts, controls and independent referral arrangements.**
Institutional independence and impartiality	7%	Ownership, relationships, funding and impartiality controls.
Individual conflicts and procedural safeguards	5%	Declarations, conflict checks, recusals and access controls.
Independent escalation, referral and review arrangements	3%	Unconflicted alternatives and review of the contractor's own work.
Named team and mobilisation	**15%**	**Available personnel, realistic milestones, coverage, dependencies and continuity.**
Named personnel and demonstrated competence	6%	Relevant CVs, roles, qualifications and committed availability.
Mobilisation plan and operational readiness	5%	Credible milestones, dependencies and readiness-test delivery.
Geographic coverage, capacity and continuity arrangements	4%	Coverage, workload capacity, backup and service continuity.
Fee model and affordability	**20%**	**Lot 1: affordable, transparent and viable CB/VB tariffs with no GBA funding. Lot 2: complete and proportionate charges to GBA.**

Lot 2 Complaints Administrator evaluation matrix

Criterion	Weight	Evidence assessed
Technical capability and approach	**50%**	**Category subtotal; score the subcriteria below.**
Relevant complaints experience	10%	Comparable sensitive complaints administration and stakeholder contexts.
Intake and case-management methodology	12%	Admissibility, assignment, deadlines, communications and auditable records.

Accessibility and sensitive-case handling	10%	Required channels, anonymity, language support and urgent concerns.
Confidentiality and data protection	8%	Secure access, retention, disclosure and confidentiality controls.
Escalation and governance interfaces	6%	Clear interfaces with Case Managers, MRM and Board decision roles.
Quality assurance	4%	Case review, consistency checks and service improvement.
Independence and conflict safeguards	**15%**	**Category subtotal; score the subcriteria below.**
Institutional independence and impartiality	7%	Ownership, relationships, funding and impartiality controls.
Individual conflicts and procedural safeguards	4%	Declarations, conflict checks, recusals and access controls.
Independent escalation, referral and review arrangements	4%	Unconflicted alternatives and review of the contractor's own work.
Named team and mobilisation	**15%**	**Category subtotal; score the subcriteria below.**
Named personnel and demonstrated competence	6%	Relevant CVs, roles, qualifications and committed availability.
Mobilisation plan and operational readiness	5%	Credible milestones, dependencies and readiness-test delivery.
Geographic coverage, capacity and continuity arrangements	4%	Coverage, workload capacity, backup and service continuity.
Fee model and affordability	**20%**	**Category subtotal; score the subcriteria below.**

Each subcriterion is scored individually from no usable evidence (0), through partial fulfilment (2) and meeting requirements (3), to a strong evidenced response (4) and clear additional value within the relevant lot's scope (5). A score of 1 reflects serious weaknesses. Each evaluator must record a short written justification, citing the bid evidence, for every subcriterion score. Weighted points equal score divided by 5, multiplied by the subcriterion weight; these points are summed to give a total out of 100. The evaluators will agree and document final scores, resolving and recording any material differences. The evaluation record and recommendation to the Board must explain the comparative strengths, weaknesses and rationale for the proposed award. Potential Digital Solutions Provider (DSP) oversight capability is outside the weighted assessment and must not influence scores, tie-breaks or the award recommendation.

Commercial scores reflect affordability, transparency, effort and cost controls, financial viability and, for Lot 2, charges to GBA. For Lot 1 this includes fees paid by CBs/VBs; for Lot 2 it covers complaints administration. Bidders' assumptions will be examined consistently. There is no automatic lowest-price score. Award requires at least 60% of the 80 non-commercial points (48 out

of 80), in addition to passing all mandatory eligibility requirements. Ties are resolved by technical score, then independence score.

Standardised illustrative pricing scenarios

Bidders must price all three scenarios for their chosen lot over a 12-month period, using a common currency of EUR and showing taxes separately. Each scenario must show a total cost, itemised charges, inclusions, estimated effort and any assumptions or exclusions. Include applicable setup, availability, annual, channel and reporting charges without double counting. These are evaluation assumptions only, not forecasts, volume or revenue commitments, fixed contract values or changes to the mandated scope. Bidders must not reduce required assessment or case-handling standards to fit a scenario.

Lot 1: Scenario A comprises one new CB/VB initial assessment, one first witness assessment and one surveillance assessment of a different, already approved body. Scenario B comprises three of each activity, plus one corrective-action follow-up. Scenario C comprises six of each activity, plus two corrective-action follow-ups and one scope-change assessment. Initial assessments include the work needed for provisional and full approval recommendations, without double counting the separately priced witness activity. Show total charges to CBs/VBs, their allocation by body and activity, and how the model remains viable at low uptake without GBA funding. For comparison, assume each witness assessment requires one assessor on site for two days and two travel days; show travel time charges separately and use a common EUR 1,000 travel and accommodation allowance per witness assessment. Assume other work is remote; disclose any required departure from these assumptions.

Lot 2: Scenario A comprises availability and readiness with no complaints. Scenario B comprises five complaints: four routine cases and one sensitive case requiring urgent escalation and conflict referral; one of the five requires translation of 1,000 words between English and Mandarin. Scenario C comprises 20 complaints: 16 routine cases and four sensitive cases requiring urgent escalation and conflict referral; four of the 20 each require the same 1,000-word translation. Assume remote administration through the required channels. Include intake, admissibility screening, conflict checks, communications, deadline tracking, records and reporting. Exclude substantive investigation, expert-panel and appeal-decision costs. Show the total payable by GBA and the incremental costs of increased volume and complexity.

GBA will compare scenario totals alongside the underlying rates, proposed effort and completeness of scope under the published commercial subcriteria, rather than rates alone. No separate undisclosed scenario weights will be applied. Any material clarification or change to the common assumptions will be shared equally with bidders for the relevant lot, with an appropriate opportunity to revise proposals.

GBA may clarify bids, interview teams and verify references. Material changes and information will be shared consistently, with an opportunity to revise proposals. Offering both lots confers no evaluation preference.

Award and proposed contractual conditions

GBA intends to recommend the highest-scoring eligible proposal for each lot, subject to checks, agreed terms and, as applicable, approval of Lot 1 tariffs or the Lot 2 budget. The Board confirms AOB selection and appoints the Complaints Administrator. The lots may be awarded on different dates to different providers or to one provider under separate scopes and charging arrangements.

GBA's standard service agreement, adapted to each lot, will be the contractual basis. The draft agreement and proposed lot schedules will be issued with the RFP so bidders can identify departures in their proposals.

The proposed initial term is three years for each lot from service commencement. AOB renewal remains subject to the Handbook's documented review, Board approval and fixed-term requirements. The service agreements will address deliverables, fees, technical independence, confidentiality, data protection, secure access, insurance, liability, performance review, termination and orderly handover.

GBA must have continuing access to scheme-specific administrative records, outputs and operational materials needed to run or transfer the services. Bidders must identify background intellectual property and any required licences. Complete client evidence files remain subject to the decentralised model in the Oversight Handbook. Handover must preserve open applications, cases, records and deadlines.