COLLABORATIVE WORKFLOW PLATFORM

Technical & Functional Specifications Framework[1]

Project Title: Procurement of a Projects and Funds Pre-Processing Workspace
Target Architecture: Collaborative Workflow Platform
Implementation Model: 100% Certified Partner Managed (Turnkey Delivery)

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1. Project Overview & Objectives

The European Liberal Forum is seeking an upgrade to its existing project management system or development of a new modern, user-friendly, collaborative workflow platform to manage a portfolio of **50+ multitier projects**. The platform will act as an intake, compliance screening, budget tracking, and document orchestration gateway. The platform must be able to connect to the existing legacy software (data storage: Microsoft SharePoint and accounting: SageBOB). Legacy software features are not part of the procurement procedure.

Given that the internal Secretariat team is non-technical and has limited availability for software development, **this procurement requires a 100% turnkey implementation delivered by a Certified Platform Partner.**

The selected vendor will design, configure, integrate, and test the entire system or upgrades prior to handover, provide basic service support for the duration of the contract and additional development support as requested by the European Liberal Forum, namely integrating AI into the workflows.

Procurement is not restricted to any platform brand or trademark. Features already active in ELF's current Salesforce-based project management tool are highlighted green and the vendors are expected to provide an equivalent or improved feature in any new technical solution and consider them priority in development and set up.

1.1 Team and License Architecture

To ensure long-term cost predictability and eliminate software seat overhead, the platform must support a strict split-user topology matching the following specifications:

- **Administrative (Secretariat) Users: 5 Power Users** requiring full administrative, workflow execution, approval tracking, and master dashboard access.
- **External Collaborators (Project Managers): 40–50 Users** requiring restricted, segregated access. They must be able to view *only* their assigned records,

[1] ELF reserves the right to make non-substantial modification to the technical framework such as provide clarifications and correct minor errors. In such cases, the change will be promptly communicated to all contacted vendors and the deadline will be extended.

upload files continuously, and message the Secretariat. This tier **must not** incur standard internal employee seat license fees (e.g., utilizing a collaborative external contributor, guest, or portal model).

- **Public Respondents (Event Participants): Unlimited public users** must be able to access specific web intake URLs without requiring any platform registration, logging, or licensing overhead.

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2. Functional Requirements Matrix

2.1 Intake Management & Public Portals

- **2.1.1 Public Form Hosting:** The system must generate public-facing, responsive web forms (with custom branding capabilities) to manage event registrations and collect event refund requests.
- **2.1.2 Project Portal:** The system must enable External Collaborators to manage their Projects, upload documents and make payment requests as well as execute core functions such as sending out a Public Form or initiating a contract signature.
- **2.1.3 Automated Data Ingestion:** Form submissions must create structured records within the platform database without manual data entry or administrative intervention.
- **2.1.4 File Attachment Vault:** Intake forms must securely accept multi-file uploads (PDFs, images, documents) with maximum file size of 20MB per file, map them to explicit data fields, and generate automated visual previews within the workflow workspace.

2.2 Relational Data Architecture (Multi-Level Hierarchy)

- **2.2.1 Multi-Tiered Data Nesting:** The system must support a structural hierarchy capable of linking four distinct data layers natively:

  - Level 1: Overall Programme (All Projects in the Year) (Grandparent)
  - Level 2: Overall Project (Parent)
  - Level 3: Specific Activities (Child)
  - Level 4: Payment Requests / Disbursements (Grandchild).

- **2.2.2 Live Budgetary Roll-Ups:** Numerical columns must execute mathematical operations vertically and horizontally across the data hierarchy. Budgets modified at the "Specific Activity" layer must instantly roll up, aggregate, and display cumulative balances at the “Overall Programme” and "Overall Project" layers.

- **2.2.3 Status Dependencies:** The platform must allow the creation of formula-driven and conditional fields to calculate remaining project balances and budget variances dynamically.

2.3 Continuous Compliance, Finance & Admin Document Management

- **2.3.1 Explicit File Labelling:** The workspace must support dedicated document fields rather than generic, unstructured file pools. Administrators must be able to assign explicit slots for specific document types (e.g., "Signed Contract," "Event Program," "Invoice PDF").
- **2.3.2 Conditional Compliance Guardrails:** The platform must support configurable, conditional workflow automation rules to block human error. The system must prevent a status transition (e.g., advancing from "Payment Requested" to "Approved") if mandatory document fields are empty.

2.4 Dynamic AI-Powered Engagement Layer

- **2.4.1 Contextual Engagement Threads:** Every project must have an isolated communication thread as a primary engagement layer. External collaborators, paid administrators as well as native and independent agents must be able to tag each other directly via user mentions, upload revised file attachments within the chat stream, and receive real-time email notifications for unread updates.
- **2.4.2 ELF Agentic:** AI agent/s capable of providing deep intelligence based on project data in the back system and, if possible, take meaningful actions such as: document pre-checks, summarize conversations to provide project updates, take direct action to change records, and providing automatic and on demand reports.

2.5 Document Generation & Legally Binding Electronic Signatures

- **2.5.1 Native PDF Document Assembly:** The system must dynamically merge platform data fields (e.g., Name, Date, Requested Amount, Bank Details) into a pre-configured, formatted document template to generate a final PDF file automatically.
- **2.5.2 eIDAS Regulatory Compliance:** The platform must natively integrate or connect via an API with an electronic signature platform that supports Simple Electronic Signatures (SES) compliant with EU Regulation No 910/2014 (eIDAS) to legally capture electronic intent, while providing the flexibility to upgrade workflows to Advanced (AES) or Qualified (QES) tiers when required by risk policy.
- **2.5.3 Simple Electronic Signature (SES) & Audit Trail:** The contract workflow must enable signers to execute documents through standard access methods

(e.g., email link verification) and automatically generate a tamper-evident audit trail capturing critical transactional data—including IP addresses, timestamps, email verification tokens, and completion status—permanently linked to the document package.

- **2.5.4 Automated Asset Return:** Upon successful execution of the signature by the external Project Manager, the cryptographically sealed PDF agreement must be automatically routed back to the platform and saved directly into the designated contract file field.

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3. Technical, Integration & AI Specifications

3.1 Downstream ERP/Accounting Integration

- **3.1.1 Event-Driven Webhooks:** The platform must support real-time, event-driven webhooks capable of firing an API payload instantly when a specific trigger condition is met (e.g., *When Travel Reimbursement Request Status changes to "Submitted for Approval*) or equivalent or better feature.
- **3.1.2 Middleware Compatibility:** The system architecture must natively expose its data and file objects to low-code iPaaS integration middleware (such as Make.com, Zapier, or Chift) or via a robust REST/GraphQL API or equivalent or better feature.
- **3.1.3 Automated PDF Extraction:** The solution must be capable of packing and extracting finalized invoice PDFs, refund documents, or payment requests and send them into a processing and approval queue before being ingested by ELF's accounting system.

3.2 Automated, Structured SharePoint Archiving

- **3.2.1 Real-Time Document Mirroring:** The platform must automatically back up every finalized project document, event program, legally signed contract, and payment invoice to the organization's Microsoft SharePoint environment.
- **3.2.2 Dynamic, Structured Directory Creation:** The archiving system must not dump files into a single flat folder. It must use automated rules to dynamically construct a structured, audit-ready folder hierarchy inside SharePoint that mirrors the project layout, following this exact naming convention path: SharePoint / [Grant Year] / [Overall Project Name] / [Specific Activity Name] / [Document Type] / [Filename.pdf]
- **3.2.3 Long-Term Audit Trail Preservation:** Once archived to SharePoint, files must remain decoupled from the operational lifespan of the workflow platform. This ensures that even if a record is archived or modified in the front-end tool, a

permanent, immutable copy remains intact within SharePoint for statutory audit purposes.

3.3 AI Agent Readiness & Developer Ecosystem

- **3.3.1 Open API Access:** The vendor must provide an open, fully documented REST or GraphQL API with extensive read/write permissions for all records, sub-records, file fields, and communication threads or equivalent or better feature.
- **3.3.2 AI Agent Framework:** The data structure must allow LLM-powered autonomous AI agents to interact freely with the workflow. The system must permit an AI agent to listen for file uploads, parse attachment content (via OCR text extraction), validate document compliance, programmatically change column statuses, and write textual feedback into communication streams.
- **3.3.3 Comprehensive AI advisory and technical development capabilities**: The service provider must offer comprehensive AI advisory and technical development capabilities to guide the integration of Generative AI technologies within the platform. This includes strategic advice on architecture and compliance, the ability to source and procure enterprise-grade third-party AI agents, and the technical expertise to build or customize autonomous AI agents tailored to the organization's specific workflows and data structures.

3.4 Futureproofing: PEPPOL E-Invoicing Access Point Ready

- **3.4.1 Dynamic API Architecture for PEPPOL Interaction:** As a critical future requirement to align with European B2B/B2G e-invoicing mandates, the platform must possess the data architecture necessary to interact with a **PEPPOL (Pan-European Public Procurement On-Line) Access Point** or a qualified PEPPOL-bis standard middleware broker.
- **3.4.2 Structured XML/UBL Ingestion Capability:** The platform's record database must be natively capable of receiving, parsing, and storing structured XML data payloads conforming to the **Universal Business Language (UBL / EN 16931 standard)**.
- **3.4.3 Automated E-Invoice Reconciliation (Future Phase):** When an external Project Manager or verified supplier pushes an electronic invoice via the PEPPOL network, the system must support the ability to capture that automated metadata payload, create or match it to a corresponding Level 4 "Payment Request" record, and map the structured data directly to the matching Project and Activity budget lines without manual entry.

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4. System Security, Data Privacy & GDPR Compliance

4.1 Data Residency & Sovereignty

- **4.1.1 EU Data Hosting:** All data centers hosting the platform infrastructure, metadata, file uploads, backups, and secondary processing servers to be used by ELF, **must be physically located within the European Union (EU) / European Economic Area (EEA)**.
- **4.1.2 Cross-Border Protections:** In the event that any personal data collected or processed is transferred outside the European Economic Area (EEA), the service provider must ensure that such transfer is strictly governed by the European Commission's approved Standard Contractual Clauses (SCCs) thereby guaranteeing an essentially equivalent level of protection to that afforded under EU law.

4.2 Data Security & Access Controls

- **4.2.1 Encryption Standards:** All data must be encrypted in transit using industry-standard protocols (minimum TLS 1.3) and encrypted at rest using AES-256 bit encryption keys.
- **4.2.2 Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA):** The platform must enforce mandatory Multi-Factor Authentication for all 5 Secretariat users and support secure login pathways for external Project Manager contributors.
- **4.2.3 Granular Permission Masking:** The system must allow administrators to rigidly isolate data access. External Project Managers must be programmatically blocked from viewing financial documents, budgets, or file attachments belonging to other projects or organizations.

4.3 GDPR Regulatory Alignment

- **4.3.1 Right to Erasure & Export:** The platform must provide tools allowing the Secretariat to fulfil GDPR compliance requests, specifically the manual or automated deletion of an event participant's personal data (Right to be Forgotten) or the complete export of structured data in machine-readable formats (Data Portability).
- **4.3.2 Retention Policy Automation:** The system must support configurable data retention workflows, allowing the automatic purging or anonymization of sensitive event refund requests and participant banking data after a specified regulatory threshold has passed.

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5. Proposal Requirements & Pricing

To ensure full operational readiness upon launch, implementation partners must submit a **fully managed, turnkey proposal** with a price quote including a **5-year Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) evaluation window including an estimate set up time and potential delivery timeline of basic features (highlighted in green)**. Interested vendors may consider items highlighted green as the basic functionalities that should be developed first to ensure current level of functionality of the project management system while all other items may be developed later in line also with available time and budget of ELF. Interested vendors that work with the Salesforce platform and wish to apply for an upgrade to the current ELF system should take into account that development of technical items highlighted green have already been implemented and should not be part of their proposal.

Price cost split:

5.1 Annual Subscription Licensing Costs

- **Base Platform Costs:** Detail any platform flat fees, enterprise support tiers, or core infrastructure charges.
- **Paid Admin Seats:** Price for exactly **5 Power User (Administrator)** licenses.
- **External Collaboration Overhead:** Explicitly state the licensing model and guarantee **no cost scaling** for up to **50 external Project Managers** (via external collaborator, contributor, or free portal status) and **unlimited public form submissions**.
- **Third-Party App Bundles:** Include annual costs for any integrated marketplace software required to achieve the spec (e.g., document generation modules or middleware connectors).

5.2 One Off Fixed-Price Implementation Services

The partner must include a comprehensive, single-invoice professional services package that covers 100% of the architecture build:

- **Phase 1: Architecture & Process Mapping:** Deep scoping sessions to map your current structural requirements into the new relational workflow models.
- **Phase 2: Turnkey Platform Configuration:** Complete backend buildout of all forms, multi-level parent/child project structures, budget tracking formulas, and compliance validation automation blocks.
- **Phase 3: Integration Pipelines:** Full development and error-testing of the eIDAS signature loops, the structured SharePoint archiving directory automations, and the Sage BOB PDF export transfer link.

- **Phase 4: User Acceptance Testing (UAT) & Hypercare:** Rigorous system testing by the partner to verify permission masks before handover, accompanied by post-launch operational support.

5.3 Fixed per year price basic support package

- **Phase 5: Basic Support after launch and during the entire course of the contract:** includes day to day support including but not exclusive to: minor framework and flow changes, error corrections and general support to the functioning of the platform.

5.4 Estimated per hour/ day cost for advanced development projects

- **Phase 6: Advanced Development Support:** ad-hoc and per request development projects such as introduction of new agentic AI tools and other improvement projects

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