IRMA Overview

The global reliance on mined materials is undeniable. Mined materials form the backbone of modern societies, embedded in everything from our electronics to our infrastructure. Mining operations are essential to modern life, providing the materials necessary for all these other industries. The world is now expecting even more from mining operations, especially given their role in the global energy transition and in addressing the industry's historical legacy and ongoing adverse impacts.

The Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA) offers a robust solution. IRMA was founded on the belief that everyone impacted by mining should have a say in how responsible mining is defined and measured. Uniquely, IRMA was co-created by six diverse sectors, ensuring communities, workers, and NGOs are given an equal voice alongside mining companies, purchasers of mined materials, and finance professionals.

By convening experts, advocates, and industry leaders across these sectors, IRMA has developed an independent, best-practice standard for responsible mining, as well as a transparent process for assessing mine performance against that standard. As more audit reports are released, stakeholders are seeing that this system, built by all sectors, has concrete benefits for each one.

Terms of Reference

Objective

In October 2024, IRMA launched version 1.0 of the IRMA Chain of Custody Standard for Responsibly Mined Materials. This Standard is designed to provide baseline requirements for tracing material coming from any IRMA-audited mine through the downstream processing of minerals into final products, all the way to the end consumer. To accompany this Standard, IRMA is working to develop a new assurance program to support material traceability and claims verification through a material registry and associated Chain of Custody (CoC) audit process, to meet the pressing need for transparency in minerals value chains. The initiative is in its early stages, with a few pilot projects underway, and IRMA is seeking a skilled consultant to support the **development of IRMA's Chain of Custody system and assurance program** by providing project management, stakeholder facilitation, research, and early-stage program design.

This assignment is for the 2025 calendar year, with the potential to extend into 2026 if project funding is made available. The consultant will collaborate closely with IRMA's Standards Director, Assurance Director, Purchasing Sector Lead, and Mining Sector Lead(s).

As IRMA continues to expand its Chain of Custody initiative, we are actively exploring additional opportunities for resourcing and partnership to support the growth and refinement of this program. The selected consultant may have the opportunity to contribute to these expansion efforts, subject to future project needs and available resources.

Scope of Work

Project Management

— Create a project plan and timeline, and drive deliverables and workstreams related to the development of the IRMA Registry of Material and other elements of the CoC assurance program.
— Ensure work is moving forward, tracking progress and holding deliverable deadlines across multiple collaborators, and following up with internal and external project stakeholders.
— For all project deliverables: facilitate meetings to gather feedback and manage relationships with actors involved, including downstream purchasers, mining companies, processing companies, auditors, traceability solution providers, and IRMA staff, as well as other relevant stakeholders.
— Ensure key staff are apprised and engaged in reviewing elements relevant to their program areas.

Research and Early Design

— Conduct additional research (only as needed) into existing standards or regulatory systems with Chain of Custody components to refine the identification of core components, challenges and key considerations given IRMA's needs and values. Apply findings to IRMA's context, values, and goals, with appropriate design and implementation components.

Development of the IRMA Registry of Material

— Based upon existing and additional research, develop a prototype database structure for the IRMA Registry of Material, with a focus on what forms and datasets best serve stakeholders, including strong considerations for data integrity and confidentiality.
— Develop terms of reference for technical developers of the first version of the Registry of Material, in consultation with the Information Systems Director.

Development of the IRMA CoC audit process

— Draft foundational components of the IRMA CoC audit process, building on the IRMA CoC Assurance Manual V1.0, in collaboration with the Assurance Director.
— Gather feedback on draft claims language (building on existing drafts) and visual identifiers (eg. logos).
— Develop terms of reference for audit firms to participate in CoC pilot audits, to allow end brands to undertake their first third-party independent compliance

audits, to verify and assure their IRMA-related claims, at the company- and/or product-level.

— Shepherd one Chain of Custody pilot forward, in close collaboration with the different stakeholders (mining company, purchaser, possible traceability/chain service provider, IRMA, auditor), to test the pieces in motion (Registry of Material, CoC audit process, IRMA CoC Claims Procedure and Communications Policy V1.0).

Deliverables

— Project plan and timeline
— Research findings, with recommended design and implementation pathways for the IRMA CoC system
— Prototype of database structure Registry of Material
— Terms of reference for development of IRMA Registry of Material
— Draft components of the IRMA CoC audit process
— Terms of reference for audit firms

Hourly Rate and Payment Structure

— This is an independent contractor role, with compensation at a rate of **USD$85/hour**. The estimated project workload is 10 hours/week, subject to project needs and not to exceed 400 hours in 2025.
— Invoices should be submitted on a monthly basis for approved project hours.

Qualifications

The successful candidate will ideally demonstrate the following qualifications:

— **Knowledge of Traceability, Due Diligence, and/or Minerals Value Chains**: Understanding of digital and physical traceability systems, responsible sourcing, and/or supply chain due diligence — particularly within mineral value chains. Familiarity with one or more relevant standards systems or traceability platforms. Experience working in or with mining, metals, or downstream purchasing sectors is an asset.
— **Project management expertise**: Experience leading complex, multi-stakeholder projects, ideally in sustainability, supply chains, or systems development. Proven ability to drive projects from early concept through implementation, managing deadlines, workstreams, and diverse collaborators.
— **Research and systems design**: Strong research skills, with the ability to identify and distill insights from existing standards, programs, or system architectures. Experience designing or co-creating new systems or tools, with attention to operationalization and auditability, data integrity and confidentiality, user needs, and long-term utility.
— **Stakeholder Facilitation & Relationship Management**: Demonstrated ability to convene, engage, and build trust across diverse actors — including companies within supplier/customer dynamics, civil society organizations, and technical service providers. Skilled in designing inclusive processes and managing nuanced group dynamics.

- — **Technical collaboration:** Comfortable working across functions — particularly with technical contractors (e.g. software developers) and internal leads. Able to bridge strategic vision with operational details.
- — **Communications development:** Experience crafting or supporting communications materials, such as normalized claims language, visual identifiers (e.g. logos), or stakeholder-specific messaging. Able to communicate clearly across technical and non-technical audiences.
- — **Graduate degree** in a relevant field, or equivalent professional experience.

Location

IRMA operates fully remotely, with team members located globally. The candidate's location can be flexibly based. Location should have reliable internet for consistent access during working hours.

Proposal Submission

Please share a 1-2 page proposal (excluding CV and references), which should include the following:

- Proposal or cover letter describing your background, interest in the project, and how you would approach the work

- Summary of relevant qualifications and experience (can also be provided as a CV)

- 2-3 professional references

Submissions should be emailed as PDF or Word documents to careers@responsiblemining.net. Proposals will be evaluated on a rolling basis, with a requested submission date by 28 May 2025.

Questions may be directed to careers@responsiblemining.net.

IRMA is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. We encourage proposals from consultants and firms that share these values and incorporate equitable practices in their work. We welcome submissions from individuals of all backgrounds and do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or other protected characteristics.