



# Request for Proposals

Working Group Coordinator Consultant | Standards Development Portfolio | Phase 1 — 2026

<b>Issuing organization:</b>	3-A Sanitary Standards, Inc. (3-A SSI)
<b>Authorization:</b>	<b>Board of Directors approved — this RFP issues on Board authorization.</b>
<b>RFP issue date:</b>	May 11 2026
<b>Proposals due:</b>	May 27, 2026 — compressed timeline by design; see Section 7
<b>Target start:</b>	<b>As soon as possible following contract execution — target June 7 – June 15, 2026. Pilot WG kickoffs will occur mid-May—early start reduces the bridge gap.</b>
<b>Engagement scope:</b>	Phase 1 — 2026 only. Phase 2 (2027) engagement subject to separate gate review in Q1 2027.
<b>Budget guidance:</b>	<b>Approximately \$65,000–\$90,000 for the full 2026 Phase 1 engagement. Proposals significantly outside this range will not be competitive.</b>
<b>Reports to:</b>	<b>Executive Director — directly and exclusively. See Section 3.3.</b>
<b>Submit to:</b>	mb@3-A.org   Attention: Executive Director   Subject: WG Coordinator RFP
<b>Questions:</b>	Submit by email no later than May 20, 2026

## 1. Organization Background

3-A Sanitary Standards, Inc. (3-A SSI) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization headquartered in Washington, DC. Our mission is to advance food safety through the development of consensus-based hygienic equipment design standards and accepted practices. 3-A SSI standards are used by 650+ certified equipment manufacturers, dairy and food processors, and regulatory agencies throughout the United States and internationally.

3-A SSI operates with a staff of three professionals. With the adoption of General Requirements 00-02 as a normative reference across the full portfolio, 48 standards and accepted practices require guidance document updates. This RFP initiates the engagement of one Working Group (WG) Coordinator Consultant to manage the day-to-day operations of Phase 1 working group projects through December 31, 2026.

## 2. Current Status and Transition Context

This engagement begins in an active operational context, not at a clean starting point. Proposers must understand the transition model before submitting.

### What has already happened

- A Call for Participation launched April 6, 2026. Applications closed April 27.
- Working group rosters have been finalized. Five Phase 1 projects are confirmed.

- Five pilot working groups held kickoff meetings in mid-May 11, 2026, facilitated by the Executive Director and Director of Standards & Certifications.
- Technical Leads have been elected or are being confirmed for each pilot working group.
- Three cohort working groups are ready to launch volunteer canvassing and are awaiting WG coordinator consultant onboarding.

### The bridge period — Mid-May through consultant onboarding

During the period between Mid-May kickoff and consultant onboarding, the Executive Director and Director of Standards & Certifications are managing pilot WG administrative logistics on an interim basis. This is a temporary, bounded arrangement.

The incoming consultant will receive a complete project briefing from the Executive Director at onboarding, including confirmed Technical Lead contacts, volunteer rosters, kickoff meeting minutes and action items, current draft document status, and any scope or scheduling issues raised during kickoff meetings.

## 2.1 Transition and overlap model

The engagement has three phases:

Phase	Who manages WGs	What is happening
<b>Bridge (Mid-May – Consultant start)</b>	Executive Director + Director of Standards & Certifications (interim)	Pilot WG kickoffs complete. Action items assigned. Technical Leads confirmed. Materials distributed. Minimal ongoing activity until consultant onboard. Cohort groups not yet launched.
<b>Overlap (~2 weeks from consultant start)</b>	Consultant (primary) + Executive Director and Director of Standards & Certifications briefing support	Consultant receives full project briefing from Executive Director. Director of Standards & Certifications provides technical orientation on each project — document history, open issues, volunteer dynamics. Consultant shadows or co-facilitates first meetings as needed. Overlap is time-limited and ends when consultant confirms readiness to manage independently.
<b>Full operation (~June 2026 – Dec 31, 2026)</b>	Consultant — independently	Consultant manages all eight Phase 1 projects. Director of Standards & Certifications provides technical escalation when consultant identifies a scope determination that requires technical authority. Executive Director receives weekly status reports and participates in monthly check-ins.

**The Director of Standards & Certifications' role during and after the overlap period is technical, not managerial. The Director of Standards & Certifications does not supervise, direct, or evaluate the consultant's project management work. All management questions go to the Executive Director.**

## 3. Scope of Work

### 3.1 What this role is — and what it is not

This is a project management and facilitation role. The WG Coordinator Consultant is responsible for how the work gets done — not for what the work concludes. Technical direction rests entirely with volunteer Technical Leads. The Director of Standards and Certifications may be consulted when Technical Lead needs assistance.

The most important quality in this role is strong, disciplined project management: the ability to manage eight concurrent projects, hold process boundaries firmly, keep volunteers oriented to scope and timeline, and document everything clearly enough that another person could step in without losing momentum.

Domain expertise in hygienic equipment design is useful and will strengthen a proposal, but it is not the primary criterion. A candidate who is an exceptional project manager with working knowledge of technical committee processes will be evaluated more favorably than a domain expert with weak project management skills.

### 3.2 Core responsibilities

Function	Responsibilities
<b>Project planning</b>	Before each working group begins substantive work: develop and maintain a project plan including milestone dates, meeting cadence, ballot dates, and publication target. Plans reviewed and approved by the Executive Director.
<b>Meeting management</b>	Schedule, prepare agendas for, and facilitate all working group meetings (virtual, 90 minutes). Distribute materials at least 72 hours in advance. Distribute draft minutes within 48 hours of each meeting. Every meeting ends with documented action items and owners.
<b>Document tracking</b>	Maintain the working draft between sessions. Track all changes, comments, and resolutions. Prepare drafts for ballot in coordination with the Technical Lead.
<b>Scope management — Parking Lot</b>	Facilitate the Parking Lot process at every meeting. Log out-of-scope items formally. Enforce boundaries established at kickoff. When a scope dispute requires a technical determination, escalate to the Director of Standards & Certifications with a clear framing of the question. This is a primary function of the role.
<b>Volunteer support</b>	First point of contact for volunteer questions about process, scheduling, and materials. Support onboarding of volunteers who join after kickoff.
<b>Ballot coordination</b>	Prepare ballot packages, track responses, distribute comment summaries to the Technical Lead, coordinate comment resolution meetings.
<b>Reporting</b>	Weekly written status update to the Executive Director using a standard template provided at onboarding. Immediate escalation of any risk to schedule, scope, or volunteer participation. The Executive Director is the sole management contact.
<b>Process documentation (primary deliverable)</b>	Maintain a living Process Documentation Manual covering all procedures, decisions, templates, and lessons learned. Updated after each project cycle — not at year-end only. Final comprehensive documentation package due December 31, 2026, sufficient to onboard a Phase 2 coordinator independently.

### 3.3 Reporting structure — explicit and unambiguous

#### The consultant reports directly to the Executive Director

All management direction, performance feedback, work assignments, and escalations flow through the Executive Director. The consultant does not report to, seek approval from, or take direction from the Director of Standards & Certifications on project management matters.

The Director of Standards & Certifications' role in this engagement is technical: providing historical context on draft documents, serving as the escalation point when a scope determination requires technical authority, and participating in the overlap orientation period. The Director of Standards & Certifications does not evaluate, supervise, or manage the consultant's work.

If a conflict arises between the consultant's process management decisions and the Director of Standards & Certifications' preferences, the Executive Director resolves it. Proposers should be comfortable operating in an environment where the management and technical authority roles are held by different people.

### 3.4 Phase 1 project scope

#### Track A — Pilot projects (5 single-standard projects)

Standard	Title	Status at onboarding	Est. hours
22-08	Silo-Type Storage Tanks	Kickoff complete; Technical Lead confirmed; action items in progress	~20–30
25-03	Non-Coil Type Batch Processors	Kickoff complete; Technical Lead confirmed	~20–30
57-02	Disc-Type Valves	Kickoff complete; ballot comments to resolve	~25–35
604-05	Supplying Air Under Pressure	Kickoff complete; final draft at SC ballot stage — lightest project	~10–20
41-03	Mechanical Conveyors for Dry Products	Kickoff complete; resumes as cohort lead with 39-01	~20–30

#### Track B — Cohort groups (3 multi-standard groups)

Cohort	Standards	Status at onboarding	Est. hours
Mixing & Blending	35-04 Blending Equipment 36-01 In-line Mixer 73-01 Shear Mixers & Agitators	Canvassing for WG; not yet launched — consultant schedules kickoff	~45–60
Filters & Separators	87-00 Mechanical Strainers 40-04 Bag Collectors	Canvassing for WG; not yet launched — consultant schedules kickoff	~30–40
Conveyors & Feeders	41-03 Mechanical Conveyors for Dry Products 39-01 Pneumatic Conveyors	41-03 already kicked off as pilot; 39-01 follows in sequence	~20–30

## 4. Performance Standards and Accountability

3-A SSI manages by outcomes. The Executive Director will establish specific performance benchmarks with the selected consultant at contract start. The following standards apply throughout the engagement.

### 4.1 Non-negotiable process standards

Standard	Requirement
<b>Meeting notice</b>	Invitations and agendas distributed at least 72 hours before every meeting — no exceptions
<b>Minutes</b>	Draft minutes distributed to all WG members within 48 hours of each meeting
<b>Action items</b>	Every meeting concludes with a written action item list; all items have owners and due dates
<b>Ballot preparation</b>	Ballot packages distributed to Technical Lead for review at least 5 business days before issue
<b>Weekly status report</b>	Written status update submitted to the Executive Director every Friday — or the Thursday before a Monday holiday
<b>Risk escalation</b>	Any threat to schedule, scope, or volunteer participation escalated to the Executive Director within 24 hours of identification — not at the next weekly report
<b>Documentation currency</b>	Process Documentation Manual updated within 2 weeks of any process change, decision, or lesson learned — not batched at year-end

### 4.2 30 / 60 / 90-day milestones

The Executive Director will evaluate performance against these milestones as part of a structured check-in at each interval.

By day	Expected outcomes
<b>30 days</b>	All eight projects have current project plans on file with the Executive Director. First cohort kickoff meetings scheduled and facilitated. Weekly status reporting established and consistent. Process Documentation Manual template in place and populated with onboarding materials. No volunteer complaints about communication or materials distribution.
<b>60 days</b>	All cohort WGs have completed at least one substantive working session beyond kickoff. All pilot WGs have met at least once under consultant management. At least one Parking Lot log active per project. No project is behind its baseline plan by more than two weeks without a documented recovery plan approved by the Executive Director.
<b>90 days</b>	At least two pilot projects have advanced to ballot preparation stage. Process Documentation Manual reflects all procedures used to date. Monthly status dashboard delivered to Executive Director showing all eight projects against timeline. Zero scope disputes — any scope challenge has been formally logged and resolved or escalated.

### 4.3 Year-end deliverables

- All Phase 1 standards advanced to ballot or publication by December 31, 2026 (target: 7 of 8 minimum)
- Complete Process Documentation Manual — sufficient for a Phase 2 coordinator to onboard without institutional knowledge transfer from current staff
- Final status report for each working group including ballot history, comment log, Parking Lot summary, and volunteer roster
- Lessons learned document identifying what should change in Phase 2

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## 5. Qualifications

### Required

- Demonstrated experience managing technical committee, working group, or standards development processes — in a standards organization, trade association, regulatory body, or professional society
- Exceptional project management skills: simultaneous management of 5+ projects, plan development and maintenance, proactive risk identification and communication
- Experience facilitating virtual meetings with technically expert professionals from diverse organizations and competing interests
- Strong written communication: meeting notices, minutes, ballot summaries, and status reports must be clear, accurate, and professional
- Working knowledge of structured consensus process sufficient to recognize when a working group discussion is drifting outside defined scope
- Ability to maintain strict confidentiality of WG deliberations, draft documents, and ballot records
- Availability to begin no later than June 15, 2026, with a strong preference for a start date of May 27 or earlier

### Preferred

- Familiarity with hygienic design, food processing equipment, or dairy/beverage/food manufacturing environments — working knowledge sufficient to follow technical discussions, not deep expertise
- PMP, CAPM, or equivalent project management certification
- Experience supporting multi-stakeholder groups with regulatory, industry, and academic representatives
- Familiarity with 3-A SSI standards or similar consensus standards used in food processing

#### On technical domain knowledge

Strong project management skills are the primary qualification for this role. A candidate with exceptional PM skills and limited hygienic design background will be evaluated more favorably than a domain expert with weak project management discipline.

Working knowledge of the technical domain — enough to recognize when a scope argument is genuine versus a distraction, and to facilitate a technical discussion without losing control of the process — is genuinely useful. It is not, however, a threshold requirement. Candidates without food processing backgrounds should not self-select out; explain in your proposal how you have successfully managed technical processes in other expert-dominated domains.

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## 6. Proposal Requirements

All five sections are required. Proposals missing any section will not be evaluated.

### 6.1 Firm / individual overview (1–2 pages)

- Name, contact information, and business entity type
- Relevant background summary
- Availability confirmation: can you begin by June 15, 2026, or earlier?

## 6.2 Technical approach (2–3 pages)

- How you would structure project management across eight concurrent projects from an active starting point — not from scratch
- Your specific approach to the overlap and transition period: how you would onboard into five projects already in motion
- How you would handle the Parking Lot scope mechanism when a volunteer with deep technical expertise disagrees with your scope classification
- Your approach to the Process Documentation Manual — how you would structure it, how frequently you would update it, and what it would contain
- How you would communicate project health to the Executive Director — what your weekly status report would look like and what would trigger immediate escalation
- Tools and systems you propose to use for project tracking, document management, and communication

## 6.3 Relevant experience

- Two or three examples of comparable engagements: your role, scope, timeline, and outcomes. At least one should involve projects already in motion at the time you joined.
- At least one example demonstrating that you held a process boundary under pressure from a subject matter expert
- Two professional references who can speak to your project management discipline and your ability to manage process under competing technical and interpersonal pressures

## 6.4 Pricing

**Budget guidance: approximately \$65,000–\$90,000 for the full Phase 1 engagement through December 31, 2026.**

- Option A — per-project fee: proposed fee per standard, inclusive of all services in Section 3.2, with clear assumptions about hours and meetings per project
- Option B — retainer: proposed fee for the complete Phase 1 scope as defined in Section 3.4, through December 31, 2026
- Identify any services or scenarios that would generate fees outside the base proposal
- Phase 2 pricing is not requested and should not be included

## 6.5 Conflict of interest disclosure

- Disclose any current or potential conflicts related to 3-A SSI, its member organizations, or companies holding 3-A Symbol certificates for standards in the Phase 1 portfolio
- Disclosure does not automatically disqualify; non-disclosure of a material conflict does

# 7. Selection Process and Timeline

Step	Date	Notes
RFP issued	May 11, 2026	Board authorization received

<b>Questions deadline</b>	<b>May 20, 2026</b>	Email to mb@3-A.org — 'WG Coordinator RFP' in subject
<b>Q&amp;A responses</b>	<b>May 22, 2026</b>	Distributed to all proposers simultaneously
<b>Proposals due</b>	<b>May 27 2026</b>	PDF by email; late submissions not accepted
<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>May 27–31</b>	Proposals scored against Section 8 criteria
<b>Interviews</b>	<b>June 1–2</b>	30-minute video interview with Executive Director; shortlisted proposers only
<b>Selection</b>	<b>June 4, 2026</b>	Selected proposer notified
<b>Contracting</b>	<b>June 4 – June 8</b>	Professional Services Agreement and Confidentiality/COI Agreement executed
<b>Onboarding</b>	<b>June 15–19, 2026</b>	Full project briefing with Executive Director; systems access; Technical Lead introductions
<b>Overlap period</b>	<b>~June 22–July 6</b>	Consultant supported by Executive Director; Director of Standards & Certifications provides technical orientation on each project
<b>Full operation</b>	<b>July 6, 2026+</b>	Consultant managing all eight projects independently

## 8. Evaluation Criteria

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>What we are evaluating</b>
<b>Project management skills and methodology</b>	<b>35%</b>	Evidence of managing multiple concurrent technical projects. Clarity and specificity of proposed approach. Quality of status reporting and escalation practices. Track record of delivering on-time, documented outcomes.
<b>Technical approach — transition and onboarding</b>	<b>20%</b>	How the proposer would take over five projects already in motion. Realism of overlap plan. Evidence of having joined in-progress engagements successfully before.
<b>Relevant experience</b>	<b>20%</b>	Quality and similarity of prior engagements. At least one example of managing a process under expert pressure. Reference quality.
<b>Process documentation approach</b>	<b>15%</b>	Proposed structure and maintenance cadence for the Process Documentation Manual. Evidence of producing documentation that has actually been used by successors.
<b>Technical domain knowledge</b>	<b>10%</b>	Working familiarity with hygienic design, food processing, or comparable technical domains. Not a threshold requirement — evaluated as a differentiator among otherwise comparable candidates.

*Note: Pricing is not an independent evaluation criterion. Proposals within the \$65–90K budget guidance will be evaluated solely on qualifications and approach. A lower-priced proposal does not score better than a higher-priced proposal on the basis of price alone.*

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## 9. Terms and Conditions

- 3-A SSI reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive informalities, and negotiate with one or more proposers
- All WG deliberations, draft documents, ballot records, and volunteer information are confidential and may not be shared without 3-A SSI's written consent
- All project documentation produced during the engagement is the property of 3-A SSI
- Selected consultants will execute a Professional Services Agreement and a Confidentiality / Conflict of Interest Agreement before beginning work
- This RFP covers Phase 1 — 2026 only. Phase 2 engagement is not guaranteed and is contingent on Q1 2027 gate review outcomes. 3-A SSI makes no representation regarding Phase 2 work.
- The selected consultant agrees to participate in a structured offboarding and documentation handoff process at the end of the engagement

*Questions about this RFP: [mb@3-A.org](mailto:mb@3-A.org) | Subject: WG Coordinator RFP | 703.790.0295 Ext 4.*