Training series
Strengthening rightsholder engagement in minerals sector audits

Audits are one of the most widely used due diligence tools in the minerals sector, yet many of them still appear to struggle to involve rightsholders in a meaningful way. This matters because, at its core**, due diligence processes are fundamentally concerned with advancing improved outcomes for rightsholders affected by business activity**. Rightsholders' lived experience is not merely supplementary to an audit: it is often essential both to understanding risk and to verifying whether an auditee's own claims are accurate.

From autumn 2026, we are **launching a series of in-person and online training sessions to help strengthen rightsholder engagement in mineral sector audit processes, with a focus on on-site visits.** The aim is to help ensure that audits fulfil their potential to support credible due diligence and give businesses the insights they need into their actual impacts and the efficacy of current practice.

Model to advance rightsholder engagement in audits

The trainings build on the work of the EU-funded DiliCHANCE project on advancing rightsholder engagement in audits. Since 2024, the DiliCHANCE consortium has assessed rightsholder engagement across **20 different voluntary sustainability schemes used in minerals**, identified better practices, and developed **a model that advances rightsholder engagement in mineral sector audits**.

The model was co-developed through an iterative process between November 2025 and June 2026 together with experts from audit firms, including ERM CVS and Forvis Mazars, leading voluntary sustainability standard-setting organisations, including ASI and IRMA, and civil society representatives, including Solidaridad.

The model is a **toolbox for auditors and assurance schemes**, offering innovative approaches to increase engagement and overcome common barriers, rather than a prescriptive 'how-to' guide with fixed methodologies.

Specifically, it:

- identifies the **prerequisites** for meaningful and effective rightsholder engagement, and discusses what these comprise;
- explores **innovative approaches** to challenges in rightsholder outreach, communication and willingness to collaborate, and to recording their input into audit deliverables;
- identifies the **structural enabling conditions** that assurance providers, member companies and auditees need to put in place so that clear guidelines and frameworks support optimal engagement; and
- makes **recommendations** to the various stakeholder groups on how they can help put such frameworks and structures in place.

The trainings will bring this toolbox to life through a dynamic programme combining plenary presentations, interactive discussions and scenario-based break-out sessions focused on practical approaches.

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Training details

Who are the trainings for:

- Third party audit professionals, internal auditors, assurance scheme representatives, policy makers, business representatives and other stakeholders.

What to expect:

- Small groups of 15-20 participants, allowing for interactive and practical sessions
- **6-hour sessions**, including lunch and coffee breaks, with roughly 4 hours of interactive work (plenary discussion, breakout groups, and scenario-led exercises)
- **Offered free of charge,** including lunch and refreshments. Please note that travel costs will not be reimbursed

Where and when:

London trainings

Date and time: 20 or 21 October 2026, 10am-4pm

Location: Forvis Mazars' London Office: 30 Old Bailey, London EC4M 7AU

Registration open until 30.09.2026

Future trainings

Paris: May 2027, following the OECD Responsible Minerals Forum

German-speaking region (Germany, Switzerland or Austria, location tbc): first half of 2027

Online trainings and webinars: from early 2027

What's in store:

Time	Activity
10.00 – 10.30	*Arrival, welcome & coffee*
10.30 – 11.30	**Session 1: Why rightsholder engagement matters – setting the scene.** *Introduction to the topic and its relevance, drawing on participants' own experiences and the current state of play in the sector.*
11.30 – 11.45	*Coffee break*
11.45 – 12.45	**Session 2: Mapping rightsholder engagement along the audit timeline.** *Interactive discussion of the audit timeline and the opportunities to plan for and embed rightsholder engagement across the pre-audit, during-audit and post-audit phases, drawing on the new EC-commissioned model.*
12.45 – 13.30	*Lunch*
13.30 – 14.30	**Session 3: Practical approaches to meaningful rightsholder engagement.** *Scenario-led breakout sessions to explore innovative approaches to rightsholder engagement and the structural enablers needed to make engagement work, drawing on tools and examples from the model.*
14.30 – 14.45	*Coffee break*
14.45 – 15.45	**Session 4: What we take back.** *Reporting and reflection on scenarios and identified challenges, practical approaches and structural enablers.*
15.45 – 16.00	**Wrap-up & next steps.** *Closing reflections and recommendations for further reading.*

Interested?

- Sign up to the London trainings or register you interest for future trainings **here**.
- Deadline for registration for **London trainings: 30.09.2026**

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