

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

September 17th, 2021 by 5:00PM Central Time

**RFP TITLE: MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS, AND SOY EXCELLENCE CENTER
SPECIALIST**

RFP CONTACT:

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Email: americasRFP@ussec.org

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INTRODUCTION:

The United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC) requests proposals to assist in the continued development, implementation and execution of strategies and programs within the Americas Region. For contractors, the expectations are to carry out the deliverables of the activities they are managing and are summarized in associated contracting documentation. Therefore, specific outputs and deliverables for personnel will be included as engagements with key contractors are formalized. Administrative performance will be based on delivering on the terms of those contracts. Contractors are required to provide monthly reports on progress if they are a long-term contractor, or post event reports if they are retained for a specific event. Information from the reports are used to keep stakeholders informed of the progress of their investment.

Through a global network of international offices and strong support in the U.S., USSEC helps build a preference for U.S. soybeans and soybean products, advocate for the use of US soy in feed, aquaculture and human consumption, promote the benefits of soy use through education and connect industry leaders through a robust membership program.

PURPOSE OF RFP:

USSEC's standard practice is to RFP every 3 years in an openly and competitive manner. This type of cost analysis will assist in determining the fair market value for the work to be performed and allows USSEC the opportunity to evaluate various proposals and select the best contractor for the job based on experience, availability, expertise, approach, and cost.

The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals for a full time the US SOY Marketing Specialist and should be based on period October 1st, 2021 thru September 30, 2022.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

The purpose of this position is to promote the sales brand image of US SOY. US SOY has several extrinsic and intrinsic qualities and characteristics. Yet at this time, many purchasers see soybeans and/or soybean meal as commodities. This position will target end users' marketing channels to work with them and create a campaign of differentiation, by using US SOY.

In addition to the overall promotion of US SOY as a concept and image, the promotion of high value specialty soy ingredient innovations, like high oleic soybean oil. Additionally, the position will be chiefly responsible for working and collaborating with other US based cooperators to determine ways to increase the exports of US meat products and the overall increase in meat consumption, in general.

Contractor shall provide Market Intelligence & Research to promote the use and differentiation of U.S. soy products by supporting the human and animal utilization teams to create brand awareness and preference.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Soybean and Soybean Meal Importers, refiners, wholesale distributors, retail distributors, cold chain providers, industry associations, governmental agencies, commodity traders and brokers, restaurants, hotels and other institutions, Soybean crushers, feed manufacturers, industry associations, governmental agencies, livestock/aquaculture and poultry producers, commodity traders and brokers

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

1. Strategic

- Identify and write proposals to help differentiate the value, sustainability, and competitive advantage of U.S. soy to customers and to Increase USSEC customer's knowledge on benefits of soy and soy products.
- Assist USSEC's Regional Director of Americas with the strategic goals and objectives, which includes but is not limited to:
 - Identify potential growth markets for U.S. soy.
 - Identify areas of strengths to maintain.
 - Identify areas of opportunities for increased support.
 - Identify the major and targeted Customers.
 - Create a Customer Analysis for each of those targeted.
 - Promote higher inclusion rate of soybean meal in feed formulations
- Identify, negotiate, and coordinate sponsorship and technical assistance opportunities in the region.

- Work and collaborate with other US based cooperators to determine ways to increase the exports of U.S. SOY Products

2. Relationship

- Act as USSEC representative creating brand awareness.
- Establish, strengthen, and maintain key customer relationships for U.S. soy.
- Provide general Trade Servicing assistance to respond trade inquiries, meet personally or remotely with target audience in the region.
- Suggest, arrange visits and meetings with key customers.
- Work in collaboration with Marketing specialist to keep Americas key customers & contact list updated.
- Identify possible collaborations with USSEC members as well as joint effort opportunities with industry.
- Travel to attend USSEC trade & technical missions.

3. Program implementation:

- Stay up to date on knowledge of USSEC's and its Funding Source's policies.
- Stay up to date on knowledge of USSEC's regional operational procedures.
- Identify a trade team of customers that should be targeted based on:
- Propose hosted and/or non-hosted events for approval from the Regional Director. The event type can fall under one of the following:
 - Conference
 - Seminar
 - Technical Training
 - Site Visits with Technical Consultant
 - Trade Team
 - Trade show
 - Feeding Demonstration
 - Market Research
 - Sponsorship
 - Subscription
 - Advertisement
 - Publication
 - Membership

For each event assigned, you will have to oversee & coordinate activities directly associated with the development and implementation of events in the region by providing the documentation required for effective operational execution. Activities such as, but not limited to:

- Create program agenda, identify & negotiate with speakers.
- Identify, select, and invite key customers to regional events, upon request.
- Attend and assist at meeting/conference creating brand awareness and preference upon request.
- Assist in coordinating events in the region with other regional event support specialists, as needed.
- Assist in preparing and consolidating required documents and support analysis of program/project planning for USSEC Regional Staff
- Provide scheduled reports, as required.
- Provide Project managers with estimated dates and an anticipated budget requirement.
- Elaborate an event Summary.
- Provide Project Manager & Americas Regional Project Team Leader with the program action plan and keep updated.
- Provide updates on projects with information relevant to achievements on project KPIs' as well as progress towards project and USSEC goals on promoting U.S. Soy benefits. Information will be utilized to populate USSEC Monthly reports

4. Marketing

- Promote sales brand image and standardize USSEC message of “**US SOY**” in the Americas Region with target audience and end users marketing channels.

5. Communications

- Serve as official liaison of the Regional Office and headquarters on communication updates.
- Collaborate with Regional team to develop and implement an effective communications strategy based on target audience.
- Write, edit, and distribute marketing material that communicates the USSEC's mission.
- Respond to any media inquiries
- Seek opportunities to enhance U.S. SOY brand

6. Soy Excellence Center

- Work in coordination with subcontracted SEC Lead to execute SEC global tracks and approved regional programs.

- Follow up, review and control SEC approved business plan.
- Serve as official liaison of the Regional Office, the Global SEC Steering Committee, and the Center Lead.
- Support decision making on the SEC Americas programs providing market information, statistics, and suggested strategies.

This development must be in accordance with the policies and procedures and will utilize approved templates and forms.

DELIVERABLES:

Completion Date	Description of Deliverables
Monthly	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide Americas Budget & Accounting Analyst with CC to Americas Regional Director & Project Manager with the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Executive English Narrative Report (In USSEC Template) with services rendered during the month, that should include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Market/Region updates on situation that could affect or benefit the use of soy imports. b. Brief description of near or future potential for the use of soybean products c. Report progress toward the situation described in each activity summary d. Recommendations and opportunity areas for further programs or events e. List of key industry contacts f. Progress towards USSEC projects g. Action photos (if any)
30 days before <u>regional travel</u> incurs within contract terms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Send Travel Authorization Form (TA) to Executive Assistant with CC to Project Manager
45 days before <u>out of region travel</u> incurs within contract terms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Send Travel Authorization Form (TA) to Executive Assistant with CC to Project Manager
No later than 30 days after <u>travel incurs</u> within contract terms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide Americas Budget & Accounting Analyst with: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) USSEC Travel Expense Report (in USSEC Template) b) USSEC Travel Mission Report (in USSEC Template)

RFP TIMELINE:

- RFP Distribution: August 24th, 2021
- Last Day to Submit Questions: September 10th, 2021
- Project Proposals Due: September 17th, 2021
- Selections Made By: September 18th, 2021
- Prospective Contractors Notified By: September 20th, 2021

Please email the proposal to americasRFP@ussec.org by 5:00PM Mexico Time

POSITION REQUIREMENTS:

- Degree from a reputable university in business, engineering, agriculture, or similar
- At least 5 years' experience in sales with extensive marketing/branding knowledge
- A background in the marketing and/or ingredient distribution
- Ability to network and build relationships
- Creativity and innovation to develop new and exciting programs for market development
- A proven track record of strategic thinking and planning
- Ability to multitask by planning and implementing many projects at one time
- Excellent written and oral communication skills (in English and Spanish)
- Passion for international trade and agriculture
- A receptive appreciation and willingness to advocate for new and innovative agriculture applications, such as GMOs, sustainable farming practices, etc
- Highest moral integrity and character
- Located full time within the markets in the region

INSTRUCTIONS:

Proposals must contain at a minimum the specific criteria listed below:

1. Please email the proposal to americasRFP@USSEC.ORG by 5:00PM Central Time on September 17th,2021.
2. A description of Prospective Contractor's capabilities, resources, and experience. Emphasis should be placed on experience related to this RFP.
3. A thorough proposal outlining Prospective Contractors planned work, deliverables and timeline to complete the work.
3. Resumes for each of the Prospective Contractor's personnel assigned to work directly on the implementation of the contract.
4. Provide a minimum of two names and contact information for other similarly sized clients for reference purposes.
5. Detailed Budget
 - All bids for services must provide a breakout of how the fee was derived including but not limited to a breakdown of hourly rate and the amount of effort they anticipate to do the work.

6. Proposals should be no longer than **10 pages** (8 ½" x 11").

NOTES:

- Prospective Contractors are hereby notified that proposals will be duplicated for internal review only. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality of all information presented. The appropriate representatives from staff and legal counsel will review proposals. Proposals will not be returned.
- USSEC reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the submitter of the conditions contained in the request for proposal, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between USSEC and the contractor selected.
- Confidentiality - Without USSEC's prior written consent, Prospective Contractors and its officers, employees, agents, representatives, affiliates, and subcontractors shall not disclose to any third party any documents, materials or information that the Prospective Contractors learns from or is provided in relation to the RFP request.
- During the evaluation process, USSEC reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications from proposers, or to allow corrections of errors and omissions.
- USSEC reserves the right to reject any proposal that is in any way inconsistent or irregular. USSEC also reserves the right to waive proposal defects or deficiencies, to request additional information, and/or to negotiate with the Prospective Contractor regarding the proposal.
- Prospective Contractor agrees that Fees are in lieu of any and all other benefits, including, but not limited to, repayment of any and all taxes related to contractor service fees, health and life insurance, administrative costs and vacation.
- Prospective Contractor agrees that any income taxes, value added taxes or any other form of direct or indirect taxes on compensation paid under the contract shall be paid by Contractor and not by USSEC or Funding Sources.
 - Prior to any payment to a Contractor, a contractor must provide a W-9, W-8, or W-8BEN upon agreement signature
- Non-Competition. Contractor shall not act as agent or representative for any product or service directly or indirectly competitive with U.S. soybeans or soybean products for the length of the contract.
- USSEC and Prospective Contractor agrees to comply with the provisions of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). USSEC provides EEO to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND BACKGROUND

BUILDING A PREFERENCE FOR U.S. SOY

USSEC's strategy can be found here: <http://ussec.org/about-ussec/vision-mission/>

USB's Long Range Strategic Plan can be found here: <http://unitedsoybean.org/about-usb/strategic-planning/>

We are a dynamic partnership of key stakeholders representing soybean producers, commodity shippers, merchandisers, allied agribusiness and agricultural organizations.

Through a global network of international offices and strong support in the U.S., we help build a preference for U.S. soybeans and soybean products, advocate for the use of soy in feed, aquaculture and human consumption, promote the benefits of soy use through education and connect industry leaders through a robust membership program.

Our 15-member board of directors is comprised of four members from the American Soybean Association (ASA), four members from the United Soybean Board (USB), and seven members representing trade, allied industry, and state organizations.

New board members are seated annually. We are receiving funding from a variety of sources including soy producer checkoff dollars invested by the USB and various state soybean councils; cooperating industry; and the American Soybean Association's investment of cost-share funding provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foreign Agriculture Service.

The United Soybean Board, created by the 1990 Farm Bill to manage and direct the National Soybean Checkoff, is dedicated to marketing and research for the soybean industry. USB is comprised of 73 volunteer soybean farmers representing the interests of fellow growers nationwide. Each board member is nominated by Qualified State Soybean Boards (QSSBs) and appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

Because of the limitations on administrative and salary costs established in the Act, USB outsources the majority of its program management responsibilities to USB's three primary contractors:

- SmithBucklin-St. Louis for domestic marketing, new uses, production research and Board initiative activities;
- Osborn & Barr Communications for communications/public relations activities and;
- U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Inc. for international marketing and global opportunities activities.

As one of these three primary contractors USSEC may also undertake initiative activities on behalf of USB. USB considers primary contractor staff (approximately 60 people) as core USB staff. These three primary contractors use a number of subcontractors and, together, these entities carry out approximately 450 projects each year for USB. USB also manages approximately 10 subcontractors.

Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Civil Rights Clause

Contractor agrees that during the performance of this Agreement it will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status, parental status or protected genetic information. Contractor further agrees that it will fully comply with any and all applicable Federal, State and local equal employment opportunity statutes, ordinances and regulations, including, without limitation, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Equal Pay Act of 1963. Nothing in this section shall require Contractor to comply with or become liable under any law, ordinance, regulation or rule that does not otherwise apply to Contractor.