

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
November 5, 2021 - 12:00 PM SGT (GMT +8)

RFP TITLE: IN-COUNTRY/IN-REGION REPRESENTATIVE(S), AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

RFP CONTACT:

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INTRODUCTION:

U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Inc. formally requests proposals for the delivery of services and costs of engaging an In-Country/In-Region Representative(s), Australia and New Zealand to provide professional services for the Australia and New Zealand region.

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 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 and benchmarking will assist in determining the fair market value for the services to be performed and allows USSEC the opportunity to evaluate qualified proposals and select the best contractor for the job based on technical qualifications, related industry experience, managerial abilities, strength of industry connections and contacts and suitable cost and time that matches the needs under this contract.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

The primary goal of the In-Country (/In-Region) Marketing Representative is to build preference and increase imports of U.S. soybean, soybean meal and other soy derivatives (collectively referred to as 'U.S. Soy') into Australia and New Zealand (collectively referred to as 'region') for applications in human food protein uses; poultry, swine and livestock feed rations, aquaculture feed rations, and other uses, as well as keep closely abreast of market concerns and developments especially events that have potential to impact, positively and/or negatively, the market access of U.S. soy shipments into the region.

The Contractor(s) will report directly to USSEC's Southeast Asia Regional Director. He/she shall be based remotely and will operate as in-country/in-region representative to USSEC but maintaining itself as fully independent Contractor. As each country/market differs culturally, politically, and socially, a key element to successfully impacting market behaviour to the advantage of U.S. Soy will be the Contractor's ability to develop close relationships, maintain active day-to-day contact, and build trust with key customers, trade representatives, relevant institutions, and government bodies in

context and for the purpose of achieving USSEC's mission. Most importantly, the Contractor will ensure that USSEC has an active and strategic presence in this region, one that is favourable and advantageous for U.S. Soy exports.

The Contractor(s) will provide trade and program management support services (per USSEC S.E. Asia's Standard Operating Procedures) for our programs and activities across USSEC's different focus areas (i.e., Human, Animal, Aquaculture, Sustainability, and Market Access).

The Contractor(s) must adhere strictly to USSEC's accounting, administrative, compliance, and operational requirements and guidelines, as well as abide by USSEC's corporate core values.

The Contractor will interface with industry decision-makers and influencers, buyers and sellers of food, feed and livestock industry sectors, leading industry and company representatives, as well as related institutions, trade associations and NGOs, related government ministries/departments in the country etc.

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

- Report administratively and operationally to USSEC's Southeast Asia Regional Director and USSEC Singapore Management team for all matters related to the execution of services as described in the contract.
- Liaise and coordinate his/her marketing efforts closely with the USSEC's S.E. Asia Regional Director and Director of Operations.
- Establish and nurture strong working relationships, good lines of communication and beneficial trade connections with local/regional producers in the poultry, swine and livestock and feed industry through his/her technical and trade servicing efforts. This includes but is not limited to, personnel associated with the private sector, government bodies, universities and institutions etc.
- Gather and evaluate data relevant to the present and future potential for use of soybeans, soybean meal and other relevant soy products in the industry.
- To attend and/or represent USSEC at agricultural related trade shows and fairs, technical meetings, international seminars and other events as requested by USSEC management. Strictly adhering to USSEC's latest travel and safety protocols and regulations.
- When requested by USSEC Singapore, the Contractor may be required to provide assistance and travel with USSEC staff, regional technical Contractors, and or U.S. Soy Producers etc. but in accordance with USSEC's latest travel and safety protocols and regulations.
- Convey the U.S. Soy Sustainability message to customers and encourage them to apply for the U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (SSAP) with their U.S. Soy purchases.
- Provide assistance to other U.S. agricultural co-operator organizations, e.g., working with the Foreign Agricultural Service on joint activities, for the benefit of U.S. agricultural exports as a whole. However, the Contractor will not participate in any event that have messages that run contrary to USSEC's core mission and objectives.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Dedicate time and attention to meet the Services, Deliverables and KPIs as required in accordance with the terms of the Master Agreement and Addendum contained within. In addition, the Contractor will:
 - Conduct oneself in a manner consistent with USSEC's core values (e.g.: respectable image, reputation and credibility as a USSEC representative and refrain from any activities that may reflect adversely on USSEC;
 - Provide complete cooperation with USSEC to maximize USSEC's success within the Region
- As an expert and a professional in his/her field of study and experience, in order to meet the requirements of this position, the Contractor must, of his/her own accord, stay well informed and knowledgeable in the latest/current developments in his/her area of expertise and be able to communicate effectively to target audiences.
- The Contractor will continue to work closely with and give their full co-operation to members of USSEC's Program Management and Accounting Teams in S.E. Asia.
- The Contractor must be fully prepared, equipped, and has the technical know-how to work and operate from home or in a remote location as and when needed or required by USSEC management. Remote activities include but is not limited to conducting virtual or online meetings, engaging customers via other means of telecommunication etc.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION (if applicable)

Additional Considerations to include any specific information regarding the proposal that could affect the Prospective Contractors ability to submit a proposal.

Additional considerations for the video creation and development include:

- *Video should be between 15-20 minutes long*
- *Videotaping with farmers must occur in St. Louis during the week of December 7th*
- *We will try to schedule the videotaping of the Economist on the same date with the farmers if their schedules permit or on a different date*
- *If your company also provides live streaming services please provide your fee schedule under ancillary services in the Detailed Budget section of your proposal.*

DELIVERABLES:

Monthly Reporting

- Invoice to be accompanied by an activity report for the duration of the contract to be submitted to the Regional Director in format as directed and using latest prescribed USSEC format. Details in the activity report to include but not limited to:
 - Contractor interactions with and feedback from soy industry contacts while marketing and promoting the U.S. Soy Advantage
 - Timely reporting of latest market updates and developments – especially events that impact the trade and preference for U.S. Soy
 - Provide soy and agricultural statistics, import shipments, and other trade data that is relevant to objective
- Observations and recommendations on proposed action on trade issues if any, develop future marketing strategies to move U.S. Soy demand etc.
- Submit ad hoc reports to USSEC Management upon request.

Upon Request

- Market Intelligence Report:
 - Price list (Cost and Freight (CNF), and local values) of key raw feed ingredients for the Australia and New Zealand (ANZ)
 - Price list of poultry, swine and livestock for the Australia and New Zealand (ANZ)
 - Highlight any major trade or technical market issue especially if the matter is, will, or have the potential to affect U.S. Soy business in any way.
- Prepare and arrange for industry meetings in-person or virtually to facilitate the understanding of USSEC's marketing and technical outreach programs with customers.

PROJECT TIMELINE:

*For this contract, our expectation is for the 'In-Country/In-Region Representative(s) – Australia and New Zealand' contract to start from **January 1, 2022** and end on **December 31, 2022**. After which this contract is renewable on a 12-monthly basis according to the term of each marketing season, tenure of the funding source, and job performance of the Contractor.*

RFP TIMELINE:

- **RFP Distribution:** October 8, 2021
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** October 28, 2021 by 5:00PM SGT (GMT +8)
- **Project Proposals Due:** November 5, 2021 by 12:00 PM SGT (GMT +8)
- **Selections Made By:** November 10, 2021
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** November 12, 2021

INSTRUCTIONS:

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

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@USSEC.ORG by **12:00PM SGT (GMT +8)** on **November 5, 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, audiotape, 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.

END OF DOCUMENT