

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

**May 7, 2021 - 12:00 PM SGT (GMT +8)**

**RFP TITLE: TECHNICAL CONSULTANT - VIETNAM**

**RFP CONTACT:**

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**INTRODUCTION:**

U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Inc. formally requests proposals for the costs of engaging a Technical Consultant to provide professional services for the Vietnamese market.

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(s) 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 Contractor will oversee USSEC's livestock and animal protein program in Vietnam and focus on top-line issues that will improve the overall effort to promote a profitable, sustainable, soy-optimized, feed-based livestock industry that utilizes soybeans, soybean meal, and other soy products (collectively referred to as 'U.S. Soy') sourced from the United States.

As directed by the Regional Director and Senior Technical Consultant (Meal), the Contractor shall differentiate, build a preference and demand for U.S. Soy, encouraging imports for application for the feed and livestock Industry. In differentiating the higher value of U.S. Soy from its competitors, the Contractor shall implement/co-ordinate feed demonstrations, organize technical workshops and training sessions with key customer accounts using tools such as Animal

Nutrition Value Calculator (NVC) to illustrate the U.S. Soy Advantage and position U.S. soy as the feed ingredient of choice in feed formulations for best value and optimal animal performance.

The Contractor will focus his/her efforts on the key accounts and primary target audience which includes feed millers, in particular the feed mill nutritionists, formulators and ingredient purchasers, to show the benefits of using U.S. soy for animal feeds.

**TARGET AUDIENCE:**

The Contractor will work closely with USSEC's other in-country trade representatives to interface with industry decision-makers and influencers, buyers and sellers of food and feed ingredients, leading industry representatives, industry, trade and livestock associations, related government ministries/departments in the country etc. Examples of the organizations are, but not limited to:

- Feed Millers Associations
- Poultry, Swine and other Livestock Associations
- Feed Ingredient Importers Association
- Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Livestock, and other related departments etc.

**SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:**

- The Contractor will establish and nurture strong working relationships, good lines of communication and beneficial trade connections with local/regional producers in the livestock and feed industry through his/her technical and trade servicing efforts.
- The Contractor must be prepared, and able to, give presentations to audiences at workshops, seminars and/or conferences for the benefit of and to achieve USSEC's core mission.
- The Contractor shall plan, co-ordinate, evaluate, negotiate (where needed) and conduct seminars, press conferences, lectures, demonstrations, publicity and presentations as needed to carry the objective of the organization with individuals, groups and media (radio, television, newspapers, periodicals and trade journals).
- The Contractor shall on behalf of USSEC respond to inquiries for information and assistance in his/her area in a timely manner.
- The Contractor shall recommend, recruit, accompany, assist and support outside consultants and technicians to assist with specific activities of the livestock and animal protein program to include, but not limited to, introduction of modern farm management techniques, support to aqua feed mills in fish and shrimp nutrition, feed milling and formulation technology, quality assurance and disease diagnosis and management.
- The Contractor may be required to travel with USSEC's regional technical staff, Contractors and U.S. Soy Producers, when requested by USSEC Management to view programs and meetings with the industry. He/She maybe be asked to prepare visitation schedules and arrange for industry meetings to facilitate the traveler(s)'s understanding of USSEC's marketing and technical outreach programs.

- The Contractor will convey the U.S. Soy Sustainability message to the customers and encourage them to apply for the U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (SSAP) with their U.S. Soy purchases.
- The Contractor will be responsible for organizing all funded technical projects and activities and manage overall the technical activities under his/her responsibility for the current UES in accordance to USSEC's guidelines and requirements, e.g.
  - Undertake managerial, reporting, budgetary, and any other administrative duties that are required by USSEC.
  - Develop, recommend and utilize budgetary funds assigned to market development activities or other projects, meeting all reporting requirements, and expending funds in such a manner as to insure maximum effectiveness, subject to the policies of USSEC.
  - Prepare correspondence, travel schedules, trip reports, activity plans, market development activities, budgets and other documentation as requested by the Regional Director or USSEC management etc.
- Ensure the timely and successful implementation of projects/activities as outlined under the current Unified Export Strategy (UES).
- Coordinate and liaise with industry and government for the promotion, extension and adoption of soy-optimized, eco-friendly and sustainable technologies.
- Manage the preparation and submission of progress, output and other reports on the livestock and animal protein program in the region as directed by the Regional Director.
- Monitor and stay abreast of developments and changes in the feed and livestock industry across the region and prepare management strategies to take advantage of opportunities for, or to address threats to U.S. Soy.
- Work with media outlets and trade publications to publish USSEC technical information and feeding demonstration results.

**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 7<sup>th</sup>*
- *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

- Report of the Contractor(s)'s interactions with local soy-related industry contacts
- Provide updates and relate what action has been taken to promote U.S. Sustainability Initiatives and further this message to the industry and its impact/results.
- Timely reporting of latest market updates and developments – especially events that impact the trade and preference for U.S. Soy.
- Report observations, evaluations, and feedback on the results and performance of technical programs and activities etc. and provide recommendations to the Regional Director and Senior Technical Consultant (Meal).
- Submit monthly budget tables on the latest investment estimates for project and activities under the Contractor's responsibility on or before the 25th of every month and or upon USSEC's management request.
- Plan of Work for upcoming Month/Quarter which is to be shared regularly with the Regional Director and Senior Technical Consultant (Meal) upon request.
- Progress reports on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as it relates to the "Services" and "Deliverables" indicated in the Master Contract and Addendums therein

### During the Marketing Season

- Promote USSEC's Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (SSAP) through technical servicing and technical programs and events.
- Aim to have local importers and end-users source U.S. Soy with the U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol certificates.
- Assist in the successful implementation of all funded programs under the current marketing year, staying within budget and meeting corporate guidelines and regulations.
- Ensure industry participation in USSEC's local, regional and global customer surveys and evaluations.
- The Contractor will participate in meetings and develop reports as and when requested by Southeast Asia's Regional Director and USSEC management.
- Regularly reach out to customers/contacts to provide technical support and promote U.S. Soy; capture key details as it regards to their business interest and other actionable information.

## **PROJECT TIMELINE:**

*For this contract, our expectation is for the 'Technical Consultant – Vietnam' contract to start from **June 1, 2021** and end on **September 30, 2021** (MY 2021). After which this contract is renewable on a 12-monthly basis according to the term of each marketing season or tenure of the funding source.*

#### **RFP TIMELINE:**

- ✓ **RFP Distribution:** April 21, 2021
- ✓ **Last Day to Submit Questions:** May 3, 2021 by 5:00PM SGT (GMT +8)
- ✓ **Project Proposals Due:** May 7, 2021 by 12:00 PM SGT (GMT +8)
- ✓ **Selections Made By:** May 14, 2021
- ✓ **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** May 18, 2021

#### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

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

1. Please email the proposal to [RFP@USSEC.ORG](mailto:RFP@USSEC.ORG) by **12:00PM SGT (GMT +8)** on **May 7, 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](mailto: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.