

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
5:00 PM CST, 10/04/2019

RFP TITLE: EMERGING MARKETS MARKET ACCESS ADVISOR

RFP CONTACT:

Name: Kristen Basala
Phone #: 636.449.6055
Email: kbasala@ussec.org

PROPOSAL DEADLINE: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2019

INTRODUCTION:

Through a global network of international offices and strong support in the U.S., the U.S. Soybean Export Council 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.

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) seeks an individual or organization to provide Market Access assessment and representation for USSEC in Emerging Markets.

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 that will focus on addressing the challenges of the biotech approval process; the emerging threat of the increasingly restrictive policies on pesticides; and the regulatory uncertainty for plant breeding innovations (PBIs) within the Emerging Markets which could impact U.S. soybean exports. Efforts should be focused on the emerging markets of Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, El Salvador, Honduras, India, Morocco, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo and Tunisia.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

In many of these countries there will have been limited exposure to USSEC. It will be important to establish contacts and understand the key stakeholders. The capacity and sophistication of the regulatory environments may vary substantially. It is our charge and challenge to engage with the relevant stakeholders to understand the current environment and the potential to ensure there are frameworks established to enable market access for U.S. soy, whether that be biotechnology, plant breeding innovation, pesticide residues, other phytosanitary measures or tariffs. It is also important to partner with other U.S. and global entities (i.e. USGC, USWA, CLI, etc) seeking to advance the same objectives. The challenges are significant requiring program customization and diversified investments to meet the unique needs of each market and the various focus areas within each country

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Regulators, Influencers, and other key stakeholders.

Countries in Emerging Markets are Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, El Salvador, Honduras, India, Morocco, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo and Tunisia.

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

Under this contract, the Contractor shall promote the use and awareness of U.S. soybeans and soybean products through the following services:

USSEC seeks a Contractor that holds an advanced degree and/or significant industry experience in U.S. Soy Market Access Support to serve as a Soy Ambassador on behalf of USSEC. As a Soy Ambassador, the Contractor will consult, attend, speak and/or moderate at various activities including seminars, on-site international visits, and major U.S. soy conferences. In addition, the Contractor must exhibit credibility with international soy industry customers within the Emerging Markets.

- Contractor is expected to coordinate with USSEC country consultants based within the Emerging Markets in regard to international on-site visits and speaking assignments.
- Contractor will be asked to prepare reports, presentations, provide general on-site consulting, and speak/moderate at various engagements.
- Contractor will make trips as requested by USSEC during the proposal timeline outlined below.
- Contractor will be asked to prepare a final report with recommendations

In addition to your credentials/cv and hourly rate, please provide a brief summary on why you or your company is best suited to carry out the services above.

DELIVERABLES:

Completion Date	Description of Deliverables
November	Work with an advisory group developed from a cooperator team through USSEC to identify existing resources.
	Conduct a thorough review of all relevant existing information regarding the Market Access issues customer needs in Emerging Markets
Prior to Each Proposed Mission	Provide draft presentations and/or reports as requested
Within 30 Days After Each Proposed Mission	Completion of mission report with recommendations of Basic markets to meet strategic goals.
	Provide a final report.
As needed	Check-in with USSEC Senior Director, rleock@ussec.org and Project Manager, kbasala@ussec.org to report on developments being made and status of project.
Ongoing	Submit monthly invoices to USSEC Accounts Payable, ap@ussec.org and Project Manager, kbasala@ussec.org

PROJECT TIMELINE:

Our expectation is for the proposal to last from **November 1, 2019** to **December 31, 2020**. We are asking that the Project Proposal include details about what the proposed timeline and scope would look like.

RFP TIMELINE:

- **RFP Distribution:** September 18, 2019
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** September 25 by 5:00PM Central Time
- **Project Proposals Due:** October 4, 2019 by 5:00PM Central Time
- **Selections Made By:** October 11, 2019
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** October 16, 2019

INSTRUCTIONS:

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

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@USSEC.ORG by **5:00PM Central Time on Friday, October 4, 2019**.
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;
- United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC) 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.