REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
5:00 PM CST, 5/5/2020

RFP TITLE: SUSTAINABILITY MESSAGING IN EUROPE

RFP CONTACT:
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PROPOSAL DEADLINE: MAY 5, 2020

INTRODUCTION:
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:
The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals for the development of a marketing campaign focused on the promotion of the U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (SSAP) and U.S. Soy sustainability to the European food, retailing, and feed industry; along with key government officials working in the environmental and agriculture industries.

As this is a broad focused RFP – there is possibility that more than one contractor could be awarded this project based on their specific area of expertise, so willingness to collaborate is required.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:
The U.S. Soy industry developed the U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (SSAP) in 2014 as a way for exporters and importers of U.S. Soy to verify the sustainability of the soy in the marketplace. SSAP has been extremely successful with 40% of total U.S exports receiving SSAP verification. Specific to Europe – approximately 70% of U.S. soy imports are SSAP verified. In 2019, over 22 million metric tons were exported with the SSAP verification.

The U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol and U.S. Soy sustainability is well recognized in the European feed industry. However, it is much less recognized in the larger value chain of food manufacturers and retailers. Recent fires in the Amazon rainforest in 2019 brought several European food/feed industries and government to initiate actions to reduce environmental impact of imported soy in their products. As sustainability demands from this
part of the value chain continue to increase, it is important to have information about the sustainability of U.S. Soy developed for their education.

U.S. soy can provide its leadership in sustainability and conservation with increased messaging to market leaders in food manufacturing and retailing, along with member state and EU government officials.

**TARGET AUDIENCE:**

Industries and organizations seeking to improve soy sustainability in their products focusing on:

- European food manufacturers and retailers
- European member state government officials focusing on environment/agriculture issues
- Secondary focus is continued messaging and support to Europe feed and soy industry

**SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:**

USSEC is seeking proposals for the development of a European food/retailing/feed industry marketing campaign promoting the sustainability of U.S. Soy. The marketing campaign will include message development that focuses on the SSAP and the overall sustainability of U.S. Soy that can be used with food manufacturers, retailers, and government officials.

Messaging should include (but not limited to) following:

- U.S. Soy production environmental metrics
- U.S. soy farmer production practices and positive environmental impact
- Linkages of UN Sustainable Development Goals and U.S soy production
- U.S protections on land use change with focus on forest, wetlands, grasslands
- U.S. biodiversity protections
- U.S. Agriculture land taken out of production such as in Conservation Reserve Program
- Concise overview of agriculture conservation under the U.S. Farm Program focusing on role and regulations managed by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Proposals should incorporate the European Commission’s acceptance of the Global Metrics for Sustainable Feed’s database and government demands of the food and feed industries to meet guidelines of the Paris Climate Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

**DELIVERABLES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Date</th>
<th>Description of Deliverables</th>
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<tr>
<td>Within 2 weeks after contract award</td>
<td>Coordination on collaboration and deliverables with any other involved parties.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Participate in monthly calls to update on progress of the project</td>
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August 15, 2020
• Submission of draft messaging materials
• Submission of recommended target audience engagement campaign

September 15, 2020
Submission of final messaging materials and proposed engagement campaign for planned implementation in October 2020.

RFP TIMELINE:
• RFP Distribution: April 14, 2020
• Project Proposals Due: May 5, 2020

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 May 5, 2020

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 (8½” 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.