

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP TITLE: TEAM LEAD- INDIA

RFP CONTACT:

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PROPOSAL DEADLINE: September 18, 2020 by 5:00PM Central Time

INTRODUCTION:

United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC) requests proposals to assist in the continued development and implementation of a Team Lead for the India 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 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 the India Team Lead, chiefly responsible for India. This RFP is for a 12 month contract for October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021 with the potential to be extended based on performance and the availability of funding.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

The South Asia region (Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India, and Nepal) includes economies which fall into the definition of CONTEXT's emerging market development phase. While soy exports to emerging economies are typically low in volume with larger annual percentage increases, South Asia is bucking that trend. Exports into the region overall more than doubled (growing 54% in FY16/17), a large annual increase. But, Bangladesh—which accounted for over half of the region's imports at 55.5%—is now the U.S. soy industry's tenth largest export market

overall. The current market situation and its future potential make this region important to the overall soy export market development program.

In FY17, USSEC targeted four main market sectors in the South Asia region including animal (swine and poultry) utilization, aquaculture utilization, opportunities for soy protein in human food applications, as well as efforts targeting the soy supply chain. The core strategy focuses on educating the target audiences about the specific advantages of U.S. soy in various applications, increasing their realization of those advantages, and establishing purchase preferences because of those advantages. In addition, India has very onerous market access issues that must be addressed. The successful candidate will be able to articulate a clear strategy working with the Regional Director to overcome myriad issues including both tariff and non-tariff trade barriers.

Based on performance measured results, derived from target audience surveys collected at the various activities that USSEC conducts throughout the year, USSEC is making incremental progress towards these objectives in all sectors except for the aquaculture sector. Awareness of feeding practices surpassed USSEC's goal, but actual change in behavior as a result of that information fell short of the goal. With an opportunity for an additional growth for soy in the aquaculture sector of about 3.4 MMT, there are clear opportunities for growth if USSEC can successfully convince the sector of the U.S. soy advantage.

A critical approach to communicating the U.S. Soy Advantage is having a development team that will assist the on the ground presence that interface directly with key customers. USSEC will maintain the U.S. soybean industry's marketing and trade servicing capabilities in Asia Sub-Continent region while providing trade services, technical services and marketing support to importers, end users and soy industry organizations.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

India trade associations, governments, non-governmental agencies, traders, importers, integrators and processors. Travel and regular communications to and from these markets is expected. Due to government travel restrictions, the successful candidate will be able to provide a virtual solution to not being present in various settings.

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 Technical/Management Support to serve as a Team Lead in the India region on behalf of USSEC. As a Team Lead, the Contractor will be required to fulfill the services below:

1) Core:

As a Team Lead for the India region, your core services are to:

- a. Direct Marketing to customers within your region on behalf of USSEC's Regional Director of South Asia, which include but not limited to:
 - i. Differentiate the value, sustainability, and competitive advantage of U.S. soy to customers
 - ii. Provide ongoing support to processors and importers by creating down-stream demand for their products
 - iii. Provide education to processors and livestock producers to boost their economic viability
 - iv. Establish key customer relationships for U.S. soy
 - v. Maintain and strengthen the U.S. soy industry's key customer relationships
 - vi. Increase end-consumer knowledge on benefits of soy and soy products
 - vii. Promote new soy product applications
- b. Assist USSEC's Regional Director of South Asia with the strategic goals and objectives, which include but not limited to:
 - i. Identify potential growth markets for U.S. soy
 - ii. Identify areas of strengths to maintain
 - iii. Identify areas of opportunities for increased support
 - iv. Identify the major and targeted Customers
 - v. Create a Customer Analysis for each of those targeted
 - vi. Identify key Associations
 - vii. Create a Association Analysis for each of those targeted
- c. Attend the Regional Strategic Meetings (two per year) that are hosted within the area of responsibility of the Regional Director
- d. Training and knowledge of USSEC's and its Funding Source's policies
- e. Training and knowledge of USSEC's regional operational procedures

2) USSEC/Regional Hosted Events:

As a Team Lead for the India region, you will also be required to develop a trade team for two USSEC hosted Global Trade Exchanges, one hosted within the region and one hosted by USSEC HQ located in the United States.

- a. Global Trade Exchange hosted within the region
 - i. Identify a trade team of customers that should be targeted based on:
 1. Meeting topic(s)
 2. Strategic importance
 3. Customer impact
 4. Number of Customers (determined by Regional Director)
 - ii. Complete an Event Summary Evaluation
- b. Global Trade Exchange hosted within the United States

- i. Identify a trade team of customers that should be targeted based on:
 1. Meeting topic(s)
 2. Strategic importance
 3. Customer impact
 4. Number of Customers (determined by Regional Director)
- ii. Complete an Event Summary Evaluation

3) Representative Events:

As a Team Lead for the India region, you will also be required to propose hosted and/or non-hosted events for approval from the Regional Director of South Asia. The event type can fall under one of the following:

- Hosted Event (in-person or virtual)
 - Conference
 - Seminar
 - Technical Training
 - Site Visits with Technical Consultant
 - Trade Team
 - Trade show with Booth
 - Feeding Demonstration
- Non-Hosted Event
 - Market Research
 - Trade Show without Booth (attendance only)
 - Sponsorship
 - Subscription
 - Advertisement
 - Publication
 - Membership

For each event proposed you will have to complete an Event Proposal that contains an analysis of the event with information such as; targeted audience, anticipated impact and expected outcome.

If the proposed event is approved, you will be required to collaborate with a Regional Event Support Specialist and/or the Regional Project Manager for proper and timely event development prior to the event. This development must be in accordance with policies and procedures and will utilize approved templates and forms. In addition, you will be solely responsible for the completion of the following reports/analysis after the event:

- a. Event Summary Analysis
- b. Success Story with Graphic from Event

For the purpose of this RFP, you will only be required to provide your CV, your daily rate based on an eight (8) hour workday in USD, and a program proposal. The program proposal should show your understanding of the market; what the issues and opportunities are; what can be done to build a preference for U.S. soybeans and soybean products, advocate for the use of soy, and promote the benefits of soy; and explanation of why you would be the best candidate. The event budget and specified details will only be required in the form of an Event Proposal only if the RFP is accepted. See instructions for detailed information.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION (if applicable)

- Preference will be given to proposals from companies/individuals residing in or already doing business in the country/region indicated.
- Submitter must have the following technological requirements:
 - Reliable high speed internet access
 - Internet Explorer (version 11 or greater)
 - Microsoft Office Suite (2013, 2016 or 365), which include:
 - Outlook
 - Excel
 - Word
 - PowerPoint

DELIVERABLES:

Completion Date	Description of Deliverables
As incurred, within the contract term dates of 10/01/2020 – 9/30/2021	Provide applicable project support documents, forms and templates for the proper implementation of events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide to Regional Project Manager and/or applicable USSEC department required and approved USSEC documents, forms and templates for review and approval. • All documents, forms and templates will be turned in according to the task timeline provided by the Regional Project Manager.
Monthly, or as incurred	Provide invoice of professional fees for payment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide with the invoice any materials, presentations, trip reports, etc. created and utilized for any applicable services that were accomplished. • Ensure all applicable invoices are submitted within 30 days of transaction and are compliant with USSEC policies and procedures. • Ensure invoice is submitted to ap@ussec.org.

By the 5 th calendar day of each month	<p>Detailed report of monthly activities and events attended with expected impact(s) and outcome(s).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Report Template is utilized. • Ensure report details all events with critical discussion of results for any applicable services that were accomplished. • Provide inside or along with the report any insights gained that can improve the execution of the activities and events. • Provide to Regional Director and Regional Project Manager.
September 30, 2021	<p>Detailed summary of year's events, key issues, alliances, and recommended actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Report Template is utilized. • Ensure report details all events with critical discussion of results for any applicable services that were accomplished. • Provide inside or along with the report any insights gained that can improve the execution of the activities and events. • Provide to Regional Director and Regional Project Manager.
Ongoing	<p>Submission of invoices and expenses will be in accordance with Section III.3.c. of this Addendum.</p>

PROJECT TIMELINE:

The term of the proposal will last from October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021.

*Additional terms from October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022 and October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023 possible after first term performance.

RFP TIMELINE:

- RFP Distribution: August 3, 2020
- Last Day to Submit Questions: August 17, 2020 by 5:00PM Central Time
- Project Proposals Due: September 18, 2020 by 5:00PM Central Time
- Selections Made By: September 24, 2020
- Prospective Contractors Notified By: September 28, 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 September 18, 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.
4. Resumes for each of the Prospective Contractor's personnel assigned to work directly on the implementation of the contract.
5. Provide a minimum of two names and contact information for other similarly sized clients for reference purposes.
6. Detailed Budget
 - a. 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.
7. 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.