FY21 REQUEST FOR PRE-PROPOSALS

Direct Request for Pre-Proposal (RFP) Submissions and Questions to:
RFP@unitedsoybean.org

Submission Deadline:
Noon CST, 01/24/2020 (see Figure A for full timeline)

Purpose of the Request for Pre-Proposals:
The United Soybean Board (USB) is seeking pre-proposals for FY21 research and programs for the strategic themes identified in Attachment 2. Invitations for full proposals will be made from the pool of submitted pre-proposals. Pre-proposals that build on previous program work, as well as creativity and new concepts are also encouraged, including well-justified concepts that may not fit perfectly in priority themes. Inclusion on the strategic priority list does not guarantee that USB will fund a given theme.

Timeline:
Please see the flowchart depicting the full proposal timeline (Figure A). In addition, submit questions to RFP@unitedsoybean.org. USB will respond to questions received by Noon CST Friday, January 3, 2020, during an open conference call on Monday, January 6, 2020, at 3:00 pm CST (Call in #636-206-4089). Only questions submitted in advance via e-mail RFP@unitedsoybean.org will be addressed. After the call, questions and responses will be posted on the USB Web site under the Vendor Services tab.

Instructions:
Pre-proposals should be submitted via e-mail to RFP@unitedsoybean.org in the following format. Lack of adherence to these guidelines may preclude pre-proposal review.

- Follow general guidelines in Attachment 1 to respond to strategic themes identified in Attachment 2
- 2-page maximum
- 11-pt Times New Roman (or equivalent) font
- 1-inch margins
- English language
- Submit as a single pdf to RFP@unitedsoybean.org using these naming conventions:
  - submitting organization_RFP_USBFY21.pdf
  - Example: ContractorName_HOSOcrudeoil_USBFY21.pdf

Key Pre-proposal Evaluation Criteria:
- Potential for U.S. differentiation, value chain disruption or improved flow of information through the value chain
- Market-driven opportunity
- Audience-specific communication plan and measurement
- Potential and lasting impact
- Clear and concise
- Organization capabilities, expertise and relevant partnerships that can be leveraged
**Figure A.** United Soybean Board FY21 Funding Process

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<th><strong>Timeline</strong></th>
<th><strong>Process Description</strong></th>
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<td>December 16, 2019</td>
<td>Request for Pre-proposals Posted for Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 24, 2020</td>
<td>Deadline to submit Research and Program Pre-proposals to USB.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noon CST</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RFP@unitedsoybean.org">RFP@unitedsoybean.org</a></td>
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<td>USB reviews pre-proposals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Late February</td>
<td>Invitations guidelines for full proposals are distributed. Full proposals will be accepted by invitation only</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 3, 2020</td>
<td>Deadline to submit full proposals to <a href="mailto:RFP@unitedsoybeanboard.org">RFP@unitedsoybeanboard.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Noon CDT</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Subcontractors are notified of funding decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 1, 2020</td>
<td>Research and Program Work Begins</td>
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Attachment 1

United Soybean Board Request for FY21 Pre-Proposals

**Content requirements for submission:**

**Descriptive Stand-Alone Pre-Proposal Title:**

**Contact Information:** Organization, Project Lead Name, Address, Phone, Email

**Proposed Duration with Start and End Date:** (USB FY21 is Oct 1 to Sept 30 – single-year proposals are preferred in this final investment year of USB’s current long-range strategic plan). New multi-year proposals will be considered with justification and clear milestones or gates to assess progress over time.

**Budget Estimate:**

**Strategic Importance for U.S. Soy:** Identify strategic theme targeted (from Attachment 2).

**Pre-Proposal Description:** Provide a concise description of the proposed pre-proposal.

**Background:**

- Frame the problem or challenge your pre-proposal will address. Why is it an opportunity for the U.S. soybean industry?
- Why this is the right concept at the right time. Please justify and frame strategic fit with USB’s FY21 strategic themes (from Attachment 2).
- Provide summary of existing market research or literature review framing the evolution of the opportunity and how it will benefit soybean farmers. Potential near-term (1-3 years) and long-term (5-20 years) benefits to farmers and to the U.S. soybean industry should be briefly addressed.
- The potential value and volume size and impact of the opportunity must be addressed in justifying and framing the concept or a plan to collect this information via market assessment built into an early stage of the project. Market-driven approaches are encouraged and should be explained along with potential economic impact.
- For proposals that build on past USB funding, please explain evolution of project, milestones, and iterative process leading to logical next steps proposed.

**Proposed Methods/Tactics:** Please provide a brief explanation of the approach. Describe sufficiently to understand the approach at a high level without disclosing intellectual property.

**Lasting Impact:** How will this project be sustained, scaled and/or commercialized over time?

**Audience-specific Communication Plan:** Describe how the results of the project or key messages/content will be delivered to the target audience(s) and how will you measure your success in reaching and influencing those audiences?

**Desired Project Outcomes:** Include SMART goal or goals associated with pre-proposal, proposed milestones to measure progress. Upon invitation, full proposals will require a thorough explanation of the measurement and evaluation components of the project, including how project progress will be tracked, measured and reported as well as what data sources will be accessed.

**Brief Description of Team Capabilities, Expertise and Network of Relevant Partners/Influencers/Collaborators:**
Attachment 2.

List of United Soybean Board FY21 Strategic Themes by Target Areas (Meal, Oil, Sustainability)

**Overall guidance**

Target areas of meal, oil and sustainability include the following products: Whole soybeans, soybean meal, soy flour, soy hulls, soy protein concentrates, isolated soy protein, textured soy protein, conventional soybean oil and high oleic soybean oil. Sustainability is an attribute of meal and oil. Strategic communication priorities (final page of RFP guidance) cross target areas to support the value proposition for U.S. soy. Pre-proposals should target product differentiation, value chain disruption, and approaches with strong long-term potential to create value, maintain or increase market share, and enhance U.S. soy value proposition in key global markets. Priority will be given to proposals demonstrating value chain linkages, partnerships, and inclusion of marketing and communication approaches that enhance U.S. soy reputation and brand in feed and food markets and increase value chain coordination. Proposals that build long-term value chain resiliency to supply shocks (e.g., drought), and/or demand shocks (e.g., African swine fever, trade disruption) are encouraged. Proposals that intersect and interact with meal, oil and sustainability are also encouraged and should be explained in the pre-proposal narrative response.

Creativity and new concepts are encouraged, including well-justified concepts that may not fit perfectly in priority themes. Inclusion on the list below does not ensure funding of a given theme.

<Please see following pages for themes>
SUSTAINABILITY

SUPPLY (generally associated with soybean production)
- Soil Health – The Backbone of Ag Sustainability
  - Best management practices
  - Nutrient management, including C, N, P and greenhouse gases
  - Harmonized solution to the multiple, industry-wide efforts underway to address C,N,P, GHG and water
  - Novel approaches to soil sampling (robotics / remote sensing) in support of soil health and to measure nutrients, moisture, crop health, etc.
- Biotic / Abiotic Research
  - Pesticides (research and management approaches)
  - Biopesticides, biofertilizers and biostimulants
  - Drought and flood tolerance
  - Temperature tolerance
  - Plant health
- Sustainable Operations
  - Green Chemistry – Safer Alternatives to on-farm chemicals
  - Zero Waste – closed loop opportunities
  - Harmonized solution to the multiple, industry-wide efforts underway to address Ag data generation, use, ownership, security, etc.
  - Novel approaches to increase traceability in partnership with agricultural stakeholders throughout the supply chain

MARKETPLACE (generally associated with market development)
- Infrastructure – research/programs in coordination with stakeholders that support infrastructure (ports, river, rail, roads, containerization, access to high-speed internet, etc.)
- Increase acceptance and understanding of biotechnology and plant breeding innovation with influencers, end-users and consumers
- Market assessment and justification for the development and use of Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) for soy-based products
- Incorporate USDA Bio-preferred Program into new and alternative uses for soy-based products

DEMAND (generally associated with soybean end use)
- Create commercial programs that support domestic and global end-users and Brands with their sustainability program needs
- Protect and enhance the reputation of U.S. Soy thereby protecting the reputation of brand partners
- Enhance SSAP program via creation of options and program offerings to meet the varying needs of domestic and global end-users and customers of U.S. Soy
- Engage appropriate audiences to protect U.S. Soy’s reputation and enhance the social license
OIL

SUPPLY (generally associated with soybean production)

- Assess the value and implications brought on by gene editing and other emerging biotechnologies
- Low or high oil content beans that provide enhanced nutritional value
- Drought resistant conventional and high oleic soybeans
- Genetic approaches for novel components in soy
  - Increases in tocopherols or other antioxidants, changes in tocopherol composition
- Trans-disciplinary research approaches are encouraged, including the following examples:
  - Match oil improvements to optimized meal traits such as protein, sucrose, etc.
  - Foundational research aimed at understanding biological mechanisms for new oil traits or determination of oil content
  - Cultural and management practices that alter or improve oil composition and quality
  - Application of new technologies and cutting-edge research (i.e. networks, plant modeling, predictive modeling, genome editing)

MARKETPLACE (generally associated with market development)

- Assess impact of higher oil content meal (both conventional and high oleic) on enhanced stability feed ingredients and finished poultry/meat/fish products, including economic feasibility and export viability
- Track end users along the path to active purchase of high oleic soybean oil solutions
- Form impactful strategic partnerships with end users to drive demand for U.S. soy
- Advance the portfolio of soy solutions to end users
- Enhance the focus on sustainability, calling for programs that promote HOSoy through a sustainability lens (including traceability and carbon sequestration)
- Enhance the “food defense platform” by calling out the need to boost soy’s reputation amongst end user contacts as well as end users’ customers (consumers)
- Develop impactful alliances with stakeholders to defend and enhance soy’s reputation

DEMAND (generally associated with soybean end use)

- Increase strategic focus of communications around conventional and high oleic soybean platforms
  - Determine CPG and major food service company motivations and the motivation of their customers
  - Define opportunity through segmentation and measurement
  - Create demand through prioritization of messaging
  - Define measurement and success criteria
- Create a food defense platform (products in both oil and meal)
  - Prioritize needs
  - Elevate support for the science and enhance targeted work with influencers (e.g., Soy Nutrition Institute)
  - Focus outputs to drive demand, debunk myths and engage consumers
- Accelerate industrial uses for conventional and high oleic soybean oil
  - Alternatives to plastic, motor oil, surfactants
- Expand original equipment manufacturer (OEM) demand efforts for biodiesel and bioheat
  - Create new use challenge (e.g., Packaging, Biodegradability, Composability)
- Develop challenge platforms for new uses across the value chain (may cross target areas)

1 Both conventional and high oleic, including non-GMO where applicable.
MEAL

SUPPLY (generally associated with soybean production)
- **Enhanced nutrition bundle**: Approaches should target higher value for end users. Multi-disciplinary approaches are encouraged (e.g., linking nutritionists with supply research and communications). Application of new technologies and cutting-edge research that improves or enhances product improvement targets or reduces time to market are encouraged.
  - Cultural or management practices
  - Carbohydrate composition to utilization and/or value
  - High protein and improved amino acid composition
  - Low or no-processing varieties with reduced anti-nutritional or allergenicity
  - Species-specific nutrient requirements
  - Soy refinement for plant-based and/or cellular protein alternatives
- **Marketing and communication** approaches that enable informed seed selections and choices based on quality and value to end users. Approaches should enhance public-private partnerships to increase profit opportunities for U.S. soybean farmers

MARKETPLACE (generally associated with market development)
- Research and/or focused technological advancements that increase transparency and traceability, especially from end users to upstream market actors
  - E.g., data use and methods standardization, harmonization, or enhancement (e.g., NIR methods), including extension to full quality parameters and digestibility (amino acids and carbohydrate fractions)
- **Enhance product transformation** (processing, transport, storage) to increase value to end users
- **Focused aggregation of publicly-available value chain data** that establishes U.S. soy as the trusted source and enables or enhances partnerships. Approach must have a clearly-defined path to end use, customers, value, and value chain coordination
- **Global market research** differentiating U.S. soy and laying partnership foundations that enhance value, including clear understanding of soy value contribution and impact of current and potential byproduct end uses (e.g., hulls, concentrate and isolate byproducts, lecithin, glycerin, isoflavones, fatty acids, etc.)
- **Promotion of factors that differentiate U.S. soy** in global markets (e.g., nutritional, health, economic)

DEMAND (generally associated with soybean end use)
- **Strategic marketing efforts** that build demand and partnerships for feed and food end uses
- **Strategic and coordinated export promotion efforts** (e.g., soybeans, soybean meal, meat, poultry) in developed and emerging markets
- **High market potential industrial applications** (e.g., wood adhesives, biorefinery) or cutting-edge technologies that create high-value or high-volume new opportunities for U.S. soy
- Approaches that **build market opportunity for soy as a preferred protein source** in alternative, higher-value food and feed markets (e.g., plant-based and cellular proteins, fermented products)
- **Animal and aquaculture research** that enhances the value proposition for U.S. soy and soy products and byproducts. Market-driven, commercially-viable solutions should be prioritized, including the following:
  - Improved methods to measure and evaluate nutritional energy in monogastric diets
  - Enzyme/direct fed microbial (DFM) applications to enhance energy release in monogastric diets
  - Improved methods to measure trypsin inhibitor levels and activity, as well as their relationship to animal performance in rations
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

- Conduct a comprehensive domestic and global strategic communications research to develop specific priority audience profiles and targeted tactics supporting meal, oil and sustainability.
- Establish and deploy a comprehensive message-testing platform to effectively communicate U.S. Soy’s advantages in support of meal, oil and sustainability.
- Enhance strategic communications by conducting an audit identifying how to improve performance, alignment and leverage of the checkoff’s websites, social media platforms and digital communications tools to more effectively support meal, oil and sustainability.
- Identify and proactively engage and leverage key opinion leaders, including nontraditional voices, in support of U.S. Soy and the meal, oil and sustainability target areas.
- Boost U.S. Soy visibility by creating a platform to place voices of U.S. soybean farmers and leaders in broadly recognized but nontraditional settings to deliver messages in support of meal, oil and sustainability.
- Strengthen investors’ understanding of soy checkoff initiatives by reaching key farmer audience segments through an integrated and coordinated strategic communications effort that amplifies achievements in the meal, oil, and sustainability target areas.