**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

**RFP Title:** Country representative- NIGERIA

**RFP Contact:**

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**Proposal Deadline:** fEBRUARY 13, 2019

**Introduction:**

United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC) requests proposals to outline how you would envision completion of the various deliverables listed in this document according to the format provided. This RFP is for a Country Representative for Nigeria. Using your experience coupled with the requirements of the services and deliverables listed in this RFP, please take time to write a narrative according to the outline that clearly depicts how you would approach this work, and how you are the best possible candidate for this contract position.

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. More information on USSEC may be found at www.ussoy.org

**Purpose of RFP:**

USSEC’s standard practice is to RFP every 3 years.  This helps to insure we are staying abreast of current technology and fair market value.  We encourage all that are interested and qualified to respond.

The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals for a Country Representative in Nigeria. The Country Representative will promote U.S. Soy and engage key customers in the region. The contractor will also attend/host conferences, meetings, etc. as requested with approval by the Regional Director. Please review the services and deliverables listed below to help formulate your proposal ideas back to USSEC.

**BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:**

The Context 2.0 I.M Strategy report recommends increasing investment in “Basic” markets. The report provided the macroeconomic indicators suggesting which Basic markets to pursue. Since the U.S Soy farmers provided direction to pursue Basic markets, information is now needed to determine what strategies to employ and in which markets/market segments to focus resources to provide the greatest returns. This proposal will provide for focused expertise needed to collect this data and allow USB, working with its contractor USSEC, to determine the type of work needed to be successful over time and the level of investment needed in each country and focus area to realize this success.

Key activities carried out by the primary international marketing contractor are to differentiate and build preference for U.S. Soy while ensuring that U.S. Soy enjoys market access in the markets it chooses to serve. To achieve these overarching goals market access and relationship management strategies are developed in key markets. Communication with U.S. Exporters and our Regional Teams is critical to ensure our Programs are addressing the needs of both parties. As we implement the USB recently approved and enhanced Strategic Plan for International Marketing a greater level of engagement will be necessary ensuring USSEC’s Program Investments have the appropriate focus in Basic (early stage demand) markets as this is the market space where the most upside potential can be realized. 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:**

Buyers, Feed Mill Nutritionists & End Users

**SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:**

Under the contract if awarded, the Contractor shall promote the use and awareness of U.S. soybeans and soybean products through the following services. Please provide your written proposal using the format outlined, to explain in detail how you would be successful in completion of these various tasks.

* Participate in the planning of the ASC Regional Trade Exchange, ensuring it is well attended by key representatives’ /decision makers of the Target Audience
* Conduct or arrange for technical seminars, trade teams, conferences, and sponsorships of producer associations and essential networking and intelligence gathering activities, and promote the development of relationships between USSEC and members/stakeholders of the U.S. Soy Family with key local industry and government contacts.
* Liaise and coordinate marketing efforts closely with USSEC ASC staff, ASC Country Managers and Contractors, as well as provide full support to USSEC’s Directors accountable for the Utilization Areas (i.e. Animal and Market Access) in organizing targeted workshops, seminars, round table discussions, site visitations, etc. as planned.
* Work closely with the Regional Project Team Lead to ensure FY19 funds are invested in a compliant manner.
* Collaborate with Country Managers, regional technical contractors to ensure successful completion of activities in Nigeria.
* Participate in the monthly planning meetings, team building exercises and adhere to USSEC’s core values.
* Participate in Regional planning sessions, as scheduled.
* Build and maintain relationships with the local industry; identify the key importers or potential importers that purchase and use U.S. soy and ensure that the major regional conferences, workshops and trade missions under/backed by USSEC, are well-attended and supported by key representatives/decision makers of the Target Audience.
* Build and maintain relationships with local FAS offices, keeping them informed of USSEC activities in Nigeria
* Plan, arrange, co-ordinate, and provide accompaniment for trade and technical visits and industry meetings for the Regional Leadership and Technical Contractors, U.S. Farmer Leadership and Trade Teams, visiting USSEC member exporter companies, U.S. Soy Exporters, etc. as directed by USSEC’s Regional Leadership.
* Collaborate with regional technical contractors and WISHH (with consultation with USSEC’s Regional Leadership) to ensure successful completion of activities in Nigeria.
* The Contractor is required to maintain and assist USSEC with:
	+ Compiling accurate and updated customer contact details and industry profiles. This information may be used for a number of purposes including supporting USSEC’s Customer Relations and Content Management systems.
	+ Gathering and evaluating data relevant to the present and future potential for use of soybeans, soybean meal and other relevant soy products in the industry. This requires that he/she maintain a set of trade statistics with a minimum of five (5) years data (including the current year and projections for the year ahead) on and animal production, animal feed production, and other relevant figures etc. that is useful to USSEC in developing the UES.
	+ Conducting trade surveys, gather customer feedback, and other pertinent information gathering initiatives as and when required by the Regional Leadership or USSEC Management.
* Ensure standardized surveys are used at all events to measure results
* Provide insights and direction for, future U.S. Soy market development programs and periodically review and recommend modification of market development plans to USSEC’s ASC’s Regional Leadership and USSEC Management as necessary in response changing market/trade conditions.
* Diligently execute his/her responsibilities for the current UES ensuring responsible, proper stewardship, and optimum utilization of funds under his/her contract or charge in accordance to USSEC’s guidelines and requirements.
* Provide timely and accurate responses to inquiries and questions from USSEC’s Regional Leadership and U.S. exporters, importers and processors of U.S. soy, trade organizations, government officials, etc. on subjects and matters that relate directly or indirectly to U.S. Soy or on the local agricultural industry as a whole.
* The Contractor must of his/her own accord, stay well informed and knowledgeable in the latest/current developments in the industry so as to be able to communicate effectively to target audiences.

**The consultant engaged under this contract will be paid based on 8 hours of work each day commencing on the start date of the contract and ending on the end date of the contract.**

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION (if applicable)**

Submitter must have the following technological requirements:

* Reliable internet access
* Internet Explorer (version 11 or greater)
* Microsoft Office Suite (2013, 2016 or 365), which include:
	+ Outlook
	+ Excel
	+ Word
	+ PowerPoint

**DELIVERABLES: You may use information on the following table to help craft your proposal. What is represented in the table is a listing of what USSEC would expect the contractor to deliver or perform over the course of the contract period.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Completion Date** | **Description of Outcomes / Deliverables/ Expectations** |
| 01 Apr to 30 Sep 2019 | * Complete the UES20 (program build) recommendations for Nigeria and submit the same to USSEC’s Regional Leadership
* Present a concrete plan to implement FY19 activities to the ASC Regional Leadership
* Report the outcomes of the trade and tech services provided during this contract period, track market changes, customer behavior and report the same to the Regional Leadership.
* Enhance contacts and working relationships with US soy importers and make inclusions into the CRM system
* Utilize knowledge on current developments in the industry and on US soy to communicate effectively to target audiences and bring about more change in their perception towards U.S soy.
* Monitor trade issues and work to resolve any threats to market access
* Implement assigned projects and prepare a monthly summary highlighting current activities and outcomes and submit to the ASC Regional Leadership by the 5th of each month.
* Assist Regional Project Team Lead and Project manager in providing clear, concise reports of activities and outcomes for inclusion in required reports.
* Assist RPTL/Project Manager and Event Planner in providing complete, timely supporting documentation such as participant lists, banquet, meals and lodging documents, menu lists, trip reports etc soon after completion of activities; required for Amex expense submission.
* Provide a feedback or a summary to USSEC’s Regional leadership on each event conducted and highlight improvements as well as discuss constraints or areas for improvement. Provide a bullet point market summary to the Regional Leadership on critical/significant market developments, industry actions, problems, opportunities which can be used in various organizational reports and/or taken into account while executing programs for the benefit of U.S soy
* Regularly liaise with the soy and livestock feed industry in Nigeria and report/communicate significant market initiatives, developments or assessments with the ASC Regional Leadership
* Bring program implementation effective by participating in monthly meetings, improve overall efficiency of the program in Nigeria by involving in team building exercises and practicing USSEC’s core values
* Ensure standardized surveys are used at all events to measure results
 |
| Ongoing  | Submission of invoices and expenses will be in accordance with Section III.3.c. of this Addendum. |

**PROJECT TIMELINE:**

The term of the Country Representative- Nigeria position will last from **inception of the contract (anticipated o/a 1 March, 2019, through the last day of the contract anticipated o/a October 1, 2019. The maximum number of days per month for successful completion of the work is 18-20 8-hour work days.**

**RFP TIMELINE:**

* RFP Distribution: February 6, 2019
* Last Day to Submit Questions: February 8, 2019 by 5:00PM Central Time
* Project Proposals Due: February 13, 2019 by 5:00PM Central Time
* Selections Made By: February 15, 2019
* Prospective Contractors Notified By: February 15, 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 February 13, 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.

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