

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
12:00 PM CST, 8/30/2019

RFP TITLE: MIDWEST STATE DEPARTMENTS OF AGRICULTURE (MASDA) 50TH ANNIVERSARY AND INDUSTRY CONFERENCES IN EUROPE AND TAIWAN

RFP CONTACT:

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PROPOSAL DEADLINE: AUGUST 15, 2019

INTRODUCTION:

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) and the Midwest State Departments of Agriculture (MASDA) are collaborating on an Agriculture Trade Program (ATP) project. The project will be multiple years and will mitigate the loss of U.S. Soy exports due to tariffs by fostering greater U.S. soy exports in long-term as well as new U.S. Soy markets.

Under the USSEC-MASDA ATP project, USSEC will collaborate with MASDA to integrate board members into some of its market development programs, where MASDA's cooperation will be beneficial to the success of the program.

The first collaborative project that USSEC and MASDA will organize is MASDA participation in U.S. Soy 50th Anniversary and Industry Conferences in Europe and Taiwan. This activity will mitigate the impact of tariffs by re-enforcing the U.S. Soy Advantage in long-term markets.

PURPOSE OF RFP:

USSEC's standard practice is to RFP every three years in an open 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 to organize details related to the participation of MASDA-State Soybean delegations in the USSEC-MASDA ATP project

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

Under the USSEC-MASDA ATP project, USSEC will collaborate with MASDA to integrate board members into some of its market development programs, where MASDA's cooperation will be beneficial to the success of the program.

The first collaborative project that USSEC and MASDA will organize is MASDA participation in U.S. Soy 50th Anniversary and Industry Conferences in Europe and Taiwan. This activity will mitigate the impact of tariffs by re-enforcing the U.S. Soy Advantage in long-term markets.

USSEC and MASDA will strive to have state soybean organizations organize delegations to attend these promotional events. The combined efforts of USSEC, MASDA, and the state soybean boards will demonstrate to long-term customers the reliability of the U.S. soy industry.

The project may also entail stopping in an additional long-term market to increase awareness of U.S. Soy industry market development programs.

These two separate activities will take place on November 2019 in Taiwan and December 2019 in Europe. Expected MASDA-State Soy Delegation travel dates are:

Taiwan 50th Anniversary & U.S. Soy Buyers Outlook Conference November 9-16 (could possibly change to November 12-20).

Europe 50th Anniversary and EUMENA U.S. Soy Trade Exchange December 1-8.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION (if applicable)

- n/a

DELIVERABLES:

At USSEC's direction, organize details related to the participation of MASDA-State Soybean delegations in the USSEC-MASDA ATP project. This scope of work entails:

1. Assist USSEC in communications to individual MASDA board members and state soybean organizations on details related to the organization and implementation of the project.
2. Work with the USSEC project team in the USA and target markets on development and implementation of the project entailing:
 - a. Delegation itinerary development and management.
 - b. Initiate and track all MASDA board members' travel details using USSEC's internal logistics team.
 - c. Working with USSEC in-market representatives engage with travel agencies for team logistics.
 - d. Working with USSEC project team in the USA and target markets support in the development and planning of delegation events.

- e. Work with the USSEC event planning team to coordinate facilities needs related to the MASDA-State Soybean delegations' events.
 - f. Assist in the organization and conduct of pre-travel briefings for the delegations.
 - g. Travel with the MASDA-State Soybean delegation to manage itinerary and events.
 - h. Assure post-event project surveys are completed to assist in measuring and evaluating the results of the activity.
3. Assist USSEC in communications to individuals MASDA board members and state soybean organizations on details related to the organization and implementation of the project. This includes:
- a. Regular and frequent updates on project development.
 - b. When necessary, organize briefing calls to update delegation participants on the project development.
 - c. Organize delegation pre-travel briefings
 - d. Assure post-event project surveys are completed to assist in measuring and evaluating the results of the activity.

USSEC will arrange all travel logistics, and reimburse at actual costs for other travel expenses, so these do not need to be built in the quotation for services.

PROJECT TIMELINE:

*Our expectation is for the **MASDA ATP Project Facilitator** to last from **September 1, 2019, to December 15, 2019** (or be completed by a certain date). We are asking that the Project Proposal include details about what the proposed timeline and scope would look like.*

RFP TIMELINE:

- **RFP Distribution:** August 6, 2019
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** August 13, 2019, by 5:00 PM Central Time
- **Project Proposals Due:** August 15, 2019, by 5:00 PM Central Time
- **Selections Made By:** August 30, 2019
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** September 5, 2019

INSTRUCTIONS:

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

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@USSEC.ORG by **5:00 PM Central Time on August 15, 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 an 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 the 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 learn 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 an 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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