

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
12:00 PM CST, 9/28/2021

RFP TITLE: EVENT MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

RFP CONTACT:

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PROPOSAL DEADLINE: 12:00 PM CST, 9/28/2021

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, advocates for the use of soy in livestock and aquaculture feed and human consumption, promotes the benefits of soy use through education and connects industry leaders through a robust membership program.

USSEC requests proposals from a Software as a Service (SSaaS) Company to provide an event management software (primarily registration) for USSEC's many Global Events whether it is in-person, virtual or hybrid.

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 event management software in primarily in event registration that can plug into USSEC's other applications and current tech stack to provide stakeholders inside and outside the organization an accurate record of all of our events and make the process of registering for a USSEC event easy regardless of language.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

For the last three years USSEC has used electronic registration for its Global Events which up until the pandemic were primarily in-person. Since 2020 USSEC has also been offering virtual events as well as recently hybrid. With the ever changing environment USSEC needs a highly flexible event management system that can adapt to the changing events landscape. Most of USSEC's events are free of charge to attendees except for our annual flagship event. For this event we do collect fees so the system does need to be able to collect payment.

Additionally we also integrate our event registration with WordPress to publish events on our website ussec.org, currently done via a custom API. Hubspot to market and send event email communications and then with Zoom Meeting and Webinar for our virtual and hybrid events. We do use other platforms for large complex events, however Zoom is the most widely used within our company. Ease of use and integration is a must in our Event Management Platform selected.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Internally: USSEC Global Event Planners (build out of registrations), Managers & Directors (Reporting). **Externally:** Local, National, & International Government Officials, as well as farmers, buyer, sellers, transporters of U.S. Soy and related industry representatives ranging from all around the world.

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

Below is a list of features in the Event Management Software we must have, an excel of them below additional considerations. Please complete your response to each feature along with any additional price or comment.

Event Management Software License for 30 users & 12,000 registrations
Event software/platform must work globally and in particular it must work in China
Ability to clearly delineate registration for in-person, virtual & hybrid events
Advanced multi-session registration
Automated waitlists available
Mobile responsive with solution working on desktop, tablet or mobile
Ability to create branded event registration websites & registration forms with the ability to customize number and the type of questions
Ability to use custom colors and fonts per the USSEC branding guidelines
Professional Services assistance to build event website templates (build out 1 custom template using USSEC's event branding guidelines)
Favicon of our choice for when event registrations or forms are displayed
Creation of a custom event URL available E.g. youreventregistration/USSECEvent123
Ability to white label event websites E.g. ussoygte.org (our annual flagship event has own website)
Media Library to store USSEC logos and graphics for Global Event Planners to use
Ability for registration be embedded into any website via code or a widget or a button
Integration with Hubspot (please state what type if native, out of the box or custom). Hubspot is our preferred email marketing platform.
Ability to send email event email notifications with from email of choice E.g. events@ussec.org
Integration with Zoom (please state what type if native, out of the box or custom). Zoom is our preferred meeting & webinar provider.
Integration with WordPress for public facing events to ussec.org
Internal Master Global Events Calendar to list all USSEC events (public & private).
Meeting Request Forms for others in company to request event planning help
Ability for specific terms and conditions be viewable and accepted at time of booking?
Global data privacy compliance including GDPR compliant
Where are your servers are located

Where are offices/staff located and what type of support is available and at what times. Ideally 24/7 is desired due to USSSEC operating in multiple locations and time zones.
Average maximum response time to help/assistance needed?
Dedicated support or account manger allocated?
Product training and adoption needed
Need pricing structure specified – i.e. per attendee, per user, annual license etc.
Where are offices/staff located and what type of support is available and at what times. Ideally 24/7 is desired due to USSSEC operating in multiple locations and time zones.
Customized Reporting & Ability to build Dashboards
Travel & hotel room block management (Ability for attendee to request air or hotel room at registration) If you integrate with any travel or hotel room software please specify E.g. Concur & PassKey

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION (if applicable)

Below is a list of additional functionality we have come across during the pandemic which would prove useful to our organization. Additionally we do want to know how training is conducted and support offered to embed and train staff on software.

Does your platform have a virtual lobby that we can connect up with any virtual platform?
Is social login offered? E.g. through LinkedIn or Facebook
With recent changes to events with increased Waivers & Vaccination Requirements is there a way to get an electronic signature during the registration process or a integration with DocuSign?
Are there any tools available for on-site registration and check-in?
User system training and how it is conducted. Please specify the amount of approximate amount of hours to be trained on the system?



Microsoft Excel
97-2003 Worksheet

DELIVERABLES:

Completion Date	Description of Deliverables
October 1	Contract signed
w/c October 4	Introduction to Account Manager & Goal Setting
w/c October 11	Implementation plan for Event Management Software presented
October 4-30	Build out of integrations with USSEC existing platforms E.g. Hubspot & Zoom
October 11 - November 5	Building of event website & registration template
Quarterly	Ongoing meetings dates TBD with Account Management and Support Team
October 11 – November 30	Any Team Training on software

PROJECT TIMELINE:

Our expectation is for the Event Management Software Provider to provide services for one year of signing the contract with USSEC.

RFP TIMELINE:

- **RFP Distribution:** September 20, 2021
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** September 25, 2021
- **Project Proposals Due:** September 28, 2021, by 12:00 PM CT
- **Selections Made By:** September 29, 2021
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** September 29, 2021

INSTRUCTIONS:

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

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@USSEC.ORG by **12:00PM Central Time on Monday, September 28, 2021.**
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 doing 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;
- 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, audiotope, 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.