REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
August 31, 2023 - 12:00 PM SGT (GMT +8)

RFP TITLE: DIRECTOR OF MARKETING (SUSTAINABILITY AND VALUE CHAIN), S.E. ASIA, AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

RFP CONTACT:
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Email: chtan@ussec.org

PROPOSAL DEADLINE: August 31, 2023 - 12:00 PM SGT (GMT +8)

INTRODUCTION:
U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Inc. formally requests proposals for the costs of engaging a Director of Marketing (Sustainability and Value Chain) to provide professional services for the S.E. Asia, Australia, and New Zealand 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 open and competitive manner. This type of cost analysis and benchmarking will assist in determining the fair market value for the services to be performed and allows USSEC the opportunity to evaluate qualified proposals and select the best contractor for the job based on technical qualifications, related industry experience, managerial abilities, strength of industry connections and contacts and suitable cost and time that matches the needs under this contract.

The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals for engaging a Director of Marketing (Sustainability and Value Chain) to provide trade and implementation support services for USSEC's initiatives, projects, and activities in S.E. Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. The core focus of this role is to build preference for and increase exports of U.S. Soy into the region. Overall, the Director of Marketing (Sustainability and Value Chain) will provide strategic direction and implementation of programs and initiatives, administrative and operational support, as well as leadership and expert representation on behalf of USSEC for all matters that concern, and towards developing, S.E. Asia, Australia, and New Zealand as a major destination market for U.S. soybeans, soybean meal, and soy products.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:
The Contractor, an independent business entity, will report directly to USSEC's Regional Director. The purpose of the Director of Marketing is to develop and execute strategic marketing initiatives focused on promoting U.S. soybeans, soybean meal, and soy products, in international markets.
for the U.S. Soy Industry. He/She aims to enhance brand awareness, expand market share, and drive demand for U.S. soy products while emphasizing U.S. Soy’s quality, sustainability, and value.

The Director of Marketing (Sustainability and Value Chain) must possess an exemplary background in marketing and a good understanding of sustainability practices within value chains in the Agriculture and or Food Industry.

The Contractor must also possess a profound understanding and extensive work experience in comprehending and valuing the diverse local cultures, customs, and languages within the regions of S.E. Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. The utmost goal is to establish a proactive and strategic foothold for USSEC in these areas, thereby fostering favorable circumstances that facilitate the successful export of U.S. Soy into each respective country.

The Contractor's success in promoting U.S. Soy will rely on his/her ability to establish strong relationships, maintain regular and close communications with industry and trade, establish relationships and trust with key customers, trade representatives, relevant institutions, and government bodies etc.

As USSEC’s Director of Marketing (Sustainability and Value Chain) for S.E. Asia, Australia and New Zealand, the Contractor must be well versed in USSEC’s administrative, compliance, reporting, and communications process and procedures to excel in his/her area of responsibility. As a not-for-profit organization, accountability and compliance is of utmost importance and is a major responsibility for USSEC Contractors and Staff alike.

**Essential Contract Functions: (Other related functions, within scope and time, may be assigned by the Regional Director)**

- To oversee and execute the successful implementation of USSEC’s regional marketing programs and initiatives.

- Ensure that USSEC’s activities, conducted on country and regional level, meets, and achieves the organization’s corporate goals and objectives.

- Assist the Regional Director in building a cohesive and collaborative team approach among all staff and contractors within the region.

- Assist the Regional Director to manage the performance of the Country Representatives in Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, as well as the Regional Representative for Australia and New Zealand.

- Work closely with USSEC Singapore management and teams to ensure that all USSEC programs and activities are properly coordinated and implemented within the regulations and guidelines of the relevant funding sources and compliant with the policies and procedures thereof.

- Represent the Regional Director in management, team coordination, implementation, and planning meetings in his absence as necessary and or when directed to do so.

- Assist the Regional Director in the execution of all activities and projects and make recommendations for the development of future plans for market development programs.
• Work closely with USSEC Singapore management and teams to ensure that all strategic and management reports necessary to comply with the various internal and stakeholder requirements are completed and submitted on time.

• Achieve an in-depth and detailed understanding of the political, economic, and social issues that affect the market for soybeans and meal and using this knowledge to plan future marketing initiatives.

• Propose new and innovative ideas aimed at increasing soybean demand, expanding activities, reducing budgets, and making the overall program more efficient.

Trade Relations:

• Establish strong working relationships with customers and end-users, trade contacts, government officials, industry representatives and other parties with whom USSEC already has or should have a working relationship with.

• Maintain active and frequent contact with the buyers, importers and end-users of Soy for food and feed purposes, to determine their rationales and schedules for making purchases and what specific criteria they use in determining the origination of their supply.

• Host events, e.g., seminars and training programs etc., and arrange regular meetings with and between U.S. suppliers and regional buyers to promote trade opportunities for U.S. Soy and to show how the U.S. soy value chain functions and the advantage and benefits thereof.

• Organize and lead buying missions and study teams to the United States to build trade relationships with the U.S. Soy industry and develop buying opportunities for U.S. Soy.

• Maintain contacts with senior officials of major feed mills, livestock production firms, oilseed processing companies, soy-based food and beverage manufacturers and local traders to build relations, learn about their problems related to soy and determine what assistance can be provided.

• Travel is an essential part of this contract. Collaborate with USSEC Consultants, U.S. Agricultural Co-operators, and Industry Partners on programs and initiatives to promote U.S. Soy.

Education and Experience:

• An equivalent combination of education, training and experience will be considered.

• Minimum of a bachelor’s degree in the field of management, marketing, international relations, or a related discipline.

• Demonstrated ability to successfully manage and to direct an organization, department or business involving a team.
• Demonstrated experience in foreign marketing and in working successfully together with other cultures and nationalities.

• Willingness to work, travel frequently, and participate in foreign cultures.

• Demonstrated ability to research, develop and evaluate market plans and/or related studies.

• Knowledge and work experience in agribusiness and supply chain management, especially in soybeans and soy products or grains and grain products, will be an advantage.

• Familiarity with U.S. agriculture, agricultural programs, and policies will be advantageous.

DElIVERABLES:

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<th>Completion Date (Cannot be outside the contract term dates)</th>
<th>Description of Deliverables</th>
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| October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024 Monthly Report       | The Contractor is required to submit an invoice and a monthly report to the Regional Director in a prescribed format. The monthly report serves as a comprehensive update on the Contractor’s activities, with a focus on their engagement with industry contacts and dedication to promoting sustainability. It enables the Regional Director to assess progress, identify areas for improvement, evaluate deliverables, and ensure alignment with the contract’s objectives. The monthly report will include, but not be limited to, the following details: 1. List of Activities and Achievements: The Contractor will provide a summary of their activities, efforts, and achievements during the month. 2. Interactions with Soy Industry Contacts: This section will highlight the Contractor’s engagements and interactions with key stakeholders in the soy industry, including meetings, discussions, collaborations, and notable outcomes. 3. Sustainability Efforts: The report will showcase the Contractor’s actions to promote sustainability within the industry, covering environmental conservation, social responsibility, and sustainable practices in soy production and utilization. The impact and results achieved through these initiatives will be outlined, if applicable. 4. Market Updates and Developments: Timely reporting of the latest market updates and developments will be included, with a specific focus on events that impact the trade and preference for U.S. Soy. 5. Observations and Recommendations: The Contractor will provide observations and recommendations on programs, activities, trade issues, and marketing strategies. 6. Handling Communications: The report will detail how the Contractor
handles communications related to inquiries and questions from U.S. exporters, importers, processors of U.S. soy, trade organizations, and government officials regarding the application, availability, and sourcing of soybeans and soybean products from the U.S.

7. Monthly Plan of Work: A monthly Plan of Work for the upcoming month/quarter will be created and shared with the Regional Director or CEO upon request. In certain circumstances, a weekly plan of work may be necessary and required by the Regional Director.

8. Budget Tables: Budget tables with the latest investment estimates for projects and activities under the Contractor's responsibility will be submitted.

9. Reviews and Recommendations: The Contractor will offer reviews, observations, and recommendations on programs, activities, action on trade issues, and marketing strategies as required.

### Core Deliverables

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<tr>
<th>October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024</th>
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<td>1. The Contractor will contribute, facilitate, and support the achievement of USSEC’s Corporate Goals and Objectives.</td>
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<td>2. The Contractor will proactively engage with at least 60 influential and key industry decision-makers in Southeast Asia and Oceania annually.</td>
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<td>3. The Contractor will regularly compile a comprehensive and updated contact list for integration into USSEC's CRM and Content Management systems.</td>
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<td>4. The Contractor will provide concise summaries and actionable recommendations for the next steps to be taken within a week after each customer meeting.</td>
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<td>5. The Contractor will assist the Regional Director achieve USSEC's focus on promoting the Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (SSAP) in the region.</td>
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<td>6. The Contractor will deliver engaging and informative presentations at virtual workshops, seminars, and conferences, promoting U.S. Soy, addressing industry challenges, and fostering preference for U.S. Soy to boost exports. Frequency to be aligned with USSEC’s Corporate Goals and Objectives.</td>
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<td>7. The Contractor will prepare comprehensive market reports and management reports, providing valuable insights into market dynamics, competitor analysis, and progress on USSEC's initiatives etc. for informed decision-making and continuous improvement.</td>
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<td>8. Submit a minimum of three (3) event/success stories each month, including:</td>
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<td>a. Concise event/success description and objectives.</td>
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<td>b. Demonstrate the benefits of U.S. Soy resulting from the interaction, highlighting the Contractor's role in facilitating the outcome.</td>
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<td>c. Utilize the event/success story template provided in USSEC's Southeast Asia Standard Operational Procedures Manual for submission etc.</td>
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**PROJECT TIMELINE:**
Our expectation is for the **DIRECTOR OF MARKETING (SUSTAINABILITY AND VALUE CHAIN), S.E. ASIA, AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND** to last from **October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024** (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 2, 2023
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** August 18, 2023, by 5:00PM SGT (GMT +8)
- **Project Proposals Due:** August 31, 2023, by 12:00 PM SGT (GMT +8)
- **Selections Made By:** August 28, 2023
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** August 29, 2023

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

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

1. Please email the proposal to **RFP@USSEC.ORG** by **12:00PM SGT (GMT +8) on August 31, 2023**.

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;
- 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.