

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
SUBMISSION DEADLINE
5:00 PM CENTRAL TIME, 04 JULY 2025**

RFP Title: DEVELOPMENT FOR A PROTEIN NUTRITION SCORE “INDEX “(PNS) IN EMERGING MARKETS

RFP Contact:

Name: Kerrey Kerr-Enskat
Phone #: +1-515-823-1848
Email: kenskat@ussec.org

Proposal Deadline: 5:00 PM, 04 July 2025

INTRODUCTION:

The US Soybean Export Council (USSEC) requests proposals for the development of a Protein Nutrition Score for select markets in East Asia, South Asia, Middle East, Africa and Americas. Global hunger and food security indices provide valuable insights into nutrition trends worldwide. However, there remains a critical gap in assessing and benchmarking protein consumption—a fundamental component of human health and development. This RFP invites proposals for the creation of a Protein Nutrition Score, a comprehensive metric that evaluates protein intake, availability, accessibility, affordability, and quality to enhance global nutrition security.

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 primary objective of the index is to provide policymakers, businesses, and NGOs with actionable insights to address protein gaps effectively. The key goals include:

- Measuring Protein Intake per Capita – Average protein intake per person per day
- Measuring Protein Availability – Evaluating per capita availability and diversity of protein sources.
- Assessing Accessibility – Analyzing physical and economic access to protein-rich foods, considering geographic and socioeconomic constraints.

- Examining Affordability – Tracking protein costs relative to household incomes and price fluctuations.
- Evaluating Nutritional Quality – Measuring digestibility, amino acid content, and bioavailability of protein sources.
- Influencing Policy Action – Providing data-driven insights to guide targeted interventions and global policy-making.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

Already promoting awareness, USSEC’s Right to Protein campaign in South Asia continues to be a leading platform of protein discussions amongst many. For more information, please refer to www.RighttoProtein.com. Protein is the cornerstone of human health, essential for growth, repair, immune function, and overall well-being at every stage of life. Inadequate protein consumption leads to malnutrition, stunted growth, impaired cognitive development, and heightened vulnerability to diseases. While global efforts have improved calorie intake, protein insecurity—the inadequate intake, availability, accessibility, or affordability of protein—remains an unaddressed challenge in many regions, particularly in developing nations. Obesity and diabetes have grown at an alarming rate, as a consequence.

Current global indices, such as the Global Hunger Index and Food Security Index, offer valuable insights into overall nutrition security and help shape important policy decisions. However, there is an opportunity to complement these efforts by focusing specifically on protein—a critical nutrient essential for health and development. A dedicated framework can address areas such as:

- Highlighting the diversity of protein sources, including animal-based, plant-based, and emerging alternatives.
- Examining regional disparities in protein consumption, availability and affordability.
- Accounting for cultural and socioeconomic factors that influence protein consumption patterns.

This targeted approach can provide a deeper understanding of protein security and its role in global nutrition.

The Protein Nutrition Score aims to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive, actionable framework to address global protein insecurity.

- **Benchmark Protein Availability:** Measure the per capita availability and diversity of protein sources across nations.

- **Evaluate Accessibility:** Assess physical and economic access to protein-rich foods, factoring in geographical and socioeconomic constraints.
- **Track Affordability:** Analyze the cost of protein in relation to household incomes and its price volatility.
- **Highlight Nutritional Quality:** Incorporate measures like digestibility and amino acid content to assess the quality of protein.
- **Drive Policy Action:** Generate actionable insights to inform targeted interventions and policies that improve protein security globally.

TARGET AUDIENCE (not limited to the following)

1. Government Officials & Policymakers

They create national and regional food security policies. They allocate budgets for nutrition programs and interventions. They regulate food systems, including protein production and trade.

Relevant Entities (but not limited to):

- Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Food Security, and Trade
- International policymakers (WHO, FAO, UN agencies)
- Regional governing bodies

2. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) & International Development Agencies (implementation and advocacy)

They implement nutrition and food security programs globally. They conduct research on protein-related malnutrition and food system sustainability. They advocate for policy changes and international collaboration.

Relevant Entities (but not limited to):

- WHO, FAO, World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF
- International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), GAIN (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition), Nutrition International (NI)
- Sustainable agriculture and food security NGOs

3. Private Sector & Agribusiness (innovation and investment)

They influence global protein production, processing, and distribution. They can innovate and invest in sustainable and affordable protein solutions. They need insights on protein demand,

market trends, and regulatory shifts.

Relevant Entities (but not limited to):

- Food and agribusiness companies (Cargill, ADM, Tyson Foods, Danone, Nestlé)
- Alternative protein companies
- Trade Organizations

4. Research Institutions & Academia (research and methodology development)

They conduct studies on protein consumption, bioavailability, and dietary needs. They develop methodologies for assessing protein security. They influence public policy and industry innovation through research findings.

Relevant Entities (but not limited to):

- Universities with nutrition, agriculture, and food security programs
- Think tanks focusing on global food systems

5. Multilateral Organizations & Financial Institutions (for global economic impact)

They provide funding for large-scale nutrition and agricultural programs. They support sustainable development and economic growth initiatives. They influence trade and investment policies related to food security.

Relevant Entities (but not limited to):

- World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development)

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

The selected organization will be responsible for designing and implementing the Protein Nutrition Score framework, including (but not limited to the following)

1. Data Collection & Survey Development
 - Conducting global protein consumption surveys to capture patterns, affordability, and perceptions.
 - Case studies in emerging, developing and developed markets to highlight barriers and opportunities in protein access.

- Gathering subnational data (state, regional, district-level) where available to provide localized insights.
2. Stakeholder Consultation & Expert Analysis
 - Interviews with policymakers, nutritionists, and industry leaders.
 - Focus groups with consumers to assess dietary trends and alternative protein adoption.
 3. Comparative Benchmarking & Trend Analysis
 - Analyzing global and regional trends in agriculture, trade, and protein demand.
 - Evaluating innovations in alternative proteins and sustainable farming.
 - Developing simplified scoring metrics to assess protein availability, affordability, and quality.
 - Utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for regional protein security mapping.
 4. Reporting & Index Presentation
 - Producing a comprehensive Protein Nutrition Score.
 - Creating an interactive dashboard or visualization tool for stakeholders.
 - Presenting findings to organizations who USSEC identifies, and recommendations made to USSEC.

METHODOLOGY & KEY METRICS

The Protein Nutrition Score should be built using a data-driven and scalable methodology. The key metrics to be included (but not limited to the following are):

- Protein Intake Per Capita – Average protein consumption per person per day.
- Protein Quality – Proportion of animal-based vs. plant-based protein contributions.
- Protein Availability – Per capita protein supply, factoring in waste and losses.
- Protein Accessibility – Affordability of protein relative to median household income.
- Sustainability Factors – Environmental impact of different protein sources.
- Regional Disparities – Mapping protein security across subnational levels.

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

1. Comprehensive Methodology Document
2. Regional and Global Protein Security Reports
3. Interactive Index Visualization & Dashboard
4. Policy Recommendations & Strategic White Paper
5. Engagement Plan for Collaboration with Global Organizations
6. Subnational Protein Security Mapping & Localized Insights
7. Event launch with relevant stakeholders (key select leaders)

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENT

Interested organizations should submit proposals that include:

- Company Profile – Experience in food security, nutrition indices, and data analytics.
- Technical Approach – Detailed methodology for data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- Project Timeline – Expected completion schedule with key milestones.
- Budget & Cost Breakdown – Estimated costs for each phase of the project.
- Experience & References – Previous work related to food security indices or global benchmarking.
- Proposed Visualizations – Sample graphs, heatmaps, or dashboard concepts to showcase data representation.

EVALUTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Technical Capability & Expertise – Proven experience in developing global food security indices. Ability to translate research into policy recommendations for governments and international bodies. Experience in benchmarking nutrition indicators across multiple countries.
- Innovative Approach – Methodologies that enhance accuracy and scalability.
- Feasibility & Adaptability – The ability to create a dynamic, region-specific index.
- Cost-Effectiveness – Budget viability and clear cost justification.
- Proven Impact & Partnerships – Collaboration with global organizations. Strong public relations and stakeholder engagement.

- Strength of Visualization & Reporting – Quality of proposed maps, dashboards, and graphics.

Other Requirements/OUTCOME but not limited to:

- Strategy to secure long-term funding partnerships with government agencies, NGOs and private sector stakeholders
- Plan for scaling and expanding the Protein Nutrition Score beyond the countries listed for the RFP
- Communication strategy and roadmap for the Protein Nutrition Score implementation and continuous updates can be done through global summits, roundtable discussions and policy workshops around nutrition and food security where protein can have a seat at the table.
- Ability to provide progress reports (whether monthly, quarterly, yearly) and final summary report
- Capability to develop a user-friendly digital platform to host the Protein Nutrition Score data, reports, insights, real-time data. Experience in handling datasets with secure storage and accessibility for policymakers and researchers (to be user-friendly on all devices whether from mobiles to laptops to desktops)
- Increase in average daily protein consumption growth rate on target to deliver long-term growth goal relative to historical benchmarks across surveyed consumers and a clearly demonstrable positive correlation between message exposure and increased protein consumption.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Proposals should be submitted electronically by 04 July 2025. Proposals must include a detailed plan addressing the scope of work, a budget, and a timeline. Please include examples of previous relevant work and any innovative ideas or technologies you plan to leverage for this campaign. We look forward to reviewing your proposals.

PROJECT TIMELINE:

The term/research of the proposal will last from 01 August 2025 to 31 July 2026.

Launch of the Protein Nutrition Score Q2 2026 – can be timed with high-profile global food security event.

RFP TIMELINE:

- RFP Distribution: 06 June 2025
- Last Day to Submit Questions: 27 June 2025, **by 5:00PM** Central Time
- Project Proposals Due: 04 July 2025, **by 5:00PM** Central Time
- Selections Made By: 11 July 2025
- Prospective Agency Notified By: 14 July 2025

INSTRUCTIONS:

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

Please email the proposal to kenskat@ussec.org and RFP@USSEC.ORG by **5:00PM CENTRAL TIME** on 04 July 2025.

2. A description of Prospective Organization's capabilities, resources and experience. Emphasis should be placed on experience related to this RFP.
3. A thorough proposal outlining Prospective organization's planned work, deliverables and timeline to complete the work.
3. Resumes for each of the Prospective Organization'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. The link to the budget table is [RFP Budget Development Spreadsheet Link](#).
6. Proposals should be no longer than **10 pages** (8 ½" x 11").

NOTES:

- Prospective Agency's 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 Agency selected.
- Confidentiality - Without USSEC's prior written consent, Prospective Agency's and its officers, employees, agents, representatives, affiliates, and sub-contractors shall not disclose to any third party any documents, materials or information that the Prospective Agency 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 Agency regarding the proposal.
- Prospective Agency 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 Agency service fees, health and life insurance, administrative costs and vacation.
- Prospective Agency 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 Agency and not by USSEC or Funding Sources.
- Prior to any payment to a Agency, a Agency must provide a W-9, W-8, or W-8BEN upon agreement signature
- Non-Competition. Agency 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 Agency 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

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 16-member board of directors is comprised of four members from the American Soybean Association (ASA), four members from the United Soybean Board (USB), and eight 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 Agencies.

As one of these three primary Agencies, USSEC may also undertake initiative activities on behalf of USB. USB considers primary Agency staff (approximately 60 people) as core USB staff. These three primary Agencies use a number of sub-contractors and, together, these entities carry out approximately 450 projects each year for USB. USB also manages approximately 10 sub-contractor.

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.

CONCLUSION

The Protein Nutrition Score aims to bridge the existing gaps in food security by providing a comprehensive assessment of protein availability and accessibility worldwide. By integrating data visualization tools and local mapping, this initiative will offer deeper insights into regional disparities, enabling policymakers and stakeholders to drive meaningful change. Mission is to improve global nutrition security.