

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
SUBMISSION DEADLINE
August 4, 2025 - 12:00 PM SGT

RFP TITLE: SEC ASIA SUPPORT & ADMINISTRATIVE CONTRACTOR

RFP CONTACT:

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PROPOSAL DEADLINE: AUGUST 04, 2025 – 12:00 PM SGT

INTRODUCTION:

U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Inc. formally requests proposals for a Support & Administrative Contractor for the Soy Excellence Center (SEC) Asia programs.

The Soy Excellence Center (SEC), led by the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), is a workforce development initiative focused on building a pipeline of qualified professionals in the food, feed, and livestock sectors across emerging markets. SEC Asia provides structured technical training and curated community engagement for early- to mid-career professionals working in the animal protein value chain. The program currently delivers activities across six focus areas:

- Feedmilling
- Poultry
- Swine
- Aquaculture
- Dairy
- Food & Beverage

Through foundational (Basic) and Intermediate courses, regional workshops, and online learning communities, SEC Asia aims to support sustainable protein production, strengthen industry capabilities, and cultivate a network of tomorrow's industry leaders.

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 contractor that will Serve as SEC Asia Support & Administrative Contractor and coordinate with SEC Asia Center Lead to effectively execute SEC Asia Courses, as well as assist SEC Asia Center Lead in management of the Soy Excellence Center Program.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

USSEC is seeking a highly organized, proactive, and detail-oriented **Support & Administrative Contractor** to work alongside the SEC Asia Center Lead. The contractor will help manage the planning and implementation of SEC's annual programming, provide cross-cutting operational and logistical support, and ensure smooth delivery of training, community events, and strategic initiatives.

This is an operational support role focused on ensuring smooth on-the-ground implementation of SEC Asia activities. The Contractor will be responsible for event preparation, day-to-day coordination, and effective communication with the USSEC team, SEC partners, speakers, and other stakeholders involved.

Reporting directly to the SEC Asia Center Lead, this contractor will be instrumental in maintaining operational efficiency and ensuring that all SEC-related program components are well-organized and executed in a timely manner.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

The target audience for this includes early- to mid-career professionals working in the animal protein and food production value chains across Asia, including sectors such as feed milling, poultry, swine, aquaculture, dairy, and soy-based food and beverage. This also includes companies and industry partners seeking structured training and upskilling opportunities for their workforce through the SEC program.

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

Under the direction of the SEC (Asia) Center Lead, the contractor is responsible for organizing training workshops, ranging from basic to intermediate levels, as well as community events. These workshops are delivered through a variety of formats, including in-person sessions, online learning, and the SEC's self-paced, on-demand hybrid platform.

This involves providing administrative and operational support to the SEC Asia Center Lead for the implementation of SEC program and courses, covering but not limited to:

1. Program Implementation

Assist in the scheduling, planning and execution of basic courses and in-person courses/events, in areas such as:

a) Virtual Events (Basic Courses and Community Events):

- Publicity for the courses / events;
- Coordination and contracting of speakers;
- Moderating weekly check-ins (basic course only);
- Post Event Follow up including event recap, survey review, invoicing processing etc

b) In-Person Events (Intermediate Courses and Community Events)

- Publicity for the courses / events;

- Coordination and contracting of speakers and relevant vendors such as venue providers, videographer, photographer, AV partners;
- Travel arrangements of sponsored participants (including LOI, TA and airfare management);
- Pre-event preparation works such as event slides, registration list etc;
- Onsite crew support;
- Post Event Follow up including event recap, survey review, invoicing processing.

2. Industry Partnerships / Participant Recruitment

Propose at least three new strategic industry partnerships annually to expand SEC's reach and enhance program visibility, and to assist in setting up potential meetings with industry partners to drive up recruitment and engagement targets. Engage with key industry stakeholders to support program objectives, documenting their in-kind contributions and impact.

3. Regional Marketing

Work closely with the SEC Center Lead and USSEC Communications Lead to implement marketing strategies to boost SEC visibility and increase participant enrolment, with measurable media and web-based presence. This include maintaining the content (social media) scheduling.

4. SEC Platform and Web-Based Community Management

Work closely with the USSEC Global Digital Platform Management Team, SEC Center Lead and Community Manager to maintain and enhance the SEC's online community, with monthly updates and participant engagement metrics; and to foster participant networking and knowledge sharing. This also includes monitoring the "asia@soyexcellence.org" accounts.

5. Feedback and Program Improvement

Assist in collecting of participant and partner feedback quarterly, using it to continuously improve the SEC program and to ensure alignment with industry trends and participant needs. The industry trends and innovations should be incorporated into the program whenever possible to ensure relevance.

6. Stakeholder Engagement

Engage with at least five industry key stakeholders, not including the Regional Advisory Committee members, to support program objectives, documenting their contributions and impact. Regular communication on progress, challenges, and achievements will ensure cohesive program management and strategic alignment across the region. Through the help of these industry partners, the contractor will assist in ensuring the program stays relevant by staying informed of emerging industry trends, technologies, and best practices; and integrating them into the program whenever applicable.

7. Commercial Model Transition

Assist the SEC Center Lead in developing a pricing model for the SEC Asia program that ensures financial sustainability of the program.

8. Compliance and Reporting

The contractor will adhere to all USSEC compliance requirements, ensuring that all activities comply with internal and external regulations. The contractor will assist the Center Lead in managing the budgets and investment forecasts; and work closely with the Community Engagement contractor in providing reports as requested by USSEC and Global SEC team. This includes but not limited to:

- Monthly Reporting of activity and engagement results
- Quarterly reports and supporting data which will be used during the Global Advisory meeting and the GAP meetings

DELIVERABLES:

Completion Date	Description of Deliverables
October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026	<p>Management of the operations and implementation of Soy Excellence Center Program for Asia, covering but not limited to:</p> <p>1. Program Implementation Deliver SEC training workshops and ensuring compliance with administrative, budgetary, and programmatic requirements.</p> <p>2. Industry Partnerships / Participant Recruitment Establish at least three new strategic partnerships annually to expand SEC's reach and enhance program visibility, thereby driving up recruitment and engagement targets.</p> <p>3. Regional Marketing Implement marketing strategies to boost SEC visibility and increase participant enrolment, with measurable media and web-based presence.</p> <p>4. SEC Platform and Web-Based Community Management Maintain and enhance the SEC's online community, with monthly updates and participant engagement metrics.</p> <p>5. Feedback and Program Improvement Collect participant and partner feedback quarterly, using it to continuously improve the SEC program.</p> <p>6. Stakeholder Engagement Engage with at least five industry key stakeholders, not including the Regional Advisory Committee members, to support program objectives, documenting their contributions and impact.</p> <p>7. Commercial Model Transition Develop and implement a pricing model that ensures financial sustainability by the end of the contract period.</p> <p>8. Compliance and Reporting</p>

	Submit timely compliance reports and provide regular updates on program progress and achievements.
SEC Pre and Post-Event/Workshop Report Submission	<p>Submit a detailed plan of action for each SEC workshop/event at least 8 weeks prior to the event. This should cover the full process from development to implementation.</p> <p>Submit the post-event report no later than 2 weeks after the event, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course evaluation • Participant feedback survey • Performance analysis of the workshop/event • At least 3-5 participant interviews • Any additional information that can improve or promote the program
Monthly	Provide a brief narrative report summarizing all work performed during the month and plans for the upcoming period. This report, in accordance with USSEC requirements, is necessary for invoicing.
Quarterly	Assist the SEC Center Lead in producing a quarterly report summarizing the work done, progress against goals, achievements, challenges, and lessons learned. The report must meet USSEC and funding source requirements.
Ad Hoc	Assist the SEC Center Lead in preparing and submitting additional reports or presentations as required by the USSEC WW SEC Director, SEC Senior Advisor, or Regional Director. These reports may be requested for SEC meetings, events, or other related activities to support the overall objectives of the SEC program.
Ongoing	<p>Upon completion of each milestone (month or event), the contractor must submit an invoice, with supporting documents.</p> <p>Submission of invoices will be in accordance with Section 12 and 13 of the Master Agreement. Invoices must include the Agreement Number, the Project Number and Activity Number as well as the Allocation ID Number shown on Page 1 of the Addendum.</p>

PROJECT TIMELINE: October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026.

** Extension of contract From October 1, 2026, to September 30, 2027, and October 1, 2027 to September 30, 2028 will be based on evaluation of first term performance.*

RFP TIMELINE:

- **RFP Distribution:** July 07, 2025
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** July 17, 2025 by 12:00 PM SGT
- **Project Proposals Due:** August 04, 2025 by 12:00 PM SGT
- **Selections Made By:** August 13, 2025
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** August 15, 2025

INSTRUCTIONS:

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

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@USSEC.ORG and SCHEN@USSEC.ORG by **12:00PM Singapore Time on August 04, 2025**
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 Contractor's planned work, deliverables and timeline to complete the work.
4. Resumes for each of the Prospective Contractor's personnel assigned to work directly on the implementation of the contract.
5. Provide a minimum of two names and contact information for other similarly sized clients for reference purposes.
6. 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.
7. 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: <https://ussec.org/about-ussec/>

USB's Long Range Strategic Plan can be found here:

<https://www.unitedsoybean.org/strategic-plan/>

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:

- 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](mailto: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.

MANDATORY CONTRACTUAL TERMS

Contracts: ***the following terms are required:***

1. USSEC, as well as the Secretary of Agriculture, may terminate the contract and be relieved of payment. USSEC will pay for all work performed under contract until the date of termination.
2. Any work a contractor undertakes prior to contract approval by AMS is at their own risk and USSEC is not financially liable if the contract is not approved.
3. Funds paid to the contractor may not be used for the purpose of influencing legislation or governmental policy or action. "Influencing legislation" is defined as any attempt to affect the opinions of the general public or any segment thereof concerning current or proposed legislation or any attempt to influence legislation through communication with any member or employee of a legislative body or with any government officials who may participate in the formulation of legislation. "Government officials" refers to federal employees outside of USDA, foreign, and State governments/officials, legislators, and legislative staffs. "Influencing of governmental policy or action" is defined as any action the principal purpose of which is to bring about a change in existing policy or regulation or affect the outcome of proposed policy or regulation, except those actions which are specifically provide for in the Soybean Act and Order.
4. The contractor must (a) keep accurate records, books and documents involving transactions relating to the contract; (b) retain the records, books and documents for 3 years; and (c) said records, books and documents may be subject to inspection and audit by a representative of USDA and/or USSEC.
5. EEO policy statement: contractor agrees that, during the performance of this Agreement, contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, protected genetic information, or reprisal. 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, but not limited to, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Genetic Information Act of 2008, and the Equal Pay Act of 1963. Nothing in this section shall require contractor to comply with or become liable under any law, ordinances, regulation or rule that does not otherwise apply to the contractor.
6. Subcontractors. Subject to USSEC's approval, the contractor may subcontract specific tasks to outside parties. Should the contractor elect to subcontract specific tasks, subcontractors will be subject to the same contractual terms as its contract agency in regard to:

- (1) Reporting and record keeping;
- (2) Travel expenses;
- (3) Title of property;
- (4) Confidential information
- (5) Influencing legislation and/or influencing governmental policy or action;
- (6) Federal civil rights policies.

The primary contractor agency who has a direct contract with USSEC will be fully responsible for the quality of all work product, including any approvals from AMS. Any such authorization in the contract must state that entering into a subcontract does not relieve the contractor of primary responsibility to carry out the terms and conditions of the underlying contract in accordance with the Act, Order, Regulations and USDA policies.

7. Confidentiality

Financial or commercial information obtained under contract with USSEC that is privileged and confidential shall be kept confidential by all persons, including employees and former employees of USSEC, USDA and the contractor having access to such information.

Contracts: ***the following terms are not allowed:***

1. Indemnification provisions, unless it is clear that the indemnification will in no way obligate the U.S. government to pay on a potential claim.
2. Liquidated Damages

Intellectual property. Rights will be governed by the Bayh Dole Act, 35 U.S.C. §200-212 for any entity that is a “contractor” as defined by the Act at §201(c).

Expenses. The following expenses are prohibited under the Act and Order:

1. University Principal Investigator salaries;
2. University overhead/indirect costs; non-Principal Investigator salaries are an exception
3. Entertainment expenses;
4. Spousal/family/companion expenses;
5. Personal expenses (except as specifically allowed in USSEC’s Travel policies;
6. Open bars;
7. Funding of capital equipment unless the equipment is purchased (a) in direct connection with a plan or project, and (b) necessary for the completion of the plan or project.