



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

September 12, 2024

**TITLE:** Communications Operations Contractor

**CONTACT 1:** Kerrey Kerr-Enskat, [kenskat@ussec.org](mailto:kenskat@ussec.org)

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**PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** September 25, 2024, 5pm CST

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Soybeans are the United States' No. 1 food and agricultural export. The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) focuses on differentiating, building preference, and attaining market access for the use of U.S. Soy for human consumption, aquaculture, and livestock feed in 80+ countries internationally. USSEC members represent the soy supply chain including U.S. Soy farmers, processors, commodity shippers, merchandisers, allied agribusinesses, and agricultural organizations. USSEC is funded by the U.S. soybean checkoff, USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) matching funds, and industry.

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this RFP is to identify a contractor to manage Communications operations and administration to support U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) communications team.

We are seeking an individual with experience using various applications including Smartsheet, HubSpot, Brandfolder, Loomly, social media platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook, X), and website content management. The ability to operate in a fast-paced environment, collaborate and meet deadlines is essential to success.

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.

### **SCOPE OF WORK:**

- Facilitate operations of the communications team to ensure compliance with United Soybean Board (USB) and USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) requirements
- Daily submissions of USSEC worldwide communications content for approval requests in Smartsheet
- Act as liaison between USSEC and USB/AMS to facilitate reviews and approvals of USSEC editorial content
- Daily posting of USSEC editorial content on USSEC owned channels as per the editorial content calendar and at the direction of the related communications lead
- Regularly manage content of ussec.org including Request for Proposals page, Directory updates, various page updates, etc. at the request of the appropriate USSEC representative
- Formatting, proofreading and distribution of weekly and monthly newsletters and various other email communication campaigns through HubSpot at the direction of the related communications lead
- Regularly maintain accurate records of approved content in Brandfolder
- Troubleshoot issues related to assigned duties as needed
- Provide onsite support at annual Soy Connex event. Domestic travel required to participate.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please email the proposal to [RFP@ussec.org](mailto:RFP@ussec.org) by 5:00p.m. Central time, September 25, 2024
2. A description of the prospective freelancer/agency capabilities, experience, and education. Emphasis should be placed on experience related to this RFP.
3. Resumes for each prospective freelancers (or personnel) to be assigned to work directly on the implementation of the contract.
4. Budget: All proposals for services must provide the scope of work that the freelance contractor proposes to cover and breakout of the fee including but not limited to a breakdown of hourly rate and the approx. number of hours anticipated to execute the work.
5. Proposals for this work can address it in its entirety or specific scopes of work that a freelancer is most competent to address. **Segment proposal headers according to support areas, as defined under the SCOPE OF WORK.**
6. Provide a minimum of two names and contact information for other similarly sized clients for reference purposes.
7. Proposals should be no longer than 10 pages (8 ½" x 11").

## TIMELINE

This timeline is a guide and may be adjusted based on needs.

- RFP Distribution: September 12, 2024
- Project Proposals Due: September 25, 2024
- Final Selection: September 27, 2024

**NOTES:**

- Prospective Freelancers 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.

## **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.