



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

September 12, 2024

TITLE: Creative Agency

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PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE: September 27, 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.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this RFP is to identify a creative agency to support USSEC and U.S. Soy brand experience and reputation with international stakeholders at the direction of USSEC's communications team.

We are seeking an award-winning creative agency with experience working in international trade, food, agriculture, and CPG industries and with capacity to support:

- Stewardship of USSEC and U.S. Soy brand identity
- International B2B marketing and communications campaigns with relevant, creative and high-quality strategy development and execution to differentiate, create preference and attain market access for U.S. Soy

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.

TARGET AUDIENCES:

- A) International (e.x. U.S.)
 - a. Customers: Soy exporters and importers, integrated food and feed companies, crushers, animal protein, aquaculture, feed formulators in animal nutrition and aquafeed, edible oil refiners, soy food, food CPG companies, retailers

- b. International Policymakers and Regulators
 - c. ESG/sustainability standards and ratings organizations, sustainable finance and banking entities
 - d. Development sector NGOs, foundations
 - e. News media and commentators
 - f. Consumers
- B) Domestic (U.S.)
- a. USSEC Members and Investors (American Soybean Association, United Soybean Board, Qualified State Soybean Boards, USDA, food and agriculture industry, U.S. Soy farmers)
 - b. Agriculture news media and commentators

PREFERRED AGENCY PROFILE:

We seek a solutions provider in our partner who will place high priority ON the USSEC business. A global perspective, cross-cultural sensibilities, and B2B and B2C expertise is valued. The desired partner demonstrates the following:

- **Global experience** in agriculture, food and beverage, and retail sectors
- **Responsiveness** built into its DNA, be it responding with empathy and agility to technical issues, change requests, reputation management, or issues and crisis communications
- **Proactive thought partner** that can deliver on strategy and hands-on execution
- **Strong project management skills/acumen** to develop, deliver and maintain high-quality outcomes and outputs, on-time and within agreed budgets

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Refresh USSEC brand voice and visual identity guidelines
- Develop strategic and imaginative marketing solutions to increase USSEC and U.S. Soy brand awareness and showcase products and services with target audiences
- Develop creative assets in support of marketing initiatives, including, but not limited to, print and digital advertising, event and trade show activations, animations, videos, marketing materials, templates
- Potential for domestic and international travel

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@ussec.org by 5:00p.m. Central time, September 27, 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.

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 27, 2024
- Final Selection: October 1, 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, 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.