



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**  
September 3, 2024

**TITLE:** USSEC Content Development

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**PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** September 18, 2024, 5pm CST

**INTRODUCTION:**

The purpose of this RFP is to identify a communications freelance contractor with subject matter expertise in developing editorial content, written remarks, PowerPoint presentations, social media content, newsletters, annual reports and other communication assets. A background in agriculture is preferred.

**Background and Purpose of the RFP:**

USSEC seeks a freelance contractor with experience and capacity to support:

- Communications and asset development for investor audiences

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:**

- USSEC Investors and Members
- USSEC Grower Leaders

**Scope of Work:**

**Content Development – Executive Communications** – collaborate with staff to:

- Develop presentations for Chair and CEO (multiple per month depending on demand)
- Draft remarks for Chair and CEO (multiple per month depending on demand)
- Develop editorial calendar of short- and long-form posts for Chair and CEO social media channels (regular cadence)

- Draft social media posts for Chair and CEO social media as per the editorial calendar

**Content Development – Investor Communications** – collaborate with staff to:

- Develop a minimum of 12 articles for [USSoy.org \(Around the World page\)](https://www.ussoy.org/around-the-world) – one per month, domestic consumer-focused and connected to topics in USSEC’s focus areas and/or programs
- FAS Success Stories
  - review quarterly submissions
  - analyze and streamline content
  - prepare for review
  - work with staff to finalize for submission
  - utilize content to draft articles and/or social media posts for USSEC’s audiences – minimum of 6 articles and 6 social media posts
- Develop long-form articles highlighting USSEC areas of work and/or specific programs/events for use in state publications, projected at 10, but more as needed
- Additional content development, as needed

**Content Development – Grower Leader Communications** – collaborate with staff to:

- Develop presentations for grower leaders
- Draft remarks for grower leaders
- Draft social media posts, as needed, such as Trade Team Tuesday and BOD meetings
- Outgoing board member video – draft script, gather existing assets, develop plan for video recordings, develop outline and direction for creative partner

**Global News Update (GNU) weekly newsletter**– collaborate with staff to:

- Draft global content
- Develop new content for spotlights, features or series
- Develop weekly content plan
- Organize incoming submissions for inclusion in editorial content plan
- Revise regional submissions to USSEC’s global tone and style
- Format, proofread and distribute weekly via HubSpot

**Annual Report** – collaborate with staff to:

- Draft creative brief
- Develop and manage timeline
- Develop and manage content
- Gather necessary visual assets and/or propose new ones
- Coordinate with design partner on deliverables and direction
- Proofread draft and coordinate with design partner to finalize for print

**Market Snapshots**

- Proofread annually updated market snapshots for grammar, spelling, consistency

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please email the proposal to [RFP@ussec.org](mailto:RFP@ussec.org) by 5:00p.m. Central time, September 18, 2024
2. A description of the prospective freelance contractor 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 3, 2024
- Project Proposals Due: September 18, 2024
- Final Selection: September 25, 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 agree 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.

## **ABOUT U.S. SOYBEAN EXPORT COUNCIL (USSEC)**

Soybeans are the United States' No. 1 food and agricultural export. The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) is focused on building preference, improving the value, and enabling market access for the use of [U.S. Soy](#) for human consumption, aquaculture, and livestock feed in 82 countries across the world.

USSEC is a dynamic partnership of U.S. soybean producers, processors, commodity shippers, merchandisers, allied agribusinesses, and agricultural organizations; and connects food and agriculture industry leaders through a robust membership program.

USSEC is farmer-funded by checkoff funds invested by the United Soybean Board, various state soybean councils, the food and agriculture industry, and the American Soybean Association's investment of cost-share funding provided by U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS).

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.

To learn more, visit [www.ussec.org](http://www.ussec.org) and [www.ussoy.org](http://www.ussoy.org), and engage with us on USSEC's [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#).

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### **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.