



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Released 5/3/2024

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

5:00 PM CT, 5/20/2024

RFP TITLE: IDENTITY PRESERVED FIELD CROP TECHNICAL CONSULTANT

RFP CONTACT:

Name: Eric Wenberg

Phone: 507-613-0780

Email: ewenberg@soyagrainsalliance.org

PROPOSAL DEADLINE: MAY 20, 2024

INTRODUCTION:

The Specialty Soya and Grains Alliance (SSGA) – the identity preserved alliance of the United States – requests proposals to assist in implementing projects related to its programs under the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)/Agricultural Trade Program (ATP) to increase exports of U.S. identity preserved specialty soya and specialty grains through foreign market development programs. SSGA is looking for an International Identity Preserved Technical Advisor (IPTA) to perform work as an expert in the identity preserved value chain, from the farm to processing to transportation to the end user, including contracting and shipping and logistics in the specialty field crop space.

SSGA is the business alliance of identity preserved agriculture in the United States – the leading voice for the industry that delivers traceable, high-quality, variety-specific field crops to food markets worldwide. Its members include producers, processors, suppliers and transportation allies whose work ensures integrity throughout the supply chain. SSGA's mission is to build, grow and sustain a reliable supply chain that ensures integrity of the end-product, with a commitment to quality, stewardship and innovation. SSGA's vision is to promote and enhance value throughout the supply chain, from farmers to food businesses.

PURPOSE OF RFP:

The primary duty of the technical consultant advisor is to further develop, with technical experts, content, education and advice about purchasing identity preserved field crops from the United States for sharing and outreach to foreign buyers. The technical consultant will work



with designated SSGA staff and consultants to develop and verify content for usidentitypreserved.org and SSGA University, as well as materials for trade shows, conferences, meetings, seminars and webinars. The advisor will rely on their skills and experiences in export sales and distribution to take available content and resources and develop answers to complex business, utilizations, and logistics questions to implement online content and tools. SSGA has in place technical materials and ideas that need to be brought to life as messages for foreign buyers and training tools for importers. The advisor will research and suggest content, strategies, and concepts.

The advisor will respond to written, email, or videoconference requests with foreign buyers to develop critique and criteria for the online tools. The work will take into account the business sense and needs of foreign buyers that are central to the goals of the materials to be developed. SSGA has in place separate education content editors and online, electronic media experts to continue to build the tools, lesson plans, and outreach strategies for foreign markets. The technical consultant fills the gap as an experienced exporter or executive who may provide content to extend the sales of U.S. crops by having content created and available that points to the advantages and worth of identity preserved crop practices and how they hold the value of the crop for the food manufacturer. The consultant will be available to travel or be available for presentations, training and teaching the content if and when needed.

The consultant or agency should include experience in traceability and segregation of field crops in identity preserved practices, variety specific crop specifications, principles of the business of exporting including pricing, logistics, export fulfillment, quality control, storage principles, and utilization.

Respondents may be individual consultants or agencies and should include CV of lead consultant with proposal. The principal work should be completed June 1 to Sept. 30, 2024 with the possibility of extension.

CONTRACTOR'S SPECIFIC WORK / REQUIREMENTS/DELIVERABLES:

- Assist SSGA staff to work with selected educational contractor to utilize online collaboration tools to educate foreign buyers and manufacturers about identity preserved field crop exports practices.
- Provide real-world insights into the material from a business point of view and ensures that the content reflects the full structure of the export sales transactions.
- Assist SSGA staff to work with communications professionals, global management teams, website developers and others to create content to educate foreign buyers and manufacturers about identity preserved field crop export practices.



- Review available technical content and identity gaps and needs for development of additional business and utilizations or logistics content.
- Appear in person and online and provide written content on the themes identified here: identity preserved practices, variety specific crop specifications, principles of the business of exporting including pricing, logistics, export fulfillment, quality control, storage principles, and utilization.
- Work with a broad spectrum of U.S. and foreign businesses to advise SSGA staff and other consultants.
- Direct and/or organize and participate in travel and meetings for SSGA or videoconferences as needed.
- Appear at events, which may include domestic and international travel.
- Provide written updates for to SSGA about their work for reports, members and news about developments on association building and market access.

BUSINESS CONFIDENTIALITY:

To whom and how a business sells its products is often business confidential. The contractor will at all points protect proprietary information and provide assurances that surveys or collected data are the property of the companies involved and may only be used by permission.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION:

Contractors should provide bids in price against the deliverables and segment proposals for SSGA to choose. Creativity and cost or time savings will gain extra consideration. Timeline for individual steps and completion should be included in proposals within the deadlines posted here.

Dependent on prior approval from the Executive Director of SSGA, travel and expenses may be reimbursed outside of the contractual budget.

RFP TIMELINE:

- **RFP Distribution: May 3, 2024**
- **Last Day to Submit Questions: May 17, 2024 by 5 PM Central Time**
- **Project Proposals Due: May 20, 2024 by 5 PM Central Time**
- **Selections Made By: May 28, 2024**
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By: May 31, 2024**



INSTRUCTIONS:

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

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@soyagrainsalliance.org by 5 PM Central Time by May 20, 2024.
2. A description of Prospective Contractor's capabilities, resources, and experience. Emphasis should be placed on experience related to this RFP, including CV of lead consultant.
3. A thorough proposal outlining Prospective Contractors 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.
- SSGA 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 SSGA and the contractor selected.
- Confidentiality - Without SSGA'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, SSGA reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications from proposers, or to allow corrections of errors and omissions.
- SSGA reserves the right to reject any proposal that is in any way inconsistent or irregular. SSGA 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 SSGA or Funding Sources.
 - Prior to any payment to a Contractor, a contractor must provide 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.
- SSGA and Prospective Contractor agrees to comply with the provisions of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). SSGA 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:

Information about SSGA can be found here: soyagrainsalliance.org.

Information about U.S. Identity Preserved can be found here: usidentitypreserved.org.

SSGA is the business alliance of identity preserved agriculture in the United States – the leading voice for the industry that delivers traceable, high-quality, variety-specific field crops to food markets worldwide. Its members include producers, processors, suppliers and transportation allies whose work ensures integrity throughout the supply chain.

SSGA’s mission is to build, grow and sustain a reliable supply chain that ensures integrity of the end product, with a commitment to quality, stewardship and innovation.

SSGA’s vision is to promote and enhance value throughout the supply chain, from farmers to food businesses.

This RFP is part of an activity approved for financing under the FAS/USDA Agricultural Trade Promotion program with a focus on Southeast Asia, North Asia and South Asia and a goal of creating an identity preserved brand that identifies the United States as a quality origin for U.S. field crops and helps growers, processors, shippers, end users and food and health professionals to:



- Source U.S. IP soybeans and soy products, and specialty grains
- Connect seamlessly with exporters
- Understand the benefits of U.S. identity preserved products
- Trace the origin of U.S. identity preserved soybean and specialty grain products
- Navigate regulatory pitfalls to food processing
- Better understand logistics of getting products to end user

SSGA is undertaking this RFP directly with the contractor, with operational support and assistance by agreement with the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC). Through a global network of international offices USSEC helps 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.

USSEC's strategic plan can be found here: ussec.org/about-ussec/vision-mission.

SSGA and USSEC partner when applicable to provide resources for the identity-preserved industry. SSGA also focuses on other identity preserved crops and the shipping of these products.

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.