



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE WORLD INITIATIVE FOR SOY IN HUMAN HEALTH (WISHH)

I. DATE

March 20, 2024

II. PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to identify a contractor or firm to implement a series of activities to connect U.S. exporters with buyers and importers in developing and emerging markets. These activities including introducing ASA/WISHH to U.S. exporters; vet trade leads from importers and buyers; updating the *Soy Buyer's Guide*; traveling with select trade teams, assisting trade team members with their buying and purchasing decisions; research U.S. consolidators or third parties that could purchase and export value-added soy proteins; and provide content and/or copy to update the WISHH website on the business opportunities in developing and emerging markets for U.S. exporters.

III. ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

The American Soybean Association (ASA) was founded in 1920 by soybean farmers and extension workers to promote soy for high protein applications in developmental settings. Overseas activities initiated in the mid-1950s, and to date ASA has worked in over 80 countries. The World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH) was founded in 2000 to expand the work of the American Soybean Association (ASA) in developing and emerging markets to improve health, nutrition and food security, building the groundwork for future markets of soy. WISHH provides services in food technology, business development, nutrition services, and program and proposal development. WISHH expertise extends its network into additional areas, such as aquaculture and animal feed.

ASA/WISHH connects trade and development to strengthen agricultural value chains in emerging markets, creating trade and long-term demand for U.S. soy. Trade can improve lives worldwide for both farmers and consumers. U.S. soy trade in emerging markets is pivotal to improve accessibility, affordability, and acceptability of high-quality plant and animal-sourced proteins in developing economies. Rising incomes in emerging economies generate further opportunity for trade. ASA/WISHH builds opportunity for long-term trade by improving agricultural value chains, human and animal nutrition, and farmer net incomes. ASA/WISHH initiatives broadly fit in two arenas: (1) trade-building long-term, early-stage market development, and (2) trade-building international agriculture and economic development. The St. Louis-based program operates in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Central America.

ASA/WISHH offers proven human food and animal feed sector capacity and decades of accumulated knowledge from ASA programs. Principal approaches include market and economic assessments, technical assistance and capacity building, food and feed trials and demonstrations, farmer field days, youth mentorship programs, food and feed value chain development, and market linkages.

ASA/WISHH achieves its mission by working in close partnership with: (1) the public sector (e.g., USDA, USAID, U.S. land grant universities, and host country governments), (2) the private sector (e.g., U.S. exporters and trade associations: Qualified State Soybean Boards and U.S. Soybean Export Council), and (3) private voluntary organizations. The Program draws upon the resources and experience of these partners and the services of a cadre of ASA/WISHH consultants with technical expertise in agricultural, international and commercial development spheres. ASA/WISHH relies on decades of experience in food commercial development and agricultural development programming. The Program takes pride in its growing portfolio of success with U.S. government-funding, including USDA (Food for Progress, McGovern-Dole, Global Broad-Based Initiative, Foreign Market Development, Market Access Program, Emerging Markets Program, Agricultural Trade Program and Quality Samples Program) and USAID funding in both prime and sub-recipient capacities. ASA/WISHH has also attracted both private sector and other complementary funding sources from various donors to build on and leverage core funding from Qualified State Soybean Boards.

WISHH's objective is to increase the international consumption of soy protein in the human, livestock, and aquaculture sectors in new markets and thereby create new opportunities for soybeans and providing higher economic returns to U.S. soybean producers.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The individual or firm selected will implement the following activities:

- Introduce WISHH to at least 10 U.S. exporters that have a container focus, with special emphasis on commodity, value-added soy proteins (concentrates, isolates and defatted soy flour).
- Vet at least 10 trade leads from overseas buyers and importers. If the trade lead is credible, distribute the trade lead to appropriate exporters and provide follow-up assistance. If necessary, modify the existing trade lead forms and process to make it more effective, to increase responses from exporters.
- Update the *Soy Buyer's Guide*, which includes revising the covers, adding sample export contracts, certificates and other documents, product grading specifications and other information. An outside graphic designer will make the recommended updates.
- Travel with at least two trade teams (most likely the July IGP feed trade team and August NCI INTSOY trade team) to coach trade team members on the buying and contracting process and associated best business practices; determine their near-term purchasing goals; and vet the resulting trade leads. Any travel and related consulting expenses will be paid through an End Result Contract (ERC). WISHH will notify the selected contractor of additional trade team travel opportunities as they occur.

- Research companies and feasibility for U.S. based consolidators and third parties willing to resell commodity value-added soy proteins (isolates, concentrates and defatted soy flour) to WISHH vetted trade leads.
- Provide concepts and/or copy for a new section of the WISHH website (wishh.org) that promotes the opportunities for U.S. exporters in developing and emerging markets. WISHH will make the necessary website changes.
- Conduct at least two virtual webinars and four speed date meetings between U.S. exporters and Latin American food buyer meetings on buying strategies, the contracting processes and how to effectively communicate with exporters.
- Provide WISHH Regional Directors with regular progress reports. Monthly briefing via a virtual platform and quarterly written reports.

V. TIMING

All activities must be completed by September 15, 2024.

RFP posted	March 20, 2024
Questions due to ASA/WISHH	March 29, 2024
Questions to be posted to WISHH Website	April 3, 2024
Proposals due to ASA/WISHH	April 17, 2024
Virtual Interviews start	April 22, 2023
Contract awarded	April 26, 2024
Contract signed	April 30, 2024
Regular stakeholder calls	At least once a month
Final deliverables and invoice due	September 15, 2024

VI. SELECTION CRITERIA AND CRITERIA WEIGHTS

Proposals submitted will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Comprehensiveness	35%
Consultant skills/experience	30%
Cost	20%
Timing	15%
TOTAL	100%

Special consideration will be given to Women or Minority Owned Small Business (WMOSB) entities with SBA certifications (proof of certification must be provided at time of submission).

VII. INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

Proposals must contain at a minimum the specific criteria requested in the Request for Proposal:

1. A description of the bidder's capabilities and experiences (can be submitted as a CV)
2. The following questions need to be answered in the full-detailed proposal:
 - Proposal executive summary
 - What is your experience working with U.S. soy exporters?

- Detailed budget for all activities
3. Maximum proposed budget between \$50,000-70,000 (Any travel and related consulting expenses will be paid through an End Result Contract (ERC), which will be paid separately)
 4. Checklist of items that must be submitted:
 - Attachment A Technical Proposal Authorization Cover Page Completed and Signed
 - Full detailed proposal with executive summary
 - Proposal detailed budget
 - WMOSB Proof of Certification (if applicable)

The maximum budget is between \$50,000-70,000, which includes consulting time and overhead. Any travel and related consulting expenses will be paid through an End Result Contract (ERC). No other funds will be allocated for this activity.

Proposals should be submitted no later than 4:00 PM CDT on April 17, 2024. To be considered for award, proposals must be submitted by e-mail to Alan F. Pooock at apooock@soy.org. Mr. Pooock will confirm receipt of each proposal; if receipt has not been confirmed, your proposal has not been received.

If your proposal is not authorized by signature on Attachment A Proposal Authorization Cover Page, it may not be considered and may be rejected.

Submission of Questions: All questions regarding the preparation of proposals must be submitted in writing (by e-mail) to Alan F. Pooock at apooock@soy.org **no later than 4pm CDT on March 29, 2024**. All questions and responses will be available on the WISHH [website](#) on or shortly after April 3, 2024. No questions will be answered over the phone or in person; all questions must be in writing and sent via email.

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. ASA/WISHH is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The firm or individual selected will be required to sign the ASA/WISHH code of conduct and conflict of interest statement.

Award: This RFP does not commit ASA/WISHH to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparations or submission of proposals, or costs incurred in making necessary studies for the preparation thereof or to procure or contract for services or supplies. ASA/WISHH reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP and to negotiate with any of the vendors or other firms in any manner deemed to be in the best interest of ASA/WISHH.

ASA/WISHH reserves the right to negotiate and award only a portion of the requirements; to negotiate and award separate or multiple contracts for the elements covered by this RFP in any combination it may deem appropriate, at its sole discretion to add new considerations, information or requirements at any stage of the procurement process, including during negotiations with vendors; and reject proposal of any vendor that has previously failed to perform properly or in a timely manner contracts of a similar nature, or of a vendor that, in the opinion of ASA/WISHH, is not in a position, or is not sufficiently qualified, to perform the contract.

This RFP contains no contractual proposal of any kind, any proposal submitted will be regarded as a proposal by the vendor and not as an acceptance by the vendor of any proposal by ASA/WISHH. No contractual relationship will exist except pursuant to a written contract document signed by the authorized procurement official of ASA/WISHH and by the successful vendor(s) chosen by ASA/WISHH.

Offerors submitting proposals must (1) be officially licensed to do such business in the country of *their* business operation, (2) be able to receive USDA funds, and (3) not have been identified as a terrorist prior to being awarded a contract. In addition, Offeror may be required to provide the following information prior to awarding of the contract:

- Documentation to verify licensure (i.e., tax id, registration certificate, etc.)
- Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest
- Equal Opportunity

X. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Technical Proposal Submission sheet

ATTACHMENT A: Technical Proposal Submission Sheet

(Complete this form with all the requested details and submit it as the first page of your technical proposal, with the documents requested above attached. Ensure that your proposal is authorized in the signature block below. A signature and authorization on this form will confirm that the terms and conditions of this RFP prevail over any attachments. If your proposal is not authorized, it may be rejected.)

Date of Technical Proposal:	
RFP Number:	
RFP Title:	

We offer to provide the goods/services described in the Scope of Work, in accordance with the terms and conditions stated in Request for Proposal referenced above. We confirm that we are eligible to participate in public procurement and meet the eligibility criteria specified.

The validity period of our proposal is _____days/weeks/months from the time and date of the submission deadline.

Type of Business/Institution (Check all that apply)

Offeror certifies that it is:

Non U.S. Owned/Operated Government Owned/Operated

(If Non U.S. Owned/Operated is selected, continue to Anti-Terrorism Certification)

OR FOR US ORGANIZATIONS ONLY:

Nonprofit Large Business
 For-Profit Small Business
 Government Owned/Operated College or University

Women Owned Small and Disadvantaged Business

Anti-Terrorism Certification

The Offeror, to the best of its current knowledge, did not provide, within the previous 10 years, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it does not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated, or participated in terrorist acts.

The Offeror also verifies that it does not appear on 1) the website of the Excluded Party List: <https://www.sam.gov>; or 2) the website of the United Nations Security (UNSC) sanctions committee established under UNSC Resolution 1267 (1999) (the "1267 Committee"): <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1267/consolist.shtml>.

The undersigned declares s/he is authorized to sign on behalf of the company listed below and to bind the company to all conditions and provisions stated in the original RFP document including attachments from ASA/WISHH.

Proposal Authorized By:

Signature: _____ Position: _____
 Name: _____ Date: _____
 Authorized for and on behalf of: _____ (DD/MM/YY)

Company: _____
 Address: _____
 Business Registration Number _____