



National  
Industrial  
Hemp Council  
of America

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL HEMP COUNCIL

### **I. DATE JULY 25, 2024**

### **II. ACTIVITY & BACKGROUND**

This market assessment identifies gaps in each step of the supply chain of hemp and hemp fiber cultivation, processing, manufacturing, and trade, especially the technical needs/gaps that limit US hemp fiber exports. India is the largest yarn-spinner in the world, importing cotton fiber while also being the largest cotton producer globally. Industrial hemp could help fill a supply gap within the Indian fiber supply chain, but questions exist regarding the legality, standards and tariffs governing the importation of industrial hemp fiber.

As India is a massive and diverse market, there may be several unknown opportunities for industrial hemp and its derived products within the consumer goods, medical and food manufacturing sectors. The proposal requests funding for an in-depth market assessment in India that will discover the best, most sustainable and potentially most mutually profitable opportunities for importing industrial hemp into the market.

Background: The textile industry in India is the second-largest employment generating sector, offering direct employment to over 35 million people in the country. India is the world second largest exporter of textiles and clothing (following China) and in fiscal year 2022 textile exports exceeded \$44.4 billion. India is the second largest producer of fiber (yarns and threads used to make fabrics for apparel and home goods) and currently the worlds largest producer of cotton and jute. India is also the world's second largest producer of silk and the top producer of several other natural and synthetic fibers including wool, polyester, nylon and viscose fibers.

### **III. ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND**

The National Industrial Hemp Council provides high quality networking and resources for its members, from the farm to consumer. The leadership is composed of leading international, federal, state, private industry, and government professionals throughout the sector. The organization's goals are to further market development, assist members in entering the industry, and educate the consumer on industrial hemp and its applications. Educating consumers is of paramount importance for NIHC. Customers are the bedrock of this revolution and consumers have the right to be safe. This means truth-in-labeling in this rapidly growing industry.



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#### **IV. PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

The project objectives are threefold.

The first is to develop an overview of planting, harvest post-harvest treatment, processing, production, distribution, downstream product manufacturing, and wholesale and retail sales of hemp fiber.

The second is to build a window into the regulations, government and industry standards, and certifications that facilitate trade in the post-harvest treatment, processing, production, distribution, and import of hemp fiber.

The third is to identify technical gaps where US technology and know-how can be deployed to improve business and rural systems and expand opportunity for US hemp exports. This would include improved production, processing, manufacture and distribution as well as improved standards and certifications.

The final deliverable will combine these three objectives into a single road map of technical activities that will improve opportunities for exports of US hemp fiber and identify technical support and product needs for India's hemp fiber industry.

This project seeks to build on existing market information and establish how US hemp fiber suppliers can access the India market given the current market structure and the competitive environment, and what actions are needed to increase exports and differentiate US hemp products. NIHC is the only organization that is representing the US hemp industry in the export market. NIHC has identified a lack of understanding and knowledge along the supply chain from hemp harvesting, processing, and manufacturing that includes an insufficient understanding of trade regulations as the largest barrier to market access and increasing exports to this market. This project seeks to advance the interests of the entire US hemp industry



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**PROJECT DELIVERABLES:** Implementation of NIHC’s market assessment will include the following deliverables.:

- Primary desktop research, including review of available public information in English related to current production and processing practices along the supply chain, and developmental trends in the use of hemp fiber to improve the quality of final products.
- Interviews of industry associations, hemp growers, hemp fiber processors, and manufacturers to understand the supply chain and determine supply chain practices that affect the adoption of US hemp fiber, and also included will be interviews with traders and specifiers to determine their business and product needs. Government agencies will also be interviewed to understand the hemp fiber import standards and SPS requirements.
- 1. Review and analysis of the desktop research and industry and government interviews to identify gaps and constraints in the supply chain to understand strengths and weaknesses of current operations and develop recommendations for actions and activities to increase India hemp fiber processing productivity and quality in order to better grow the market for US hemp fiber.

## V. TIMING

All activities must be completed by September 30, 2024

RFP posted	July 25, 2024
Questions due to NIHC	July 30, 2024
Answers responded to by:	August 2, 2024
Proposals due to NIHC	August 7, 2024
Contract awarded	August 9, 2024
Contract signed	August 13, 2024
Activities begin	August 14, 2024
Final deliverables and invoice due	*December 31, 2024
*possible extension	

## VI. SELECTION CRITERIA AND CRITERIA WEIGHTS

Proposals submitted will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Comprehensiveness	30%
Hemp & Global Experience	30%
Cost	30%
Timing	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>



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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 (edited for repost)

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

1. A description of the bidder's capabilities and experience (Can be submitted as CV)
2. A proposal that is no longer than 10 pages - appendices allowed
3. A detailed project budget
4. Checklist of additional items that must be submitted:
  - Attachment A Technical Proposal Authorization Cover Page Completed and Signed
  - 100-word executive summary of the proposal
  - Full detailed proposal
  - Proposal detailed budget
  - WMOSB Proof of Certification (if applicable)

Proposals should be submitted no later than 5:00 PM PST on August 7, 2024. To be considered for award, proposals must be submitted by e-mail to the following: Veronica Frantz: [info@hempindustrial.com](mailto:info@hempindustrial.com), V. Frantz 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 [info@hempindustrial.com](mailto:info@hempindustrial.com) no later than 5pm PST on July 30, 2024. All questions and responses will be e-mailed on or shortly before August 2, 2024. No questions will be answered 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. as NIHC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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



# NIHC

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**Award:** This RFP does not commit the NIHC 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. The NIHC 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 the NIHC. The NIHC 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 the NIHC, 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 the NIHC. No contractual relationship will exist except pursuant to a written contract document signed by the authorized procurement official of the NIHC and by the successful vendor(s) chosen by the NIHC.

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: Submission sheet



National Industrial Hemp Council of America

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.)

Table with 2 columns and 3 rows: Date of Technical Proposal, RFP Number:10.603, RFP Title:EMP-2024-19

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. .

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:

- [ ] Non Profit [ ] For Profit [ ] Government
[ ] Large Business [ ] Small Business [ ] College and University
[ ] Women Owned [ ] Small & 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 NIHC.

Proposal Authorized By:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized for and on behalf of: (DD/MM/YY)



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Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Registration Number \_\_\_\_\_