



# Request for Proposals (RFP)

**Evaluation Services and Economic Analysis**

**Leather and Hide Council of America (LHCA)**

## 1. Introduction

The Leather and Hide Council of America (LHCA) is seeking qualified firms or individuals to provide comprehensive evaluation services and economic analyses in support of LHCA programs, trade initiatives, market development efforts, and policy activities. The selected Consultant(s) or Contractor(s) will be responsible for producing high-quality, data-driven insights that support organizational decision-making and demonstrate the impact of LHCA's work across domestic and international markets. LHCA is also seeking technical and advisory services for leveraging AI for strategic growth and operational efficiency in the global leather and hide export industry.

## 2. About LHCA

The Leather and Hide Council of America represents U.S. hides, skins, and leather exporters and works to advance the competitiveness, sustainability, and global reputation of the U.S. industry. LHCA engages in trade policy, market access initiatives, consumer and stakeholder outreach, and technical and scientific research.

### 3. Purpose of the RFP

LHCA intends for the findings and insights generated through this work to directly support and strengthen the organization's strategic planning, market development efforts, and communications activities. The resulting analyses should be delivered to serve **four primary audiences**:

1. **Unified Export Strategy (UES) and USDA Funding Application** – Providing evidence-based justification for target markets, resource allocation, and program priorities submitted to USDA.
2. **Public Relations and Communications Partners** – Supplying data-backed insights that inform messaging, media engagement, and stakeholder outreach conducted by LHCA's partner PR firms.
3. **LHCA Members Across the Supply Chain** – Delivering actionable market intelligence, evaluation findings, and economic insights that support business decision-making and industry competitiveness.
4. **Internal LHCA Leadership and Staff** – Guiding strategic planning, program design, and organizational decision making through clear, high-quality analyses.

LHCA aims to establish a relationship with a qualified Contractor to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of LHCA programs and trade development efforts.
- Conduct economic and market analyses relevant to hides, skins, and leather.
- Provide Return on Investment (ROI) cost/benefit analysis for program successes.
- Provide actionable insights tailored to the four audiences above.
- Support reporting requirements for internal and external stakeholders.

The period of performance for the award is one calendar year (February 2026 – January 2027.)

### 4. Scope of Work

Analyses should consider the differentiated impacts and outcomes for members, consumers, brand partners, media stakeholders, and actors across the full hides, skins, and leather supply chain. Contractors are expected to assess how LHCA programs and market trends influence perceptions, behaviors, business performance, and operational dynamics at each stage of the value chain, ensuring a holistic understanding of industry-wide effects. Analyses should incorporate both supply-side (i.e., herd size, cattle prices, beef prices, production, capacity, inventory-to-shipments ratio) and demand-side considerations (customs, duties, goods categories), evaluating how market conditions, consumer behavior, production dynamics, and trade factors interact across the global hides, skins, and leather sector. Areas of investigation may include attitudinal and behavioral data, competitive assessments, purchasing data, sustainability, and specific usage data. Sample analytic tools may include consort or segmentation analyses.

LHCA seeks proposals that include the following service areas. *Bidders may submit proposals for individual components or portions of this scope of work and should provide a la carte pricing—proposals are not required to address every service area. LHCA anticipates selecting more than one awardee based on expertise and alignment with specific project needs.*

## **4.1 Program Evaluation(s)**

- Design and execution of evaluations for LHCA marketing, trade, or outreach programs, such as those conducted using USDA Market Access Promotion (MAP) Funds and Foreign Market Development (FMD) Funds.
- Assessment of program outcomes, effectiveness, and return on investment.
- Development of performance metrics and evaluation frameworks.

Examples may include:

- Provide indexed benchmarks that measure L&HCA efforts and communications with its key stakeholders, which include industry members (throughout the supply chain), association partners, US and foreign governments, media, branded manufacturers and consumers.
- Evaluate L&HCA member, trade and consumer messaging to ensure that they have identified the proper messages, that the messages are effective and that there is an impact on the target audience over time.
- Review and update existing trade surveys so that the LHCA staff and partners can self-administer a tailored survey during trade shows, trade missions, seminars and educational events. Reports would include a comparison of findings with the prior surveys and recommendations for updating any performance measures that were implemented based on the original survey data, if necessary.

## **4.2 Economic and Market Analysis**

- Global and regional trade flow analysis specific to hides, skins, and leather.
- Economic modeling and scenario analysis.
- Cost-benefit and impact assessments.
- Policy and regulatory analyses related to trade, tariffs, or market access.

## **4.3 Data Collection and Reporting**

- Establishment of methodologies for quantitative and qualitative data collection.
- Development of dashboards, written reports, and presentations.
- Production of annual, quarterly, or project-specific analysis deliverables.

## **4.4 Longitudinal Return on Investment (ROI) and Benefit-Cost Ratio Analysis**

- Using multivariate econometric modeling, the analysis must isolate the program's specific impact on market demand and export value by controlling for exogenous factors such as exchange rate volatility, global supply shifts, and trade policy changes.
- Include a Socio-Economic Impact Assessment to quantify the "multiplier effect" on the broader economy, specifically calculating contributions to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), labor income, and full-time equivalent (FTE) job creation.
- Provide a granular breakdown of domestic vs. export market performance and a sensitivity analysis to validate the statistical significance of the findings for stakeholders.

## **4.5 Advisory Support**

- Ongoing consultation and participation in LHCA meetings, workshops, or stakeholder sessions.
- Rapid-response analysis on emerging trade, market, or policy developments.

## 4.6 AI- Market Intelligence and Marketing Platform

- Design and implement a state-of-the-art AI-driven platform aimed at strengthening the global competitiveness of the U.S. leather and hide export industry.
- The platform should:
  - Provide Market Intelligence: Utilize AI technologies for social listening and predictive analytics to gather insights on global consumer preferences, emerging trends, and market demands.
  - Enable Targeted Marketing: Generate culturally and linguistically tailored marketing materials, including dynamic content such as videos and ad copy.
  - Forecast Market Opportunities: Deploy machine learning models to predict demand, identify pricing trends, and discover new market opportunities for U.S. hides, skins, and leather products.
  - Promote U.S. Leather and Hide Products Globally: Enhance the positioning of U.S. products through strategic campaigns informed by real-time data and predictive analytics.
  - Train Staff: Provide comprehensive training for LHCA staff and council member companies in using the latest AI tools and solutions effectively.
  - Support Talent Acquisition: Offer a service to locate, hire, and train staff for council member companies to use the marketing platform and address other related AI needs.
- Offer ongoing support and auxiliary services to ensure the platform remains scalable and adaptable to meet evolving market demands.

## 5. Data Sources

Contractors will be expected to work with a diverse set of quantitative and qualitative data to inform evaluations and economic analyses. Data sources may include social media engagement metrics, findings from market assessments, global import and export data, industry-specific economic indicators, questionnaires and survey data collected from stakeholder panels and LHCA members, and engagement analytics from trade-related communications. Additional datasets may be provided by LHCA or identified by the contractor to ensure comprehensive and methodologically sound analysis. Bidders are encouraged to conduct stakeholder workshops and other primary research where gaps are identified.

## 6. Proposal Requirements

LHCA welcomes recommendations from bidders on best practices for metrics, measurement approaches, and methodological frameworks to strengthen the rigor and effectiveness of evaluations and analyses. Proposals should include the following components:

### 6.1 Cover Letter

- Brief introduction to the applicant.
- Summary of experience and suitability for the engagement.
- Description of any additional proposed partner organizations or team members.

## 6.2 Technical Proposal

- Detailed description of proposed research design, approach and methodologies.
- Work plan, timeline, and project management strategy.
- Description of evaluation frameworks or analytical models to be used.
- Proposed deliverables and communication formats.

## 6.3 Qualifications

- Organizational background and mission (if applicable and for all proposed team members).
- Relevant experience in evaluation, economics, trade analysis, or related fields (for all proposed team members).
- Examples of previous projects, with links or attachments where available (for all proposed team members).
- Bios of key personnel, including roles and responsibilities.

## 6.4 Budget

- Detailed cost proposal, including rates, expected level of effort, and any additional expenses.
- Optional alternative pricing structures.
- Preference will be given to proposals under \$130,000 USD.

## 6.5 References

- At least three references for similar work completed within the last five years.

# 7. Evaluation Criteria

LHCA will use a standardized proposal review matrix to ensure consistency, transparency, and fairness in evaluating all submissions.

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following factors. Each factor must receive a score between **1** and **10**. Any factor receiving a score of **0** will result in disqualification. Scores will then be weighted based on the relative importance of each factor.

Evaluation Factor	Definition
Technical qualifications of the proposer	Experience and professionalism of the organization and proposed staff
Logistics	Knowledge, availability, and capacity related to the field, sector, or industry
Completeness of the proposal	Alignment with statement of work requirements and objectives
Quality of the proposal	Strength of methodology and thoroughness of approach
Solves the problem USHSLA seeks to address	Solutions-oriented approach, innovation, and relevance
Budget	Total cost, travel considerations, and budget flexibility

LHCA will rank proposals based on weighted scores. Multiple awards may be issued depending on proposer strengths in specific areas of the scope of work. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following weighted criteria:

- **Experience and Qualifications**
- **Strength and Clarity of Technical Approach**
- **Demonstrated Understanding of the Hides, Skins, and Leather Sector**
- **Cost-Effectiveness of the Proposal**
- **Quality of Past Work and References**
- **Ability to Meet Timelines and Deliverables**

## 8. Timeline and Submission Instructions

LHCA anticipates the following schedule:

- **RFP Release Date:** January 5, 2026
- **Deadline for Questions:** January 12, 2026
- **Proposal Submission Deadline:** 31, 2026
- **Evaluation Period:** February 5, 2026
- **Notification of Award:** February 7, 2026
- **Contract Start Date:** February 12, 2026

*LHCA reserves the right to adjust the timeline as necessary.*

Proposals may be submitted using Word, PDF, or PPT formats, not to exceed 50 pages. Companies that have a SAM.gov UEI should include the firm's UEI number.

All proposals should be submitted electronically to: [finance@lhca.us](mailto:finance@lhca.us)

Proposals must be received no later than **January 31, 2025**. Late submissions may not be considered.

## 9. Terms and Conditions

- LHCA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals.
- LHCA may request additional information or clarification.
- Submission of a proposal does not guarantee selection or contract award.
- All proposal materials become the property of LHCA and may be used for evaluation purposes.
- Awardee(s) may be required to sign a Data and Privacy Agreement, protecting member data/proprietary trade information, using data only for contracted purpose, complying with confidentiality provisions, and following secure data-handling protocols,
- Awardee(s) may be required to sign a USDA Standard Agreement, mandating compliance with federal regulations, proper use of USDA funds, transparency and documentation, and accountability in reporting.

**We thank you for your interest in partnering with the Leather and Hide Council of America and look forward to reviewing your proposal.**