



**American Seed Trade Association**

**European Union Plant Breeding Innovation Project**

**R E Q U E S T   F O R   P R O P O S A L**

## **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

ASTA's mission is to be an effective voice of action in all matters concerning the development, marketing and movement of seed, associated products and services throughout the world. ASTA promotes the development of better seed to produce better crops for a better quality of life.

Founded in 1883, the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) is one of the oldest trade organizations in the United States. Its membership consists of over 700 companies involved in seed production and distribution, plant breeding, and related industries in North America. As an authority on plant germplasm, ASTA advocates science and policy issues of industry-wide importance.

#### **Objective:**

ASTA seeks proposals for a contractor to develop and coordinate strategy for engagement with the European seed industry, public sector researchers, agriculture value chain stakeholders, and relevant government stakeholders on the topic of Plant Breeding Innovation (PBI), such as new genomic techniques (NGTs). The contract support ASTA's international work on PBI for the 2023 calendar year (February 2023- December 2023), with the opportunity for renewal in future program years upon satisfactory performance.

#### **Goal**

Ensure better alignment, communication, and collaboration between stakeholders in the European Union and the United States on the topic of PBI and NGT to support development of policies that facilitate seed innovation and trade.

#### **Background**

The seed industries in the United States and the European Union are well integrate. Therefore, a harmonized regulatory policy approach to PBI/NGT is vital in facilitating seed movement to continue the close collaboration between the regions.

The European Union is undertaking a multi-year legislative initiative on NGT. In 2023, the European Commission is expected to publish a proposal for NGTs, which is expected to include policy recommendations that could impact product research and development, regulation, and market stewardship. The United States is also continuing to update policies to provide regulatory clarity for products of PBI, such as genome editing.

ASTA has support several years of engagement in the EU, and seeks to continue under four general activities listed below. This contract is focused on the EU and is for one year, with the opportunity to renew after successful completion.

- Identify and engage key stakeholders and thought leaders in the European Union.
- Build strategy for policy engagement relevant to the NGT legislative initiative and current policy landscape.
- Develop messaging for the targeted audiences (government, public researchers, and product developers) that is tailored to the European Union's current PBI environment, culture, political environment, and participation in the agricultural value chain.

- Outreach to targeted audiences by convening events, meetings, and appropriate use of mass and social media.

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAM CONTACT**

Questions concerning technical specifications or Statement of Work requirements must be directed to:

<b>Name</b>	Fan-Li Chou
<b>Address</b>	1701 Duke St, Suite 275 Alexandria, VA 22314
<b>Phone</b>	703-837-8140
<b>Email</b>	flchou@betterseed.org

**CONTRACTUAL CONTACT**

Any questions regarding contractual terms and conditions or proposal format must be directed to:

<b>Name</b>	Sam Crowell
<b>Address</b>	1701 Duke St, Suite 275 Alexandria, VA 22314
<b>Phone</b>	703-837-8140
<b>FAX</b>	703-837-9365
<b>Email</b>	scrowell@betterseed.org

**DUE DATES**

A written email confirmation of the Contractor’s intent to respond to this RFP is required by January 20, 2023. All proposals are due by 5:00 pm, EDT on January 25, 2023 in electronic format sent to flchou@betterseed.org and scrowell@betterseed.org.

**SCHEDULE**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
1. RFP Distribution to Contractors	01/05/2023
2. Written Confirmation from Contractors with Bid Intention	01/20/2023
3. Questions from Contractors due about scope of work	01/20/2023
4. Responses to Contractors about scope due	01/23/2023
5. Proposal Due Date	01/25/2023
6. Target Date for Review of Proposals	02/03/2023
7. Final Contractors Selection Discussion(s)--	02/06/2023
8. Anticipated decision and selection of Contractor(s)	02/10/2023
9. Anticipated commencement date of work	02/20/2023
10. Final report/invoice due	02/24/2024

## **GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION**

### **EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD CRITERIA**

Any award to be made pursuant to this RFP will be based upon the proposal with appropriate consideration given to operational, technical, cost, and management requirements. Evaluation of proposals will be based upon the Contractor's responsiveness to the RFP and the total price quoted for all items covered by the RFP.

The following elements will be the primary considerations in evaluating all submitted proposals and in the selection of a Contractor:

1. Completion of all required responses in the correct format.
2. The extent to which Contractor's proposal fulfills ASTA's stated requirements as set out in this RFP.
3. An assessment of the Contractor's ability to deliver the indicated service in accordance with the specifications set out in this RFP.
4. The Contractor's ability, experiences, and record of past performance in delivering such services.
5. The Contractor's expertise, required skills and experience for the specific approach proposed.
6. Overall cost of Contractor's proposal.

ASTA may, at their discretion and without explanation to the prospective Contractors, at any time choose to discontinue this RFP without obligation to such prospective Contractors.

ASTA's review for this RFP and management of the selected Contractor will be conducted in accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [civil rights regulations and policies](#).

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

#### **REQUIREMENTS**

The following information should be used to determine the scope of this project and provide pricing for this engagement.

#### **DELIVERABLES**

For the purpose of the agreement resultant from an accepted proposal, the CONTRACTOR, at a minimum, will be responsible for the following:

1. Identification of specific individuals, associations, and companies within the policy maker circle and agriculture value chain that should be targeted through the project's activities
2. Outline a strategy to build coalitions with existing organizations and/or through existing projects to coordinate on advocacy efforts
3. Develop appropriate strategy to advance ASTA goals, consistent with the current EU NGT legislative initiative and relevant policy environment
4. As appropriate, coordination of "convening events" to further engage stakeholders in policy discussion

For the purpose of the agreement resultant from an accepted proposal the ASTA, at a minimum, will be responsible for providing the CONTRACTOR with:

- Relevant contacts with USDA Foreign Agricultural Service attaches in the EU

→ Frequent coordination with other USDA cooperator organizations and their EU partners

## **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Award of the contract resulting from this RFP will be based upon the most responsive Contractor whose offer will be the most advantageous to ASTA in terms of expertise, functionality, and other factors as specified elsewhere in this RFP.

ASTA reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential Contractor,
- Accept proposals than the lowest priced offer,
- Award a contract on the basis of initial proposals received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers, and
- Award more than one contract.

Contractor's proposal shall be formatted in several sections as set forth below. The Contractor will confine the submission to those matters sufficient to define the proposal and to provide an adequate basis for ASTA's evaluation of the Contractor's proposal.

Contractor's proposal in response to this RFP will be incorporated into the final agreement between ASTA and the selected Contractor(s). The submission is suggested to include each of the following sections:

1. Executive Summary
2. Approach and Methodology
3. Project Deliverables
4. Project Management Approach
5. Detailed and Itemized Costs
6. Appendix: References
7. Appendix: Contractor Bio/Resume

The detailed requirements for each of the above-mentioned sections are outlined below.

## **DETAILED RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This section will present a high-level synopsis of the Contractor's responses to the RFP. The Executive Summary should be a brief overview of the engagement and should identify the main features and benefits of the proposed work.

### **SCOPE, APPROACH, AND METHODOLOGY**

Outline proposed strategy to achieve desired goals. This section should include a description of each major type of work effort and activity being requested of the Contractor. All information that is provided will be held in strict confidence.

### **DELIVERABLES**

Include descriptions of the anticipated outcomes of activities conducted for work related to the project.

**DETAILED AND ITEMIZED RATE AND COSTS**

Include a fee breakdown for services provided, including potential travel expenses. ASTA will also cover travel expenses if necessary to conduct the contracted work.

**APPENDIX: REFERENCES**

Provide three current professional references.

**APPENDIX: Resume**

Provide a one or two page summary of your skills, experience and education.