



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

January 05, 2024

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 nearly 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).

Goal

To support progress on aligned PBI and NGT policies that facilitate seed innovation and trade through collaboration between stakeholders in the European Union and the United States.

Background

The seed industries in the United States and the European Union are well integrate. Therefore, harmonized PBI/NGT regulatory policy approaches between the United States and the European Union 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 published a legislative proposal for NGTs, which is currently been considered by the Council and European Parliament. The United States is also continuing to update policies to provide regulatory clarity for products of PBI/NGT.

ASTA has supported several years of engagement in the European Union 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.

- Build and implement strategy for policy engagement throughout the NGT legislative process. The strategy should reflect potential political and procedural changes. In addition, the strategy should identify and take into account other relevant EU initiatives for example those that support trans-Atlantic cooperation or innovation broadly.
- Develop messaging for the targeted audiences (government, public researchers, agricultural value chain, and product developers) that is tailored to the European Union's policy environment, culture context, and political reality.
- 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:

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

CONTRACTUAL CONTACT

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

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

DUE DATES

A written email confirmation of the Contractor's intent to respond to this RFP is required by January 19, 2024. All proposals are due by 5:00 pm, EDT on February 05, 2024 in electronic format sent to scrowell@betterseed.org.

SCHEDULE

Event	Date
1. RFP Distribution to Contractors	01/05/2024
2. Written Confirmation from Contractors with Bid Intention	01/19/2024
3. Questions from Contractors due about scope of work	01/24/2024
4. Responses to Contractors about scope due	01/26/2024
5. Proposal Due Date	01/25/2024
6. Target Date for Review of Proposals	02/05/2024
7. Final Contractors Selection Discussion(s)--	02/09/2024
8. Anticipated decision and selection of Contractor(s)	02/12/2024
9. Anticipated commencement date of work	02/14/2024
10. Final report/invoice due	01/31/2025

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.

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. Describe how to develop and implement appropriate strategy to advance ASTA goals, consistent with the current EU NGT legislative initiative and relevant policy environment.
4. As appropriate, identify opportunities for convening events or workshops to further engage stakeholders in policy discussion.
5. Outline a proposed budget (by month and/or quarter) to meet these deliverables.

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. Proposed Budget with 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.