



American Seed Trade Association

Expert on Plant Breeding Innovation International Regulations and Product Development

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

March 12, 2025

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

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. ASTA advocates on science and policy issues of industry-wide importance.

Objective:

ASTA seeks proposals for a contractor to develop and coordinate strategy for engagement with the international seed industry, public sector researchers, agriculture value chain stakeholders, and relevant government stakeholders on the topic of Plant Breeding Innovations (PBI), including genome editing. The contractor will support ASTA's international work on PBI for 2025 calendar year (April 2025 – December 2025).

Goal

Support global alignment of PBI policy by identifying opportunities for regional and international engagement with private industry, regulatory officials in key markets, policymakers, and other thought leaders. Develop and implement an advocacy strategy.

Background

The U.S. seed industry is closely connected to the global seed industry. U.S. seed companies actively invest in research, seed production facilities, and commercial operations in international markets. Moreover, the industry continually incorporates advanced breeding techniques to develop new plant varieties. As a result, the strength of the U.S. seed industry relies on internationally consistent, science-based, and risk-proportionate policies concerning varieties developed through plant breeding innovation (PBI).

For several years, ASTA has successfully engaged internationally, collaborating with regional and global seed associations to promote the adoption of PBI policies in key countries. While continuing this work remains essential, ASTA is expanding its priorities to ensure regulatory policies are adaptable and responsive to emerging breeding tools and applications. Furthermore, ASTA aims to ensure that regulatory implementation in countries with established policies fosters innovation. Through strategic partnerships with regional and international seed associations, as well as stakeholders across the value chain, ASTA will advance its objectives by organizing outreach efforts, including events and meetings aimed at target audiences.

As part of this RFP, the Contractor is expected to present a draft vision for how the seed sector can continue navigate international policies impacting the commercialization of PBI; work with policymakers to shape policies and regulatory requirements to bring PBI to market; and identify key points of engagement in the next 6-12 months that could be leveraged to support ASTA's international engagement.

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 March 26, 2025. All proposals are due by 5:00 pm, eastern time on April 9, 2025 in electronic format sent to scrowell@betterseed.org.

SCHEDULE

Event	Date
1. RFP Distribution to Contractors	03/12/2025
2. Written Confirmation from Contractors with Bid Intention	03/26/2025
3. Questions from Contractors due about scope of work	03/26/2025
4. Responses to Contractors about scope due	04/02/2025
5. Proposal Due Date	04/09/2025
6. Target Date for Review of Proposals	04/10/2025
7. Final Contractors Selection Discussion(s)--	04/11/2025
8. Anticipated decision and selection of Contractor(s)	04/14/2025
9. Anticipated commencement date of work	04/15/2025
10. Final report/invoice due	01/15/2026

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. Monitor PBI policy development internationally and identify opportunities for engagement.
2. Lead the development and implementation of engagement strategies.
3. As appropriate, identify opportunities for convening events or workshops to further engage stakeholders. Some international travel by the contractor may be considered.
4. 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 the U.S. government and seed industry
- Frequent coordination with other USDA cooperator organizations

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.

The 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.

The 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.