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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL Southern Forest Products Association

Conducting an In-Depth Market Assessment and Evaluation of Performance Measures in the Caribbean

I. Introduction and Overview:

The Southern Forest Products Association (SFPA), founded in 1914, is a non-profit trade association representing the Southern Pine lumber industry. SFPA is recognized as one of the foremost trade organizations in the forest products industry and represents Southern Pine lumber manufacturers from Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Member mills produce half of the Southern Pine lumber in the United States.

SFPA is headquartered in the metro New Orleans area, with staff directing marketing programs to serve the entire U.S., and international market consultants serving markets in Europe, the Middle East, Mexico, the Caribbean, China, and India.

SFPA is seeking proposals for an individual or agency to conduct a one time in-market assessment and annually evaluate performance measures in the Caribbean over the course of five years (2025-2029).

II. Candidate Proposal:

Please submit your proposal by September 30th, 2024, and include the following:

1. A brief description of your firm.
2. At least three references, including the names of individual contacts and their contact information.
3. A detailed description of the project team, including experience, education, and representative clients in the past five years.

III. Proposal Objective:

The Caribbean, though considered a mature market for U.S. SYP lumber products, has witnessed recent surges in demand, driven by the growth in high-end tourism and retail projects. Recognizing this potential for growth, the market is poised to expand substantially throughout the remainder of the decade, solidifying its status as a leading destination for U.S. SYP export products.

SFPA will commission an in-depth market assessment to solicit feedback from a wide variety of in-region stakeholders on their specific technical challenges, desired support areas, and preferences for assistance. This will involve a broad-based survey and potentially follow-up interviews with key accounts to develop a comprehensive understanding of market needs. The results of this assessment will allow for further improving SFPA programming and allow for deeper relationships to be developed between SFPA and in-region stakeholders (examples of stakeholders would be architects, builders, code officials, importers and retailers). through proving multiple fora for input and being responsive to their needs.

Following separate ongoing initiatives in the Caribbean, SFPA will have robust data collected on the views of stakeholders regarding U.S. SYP lumber products and how those view influence their behavior with regards to sourcing or specifying U.S. SYP lumber products, with data points following the logic of target awareness, preference, perception, and over time behavior change. This data will be used to evaluate the impact of SFPA programming in the region and inform the marketing mix and strategy in subsequent program years. This data will also be used as the performance measure data reported as part of this program.

IV. Project scope of work

Specific tasks of the individual or agency include:

1. To collect feedback from industry that will allow for developing an in-depth assessment of the needs of the market and better optimize SFPA content. This will be done through conducting a market assessment survey supplemented with in-depth interviews to gather further intelligence and provide color and nuance to the data collected. Costs must be in accordance with U.S. federal regulations as advised by SFPA.
2. Work with a SFPA to facilitate contact with at least seven regional stakeholders. Assistance will be provided if necessary.
3. Complete market assessment and follow up with SFPA for any additional questions or items.
4. Review outputs of market assessment with SFPA and consult with in-country representative to determine next steps.
5. Confirm parameters of surveys. Write up and send out an annual survey to in-region contacts based on parameters established by discussions and meetings with various contacts (buyers, exporters, university faculty, etc.) to collect data relevant to our annual activities. The results will be used to help inform any adjustments to programming in the subsequent program year.
6. Survey results are presented to SFPA in time for reporting evaluation and performance measures in the UES and progress reports.

V. Final deliverable:

A comprehensive market assessment yielding valuable insights and will use the intelligence gathered to enhance its programming. Concurrently, this initiative aims to strengthen relationships with in-country contacts by establishing multiple feedback forums. SFPA's responsiveness to their feedback underscores its commitment to being an active partner and stakeholder, aligning its efforts with the specific needs and dynamics of their businesses.

SFPA will have robust data collected annually that can be used to measure the impact of its programming on the attitudes of the trade in the region. This data will be used both to report program performance (i.e. RAPP performance measures) and evaluate program performance and make adjustments to programming and potentially the activity mix if it is determined that progress is not being made.

VI. Budget Range: One Time In-Market Assessment: \$30,000 to \$50,000
Five Annual performance evaluations for years 2025-2029: \$10,000
Total contract budget through 2029: **\$80,000 - \$100,000**

VII. Selection Criteria:

The selection of the individual or agency will be based upon the following:

1. Knowledge of the wood, building materials, and construction industry in the target markets.
2. Contacts in the target countries involved in the wood trade and construction industry.
3. Experience in researching market trends and opportunities in the target countries.
4. Relevant background of staff to be assigned to this project.
5. Experience with USDA/FAS cooperator promotion programs.
6. Experience with the U.S. Agricultural Trade Offices, Foreign Agricultural Service, the U.S. cooperators and the American embassy staff.
7. Suggested fee schedule.
8. Statement that working with the SFPA construes no conflict of interest with the Agency's other clients or affiliates.
9. Completeness and thoroughness of the proposal.

Selection will be made by October 18th, 2024. Only those firms meeting the criteria above will be considered. All proposals must be received by September 30th, 2024, and addressed to:

Eric Gee
Executive Director
Southern Forest Products Association
egee@sfpa.org
Tel 504-443-4464

Alaina Hanson
Director of Administration
Southern Forest Products Association
ahanson@sfpa.org
Tel 504-443-4464

Questions regarding this RFP or your proposal submission may be addressed to:

Alaina Hanson
Director of Administration
Southern Forest Products Association
ahanson@sfpa.org
Tel 504-443-4464

VIII. Proposal Format:

The format of the proposal is open, except for the breakdown of costs. While the fee will be all-inclusive, we require that the following information be specifically included in the budgeting section of the proposal to compare the value of various proposals. The more detailed the information you provide, the better assessment we can make as to the overall merit of your proposal. The cost breakdown should include:

1. Name and title of all staff people assigned to this account with corresponding hourly rates at which will be charged, and the approximate number of hours to complete the final assessment. For example:

a. Senior Staff Consultant:	
\$1.00/hour x 2 hours	\$ 2.00
b. Project Director:	
\$ 0.75/hour x 20 hour	\$15.00
c. Support Staff:	
\$.25/hour x 60 hour	\$15.00
<u>d. Total fees per seminar (a+b+c):</u>	<u>\$32.00</u>

Please provide a listing and explanation of any other costs that your firm feels should be incorporated into the final fee.

SFPA reserves the right to award the contract to the company with the best combination of attributes, not necessarily the lowest bid.

SFPA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

SFPA is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation in its services, activities, programs, and employment opportunities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other applicable laws. SFPA is committed to making its electronic and information technologies accessible to individuals with disabilities by meeting or exceeding the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794d), as amended in 1998.

If you require assistance or wish to report an issue related to the accessibility of any content on this website, please email mail@sfpa.org. If applicable, please include the web address or URL and the specific problems you have encountered.

It is the policy of the SFPA not to discriminate against any person who is limited English proficient (LEP). In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 13166, the Association will take reasonable steps to provide LEP persons meaningful access to its programs and activities. This commitment applies to all of the Association's federally conducted programs and activities.