

FY26 RFP – INFLUENCER EDUCATION

Deadline for submission: June 30, 2025

1. Summary and Background

On behalf of Minnesota's 25,000-plus soybean farmers, the Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council (MSR&PC) directs the investment of soybean checkoff dollars in international and domestic marketing programs, research projects and education and technology transfer efforts designed to increase the profitability of soybean production. MSR&PC is made up of an elected board of 15 soybean producers from across the state.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is not an offer to enter into an agreement, but rather a means to solicit proposals from various investigators and collaborators to help increase the profitability of Minnesota soybean producers. MSR&PC will conduct an open, fair and complete evaluation of all proposals based on the criteria listed herein and select those investigations that best represent the needs MSR&PC desires to address.

MSR&PC reserves the right to reject all proposals, in whole or in part, and/or enter into negotiations with any party. MSR&PC shall not be obligated for the payment of any sums, to any RFP respondent unless a written contract between the parties is executed.

Successful bids, as determined by the MSR&PC Action Teams, will:

- Increase profitability to Minnesota soybean farmers, while promoting, educating and increasing awareness of Minnesota's soybean farmers and the importance of soybeans and soybean products to industry, influencers and consumers.
- Collaborators must maintain records and make them available for audit and inspection by MSR&PC, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, the United Soybean Board, and/or USDA.
- MSR&PC must retain ownership of all materials and information generated by collaborators.
- Collaborators cannot assign their duties under the contract to anyone else without prior written authorization.
- Funds awarded must not be used for any lobbying or influencing legislation at any level of government.
- Contracts will only be valid for one year, if a term of more than one year is anticipated a clause allowing termination on a yearly basis must be included.

General sponsorships, grants, gifts, or donations are prohibited from being funded by the USDA. Funds distributed must be used towards a specific project with deliverables. If the project is generally called a sponsorship or partnership, it must include deliverables such as advertisements, speaking opportunities, admission to an event, booth space, etc.

Projects must have a strong tie to soybean growers and soy in general. General agricultural messages and projects can be funded; however, MSR&PC could not be the only funding source. Funding should be commensurate with the value back to soy growers and the soy industry in Minnesota.

No project is final and approved and no expectations of payment based on an action team approval or MSR&PC approval is reasonable without a signed final contract.

3. General Guidelines:

This Request for Proposals represents an open and competitive process.

Proposals should be directed to the Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council via email at Projects@MNSoybean.com.

The proposal must contain the signature(s) of a duly authorized representative of the organization submitting the proposal.

The Principal Investigator (PI), also known as cooperator, contractor or partnering organization, will be noted as PI from this point forward. If submitting a proposal with the intention to outsource or sub-contact any of the components, this must be clearly stated in the proposal and a list of sub-contractors to be used included along with associated fees/charges included in the budget breakdown. MSR&PC will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of sub-contractors; however, we retain the right to refuse sub-contractors you have identified in your proposal.

A good proposal fits the goal of the Influencer Education Committee of identifying and developing additional soybean leaders and benefits Minnesota soybean producers as a component of that mission. It is important to identify what significant contribution your research/marketing/studies/promotion will contribute toward fulfilling that mission.

Proposals should be written as to be completed in a 12-month or less contract period.

Proposals will be reviewed by a broad range of farmers and experts. Avoid use of acronyms whenever possible. Include the reason and background for the marketing/research/studies and materials and methods for each proposal.

Any potential political activity as a component of proposed project must be identified as part of the pre-proposal process.

4. Investigation Purpose:

Proposals in this area will focus on efforts to deliver key Minnesota Soybean messages to farmers, influencers or industry audiences on issues that affect soybean farmers' freedom to operate. Proposals should aim to enhance the image or desirability of soybeans or soybean products in domestic and foreign markets. Specific areas of interest to our growers are proposals in the following areas:

- Proposals that address the effect of carbon markets on the marketability of soybeans grown or processed in Minnesota.
- Proposals that show the true water or air quality impacts of growing soybeans in Minnesota.
- Proposals that show the full extent of greenhouse gas reductions from the production of biodiesel in Minnesota using soybeans grown under a B20 mandate.

- Proposals that address the carbon footprint of soybean production in Minnesota with guidance on steps growers could take to lower or offset their carbon footprint.
- Proposals that give a true picture of the amount of inputs used in growing soybeans in Minnesota with guidance on steps to reduce those input costs and unintended consequences.
- Proposals that track the loss of farmland in Minnesota and analyze trends on what that could mean to Minnesota's rural communities.
- Proposals that aim to help protect Minnesota's biodiesel industry and biodiesel mandate.
- Proposals that clarify the presence of neonicotinoids in Minnesota's environment and their true sources.

Please identify the goals and objectives for each proposal submitted in this area and explain how each objective and goal will affect Minnesota soybean farmers by reaching this audience and/or will aid enhancing the image or desirability of soybeans or soybean products in domestic and foreign markets.

5. Funding Requested/Justification - Budget

All proposals must include budgets of expected expenditures with as much detail as possible. Incomplete budgets may result in delayed consideration for funding. All anticipated costs and fees must be included in the proposal.

No depreciable capital equipment shall be purchased with funds provided without prior approval from MSR&PC.

6. Project Schedule/Timeline:

All proposals in response to this Request for Proposal are due no later than 5:00 p.m. CST June 30, 2025. Late proposals will not be considered. Evaluation of proposals by MSR&PC Action Teams will begin after that date and initial decisions regarding funding will be based on the written bid. Should clarification on the proposal(s) be desired, the Action Team may invite individual PIs for an oral presentation. Recommendations for funding approval will be presented to the MSR&PC Board of Directors during the August 2025 board meeting.

7. Proposal Evaluation Criteria:

The Council will evaluate all proposals with equity. To ensure consideration, your proposal should match the goals of the MSR&PC Influencer Education Action Team.

The proposal must also be on time, complete, and include:

- a. Identification of the priority area the proposal addresses and suitability to provide Minnesota soybean growers with information to meet the action team goals.
- b. Adherence to the proposal requirements listed in this document
- c. Value and cost: Submissions will be evaluated on cost effectiveness of the proposal.
- d. A plan as to how you intend to communicate the results of your work to farmers, businesses, or consumers in 250 words or less.
- e. FY26 Proposal Cover Sheet and Proposal Budget located here:
<https://mnsoybean.org/msrpc/request-for-proposal/>
- f. FY26 Full proposal - Submission of complete, fully detailed proposal with cover sheet and budget must be submitted to: **Projects@MNSoybean.com**.