

**Issue date: 19.12.2022**

**Closing date: 31.01.2023**

## **Call for offers**

Donau Soja is seeking an

### **International expert for provision of services related to the creation of a multi-crop standard**

The Donau Soja Association hereby invites organizations/individuals (hereafter: the service provider) to send in their proposal for the provision of the services described in this Call for offers. The service provider selected will fulfil an expert role in a Donau Soja project focused on the development of new multi-crop standard.

#### **1. Background**

##### Donau Soja

Donau Soja is an independent, international, non-profit, multi-stakeholder organisation aiming to effectively meet protein market demand and to provide a baseline for the development of high quality soy and legume cultivation in the Danube region ([www.donausoja.org](http://www.donausoja.org)). The Organisation seat is in Vienna, Austria.

##### Strategic Partnership Programme

At the beginning of 2017, Donau Soja and Austrian Development Agency (ADA) started the Strategic Partnership Programme in Moldova, Ukraine, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina planned to be implemented until February 2024. The overall objective of the programme is to build sustainable, inclusive and well-functioning value chains (local, regional and international) for non-GM soya and organic soya in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine.

The programme proposes measures in nine areas (components: Production and processing, Value chain development, Awareness raising and sensitization, Certification and labelling, Business environment and policy framework, International market development, Knowledge and technology management and transfer, Project development and Technical assistance, General administration and program management) planned to be implemented by Donau Soja through numerous measures and activities. All programme activities are to be implemented according to General Contract Conditions (Allgemeine Vertragsbedingungen), guidelines and requirements described in Guidelines for Visibility, considering DS and standards in international development, with special emphasis of DECD Standard (<http://www.enterprise-development.org/dced-guidance/>).

## 2. Context and the objective of the Assignment

### Donau Soja Multi-crop standard

Within the framework of the Strategic Partnership Programme, as part of continuous work on standard development, Donau Soja is developing a new multi-crop standard.

Donau Soja is continuously developing its standards and brands for increasing sustainability and quality assurance in the value chains of agricultural goods, accounting for the needs of European market and value chain actors.

The development and implementation of sustainability standards and quality programmes are fundamental for the market-related work of the Donau Soja Organisation. These standard systems are the foundations upon which sustainable, deforestation and conversion-free, regional, non-GMO value chains are based. The standards move the market forward by providing traceability and control from the farmers level to food and feed level. The standards and labels provide transparency for the customer by assuring the non-GMO quality, sustainability, deforestation and conversion-free, European origin of products. The certification and branding give identity, visibility and recognition to the products and therefore establish a higher value compared to other commodities.

Currently, Donau Soja is initiating the development of a multi-crop standard. Thereby Donau Soja aims to meet the need to produce other arable crops, beyond soya, according to the same high standard. The multi-crop standard will be based on the existing requirements of the Donau Soja / Europe Soya standards, including but not limited to European origin, non-GM, deforestation/conversion free. In addition, it will be applicable to other arable crops/legumes. From the farmers' point of view, it is a clear advantage to broaden the scope to all arable crops produced on the farm and not be limited to soybeans. On the other hand, the market demands other agricultural products (other arable crops/legumes) cultivated in accordance with the same high standards.

The multi-crop standard is aimed to meet the demand for European products, in plant-based and animal-based supply chains where the focus is on locally produced ingredients for food and feed. Additionally, the standard is aimed to comply with the requirements for voluntary systems approved under the Renewable Energy Directive II.

The proposed creation of a multi-crop standard will contribute to building sustainable, inclusive and well-functioning value chains for non-GM food and feed products. Besides contributing to the project's overall objective this activity additionally strengthens the work foreseen in project component 6 (in part Market Development), project component 7 (in part Standard Development) and project component 8 (in part Project development-> preparation for new Strategic Partnership with Austrian Development Agency) and opens new opportunities for farmers from target countries.

### **3. The work of the expert**

The service provider will be contracted to provide expertise to the development of the multi-crop standard:

- Support the conceptualization of the standard development
- Prepare concept for standard system documents together with Donau Soja team
- Prepare documents for working group meetings and consultation rounds, communicate and debate with Donau Soja and external experts
- Write the standard documents (incl. principles/criteria for production and chain of custody, principles/criteria of risk-based assurance/verification system, biofuel module)
- Design/Layout of all prepared standard documents
- Optional: Development of further modules on demand

### **4. Expected outputs/ Deliverables**

- Conceptual workshop with Donau Soja team
- Concept for standard system documents
- Draft Documents for discussion in working group meetings
- Written and designed standard system documentation (principles/criteria for production and chain of custody, principles/criteria of risk-based assurance/verification system, biofuel module)

The final documents are expected to be in appealing layout/design intended for publication and external communication. All documents should be available in English.

### **5. Time frame and organisation**

The work of the consultant will start as soon as the contract is signed. The expected project duration is to start in February 2023, preferable end of the assignment is December 2023. The duration of engagement is subject to organisational requirements, availability of funds and satisfactory performance.

The assignment is part-time/short-term, and the services will be provided based on a work plan mutually agreed between the service provider and Donau Soja Organization.

The service provider is expected to use his/her own office and technical equipment.

Flexibility and readiness for travel depending on the work plan are required.

### **6. Reporting**

The service provider will report directly to the Donau Soja director of standard development.

Close cooperation with the Donau Soja team is required.

The service provider is expected to keep records of time, cost and activities spent on the project.

Additionally, outputs (such as standard documents, verification documents etc.) can be considered as proof of expert work.

## 7. The requirements

The service provider shall meet the following requirements:

- a broad knowledge and understanding of all relevant issues related to the European food and feed industry and relevant (worldwide) sourcing strategies;
- knowledge of sustainability in agriculture, non-gmo regulations and relevant European legislation in the area of agriculture, the environment, human rights and working conditions;
- expertise in food/feed value chain development;
- a proven knowledge and experience related to standard development;
- experience in conducting and managing relevant projects related to standard development;
- experience in complex stakeholder management;
- an excellent record of working in an international environment;
- excellent general communication skills with excellent written English.

In addition, the service provider is required to support high standards of social and environmental performance in the project and demonstrate gender and diversity competences.

## 8. Remuneration

The service provider will work under a framework agreement.

Remuneration installments will be based on an offer and agreement between Donau Soja and the service provider. The detailed remuneration plan will be defined in the framework agreement.

Payments will be made based on issued invoices.

The fees will be paid based on services provided - against accepted time recording and other agreed terms.

Travel costs and other costs can be paid directly by the contractor or by the service provider - against proof of evidence- (incl. written confirmation of contractor, invoices for transportation, tickets/boarding passes, hotel invoices, entrance tickets- participation costs for events etc.)

## 9. Selection criteria

The evaluation will be done based on following criteria:

1. Price
2. Strategic approach (including explanation and detailed plan of work flows, results and time frame)
3. Professional experience with standard development
4. Professional experience with the design of standard documents
5. Reputation of service provider/references
6. English language skills
7. Fulfilment of the formal requirements defined in the ToR

## 10. Documents to be provided

Tenders are to be sent by email to Biljana Tadic via [project\\_admin@donausoja.org](mailto:project_admin@donausoja.org) by 31.01.2023, indicating "International expert for provision of services related to creation of a multi-crop standard" in the subject, with the following documents (in English):

1. Formal proposal including explanation and detailed plan of work flows, results and time frame
2. A curriculum vitae for each of the staff expected to be engaged in the work
3. References (list of contacts)
4. Financial offer including detailed budget overview (see financial offer templates)

Financial offer template

	Estimated amount of hours	Price per hour	Total
Support the conceptualization of the standard development			
Prepare concept for standard system documents together with Donau Soja team			
Prepare documents for working group meetings and consultation rounds, communicate and debate with Donau Soja and external experts			

Write the standard documents (incl. principles/criteria for production and chain of custody, principles/criteria of risk-based assurance/verification system, biofuel module)			
Design/Layout of all prepared standard documents			
Project Management / Administration			
Optional: Development of further modules on demand	n.a.		n.a.
Total			

For administrative questions please contact: Mrs. Biljana Tadic, E-mail: [project\\_admin@donausoja.org](mailto:project_admin@donausoja.org)

For content related questions please contact: Mrs. Julia Weihs, E-mail: [weihs@donausoja.org](mailto:weihs@donausoja.org)

### **Workforce diversity**

Donau Soja is committed to achieving diversity within its workforce, and encourages all qualified applicants, irrespective of gender, nationality, disabilities, sexual orientation, culture, religious and ethnic backgrounds to apply. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.