

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Coordination of wood product seminars in the Caribbean, Egypt, and Mexico

I. Introduction and Overview:

The Southern Forest Products Association (SFPA), formerly the Southern Pine Association, is a non-profit corporation, incorporated in 1914, under the laws of the State of Missouri and in 1957 under the laws of the State of Louisiana. Today, 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 5 staff, promoting domestic and international markets for southern pine lumber.

SFPA's mission is to: *“Advance the Southern Pine lumber industry, promote the use of member products in domestic and international markets, and facilitate the exchange of information and ideas.”*

II. Project Objective and Scope of Work

SFPA routinely holds technical seminars to train wood traders (importers, wholesalers, and retailers) and wood specifiers (builders, architects, engineers, joinery and furniture producers) on proper selection and use of softwood lumber from the United States. The seminars, which are offered to attendees free of charge, are typically three hours in duration and feature expert speakers from the United States on the subject. SFPA provides training literature and coffee breaks, lunch, or reception depending on the timing of the event.

SFPA's 2019 plans include promoting U.S. wood products internationally by presenting seminars in the following locations:

Caribbean – 6 seminars (3 trips with 2 seminar locations per trip)

Egypt – 2 seminars (Cairo and Alexandria)

Mexico – 1 seminar – timing to be near the Expo Hotel Trade show dates and location

SFPA is seeking assistance from an individual or company that has knowledge in FAS guidelines and travel policies to:

1. Create RFP to Identify an in-market consultant in each country to assist with in-country arrangements and promoting the event to targeted attendees;
2. Review and summarize proposals received from RFP; and recommend a company or person in each country you feel is best able to meet our goals.

3. Provide guidance and Coordinate the seminar agenda, in-country arrangements, and logistics with the in-market consultant and partner organizations in the target cities including invitations, advertising, venue selection, food and beverage, registration, audio/visual, translators, ground transportation for speakers, registration list with contact information, survey distribution to attendees and summary of those surveys, etc . for the seminars and construction site visits prior to the seminars.
4. Coordinate seminar target dates with speakers available dates. Speakers will address topics of U.S. lumber grades, standards, construction, and preservative treating standards at the Seminars, high wind construction.
5. Provide guidance and material to the speakers on subject matter and any other assistance they may need to promote U.S. softwoods at the Seminars;
6. Ensure that all expenses are reasonable and in accordance with FAS regulations;
7. Issue trip notifications no later than 2 weeks prior to travel for each trip
8. Submit final trip report on each activity to SFPA summarizing the activities, the Consultant Presentations, audience survey responses, questions and other observations Consultant believes useful to SFPA for market intelligence, no later than 3 weeks following each seminar.

SFPA will provide speaker possibilities and training literature; the individual or agency chosen to assist with the project is tasked with organizing and monitoring the in-country consultants to make sure the projects are successful and the audience is of quality and quantity.

Specific tasks of the in-country Consultants to include:

1. Arrange for seminar venues, audio/visual, and interpreters for the seminars. Costs must be in accordance with U.S. federal regulations.
2. Promote the events to the target audience with an aim to gather at least 50 wood traders and specifiers at each seminar. Experience has shown that this is best accomplished through partnerships with local trade associations, such as contractor associations, builder associations, architectural associations, or other like trade groups.
3. Attend the events to assist with on-site arrangements, registration, and literature and survey distribution.
4. Arrange for and attend site visits prior to the seminars in each location. Site visits would include lumber yards, retailers, construction sites, and any other venues that provide insight on lumber consumption in the market.
5. Assist with hotel recommendations for the speakers and any other arrangements.

SFPA envisions accomplishing the seminars and site visits in one week. An example itinerary is below.

Sunday – Speakers travel to 1st location

Monday -- Tour lumber yards and construction sites near seminars location

Tuesday – 1st Seminar

Wednesday -- Travel to 2nd seminar location (if applicable)

Thursday -- Tour lumber yards and construction sites near 2nd seminar locatoin

Friday -- Seminar at 2nd locatoin; speakers travel home if possible. If not, travel home Saturday

III. Candidate Proposal:

Please submit your proposal by February 28, 2019, 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 the past five years
4. Detail past experiences where you have completed similar tasks to the tasks identified in this RFP.

V. Selection Criteria:

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

1. Experience in promoting U.S. softwoods or other wood products, building materials, and construction industry in the target markets.
2. Knowledge of U.S. softwood industry
3. Contacts in the target countries involved in the wood trade and construction industry.
4. Experience in organizing similar events in the target countries.
5. Relevant background of staff to be assigned to this project.
6. Experience with USDA/FAS cooperator promotion programs.
7. Experience with the U.S. Agricultural Trade Offices, Foreign Agricultural Service, the U.S. cooperators and the American Embassy staff.
8. Fee Schedule
9. Statement that working with the SFPA construes no conflict of interest with the Agency's other clients or affiliates.
10. Completeness and thoroughness of the proposal.

Selection will be made by March 6, 2019. Only those firms meeting the criteria below will be considered. All proposals must be received by February 28, 2019, and addressed to:

**Tami Kessler
Executive Director
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