

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Consultancy for Prosper Cashew Project Marketing Strategy and Brand Book

Project name: Promoting Opportunities for Cashew Processing in West Africa (Prosper Cashew)

Expected start date: March 2021

Subject: Request for Proposal to develop the marketing strategy and brand book for the West Africa regional (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria) Prosper Cashew project

1 Background

1.1 TechnoServe

TechnoServe is an international nonprofit organization that promotes business solutions to poverty in the developing world. It is headquartered in Rosslyn, VA and operates in 29 countries worldwide. TechnoServe's mission is to work with enterprising men and women in the developing world to build competitive farms, businesses, and industries. It does this by linking people to information, capital, and markets. With more than 50 years of proven results, TechnoServe believes in the power of private enterprise to transform lives.

TechnoServe Inc. (TNS) invites you to participate in this competitive solicitation for pricing, delivery and terms as a contractor for West Africa Regional (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria) Prosper Cashew project with the project's head office based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

1.2 Project

Prosper Cashew is a five-year, \$25 million project funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the Food for Progress Program (FFPr) that aims to strengthen cashew processing in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria. West Africa is the world's leader in cashew production, accounting for more than 45% of the raw cashew nuts harvested around the globe each year. However, less than 10% of raw cashew nuts are processed within West Africa. The vast majority are exported to Asia, where they are processed before being shipped to consumer markets around the world.

The overall goal of the project is that 50% of cashew production is domestically processed to kernels in the three focus countries. Increased investment in local cashew processing and increased processing capacity and capacity utilization are the key results to achieve this goal. Achieving this vision requires significant increases in overall capacity utilization as well as in the number of processing enterprises across the three countries. While improvements to existing facilities can move the sector towards the stated goal, the industry will need to crowd in a large number of new processing plants to meet the overall target, requiring significant levels of investment. Prosper Cashew will act as a catalyst for the sector, strengthening and reviving existing cashew processing facilities, facilitating access to critically needed working capital, demonstrating the business case for additional investment flows into the sector, and bringing together investors and high-quality investees. Additional project details are available [on TechnoServe's website](#).

The Prosper Cashew project is currently in its start-up phase and expects to begin implementation of technical activities by June 2021.

2 Scope of Work

The selected candidate will develop a marketing strategy for the Prosper Cashew project. The strategy will unite the project's partners and technical activities across several countries and allow the project to maximize its impact through marketing. The strategy will:

- Create the positioning plank for Prosper Cashew that will capture the essence of the project and its objectives
- Identify core messages, themes, and target audiences and describe how and when to reach each audience
- Identify how to create brand awareness through advertisement and online marketing techniques
- Craft the path and process to define the unique advantage that the project offers and articulate the same meaningfully

The selected candidate will also develop a brand book for the project. The project brand will unite the project's partners and activities across several countries under a recognizable and cohesive visual identity. The brand will incorporate TechnoServe's brand colors and general style for cohesive visual identity (*Note: while the Prosper Cashew brand should be congruous with TechnoServe's, its visual identity is not limited to TechnoServe colors and styles*), should be clean and professional, and should evoke a sense of strong local economic growth through private sector investment and improved capacities of cashew processing businesses. The brand book should cover:

- Brand Name
- Outline of the brand story, ethos, and purpose/mission
- Brand persona
- Brand logo, its variation, its usage
- Icons
- Color scheme/palettes
- Fonts, sizes, and style variation/typography
- Imagery
- Brand language and communication style

2.1 Deliverables

The successful candidate will work with Prosper Cashew's Chief of Party and Deputy Chief of Party to develop:

1. a marketing strategy that covers all project components and describes the approach and activities to be implemented over the project's five years
2. a brand book and visual identity, including:
 - Prosper Cashew project logo (in English and French)
 - Brand guidelines, including co-branding guidance for implementing partners (for printed and digital materials, such as fact sheets, reports, video, etc.)
 - Editable Prosper Cashew-branded templates for:
 - Letterhead in Microsoft Word
 - Fact sheet in Microsoft Word or PowerPoint
 - Report in Microsoft Word
 - Presentation in PowerPoint
 - Digital templates for:
 - Signage for project office and other physical structures
 - Staff uniforms (shirts, hats)
 - Business cards

- Email signatures
 - 4-6 icons/infographics to represent key project activities
3. A 2-page project brochure for digital and print using TechnoServe photos and content

2.2 Period of Performance

The period of performance of any contract resulting from this solicitation is anticipated to begin on or about March 1, 2021, for a duration of approximately 1-3 months.

3 Qualifications

Desired skills and experience include:

- Previous work with international/small/non-profit organizations
- Understanding of brand identity
- Superior customer-service skills
- Ability to accept constructive criticism and integrate client's feedback
- Ability to create initial concepts with minimal information provided
- Experience in creative marketing strategies targeting various audiences, including audiences relevant to Prosper Cashew
- Fluency in design in Microsoft Office and PowerPoint
- Fluency in Adobe Suite, including Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, Acrobat DC
- Experience in creative concept development
- Understanding the importance of color and fonts to communications messaging
- Experience with publications and desktop publishing
- Experience in creation of graphs and infographics
- Capacity to work under tight deadlines
- Availability to make changes, pivot quickly

4 Submission and Evaluation of Proposals

4.1 Form and Content of Response

Please share your firm's qualifications to deliver on the requirements contained within this RFP and a monetary bid for completing such work. To assist TechnoServe in assessing your company's fit with our needs, your proposal should provide:

- Details on how your firm would address the SOW above
- Details on your project management process - what is your approach to managing project timelines and budgets? What tools and communication methods do you use internally and with clients to keep everyone aligned, organized and successful?
- Information about your firm: in what areas does your firm have the most expertise? What sets you/your firm apart from the others, and why? What is your percentage of nonprofit and for-profit clients?
- Team member bios that will be assigned to this project and their role within the project:
 - Years of experience
 - Previous work
 - Time with firm
- Sample work plan with project milestones
- A description of what you expect from clients in order to ensure a successful partnership
- Three client references we may contact
- Two to three example work products that demonstrate your approach, capabilities, and results (if possible, please include at least one nonprofit client)

- Detailed cost proposal in USD, including a cost breakdown for your standard design and development process for each product, with applicable Tax/Charges clearly identified

All proposals shall also:

- Remain valid for a period of 90 days from submission.
- Be in the English language.
- Provide requested payment terms and conditions.
- Include a contact name, email address, and telephone number to facilitate communication between TNS and the submitting organization.
- Provide a brief outline of the organization and services offered, including:
 - Full legal name, jurisdiction of incorporation and address of the company
 - Full legal name and country of citizenry of company's President and / or Chief Executive Officer
 - Year business was established

4.2 Criteria for Selection

The evaluation of each response to this RFP will be based on the criteria set out below. At the sole discretion of TechnoServe, the top proposals may be selected for follow-up questions.

- Experience & portfolio – 30%
- Work plan & project management approach – 30%
- Cost proposal – 30%
- Brand alignment with Prosper Cashew and TechnoServe audiences – 10%

TechnoServe reserves the right to award the contract to the consultant or firm whose proposal is deemed to be in the best interest of TechnoServe and the Donor. The consultant or firm with the winning proposal will be notified in writing. Applicants who are not selected will also be notified.

TechnoServe will not award a contract to any bidder where there is indication of a lack of business integrity.

4.3 Schedule of events

The procurement will take place according to the following timeline:

1. January 26, 2021 – RFP distributed
2. February 1, 2021 – interested parties who intend to submit a proposal for this RFP should notify TechnoServe of their intent to bid by emailing rfpprosper@tns.org with the subject line “Prosper Cashew marketing and branding procurement”
3. February 3, 2021 – Questions regarding this request for proposals may be sent to rfpprosper@tns.org
4. February 10, 2021 – TechnoServe will provide a transparent response to all interested parties who submit an intent to submit a proposal
5. **February 17, 2021** – Proposals responding to the RFP should be sent electronically to rfpprosper@tns.org with the subject line “Prosper Cashew marketing and branding procurement proposal”
6. February 22 – 26, 2021 - top candidates may be engaged to present their proposed solutions before final selection is made

4.4 Terms and Conditions

1. The Request for Proposal is not and shall not be considered an offer by TechnoServe.

2. All responses must be received on or before the date and time indicated below. All late responses will be rejected.
3. All unresponsive responses will be rejected.
4. All proposals will be considered binding offers. Prices proposed must be valid for entire period provided by respondent or required by RFP.
5. All awards will be subject to TNS contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
6. TNS reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal or cancel the solicitation process at any time, and shall have no liability to the proposing organizations submitting proposals for such rejection or cancellation of the request for proposals.
7. TNS reserves the right to accept all or part of the proposal when award is provided.
8. All information provided by TNS in this RFP is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time, and all bidders will be provided with notification of any changes. TNS is not responsible or liable for any use of the information submitted by bidders or for any claims asserted therefrom.
9. TNS reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.
10. The bidders are solely obligated to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by bidder or any third parties, in connection with the Response. All responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of TNS, subject to claims of confidentiality in respect of the response and supporting documentation, which have been clearly marked confidential by the bidder.
11. Bidders are required to identify and disclose any actual or potential Conflict of Interest.

Annex 1: Responses to Questions Submitted Regarding the RFP

- 1. Q:** I would like to enquire if due to covid-19 you would consider doing this digitally with a team well versed in this type of delivery?

A TechnoServe envisages that this engagement can be done entirely remotely.
- 2. Q:** I would like to confirm that you will consider international bidders providing they work in your time zone or if there is a marking criteria rating for local suppliers?

A There is no restriction on geography of the contractor. The criteria established in section 4.2 of the RFP apply to all bidders.
- 3. Q:** Who will be managing the project on the client side?

A Prosper Cashew's Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP).
- 4. Q:** Who will approve the deliverables/who will be the decision makers?

A The deliverables will be approved by the DCOP. The decision makers will be the COP and the DCOP. Deliverables articulated in question 8 will also require the input of USDA.
- 5. Q:** What is the approval process anticipated to be?

A We expect that the approval process for each deliverable will be relatively straightforward with minimal decision makers involved. We anticipate that depending on the deliverable, it would be approved between 1-14 days.
- 6. Q:** Is there further information on the partners that can be provided?

A The financial partner is the United States Department of Agriculture. TechnoServe's implementing partner is ISF Advisors.
- 7. Q:** In addition to the TechnoServe and USAID brands will additional partner brands be included in the communications, such as ISF?

A The USAID brand will not be involved. We expect that USDA and ISF's logos will be used on some, but not all communications.
- 8. Q:** Will the partners be reviewing and approving the deliverables for this project?

A We expect that USDA will review and approve the logo, any proposed change in project name, the guidelines that pertain to when and how the USDA logo will be used, and the project brochure.
- 9. Q:** The RFP states that minimal information will be provided. Will we have access to key project leaders and stakeholders to gather necessary insights? Can you please elaborate on this.

A The plan is not to provide only minimal information. The contractor will have access to project leadership and materials. A plan can also be developed for the contractor to have access to other stakeholders as well, as relevant.
- 10. Q:** Is there any research information in place that is relevant to developing the brand, positioning and marketing strategies?

A TechnoServe has institutional information and research relevant to the sector, but limited research specific to this project's marketing strategy.
- 11. Q:** Is the name "Prosper Cashew" remaining or should development of a new name be included?

A We are open to changing the project name and would welcome ideas of new names that may be more effective.
- 12. Q:** An editable report is listed as a deliverable. What is the length and content of this document? Do you have an example?

A The editable report template refers to a template that the contractor will develop that will be used for semi-annual performance reports to USDA. The project team will develop content each semi-annual period. The template will likely be 2-5 pages

in length and would establish a format that will be followed for each report, including the cover page, table of contents, heading and sub-heading styles, table format, etc. The selected bidder can be provided with examples from relevant TechnoServe projects.

- 13. Q:** How many different types of signage are anticipated to be needed?
A We anticipate one template of signage will be needed to be used for project offices.
- 14. Q:** The RFP states TechnoServe will be providing content for the brochure. Is any content development needed for any of the communications pieces?
A The contractor will be required to develop the content for the marketing strategy and the brand guidelines. The templates do not require content.
- 15. Q:** Regarding all editable templates: Will these include final content (copy and images) provided by TechnoServe, or "lorem ipsum" copy and placeholder images?
A For editable templates, "lorem ipsum" copy and placeholder images will be sufficient.
- 16. Q:** How many agencies are submitting proposals?
A We are unable to answer this question.
- 17. Q:** What is the budget range? (in order to more accurately scope and estimate deliverables).
A The project has estimated that the total contract ceiling may range between US\$10,000 and US\$50,000. The final contract ceiling will be contingent on the "value for money" of the selected applicant's proposal.
- 18. Q:** Who would you say are your primary stakeholders and which ones are being prioritized for this specific project?
A The project's primary clients will be cashew processors and other value chain businesses such as equipment manufacturers and suppliers in Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Ghana.
- 19. Q:** From a value proposition and general business identity perspective, does your team have a starting point with regards to who you are or will be a carte blanche exercise?
A We have a starting point and a general perspective of our value proposition. Our service offering is relatively defined.
- 20. Q:** From a strategy perspective, what research has been done - Product? Category? Consumer?
A We do not have a straightforward syndicated analysis or report on any of these.
- 21. Q:** What does success look like for you?
A The project has a strong brand that evokes enough interest in the minds of the stakeholders to participate and ultimately leads to continued engagement in and sustainability of the project.
- 22. Q:** Do you have a preference for the vendor is located or are you open to a Canadian agency that works with clients globally?
A We do not have a preference for where the vendor is located.
- 23. Q:** We understand that we are to only provide for the strategies but not implement the same, is this correct?
A Correct, at this point in time we are currently asking the contractor to develop the strategy.
- 24. Q:** Could you let us know what the budget is for this work?
A The project has estimated that the total contract ceiling may range between US\$10,000 and US\$50,000. The final contract ceiling will be contingent on the "value for money" of the selected applicant's proposal.
- 25. Q:** Would be helpful to know the range you expect the budget for this project to fall into.

- A The project has estimated that the total contract ceiling may range between US\$10,000 and US\$50,000. The final contract ceiling will be contingent on the “value for money” of the selected applicant’s proposal.
- 26. Q:** Do you have an existing Brand Brief and/or Brand Guidelines for TechnoServe? If so, can you share them?
- A TechnoServe Inc. does have a brand toolkit. To the extent that it is helpful, we can share it with the selected bidder, however, though Prosper Cashew's visual identity should be congruous with TechnoServe's, it is not limited to TechnoServe colors and styles.
- 27. Q:** Do you have any existing research on the target audiences for this project? If so, can you share it?
- A We have identified our target audiences for the project but have not done substantial research on each of them.
- 28. Q:** The RFP states that the work in the contract will be for a “duration of 1 – 3 months.” Are there outside events or deadlines that are driving this timeline? Is there any room for flexibility in this timeline?
- A This timeline is not driven by outside events or deadlines. There is potential for some flexibility.
- 29. Q:** We have experience branding and marketing nonprofit organizations, as well as a number of vertical industries, including Food & Beverage. Would our F&B experience be something relevant that you would like to see in our response?
- A We consider food & beverage experience relevant and interesting.
- 30. Q:** Do you have any specific goals and/or KPIs for the communications aspect of this project? If so, what are they?
- A We do not currently have any formulated communications KPIs, but we would like to develop them.
- 31. Q:** We understand the project has a timeline of five (5) years. Is the marketing strategy for all five (5) years as well?
- A Yes, the marketing strategy should cover all five years.
- 32. Q:** We can scale our activities for this project and want to be as efficient as possible in our budgeting. Is there any budget guidance you can provide, even on an annual basis, so that we give you an appropriate budget to consider?
- A The project has estimated that the total contract ceiling may range between US\$10,000 and US\$50,000. The final contract ceiling will be contingent on the “value for money” of the selected applicant’s proposal. Bidders should provide a cost breakdown for each deliverable.
- 33. Q:** What is the structure of your internal communications team? After the contract is awarded, who will be involved in the review/approval process from your team?
- A Prosper Cashew's communications initiatives will be managed by the DCOP, with ad hoc support from TechnoServe Inc.'s marketing and communications team. The COP and the DCOP will be involved in the review and approval process.
- 34. Q:** Will the proposed marketing recommendation include a paid media component and if so, will it be a media planning recommendation for TechnoServe to implement on its own, or would you be looking for our agency’s media team to plan, buy and place the paid media on your behalf?
- A The marketing strategy may recommend a paid media component. The strategy should be developed as if the project is implementing it. At the same time, we are open to potential future external engagements to execute certain aspects of the strategy.

- 35. Q:** If there is a paid media component, please confirm the target audience and geographies.
A The project does not already have a paid media component.
- 36. Q:** Are there any other paid media tactics currently in place, i.e., traditional, digital, social?
A The project does not already have a paid media component.
- 37. Q:** What is the ideal completion date?
A We would like to have the Scope of Work completed by the end of June 2021 at the latest.
- 38. Q:** Are you open to a staged delivery that goes beyond three months?
A We are open to a staged delivery.
- 39. Q:** Do you have a set budget or budget range?
A The project has estimated that the total contract ceiling may range between US\$10,000 and US\$50,000. The final contract ceiling will be contingent on the “value for money” of the selected applicant’s proposal.
- 40. Q:** Who is on the project team, what are their roles, time zone, and availability?
A The deliverables will be approved by the DCOP. The decision makers will be the COP and the DCOP. The DCOP is currently based in the Eastern time zone (EST) and generally available from 9am-5pm. The COP is currently based in the India Standard Time zone and generally available from 5am-12pm EST. Both will eventually be based in Abidjan and on Greenwich Mean Time.
- 41. Q:** Are there other TechnoServe projects with a similar scope we can review?
A The development and deployment of an investment fund (Cashew Catalyst Fund) is new to TechnoServe, therefore the scope of this project is unique. Other USDA-funded projects implemented by TechnoServe that are similar in that they work in high margin agricultural crops are BeninCaju and MOCCA. Their websites are accessible here: <https://www.tnsbenin.org/benincaju.html>; <https://mocca.org/>
- 42. Q:** What type of fundraising infrastructure and team do you have in place?
A We do not believe this is relevant to the RFP.
- 43. Q:** For the Cashew Catalyst Fund, do you anticipate raising funds exclusively from philanthropic and government funders, or do you have the desire/capacity to raise from private equity firms and impact investments funds?
A We will pursue a variety of different potential investors, including impact investors, private equity firms, other impact investment funds, etc.
- 44. Q:** Are there any conversations currently underway with donors and/or partners?
A The Cashew Catalyst Fund is in the design and feasibility stage. We have had initial exploratory conversations with some donors and partners.
- 45. Q:** For the cashew sector: what type of relationship do you have with this audience (i.e. West African cashew business operators)?
A TechnoServe has worked in the cashew sector in West Africa for more than a decade, however, our previous work in these three countries focused more on production versus processing. We have institutional relationships with some actors, while some relationships will be new.
- 46. Q:** Similarly, what type of relationship do you have with buyers and distributors?
A We have institutional relationships with some buyers and distributors, while we will seek to build some new relationships.
- 47. Q:** What type of access will we have with these various audiences/groups?
A We are open to proposals on what level of access would be most appropriate, meaningful, and how it would add value.
- 48. Q:** Do you have a business model geared toward these audiences/groups?
A Yes.

- 49. Q:** For the five-year marketing strategy, what level of detail are you expecting?
- A We are expecting a broad strategy for the entire 5 years, but more detailed for the first year of the project.
- 50. Q:** Who will be implementing/executing the marketing strategy?
- A The strategy should be developed as if the project is implementing it. At the same time, we are open to potential future external engagements to execute certain aspects of the strategy.
- 51. Q:** What is the desired outcome of the marketing/advertising?
- A The project has a strong brand that evokes enough interest in the minds of the stakeholders to participate and ultimately leads to continued engagement in and sustainability of the project.
- 52. Q:** What is the designated budget (or budget range) for executing the marketing strategy?
- A The project has a communications budget that can be leveraged in different ways, including used for a marketing campaign. This can be discussed during the discovery & audit period.
- 53. Q:** Do the marketing deliverables (brochure; infographic; templates; etc.) need to be translated into several languages? If yes, which languages?
- A Brand guidelines and editable branded templates are required in English only. If the project logo ends up having a French and English version, then digital templates would be required in both French and English. The project brochure will be developed in both French and English. TechnoServe will provide the translations.
- 54. Q:** The RFP states that "The successful candidate will work with Prosper Cashew's Chief of Party and Deputy Chief of Party to develop..." Can you share more information about the nature of the team that we would be interfacing with? Is the team based in the U.S or West Africa? How many decision-makers will be involved in the project as we go through important Discovery milestones as well as the rounds of feedback and review?
- A The deliverables will be approved by the DCOP. The decision makers will be the COP and the DCOP. The DCOP is currently based in the Eastern time zone (EST) and generally available from 9am-5pm. The COP is currently based in the India Standard Time zone and generally available from 5am-12pm EST. Both will eventually be based in Abidjan and on Greenwich Mean Time. Deliverables articulated in question 8 will also require the input of USDA Washington.
- 55. Q:** The RFP states that "The selected candidate will develop a marketing strategy for the Prosper Cashew project. The strategy will unite the project's partners and technical activities across several countries and allow the project to maximize its impact through marketing...The successful candidate will work with Prosper Cashew's Chief of Party and Deputy Chief of Party to develop: 1. a marketing strategy that covers all project components and describes the approach and activities to be implemented over the project's five years" Is there a budget assigned to the marketing campaign? This is something that can be shared during Discovery & Audit, although it will be a key factor in defining the specifics of marketing strategies and implementation.
- A The project has a communications budget that can be leveraged in different ways, including used for a marketing campaign. This can be discussed during the discovery & audit period.
- 56. Q:** The client is named as "West Africa Regional (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria) Prosper Cashew project with the project's head office based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire" To what extent is pre-existing familiarity with the focus countries required, or is it understood that this will be acquired through Discovery & Audit?

A The client is TechnoServe's Prosper Cashew project, which operates in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria with its main office in Abidjan. Familiarity with the focus countries is preferred but not required.

57. Q: The RFP states that you would like a logo in English and French. Are you looking for other deliverables to be in English and French as well (brand guidelines, branded template, digital templates, email signatures, brochures)? Would communication with the client be in French or English?

A Communication with the client would be in English. Brand guidelines and editable branded templates are required in English only. If the project logo ends up having a French and English version, then digital templates would be required in both French and English. The project brochure will be developed in both French and English. TechnoServe will provide the translations.

58. Q: The RFP states, "The period of performance of any contract resulting from this solicitation is anticipated to begin on or about March 1, 2021, for a duration of approximately 1-3 months." Are there any hard deadlines in place, defined by parallel project efforts, by which the brand project and marketing strategies must be launched and ready for kick-off and distribution?

A There are no hard deadlines in place.

59. Q: What is the overall budget assigned for the scope of work outlined in the RFP? (A ballpark range is fine if you can't be specific.)

A The project has estimated that the total contract ceiling may range between US\$10,000 and US\$50,000. The final contract ceiling will be contingent on the "value for money" of the selected applicant's proposal.

60. Q: What is a guideline budget for the proposed deliverables?

A The project has estimated that the total contract ceiling may range between US\$10,000 and US\$50,000. The final contract ceiling will be contingent on the "value for money" of the selected applicant's proposal. Bidders should provide a cost breakdown for each deliverable.

61. Q: At the time of presentation, will the event be in person or remotely?

A The event will be done remotely.

End of RFP