

## USA Program Officer Consultancy Announcement



The Better Cotton Initiative seeks a qualified individual to serve as Program Officer to support the data management, assurance and other functions of its rapidly expanding USA country program

**Starting date: As soon as possible, no later than May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018**

**Contract Type/Location** – Full-time consulting contract, 1-year term, renewable by mutual agreement. The role is estimated to require approximately 40 hours per week, and will be home-based in the USA. BCI has a strong preference for Memphis or another Mid-South location.

**Monthly Fee (Gross) – USD 4,290**

**Application closing date – 15 April 2018**

### Background

Cotton is one of the most important and widely grown crops in the world, and the USA plays a key role in terms of production volumes, innovation within the industry and the ability to strongly influence other cotton producers.

The Better Cotton Initiative is a global, non-profit membership association headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, with satellite offices London, New Delhi, Shanghai and Lahore, and additional contract personnel in Turkey, Mozambique, and the United States. Together, they comprise the BCI Secretariat, which oversees the global implementation of the Better Cotton Standard System.

BCI's USA program has been growing very rapidly since launching in 2014, and now includes 5% of US cotton production under license.

### BCI's specific aims

- » Reduce the environmental impact of cotton production;
- » Improve livelihoods and economic development in cotton producing areas;
- » Improve commitment to and flow of Better Cotton throughout the supply chain;
- » Ensure the credibility and sustainability of the Better Cotton Initiative.

For more info, see <http://bciannualreport.org/>.

### Position Description

Under the supervision of the USA Country Manager, the USA Program Officer will support the successful, rapidly expanding implementation of the Better Cotton program in the United States. The Program Officer will manage online databases, monitor the activities of Implementation Partners (IPs), facilitate information flows, and support the evaluation of projects. The Program Officer will ensure the credibility of the information collected from the field and contribute to understanding the impact of Better Cotton. The Program Officer will also provide support to members based in the USA.

This is an exciting and challenging role that will involve regular travel to the field to verify sustainable practices and collaborate with growers to identify improvement opportunities.

## Responsibilities

### Information management

The Program Officer will be the primary USA contact for data management, providing support to Implementing Partners (IPs) and other actors, and ensuring that country-level BCI data is available to support results and impact claims. The Program Officer will:

- » Ensure that BCI's contact database is maintained up to date, in collaboration with other users of the system;
- » Ensure the timely, accurate collection of data from project IPs and individual farms to ensure BCI requirements and deadlines are met;
- » Support IP managers and 3<sup>rd</sup>-party verifiers to carry out their verification functions;
- » Contribute to improving the quality of result indicator data;
- » Support the preparation of case studies to evaluate progress and impact;
- » In collaboration with the Communications Team and the global Supply Programme Coordinator, contribute to development of communications material for members and partners, strengthening the story of Better Cotton;
- » Collect, review and organize national guidance material, stories from the field and best practices developed by IPs (and others), in order to foster learning between partners;
- » Share the results of data analysis to facilitate and inform continuous improvement among participating farmers and producer groups.

### Assurance

The Program Officer will support the operation of the Better Cotton Assurance program in the following ways:

- » Conduct and report on verification visits to farms within producer groups to determine license eligibility and identify areas for improvement or other specific needs;
- » Review 2nd- and 3rd-party verification reports for accuracy and completeness and advise Country Manager accordingly;
- » Prepare reports based on verification outcomes;
- » Provide support on communications, training and implementation of the Better Cotton standard;

### Membership and Supply Chain Support

- » Respond to inquiries from supplier and retail/brand members regarding membership, use of the Better Cotton Tracer or procurement of US Better Cotton;
- » Liaise with Membership and Supply Chain team members as necessary;
- » Provide administrative and logistical support for USA stakeholder, member and supply chain events;
- » Provide support to the USA Membership Engagement Manager, as agreed with the USA Country Manager.

## Profile

A successful candidate for the Program Officer role will have the following attributes:

Experience
<b>Essential</b>
At least 2 years experience managing project data, databases
Successful member of multifunctional team
<b>Desirable</b>

Experience in monitoring and evaluation and/or 3 <sup>rd</sup> party certification systems
Agricultural experience/background
Experience conducting farm-level interviews or audits
Cotton production or supply chains
<b>Skills, knowledge, credentials</b>
<b><i>Essential</i></b>
Bachelor's degree or equivalent professional experience.
Demonstrated interest in sustainability and agriculture
Excellent analytical and problem solving skills, with a proactive approach to finding and proposing solutions to challenges within clearly defined boundaries
Fluent in English, w/ demonstrated ability to communicate clearly, concisely and confidently
Ability to command respect and gather essential management information from farmers
IT literacy, to include: Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
Self-motivated, highly organized and able to manage multiple, competing priorities
Ability to undertake multi-day travel
<b><i>Desirable</i></b>
Academic training in agriculture, environmental science and/or sustainability
Fluency in Spanish (To facilitate developments in Latin America)
Training in statistics

### Working arrangements

The contractor appointed to this role will report to the USA Country Manager and must be a US citizen or have authorization to work in the United States. As a contractor, the PO is responsible for all related payroll taxes and other costs.

The Program Officer is expected to attend some events in the evenings or on weekends. Travel will be required. The Program Officer will travel to US cotton production areas, for up to a week at a time, most commonly in the two months before and after the beginning of cotton harvest.

### Applications

Interested applicants with the required attributes are asked to send a detailed resume and letter of interest (2 pages maximum) to [Scott.Exo@BetterCotton.org](mailto:Scott.Exo@BetterCotton.org).

We thank all applicants for their interest. Those candidates short-listed for a preliminary telephone interview will be contacted.

*The BCI is an equal opportunity organization, and is committed to good practice and transparency in the management of natural, human and financial resources.*