

Request for Proposals - US Certification Group Manager

RFP n#: 2025-10-PR-USGM

Location: US (Remote)

Start date: 1st Feb 2026

End date: 30th Jan 2027

Technical Team: Programmes



All applications must be submitted via this [form](#).

You may submit questions to tender@bettercotton.org – RFP n# 2025-10-PR-UGM” until 30th November 2025, noting that the **final submission deadline for bids is the 8th December 2025**.

Questions, requests and applications sent after the deadline will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Important Submission Process Information:

After submitting your details through the [form](#), you will receive a separate email to upload your supporting documents to a secure platform.

Description

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) is the world’s largest cotton sustainability program. Our mission: to help cotton communities survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment. In difficult times, we are meeting the challenge head on. Through our network of field-level partners we promote more sustainable farming practices to more than 1.6 million cotton farmers in 15 countries. More than a fifth of the world’s cotton is now grown under the BCI Standard and our membership network includes more than 2,600 members.

In the US, the BCI Program has been active since 2014, adapting its standard to local farming contexts. Over 300 cotton producers are enrolled in the program, accounting for more than 10%

of total U.S. cotton production on an annual basis. The Better Cotton Standard System covers six principles including crop protection, natural resources, fiber quality, decent work, livelihoods, and management systems, plus two cross-cutting themes: climate change and gender. Producers that are certified by BCI follow the Better Cotton Standard System and can market their cotton as BCI Cotton to a global membership network that includes well known apparel and home textile brands.

More information about BCI can be found on our website: www.bettercotton.org

Background

In 2025, BCI transitioned fully to third party certification of its US growers. Many are enrolled as part of a group model, with Program Partners serving as the Group Manager and handling processes to ensure that all growers maintain compliance with the standard. This model relieves some burden for the growers and allows auditing for sampling of a subset, reducing the cost and time for compliance checks.

Due to location, buyers, and other factors, not all growers are eligible to participate in the existing grower groups. We are evaluating a model for consultants to provide grower group management as a service and would like to test the model in the 2026 growing season.

We are seeking proposals from experienced individuals or organizations to recruit and manage a new BCI Grower Group in the US. This Group Manager would be responsible for communicating with prospective growers, assisting with enrolment and certification, performing internal assessments, and ensuring ongoing group compliance with the BCI standard.

Scope of Work

The expected output will be successful recruitment and management of a certified BCI Grower Group. With the support of the BCI US team, the consultant will be responsible for the following activities:

Group management

- Grower engagement: Communicate with prospective growers and assist in new grower recruitment.
- Grower enrollment: Support growers in determining eligibility and program enrollment.
- Group set-up: Contract with certification body and meet requirements for grower group certification
- Implement processes to ensure ongoing compliance, including timely submission of grower information and data, annual internal compliance checks of a subset of participating growers, resolution of corrective action plans, and communications with BCI and the certification body on any changes to the group members.
- Work with growers to enroll in carbon and other programs as needed.

- Provide regular feedback to BCI US Team on potential improvements to assurance system and other programming.

Evaluation of long-term feasibility

Track time and expenses to develop a business model that would make this a self-funded role, if possible. Share insights with BCI team at end of season.

High-level Timeline

8 th Dec 2025	Applications deadline All applications must be submitted via this form .
8–15 Dec 2025	Applications review & shortlisting / Interviews
By 19 Dec 2025	The successful applicant will be notified Unsuccessful <u>shortlisted</u> applicants will also be notified
11 th Feb 2025	Start of the consultancy
Feb – May 2026	Begin development of grower group and recruitment of new BCI growers.
Summer 2026	Contract with certification body and establish group management processes. Assist new growers in enrollment and perform compliance checks on sample group.
By Oct 2026	Work with growers to resolve any potential non-compliances. Work with certification body to complete requirements for certification.
By Nov 2026	Finalize certification and report harvest estimates
By Jan 2027	Support growers with renewal and submission of final seasonal data reports.

Required Skills & Knowledge

Skills, Knowledge and Experience
Essential
Experience working with multiple growers to manage certification or other regulatory processes
Knowledge of cotton production systems in the US to ensure accurate and efficient communication
Excellent time and project management skills
Based in the U.S
Desirable
Although the project will be primarily remote, travel may be requested to do checks, so ideally based in the U.S cotton belt

In addition to skills, competencies and expertise, we will consider value for money and demonstrable commitment to the sustainability field to evaluate applications.

Application Requirements

Please note that we have changed our RFP submission protocol, and this is now in two phases;

- **Phase 1: Initial details will be submitted on the form found in this [link](#).**
- **Phase 2: You will receive an email with live links to upload relevant documents (please check your Spam and Junk folders)**

Proposals responding to this Request for Proposals should be a maximum of three pages (excluding CVs), and include the following:

- Overview of relevant experience
- Proposed methodology and timeline
- Detailed and transparent budget, in EUROS, including time allocation and day rates

We thank all applicants for their interest; however, only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

BCI is committed to good practice and transparency in the management of natural, human and financial resources. All applications will be reviewed under the principles and subject to BCI's policies on equal opportunity, non-discrimination, anti-bribery & corruption and conflict of interest.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Technical Evaluation Criteria

- Demonstrated understanding of this RFP
- Quality and clarity of the proposed approach and methodology

- Feasibility of the proposed activity plan and timeline, and appropriateness of time allocated to delivering each task
- Relevant professional experience of the proposed consultant(s)
- Quality and relevance of the sample work submitted

Financial Evaluation Criteria

- Quality and clarity of budget provided, and level of detail included
- Alignment of the budget to the activity timeline detailed in the technical proposal
- Value for money
- Adherence to the available budget