Broadband Expansion and Access

RFP Response Form

June 20 2023

North Carolina Department of Information Technology
Broadband Infrastructure Office

Broadband Expansion and Access
RFP Response Form

Contents

Broadband Expansion and Access RFP

RFP Response Form

General Instructions.

Respondents must use the RFP Response Form to provide answers and documentation on the Financial, Operational and Technical components within Section 5 of the Broadband Expansion and Access RFP. The form provides space for Respondents to provide answers within a text box. Adjacent to each question is a designation which advises of the character limits within each text response box.

Uploaded Documents.

Some responses must be provided through uploaded files. Required documents should be uploaded directly into the Ariba Sourcing Tool. A cover sheet is recommended for each uploaded document including the name of the Respondent, the date, and the type of document. Number of pages including the cover may also be indicated. Uploaded documents should be in the PDF format. When creating the file name for the document, please include the Respondent name and document type. For example: **ABC Provider – Financial Statements 2019-2022.pdf**

A. Respondent Name and contact Information

Provide name of the Respondent below, as well as contact information for the project contact(s) for this RFP Response. (Please ensure the Company Name for Respondent corresponds with the organizational information requested in Section C.2., Baseline Company Profile. Additional contact information for the Authorized Representative(s) for the Respondent is requested in Section C.1 of this form.)

Company Name					
Company D/B/A					
Street Address					
City			State		Zip Code
Company URL					
Primary Contact	First Name		Last Name		
Email Address			Phone		
Secondary Contact	First Name		Last Name		
Email Address			Phone		

[The remainder of this page intentionally blank.]

B. Financial Documentation (RFP Section 5.3)

1. Financial Statements – 3 Years (5.3.1)

If Respondent is not a publicly held company, upload financial statements for the three most recent fiscal years including Balance Sheet, Income Statement and either a Statement of Changes in Financial Position or a Statement of Cash Flows. Financial statements from the three previous fiscal years are required.

If Respondent has less than three years of operating history (start-up or spin-off), provide annual financial statements for each full year of operations, and a YTD set of financials through the most recent complete quarter of operations. Provide an explanatory note in the indicated space below.

These statements can be provided from a CPA (audited, compiled, or reviewed), or can be provided from mainstream accounting programs such as QuickBooks, Sage, MS Dynamics, FreshBooks or other similar programs.

Publicly held companies must submit either (a) 10-K filings or (b) provide an EDGAR link to the company's 10-K filings for each of the three most recent reporting years.

Tax returns such as Form 1040 Schedule C, Form 1120 (all variants), Form 1165, or a partnership statement (Form K-1) are not acceptable substitutes for submission.

FI.01. Financial Statements – 3 Years. *(200 characters)*

Upload required financial statements into the Ariba Sourcing Tool. Statements should be in PDF format. Provide in box below, any descriptions of information being provided for this section. If Respondent is publicly held, provide direct links to 10-K statements in the box below.

☐ *Please click here if the company is publicly held* ***and*** *enter a link below to prior years 10-K filings.*

2. Bank Statements – 3 Years (5.3.2)

If Respondent is not a publicly held company, provide two consecutive (monthly) bank statements per year over the most recent three year period per bank account (e.g., the February and March statements for each of the past three years for a total of 6 statements). The yearly statements must be for consecutive months. Include statements from all operating accounts.

It is preferred that statements indicate transactions such as payroll, payroll tax deposits, and inbound invoice collections, etc. If Respondent has less than three years of operating history (start-up or spin-off), provide two consecutive months of bank statements for each operating account for each year of operation and provide an explanatory note in the indicated space below.

Submission of bank statements is not a requirement for a publicly held company that is operating in good standing – i.e., has not filed for Chapter 11 reorganization.

FI.02. Bank Statements – 3 Years. *(200 characters)*

Upload required financial statements into the Ariba Sourcing Tool. Statements should be in PDF format. Provide in box below, any descriptions of information being provided for this section.

☐ *Please click here if the company is publicly held and bank statements are not required.*

3. Bankruptcy (5.3.3)

Respondent must provide summary information on any current and prior bankruptcy filings dating from January 1, 2016 to present day and current bankruptcy status, if any. Include information about dates, type, court and jurisdiction and post-bankruptcy operating restrictions (if any) imposed by the court and whether such restrictions have been lifted. If Respondent is a sole proprietorship, include personal bankruptcy filings.

Submission of bankruptcy information is not a requirement for a publicly held company.

FI.03. Bankruptcy. *(1,000 characters)*

Upload required documents into the Ariba Sourcing Tool, as applicable. Documents should be in PDF format. Provide in box below, any descriptions of information being provided for this section.

☐ *There is no bankruptcy information to report, or to upload for this Respondent*.

4. Bank and Investment Reference(s) (5.3.4)

Banking Institutions

Respondent, who is not publicly held, will provide contact information for its primary representative (contact) for each banking institution to serve as a reference including (a) name of financial institution, (b) contact name, (c) contact title, (d) email address, (e) city and state of location, and (f) telephone number.

Submission of bank references is not a requirement for a publicly held company.

[The remainder of this page intentionally blank.]

FI.04.A. Bank and Investment Reference(s). ***(1,000 characters)***

If Respondent is not a publicly traded company, Respondent must provide reference(s) for each bank account as described above.

☐ *Click this box if Respondent is a publicly held company and bank contact information is not required.*

Non-Bank Financial Institutions

If Respondent is not a publicly traded company, and will be utilizing alternative sources of capital including, but not limited to, equity, private placement, or debt financing for projects, then Respondent will provide contact information for its primary contact for each investment firm to serve as a reference including (a) name of financial institution, (b) name, (c) title, (d) email address, (e) city and state of location, (f) telephone and (g) URL of the firm.

Submission of non-bank investment references is not a requirement for a publicly held company.

FI.04.B. Non-Bank Investment Reference(s). *(1,000 characters)*

If Respondent is not a publicly traded company, and will be utilizing alternative sources of capital including, but not limited to, equity, private placement, or debt financing, Respondent must provide reference(s) for these sources of capital as described above.

☐ *Click this box if Respondent is a publicly traded company and investment firm contacts are not required.*

[The remainder of this page intentionally blank.]

5. Current Broadband Deployment Grants (5.3.5)

Respondent, who is not publicly held, will provide a summary of existing broadband deployment projects in North Carolina or geographically adjacent states, which are funded by grants. This listing of current grant-funded projects should include the award date, award amount, matching fund requirement amount, expected end date of the project, granting agency and location of the project. The summary should also include the outstanding financial/matching fund obligations due from the Respondent for project completion. Funding awards from the Broadband Infrastructure Office do not need to be included in this response.

If Respondent is publicly held, information on current broadband deployment grants is not required.

FI.05. Current Broadband Deployment Grants. *(1,500 characters)*

Upload required documentation into the Ariba Sourcing Tool, as applicable. Documents should be in PDF format. Or provide in box below, information being provided for this section.

☐ *Click this box if Respondent is a publicly held company and this information is not required.*

☐ *Click this box if Respondent does not currently have grant funded broadband deployment projects.*

☐ *Click this box if Respondent does have grant funded broadband projects and **is uploading** documentation.*

6. Indebtedness (5.3.6)

Respondent, who is not publicly held, will provide a summary schedule of existing indebtedness, excluding non-material debt such as credit card balances, or small secured debt such as vehicle loans or mortgages. The schedule should reflect the current portion of long-term debt, as well as remaining obligations classified as long-term debt. If Respondent utilizes factoring, a summary of the factoring arrangements including commitments and requirements is required, as is baseline contact information related to the primary contact at the factoring company.

If Respondent is publicly held, information on indebtedness is not required.

FI.06. Indebtedness. *(750 characters)*

Provide a summary schedule of existing indebtedness via direct entry below or uploaded in a PDF document.

☐ *Click this box if Respondent is a publicly held company and a debt schedule is not required.*

☐ *Click this box if Respondent is uploading a summary schedule of debt.*

7. Failure to Perform (5.3.7)

Respondent will provide a list of grant projects where the Respondent defaulted on the completion of a broadband deployment grant funded with local, state, or federal funds, from January 1, 2018, to the present.

The word default, as used in this context, is defined as the omission or failure to fulfill a duty, observe a promise, discharge an obligation, or perform an agreement; and is specific to instances where the Respondent may be deemed to be at fault for the failure to perform the grant project(s). For each instance, provide a synopsis of why the project was not completed and the current status of the project(s).

FI.07. Failure to Perform. *(750 characters)*

Upload required documentation into the Ariba Sourcing Tool, as applicable. Documents should be in PDF format. Or provide in box below, information being provided for this section.

☐ *Click this box if Respondent has no items to report.*

[The remainder of this page intentionally blank.]

C. Operational Documentation (RFP Section 5.4)

1. Contact Information for Authorized Representatives (5.4.1)

If not previously identified, Respondent shall provide the name and contact information for up to two individuals who carry P&L responsibility for broadband operations in North Carolina.

OP.01. Contact Information.

Provide name and contact information for up to two Respondent contacts responsible for "full cost" management for broadband projects in North Carolina. Include name, title, email address, phone number and physical address. If different than previously provided, please enter the relevant physical address. If the contacts are the same as previously listed in Section A, the following table should remain blank.

☐ *Click this box if the contacts listed in section A fulfill the requirements of OP.01 and OP.01 is not completed.*

	Contact 1	***Contact 2***
Name		
Title		
Email		
Phone		
Location City/State		

2. Baseline Company Profile (5.4.2)

Respondent will provide a corporate organizational chart identifying the parent company and any subsidiaries or affiliates that will be performing work in North Carolina and clarifying the company serving as the Respondent to this RFP. The Respondent should be the part of the company able to contract, receive and implement grant awards in North Carolina.

Within the organizational chart, describe the Respondent's business structure in relation to tax filings (for-profit, not-for-profit, etc.) and whether the company is publicly traded. Respondent will indicate appropriate identification numbers by providing the specific ID number for the relevant corporate entity in the ID Number field in the table below. Only applicable identification numbers are required. See RFP Section 5.4.2 for a description of the ID Name. Please do not upload copies of submitted reports.

[The remainder of this page intentionally blank.]

OP.02 Baseline Company Profile.

Respondent's corporate organizational chart should be provided as an upload in pdf format. Please indicate appropriate identification numbers by adding the Respondent specific number in the ID Number field in the table. Enter any applicable comments in the Remarks column. If the company has multiple legal entities, provide the company name associated with the ID in the Remarks column. If there are additional identification numbers to be included by the Respondent, enter these numbers in the blank miscellaneous boxes.

ID Name	*ID Number*	*Remarks*
US FEIN		
NC SOS		
US CAGE		
FCC FRN		
FCC ETC		
UEI		
EQUIFAX		
MISC. 1		
MISC. 2		
MISC. 3		

3. Billing and Operational Support Systems (B/OSS) (5.4.3)

Respondent will provide information regarding their internal B/OSS system. Irrespective of the developmental origins of the system, Respondent is required to provide summary information related to system management and maintenance. If the system is provided by a vendor, but managed and controlled in-house, contact information is to be provided for the vendor's account manager or representative supporting the Respondent including name, email, and phone number.

[The remainder of this page intentionally blank.]

OP.03. Billing and Operational Support System. *(1,000 characters)*

Briefly describe the billing and operational support system utilized for end user account management. Include the name and URL of the software provider and contact information for the current account manager. Indicate if primary billing system data is stored onsite or offsite. Provide a brief summary of backup protocols for this data.

☐ *Check this box if billing system was developed internally.*

☐ *Check this box if billing functions are outsourced and managed by a third party.*

☐ *Check this box if Respondent employs a dedicated billing manager or billing staff.*

4. Billing and Customer Data (5.4.4)

Billing and collection activities are a cornerstone of operational viability. This question has two associated components related to performance and data security.

OP.04A. Billing Processes. *(1,000 characters)*

Briefly describe billing cycles and summarize how end users receive or access their billing information. Provide a summary of payment methods available to subscribers.

[The remainder of this page intentionally blank.]

Customer Data. The protection of both subscriber and company data is a critical operational component. Subscriber data may include social security numbers, checking account and credit card information, alternate contact information and more.

OP.04B. Customer Data. *(750 characters)*

Summarize internal policy and security standards for protecting customer proprietary network information (CPNI) and equivalent end user information including personal and billing information. The frequency of security standards testing and reviews should be included. <u>In response, do NOT provide information which has the potential to compromise ongoing or planned systems operation, network management or security.</u>

5. Federal Filing Status (5.4.5)

This question requests a summary of federal filings by the Respondent relating to communications operations. This brief summary must include filing dates, agency, and current status including Forms 477, 498, 499 and Broadband Data Collection (BDC) data submitted since July 1, 2021. This element is a summary description only. Do not submit actual forms or documentation filed with the agency. There is no requirement to provide information on filing activities which are currently in process. If no forms have been filed meeting the above criteria, please indicate via the checkbox. Respondent must also indicate whether they participate in the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program.

OP.05. Filing Status *(500 characters)*

Briefly describe current federal communications filings including, but not limited to, Form(s) 477, 498, 499 and BDC submissions dating from July 1, 2021 including filing dates, agency, form type and status (if any) starting with the most recent filing. Indicate specifically whether the Respondent currently participates in the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program.

☐ *Check this box if Respondent has not filed forms as described.*

☐ *Check this box if Respondent participates in the FCC Affordable Connectivity Program.*

6. End User Support (5.4.6)

Respondents should address both the types of support as well as support standards.

Support Types. The three primary types of inbound support calls are for (1) service break-fix, (2) billing, and (3) requests to help connect equipment or to troubleshoot issues relating to equipment such as televisions, routers, computers, etc. Other inbound calls may focus on issues such as utilizing web-based applications, email, or concerns about security. Respondent must briefly summarize their processes and policies for handling such calls.

Standards. Respondent should provide information on respondent standards for end user customer support. Differentiate between support for end users receiving "best efforts" services vs. those who subscribe to services with a service level agreement (SLA) in place.

Provide the standard hours of operation, based on the Eastern time zone, for the availability of customer support representatives (CSR's). Identify if CSR's are based in the United States or elsewhere. Describe how contact can be made with the CSR e.g., telephone call, text, online through a web portal, an online chat function, email or other.

OP.06. End User Support. *(1,000 characters)*

Summarize both the types of support and support standards for end user support protocols including the capacity for 24 x 7 inbound support. Briefly describe resolution procedures relative to real time resolution, dispatch, or escalation.

[The remainder of this page intentionally blank.]

7. Human Resource Capacity (5.4.7)

This question focuses on the capability and capacity of a Respondent to address resource requirements needed to support broadband expansion projects in North Carolina.

OP.07. Human Resource Capacity. *(1000 characters)*

Summarize the Respondent's capacity from a human resource perspective, especially in relation to the federal funding now available nationwide for broadband investments. Describe broad strategies for absorbing the additional deployment work in this climate, including the company's capability to utilize in-house and contract personnel. Briefly describe how new employees and/or contract personnel are trained and integrated to support grant projects in North Carolina, specifically the types of employees who support the physical network such as technicians and splicers.

D. Technical Documentation (RFP Section 5.5)

1. High Level Network Summary (5.5.1)

This introductory question allows the Respondent to provide a general overview of its architecture for its current broadband networks in North Carolina. Do not include special use / constructed circuits in the description. The response is an overview to assist in better understanding how the Respondent views its networks at a high-level and is not considered binding for any specific infrastructure project.

This response will provide a succinct overview of central office (CO), headend or colocation facilities to last mile connectivity, and further describe whether Internet access is via peering, direct connection, or a combination of both. In the summary, provide failover and general network security processes.

Summarize powered and unpowered components generally used in networks. Summarize overall design direction for future network construction or additions in North Carolina, if different from strategy for current networks. In the response, do NOT provide details of security architecture, processes, or credentials.

[The remainder of this page intentionally blank.]

NW.01. Network Summary. *(1,000 characters)*

Briefly provide response to the items outlined above. If the Respondent does not currently own or operate networks in North Carolina, the response should be a concise summary of overall network architecture principles utilized by the Respondent.

2. Network Design for Grant Projects (5.5.2)

NW.02. Network Design. *(1,000 characters)*

Provide a summary of considerations for how Respondent designs for grant-based projects that are seeking to serve unserved and underserved locations in North Carolina. Information should include but not be limited to analysis of eligible project areas, budget development and review, network design considerations to achieve last mile connectivity, and details on how internal / external resources may be engaged in the process.

[The remainder of this page intentionally blank.]

3. Network Development (5.5.3)

NW.03. Network Development. *(1,000 characters)*

Respondent should briefly outline how the Respondent advances a proposed project from the conceptual to an actual work in process as a project. Briefly describe this as a transition to a managed project including high level definitions of key milestones. Summarize planning for permits, easements, and preparation for make-ready work. If Network Development of a grant project is different than a privately funded build, note any key differences.

4. Network Construction (5.5.4)

Respondent will provide summary information on how network construction for new projects is generally managed and implemented. Response should outline key construction phases and whether internal or external resources are used during construction. Respondent should include names of typical contactors used by Respondent in North Carolina projects. If network construction processes differ for grant-funded projects, Respondent should describe how grant-funded deployment projects differ in approach in terms of Network Construction.

NW.04. Network Construction. *(1,500 characters)*

Provide response information in the box below or upload documentation into the Ariba Sourcing Tool, as applicable. Documents should be in PDF format.

5. Network Turnup / Operationalization (5.5.5)

Respondent will summarize the high level processes and typical transition from network construction to operationalization including quality control (QC) processes for new construction combined with the resolution of construction and turnup issues. Describe intermediate test processes during construction. Identify the safeguards in place to ensure adequate reliability and stability are present prior to general availability of the network. Also explain who in the company is responsible for network turnup and signoff for completion.

NW.05. Operationalization. *(1,000 characters)*

Provide information on the items and processes described above in the box below.

6. Reliability and Repair (5.5.6)

This response is separated into several related elements.

Questions in this section are directed towards understanding overall network reliability goals. Respondent will describe its broad standards for ongoing infrastructure review and maintenance including generalized information on resource and funding allocation and schedules, identification of key vendors and escalation processes.

DO NOT DISCLOSE CONFIDENTIAL NETWORK SECURITY INFORMATION IN THE RESPONSES.

NW.06A. Reliability. *(1,000 characters) (5.5.6.1)*

Describe the overall objectives for network reliability (excluding upstream providers). Briefly describe network monitoring algorithms and systems in use. Describe what generally constitutes a "Network Emergency."

NW.06B. Repair. *(1,000 characters) (5.5.6.2)*

Respondent will summarize how repair requirements are communicated and managed. Describe whether mean time to detect (MTTD) and mean time to restore (MTTR) statistics are calculated for the Respondent for fiber networks in NC and whether such statistics are of value in supporting network restoral. If not, describe how response times are tracked and measured to ensure timely repair (non-extraordinary).

NW.06C. Resource Management. *(750 characters) (5.5.6.3)*

Summarize resource management protocols utilized by Respondent to support network maintenance and repairs including crew, equipment, and supplies.

NW.06D. Dispatch Process. *(1,000 characters) (5.5.6.4)*

Respondent will briefly describe the standard dispatch process related to the identification and management of network outages or repairs. Generally describe the broad process relating to an outage for an individual subscriber. Describe how scheduled maintenance windows tie to these processes.

NW.06E. Inventory. *(750 characters) (5.5.6.5)*

Briefly describe Respondent's general inventory management policies, processes, and capabilities for infrastructure components such as cables, connectors, conduit; for network electronics (such as cards, hubs, antennas, radios, routers, switches etc.); and for end user components (such as network interface devices (NID), optical network terminals (ONT), etc.). If inventory management processes for a grant project are different than a privately funded build, note any key differences.

7. Network Management & Security (5.5.7)

Network security represents the protection of data which travels the network, or is accessible from the network, but also the maintenance of network availability use by end user subscribers. It is generally accepted that end users carry primary responsibility for data and application security. The responses to this component summarize at a high-level, the approach of the Respondent to network level security.

DO NOT DISCLOSE CONFIDENTIAL OR SPECIFIC NETWORK SECURITY ARCHITECTURE, DEVICE INFORMATION OR CREDENTIALS IN THESE RESPONSES.

NW.07.A Security Management Information *(500 characters) (5.5.7.1)*

Respondent will briefly describe the high-level approach to managed network security. If Respondent utilizes a third party for managed services, please list the name of the managed network security (MNS) company in the box provided. If Respondent utilizes both an in-house security manager and a third party company, please check both boxes.

☐ *Check this box if Respondent has a dedicated security manager for North Carolina based networks.*

☐ *Check this box if Respondent relies on, or contracts with, a third party for managed network security services.*

[The remainder of this page intentionally blank.]

NW.07.B Network Security Policy. *(1,500 characters) (5.5.7.2)*

Respondent will briefly describe the high-level approach to its policy for network security including physical security, network access, and other incursions such as distributed denial-of-service type attacks.
Summarize Respondent policy for network security including physical security, network access, and other incursions such as DDoS or other cyber attacks. Describe differences between protocols for company owned networks vs. partner owned networks if applicable. (Indicate if the Respondent does not utilize a partner-owned network).

E. Attestation Statement

AS.01. Attestation from Respondent.

By submission of this form, the Respondent certifies that the information contained in this RFP Response Form, and its accompanying uploaded information is true, correct, and complete to the best of the Respondent's knowledge and belief.

Attestation Statement			
The undersigned representative of the Respondent certifies the information in this RFP Response Form, and its accompanying uploaded information is true, correct, and complete to the best of the signatory's knowledge and belief. The signatory further certifies that as Authorized Representative, the signatory is authorized to approve this submission.			
Authorized Representative Signature		Date:	
Printed Name		Title	