

Office of Broadband Access and Expansion

Addendum 1

Response to Written Questions

RFP# OBAE-SEN-PH2-2023-001

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

Please see the attached document which addresses Section II.B.6 Response to Written Questions of RFP# OBAE-SEN-PH2-2023-001. This document contains questions that were submitted by potential offerors by the deadline listed in the RFP, Section II.A, Sequence of Events.

Thank you for your interest in the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion solicitations.

Richard Govea
Procurement Manager

Office of Broadband Access and Expansion

No.	Question	Response
1.	Please clarify the date Appendix F is due back to the State's procurement manager. The RFP states to reference the RFP deadline in Section IIA Schedule of events; however, Appendix F states it is due Jan 23, 2024, at 3pm MT.	Appendix F shall be due back to the Procurement Manager by February 7, 2024, by 3:00 PM MST.
2.	Instructions state to provide a single Technical Proposal file and a single Cost Proposal file, and all attachments must be in pdf format. For clarification, does the state wish the Cost Proposal to also be in pdf format?	No, the cost proposal should not be submitted in PDF format. Please keep the Cost Proposal file in its original Excel format for submission.
3.	Are all bandwidths listed on Appendix D required to be bid or just the bandwidths supported at that location?	Offerors are not required to provide responses to all bandwidths listed on Appendix D. Offerors should explain in their technical proposal how their solution meets scalability needs (or not) and what specifics and limitations exist.
4.	In order to provide an optimal solution and pricing, will the State consider granting Proposers an extension to March 7?	Due to time constraints, we are unable to extend the Submission of Proposal deadline beyond February 7, 2024.
5.	Is OBAE looking for category 2 equipment in this RFP/470?	E-rate Category 2 equipment is NOT requested on RFP# OBAE-SEN-Ph2-2023-001.
6.	<i>New Mexico/Native American Resident Preferences - Not applicable. Federal funding is expected to cover the majority of the cost of resulting agreements. State preference will not apply for this procurement. To ensure application of § 13-1-21 NMSA 1978 (as amended), an Offeror MUST submit a copy, in this section, of its valid New Mexico/Native Resident Preference Certificate or its valid New Mexico/Native American Resident Veteran Preference Certificate, as issued by the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department.</i> Can you confirm this is not required in our RFP response?	Correct. This form and information are not required for this procurement.
7.	For locations that are over 10G and under 100G, will you accept Nx10G or must it be 100G handoff rate limited to the required bandwidth?	Yes, we are willing to accept Nx10G.
8.	During the Pre-Proposal Conference it was shown that there is an existing HUB site through Lumen in Carlsbad. What is the address for that location? And if this is a HUB site, can we use this Carlsbad HUB to terminate services?	During pre-proposal a potential Node site (such as the New Mexico Junior College in Hobbs) was shown. The address of that new/potential Node site is listed in the RFP.

No.	Question	Response
9.	The request for Proposal (RFP), Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) identifies locations that have historically been funded by E-Rate funding. Is OBAE identified as an eligible recipient for E-rate funding and if not how will OBAE fund the services purchased and what entity will be the responsible party.	OBAE is not an eligible school or library and is, therefore, not eligible to receive E-rate discounts for services it receives. OBAE will be serving as the consortium lead and responsible party for E-rate purposes but will not be a recipient of the services included in the RFP.
10.	The RFP indicates that awards will be based on individual locations. Are eligible entities included in the RFP informed about the RFP and how any transitions from historical processes will work with OBAE being the lead agency for School and Library services?	The information about the OBAE being the consortium lead from an E-rate perspective has been communicated to the participating entities.
11.	Are all aggregation locations aware of the RFP and its requirements?	Yes, the information about the RFP requirements has been communicated to the aggregation (Node) locations.
12.	Does OBAE have pricing for collocation and interconnection at each of these locations, and will this pricing be made available?	OBAE and the node locations have not finalized any collocation rates or fees. Proposers should use their professional judgement to estimate these costs and/or negotiate directly with the node sites and are encouraged to identify their estimation methodology. It is expected that these costs will align with industry standards and/or the rates other governmental agencies pay for similar services.
13.	Do all aggregation locations have the required bandwidth for all connecting end locations to be aggregated?	Yes, the aggregation locations have sufficient and scalable capacity to accommodate the participants.
14.	Do all aggregation locations require the same connection interfaces, and will essential rack space and power be available?	Please see the connection interfaces listed in the RFP documentation. Please see the answer for question 12 (above) for information regarding rack space and power.
15.	Services are requested to commence on July 1, 2024. Is OBAE positioned to facilitate all cutovers to accommodate this date?	OBAE will coordinate the cutovers with all the SEN participant sites in order to accommodate a July 1, 2024, start of service. The actual start of service will depend on the number of sites awarded and the readiness/availability and operational constraints for the participating schools.
16.	Will the SEN offer collocation space and power agreements at each SEN node location without any associated costs for the selected bidder?	No. The offerors will have to complete collocation agreements with the site owners. OBAE will coordinate and facilitate the negotiation and completion of these agreements.
17.	Are there any specific requirements or limitations regarding the usage of collocation space and power resources at SEN node locations?	Please see the answer to question #12.
18.	Is there a price list that can be provided for equipment collocation, space & power, and cross connect fees for each Aggregation Node location?	Please see the answer to question #12.

No.	Question	Response
19.	Can you confirm the availability of -48v DC power at all SEN node locations? If not, what alternative power options are available for bidders to consider?	The power available is AC power. Vendors will have to provide their own UPS/Inverter equipment as required by the equipment installed.
20.	If the node contact is unable to provide a specific price for cross-connect fees at this time, what steps should the bidder take to address this during the proposal submission?	Please see the answer to question #12.
21.	Can you provide insights into the scalability plans for the SEN, particularly how the network is expected to grow over the next few years? This information will assist bidders in designing solutions that align with future expansion requirements.	Capacity demand is expected to continue to grow and double every ~two years.
22.	What redundancy measures, if any, does the SEN expect from the optical handoff solutions proposed by bidders?	Please see below.
23.	Should bidders include redundancy options in their proposals, and if so, are there specific redundancy configurations favored by the SEN?	OBAB desires proposals that provide a robust and resilient solution. Vendors should propose network designs they believe will serve OBAB's needs. In doing so, vendors should consider OBAB's desire to receive E-rate discounts on the requested services.
24.	What testing and certification procedures does the SEN require for the optical handoff solutions proposed by bidders?	The provided connection must be tested to prove performance before it will be considered complete and usable. Testing according to ITU-T Y.1564sam or RFC-2544 for performance, frame-loss and latency is preferred but detailed performance, frame-loss, latency and QOS test disclosure is also acceptable. Testing must validate the minimum frame size specified is supported.
25.	Are there specific performance benchmarks or criteria that must be met to ensure the quality and reliability of the optical handoff?	See above.
26.	How does the SEN envision the implementation and management of VLANs within the proposed metro Ethernet solution?	VLANs shall be implemented locally on a particular access device and separated, when possible, into distinct VPN or bridge-domains. All VLANs shall then be transported across the WAN using L2-stretch technologies such as EVPN. Local layer2 VLANs shall be mapped to EVIs (with respective VNI assignment in the case of VXLAN) and routed over a layer3 underlay as either EVPN-VXLAN or EVPN-MPLS. VLANs shall be grouped into VPNs and VPN-separation should allow for safe transport of overlapping VLAN-IDs across a common routed underlay.

No.	Question	Response
27.	How does the SEN anticipate the metro Ethernet solution scaling to accommodate future growth in network traffic and connectivity requirements?	Metro customers will be offered several products.[1] Internet - This will be handed off to the customer on a 802.1q tagged interface which is drawn from an Internet VRF. The traffic is backhauled across an L3VPN to the Internet breakout node.[2] VPN - This will be handed off to the customers on an 802.1q tagged interface plumbed directly from the customer's VPN/VRF. This VRF will be constructed on an EVPN, and all customer VPN traffic will traverse as either L2-stretch or L3 depending on the type of VPN product specified for that customer. Multiple different VPN types may coexist at the handoff and be separated by proper .1q tags.
28.	Is there a preference for modular or scalable solutions that can adapt to changing demands?	All responses with modular or scalable solutions will be evaluated per the criteria.
29.	Will circuits be awarded to the nearest Node? What is the criteria is used to determine which Node will be selected?	All bids for a single service location to multiple aggregation points will be compared against each other. Each service location will only have one award and the State will award the lowest cost bid from that service location to one of the identified locations that meets the technical requirements as stated in the RFP. If a bidder bids identical pricing for a particular site to two or more core aggregation locations, and is awarded the site, the SEN engineers will select one of the core locations for the circuit.
30.	Is LACP required on every circuit?	Yes, LACP is required.
31.	Is this L2 Transport to the listed nodes	Yes.
32.	What if the node is a New or Potential site that is not in existence yet (SFIS)	All ten Phase1 Nodes (Columns A-J, SFIS included), are considered existing. If a New (Potential) Backbone node does not have satisfactory proposals and therefore not awarded, then all the proposals to connect Participants to those nodes will not be considered. We encourage Offerors proposing connections to the new (potential) backbone nodes to: 1 – Also propose a connection to one of the ten (A~J) existing backbone nodes; 2 – Also propose a connection between the new (potential) backbone nodes (K~O) to one of the existing (A~J) backbone nodes.
33.	Response to Written Questions Written responses to the written questions will be provided via e-mail, on or before the date indicated in Section II.A, Sequence of Events, to all potential Offerors who timely submitted an Acknowledgement of Receipt Form (Section II.B.3 and APPENDIX A). The Questions and Answers will be posted to: https://connect.nm.gov/SEN-Phase-2-RFP	Please note the sequence of events and Section II.B.3. state that the Acknowledgement of Receipt Form is not required and written questions were accepted from potential offerors what submitted their questions in a timely manner. Response to Questions will be posted on the connect.nm.gov website and emailed to attendees of the pre-proposal meeting.