

RFP 2019-0001
Vendor Questions

- 1) Would it be possible to add a column for special construction costs for each bandwidth option?
For Tab 1 Broadband Internet we are not anticipating vendors to bid much, if any, construction cost.
For Tab's 2, 3, 4 and 5 please be aware that, for the most part, the current bandwidth has been identified. We do not anticipate any sites moving to a lower bandwidth than what is currently in place. Any construction cost necessary to build out to these sites will be part of the overall total costs.
- 2) Would it be possible to add columns for router/management costs for each bandwidth option?
No, please provide costs for routers that will accommodate bandwidths up to, and including, 1Gb.
- 3) Do we have to bid the entire RFP or can we bid only portions of the RFP? i.e. Bid on sections A, C and E but not B or D and still be considered qualified for the sections bid.
You do not have to bid the entire RFP. Bidding portions is allowed.
- 4) It appears that Items 1.6 and 2.4 of the RFP may conflict. Could you please clarify the following?
 - a) Can vendor propose its own standard Terms and Conditions as long as they follow the standards of USAC RHCF requirements USAC RHCF, along with other applicable Federal and State contracting requirements?
No
 - b) Can vendor take exceptions to the proposed Terms and Conditions as long as they follow the standards of USAC RHCF requirements, USAC RHCF, along with other applicable Federal and State contracting requirements?
No
- 5) Does elink plan on replacing all 9 Hub routers for sure? Page 41 item 10.a.
No
- 6) If any of the current 175 sites are transferred to another Circuit Provider, is this transition a service that could be won/performed by a non-Circuit Provider?
No
- 7) Does elink still want just one Managed Service Provider for all of the Hubs like in the past?
To be determined
- 8) Is elink receptive to providers offering their other services through the Consortium at discounted rates?
Yes. Only goods/services outlined in this RFP are eligible for USAC discounts, however, vendors may offer additional discounts directly to consortium members on goods/services that are outside the scope of this RFP.
- 9) Has there been any improvements/discoveries made regarding the timely reimbursement to vendors from USAC?
No
What is the expected turnaround time for reimbursement?
Varies

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10) Where should the vendor list cost for the HUB circuits?

CLARIFICATION: In section 1.1, under General Information you mention Vendor aggregation location for service as required prior to UAMS aggregation. This would require a circuit be placed between the Primary/ Secondary UAMS aggregation location and our aggregation site (AT&T CO). The bid price sheet for this bid has no speed requirements for the aggregation locations and no place to enter a price.

Aggregation costs should be built into the monthly recurring circuit cost per each CAI being aggregated.

11) Is construction required to be listed on Tab 1, and if so, where?

For Tab 1 Broadband Internet we are not anticipating vendors to bid much, if any, construction costs. However:

-Any construction costs (above \$5,000 would be amortized over 3 – 5 year) can be entered into “Vendor Note 1” column.

-Any one-time installation costs (up to \$5,000) can be entered into “Vendor Note 2” column.

12) Will you provide an example of what you consider an acceptable design for SD-WAN?

No, vendors should provide their most appropriate solutions.

13) There are many sites on the Broadband Tab 1 which are not on the SD-WAN tab. For Broadband-only sites,

a. Is private/secure connectivity to the e-Link Telehealth network required for these sites?

No

b. If so, how will these sites achieve private/secure connectivity back to the e-link Telehealth network?

UAMS will use appropriate device to secure traffic

14) In Section 6.0 Broadband Internet Connectivity, the RFP states vendors will be asked to bid for:

- a. B. a vendor provided router,
- b. C. cost to manage the router
- c. D. Cost of construction;

However, Tab 1 Broadband Internet on the vendor bid spreadsheet does not include columns for these items. Will columns be added?

Please disregard B, C and D in this section.

15) In the 3rd paragraph under Section 6.6, the RFP states “If you are bidding on site connectivity in Section 6.0, 6.1, or Section 6.2, you should have already included the cost of equipment as well as the cost for you to manage it.” If we are bidding on Broadband, and there are not columns on Tab 1 to include a separate cost for a router or a cost to manage the router, does this mean that the bandwidth prices must include the router and the cost to manage the router?

Yes

16) For Broadband Internet, will bids for bandwidth be accepted without bids for vendor provided router or router management?

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Yes, however, vendor should provide necessary end user equipment to hand off Ethernet connection either wired, wireless or both.

- 17) For locations receiving bids for broadband, will a static IP address need to be provided by the vendor?
No
- 18) For locations receiving bids for broadband, will VPN need to be provided by the vendor?
No
- 19) For locations receiving bids for broadband and a vendor provided router, will cellular failover be required to be bid by the same vendor?
Not required
- 20) What primary applications will be used over the broadband connections?
Varies by site. If the site is using Telemedicine, real time communications will be heavily used.
- 21) For SIP Trunking service, are you seeking pricing for long distance service or DIDs?
No, these are not USAC eligible expenses. See response to question #8.
- 22) On the vendor bid spreadsheet, Tab 6 SIP Trunking – will you include columns for construction cost? Long Distance options? DID costs?
SIP circuits will be associated with data circuits in place for other connectivity needs.
Construction costs should be included in the data circuit costs.
In regards to LD/DID, see response to question #21.
- 23) Will a bid for SD-WAN appliance cost and management be accepted without the connectivity piece (bandwidth options) on the SD-WAN tab(s)?
No
Or will the SD-WAN provider also be required to provide the circuit connectivity?
Yes
- 24) When bidding for SD-WAN, what is the difference between eLink sites (Tab 3) and UAMS sites (Tab 5)?
Tab 3 lists non-UAMS sites; Tab 5 lists UAMS internal sites only.
Will the two groups be on separate SD-WAN networks?
Yes
- 25) For SD-WAN service, why is one group being evaluated for bulk award (Sec 6.2) and one group for site-by-site basis award (Sec 6.3)?
eLink/UAMS preferences; see response to question #24
- 26) How would a site-by-site SD-WAN award work?
It is anticipated that the vendor might propose multiple sites in their solution but not all.

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27) If SD-WAN technology is used to create an overlay network, how does UAMS plan to integrate it with the nine (9) E-Link Data network core routers?

By utilizing the private connectivity as ingress/egress on one of the primary uplinks on the SD-WAN appliance.

28) If a blend of SD-WAN technology and Managed Routers are deployed at the CAI locations, how does UAMS plan to integrate the blended approach with the nine (9) E-Link Data network core routers?

See response to question #27.

29) Does UAMS intend to use cellular connectivity as an active data path, or will all traffic be routed to use the WAN and/or broadband circuits as a primary route, and only use the cellular connectivity in the event of an impairment on the WAN and/or broadband circuit(s)?

Cellular connectivity is intended for failover only.

30) In the list of details for the invoice, what is #5 Subsystem/Extension?

May not be applicable to all vendors. These are examples of unique identifiers.

31) In the event that the consortium is not approved for USAC RHC funding, what provisions will be made to pay the vendor?

Each vendor should have a contract with each site that states financial obligations.

These contracts should be approved by Consortium Leader before distribution to sites.

32) Tab 1 – Bost Inc. (Index # 313) location at P.O. Box 11495 – is there a physical street address?

Consortium Leader has provided the information that was available at the time of RFP posting.

33) Tab 1 – Lincoln Health and Wellness (Index #95) – the city's website says the address is 573 County Ave, but the Vendor Bid Spreadsheet shows 207 Elm St. Please clarify the correct location.

Consortium Leader has provided the information that was available at the time of RFP posting.

34) Tab 4 – UAMS West – Ft Smith location (Index #1163) – The Site Address Line 1 shows two addresses in that field: 2414 S. 57th St Suite 101, and 512 S. 16th St. Were these meant to be listed as two different sites on two different rows?

Spreadsheet has been corrected.

35) On Tab 4, columns P & Q have protected cells starting with row 113 down. Can you please unprotect these cells?

Yes

36) On Tab 5, columns P & Q have protected cells starting with row 113 down. Can you please unprotect these cells?

Yes

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37) On Tab 6, all of the cells in the pricing and vendor notes sections are protected. Can you please unprotect them?

Yes

38) On Tab 10, Column I is protected. Rows 99 – 102 are protected. Can you please unprotect these cells?

Yes

39) Under 6.6 Managed Services, would you award multiple vendors, for example one vendor for A and B, and another for C, D, & E?

No, one vendor per site for all of these services.

40) Under 8.1, section 10. a, the RFP says routers must be provided at each hub site. Are the routers at the hub locations up for bid? If so, where do we indicate our price?

See response to question #5.

41) You are requesting OOB for the managed routers at the remote locations. Generally a Managed Service would have OOB to support any outage for break/fix support from a vendor, however that would be part of the vendor responsibility and part of the managed service. Is UAMS requesting access to that OOB and if so, why would you request Managed Router service if you would have the ability to access the device?

If a third party is awarded managed services, they would OOB access. If the vendor is awarded managed services, they would need OOB access.

42) Tab 2 and Tab 4 locations have incorrect NPA NXX information. Some locations appear to have Cellular numbers which may not represent the actual locations.

Consortium Leader has provided the information that was available at the time of RFP posting.

43) Will there be a call-in number provided for the Pre-Bid Vendor Conference on May 30th, 2018?

We will record the pre-bid vendor conference but do not intend to offer dial in numbers or live stream video. The recording will be posted to www.Arkansaselink.com.