

Request for Proposals (RFP) Checklist



A [Request for Proposal \(RFP\)](#) is:

- Typically 3-5 pages, depending on business needs.
- A bidding solicitation describing business priorities and functional requirements in sufficient detail to ensure an effective competitive bidding process.

Use the following checklists to ensure the applicant includes all required elements in the RFP.

CHECKLIST #1: RFP Requirements

Detailed Requirements About Specific Needs: While an RFP is an optional document, it provides the opportunity to give service providers details regarding specific needs of the applicant so that bidders can better understand the scope, location, and other special requirements.		
REQUIREMENT	WHAT IS IT?	WHY IS IT REQUIRED?
Neutral Language	<input type="checkbox"/> The words “or equivalent” must be included after each mention of a particular service provider’s name, brand, product, or service. Particular requests include, but are not limited to: Fiber, Ethernet, VPN, Point-to-Point, T-1, DS1, and Copper.	By using “or equivalent,” you avoid the appearance that a service provider has been pre-selected or that a service provider is receiving preference in the bidding process, which is not allowed. (See HCF Program Order)
Bid Evaluation Criteria	<input type="checkbox"/> Bid evaluation criteria (e.g., a scoring matrix) must be included with weighted percentages describing how the most cost-effective bid will be selected. <input type="checkbox"/> The criteria and percentages must match what is listed on Line 22 of FCC Form 461 . <input type="checkbox"/> The bid evaluation criteria must solicit sufficient information so that the criteria can be applied effectively.	Including evaluation criteria ensures that applicants are considering all factors before submitting the request for services. (See HCF Program Order)
Infrastructure Language	<input type="checkbox"/> Include language requesting bidders to provide cost for owning and leasing the requested infrastructure (including infeasible rights of use (IRUs)). Requests for both costs must be explicitly stated in the RFP.	Consortium applicants may receive support for network facilities that will be constructed and owned by the consortium or eligible HCPs within the consortium. However, HCP-owned infrastructure will only be supported under the HCF Program when the consortium has demonstrated, following the competitive bidding process that solicited bids for both services and construction, either that the needed broadband is unavailable or that the self-construction approach is the most cost-effective option. (See HCF Program Order)
HCP Site Listings	<input type="checkbox"/> List of all participating member HCP site listings must be included. Site listing should include site names, addresses, and HCP numbers, at a minimum. <input type="checkbox"/> Participating member HCPs information must match the HCP information given on the FCC Form 460. <input type="checkbox"/> Consortia: Site listing should include all sites listed on Line 14 of the FCC Form 461.	Providing a list of participating member sites gives service providers a better understanding of the size and scope of the consortium as well as accurate locations of each participating member site.
Competitive Bidding Period	<input type="checkbox"/> Must specify the period in which bids will be accepted. <input type="checkbox"/> The competitive bidding period must match the competitive bidding period listed on the FCC Form 461 .	The minimum competitive bidding period is 28 days . Including the competitive bidding period provides service providers with a time frame of when bids will be accepted.
Requested Contract Period	<input type="checkbox"/> Must specify the desired contract length. <input type="checkbox"/> The requested contract period must match the requested contract period listed on the FCC Form 461 .	Per program rules, the requested contract period must be in the contract submitted with the FCC Form 462.

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The following are not requirements for the RFP but suggested language to consider when creating an RFP. It is recommended that an RFP include:



CHECKLIST #2: RFP Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION	WHAT IS IT?	WHY IS IT REQUIRED?
Explanation of Invoicing Practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Include an explanation of the invoicing deadline, which is six months after the end of the commitment period.	Including an explanation of the FCC Form 463 and the invoicing process will ensure service providers understand their responsibility to sign, certify, and submit proper invoices and documentation (included submitting bills for services with a breakdown of eligible and ineligible services) to be reimbursed.
Explanation of Vendor Requirement to Obtain a SPIN/498 ID	<input type="checkbox"/> Explain the program requirement for service providers to either have a SPIN/498 ID or to obtain one by filing the FCC Form 498. <input type="checkbox"/> The FCC Form 498 must be updated to show that the service provider has acknowledged participation in the HCF Program.	All service providers must file FCC Form 498 to obtain a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN)/498 ID and acknowledge participation in the HCF Program on the FCC Form 498 to participate in the HCF Program.
Contact Info for Project Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/> Include the name, address, and contact information (phone number and/or email address) for the project coordinator, assistant project coordinator, or third party. <input type="checkbox"/> This information must match the contact information listed on Line 19 of the FCC Form 461.	The designated contact should be the person responsible for any question requests or responses to the RFP/competitive bidding documents.
Service Level Agreement (SLA)	<input type="checkbox"/> Include an SLA in the RFP to define the quality of service requirements for the network. Usually, an SLA will state when the network should be available, bandwidth required to support this connection, network latency standards, and required response times.	These technical requirements are critical for a service provider to prepare an accurate pricing proposal to conduct an objective evaluation.
Site & Service Substitutions	<input type="checkbox"/> It is strongly recommended that consortia applicants include language allowing the substitution of sites and services over the life of the contract or participation in the HCF Program. <input type="checkbox"/> The language used should reflect the site and service substitution rules found in the HCF Program Order (47 C.F.R. § 54.646: 746 Appendix D, 47 C.F.R. § 54.646). Contracts entered into as a result of an RFP must also contain language that allows for site and service substitutions.	This provision allows the applicant to add sites and/or upgrade or change services throughout the length of the contact term without having to re-bid. If this language is not included in both the RFP and the contract, the applicant may not be eligible for site and service substitutions.
Disqualifying Bids	<input type="checkbox"/> Applicants must specifically define the services/equipment that meet their standards for disqualification.	Service providers should be aware of any services or equipment that the project will chose to disqualify.