**USAC Request for Information (RFI) #IT-23-004 for
Fraudulent Document Identification Tool**

I.   PURPOSE

Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) seeking information from US-based companies with the ability to provide a software application that can be installed or called as a service from other USAC software applications that can identify fraudulent documents submitted to USAC. The goal of this RFI is to provide USAC with the latest information on software applications that are available to scan USAC submitted supporting documents to identify which of those scanned documents have the potential to be fraudulent. ***Please note that this is not a solicitation for products and/or services and this inquiry will not result in an award or contract.***

The specifications and information gathered from responses to this RFI will be used to evaluate the offerings of the current marketplace and may lead to the development and preparation of a formal Request for Proposal (RFP). For simplicity USAC will refer to Fraudulent Document Identification Tool as 'FDIT' throughout the remainder of this RFI.

USAC is soliciting information from commercial vendors, application service providers, associated integration service providers, and other interested parties capable of assisting USAC in identifying a software tool that either can provide the fraudulent document identification or could be configured or customized to identify such fraudulent documents. Furthermore, USAC would be interested in the provider also providing support with the configuration, customization, implementation, and training, as well. Information submitted by any interested party will be done so voluntarily and with the understanding that this RFI is for information gathering purposes only and is not a formal solicitation. Similarly, cost ranges will be used solely for budgetary analysis and establishing a target budget. Information presented during this information gathering process will not be considered as a response to any solicitation subsequently issued by USAC.

Respondents may be asked to provide a demonstration of their products and services. This would include a guided tour of their product, business capabilities and technology. Demonstrations may be presented through Internet web conferencing. No compensation will be made by USAC for demonstrations.

II.   BACKGROUND

Through its administration of the Universal Service Fund ("USF") programs on behalf of the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC"), the Universal Service Administrative Company ("USAC") works to promote the availability of quality telecommunications services at just, reasonable, and affordable rates, and to increase access to advanced telecommunications services throughout the nation. Specifically, the USF programs provide funding for the expansion of telecommunications and broadband access to rural communities and health care facilities, schools and libraries, and low income households. Through program administration, auditing, and outreach, USAC works with contributors, service providers, and program beneficiaries to achieve the program goals articulated by the FCC for the High Cost Program, Lifeline Program, Rural Health Care Program, and Schools and Libraries Program.

USAC strives to provide efficient, responsible stewardship of the programs, each of which is a key national asset in making important telecommunications and Internet services available to consumers, health care providers, schools, and libraries throughout the United States. The program divisions are supported by additional USAC personnel in other divisions, including Finance, General Counsel, Information Systems, Audit and Assurance, Enterprise Program Management, and Human Resources.

Consistent with FCC rules, USAC does not make policy nor interpret unclear provisions of statutes or the FCC's rules. The USF is funded by contributions from telecommunications carriers, including wireline and wireless companies, and contributions from interconnected voice over internet protocol ("VoIP") providers, including cable companies that provide voice service, based on an assessment of their interstate and international end-user revenues. These contributions are typically passed through to consumers through a universal service fee line item on their telephone bills.

High Cost Program
The High Cost Program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service, both fixed and mobile, at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas ("High Cost"). High Cost fulfills this universal service goal by allowing eligible carriers who serve these areas to recover some of their costs from the USF. Like all USF programs, the administration of High Cost has undergone significant modernization in the last several years to increase innovation and ensure beneficiaries have access to updated technology. USAC developed and now leverages the High Cost Universal Broadband Portal ("HUBB"), which allows participating carriers to file deployment data showing where they are building out mass-market, high-speed internet service by precise location. This information includes latitude and longitude coordinates for every location where service is available, and USAC displays this information on a public-facing map to show the impact of high-cost funding on broadband expansion throughout the United States.

Lifeline Program
The Lifeline Program provides support for discounts on broadband and voice services to eligible low-income households ("Lifeline"). USAC uses its centralized application system, the Lifeline National Eligibility Verifier ("National Verifier"), to verify consumer eligibility through proof of income or the consumer's participation in a qualifying federal benefit program, such as Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ("SNAP"), Federal Public Housing Assistance, or Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit. USAC focuses on metrics and data analytics for Lifeline improvement, and provides outreach efforts to eligible households to increase participation in and the effectiveness of Lifeline. USAC also works to ensure program integrity by supporting the needs of Lifeline stakeholders, reducing program inefficiencies, and combating waste, fraud, and abuse. USAC reviews processes regularly to increase compliance, identify avenues for operational improvements, and refine program controls, such as audit processes.

Rural Health Care Program
The Rural Health Care Program supports health care facilities in bringing medical care to rural areas through increased connectivity ("RHC"). RHC consists of two main component programs: (1) the Telecommunications Program ("Telecom") and (2) the Healthcare Connect Fund Program ("HCF"). The FCC established Telecom in 1997 to subsidize the difference between urban and rural rates for telecommunications services. Under Telecom, eligible rural health care providers can obtain rates on

telecommunications services in rural areas that are reasonably comparable to rates charged for similar services in corresponding urban areas. In 2012, the FCC established HCF to promote the use of broadband services and facilitate the formation of health care provider consortia that include both rural and urban health care providers. HCF provides a discount on an array of advanced telecommunications and information services such as Internet access, dark fiber, business data, traditional DSL, and private carriage services. These telecommunications and broadband services support telemedicine by ensuring that health care providers can deliver cutting edge solutions and treatments to Americans residing in rural areas.

Schools and Libraries Program (E-Rate)
The Schools and Libraries Program helps schools and libraries obtain high-speed Internet access and telecommunications services and equipment at affordable rates ("E-Rate"). E-Rate provides a discount for the cost of broadband and telecommunications services to and within schools and libraries in order to support a modern and dynamic learning environment. Applicants and service providers submit FCC Forms (e.g. requests for services or funding) and other compliance-related documentation to the E-Rate Productivity Center ("EPC"), an electronic platform that enables participation in the program. USAC frequently invests in new tools and data analytics capabilities to support the success of the program in alignment with the FCC's goals.

Additional information on USF programs can be found at: [About USAC](#)

III. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

FUNCTIONALITIES/CAPABILITIES:

Description of FDIT requirements:

USAC is soliciting information on available fraudulent document verification tools. The main purpose of the tool would be to determine if documents or images submitted to USAC are authentic or fraudulent. As an example, fraudulent documents could include an image or pdf document of a copy of a benefit notice where the name of the applicant is replaced or altered. The tool should be available such that it can render decisions automatically without human intervention and also have the capability to flag potentially altered or fraudulent documents for additional inspection or rejection by USAC's reviewers. Additionally, the tool should have the ability to identify suspicious repeat document submission patterns (i.e. use of Optical Character Recognition or OCR to scan or inspect W2 income documents with the exact same dollar amounts or other repeat patterns) or technical specifications such as file metadata that would indicate repeated document submissions. The tool should also be able to process at least 40,000 documents for review a day from a performance perspective and be compatible with image and PDF formats.

USAC expects that this tool can be built or configured to operate as a Software Service that could be called from any USAC application that is managing documentation that has been submitted to USAC by applicants in support of their application. The tool shall also be made available so that it is secure and compatible with USAC's security requirements as follows:

     i.   The system availability shall be at minimum 99.6%.
    ii.   The system shall achieve a FISMA ATO based on USAC IT Security standards.

iii. Development of the system shall use standard USAC IT Development-Security-Operations ("DevSecOps") processes, procedures, and technologies.

iv. Core components of FDIT shall be modular with well-defined services/micro services for re-use by other applications.

IV. RFI PROPOSED TIMELINE

Event	Date
Release RFI	January 6, 2023
Questions Due	January 17, 2023
Answers to Questions Released	January 20, 2023
Responses Due	January 31, 2023
Demos (if needed)	February 22–23, 2023

V. RFI SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

All responses to this RFI are due no later than **Tuesday, January 31, 2023 by 11:00 AM ET**. Responses received after this date and time may not be considered for review.

The RFI response should also include a sample work flow of how the FDIT process would work including how an individual would be able to review, categorize and further process documents identified as potentially fraudulent.

Responses should be prepared simply and economically and provide a straightforward and concise explanation of the information requested. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity.

Please submit one (1) electronic copy (PDF) of your response to USAC at rfp@usac.org. All submissions must include "Response to RFI IT-23-004 – Fraudulent Document Identification Tool" in the subject line. Please note: all electronic submissions must be limited to a maximum size of 25 GB.

VI. RFI RESPONSE FORMAT

The response must have numbered pages and include an index or table of contents referencing the appropriate page numbers for the below sections.

SECTION 1 – ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Maximum: Three (3) Pages

Please provide a response that includes the following:
- Years of experience in developing software solutions related to Fraudulent Document Identification Tools, or other relevant areas

- Your company's core competencies
- What differentiates your organization and existing solutions in the market
- Number of clients you serve with similar solutions

SECTION 2 - TECHNICAL Q&A

Maximum: Eight (8) pages

Please provide a solution response to the associated FDIT requirements in Section III that are related to your proposed software solution and product. Solution descriptions must be concise and directly address the requirements.

SECTION 3 – EXPERIENCE

Maximum: Two (2) Pages

Proposals shall provide a response that addresses the following question:

- What relevant corporate experience does the company have with developing similar software or products for a similar sized engagement?

In addition, proposals shall provide client references that demonstrate similar provided solutions for those organizations.

SECTION 4 – PRICING ESTIMATE

Maximum: One (1) Page

(Note: Any prices provided as part of this RFI are intended solely for budgetary analysis and to establish a reasonable target budget).

Responses shall include a cost estimate for the following:
- Include an estimate for all relevant software components, such as software purchases, licenses and ongoing software support.
- Include an estimate for integration and overall project management services to lead the implementation effort, develop business processes that include recommendations on incorporating numerous processes, workflows, and requirements in an integrated platform and provide training.

VII.   VENDOR INQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS

Questions and inquiries regarding this RFI must be submitted in writing by **January 17, 2023, 11:00 AM ET**. Please submit all questions to USAC at rfp@usac.org and include "Questions to RFI IT-23-004 – Fraudulent Document Identification Tool" in the subject line.