Universal Service Administrative Co.

Request for Proposal (RPF) Checklist

A Request for Proposal (RFP) is a bidding solicitation describing business priorities and functional requirements in sufficient detail to ensure an effective competitive bidding process. It's typically 3-5 pages, depending on business needs. Use the following Checklists to ensure you include all required elements in your RFP.

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	☐ The words "or equivalent" must be included after each mention of a particular service provider's name, brand, product, or service.	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.
Bid Evaluation Criteria	☐ Bid evaluation criteria (e.g., a scoring matrix) must be included with weighted percentages describing how the most cost-effective bid will be selected. ☐ The criteria and percentages must match what is listed on the FCC Form 461 or 465. ☐ The bid evaluation criteria must include 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.
Infrastructure Language (HCF Program consortia only)	☐ Including language requesting bidders to provide cost for owning and leasing the requested infrastructure (Including	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

	indefeasible rights of use (IRUs)). Requests for both must be explicitly stated in the RFP.	HCF Program when the consortium has demonstrated that the competitive bidding process solicited bids for both vendor-owned services and HCP-owned construction. Further, they must demonstrate that either that the needed
HCP Locations	☐ List of all participating member HCP site listings must be included. Site listing should include site names, addresses, and HCP numbers, at a minimum. ☐ Participating member HCPs information must match the HCP information listed on the FCC Form 460. ☐ **Consortia:** Site listing should include information from the FCC Forms 460 for all member sites.	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. If a site does not appear on the FCC Form 461, 465, and RFP, it will not be able to be selected when submitting the FCC Form 462 or 466 because it would not have been included in the competitive bidding process
Competitive Bidding Period	☐ Must specify the period in which bids will be accepted. The competitive bidding period must match the competitive bidding period listed on the FCC Form 461 or 465.	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 (Contract term)	☐ Must specify the desired contract length. ☐ The requested contract period must match the requested contract period on the FCC Form 461 or 465.	Per RHC program rules, the requested contract period must be in the contract submitted with the FCC Form 462 or 466.

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RFP Recommendations:

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

RECOMMENDATION	WHAT IS IT?	WHY IS IT RECOMMENDED?
Explanation of invoicing practices	☐ Include an explanation of the invoice filing deadline, which is 120 days after the service delivery deadline.	Including an explanation of the [FCC Form 463](#) and/or [469](#) 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 498/SPIN ID	☐ Explain the program requirement for service providers to either have a SPIN/498 ID or to obtain one by filing the [FCC Form 498](#). ☐ The FCC Form 498 must be updated to show that the service provider has acknowledged participation in the RHC and HCF Program sections of the form.	All service providers must file FCC Form 498 to obtain a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN)/498 ID and acknowledge participation in the RHC and HCF Program on the FCC Form 498.
Contact information for person(s) who will be accepting And reviewing bids	☐ Include the name, address, and contact information (phone number and/or email address) for the parties who will be accepting and reviewing bids. ☐ This information must match the contact information listed in the FCC Form 461 or 465.	The designated contact should be the person responsible for any question requests or responses to the RFP/competitive bidding documents.

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Service Level Agreement (SLA)	☐ If an SLA is needed, include those requirements in the RFP to define the quality-of-service requirements for the network. ☐ Usually, an SLA will state when the network should be available, network latency standards, and required response times.	These technical requirements are critical for a service provider to prepare an accurate pricing proposal and for an applicant to demonstrate
Site & Service Substitutions	☐ It is strongly recommended that applicants include language allowing the substitution of sites (consortia) and services (HCF individual and Telecom) over the life of the contract or participation in the RHC program. ☐ The language used should reflect the site and service substitution rules found in the HCF Program Order ([47 C.F.R. § 54.624](#)). ☐ RFPs must contain the language and contracts entered into as a result of an RFP must also contain language that allows for site and/or 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 rebid. If this language is not included in both the RFP and the contract, the applicant may not be eligible for site and service substitutions
Disqualification Factors	☐ Applicants must specifically define their standards	Service providers should be aware of any factors that will be used to disqualify a bid from being considered.