The Quilt's 2018 Commodity Internet Service Request for Proposal Process Summary

THE QUILT

The Quilt, a coalition of advanced regional network organizations, is a dynamic forum where leaders from throughout the advanced research and education network community build on the intellectual capital and best practices of network service providers worldwide. Based on the participants' combined experiences in operations and development of leading edge technologies, the Quilt aims to influence the national agenda on information technology infrastructure, with particular emphasis on networking. Through this coalition, the Quilt promotes delivery of networking services at lower cost, higher performance and greater reliability and security. The Quilt derives support and funding from a diverse base, including participants, federal agencies, and partners. It also relies on significant volunteer contributions from its participants.

As of January 2018, The Quilt participant base includes 36 regional non-profit network aggregators within the United States. For a full listing and description of each of the current Quilt participants, see www.thequilt.net/participants.html. Each of these network aggregators serves multiple research and education institutions and, in some instances, other organizations.

2018 CIS RFP

In January of 2018, The Quilt released its tenth Request for Proposal (RFP) for Commodity Internet Services (CIS). The goal of the RFP process is to aggregate the buying power of the Quilt members and authorized buyers to get the best value and lowest pricing commodity internet services. The central feature of this effort is to have the price per unit drop for the individual Quilt participant as a result of the cumulative capacity purchased by all.

Through the RFP process, The Quilt seeks vendor partners who not only are able to provide the best value, but also are at the forefront of technology and be willing to work closely with Quilt members to develop and expand that technology beyond a standard provider-customer relationship.

The process The Quilt uses to conduct its request for proposal process for commodity internet services has been in place since the program's inception in 2002. With hundreds of Authorized Quilt Buyers across the country successfully taking advantage of the program for their CIS purchases, our collective purchases through the program are now nearing the 1TBPS level.

The initial steps of the RFP process were to have the CIS project committee members prepare the RFP documents for distribution and establish the RFP schedule shown below.

The Quilt's 2018 Commodity RFP Schedule

Event	Date
RFP Release	January 8, 2018
Non-Binding Letter of Intent to Respond Due	January 16, 2018
Pre-RFP Q&A Conference Call 3:00 pm EST 202-850-0927 *no access code*	January 26, 2018
Pre-RFP Q&A Conference Call 3:00 pm EST 202-850-0927 *no access code*	February 1, 2018
Due Date for CIS RFP Submission to The Quilt (11:59 pm EST)	February 16, 2018
CIS RFP Semi-Finalists Selected and Invited for Presentations	March 19, 2018
CIS RFP Semi-Finalist Presentations in Denver, CO	April 4-5, 2018
Providers Selected to be CIS Authorized Quilt Provider (AQP)	April 16, 2018
CIS Master Services Agreement Signed	Week of May 21, 2018

The CIS project committee is made up of volunteer members who, as a committee, oversee the management of RFP process as well as The Quilt's relationships with The Quilt Authorized CIS Vendors.

RFP DISTRIBUTION

The announcement of The Quilt's CIS RFP was made on January 8, 2018 to broad distribution list of national commodity service providers and brokers. In addition, the RFP and its documents were open to all commodity service providers to respond through The Quilt's public website at https://www.thequilt.net/quilt-2018-commodity-internet-services-rfp/.
All responders were required to submit a non-binding letter of intent to respond to the RFP. Vendor responses were required to be uploaded to a secure vendor page on a web-based project management tool titled Base Camp to which The Quilt subscribes. All items uploaded to the individual vendor pages were date and time stamped and required to be submitted by February 19, 2018.

The Quilt received 8 responses to its commodity service RFP. The RFP review team acknowledged responses received.

RFP RESPONSE REVIEW

The Quilt CIS review team is comprised of qualified member volunteers who each demonstrate a sufficient knowledge of the subject matter to competently evaluate the responses. They also must demonstrate their ability to evaluate responses in an impartial and confidential manner.

Each volunteer was requested to complete a vendor scorecard which evaluated the vendor response for completeness and content to ensure the response contained all the essential requirements necessary for the bid to be given further consideration. Each element of the scorecard receives a point assignment and weighting.

Once the vendor scorecards were complete, the volunteer committee met on March 14, 2018 to discuss the RFP responses and scorecard values based on a point and weighting scale. As an

outcome of this committee meeting, each vendor scorecard was reviewed and ranked by points. Based on these rankings and committee discussion, invitations were extended to 6 vendors to participate in a semi-finalist presentation round held in Denver, Colorado on April 4-5, 2018.

During the semi-finalist presentations, vendors were asked to provide further detail and clarification on items contained in their initial responses. Each semi-finalist then received another round of questions and clarifications on their final Quilt program offerings. From the semi-finalist presentations, six vendors were chosen as Authorized Quilt Providers with whom The Quilt will execute Master Service Agreements. These vendors are CenturyLink, Cogent Communications, GTT, Telia Carrier, Verizon, and Zayo.

Further Questions on The Quilt's 2018 CIS RFP process can be directed to:

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