**The Quilt  
IP Transit Internet Services  
Request for Proposals**

**January 9, 2023**

**ESSAY RESPONSE FORM**

This completed form and any requested attachments ***must be received no later than Wednesday, February 22, 2023 11:59 pm eastern time.*** Please upload your RFP documents to your individual and secure RFP page on The Quilt’s Group Hub. To request instructions and access to The Quilt’s Group Hub, please contact Jennifer Griffin at griffin@thequilt.net.

Any questions on the RFP documents should be sent to [qt-2023cisrfp@thequilt.net](mailto:qt-2023cisrfp@thequilt.net).

Only PDF or documents created in standard Microsoft office software will be accepted. All documents should be verified with the latest version of Microsoft Office or the default PDF viewer on both Windows and macOS.

*ALL RFP MATERIALS SUBMITTED AS CONFIDENTIAL BY THE PROVIDER WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL WITHIN THE QUILT.*

**A Few RFP Response FAQs:**

**Q:** Is a vendor required to touch every address on the supplied PoP list in the Pricing Matrix Workbook?

**A:** There are many locations listed on the PoP list. The intention is to understand the current reach of a vendor’s network footprint. We understand that vendors upgrade infrastructure capacity upgrades and add new sites to the networks on a regular basis. We are looking for a snapshot of the current footprint.

**Q:** If a vendor does not reach all locations on the Pop list, is this an automatic disqualification?

**A:** No, this is not an automatic disqualification. All responses will be taken into consideration.

**Q:** For locations on the PoP list that we don’t currently service, how do we note that we could consider building to that location based on negotiated costs and terms with the Authorized Quilt Provider?

**A:** Our preference is to see any negotiated build costs, etc. be treated as a non-recurring charge so that the monthly-recurring charge can remain the same as offered program pricing to the other Authorized Quilt Buyers.

1. **Important: Semi-Final Provider Presentations**  
   Providers who are chosen as semi-finalists will provide presentations of their proposals on April 18th, 19th and 20th. Block your calendars. These presentations will be scheduled individually. Please provide the names, titles and contact information including mailing address, phone, and e-mail of the individuals who will represent your company if selected. At least one presenting representative must have the authority to set and negotiate pricing on behalf of your company. Semi-finalist presentations will include detailed questions on customer support, pricing, the network, and peering arrangements; be sure to select representatives who can address these questions.
2. **Provider CIS Pricing and Services Proposal  
   *Please use “quiltrfp2023\_provider\_pricing\_matrix.xlsx” to complete items 2a-c in this section.   
   Be sure to complete all three tabs on the spreadsheet.***
   1. **Quilt Program Pricing Matrix:** Complete the table on tab 2a) by filling in the chart indicating the price (for) each of the listed committed data rate (CDR) by port size and service type. *Note that the DDoS scrubbed bandwidth pricing is optional in the pricing matrix (See section 3. below.)* Assume a minimum one-year contract term for completing this table. For each service offered, identify any applicable port costs such as those listed below. We are expecting there to be no additional monthly recurring taxes or fees beyond the price per Mbps offered in the table. If there are exceptions to this expectation, please note in the comment section.

A response to this RFP must address a pricing program with service terms of 12 months for the end user service agreement which is item 2a). Optionally, a response may include pricing for other lengths of terms for an end user service agreement. The second type of service term is addressed in the Sample Master Service Agreement provided at the end of the RFP Essay document as an exhibit. (This refers to the length of term for the Agreement between The Quilt and an Authorized Quilt Provider. The requested length of term for an Agreement between The Quilt and an Authorized Quilt Provider is three years (36-month term).

Quilt members are network aggregation points for Research & Education organizations within a certain geographic territory. As such, these organizations have high-capacity CIS needs. Multiple 10Gbps, 100Gbps and 400Gbps ports per organization are now standard. A pricing model that recognizes and encourages migration to multiple 100Gbps connections through price and aggregation incentives would be very useful.

Support for multiple connections per customer such as for service resiliency, traffic management, etc. Your proposed pricing model must be able to support one Authorized Quilt Buyer (AQB) purchasing several circuits and spreading the AQB’s cumulative committed data rate across those circuits.

* Will you allow one AQB purchased CDR to be spread over multiple physical connections spreading the cumulative committed data rates (CDR) across the connections at different locations?
* How do you calculate the overall minimum CDR for the combined connections?
* Are there minimum CDR per connection?
* Are there additional port costs?
* If there are additional costs for these types of scenarios, please indicate which fees you are willing to waive for Authorized Quilt Buyers?

***Alternate Pricing Models***

While The Quilt’s experience and success points towards the requested aggregate Quilt Pricing Model outlined above, The Quilt will consider alternate discount models that would provide cost effective solutions to meet AQB requirements. Alternate models should be listed on tab 2a) below the provided pricing matrix. If proposing an alternate model, we request that you respond with a single pricing model that will be incorporated into the MSA. Innovation and simplicity are key to alternate responses.

* 1. **Quilt Program Aggregation Model:** Use tab 2b) to outline your Quilt program aggregation model as detailed in the ‘Overview’ document. The traditional (and successful) approach to our Quilt IP-transit program has been The Quilt Aggregation model. We encourage vendors to provide a Quilt aggregation discount pricing model that takes into account the bandwidth used across all Authorized Quilt Buyers, providing increasing discounts to all members as adoption across The Quilt increases. When constructing an aggregation model, we encourage providers to carefully consider creating bandwidth tiers that incentivize growth in an aggregated bandwidth that will result in Buyers being able to access to a new tier for an increased discount on at least an annual basis. This provides an incentive for Quilt members to directly advocate for your service within the community. *An example of this discount structure is included at the top of tab 2b) in the pricing matrix.*
  2. **Quilt Member Service Locations:** Complete the Quilt member PoP locations at the indicated port speeds on tab 2c of *the pricing matrix*. By indicating port speed availability, you are agreeing that the services and pricing listed in 2a and 2b are available at the time of RFP response and *WITHOUT* any additional fees or charges. *Note any site exceptions in the comment field on this tab as to why it is an exception*.

1. **DDoS Pricing Information (*OPTIONAL*)**
   1. Do you support DDOS Scrubbing Services? If so, please describe them briefly. If pricing is based on scrubber traffic, please include that in 2a.) If pricing follows some other model, please describe it here:

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1. **Routing Information**
   1. Please provide documentation of your supported BGP communities to control route advertisements and routing.
   2. Do you honor customer AS-padding and setting of MED values for traffic management?
   3. List all ASNs with which customers might peer.
   4. Briefly discuss your implementation of MANRS and RPKI routing security.
   5. Do you take an AS-Set from the IRR to define the routes you will receive from a customer?
2. **National Backbone Infrastructure**
   1. Do you provide 400G services?  
      1. What is your commodity internet pricing?
      2. What is your minimum commit
      3. Where do you deliver
   2. Please provide a complete list of your U.S. customer serving PoPs and confirm at which locations can you offer services in accordance with the pricing matrix at 400G/100G/10G/1G?
   3. Provide a national (and international if applicable) backbone infrastructure map, including backbone link capacities and infrastructure topologies.
   4. Will you accept a dark fiber handoff from a customer at specific PoP locations? Y/N with comments on additional fees.
   5. Provide diagrams of your standard PoP infrastructure.  
      1. What is your current national backbone average utilization?
      2. At what monthly percentile utilization do you initiate a circuit capacity upgrade?   
         (e.g., 40%, 50%, 80%)
   6. What percent of the fiber facilities do you own in your backbone?
   7. Do you support jumbo frames? If so, what is the largest MTU you will configure on a customer link?  
      1. Will there be an additional fee for MTUs over 1500 bytes?
   8. Do you support 802.1Q VLAN tagging on customer ports?
   9. Do you support Ethernet LAG (802.3ad/802.1AX) on customer-facing ports? If so, do you support LACP?
   10. Are all of your backbone PoP locations IPv6 enabled? If not, please explain.  
       1. If there are any such PoPs, what is your timeline for offering IPv6 at them?
       2. If the nearest IP PoP to a customer is IPv4-only, are you willing to waive any charges for on-net backhaul to the nearest IPv6-enabled PoP? (Y/N with comments)
       3. If the nearest PoP to a customer is only layer 2, are you willing to waive any charges for on-net backhaul to the nearest layer 3 PoP? Y/N with comments.
3. **Peering Information**
   1. Provide a map that identifies the network’s peering infrastructure. (locations and capacity)
   2. What is your total aggregate public peering and total aggregate private peering for the East, West and Central United States?
   3. What are your total public peering and private peering aggregates for U.S, Europe, and Asia?  
      1. What is the ratio of peering to transit?
      2. What percentage of your peering traffic is IPv6?
4. **Technical Support, Operations and Billing Practices**
   1. Provide a brief document detailing your company’s history, current organization, and funding sources.
   2. Provide contact information for a VP-Level executive in your organization to support customer relationship with The Quilt.
   3. Does your company participate in e-rate? If so, what is your 498 ID (formerly known as SPIN)?
   4. Have you reviewed the sample MSA provided in the Overview document? Yes/No  
      1. Are there portions of the contract, which would be difficult for you to agree to as-is? If so, identify these sections.
      2. Will you agree to an MSA with a 1-year term and mutually agreeable renewal?
   5. Please provide the names and contact information for three references. Include corporate, research, and education organizations where possible.
   6. Please provide a list of your active IP Transit customers that are on the Authorized Quilt Buyers (AQB) list (or indicate the number of customers).
   7. What​ ​is​ ​unique​ ​about​ ​your​ ​network?
   8. Why are you interested​ ​in​ ​participating​ ​in​ this​ ​program?
   9. How​ ​will​ ​you​ ​engage​ ​with​ ​our​ ​community​ ​to​ ​provide​ ​information about​ ​your​ ​network’s​ ​capabilities?
   10. What do you charge for providing the following customer IP address assignments and allocations? This question refers to addresses for customer use, not for peering infrastructure; our assumption is that peering addresses are included with the connection (if not, so indicate).  
       1. IPv4
       2. IPv6
5. **Network Policies and Practices**
   1. We expect access to all internet addresses undifferentiated by cost or performance. Do you currently (or have plans to) prioritize traffic on your network outside of illegal or malicious traffic?
   2. Describe the security procedures and protections you have in place to prevent unauthorized access to user data that transits your network.
   3. Do you sell, rent, or share any type of analysis data, aggregated or not, such as flow, header, payload, metadata, etc. with 3rd parties, including government agencies (without a court order)?
   4. Do you inject advertising or otherwise modify web, email, DNS, or other traffic?