RED BIRD MISSION, INC.

Beverly, Kentucky

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Broadband as a Service (BaaS) for the Red Bird Mission Campus

Redundant, Fiber-Based Dedicated Internet Access Under a Long-Term Service Agreement

RFP No. RBM-BaaS-2026-01

Funded in part by the Appalachian Regional Commission, POWER Initiative, Project PW-22926

RFP Issue Date: November 6, 2026 | Proposals Due: December 11, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Issuing Organization Red Bird Mission, Inc. 70 Queendale Center Beverly, KY 40913 www.redbirdky.org	**Authorized Representative (sole point of contact)** Connect Humanity RedBirdRFP@connecthumanity.fund Email subject line: "Red Bird Mission BaaS RFP"
Proposals must be received no later than Friday, December 11, 2026, 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time	**Submit to** RedBirdRFP@connecthumanity.fund Electronically only, as described in Section 11.5

Legal Notice

Request for Proposals: Broadband as a Service for the Red Bird Mission Campus, Beverly, Kentucky

Red Bird Mission, Inc. ("Red Bird Mission" or "the Mission"), a Kentucky nonprofit corporation, is requesting proposals from qualified Internet Service Providers ("Respondents") to deliver highly reliable, redundant, fiber-based Dedicated Internet Access to the Red Bird Mission campus in Beverly, Kentucky, under a long-term Broadband as a Service ("BaaS") agreement.

This service contract will be funded through an Appalachian Regional Commission ("ARC") POWER Initiative grant and will require matching funds from the selected Respondent. This project is funded 80 percent by the Appalachian Regional Commission (up to $625,000), with the remaining 20 percent provided by the selected Respondent from non-federal sources, or from other federal sources if approved by both ARC and the federal agency providing those funds. The procurement will be conducted in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart D (Procurement Standards) and ARC Broadband as a Service program requirements.

Proposals must be submitted electronically to RedBirdRFP@connecthumanity.fund, as described in the RFP, no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, December 11, 2026. Late proposals will not be accepted.

The full RFP PDF is available through Red Bird Mission's website at www.redbirdky.org. For additional details, procurement updates, registration, addenda, and questions, respondents should follow the link from Red Bird Mission's website to Connect Humanity's RFP page or contact RedBirdRFP@connecthumanity.fund. The RFP is available in alternate formats upon request to the Authorized Representative. Questions will be accepted through Monday, November 30, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Red Bird Mission reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to negotiate with Respondents, and to waive informalities. Red Bird Mission is an equal opportunity organization and encourages proposals from small businesses, minority-owned firms, women's business enterprises, veteran-owned businesses, and labor surplus area firms.

Published online: November 6, 2026. Local newspaper notice: next available issue following issuance.

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Section 1. Introduction and Purpose

1.1 Red Bird Mission seeks a qualified Internet Service Provider to design, build, own, operate, and maintain a redundant fiber connection to the Red Bird Mission campus and to deliver managed, monitored Dedicated Internet Access ("DIA") service at two campus service points under a Broadband as a Service agreement.

1.2 The heart of this procurement is reliability. The campus is currently served by a single line that runs through remote sections of the Daniel Boone National Forest, and it goes down often, sometimes for days. This RFP therefore places heavy weight on buried installations, physically diverse routes, fast restoration, and verifiable service levels. Speed matters, too, but a fast connection that disappears three times a week does not effectively serve anyone.

1.3 Under the BaaS model, Red Bird Mission will not own, lease, or control any of the broadband network assets except for the campus network itself. The selected Respondent will own the network, and Red Bird Mission will purchase a defined service, paying for it in stages tied to contract execution, Service Acceptance, and ongoing performance over the contract term.

1.4 Key terms of this solicitation are summarized below. Detailed requirements appear in Sections 4 through 9.

Item	Summary
Service sought	Managed, monitored, ideally buried, fiber-based Dedicated Internet Access delivered over two physically diverse routes to two campus service points
Service points	(1) Telecommunications room, Red Bird health clinic building; (2) Telecommunications closet, Red Bird Christian School (see Appendix C)
Route concept	Two independent network access points, one from the north (approx. 1.7 miles) and one from the south (approx. 3.5 miles), approx. 5.2 route miles total. Respondents may propose alternative routes that achieve equal or better diversity.
Minimum capacity	10 Gbps symmetrical committed DIA at each service point (20 Gbps aggregate)
Availability	Engineered for 99.99% availability; route diversity required
Contract term	Initial term of seven (7) years from contract execution, plus a required continuity-of-service statement beyond Year 7 (Section 7.3)
ARC funding available	Up to $625,000 in ARC grant funding is available. The selected ISP must provide a match of at least 20% of the Total Contract Value.
Required Respondent match	Not less than twenty percent (20%) of the Total Contract Value in cash or documented in-kind contribution (see Section 8.3)
Target timeline	Service Acceptance at both service points no later than eighteen (18) months after Notice to Proceed
Procurement method	Formal competitive proposals, best value, 2 CFR 200.320(b)(2)

1.5 This RFP does not constitute a contract. Red Bird Mission intends to negotiate and execute a written agreement with the Respondent whose proposal is most advantageous to Red Bird Mission, price and other factors considered.

Section 2. Background and Project Description

2.1 About Red Bird Mission

Red Bird Mission has served the people of the Red Bird River valley since 1921. Its Beverly campus sits where Bell, Clay, and Leslie Counties meet, in the heart of the Eastern Kentucky Coalfields. The Mission is the largest employer in its service area and serves roughly 10,000 people each year, about 5,000 of whom come to campus for education, health care, workforce training, food, and family support.

2.2 The Problem This Project Solves

Today, the campus depends on a single connection routed through remote national forest land with no nearby homes, lighting, or surveillance. Vandalism and theft along that route cause frequent outages, and some of them last several days before crews can find and repair the damage. Even when the line is up, usable bandwidth has fluctuated between roughly 1 and 5 Mbps. Cellular coverage in the valley is minimal or absent.

Temporary satellite terminals have helped a little, but steep terrain blocks much of the sky, and the service is inconsistent. The community needs a permanent, redundant, fiber-based connection.

2.3 The ARC POWER Award and the BaaS Model

Red Bird Mission applied for and has received an ARC POWER Initiative grant for the Red Bird Mission Connected Campus Initiative. The broadband component of that project uses ARC's Broadband as a Service model. Under BaaS, a grantee procures broadband as a service through a competitive RFP and enters into a long-term contract with an ISP. The grantee does not own any broadband infrastructure. Instead, it subsidizes the availability of the defined service and uses contract terms and structured payments to hold the provider accountable. See ARC Application Guidance by Project Type (Broadband as a Service).

2.4 Project Partners

Red Bird Mission is supported in this procurement by **Connect Humanity**, a nonprofit subrecipient that assisted with broadband planning. Connect Humanity serves as the Authorized Representative for this RFP and the sole point of contact for Respondents. It will also support proposal evaluation, contract monitoring, and ARC compliance, including third-party verification of the selected Respondent's performance.

Section 3. Funding Source and Compliance Framework

3.1 Federal funding. This contract will be funded in part with federal financial assistance from the Appalachian Regional Commission. ARC requires every grant, subgrant, and cooperative agreement to comply with 2 CFR Part 200. See ARC OMB Grant Regulations. The selected Respondent will be a contractor to Red Bird Mission, not a subrecipient, and must comply with all relevant contract provisions that apply to contractors under federal awards (Section 13). This project is funded 80 percent by the Appalachian Regional Commission (up to $625,000), with the remaining 20 percent provided by the selected Respondent from

non-federal sources, or from other federal sources if approved by both ARC and the federal agency providing those funds.

3.2 Procurement standards. This procurement is conducted under Red Bird Mission's documented procurement procedures and 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart D, including requirements for full and open competition (2 CFR 200.319) and the competitive proposal method (2 CFR 200.320(b)(2)). ARC requires BaaS service providers to be competitively bid. See the ARC Broadband as a Service guidance.

3.3 ARC BaaS requirements. The following ARC BaaS requirements are incorporated into this RFP and will be incorporated into the final agreement:

- Service must reliably meet or exceed 100 Mbps symmetrical. (This RFP sets a higher bar: 10 Gbps symmetrical committed service at each service point.)
- Service must be made available to Red Bird Mission with no data caps or usage-based throttling.
- Pricing must be reasonably affordable, and the Respondent must disclose whether it is an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) in Kentucky and whether it participates in Universal Service programs such as Lifeline, E-Rate, and Rural Health Care.
- The ARC period of performance for BaaS is seven (7) years, and ARC expects BaaS agreements to extend beyond seven years.
- Red Bird Mission must monitor ISP performance, protect itself against unsatisfactory performance through milestone-based and periodic payments tied to contractual covenants, and evaluate Respondent risk, including financial stability, performance history, quality systems, and suspension or debarment status.

3.4 No duplication of federal activity. Consistent with the ACCESS BROADBAND Act and ARC guidance, the Respondent must disclose any other federal, state, or Universal Service support it receives or has applied for that covers any portion of the proposed routes or the service points, and must certify that ARC funds will complement, not replace or duplicate, activities already supported by another federal program. This includes any E-Rate funding for Red Bird Christian School and any Rural Health Care funding for the clinic (Section 7.5).

3.5 Telecommunications equipment prohibition. Under 2 CFR 200.216 and Section 889 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Pub. L. 115-232), ARC funds may not be used to procure services from, or contract with, an entity that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system. Respondents must complete the certification in Appendix F.

3.6 Domestic preferences. Consistent with 2 CFR 200.322, Respondents are encouraged, to the greatest extent practicable, to use goods, products, and materials produced in the United States.

3.7 Conflicts of interest and unfair competitive advantage. Red Bird Mission maintains written standards of conduct consistent with the Uniform Guidance. Consistent with those guidelines, any person or firm that developed or drafted the specifications, requirements, or statement of work for this RFP is excluded from competing. Each Respondent must disclose any business, family, or financial relationship with Red Bird Mission staff or board members or any consultant to the project (Appendix F).

Section 4. Service Area and Service Points

4.1 Grant footprint. The BaaS service area is the Red Bird Mission campus at 70 Queendale Center, Beverly, Kentucky 40913, together with the fiber routes needed to connect the campus to two independent network access points. ARC funding may be applied only within ARC's geographic footprint and the approved project area.

4.2 Service points. Service must be delivered to two separate points of service on campus:

- **Service Point A:** the telecommunications room in the Red Bird health clinic building.
- **Service Point B:** the telecommunications closet at Red Bird Christian School.

4.3 Available information. Upon request, Red Bird Mission will provide registered Respondents with the campus maps, pole information collected during planning, and photographs of the service point locations. Requests should be sent to the Authorized Representative. The same information will be sent to every registered Respondent.

4.4 Site conditions Respondents should consider. The area is mountainous and heavily forested. Portions of any route may cross or border the Daniel Boone National Forest and will likely require U.S. Forest Service authorization. Pole owners in the area may include Kinetic (Windstream/Uniti), Kentucky Power, and Kentucky Utilities. The existing line has been repeatedly damaged by vandalism and theft. Buried installations will be prioritized.

Section 5. Scope of Services

5.1 The selected Respondent should be prepared to submit documentation of due diligence to substantiate the feasibility of proposed service delivery.

Examples may include:

- **Engineering and design** (such as field surveys and network design). Documentation showing how minimum service requirements will be met.
- **Permitting and rights of way.** Permits, easements, including U.S. Forest Service special use authorization where required.
- **Make-ready plans.** Pole attachment agreements, and approvals.
- **Electronics and managed service.** Intentions for installation, ownership and maintenance of connection equipment.

Section 6. Technical and Performance Requirements

Requirements marked **Minimum** are pass/fail. A proposal that does not meet or commit to meet every Minimum requirement may be found non-responsive. Elements marked **Scored** will be evaluated for quality and value under Section 10. Respondents must complete the compliance checklist in Appendix D.

Parameter	Requirement	Type
Committed bandwidth	10 Gbps symmetrical committed DIA at each service point	Minimum
Interface	10 Gbps customer handoff (for example, 10GBASE-LR) at each service point	Minimum
Route diversity	Two physically diverse routes to two independent network access points, with no shared conduit, pole line, or single point of failure between the campus and the Respondent's core, except where disclosed and justified	Minimum; degree of diversity Scored
Availability	Engineered to 99.99% availability; cumulative service unavailability (both service points down) not to exceed 24 hours in any 365-day period, excluding force majeure	Minimum
Mean time to restore	Electronics: 12 hours. Fiber damage on a single route: 48 hours	Minimum; faster Scored
Latency	Round-trip latency not to exceed 30 ms from each service point to the Respondent's internet peering point	Minimum
Packet loss / jitter	Monthly average packet loss under 0.1%; jitter under 5 ms	Minimum
Delivered throughput	At least 85% of committed rate in all quarterly scheduled tests	Minimum
Data usage	No data caps, surcharges, or usage-based throttling	Minimum
Failover	Automatic failover so that loss of one route does not interrupt campus service; Respondent to describe method (for example, BGP, shared address space across both service points); Respondent to state the expected failover time	Minimum; design Scored
IP addressing	Static IPv4 block (/29 or larger) and IPv6 allocation, routable across both service points	Minimum
Maintenance windows	Planned maintenance outside 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Eastern, with at least 72 hours' notice, never on both routes simultaneously	Minimum
Covered equipment	No covered telecommunications equipment or services under 2 CFR 200.216	Minimum

6.1 Technology. This RFP requires fiber to both service points. Respondents may propose other technologies only as supplementary protection (for example, a licensed microwave path as a third layer of resilience), and must describe how any such element is monitored and maintained.

6.2 Service credits. The agreement will include service credits for missed service levels. At a minimum, if cumulative unavailability exceeds 24 hours in any 365-day period (excluding force majeure), Red Bird Mission will receive a credit equal to one full month of the service fee. Respondents are invited to propose a tiered credit schedule for shorter outages and missed restoration targets. Service credits are applied as an offset against amounts due to the Respondent, as described in Section 8.6. Red Bird Mission will also receive service credits when a performance shortfall found in quarterly testing (Section 6.5) is not corrected within the timeline in that section.

6.3 Chronic outage. Repeated failure to meet the availability standard may be grounds for termination for cause. Corrective action procedures will be set in the agreement.

6.4 Force majeure. Vandalism, theft of plant, weather typical of the region, and tree damage will not qualify as force majeure, since the redundant design is meant to withstand them.

6.5 Quarterly performance testing. Red Bird Mission and its partners will test the service at each service point every quarter, on a schedule aligned with ARC's required reporting. If a test shows service below any Minimum requirement in Section 6, the Respondent must restore compliant service within the restoration times in Section 6, or within seventy-two (72) hours for performance shortfalls not caused by an outage. If the Respondent does not meet that timeline, Red Bird Mission will receive service credits under Section 6.2. The Respondent will provide a test endpoint and any access needed to test each service point. Monthly average packet loss and jitter will be verified from the Respondent's network monitoring data and reported in the annual service report (Section 9.1).

6.6 Service Acceptance

Service will be accepted when:

(a) service installation is complete on both routes;
(b) each service point passes a documented 72-hour burn-in test meeting the throughput, latency, packet loss, and jitter requirements in Section 6;
(c) each route passes a failover test with no campus service loss beyond the Respondent’s stated failover time; and
(d) as-built documentation is delivered.

The Respondent will perform and document all tests, with five (5) business days’ notice so Red Bird Mission and its third-party compliance reviewer may observe. The date of written acceptance is the Service Start Date and sets the baseline for quarterly performance testing under Section 6.5.

6.7 Demarcation. The demarcation point is the customer-facing port of the Respondent's equipment at each service point. The Respondent is responsible for everything on the network side of the demarcation. Red Bird Mission is responsible for its campus network on the customer side.

6.8 Operations and maintenance. The Respondent must provide 24x7x365 network monitoring, proactive fault detection, repair and restoration, preventive maintenance, spare parts, and equipment lifecycle replacement for the full contract term.

6.9 Customer support. Respondents must provide a way for subscribers to report outages at any time, by phone, online form, or automated system. Live customer support must be available at minimum during standard business hours, Monday through Friday. Respondents should describe their support hours, typical response and restoration times, and escalation path, including a designated point of contact for Red Bird Mission.

6.10 Security. The Respondent must maintain reasonable physical and cyber security practices for the provider network, including protection of fiber plant in remote areas, secure management

of customer-premises equipment, and notification to Red Bird Mission of any security incident affecting the service.

Section 7. Affordability, Pricing, and Continuity of Service

7.1 Firm pricing. Monthly recurring charges must be fixed for the full seven-year initial term. No price increases, new fees, or surcharges will be permitted during that term.

7.2 No hidden charges. All non-recurring charges, including line extension, make-ready, installation, drops, and equipment, must be disclosed in the Price Proposal (Appendix B). Charges not listed in the proposal will not be payable.

7.3 Continuity of service beyond Year 7. ARC expects BaaS agreements to last longer than the seven-year grant period, and Red Bird Mission intends to keep this service long after ARC funding ends. Each proposal must include a written statement on whether and how the Respondent will maintain service after the grant period. Proposals guaranteeing long-term service availability at a competitive rate will score higher.

7.4 Continuity protections. Respondents must describe how service to Red Bird Mission would be protected if the Respondent sells the network, undergoes a change of control, becomes insolvent, or exits the market.

7.5 Universal Service programs. Respondents must state whether they are an ETC in Kentucky and whether they participate in E-Rate, Rural Health Care, and Lifeline. Where Red Bird Christian School or the clinic may be eligible for these programs, the Respondent should describe how it would support Red Bird Mission's applications, and how it would structure billing so that no cost is paid twice by ARC and a Universal Service program. Any E-Rate or Rural Health Care services must be procured under those programs' own competitive bidding rules, which this RFP does not replace.

7.6 Community benefit (Bonus). Respondents are encouraged, and may receive bonus points for, submitting community benefit plans that describe any additional benefit the new routes could bring to the surrounding communities, such as (a) retail service to homes and businesses passed by the new routes, (b) wholesale or backhaul capacity at reasonable, non-discriminatory rates to support future cellular or fixed wireless service in the valley, and (c) any commitment to participate in future affordability programs. More than 4,300 unserved and underserved locations lie within 30 miles of campus.

Section 8. Financial Structure and Payment

8.1 ARC contribution. ARC funds available for this contract will not exceed $625,000 over the contract term, with all ARC payments completed by December 31, 2033.

8.2 Total Contract Value. Each Respondent must propose a Total Contract Value covering all non-recurring and recurring costs for the seven-year initial term.

8.3 Required Respondent match. The Respondent must contribute cash or documented in-kind value equal to at least twenty percent (20%) of the Total Contract Value. The match is separate from the ARC payments in Section 8.4. The Respondent must document its cumulative match with each payment request, and the match must be verifiable under 2 CFR

200.306 (cost sharing). The Respondent may not use other federal funds as match unless approved by ARC and the federal agency providing those funds. Proposed match above the 20% minimum may receive bonus points (Section 10.3). The full match must be incurred and documented by December 31, 2033.

8.4 Payment schedule. The following is Red Bird Mission's proposed payment schedule. Respondents may propose an alternate schedule in their proposal using Appendix B-3.

ARC funds will be paid in three stages, each stated as a percentage of the ARC-funded portion of the contract, not of the Total Contract Value: ten percent (10%) at contract execution; forty percent (40%) at Service Acceptance; and the remaining fifty percent (50%) divided equally among annual service payments made on each anniversary of Service Acceptance before the end of the ARC period of performance. The conditions for each payment appear in Section 8.5.

Contract Year 1 begins on the contract execution date, and the contract term runs seven (7) years from that date. The monthly recurring charges in Appendix B begin at Service Acceptance (Section 6.6) and are used to price the Total Contract Value. All ARC payments must be completed by the end of the ARC period of performance, December 31, 2033, and the number of annual service payments will be set at Service Acceptance to meet that date. Delays in Service Acceptance will not extend ARC payments. Red Bird Mission will pay for any service delivered after that date at the rates proposed in Appendix B, and Respondents should price the full seven-year term accordingly.

8.5 Payment conditions. ARC requires structured BaaS payments that reduce grantee risk. Payments compensate the Respondent for making the defined service available. Annual service payments are based on the quarterly performance tests in Section 6.5. Payments will be released only when the conditions below are met and documented, substantially as follows (final terms to be negotiated):

Payment	Conditions for payment	Share of ARC funds
Contract execution	Agreement executed; performance security delivered (Section 8.7)	10%
Service Acceptance	Service Acceptance under Section 6.6	40%
Annual service payments	Quarterly tests for the preceding year completed under Section 6.5, with any shortfalls corrected or credited; annual service report (Section 9.1) and cumulative match documentation delivered	50%, divided equally among the annual service payments due on each anniversary of Service Acceptance before December 31, 2033, less any service credits

8.6 Holdbacks and remedies. Service must be accepted within eighteen (18) months after Notice to Proceed. Red Bird Mission will issue a written Notice to Proceed within fifteen (15) days after contract execution and receipt of the performance security required in Section 8.7. Red Bird Mission will consider extensions for documented permitting delays outside the Respondent's control. Service credits will be deducted from payments due to the Respondent. If the agreement is terminated because Service Acceptance is not achieved, the Respondent must repay the contract execution payment. Detailed remedy procedures will be set in the agreement.

8.7 Performance security. The Respondent must provide performance security, such as a letter of credit, parent guarantee, or performance bond, in an amount not less than the contract execution payment (10% of ARC funds). Security will be released at Service Acceptance. Respondents may propose the form of security.

8.8 Invoicing. Invoicing procedures and payment timing will be set in the agreement.

Section 9. Performance Monitoring, Reporting, and Data

9.1 Annual service report. With each annual invoice, the Respondent will submit a report for each service point covering the prior year's service quality, outages and total downtime, monthly average packet loss and jitter, restoration times, repairs completed, and any repairs still needed.

9.2 Federal reporting. Upon request, the Respondent will provide the information Red Bird Mission needs for ARC's broadband reporting, including buildout data, route files, service availability, and closeout information, and will help confirm the Red Bird Mission campus location in the FCC's Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric. Once service begins, the Respondent must report broadband availability to the FCC's Broadband Data Collection, to the extent applicable, and must cooperate with data requests for ACCESS BROADBAND Act economic impact reporting. Record retention and access requirements appear in Section 13.

Section 10. Evaluation and Award

10.1 Evaluation committee. Proposals will be evaluated by a committee that may include representatives of Red Bird Mission, Connect Humanity, and external subject matter experts. Each evaluator will independently score proposals using the criteria in Section 10.3 and will sign a conflict-of-interest statement before reviewing proposals.

10.2 Step 1: Responsiveness and responsibility (pass/fail). Red Bird Mission or its partner will first confirm that each proposal is complete and meets all Minimum requirements. Consistent with 2 CFR 200.318(h), it will also confirm each Respondent’s basic responsibility, including exclusion status in SAM.gov, apparent financial and technical capacity, integrity, compliance with applicable certifications, and any disclosed information indicating that the Respondent

may be unable to perform successfully. A Respondent found non-responsive or not responsible at this stage will not be scored.

10.3 Step 2: Scoring. Responsive and responsible proposals will be scored as follows:

Criterion	Points	What evaluators will look for
1. Technical approach, route diversity, and reliability	30	Evaluation will consider the technical feasibility of the proposed solution, route diversity and redundancy, network capacity, reliability and restoration approach, and the extent to which the proposed solution meets or exceeds the RFP's technical requirements.
2. Price and lifecycle value	20	Up to 12 points will be awarded based on the Respondent's Total Contract Value for the initial seven-year contract term using the following formula: **Lowest Responsive Total Contract Value ÷ Respondent's Total Contract Value × 12** Up to 8 points will be awarded based on lifecycle value, including pricing transparency and predictability, escalation provisions, included services and charges, long-term cost exposure, pricing and terms proposed for Years 8–10, and overall value to Red Bird Mission over the service lifecycle.
3. Qualifications, experience, and organizational capacity	15	Evaluation will consider the Respondent's experience with comparable broadband and telecommunications projects, experience operating at the proposed scale and in similar environments, qualifications of key personnel, organizational resources available to perform the work, relevant federally funded project experience, and demonstrated ability to successfully manage comparable project and operational responsibilities.
4. BaaS model, sustainability, and continuity	15	Evaluation will consider the clarity and practicality of the proposed BaaS operating model; allocation of ownership, maintenance, replacement, and service responsibilities; long-term service continuity; sustainability over the contract term; and transition, renewal, or end-of-term arrangements.
5. Compliance and reporting capacity	10	Evaluation will consider the Respondent's demonstrated capacity to meet applicable ARC, federal, FCC, and contract reporting and documentation requirements; experience administering comparable federally funded projects; systems and personnel available to support compliance and reporting; and the quality and usefulness of the sample annual service report.
6. Implementation schedule and delivery risk management	10	Evaluation will consider the credibility and completeness of the Respondent's path to Service Acceptance within eighteen (18) months, including sequencing of major activities, identification of material dependencies, permitting and U.S. Forest Service requirements, make-ready activities, supply-chain considerations, and the practicality of proposed contingency and mitigation measures.
Total	**100**	

Criterion	Points	What evaluators will look for
(Bonus) Additional Respondent match above 20%	**Up to 5**	Respondents proposing verifiable cash or documented in-kind match above the required twenty percent (20%) minimum may receive bonus points as follows: ● More than 20% but less than 25%: 1 point ● 25% to less than 30%: 2 points ● 30% to less than 35%: 3 points ● 35% to less than 40%: 4 points ● 40% or more: 5 points Only match that is allowable, verifiable, and committed to the project will be considered for bonus points.
(Bonus) Community benefit under Section 7.6	**Up to 5**	Respondents may receive up to five (5) bonus points for credible commitments that provide additional benefit to communities surrounding the Red Bird Mission project area, as described in Section 7.6. Evaluation may consider the specificity, feasibility, and likely value of commitments related to retail service availability, wholesale or backhaul opportunities, participation in future affordability programs, or other documented community benefits enabled by the proposed project. Community benefit commitments are not required for a proposal and will be evaluated only as bonus points.

10.4 Interviews, Clarifications, and Pre-Award BaaS Risk Review. Red Bird Mission may invite the highest-ranked Respondents to interview or present and may request written clarifications from any Respondent.

After scoring and before final award, Red Bird Mission will complete and document an ARC Broadband as a Service risk review of the highest-ranked Respondent. The review will consider financial position, past performance on similar projects, proximity of existing operations to the project area, experience operating at the proposed scale, quality systems and standards, and other material factors affecting successful delivery of reliable and reasonably affordable service.

Red Bird Mission may use the interview and clarification process to obtain supporting information needed to complete this review. If material risks are identified, Red Bird Mission may require reasonable mitigation as a condition of award or contract execution. If identified risks cannot be adequately mitigated, Red Bird Mission may proceed to the next-ranked Respondent.

10.5 Negotiation and best and final offers. Red Bird Mission may negotiate with the highest-ranked Respondent or request best and final offers from Respondents within the competitive range. If an agreement cannot be reached, Red Bird Mission may begin negotiations with the next-ranked Respondent.

10.6 Cost or price analysis. Respondents must provide cost detail sufficient to support the cost or price analysis required by 2 CFR 200.324.

10.7 Single or inadequate response. If Red Bird Mission receives only one proposal, or determines after soliciting several sources that competition is inadequate, it may proceed under 2 CFR 200.320(c)(5), subject to a documented justification, a cost analysis, and any review ARC requires. Respondents should not assume that a single response will be accepted without negotiation.

10.8 Award. Award will be made to the responsible Respondent whose proposal is most advantageous to Red Bird Mission, price and other factors considered, following completion of the pre-award BaaS risk review described in Section 10.4. Red Bird Mission will notify all Respondents in writing of the outcome.

Section 11. Schedule, Questions, and Submission

11.1 Procurement schedule. Red Bird Mission anticipates the following schedule. Dates may change by written addendum.

Activity	Date	Planning note
RFP issued and posted online	Friday, November 6, 2026	Question period opens; registration opens; local newspaper notice to follow in next available issue
Answers posted to registered Respondents	Fridays, November 13 and 20; Wednesday, November 25, 2026	Rolling; Wednesday the 25th due to the federal holiday
Final day to submit questions	Monday, November 30, 2026, 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time	
Final answers and addendum issued	Wednesday, December 2, 2026	Send update to all Respondents.
Proposals Due	Friday, December 11, 2026, 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time	
Evaluation Period	December 13 to 21, 2026	
Notice of Intent to Award	January 5, 2027	Sent to all Respondents
Protest Period Ends	January 12, 2027	
Contract Execution	Target Date: Late January 2027	
Service Acceptance	No later than 18 months after Notice to Proceed	

11.2 Registration. Any firm that wants to receive addenda and answers to questions must send its company name, contact name, and email address to the Authorized Representative before

the question deadline. Red Bird Mission is not responsible for addenda missed by firms that do not register.

11.3 Questions. All questions must be submitted in writing by email to RedBirdRFP@connecthumanity.fund with the subject line "Red Bird Mission BaaS RFP: Questions" by the deadline above. Answers will be shared in writing with all registered Respondents without identifying the firm that asked. Only written addenda issued by Red Bird Mission modify this RFP.

11.4 Communications blackout. From issuance until award, Respondents may not contact any Red Bird Mission employee, board member, volunteer, partner, or consultant about this RFP except the Authorized Representative. Violations may result in disqualification. Routine business unrelated to this RFP is not affected.

11.5 How to submit. Proposals will be accepted by electronic delivery only. Printed, mailed, or hand-delivered proposals will not be accepted.

- **Electronic delivery:** Respondents must email either (a) a single searchable PDF or (b) a single ZIP file containing the complete proposal package to RedBirdRFP@connecthumanity.fund with the subject line "Red Bird Mission BaaS RFP Proposal: [Respondent Name]." If the submission exceeds email attachment limits, the Respondent must contact the Authorized Representative in advance for secure file-transfer instructions. Regardless of submission method, the complete proposal must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, December 11, 2026. The Authorized Representative will confirm receipt by reply email. The time stamp on the Authorized Representative's inbox, or the documented time of receipt through an approved secure file-transfer method, is controlling. Late proposals will not be considered.

11.6 Cost of preparation. Respondents bear all costs of preparing and submitting proposals and of negotiations.

11.7 Due diligence. Each Respondent is responsible for examining this RFP and conducting whatever investigation it considers necessary to understand site conditions and requirements. Failure to do so will not relieve the Respondent of its obligations.

Section 12. Terms, Conditions, and Reservation of Rights

12.1 No commitment. This RFP does not commit Red Bird Mission to award a contract or to pay any cost incurred in preparing a proposal.

12.2 Property of Red Bird Mission. All proposals become the property of Red Bird Mission and part of its procurement file.

12.3 Confidentiality and disclosure. Red Bird Mission will use reasonable efforts to protect information clearly marked "Proprietary," "Trade Secret," or "Confidential," to the extent permitted by law. Proposals may be shared with ARC, the Kentucky Office of Broadband Development, Red Bird Mission's auditors, evaluators, and advisors, and as otherwise required by law or the terms of the federal award. General technical approaches, pricing, and business model information are not confidential.

12.4 Conduct. Respondents shall not offer any gratuity, favor, or anything of monetary value to any Red Bird Mission official, employee, volunteer, or agent, and shall not collude with other Respondents or third parties in any way that restricts competition. Disclosed subcontracts and joint ventures formed to respond to this RFP are permitted. Proposals must be the Respondent's own work product.

12.5 Contract formation. This RFP and the selected proposal may be incorporated by reference into the final agreement, which will be negotiated in accordance with 2 CFR 200.317 to 200.327, ARC requirements, and Kentucky law. If an agreement cannot be reached, Red Bird Mission may negotiate with another Respondent. The agreement will include standard terms on default, governing law, legal compliance, and cooperation.

12.6 Disqualification. Red Bird Mission may disqualify any Respondent that fails to provide requested information, provides materially inaccurate or misleading information, or has a real or apparent conflict of interest.

12.7 Reservation of rights. Red Bird Mission reserves the right to: (a) reject any or all proposals; (b) reissue the RFP; (c) accept portions of proposals; (d) request clarification or additional information from any Respondent; (e) waive immaterial defects or informalities; (f) negotiate modifications to any proposal; and (g) cancel this RFP at any time, including if ARC funding is not available.

12.8 Grounds for rejection. A proposal may be rejected for late or misdirected submission, failure to use the required format, failure to include required information or forms, or taking exception to material terms of this RFP. Respondents that wish to propose alternatives to non-Minimum terms must identify them clearly in a separate "Exceptions" section.

12.9 Capacity to contract. Respondents must be legally able to enter into a binding contract and must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of Kentucky before contract execution.

12.10 Protests. A Respondent that believes this procurement was conducted improperly may submit a written protest to the Authorized Representative within five (5) business days after the basis for the protest is known, stating the facts and relief requested. Red Bird Mission or its authorized partner will respond in writing within ten (10) business days and may inform ARC of any protest.

Section 13. Required Federal Contract Provisions

As required by 2 CFR 200.327, the final agreement will include all applicable provisions from Appendix II to 2 CFR Part 200. Based on the anticipated value and scope of this contract, these are expected to include:

Provision	Summary of requirement
Remedies (contracts above the simplified acquisition threshold)	Administrative, contractual, or legal remedies for breach, including sanctions and penalties
Termination for cause, convenience, or loss of federal funding	Red Bird Mission may terminate for cause, convenience, or if ARC funding is suspended, reduced, terminated, or otherwise becomes

Provision	Summary of requirement
	unavailable, with notice procedures and the manner and basis for settlement defined in the agreement
Clean Air Act and Federal Water Pollution Control Act	Compliance for contracts over $150,000
Debarment and suspension	Respondent and its subcontractors must not be excluded under Executive Orders 12549 and 12689 and 2 CFR Part 180; verified in SAM.gov
Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment	Certification that federal funds were not used for lobbying, for contracts of $100,000 or more (31 U.S.C. 1352)
Procurement of recovered materials	Compliance with 2 CFR 200.323 where applicable
Prohibition on certain telecommunications equipment	2 CFR 200.216 and Section 889 of Pub. L. 115-232
Domestic preferences	2 CFR 200.322
Access to records; retention	2 CFR 200.334 and 200.337
ARC Code requirements	Conflict of interest (ARC Code 8.3), restrictions on assistance (8.4), and post-grant cooperation (8.9)

Respondents should review these provisions carefully. Exceptions to mandatory federal provisions cannot be accepted.

Section 14. Proposal Content Requirements

Proposals must be organized using the tabs below, in this order. Clear, concise answers are appreciated. Please do not bury key commitments in marketing material.

Tab	Contents
Tab 1. Cover Sheet and Transmittal Letter	Signed Respondent Cover Sheet; transmittal letter signed by an authorized officer; acknowledgment of all addenda; statement of proposal validity (180 days)
Tab 2. Executive Summary	Two pages or fewer summarizing the proposed solution, price, match, and schedule
Tab 3. Understanding of the Project	Restatement of the project goals and requirements in the Respondent's own words, and how its approach addresses the campus reliability problem
Tab 4. Technical Approach	Route plan and maps; diversity analysis identifying any shared elements; installation method (aerial, underground, leased); network architecture; electronics; failover design; security and vandalism mitigation; answers to every item in Section 6; completed Appendix D checklist; how the design will carry 10 Gbps symmetrical at each service point
Tab 5. Implementation Plan and Schedule	Milestone schedule from Notice to Proceed to Service Acceptance; permitting plan, including U.S. Forest Service, pole owners, and state permits; make-ready strategy; supply chain risks; key dependencies and mitigation
Tab 6. Operations, SLA, and Support	Network operations center; network monitoring and incident management practices; SLA terms and proposed credit schedule; restoration staffing and nearest crew locations; escalation and corrective action procedures; sample annual service report
Tab 7. BaaS Model and Continuity	Ownership of assets; Years 8 to 10 pricing; renewal options and price caps; continuity protections for sale, change of control, or insolvency; community benefit commitments (Section 7.6)
Tab 8. Qualifications and Experience	Company overview; current service footprint and approx. customer counts; experience with rural fiber line extensions in mountainous terrain; experience with managed DIA and projects of comparable scale; proximity of existing operations and restoration resources to the Red Bird Mission campus; experience with federally funded projects and reporting; key personnel with resumes; organizational chart; any proposed subcontractors
Tab 9. References	At least three (3) references for similar projects completed within the last five (5) years, with contact name, phone, email, and project description
Tab 10. Financial Capacity and Risk	Two most recent years of audited or reviewed financial statements or equivalent documentation acceptable to Red Bird Mission; evidence of sufficient financial capacity to support implementation before the Service Acceptance payment; source of match funds; description of any pending litigation, regulatory actions, defaults, insolvency concerns, or planned sale, merger, or change of control; current certificate of insurance identifying existing coverage and policy limits for pre-award risk assessment purposes

Tab	Contents
Tab 11. Price Proposal	Completed Appendix B, including price, match, payment schedule, and post-Year 7 pricing
Tab 12. Required Forms	Appendices A, D, E, and F, fully completed and signed; Exceptions section, if any (Section 12.8)

Respondents may mark genuinely proprietary financial or technical information as "Confidential" (Section 12.3). Pricing, match commitments, and service levels will not be treated as confidential.

Appendix A. Proposal Summary Form

Complete this form and place it immediately after the Cover Sheet. Figures must match the Price Proposal in Appendix B.

Respondent name	
Primary contact (name, title, phone, email)	
Technology to each service point	
Installation method (aerial / underground / leased / mixed)	
Route miles proposed (north / south / other)	
Committed bandwidth per service point	
Proposed Service Acceptance date (months after Notice to Proceed)	
Total Contract Value, Years 1 to 7	
Respondent match ($ and % of Total Contract Value)	
Net ARC funds requested	
Monthly price in Year 8	
Physically diverse routes to both service points? (Yes / No)	
Meets all Minimum requirements in Section 6? (Yes / No)	
ETC in Kentucky? (Yes / No)	
Retail or wholesale service offered to premises passed? (Yes / No; describe)	

I, _____, an authorized representative of the firm named above, have reviewed and understand Red Bird Mission's Request for Proposals for Broadband as a Service, and the firm is prepared to provide the required services for the amounts stated.

Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Appendix B. Price Proposal Form

All prices in U.S. dollars. Respondents may attach supporting detail, but this form controls. Include all costs; any cost not listed will not be payable.

B-1. Non-Recurring Charges

Line item	Quantity / unit	Unit price	Extended price
Engineering, design, and permitting	Lump sum		
Make-ready (north route)			
Make-ready (south route)			
Fiber line extension, north route	Route miles		
Fiber line extension, south route	Route miles		
Service drops and building entrances (2)	Each		
Managed router / NID at service points (2)	Each		
Other (describe)			
Total non-recurring charges			

Note: Itemized non-recurring charges are required for evaluation and the cost analysis under 2 CFR 200.324. Payment will follow the payment schedule in Section 8, or as mutually agreed during contracting.

B-2. Monthly Recurring Charges

Service	Monthly price per service point	Monthly total (both points)	Total through end of Year 7
10 Gbps symmetrical DIA, managed			

Note: Recurring charges begin at Service Acceptance (Section 6.6). State how many months of recurring charges are included in the seven-year total.

B-3. Total Contract Value, Match, and Payment Schedule

Contract year	Total amount	ARC share	Respondent match	Match type (cash / in-kind)
Year 1				
Year 2				
Year 3				
Year 4				
Year 5				
Year 6				
Year 7				

Contract year	Total amount	ARC share	Respondent match	Match type (cash / in-kind)
Total				

Total ARC share may not exceed $625,000. Respondent match must equal at least 20% of Total Contract Value. Show the ARC share in the contract year in which each payment under Section 8.4 is expected. Respondents proposing an alternate payment schedule should show it in this table and describe it in Tab 11.

B-4. Continuity Pricing (after Year 7)

Period	Monthly price, 10 Gbps (both points)	Maximum annual increase
Year 8		n/a
Year 9		
Year 10		
Renewal term 1 (3+ years)		
Renewal term 2 (3+ years)		

B-5. Optional Community Benefit Pricing (Section 7.6)

Offering	Description and price
Retail service to premises passed by new routes	
Wholesale or backhaul capacity for future cellular / fixed wireless	
Other	

Appendix C. Service Area, Routes, and Service Points

Upon request, Red Bird Mission will provide registered Respondents with the campus maps, pole information collected during planning, and photographs of the service point locations. Requests should be sent to the Authorized Representative.

Element	Description
Campus address	70 Queendale Center, Beverly, KY 40913
Service Point A	Telecommunications room, Red Bird health clinic building
Service Point B	Telecommunications closet, Red Bird Christian School
North route (preliminary)	Approximately 1.7 route miles from a northern network access point to one campus service point (health clinic or Red Bird Christian School)
South route (preliminary)	Approximately 3.5 route miles from a southern network access point to the other campus service point (health clinic or Red Bird Christian School)
Total preliminary route length	Approximately 5.2 route miles (27,456 linear feet)
Campus locations served via Red Bird network	Approximately 46 residential units; school; clinic and dental clinic; on-campus health and behavioral health tenants; community store; café and craft store; commercial kitchen; administrative, classroom, and community buildings

Appendix D. Minimum Requirements Compliance Checklist

For each item, mark "Comply" or "Exception" and give the proposal page reference. Any "Exception" to a Minimum requirement must be explained and may result in a finding of non-responsiveness.

#	Requirement	Comply / Exception	Page ref.
1	Fiber to both service points		
2	10 Gbps symmetrical committed DIA at each service point		
3	10 Gbps handoff at each service point		
4	Two physically diverse routes to independent access points		
5	Engineered to 99.99% availability; 24-hour annual unavailability cap		
6	Restoration: 12 hours electronics; 48 hours single-route fiber		
7	Latency 30 ms or less round trip		
8	Packet loss under 0.1%; jitter under 5 ms		
9	No data caps or usage-based throttling		
10	Automatic failover across both service points		
11	Static IPv4 (/29+) and IPv6		
12	Quarterly performance testing and correction timelines accepted (Section 6.5)		
13	Fixed pricing for seven-year term		
14	Match of at least 20% of Total Contract Value		
15	Years 8 to 10 pricing and renewal options provided		
16	Service Acceptance within 18 months of Notice to Proceed		
17	Support for ARC, FCC BDC, and audit reporting		
18	No covered telecommunications equipment (2 CFR 200.216)		
19	Payment schedule and conditions, performance security, service credit offsets, and refund obligation accepted (Sections 8.4 to 8.7)		
20	Acceptance of mandatory federal contract provisions (Section 13)		

Appendix E. Vendor Affidavit

Project name: Broadband as a Service for the Red Bird Mission Campus

Non-delinquency. The undersigned, being duly sworn, states that the Respondent is not delinquent on any taxes owed to the Commonwealth of Kentucky or any of its political subdivisions, and is not delinquent on any debt owed to the United States.

Non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity. The Respondent does not and shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by federal or Kentucky law, and will comply with all applicable equal employment opportunity requirements.

Non-collusion. The proposal is genuine and not collusive or sham. The Respondent has not colluded, conspired, or agreed, directly or indirectly, with any other Respondent or person to submit a sham proposal, to refrain from proposing, or to fix any price or cost element of any proposal, and has not sought any advantage against Red Bird Mission or any person interested in the proposed contract. All statements in the proposal are true.

No financial interest. No Red Bird Mission employee, officer, board member, or consultant to this project has a financial interest in the Respondent or in this proposal, except as disclosed in writing in Appendix F.

The undersigned affirms that the above statements are true, and that they will be incorporated as covenants in any resulting agreement.

Company name:	Federal Tax ID:
Authorized signature:	Printed name and title:

Appendix F. Representations, Assurances, and Certifications

Company legal name	
Company address	
Legal status (corporation, LLC, cooperative, other) and state of organization	
Date of establishment or incorporation	
Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)	
SAM.gov Unique Entity ID (if registered)	
Name and phone of person authorized to submit this proposal	
Name and phone of person authorized to sign contracts	
Parent company, if any	

Please answer each question Yes or No. Attach an explanation for any answer that requires one.

#	Certification	Yes / No
1	The Respondent is authorized, or will be authorized before contract execution, to do business in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.	
2	Neither the Respondent nor any of its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from federal transactions (2 CFR Part 180), and none is listed as excluded in SAM.gov.	
3	The Respondent will not subcontract any work under this agreement to a debarred, suspended, or excluded party.	
4	The Respondent is not delinquent on any federal debt.	
5	The Respondent certifies that no federal appropriated funds have been or will be paid to any person to influence a federal officer, employee, or Member of Congress in connection with this contract, and will file Standard Form LLL if any non-federal funds have been so used (31 U.S.C. 1352).	
6	The Respondent does not and will not use covered telecommunications equipment or services, as defined in 2 CFR 200.216 and Section 889 of Pub. L. 115-232, in performing this contract.	
7	The Respondent is an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in Kentucky. (If Yes, list study areas.)	
8	The Respondent participates in E-Rate, Rural Health Care, and/or Lifeline. (List programs.)	

#	Certification	Yes / No
9	The Respondent receives, or has applied for, other federal, state, or Universal Service support covering any part of the proposed routes or service points. (If Yes, describe.)	
10	The Respondent has any business, family, or financial relationship with Red Bird Mission staff or board, Connect Humanity, Mountain Association, Broadband Catalysts, or any other consultant to this project. (If Yes, describe.)	
11	The Respondent or any affiliate participated in drafting the specifications, requirements, or statement of work for this RFP.	
12	The Respondent has current or planned activity for a sale, merger, buyout, or change of control. (If Yes, describe.)	
13	The Respondent has defaulted on, been terminated for cause from, received a material cure notice under, or received a material extension attributable to its performance on any comparable broadband or telecommunications project in the last five years. (If Yes, describe.)	
14	The Respondent maintains a drug-free workplace.	
15	The Respondent is subject to federal, state, or local affirmative action or EEO rules and has filed all required reports. (N/A if not subject.)	

Signature: _____

Printed name and title: _____

Date: _____

Appendix G. Reference Sources

The following official sources informed this RFP. Respondents are encouraged to review them.

1. Appalachian Regional Commission. Application Guidance by Project Type: Broadband as a Service. https://www.arc.gov/resource/application-guidance-by-project-type/
2. Appalachian Regional Commission. OMB Grant Regulations. https://www.arc.gov/omb-grant-regulations/
3. Appalachian Regional Commission. Broadband Grantees: Post-Award Reporting Templates. https://www.arc.gov/resource/broadband-grantee-reporting-templates/
4. Appalachian Regional Commission. Broadband Applicant Reporting Templates. https://www.arc.gov/resource/broadband-applicant-reporting-templates/
5. Appalachian Regional Commission. Grant Compliance Guide. https://www.arc.gov/resource/grant-compliance-guide/
6. Appalachian Regional Commission. Guide to ARC Project Performance Measures. https://www.arc.gov/resource/guide-to-arc-project-performance-measures/
7. Electronic Code of Federal Regulations. 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart D, Procurement Standards (200.317 to 200.327). https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-D/subject-group-ECFR45ddd4419ad436d
8. Electronic Code of Federal Regulations. 2 CFR 200.320, Procurement Methods. https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-D/subject-group-ECFR45ddd4419ad436d/section-200.320
9. Electronic Code of Federal Regulations. Appendix II to Part 200, Contract Provisions. https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/appendix-Appendix%20II%20to%20Part%20200
10. Federal Communications Commission. Broadband Data Collection. https://www.fcc.gov/BroadbandData
11. Federal Communications Commission. Broadband Funding Map. https://fundingmap.fcc.gov/home
12. Federal Communications Commission. National Broadband Map. https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/home
13. Universal Service Administrative Company. E-Rate, Rural Health Care, and Lifeline programs. https://www.usac.org/