

Lumpkin County Government
Request for Proposals

*Technical & Grant Administrative Services:
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Broadband Infrastructure Project*

Proposals to be received by 4:00 PM Friday, April 14, 2022.

Submit Proposals to:
Lumpkin County Government
Attn: Ryan McDuffie, Purchasing Agent
99 Courthouse Hill, Suite D
Dahlonega, GA 30533

Ryan.McDuffie@LumpkinCounty.GOV
706.482.2552

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Lumpkin County Government intends to hire a third-party contractor (Program Manager) to assist with project implementation, oversight, tracking and collection of data related to performance measurements, and reporting. This Program Manager role will work on behalf of Lumpkin County to ensure there is no fraud, waste, or abuse associated with the grant funds received from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Infrastructure Program (BIP).

The Program Manager will provide oversight for the project to ensure the provider implements the project as outlined, that all reporting requirements are met, and that project goals are achieved. The Program Manager will also assist with collection, collation and submission of performance data to Lumpkin County in a timely manner.

The Program Manager will manage, monitor, and oversee the private provider on behalf of Lumpkin County Government on any requested changes or modifications of the proposed project by the private providers.

Background

Lumpkin County was notified by NTIA in February 2022 as a recipient of the BIP grant award.

This award from NTIA is a part of a larger comprehensive broadband project with a private provider and the Development Authority of Lumpkin County (DALC) throughout Lumpkin County. The DALC's portion of this project will be funded through a grant award from the Georgia American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) for broadband infrastructure.

This combined project using the BIP award and the state ARPA funds will address the most disproportionate broadband needs for residents and businesses throughout Lumpkin County.

Current Timeline

Activity	Date
Issuance of this RFP	March 30, 2022
RFP questions due to the Lumpkin County Purchasing Agent	April 6, 2022
Responses to any questions submitted emailed and posted to the Lumpkin County website	April 8, 2022
RFP due to the Lumpkin County Purchasing Agent	April 14, 2022
Presentation of proposals to Lumpkin County Government Board of Commissioners	April 19, 2022
Professional Service Agreement with third-party advisor executed by Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners	May 17, 2022

Negotiating final scope of work and budget with NTIA for BIP award	Currently
Form CD-450 award accepted and sent to NTIA	Approximately 30 days after the scope of work and budget with NTIA grant administrators is finalized
Submit final scope of work and budget with state of Georgia	Once details confirmed with NTIA
Acceptance of state of Georgia grant terms and conditions	TBD
Program Manager agreement start date	TBD
Program Manager, DALC, Lumpkin County Government, and private provider kick off meeting	TBD
Lumpkin County Citizen Awareness event	TBD
Project start	TBD

The dates shown above may be subject to change within Lumpkin County Government's sole discretion and upon written notification as set forth herein.

Communications

All communications by parties who have indicated an intent to submit or have submitted a proposal in response to this RFP ("Respondents"), including any questions or requests for clarifications, submission of the proposal, requests for status updates about the proposal selection process, and any other inquiries whatsoever concerning this RFP shall be sent, in writing, to the following Lumpkin County Government staff person ("Lumpkin County Contact"):

Lumpkin County Government
 Attn: Ryan McDuffie, Purchasing Agent
 99 Courthouse Hill, Suite D
 Dahlonega, GA 30533
Ryan.McDuffie@LumpkinCounty.GOV
 706.482.2552

No contact is permitted with any other Lumpkin County staff member with regard to this RFP during the RFP process unless specifically authorized in writing. Prohibited contact may be grounds for disqualification.

Lumpkin County will make every reasonable effort to keep Respondents informed about the RFP process. Notifications about Timeline date changes, amendments to the RFP and other information about the RFP will be sent by e-mail to Respondents who have provided an e-mail address to the Lumpkin County Contact and will be posted on Lumpkin County's website for this RFP.

Scope of Services

Lumpkin County Government is seeking the services of a Program Manager to perform the following services as part of BIP project. Each Respondent's proposal shall address each of the following services.

The selected Program Manager will assist Lumpkin County Government with the following duties to monitor project implementation, verify provider milestones, govern/oversee modifications, ensure project and fiscal accountability, and collect data:

- Written policies and procedures
- Written standards of conduct
- Risk-based due diligence
- Risk-based compliance monitoring
- Record maintenance and retention

The hours per week will vary depending on the status of the project. However, the NTIA BIP is approximately 75% of the total Lumpkin County broadband infrastructure project and is anticipated to require approximately 15 hours per week of administration.

It is also requested the Program Manager conduct one site visit per month for the duration of the project, for a total up to 12 visits per year, to ensure the project is being built out as approved by the NTIA BIP award. These site visits can coincide with site visits related to the technical oversight for the ARPA SFRF award portion of the project.

It is anticipated the ARPA SFRF is 25% of the total project and will require approximately 5 hours per week of grant administration, plus the once-a-month site visit for technical oversight related to the ARPA SFRF award. A RFP for this portion of the project was already issued by the DALC and should not be included in the response to this RFP.

The estimated length of the project is one year and is estimated begin the second quarter of 2022.

The Program Manager role and responsibilities will be the following:

- Provide oversight and guidance to guarantee compliance with Form CD-450, Financial Assistance Award
- Provide technical advisory services related to allowed uses of funds
- Respond to questions from and provide formal opinions regarding the eligibility of specific expenses to be covered by funds available from federal, state and other sources
- Provide expert programmatic and policy advice on program
- Develop appropriate documentation to demonstrate compliance with guidance
- Develop processes and documentation requirements around sub-recipient risk assessment, monitoring and management, including training of sub-recipients on funding requirements
- Provide guidance on a technology solution for tracking funding distribution strategy to sub-recipients
- Provide assistance and oversight to facilitate and ensure appropriate progress on agreed-upon deliverables
- Resolve any requests for information, justification, audit findings, and eligibility appeals
- Review contracts and purchasing documentation to ensure cost recovery and compliance of expenditures using federal funds

- Review and assist with processing payment requests, determining allowable costs
- Assist with preparation of project files and responses to any findings and/or concerns identified during monitoring visits and/or audits by any requesting entity
- Provide grant funding close-out services to ensure funding is retained
- Prepare and review documentation and reports for completeness to ensure eligible work and costs are captured for audit
- Assist with applying for and packaging materials for reimbursement
- Streamline reporting process to ensure continued compliance and provide post award grants administration
- Meet regularly with the provider implementation teams to assess progress and inform reporting, including onsite visits to the project area to ensure quality control measures are in place

It is anticipated that a Professional Services Agreement (PSA) would be for an initial term of one (1) year, with additional one-year optional renewals.

Proposal Preparation and Submission Process

Proposals must be submitted electronically to Lumpkin County no later than 4:00 pm April 14, 2022. Submit one (1) digital copy to:

Lumpkin County Government
 Attn: Ryan McDuffie, Purchasing Agent
 99 Courthouse Hill, Suite D
 Dahlonega, GA 30533
Ryan.McDuffie@LumpkinCounty.GOV
 706.482.2552

This RFP is designed to facilitate the evaluation and selection of a Program Manager that is best able to achieve Lumpkin County's objectives. The proposal shall contain a table of contents. All pages shall be numbered, and major sections and all attachments shall be referenced in the table of contents. In order to enable Lumpkin County to effectively review the information contained in the proposals, proposals shall reference the numbered sections of the RFP. The response to each section shall be clearly indicated and addressed or an explanation provided for why the Respondent is not submitting a proposal for a specific section or requirement of the RFP. If desired, the proposal may include an executive summary of no more than two pages.

Each proposal shall be signed by an individual authorized to enter into and execute contracts on the Respondent's behalf. Unless otherwise specified in its proposal, Respondent represents that it is capable of meeting or exceeding all requirements specified in this RFP.

Submission of a proposal shall be deemed authorization for Lumpkin County to contact Respondent's references. Evaluation of proposals will be conducted by Lumpkin County based on information provided in the Respondent's proposals and on such other available information that Lumpkin County determines to be relevant. The evaluation of proposals may include an on-site assessment, meetings with authorized personnel, and may involve the use of a third-party consultant.

The Respondent selected by Lumpkin County will be required to enter into a PSA with Lumpkin

County.

Respondents shall provide sufficient information in their written proposals to enable Lumpkin County review team to make a recommendation to the Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners.

Lumpkin County reserves the right to invite any or all Respondents to an interview to discuss their proposal. Any expenses resulting from such an interview will be the sole responsibility of the Respondent. Lumpkin County is under no obligation to select any of the responding Respondents or to conduct the Project described herein. Lumpkin County may amend or withdraw the RFP at any time, within its sole discretion. Lumpkin County shall have no liability for any costs incurred in preparing a proposal or responding to Lumpkin County's requests with respect to the proposal.

Proposal Content

The proposal should include the following information in the order specified:

1. Project statement: A Project narrative that describes the Respondent's understanding of Lumpkin County's needs and the unique value the Respondent will bring to the process.
2. Description of Solutions and Services to be provided: Describe in detail the services being proposed. The proposal should address the tasks as described in the Scope of Services and any other information that would assist in understanding of the project.
3. Respondent's Qualifications: Information about the Respondent and its qualifications for this Project. Describe the capability and experience to deliver the proposed consulting services.
4. References: Provide up to three projects of similar or greater magnitude that have been successfully completed in the last three years. Include a reference for each project, including name and contact information.
5. Project cost: Respondent will provide a fixed fee quote and a list of hourly rates for anything that could be considered out of scope of the project.
6. Project personnel: Identify the Respondent's lead person for the Project and provide names, resumes, and roles of all staff who will be involved in the Project. Provide data on the diversity of Respondent's overall workforce, including total number of employees and percentages of minorities and females employed.
7. Subcontractors: Names, resumes, and roles of all sub-contractors, associates, or any non-employees who will be involved in the Project.

Evaluation Criteria

The following is a summary of the proposal evaluation criteria. It is within Lumpkin County's sole discretion to determine the value assigned to each of these criteria.

Proposal: The Respondent's comprehension of the needs of Lumpkin County, as demonstrated by its description of its approach to the elements listed in the Scope of Services section of this RFP.

Experience: The Respondent's relevant experience in providing the same or similar services.

Cost: The total cost of the Respondent's proposal is important to Lumpkin County; however, based on the evaluation of the other criteria, Lumpkin County will not necessarily select the lowest bidder.

References: Evaluation of the Respondent's work for previous clients receiving similar services to those proposed in this RFP.

Other Criteria: Other criteria may be considered and evaluated by Lumpkin County if it is determined to be in the best interest of Lumpkin County and the success of the Project to do so.

Miscellaneous

Lumpkin County reserves the right to amend or withdraw this RFP in Lumpkin County's sole discretion, including any timeframes herein, upon notification of all Respondents as set forth above, and in such case, Lumpkin County shall have no liability for any costs incurred by any Respondent.

Lumpkin County may request additional information from any Respondent to assist Lumpkin County in making its evaluation.

The proposal and all materials submitted with the proposal shall become property of Lumpkin County and will be subject to open records law. If any proprietary information is submitted with the proposal, it must be clearly identified and a request to keep such information confidential must be submitted.

Submission of a proposal shall constitute a binding offer by Respondent to provide the services at the prices described therein until such time as the parties enter into a PSA.

Respondent is solely responsible for all costs associated with preparing and submitting proposals. Such costs will not be borne by Lumpkin County.