

RFI/001/PHL-2019

Request for Information (RFI) from Technology Providers for the Free WiFi Initiative of the Department of Information and Communications Technology, Republic of the Philippines, implemented by UNDP

Background

The Philippines is recognized as a high user of online services: an estimated 67 million Filipinos use Facebook. Yet 59% of the population and 72% of all household lack access to the internet. The Free Wi-Fi Internet Access in Public Places Project, otherwise known as Pipol Konek, was implemented starting June 2016. Pipol Konek aims to provide free broadband Internet access to public places across the country. The target beneficiary sites of Pipol Konek is 13,024 by December 2018. As of August 2018, a total of 3,509 sites have already been installed, with 1,592 live sites and 1,689 sites with access points installed but awaiting telco links.

On August 2, 2017, Republic Act No. 10929 otherwise known as the Free Internet Access in Public Places Act of 2017 was enacted, which mandates the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) as the lead implementing agency that will oversee the effective and efficient implementation of said Act. Under said law, the Free Public Internet Access Program was created that shall provide free access to internet service in public places throughout the country such as the national and local government offices; public basic education institutions; state universities and colleges, and TESDA (The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority) technology institutions; public hospitals, health centers and rural health units; public parks, plazas, libraries, and barangay reading centers; public airports and seaports; and public transport terminals.

UNDP will support DICT's commitment to accelerate the roll-out of the *Pipol Konek* project. Working in partnership with DICT, UNDP will use its National Acceleration Modality to draw international expertise and temporarily apply its procurement system for managed services contracts for designated areas that currently have no or limited access to internet in public places. This phase of the DICT-UNDP partnership aims to expand internet access in up to 6,000 additional sites.

The project will contribute to closing the digital divide in the Philippines by providing incentives to encourage new and existing local and international service providers to expand internet coverage in designated areas. The project will incorporate third-party monitoring mechanisms to ensure internet service providers meet service quality standards. The project will also include resources to develop the capacity of DICT staff to oversee the procurement, management and implementation of future large-scale ICT investments. Governance arrangements will be established for the project that ensure proactive management of project activities and performance.

Objective

This is a Request for Information (RFI), from national and/or international Technology Solutions Providers, Technology Startups, Internet Service Providers, Cable and Satellite Operators, Electric Cooperatives, Telecommunications and Network Infrastructure Providers, and System Developers, for the implementation of the Free Public WiFi initiative of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) in partnership with the UNDP. The following outlines the required expertise and experience by RFI respondents in the following areas:

- ✧ Network infrastructure deployment;
- ✧ Wired broadband service delivery;
- ✧ Wireless broadband service delivery;
- ✧ Different approaches to wired or wireless broadband service (for example wireless mesh technologies, satellite-based Internet access, among others);
- ✧ Innovative business models with regard to continued broadband service and consumer access;
- ✧ Managed services;
- ✧ Systems integration;
- ✧ Network security;
- ✧ Data privacy; or
- ✧ Application development

Information Requested

For the purposes of this initiative, the RFI will be used to gather information and recommendations via the completed questionnaire (Appendix A) on the range of possibilities with regard to:

- Deployment options of wired and/or wireless broadband infrastructure for last-mile access, and for middle-mile core infrastructure rollout.
- Implementation options on the range of business models that would support the ongoing operations of this initiative at the last-mile.
- Developing a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) Cost for the different aspects of this initiative.
- Gathering insight into the range of responders' capabilities, experience, and offerings.

Respondents are requested to fill out the below questionnaire, attaching all supporting documentation where available.

RFI Assumptions

The review committee is open to all technologies and service delivery business models that would be able to meet or exceed the requirements of this initiative.

Responders to the RFI can provide a proposal for any, or all, segments of the solution (i.e., last mile infrastructure, middle mile infrastructure, backhaul, access points, management software, consumer devices) to best provide a robust picture of the range of deployment options.

Of particular interest is of multi-vendor approaches that leverage relative strengths and comparative advantages of different entities into robust and reliable solutions.

Copies of all documentation submitted in response to this RFI will be available to the Committee for review purposes. If copyrighted material is sent in response to this RFI, then a statement waiving that copyright for use by the Committee is required and a limited waiver of copyright that allows the Committee to make copies for review purposes is required.

Information Meeting

This RFI is issued with the intent to survey the industry to obtain information that provides guidance, which may be used in the preparation of a detailed Request for Proposal (RFP). Based on those responses, the Committee will augment its roadmap which may result in one or more RFPs. To fully comprehend the information contained within a response to this RFI, the Committee may request further clarification in the form of brief verbal communication by telephone, written communication, electronic communication, or a presentation to the RFI Committee. Companies responding to this RFI shall designate a single contact within their company for receipt of all subsequent information regarding this RFI. The name of this contact will be made available to the Review Committee.

Requirements

- A proven track record in one or more of the areas identified above.
- A proven track record of experience in the development of technology and/or in building infrastructure for middle and last mile networks.
- A proven track record of building last mile infrastructure in a challenging geography similar to the Philippines, which would include overcoming issues such as lack of cable infrastructure, remote sites in upland areas or far flung islands, typhoons, earthquakes, or floods.
- A proven track record of delivery and maintenance of high levels of quality for broadband service.

The completed questionnaire with required attachments must be uploaded at the UNDP eTendering website. The information should be received no later than 1 February 2019, 2:00PM Manila Time (or 1:00 AM EST- New York Time).

Appendix A

Questionnaire

| | |
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| General Information | |
| a) Firm name: | |
| b) Business Address: | |
| c) Primary Business: | |
| d) Years in operation: | |
| e) Contact Person: | |
| f) Willing to attend meeting/consultation (pre-procurement, no-obligation): | |
| Technical Information | |
| a) Explain how your firm's specific technologies and/or business models may fit in with the requirements of this initiative. | |
| b) Explain your firm's involvement and expertise in technical standards required for the implementation of free public WiFi. | |
| c) Provide a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) Cost for the following, given all the requirements stated in this RFI: i. Deployment of network infrastructure ii. Operation and Maintenance iii. Customer Service or Technical Support iv. Service Provisioning (if applicable) v. Other components | |
| d) To help evaluate vendor proposals and capabilities please submit examples of network architectures and/or functional entities already in existence and those in the pipeline. | |

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| Explain how the architecture applies to the requirements of this initiative and would also be compatible with future advances in the field (including the future-proofing of consumer bandwidth demands). | |
| e) Please propose a timeline for the completion of the project. | |
| f) Explain how your firm would deliver quality products that are multi-vendor, multi-platform, secure, reliable, and interoperable. | |
| g) Describe a unique experience(s) (such as case studies) where your firm successfully collaborated to deliver a custom solution to meet a client's goal. | |
| h) Describe past successes you've had in building out similar networks. | |
| i) Based on your understanding of the scope of this project, what challenges or areas of concern do you have? | |
| j) Provide a sample staffing model including level of expertise. | |

The list of questions above are not exhaustive, responders may share additional information that may be related to this RFI.