

Annex 4 - RDPE Bid Explanatory Notes

A summary of the guidance notes accompanying call for "expressions of interest" for RPDE funding for Rural Broadband from SEEDA

Original document available from:

http://www.seeda.co.uk/documentbank/Rural_Community_Broadband_RDPE_Expression_of_interest_guidance.pdf

The bids are expected to be:

Innovative approaches that address existing gaps in rural broadband coverage. These approaches can include:

- community broadband projects
- projects that seek to upgrade existing infrastructure to exceed the proposed Universal Service Commitment speed of 2Mb/s
- projects that enable early deployment of next generation compatible solutions (only where existing broadband operators consider it unprofitable to deploy NGA in the next 3 years)

"Eligible Beneficiaries" to receive funding

Businesses

Social Enterprises

Charities

other formally constituted groups

A bid will need to define:

- number of people in rural area that will benefit
- number of businesses that benefit
- number of public sector organisations that benefit
- number of jobs created and/or safeguarded

Project Scale - The guidance proposes

" Pilot projects should be of significant scale to demonstrate the benefits of high-speed broadband access to improving the prospects and diversity of the economy of rural communities. For example, projects requiring total funding of between £100,000 and £150,000 should deploy improved infrastructure to at least 200 premises with 20% being business use."

This suggests a small number of projects (2 or 3 if the scale is £100,000 to £150,000) that bring benefit to at least 200 premises with 20% being business use (i.e. 40) and demonstrate the demand for high speed broadband (i.e. well in excess of 2Mbps).

Types of project that SEEDA consider preferable are those that:

- Create and/or enable access to broadband infrastructure including backhaul facilities and ground equipment (e.g. fixed, terrestrial wireless, satellite based or combination of technologies).
- Upgrade existing broadband infrastructure to provide at least 2Mb/s to all users.
- Lay down passive broadband infrastructure (e.g. civil engineering works such as ducts, and other network elements such as dark fibre, etc.) including in synergy with other infrastructures (energy, transport, water, sewerage networks, etc.)
- Improve/replace existing copper cabling between the local exchange and rural communities.
- Provide alternative or innovative arrangements for delivering fibre (allowing the delivery of next generation networks).

- Are community based solutions working where possible with local community broadband networks.

An Expression of Interest is more likely to be successful if it:

- can demonstrate a demand based on registrations
- serve areas where there is evidence of a market failure because commercial service providers are not offered the prospect of operating commercially
- is benchmarked against value-for-money and cost-effectiveness criteria based on independent research/ analysis

Preferred technologies

1. Fibre to the Premises – PTP (Ethernet Point-to-Point)
2. Fibre to the Premises – GPON (Gigabit Passive Optical Network)
3. Fibre to the Cabinet
4. ADSL and variants (depending on distance to the exchange)
5. Long Range Wireless
6. Satellite

Projects will also need to show:

- Evidence of demand to support the ongoing network
- Evidence of non Public match funding (100% bids are permissible but private match funding will increase the chance of success)