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Request for Proposal to be a Virtual Network Operator for a WHIN-Owned Neutral Host Network

The Wabash Heartland Innovation Network (WHIN) is a 501c3 organization located in West Lafayette, Indiana serving a ten-county region in northwest central Indiana that includes Benton, Carroll, Cass, Clinton, Fountain, Montgomery, Pulaski, Tippecanoe, Warren and White counties. WHIN is developing its region as a Living Laboratory for advanced technology related to the Internet of Things (IoT), including state-of-the-art network technology that can be used to accelerate high-quality commercial broadband services in presently un- and underserved footprints. WHIN makes that technology available to users through Virtual Network Operator (VNO) agreements. WHIN develops both engineering and business use cases from the use of its networks for WHIN's charitable purposes of research and education.

Specifically, WHIN is the neutral host of the networks it owns and the networks are operated as neutral host networks with LTE or comparable technology that allows for the creation of virtual networks. The neutral host model allows multiple guest VNOs, both public and private, to use the same WHIN-owned and managed network for multiple, co-existing purposes, including virtualizing key services such as elearning. The benefit of the neutral host model is that all parties can maintain connectivity and ensure network coverage, while reducing overhead costs typically associated with investment, management and oversight of the network.

The present RFP seeks companies to serve as VNOs to provide commercial services within some or all of the footprints of the presently available towers that are equipped with LTE Citizens Broadband Radio Service (CBRS) gear. WHIN will provide VNOs with WHIN-owned, SIM-card equipped, Customer Premise Equipment (CPE) to install for their customers, which will allow addresses to connect to the network. WHIN will maintain responsibility for provisioning the CPE to each VNO and the VNO will be responsible for installation of the CPE. WHIN plans future deployments in the region.

WHIN Performance Expectations

The attached schedule lists currently available towers along with the specifications of the gear on those towers.

WHIN has contracted access to the towers described in the attached schedule for at least two years, and is responsible for transport, including Direct Internet Access (DIA) fees.



WHIN has obtained the necessary SAS and EPC registrations and it is responsible for SAS, EPC, and any other fees related to spectrum usage.

WHIN is responsible for service on the tower and service related to transport.

WHIN is working with certain local school corporations to develop virtual networks for student use on school-provided devices. Commercial VNOs may be asked to help deploy certain CPE in certain instances, or other services. The VNO may charge WHIN separately for any requested services outside of the scope of the commercial VN that the VNO is selling.

VNO Performance Expectations

Approved VNOs will be required to agree to terms and conditions and execute a WHIN-provided VNO Agreement. Generally, the scope of work for VNOs is as follows:

1. Market and sell the network
2. Manage and maintain customer accounts
3. Bill, support and service the customer
 - i. Install the WHIN-provided CPE and return it to WHIN if account terminates
 - ii. Provide field service assistance
 - iii. Bill the customer via the method of your choosing
 - iv. Handle all customer requests
 - v. Respond to customer requests within 48 hours on premises, 12 hours for requests that can be handled by phone
2. Maintain sufficient documentation so that WHIN can verify marketing and sales strategies, as well as service, revenue and service quality
3. Provide WHIN, upon request, with an anonymized list of customer service issues, including service levels not achieving provisioned speeds.
4. Adherence to WHIN's Acceptable Use Policy and Insurance and Indemnification requirements.

Internet Access Only

WHIN's network is for internet access only and may not be used for VoIP.

Revenue share

VNO shall pay WHIN a revenue share that is specified on the attached schedule and as detailed in the subsequent VNO Agreement.

Eligibility

Companies with at least two years in business as a provider of internet access services may submit proposals for consideration.

Proposals

Proposals must include the following:

1. Completed W-9 form
2. Names and short bios of executive management team
3. Names and affiliations of owners or board members, if available
4. Two years of audited financial statements/reports (if not available, please explain)
5. Size and composition of workforce (administrators, technical staff, customer service, etc.)
6. Tower(s) for which you are applying from the attached schedule.
7. Date when you would be able to begin offering services
8. Summary of services you offer currently
9. Number of customers, locations, and type/level of service offered in current service areas
10. Five customer references that WHIN may contact with the customer's permission
11. Average response time for customer inquiries and requests for service for the past 6 months
12. Average resolution time for customer service inquiries and requests for service for the past 6 months
13. Customer satisfaction dashboard or data
14. If applicable, number of customers you already have within the WHIN footprint, the gear you are currently using, and the broadband speeds they currently have. What is the nature of the problems you are experiencing with these customers that causes you to want to offer them the WHIN network?
15. Do you have technicians within 50 miles of the footprint and customer service representatives who are trained in LTE CBRS service and CPE, or will you ensure that all technicians are trained to install CBRS service with CPI Certification? WHIN can direct you to training at no cost.
16. If you do not currently provide services in or near the proposed footprint, please explain how you will staff to be able to meet the WHIN service requirements
17. Please briefly describe how you will market the network
18. Please provide an example of your marketing materials for broadband services
19. Please provide copies of your Terms of Service, Privacy Policy, Acceptable Use Policy and Open Internet Transparency Policy
20. Describe participation in any low-income discount service programs, such as the Federal Communications Commission's Affordable Connectivity Program
21. When do you expect to be able to go live with the Virtual Network?
22. How many customers will you plan to serve in the tower footprint?

Selection of VNOs

WHIN will make the sole determination as to which prospective VNOs may proceed to the agreement stage, taking into consideration:

- Overall experience and expertise
- Current service levels and customer satisfaction
- Ability to provide service at the customer level for the specific towers requested by the VNO
- Ability to successfully sell the network
- The date by which the service will be provided

Selection is confirmed only upon execution of a VNO agreement including, but not limited to, the terms and conditions under **VNO Performance Expectations**

Application period

Applications can be received at any time. WHIN will let applicants know whether they can proceed to the term negotiation stage within three weeks of receiving the application. WHIN will provide notice when additional towers become available or additional technology is added to an existing tower.

If you have any questions, please contact Greg Jarman at greg.jarman@WHIN.org. We will maintain an FAQ at WHIN.org/VNOFAQ that you should check frequently.

Accompanying schedule for VNO RFP

Service is available only to location(s) qualified by signal level test at the time of installation. Some locations may not qualify for the service even if initial propagation mapping suggests otherwise. Speed and availability of service are not guaranteed and may be limited by a variety of factors including but not limited to the local terrain and neighboring obstacles.

Available towers:

1. Williamsport, Indiana

Address	116 Slaughter Ln Williamsport, IN 47993
Type of tower	Commercial tower owned by CTI
Height deployed	220'
Service description	LTE CBRS
Gear deployed	4-sector, Telrad LTE CBRS solution comprised of the BreezeCOMPACT1000 base station in 3.4-3.7GHz (all-in-one modem, radios, software) and Compact1000 Antennas 3.3-3.8GHz, 17.5 dBi, 65deg.
Provisioned service packages	25Mbps down and 3Mbps up, 50Mbps down and 5Mbps up, 75Mbps and 10Mbps up, and 100Mbps down and 20Mbps up.
CPE/UE	<p>WHIN-provided CPE will include a SIM card provisioned for a fixed address.</p> <p>WHIN is piloting a feature of this solution that also allows properly equipped mobile devices to connect to the network within the tower footprint and to roam out of the footprint. properly equipped mobile devices to connect to the network within the tower footprint and to roam out of the footprint. The user needs an open device that can accept the Telrad Plus SIM card for band 48. Roaming charges apply for AT&T and T-Mobile. WHIN does not pay to unlock phones, for the Plus SIM card, nor for roaming charges.</p>
Revenue share	VNO shall pay the Supplier the greater of \$25/month/subscriber or forty percent (40%) of the total monthly recurring revenue per subscriber generated using the services as defined in the VNO Agreement.

2. Reynolds, Indiana

Address	646 S. Meridian road, Reynolds, IN 47980
Type of tower	Grain elevator owned by Co-Alliance
Height deployed	174'
Service description	LTE CBRS
Gear deployed	4-sector, Telrad LTE CBRS solution comprised of the BreezeCOMPACT1000 base station in 3.4-3.7GHz (all-in-one modem, radios, software) and Compact1000 Antennas 3.3-3.8GHz, 17.5 dBi, 65deg.
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Revenue share	VNO shall pay the Supplier the greater of \$25/month/subscriber or forty percent (40%) of the total monthly recurring revenue per subscriber generated using the services as defined in the VNO Agreement.
Other considerations	A near future upgrade is planned for the Town of Reynolds. That upgrade will be added to the VNO schedule as

	soon as it is live. The north sector of the Telrad deployment is aimed to not include Reynolds.
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