



ARConnect

The Arkansas State Broadband Office

Arkansas BEAD Program

Frequently Asked Questions Document 22

Preliminary Selection Questions.....3
Tranche-2 Questions3

Arkansas BEAD Program
Frequently Asked Questions – Document 22

Preliminary Selection Questions

1. How does the confidentiality requirement for Tranche-1 results relate to communication between ISPs and contractors when preparing supplemental documents required from preliminary selectees?
Preliminary selectees may communicate with any contractors or subcontractors they will be working with on the project for the purpose of preparing the supplemental documents required by ARConnect.
However, applicants may not share Tranche-1 results publicly, with other applicants, or with any other entity that will not be directly involved in the project.

Tranche-2 Questions

2. How is technology type scored for Tranche-2?
Technology types are scored as follows:
 - XGS-PON fiber – 2 points
 - Non-XGS-PON fiber – 1.5 points
 - Non-fiber (1000/500 Mbps) - 1 point
 - Non-fiber (400/200 Mbps) - 0.5 points
 - Other Reliable – 0 points
 - Other Alternative – 0 points and not eligible for selection in Tranche-2
3. Will preliminary selectees with wireless network projects be required to submit a RAN engineer's stamp as well as heat maps similar to the engineering stamp required for fiber deployments?
Yes, the requirements for wireless projects will be similar to those for fiber projects. ARConnect will release more information on this at a later date.
4. Could a priority bid that is below two times the reference price be selected over an overlapping non-priority bid that offers a lower price?
Yes. Non-priority bids will not be preliminarily selected if they overlap with a priority bid.
5. What technology types are included in priority versus non-priority bids? How will priority and non-priority bids be adjudicated in Tranche-2?
All bids are categorized as either priority or non-priority based on the technology type(s) included in the bid.

Priority bids include the following technology types, as listed in the applicant portal:

- XGS-PON fiber
- Non-XGS-PON fiber
- Hybrid XGS-PON fiber and Non-XGS-PON fiber

Non-priority bids include the following technology types, as listed in the applicant portal:

- Non-fiber (1000/500 Mbps)
- Non-fiber (400/200 Mbps)
- Other Reliable
- Note: Hybrid technology bids that include any of the above non-fiber technologies will be classified as “non-priority”, even if XGS-PON or Non-XGS-PON fiber are also included

Alternative technology bids include the following technology type, as listed in the applicant portal:

- Other Alternative (e.g., *unlicensed* fixed wireless, low-earth orbit satellite)

For adjudication, all priority bids are evaluated against each other, and all non-priority bids are evaluated against each other. Priority bids are adjudicated first. Non-priority bids will not be preliminarily selected if they overlap with a priority bid.

In the event that a non-priority bid overlaps with a priority bid which requests more than twice the reference price, CBGs in the overlapping project areas will be available during the negotiations phase.

Please note, applications that include *any* alternative technology are not eligible for preliminary selection in Tranche-2.

6. Can an applicant add letters of support to a Carried Forward bid?
No. Applicants may only modify a Carried Forward bid by adding CBGs or decreasing the requested subsidy. Applicants may also increase the requested subsidy **if and only if** they add CBGs to the Carried Forward bid’s project area.
7. If an applicant requests exactly two times the reference price, is that bid eligible for preliminary selection in Tranche-2?
No. The subsidy request must be **below** two times the reference price to be eligible for preliminary selection in Tranche-2.
8. For available CBGs that received multiple bids in Tranche-1, is it possible that more than one of the bids counted may have been from the same applicant?
Yes.

9. If there is a Zero Bid CBG that engulfs another CBG, do applicants still need to bid on both (i.e., the donut rule)?

Yes. In the case where one CBG is engulfed by another, applicants must bid on both regardless of whether they are classified as Available or Available Zero Bid.

A list of CBGs that engulf or are engulfed by another CBG can be found on the ARConnect webpage.

10. Can applicants change their commitment to 85% share of buried fiber in a Carried Forward bid if it means they can lower their requested subsidy by using aerial fiber?

No. An applicant may not modify their Carried Forward bid except for adding CBGs or decreasing the requested subsidy. Applicants may also increase the requested subsidy **if and only if** they add CBGs to the Carried Forward bid's project area.

11. How will the negotiations phase work?

ARConnect will release more guidance on the negotiations phase at a later date.