

Request for Proposal

Internet Access

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System

**E-rate Funding Year
July 1, 2027 through
June 30, 2028**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Internet Access
Augusta-Richmond Public Library System

The Augusta-Richmond Public Library System invites vendors to submit proposals in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Request for Proposal (RFP). This RFP provides the requirements and evaluative criteria for Internet services and requests a detailed response from all prospective vendors, including pricing and service descriptions, in a specified format.

Our goal is selecting an Internet Service Provider that can provide Internet Access with sufficient speed and bandwidth needed at each of the libraries.

***The work proposed in these specifications are
dependent upon receipt of E-rate Funding for
Internet Access for the E-rate Funding Year July 1,
2027 through June 30, 2028***

The intent of this RFP is to enter into a contract or contracts for Internet Access for a four (4) year period to begin July 1, 2027, and run through June 30, 2031.

Internet Service Providers should be able to deliver the following features:

Internet Service Providers should be able to deliver the following features:

1. Standard Internet service
2. Class C IP address allocation (At least 3 usable public IP addresses)
3. Managed Services of the Internet connection to each of the individual libraries.
4. Full implementation of internet service must occur by July 1, 2027.

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Requested Bandwidth Per Location:

Library name	Address	Requested Bandwidth
Augusta-Richmond County Public Library	823 Telfair Street Augusta, GA 30901	500 Mbps
Appleby Branch Library	2260 Walton Way Augusta, GA 30904	300 Mbps
Diamond Lakes Library	101 Diamond Lakes Way Hephzibah, GA 30815	300 Mbps
Friedman Branch Library	1447 Jackson Road Augusta, GA 30909	300 Mbps
Jeff Maxwell Branch Library	1927 Lumpkin Road Augusta, GA 30906	300 Mbps
Wallace Branch Library	1237 Laney Walker Augusta, GA 30901	300 Mbps

Proposals should also include bandwidth pricing for additional 100 Mbps increments above the requested bandwidth, up to 1 Gbps.

Invoicing

Services may be requested under this RFP for both E-rate eligible and non-E-rate eligible locations and/or services. Separate invoices are required for E-rate eligible locations and services from those that are not eligible. Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System will provide a summary of the services ordered and the corresponding locations, together with all costs. It is the burden of the Service Provider to reconcile, to Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System's satisfaction, its invoices to that summary.

Vendors submitting responses to this Request for Proposal agree to provide discounted billing (SPI billing) for services associated with this proposal and seek reimbursement of the discount amount according to the invoicing/reimbursement guidelines of the Schools and Libraries Division of the Universal Service Fund. Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System will pay for the discounted portion of services provided under this proposal. Invoices should be broken down by individual library listing the appropriate discounted charge for each contracted facility. Total costs may be listed minus the applicable discount amount to arrive at the discounted amount accounted to each library in the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System.

All invoices must be based on a first-of-the-month through end-of-the-month cycle.

Errors on invoices cannot be remedied by credits on invoices. All errors must be repaid by a check cut by the Service Provider within 30 days of notification such error.

Service Provider Requirements

SPIN and FCCRN Required

It is the intention of Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System to apply for discounts under the Schools and Libraries ("E-rate") program for some or all of the services that are the subject of this RFP. Services may be requested under this RFP for both E-rate eligible and non-E-rate eligible locations and/or services. Therefore, all Service Providers responding to this RFP must participate in the E-rate Program and must comply with all applicable FCC rules.

The Service Provider is required to submit its SPIN and FCCRN as part of the Proposal. If you do not have a SPIN and FCCRN, you MUST obtain them before you respond to this RFP.

Document Retention, Production of Records, and Audits

Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.516, the Service Providers have the following obligations with respect to document retention, production of records and audits:

The Service Providers shall retain documents related to the delivery of discounted telecommunications and other supported services for at least 10 years after the last day of the delivery of discounted services. Any other document that demonstrates compliance with the statutory or regulatory requirements for the schools and libraries mechanism shall be retained as well. Comprehensive information about document retention requirements is found in the FCC's Fifth Report and Order (FCC 04-190).

The Service Providers shall produce such records at the request of any representative (including any auditor) appointed by a state education department, the Administrator, the FCC or any local, state or federal agency with jurisdiction over the entity.

The Service Providers shall be subject to audits and other investigations to evaluate their compliance with the statutory and regulatory requirements for the schools and libraries universal service support program including those requirements pertaining to what services and products are purchased, what services and products are delivered, and how services and products are being used. Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System must provide written consent before a Service Provider releases information to the auditor, reviewer, or other representative.

The Service Provider shall assume responsibility for its subcontractors' compliance with the FCC requirements on document retention, production of records, and auditing.

Lowest Corresponding Price

Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.511, Service Providers shall not submit bids for or charge libraries a price above the lowest corresponding price for supported services, unless the FCC, with respect to interstate services or the state commission with respect to intrastate services, finds that the lowest corresponding price is not compensatory. Promotional rates offered by a Service Provider for a period of more than 90 days must be included among the comparable rates upon which the lowest corresponding price is determined.

Pricing Transparency

Pursuant to the FCC's E-rate Modernization Order (FCC14-99) released July 23, 2014, the Commission provided notice to all Service Providers that the receipt of E-rate support will be conditioned on disclosure of pricing information beginning in Funding Year 2015. The Commission states in the Order that contracts executed after the effective date of the Report and Order may not contain restrictions barring publication of purchasing price data, and that any such restrictions shall have no effect.

Contract Terms & Conditions

The following Terms & Conditions are to be included in contract resulting from this RFP:

- Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System will not sign a vendor contract.
- Services added during the course of the contract must be coterminous with the proposed contract. (Need to add or delete services at the same costs throughout the contract period.)
- Time is of the essence in the Proposed Contract.
- Full implementation of internet service must occur by July 1, 2027.
- Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System reserves the right to change a Service Provider if there is a legitimate reason to do so.
- Terms of contract will be: For a four (4) year period to begin July 1, 2027, and run through June 30, 2031.
- It is important that the vendor understand that this Internet Access Proposal has been submitted on Augusta-Richmond Public Library System E-rate applications which, if approved, will entitle us to approximately a 90% discount through the Universal Service Fund. Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System will pay for the discounted portion of services provided under this proposal (SPI Billing). Invoices should be broken down by individual library listing the appropriate discounted charge for each contracted facility. Total costs may be listed minus

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the applicable discount amount to arrive at the discounted amount accounted to each library in the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System.

- In the event that the Service Provider has not applied the E-rate discount to the invoice(s), Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System WILL NOT be charged late fees for paying only the discounted portion for which we are responsible.
- Vendors will provide all necessary equipment, IP addresses, connections, routers, etc., needed for Internet Access at each site.
- Vendors will be responsible for all service and maintenance of Internet connections.
- Troubleshooting service will be provided within four (4) hours of reported problem(s) on a 24/7 basis. Refunds will be provided for periods of service outage lasting more than four (4) hours.
- During the contract period, should lower pricing be provided to another client, the lower pricing must also be provided for contracts with the Augusta-Richmond Public Library System.
- Should the Service Provider, its principals, agents or employees act in violation of the FCC's policy regarding gifts, and should Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System be denied funding on a funding request or be subject to a commitment adjustment as a result of the aforementioned action, the Service Provider shall be liable for liquidated damages in the amount of the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System's discounted portion on each of the funding requests so denied.
- The Service Provider shall comply with all applicable FCC rules, Orders, and guidance which govern the E-rate program. Notwithstanding any other remedies at law or equity, in the event the Service Provider acts or fails to act in such a way that causes Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System to lose E-rate funding, the Service Provider shall be liable to Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System for the amount of denied, reduced or adjusted funding. Additionally, the Service Provider shall be liable Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System for legal or consulting fees Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System incurs to ensure compliance with the E-rate program, to respond to the FCC or USAC directives, and/or to pursue an appeal.

Right of Rejection

The Augusta-Richmond Public Library System reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses to this RFP and to enter into discussion and/or negotiations with one or more qualified vendors at the same time, if such actions are in the best interest of the Augusta-Richmond Public Library System. Augusta-Richmond County Public Library

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System reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or parts thereof, as deemed to be in the best interest of the Library.

Cost of Proposals

Expenses incurred in the preparation of proposals to this RFP are the sole responsibility of the vendor.

PROPOSAL DELIVERY

Proposal Submission

Proposals should be submitted in a sealed envelope addressed to the following by mail, delivery service, or hand delivery, no later than **3:00 PM EST, Friday, December 4, 2026**. Proposals must be received at the Augusta-Richmond Public Library System secretary desk by this date and time. No faxed or emailed copies will be accepted.

Send Proposals to:

**Augusta-Richmond Public Library System
ATTN: Ben Dudley
823 Telfair Street
Augusta, GA 30901**

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QUESTIONS

All questions pertaining to this RFP must be submitted in writing by email to dudleyb@arcpls.org. Questions submitted up to Monday, November 30, 2026 will be answered in the form of addendum which will be posted to <http://www.arcpls.org/rfp.html> no later than 5:00pm, Tuesday, December 1, 2026.

Bidders are responsible for information, changes, additions, etc., posted in addendum on the library website at <http://www.arcpls.org/rfp.html>.

Evaluation Criteria

Augusta-Richmond Public Library System will be evaluating and weighing the following criteria when considering the various Internet Access proposals. These standards are listed in descending order of importance.

Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Cost effectiveness of service	35%
Administrative • Ability to provide full implementation of Internet service by July 1, 2027. • Ability and Willingness to adhere to Contract Terms & Conditions • Ability and Willingness to meet invoicing requirements • Ability and Willingness to comply with Service Provider Requirements	25%
Ability to meet technical requirements • Sufficient bandwidth for library needs • Reliable bandwidth • Static IP address allocation	15%
Past Performance (experience) • Experience with libraries and schools preferred	15%
Support and Maintenance • Prompt phone response • Prompt on-site assistance when appropriate • Proactive monitoring	10%
Total	100%

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

This RFP document and subsequent addendum pages may be viewed, printed, downloaded from the Internet at <http://www.arcpls.org/rfp.html>.

The Augusta-Richmond Public Library System (ARCPLS) reserves the right to accept and award a contract and/or contracts to the lowest responsive, responsible bidders. Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or any part thereof. Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System reserves the right to award a contract or contracts based on evaluation of specific criteria found in these specifications. Proposals on forms other than provided herewith will be rejected. Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System also reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

Vendors should frequently, during the proposal process, check <http://www.arcpls.org/rfp.html> for updated information and addendum.

QUALIFICATIONS OF BIDDERS

The Augusta-Richmond Public Library System may make such investigation as they deem necessary to determine the ability of bidder to perform the work. Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System reserves the right to reject any proposal if investigation of such bidder fails to satisfy the Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System that such bidder is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract, and to complete the work contemplated therein.

Bidders may be required to submit the names and addresses of the officers or principals of the Corporation, firm or partnership submitting a proposal. Failure to comply could result in the rejection of such proposal as non-responsive.

All bidders must be prepared to present suitable evidence of their financial standing.

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System has the right to reject any and all proposals from any bidder that is in or contemplates bankruptcy of any chapter or nature. Said bidder must notify the Augusta-Richmond Public Library System in writing of any existing condition or knowledge of same.

No verbal instructions or information to bidders will be binding. The specifications will be considered clear and complete unless written attention is called to any apparent discrepancies or incompleteness thereof, before the opening of proposals. Should any written inquiries be received by Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System, these

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inquiries will be answered in the form of addendum and posted for access by all providers. All questions pertaining to this RFP must be submitted in writing by email to dudleyb@arcpls.org. Questions submitted up to Monday, November 30, 2026 will be answered in the form of addendum which will be posted to <http://www.arcpls.org/rfp.html> no later than 5:00pm, Tuesday, December 1, 2026. These addenda shall then be considered a part of these specifications.

The submission of a proposal will be considered as conclusive evidence of complete examination by a bidder of all instructions, specifications, and addenda.

A Proposal Form - Signature Page is provided in these specifications. This form must be used in submitting a proposal, and all pages of the form must be completely filled out, and the whole signed by the bidder.

No proposal may be withdrawn later than 2:00 PM on the day of the opening of proposals. No modifications of any proposals will be allowed after the same is sealed and delivered to Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System, however, a bidder may withdraw a proposal before 2:00 PM on the day of the opening of proposals and submit another proposal before the closing date and time. A bidder may submit as many proposals as they desire.

FORM OF CONTRACT

The successful bidder will be required to execute a written contract with Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System within fifteen (15) business days after acceptance of proposal or proposals. It is expressly understood and agreed by the bidders that the contractual obligations of Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System to the bidders are effective only after the execution of a contract or contracts signed by all parties and E-rate funding is secured from the School and Libraries Division of the Universal Service Fund.

SPECIFICATIONS

These specifications are intended to cover the furnishing of all materials and the performance of all work that may be required or necessary for the complete performance of the contract, and the bidder will be required to do all things that may be necessary to fully complete the work within the purview of these specifications.

Equipment and/or material to be furnished shall meet with the approval of the Systems Administrator or designated representative.

All equipment and/or material shall conform to the requirements of these specifications, and any equipment and/or material condemned by the library Systems Administrator as not meeting these specifications shall at once be removed and replaced with acceptable equipment.

ADDITIONS OR DEDUCTIONS

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System shall have the right, without invalidating this RFP or any and/or all contracts, to make additions to or deductions from the work covered by these specifications, and in case such deductions or additions are made, an equitable adjustment of the addition to or deduction in cost shall be made between Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System and the bidder, as shown in a written amendment to the contract.

PROTECTION BY BIDDER

All bidders agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Augusta-Richmond Public Library System and their representatives from all suits or actions of every nature and description brought against them or any of them, on account of the use of patented or copyrighted appliances, materials, products or processes, and from all legal expenses and costs of suits regarding the same.

Bidders shall obey all Federal, State, County, and City laws or ordinances in any way pertaining to the work, and shall obtain all permits that may be necessary for its performance if required. (a) That in the hiring of employees for the performance of such contract, no bidder, sub-contractor, nor any person acting on behalf of such bidder or sub-contractor shall by reason of race, creed or color discriminate against any citizen of the United States who is qualified and able to perform the work to which the employment relates; (b) Nor shall they in any manner discriminate against or intimidate any employees hired for the performance of the work on account of race, creed or color. House Bill 87, Section 3, E-verify Form.

All bidders shall not assign, transfer, convey, sublet or otherwise dispose of the contract or any part thereof to anyone without the written consent of the Augusta-Richmond Public Library System.

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RESERVATIONS

Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and also reserves the right to waive any informality in the proposals received.

Any bidder who has demonstrated poor performance during either a current or previous agreement with Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System may be considered as an unqualified source and their proposal may be rejected. Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System reserves the right to exercise this option as is deemed proper and/or necessary.

PROPOSAL FORM

Attached to these specifications is "Proposal Form-Signature Page" which must be completely filled out and signed by each bidder and included in their RFP submission.

All proposals must be sealed, marked, and delivered in accordance with the instructions in this RFP. Proposals will be opened and read by Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System administrative staff and the Information Technology Manager at the closing of the due date. Recommendations will be made and the Library Director may award a contract or contracts as Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System deems appropriate.

EXEMPTION FROM GEORGIA SALES TAXES

The Augusta-Richmond Public Library System is exempt from Georgia State Sales Tax. Net prices as shown in the proposal shall exclude said State tax amounts. Bidders shall inform all prospective subcontractors and suppliers from whom they expect to obtain services or supplies of the tax exempt status of the Augusta-Richmond Public Library System. Following a contract award, an exemption certificate will be furnished by Augusta-Richmond Public Library System.

FORM FOR PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

STATEMENT OF VENDOR'S QUALIFICATION

To accompany proposals submitted for Internet Access for the Augusta-Richmond Public Library System.

Name of Vendor's Firm: _____

Name of Company Representative: _____

Business Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Partnership _____ Corporation _____

Vendor must provide a Service Provider Information Number assigned by the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD):

SPIN Number: _____

Please attach to this statement at least five references, including: (name, address, title, phone number and brief description of work performed, including dates of work).

Date: _____

Firm Name: _____

By: _____

Title: _____

QUESTIONS FOR PROPOSERS

Company and Staff Profiles

1. Describe your company's history and qualifications to perform the proposed work.
2. Describe the qualifications of the staff who would be involved in our project, including our primary contacts.
3. Describe your experience with projects similar to the one described in this Request for Proposal.

Timeline

1. Please list your proposed timeline (Full implementation of internet service must occur by July 1, 2027).

System

1. Please describe your company's support options.
2. Please describe your company's proactive monitoring solutions.
3. Please describe your company's guaranteed up time regarding these connections.

Exceptions

1. Please describe in full any aspects of the specifications or other parts of the Request for Proposal (e.g., Standard Terms and Conditions) with which you disagree or cannot comply.

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PROPOSAL PRICING SCHEDULE

The prices listed below must be all-inclusive. Budgetary constraints prevent the Library from accepting add-ons such as fuel surcharges. Be sure to include all costs associated with labor, installation (build-out costs) equipment, fees, transportation, and insurance in the proposal price.

Do not include any taxes in the price, as Augusta-Richmond County Public Library System is exempt by law.

This form will be attached to the contract with the successful vendor.

Purchase and installation must be completed by June 30, 2027 and all services up and operational as of July 1, 2027.

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500 Mbps

Installation Costs: \$_____

Contract (price per month for 4 years) \$_____

Additional Cost per 100 Mbps increments up to 1 Gbps \$_____

Appleby Branch Library

300 Mbps

Installation Costs: \$_____

Contract (price per month for 4 years) \$_____

Additional Cost per 100 Mbps increments up to 1 Gbps \$_____

Diamond Lakes Branch Library

300 Mbps

Installation Costs: \$_____

Contract (price per month for 4 years) \$_____

Additional Cost per 100 Mbps increments up to 1 Gbps \$_____

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Friedman Branch Library

300 Mbps

Installation Costs: \$_____

Contract (price per month for 4 years) \$_____

Additional Cost per 100 Mbps increments up to 1 Gbps \$_____

Jeff Maxwell Branch Library

300 Mbps

Installation Costs: \$_____

Contract (price per month for 4 years) \$_____

Additional Cost per 100 Mbps increments up to 1 Gbps \$_____

Wallace Branch Library

300 Mbps

Installation Costs: \$_____

Contract (price per month for 4 years) \$_____

Additional Cost per 100 Mbps increments up to 1 Gbps \$_____

PROPOSAL FORM - SIGNATURE PAGE

Date _____

TO: Augusta-Richmond Public Library System

This proposal is submitted in accordance with your RFP inviting proposals to be received for the project identified as "Internet Access." Having carefully examined the RFP, all instructions, specifications, all addenda, and being familiar with the various conditions affecting the work, the undersigned, hereby agrees to furnish all material, perform all labor, and do all else necessary to complete the work in strict accordance with the specifications for price as contained herein.

In the event this proposal is accepted the undersigned is hereby bound to commence and complete all of the work included under this contract in such time and such manner as designated for the various items the bidder has contracted to supply or perform.

In submitting this proposal, it is understood that the unrestricted right is reserved by the Augusta-Richmond Public Library System in making the award to reject any and all proposals or parts thereof, or to waive any informalities or technicalities in said proposals.

The undersigned hereby certifies that this proposal is genuine and made in the interest or in behalf of any person, firm or corporation not herein named; that the undersigned has not directly or indirectly induced or solicited any bidder to refrain from submitting proposals, and that the undersigned has not, in any manner, sought by collusion to secure for himself an advantage over any other bidder.

TOTAL AMOUNT PROPOSAL OPTION:

Should the contract require a Performance Bond:

_____ I will provide a Performance Bond from

Bonding Company _____

Name of Agent _____

Address _____

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Bidder **MUST** provide Federal EIN or SSN: _____

and ERate SPIN: _____

(Print Name)

Proposal must be signed for Consideration:

(Signature)

(Date)