

VITA Holds Broadband Teleconference

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The **Virginia Information Technologies Agency** (VITA) held a non-mandatory pre-proposal teleconference this morning for their statewide **Broadband Internet Service** project. VITA is looking to establish a firm fixed price contract with multiple vendors to increase access to broadband services in underserved areas, making broadband services affordable for all citizens and businesses, and improving digital literacy throughout the Commonwealth.

In addition to carefully reviewing the Invitation to Bid and all associated documents, VITA stressed that the resulting awarded contracts will be the first of their kind for the Commonwealth. VITA is hoping to secure multiple contracts accessible to all public bodies for a variety of broadband technologies. The Agency has divided the Commonwealth by zip code and has set up the resulting contract so that vendors may bid specific technologies for specific areas. When a question arose regarding the expected value of the resulting contracts, VITA responded that due to the nature of the bid and the current state environment, the Commonwealth is looking for the lowest-cost options available. VITA assured vendors, however, that this is a service that has been long-requested by users.

During the conference, discussion was raised concerning the current broadband service "tiers" as defined in the Invitation to Bid. A decision was made by conference participants and the Agency for VITA to revisit their definitions so that potential vendors may present the best offers possible while maintaining VITA's ability to conduct an equitable selection process. VITA stated that any and all changes will be posted publicly on **eVA**, the Commonwealth's procurement website. Bids for this opportunity are due no later than 3:00 PM EST on January 11, 2010.