Introduction

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is in support of providing quality high-speed broadband connectivity for public libraries statewide.

This Request for Proposal solicits responses from qualified service providers for various communications circuits and optional dark fiber segments across California. The physical addresses and NPA/NXX numbers, when available, are provided in the attached exhibits. For the convenience of sorting and evaluation, responses MUST be submitted using the Pricing Worksheet (Exhibit D) and responses cannot be in PDF or locked spreadsheets. Supplemental pricing information is acceptable and may be inserted into the Pricing Worksheet or submitted in a separate spreadsheet.

CENIC reserves the right to award all, some, or none of the circuits associated with this RFP. CENIC is acting as a consortium lead for the purposes of seeking bids and awarding contracts, and will also apply for Federal E-rate and State CTF discounts for awarded services on behalf of members of the consortium.
1.0 General Administrative Information

A. E-rate Form 470 and USAC E-rate Productivity Center (EPC). For the purposes of this solicitation, the FCC Form 470 number is 160001651. The Form 470 may be viewed by service providers with an EPC log in and search under the “Records” tab “FCC Forms 470” option. For service providers without an EPC login, the Form 470 may be viewed at http://www.usac.org/sl/tools/view-an-fcc-form-470.aspx. There is a copy of the RFP submitted with the Form 470 on USAC’s website. However, the original RFP and all prevailing documents, including frequently asked questions, are posted at CENIC’s website at the following URL: http://www.cenic.org/LibraryRFP.

B. Due date. Responses must be received in electronic format via email at 2016libraryrfp@cenic.org by November 4, 2015 by 11:59pm Pacific Time. Upon request by one or more bidders, CENIC may, at its sole discretion, extend the due date for all circuits or on a circuit-by-circuit basis.

Any questions or points of clarification received by CENIC will be answered and posted online at http://www.cenic.org/libraryrfp.

C. Basis for Award. CENIC reserves the right to award contract(s) based upon the lowest priced bids for E-rate eligible, responsive services. Furthermore, it is the intent to award contract(s) to the most cost-effective and responsive proposals for service. Therefore, CENIC will make awards to proposals that, in CENIC’s sole judgment, represent the best value, taking into consideration cost, program needs, technical issues and similar factors.

D. Awards. CENIC may make one award, multiple awards or no award as a result of this solicitation. CENIC’s decision regarding awards is final and not subject to protest.

E. Vendor costs. CENIC shall assume no responsibility for vendor costs incurred in developing a proposal.

F. Addenda. CENIC may modify this RFP, its scope, any of its key action dates, or any of its attachments or exhibits, prior to the date for submission of proposals. Any such
addenda will be published on the CENIC website, and email notification will be sent to all potential participants known to CENIC.

G. Questions on the RFP. Any questions on the RFP must be conveyed in writing, submitted to the email address above, and will be responded to in writing and added to the Question & Answer exhibit posted online on the CENIC website. Any oral statements made by CENIC employees, consultants or others will not be binding.

H. Rejection of proposals. CENIC may reject proposals if, based on CENIC’s sole judgment, the proposals are deemed to be nonresponsive.

I. Negotiation. CENIC reserves the right to negotiate any aspect of any proposal deemed responsive to this RFP.

J. Ownership of Proposals. All proposals become the property of CENIC. CENIC reserves the right to make use of any information or ideas contained in the proposals

K. Confidential material. CENIC is working with other organizations, including Califa and the California State Library, on the project to improve library broadband connectivity. The inability to share entire or large portions of proposals with these organizations or library jurisdictions may adversely affect the review of proposals and result in a proposal being rejected. As a result, bidders are encouraged to make their entire proposals non confidential. However, bidders may designate some or all of their proposals as confidential. Bidders must notify CENIC of any specific portions of proposals considered confidential or proprietary. CENIC will attempt to take reasonable efforts to protect the confidentiality of such material, but makes no guarantees that such material will be protected. Entire proposals designated as confidential may be rejected as being nonresponsive. Please note that as of Funding Year 2015, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), in promoting new “pricing transparency” measures, requires vendors not to restrict publication of pricing data.

L. Evaluation Criteria. With respect to the circuits and optional dark fiber segments, in compliance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules, bids will be carefully considered and CENIC will award to the vendor(s) providing the most cost-effective, responsive end-to-end service offering, and price of E-rate eligible services will be the primary factor in CENIC’s evaluation of proposals.

2.0 Required Administrative Responses
Bidders MUST respond to all required items. Incomplete bids are subject to rejection. Throughout this section and the accompanying appendices, the capitalized words MUST and SHALL are used to indicate requirements that are mandatory and MUST be addressed for a response to be considered complete. The capitalized words MAY and SHOULD are used to indicate desires on CENIC’s part that are not requirements. However, Service Providers are expected to respond to each of these, either by meeting the desire or by providing an alternative approach to meeting the desire.

A. **Federal and state discounts.** CENIC expects all the circuits listed\(^1\) in this RFP will be eligible for Federal E-rate and State CTF discounts. All respondents are asked to provide their current USAC Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN). It is not required to have a SPIN to submit a response to this RFP; however, the respondent will be required to have a SPIN in place by July 1, 2016 or any associated awarded contract will be considered null and void. Additional information and requirements are contained in Exhibit C. Such procedures outlined in Exhibit C may be included in any contract issued as a result of this bid.

B. **Contract period.** The contract period for awards resulting from this RFP will be from the date a circuit is installed and has been tested and accepted by CENIC, through its contractual termination date. The termination dates may vary according to the type of circuit. Pricing for managed or lit services may be submitted for three (3) or five (5) year terms. For dark fiber Indefeasible Right of Use (IRU) terms may be ten (10), fifteen (15) or twenty (20) years. Maintenance and operation contracts for dark fiber may be submitted for three (3) or five (5) with optional extensions. Bidders may bid on all or any subset of services included in this RFP. If Bidder is currently under contract for services, responses should indicate whether existing contracts are to be used for the services to be bid, are to be superseded by the new proposal, or if services under such agreements convert to the proposed new agreement at the end of the existing contract period.

CENIC may choose to adopt a later start date for services included in any proposal in order to fulfill commitments on current contracts. When mutually agreed upon, CENIC

\(^1\) With the exception of the dedicated dark fiber build of a minimum of 12 strands and recurring maintenance. Self-provisioned networks are currently eligible for E-rate, but eligibility for CTF is not defined as of the posting date of this RFP. All other services on the RFP are eligible for both E-rate and CTF discounts.
will consider contracts with one or more annual contract extensions beyond the basic term.

C. **Commencement of Billing.** In no case is a service provider allowed to commence billing on a new service until a CENIC representative confirms successful completion of CENIC’s acceptance testing procedure. However, for the sake of expediency and to improve the installation timeline, payment of one-time, non-recurring costs in advance of circuit installation and possibly outside the E-rate window may be made.

D. **Invoices.** Each Bidder will be expected to provide a single, itemized, monthly invoice indicating all of the contracted services unless otherwise requested by CENIC. Invoices should be mailed to:

The Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California (CENIC)
16700 Valley View, Suite 400, La Mirada, CA 90638

E. **Open Records.** All information provided to CENIC in response to this RFP, or under an agreement or contract between CENIC and the successful bidder, may be subject to release, inspection, or disclosure upon request. The successful bidder acknowledges that all pricing and technology infrastructure information in its contract shall be considered as public and non-confidential pursuant to CFR Part 54 Section 504 (2)(i)(ii).

F. **Pricing.** Bidders SHALL propose costs for services on a monthly basis inclusive of all associated collocation costs, and separately show any applicable one-time non-recurring charges. Special construction costs, if any, MUST be separately identified on a per service basis. CENIC WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY EASEMENT/RIGHT OF WAY COSTS INCURRED BY THE PROPOSER WHILE IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTION. The Minimum Point of Entry (MPOE) and Demarcation point at each site shall be determined by CENIC. All cost proposals MUST include pricing to install services to the MPOE and Demarcation point.

G. **Services and Pricing.** Bidders MUST respond using the RFP Pricing Worksheet(s) (Exhibit D). Supplemental pricing information is acceptable and may be inserted into the Pricing Worksheet or submitted in a separate spreadsheet. Bidders MUST meet all requirements noted in Exhibit C.
Pricing MUST be expressed in undiscounted rates to CENIC (that is, excluding California Teleconnect Fund (CTF) or Federal E-rate discounts and including estimated taxes and surcharges.

The Pricing Worksheet(s) details specific bandwidths requested per site. Bidders should carefully note the requested bandwidths and are only asked to provide quotes for these.

**Managed or lit data transmission services, including lit fiber:**
For the purposes of review and, for determining the potential basis of award, CENIC requests service providers provide pricing in Exhibit D for managed or lit services to be stated in the following manner:

- **Special Construction one-time charge:** Per the Federal Communications Commission’s Eligible Service List\(^2\) for Funding Year 2016, special construction is comprised of upfront, non-recurring costs of deployment for new or upgraded facilities, design and engineering, project management, and construction of network facilities. Please identify the one-time charge for these items, if any.
- **Other one-time charges:** Please also identify any other one-time installation charges, if any.
- **Monthly Recurring charge:** Please identify the monthly recurring charge for service for the thirty-six month and/or sixty-month terms.
- **Estimated rate for taxes and surcharges:** Please identify the aggregate estimated percentage of taxes and surcharges to be assessed.

**Dark Fiber Long Term Lease (IRU):** Pricing for dark fiber can be expressed in either ten (10), fifteen (15) or twenty (20) year Indefeasible Right of Use (IRU) terms. Lateral fibers built as part of IRU delivery should include a minimum 12 strands. Fiber test results, containing at a minimum bi-directional OTDR and optical power loss readings at both 1310nm and 1550nm must be provided 15 days prior to service delivery. This testing should be end-to-end including any fiber extension built for the handoff of service at either end. For the purposes of review and, for determining the potential basis of award, CENIC requests service providers provide pricing in Exhibit D for dark fiber to be stated in the following manner:

- **Special Construction one-time charge:** Per the Federal Communications Commission’s Eligible Service List for Funding Year 2016, special construction is comprised of upfront, non-recurring costs of deployment for new or upgraded

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facilities, design and engineering, project management, and construction of network facilities. Please identify the one-time charge for these items, if any. As a one-time cost with an associated monthly rate.

- **Other one-time charges:** Please also identify any other one-time charges associated with the IRU.
- **Recurring Maintenance and Operations (M&O) costs:** Please indicate the recurring rate and if it is assessed annually or monthly.

Under the new guidelines established by the Second E-rate Modernization Order\(^3\), CENIC may request that its share of costs after E-rate discounts for special construction charges be amortized up to four years while requesting the E-rate discounted amount for the entire charge during Funding Year 2016. Bidders should indicate if amortization of special construction will be allowed under the proposed rates.

Bidders of managed or lit services should propose costs for services on a monthly basis inclusive of all associated co-location costs, and separately show any applicable one-time non-recurring charges.

**H. Early Termination Liability.** Any contract resulting from this RFP MAY include an Early Termination Liability provision for any awarded service during the life of the contract. Early Termination Liability is defined as the amount due and payable should CENIC, its assigns or successors, disconnect any service segments prior to the expiration of the term of service. Any early termination liability MUST be specified in all bid responses and under no circumstances can exceed the remaining amount due and payable.

Early Termination liability shall not apply to any service disconnect resulting from financial hardship, discontinuance of funding available to CENIC, lack of E-rate or CTF discounts, or in the event of upgrading service contracted for by CENIC. See section 3E below.

**I. Special Construction.** If special construction costs are not specified or are specified as zero dollars, the Bidder will be responsible for construction up to the MPOE at no cost to CENIC. There are many service segments and pricing alternatives being requested. It is the responsibility of each responding Bidder to ensure that correct pricing has been input to the pricing worksheets. This information will be used extensively in evaluating

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responses and awarding service contracts. CENIC relies on each Bidder to provide information that is free from errors or omissions. Once submitted, Bidders will be held responsible to provide service at the prices bid and quoted. **All services eligible for federal or state discounts MUST be expressed in rates before CTF or E-rate discounts, including all estimated taxes and surcharges.** Optional pricing for annual pre-payment or multi-year pre-payments may be considered by CENIC.

J. **Terms and Conditions.** Bidders MUST propose Terms and Conditions in the form of a contract as part of the response. Contracts MUST be provided as Word documents and cannot be locked to editing. The Terms and Conditions proposed MUST include all relevant terms from this RFP. All proposed Terms and Conditions will be subject to CENIC’s approval and subject to negotiations before acceptance.

K. **Qualifications.** Bidders MUST demonstrate their ability and capacity to implement the services proposed.

L. **References.** Bids will be judged in part on their experience installing services similar to those bid, on schedules similar to those proposed. Bidders MAY include references, with name and contact number, for three (3) such organizations.

M. **Bidders** interested in responding to this RFP MUST submit a signed Non-disclosure Agreement (NDA) or have an existing NDA on file with CENIC. The signed NDA (Exhibit A) MUST be submitted to 2016libraryRFP@cenic.org. Upon receipt of a signed Exhibit A, a list of aggregation hub site (Exhibit B) addresses will be provided.

### 3.0 Required Technical Responses

Bidders MUST respond to all required items. Incomplete bids are subject to rejection.

A. **Description of service requirements.** Broadband services SHALL consist of one of the following: (1) a pair of single mode dark fibers, (2) Metro Ethernet service at CIRs of 50, 100, 250, 500 or 1000 Mb/s (or others as requested), (3) scalable point-to-point Gigabit (1000 Mb/s), (4) scalable 10 Gigabit (10,000 Mb/s), (5) 40 Gigabit (40,000 Mb/s) or (6) 100 Gigabit (100,000Mb/s), connecting each site to the specified location.

Where specifically requested, services MAY consist of SONET services including T-1 (1.54Mb/s), T-3 (45 Mb/s), OC-3c (155Mbps), or OC-12c (622Mb/s). Bidders SHOULD
propose these services only where requested; in general CENIC prefers to procure the broadband services described in the paragraph above. Where applicable, SONET services SHOULD be configured with C-bit parity signaling.

Bidders MAY propose either physical point-to-point connections or virtual connections such as MPLS, but MUST clearly identify whether the services proposed are virtual connections or point-to-point. Any bidder wishing to propose both point-to-point connections and virtual connections for a specific A and Z location will need to complete two separate Pricing Worksheets (Exhibit D). Services MUST NOT be oversubscribed.

In all cases, bidders MAY propose a pair of single mode dark fibers in place of, or in addition to, the services listed above. That is, CENIC will entertain proposals for a pair of dark fibers where it has requested, for example, 10 Gigabit service.

Where dark fiber is proposed, bidders must clearly identify the fiber type and distance. Where either estimated or actual loss measurements are available, bidders SHOULD provide this information as well.

Exhibit D lists the A and Z locations for which E-rate eligible pricing and solutions may be requested. Bidders MUST meet all requirements noted in Exhibit C. The Bidder shall install only sufficient equipment necessary to provide the CENIC requested services at a location. Equipment will be installed in a workmanship-like manner. All cables and external connections will be attached or secured in accordance with industry standard practices. The Bidder will remove all waste or unused installation material from the site, at the conclusion of the installation.

B. Service Design Documentation. Every service provider MUST submit a service layout record, also known as a design layout record, within thirty (30) days of CENIC’s acceptance testing procedure, which MUST include fiber distances between end locations and major intermediate sites.

For each distinct service bid, Bidders MUST supply a copy of, or link to, any applicable documentation detailing Bidder’s requirements for customer readiness, including requirements for space/power/HVAC for customer premise equipment, customer-provided conduit, and any similar “room ready” requirements.

C. Adoption of New Technologies. CENIC reserves the right to substitute, without financial penalty, the functional equivalent of existing services as new technologies
emerge. Bidders should address how new technologies and services will be handled within the terms of the contract during the life of the agreement. While CENIC is willing to enter into a multiple year agreement, it is CENIC’s expectation that such an agreement will permit the adoption of new technologies without penalty during the life of the agreement.

D. **Optional Services.** Bidders are permitted to propose optional services not specifically requested by CENIC as part of this RFP, however CENIC shall be under no obligation to consider, nor adopt, any such services.

E. **Upgrades.** Following award of service, and during the term of that service, including those ordered on multiple year terms, the Bidder agrees that CENIC shall have the right to upgrade the existing service to a higher bandwidth service without incurring termination liability, as defined below, and without modifying the term of the initial contract. In the event that CENIC elects to upgrade an existing service, Bidder shall have the first option to provide that service at a cost that reflects, in CENIC’s sole discretion, a fair market price. If, upon receipt of a formal written request to upgrade a service, the Bidder is unable, for whatever reason, to provide the upgrade, CENIC reserves the right to cancel the existing service, and to request bids from other service providers who can provide the higher bandwidth service. In such instance, CENIC will provide the existing Bidder with evidence of the change, and will not be subject to any early termination liability.

If the Bidder is able to provide service but only at a cost that is in excess of what CENIC, in its sole discretion, considers a fair market price, CENIC reserves the right to cancel the existing service, and to request bids from other service providers who can provide the upgrade at a fair market price. CENIC will provide the existing Bidder with evidence of the change, and will not be subject to any early termination liability.

F. **Relocations.** Following award of service, and during the term of that service, including those ordered on multiple year terms, the Bidder agrees that CENIC shall have the right to relocate the existing service to different A or Z locations, without incurring any early termination liability, as defined below, and without modifying the term of the initial contract. In the event that CENIC elects to relocate an existing service, Bidder shall have the first option to provide that service at a cost that reflects, in CENIC’s sole discretion, a fair market price. If, upon receipt of a formal written request to relocate a service, the Bidder is unable, for whatever reason, to provide the relocation, CENIC reserves the right to cancel the existing service, and to request bids from other service providers. **
providers who can provide the relocated service. In such instance, CENIC will provide the existing Bidder with evidence of the change, and will not be subject to any early termination liability.

If the Bidder is able to provide service but only at a cost that is in excess of what CENIC, in its sole discretion, considers a fair market price, CENIC reserves the right to cancel the existing service, and to request bids from other service providers who can provide the relocated service at a fair market price. CENIC will provide the existing Bidder with evidence of the change, and will not be subject to any early termination liability.

G. **Additions.** CENIC would prefer a master service agreement that allows for the addition of services without modifying the terms of the initial contract. In the event that CENIC elects to add a service, Bidder shall have the first option to provide that service at a cost that reflects, in CENIC’s sole discretion, a fair market price.

If the Bidder is able to provide service but only at a cost that is in excess of what CENIC, in its sole discretion, considers a fair market price, CENIC reserves the right to request bids from other Bidders who can provide the additional service at a fair market price.

H. **Response time and Outages.** The Bidder SHALL respond to a trouble report within one (1) hour of the initial report. The response may include the start of Network Management Center diagnostic efforts, or on-site presence of Bidder technicians. Within two (2) hours of the initial trouble report, the Bidder shall communicate with the CENIC NOC with periodic reports consisting of status and estimated time to repair. The CENIC NOC will assist the Bidder in joint testing and coordination to effectuate repairs at the earliest possible time. Outages of services shall fall into two categories. Planned outages represent service downtime for which the Bidder has given five (5) business days’ notice of an anticipated outage to CENIC. Upon approval, the Bidder will be allowed one (1) hour per month per service for planned preventative maintenance, equipment change-outs, or service grooming, without incurring outage credits. The allotted time per service, per month is not cumulative. Outage time not used in the current month is not carried forward to future months. Planned outages shall be scheduled during normal maintenance windows of midnight to 6am local time. An unplanned outage, through no causes of CENIC, is defined as the service being unavailable for use and would not include conditions caused by Force Majeure or otherwise beyond the control of Bidder. An outage of this type, or the amount of time a
planned outage exceeds the maximum 1-hour duration, shall result in “outage credits” being incurred by Bidder. Outage credits shall consist of three times the monthly rate of the affected service divided by 43,200, multiplied by the minutes a service is unavailable for use. The duration of minutes shall consist of the recorded time between the trouble report delivered to the Bidder, and the time the Bidder reports the trouble is fixed.

4.0 Table of Exhibits

Exhibit A: Nondisclosure Agreement
Exhibit B: CalREN Aggregation Hubsite Locations
Exhibit C: Reporting Requirements for Federal and State Discounts
Exhibit D: Pricing Worksheets (1 of 2 and 2 of 2)