

## Innovative Solutions Canada Program

### Challenge EN578-170003/13: Improving the Internet Connectivity of Users in Remote Locations

#### Attachment 1

#### Question and Answer #1 to #8

This document contains questions and answers related to this challenge.

##### **Question 1:**

The problem statement notes the intention to “improve the online experience of GoC employees and citizens in remote locations.” It is unclear whether these “remote locations” are found in Canada or abroad. The solution we choose to propose will depend on this information. Also, “Canadian citizens residing in remote locations” implies that the “remote locations” are found in Canada, “Canadian citizens who work or live in remote locations around the world” would mean the opposite, and “according to the current census” would again imply a Canada-only context.

##### **Response 1:**

Shared Services Canada is seeking solutions that would enable low-cost high-speed Internet access to Government of Canada employees and Canadian citizens who work or live in remote areas around the world.

##### **Question 2:**

The section entitled “Desired Outcomes and Considerations” contains the criterion “Any community not currently connected to the North-American electrical grid nor to the piped natural gas network.” It is unclear why a connection to the electrical grid or gas pipelines would be relevant. Does this mean that the solution must be compatible with alternative sources of energy such as solar power, batteries or generators? Could this be clarified?

##### **Response 2:**

This definition has been provided so that bidders understand what SSC considers a “remote location” for the purpose of this challenge.

##### **Question 3:**

The section entitled “Essential Outcomes” contains the criterion “Be able to outperform current bandwidth speeds and at prices better than rural areas that have a close proximity to major urban centers.” It is unclear whether we’re still talking about “remote locations.” In such areas, it would likely be difficult to provide a higher bandwidth speed at a better price than that offered in rural areas close to major urban centres, which are already very well connected. Does this mean that the solution should not be based on fibre optics? Could this be clarified?

**Response 3:**

The Innovative Solutions Canada program seeks solutions offering improvements over currently available technology. This challenge does not specify the technology to be used in order to meet the desired outcomes articulated in the challenge. We leave this up to the bidder to determine.

**Question 4:**

The section entitled "Additional Outcomes" contains the criterion "Cost effectiveness: \$0.50Mbps or less." Equipment acquisition and installation costs (CAPEX) and network operation costs (OPEX) are often considered separately. Would it be possible to indicate who will operate the access network once the solution has been installed? Will it be the user or a private company? The CRTC-issued user licences for the electromagnetic spectrum are generally very expensive, and this is reflected in consumer prices. Could the rate of \$0.50Mbps be situated within this context?

**Response 4:**

For the purposes of this challenge, SSC has defined "cost-effectiveness" as \$0.50Mbps or less. This cost would be paid by the user. This is not an Essential Outcome (mandatory) of the proposed solution, but it is a desirable outcome to SSC.

**Question 5:**

Will the users be stationary or mobile? Is there interest in a fixed network solution that also has mobile capabilities, or is SSC only interested in a fully fixed network solution?

**Response 5:**

Both are of interest to SSC.

**Question 6:**

For mobile network solutions, should the proposal cover both the backhaul network and the access network, or just one of these?

**Response 6:**

Both are of interest to SSC.

**Question 7:**

Is there a preference regarding the technology used for the backhaul network (e.g. satellite)?

**Response 7:**

There is no preference. For a satellite-based service, however, it would be challenging to achieve the required latency time.

**Question 8:**

Could you please confirm for me if this challenge would be open to solutions for RURAL AREAS and not just REMOTE LOCATIONS as per your definition on the following link?

**Response 8:**

Shared Services Canada requires solutions for remote locations. They will consider solutions that address both remote locations and rural areas. Solutions that only address rural areas will not be considered.