BID BEST PRACTICES

Congratulations. You've now crafted a prioritized list of BEAD targets, underpinned by solid data and business case analysis, and the states you are targeting have announced their programs and timelines. It's time to construct applications that have the highest probability of success.

1 NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS

Although the bulk of this playbook has focused on market and cost data and analysis, it's critical to remember that relationships are also a vital component. Be clear-eyed about your reputation with governing authorities and the communities to be served, your strengths and weaknesses are relationships that need to be nurtured, both for application success and for future market penetration success.

2 BUILD A COALITION OF SUPPORTERS

Key governmental officials, customers, and other stakeholders who are influencers in the community. Having the confidence and backing of these individuals boosts the probability of success in the bid as well as in market acquisition after the network is built.

3 DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE RESOURCES NEEDED

The average application requires approximately 160 hours of work to thoroughly prepare, vet and submit. Fortunately, much of the work can be done in parallel and spread across multiple resources but skimping on any of the required elements will dampen the probability of success.

4 BREAKDOWN THE REQUIREMENTS

At the very beginning, craft a checklist, and build out a project plan with assigned tasks and deadlines. If resources are constrained, make sure you've identified and resourced those requirements that carry the heaviest weighting in the decision process so that you are well positioned to do an outstanding job in delivery.

5 UNDERSTAND YOUR REAL COSTS

Another potential "gotcha" is relying too heavily on generic costs and not looking at the specifics of the area targeted. The cost swings can be enormous and unrealistic assumptions for the location could damage your bid's probability of success and most certainly will damage your business case realization if you've been overly optimistic about the cost to build.

6 BUILD A CREDIBLE DEPLOYMENT PLAN

This point reinforces the need to ensure that your plan and timeline are credible. Communities were burned by the number of withdrawals from the RDOF program, when approximately 1/3 of the awards were either rescinded or handed back because the cost and delivery assumptions were not realistic.

7 CRAFT THOROUGH DOCUMENTATION

Do not underestimate the value of solid, quality documentation to support your application. This is another execution element that boosts your probability of success in winning the award and accelerates the process for your engineering team to translate the plan into a construction-ready design.

8 WORK ELEMENTS IN PARALLEL

To streamline the bidding process, it's essential to work on all elements in parallel to save time and ensure efficiency. By aligning these efforts, you can create a comprehensive and competitive bid without delays.

9 OPTIMIZE TO CAPTURE "PASS BY" LOCATIONS

Although the data doesn't get included in the application, analysis of the "pass by" opportunity, the grant-ineligible locations that the new network and/or backhaul network will be capable of serving, is a vital element of your internal business case, so you know how aggressive you can be in your bid.

10 SUBMIT ON TIME

Finally, although it may seem absurd to state, make sure you have completed all the prep work with credentials and become familiar with the submission process and portal so you can submit on time.

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