



**INVITATION TO APPLY (ITA) TO OPERATE AS YATHU-YATHU DATA OPERATOR AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL FOR THE PROVISION OF BROADBAND SERVICES TO RURAL COMMUNITIES IN MALAWI.**

**ISSUE DATE: 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023**

**APPLICATION REF: USF/ITA/2023/04/01.**

1. The Universal Service Fund is a Unit established by the Communications Act Cap 68:01 of the laws of Malawi. It is established to provide services to fill gaps in the communications sector. The Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) is mandated by the law to establish and manage USF.
2. The Universal Service Fund is inviting written applications from interested Malawians, who must be in groups of not less than 7 members, of which 51% must be female for the provision of broadband services (Yathu – Yathu Data) in the twenty-nine districts of Malawi. Rollout will be prioritized in the districts that are badly affected by Cyclone Freddy. The districts are Nsanje, Mulanje, Phalombe, Chiradzulu and Blantyre.
3. A license shall be issued to a group per district, which shall form part of a national broadband cooperative that shall be responsible for bulk purchase of capacity from licensed operators locally as well as provide technical support to the district operators.

4. Each applicant shall be required to:
  - demonstrate the ability to raise operating capital of not less than MWK50 million.
  - Organize themselves into a primary cooperative that shall become a member of the National Broadband cooperative as guided by the Cooperatives Act of Malawi
  - Obtain an Authorization license to operate;
  - Build, operate, and manage the community network. This includes computer networking links and last-mile delivery equipment with billing and application systems;
  - Provide access to the internet with a minimum of 5Mbps link to the internet;
  - Provide training to the community;
5. The applicant shall be responsible for managing the network operations at the district level while the sourcing and deployment of network components shall be arranged through USF through a financing arrangement to ensure that all districts have same quality of data services.
6. A complete set of Invitation to Apply (ITA) Documents which have been prepared in English language may be obtained by interested applicants. The documents may be obtained in person by the prospective bidders or downloaded on MACRA Website
7. Sealed Applications must be submitted to the address at 7(ii) below at or before **10:00 hours** on **Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023** Late Applications shall be rejected and returned to the applicant unopened.
8. The address for inspection, purchase, submission and opening of Application documents:
  - i) Inspection of Application Documents**  
Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA)  
MACRA House  
Ginnery Corner  
Salmin Amour Road

P/Bag 261

Blantyre

**Attention: Head of Procurement & Supply Chain**

Tel: +265 1 810 497

Fax: +265 1 812 890

E-mail: [procurement@macra.mw](mailto:procurement@macra.mw)

**ii) Submission of Applications**

**THE HEAD OF UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND**

Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA)

MACRA House

Ginnery Corner

Salmin Amour Road

P/Bag 261

**BLANTYRE**

**iii) Opening of Applications**

Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA)

MACRA House

Boardroom Hall

Salmin Amour Road

P/Bag 261

**BLANTYRE**

9. It is the responsibility of each Applicant to ensure that the Applications submitted are in accordance with the **'Requirements'** contained in the Invitation to Apply (ITA) documents, as non-compliance to the instructions will lead to disqualification and rejection of the Application.
10. Opening of Applications shall commence at **10:00 hours on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023** in MACRA's corporate boardroom, where interested bidders, their representatives and the general public are welcome to attend.
11. **USF** is not in any way bound to accept any Application but reserves the right to exercise choice of the most substantially responsive Application and where necessary can cancel the proceedings at any stage.