

Invitation to Bid (“ITB”)

Health Care Provider:	North Slope Borough Department of Health 5200 Karluk Street Barrow, AK 99273
ITB Number:	NSBDHSS20230814134202
Posting Start Date:	Date Posted by USAC, set via E-mail - note web posting
Posting End Date:	28 days after the date posted by USAC - in accordance with Program Rules. Requests for extensions are not intended to be granted.
ITB Contact Name:	Dan Kettwich
Upload Bid Submission to:	http://adsadsi.com/itb_year_27.asp
Requested File Format	Please upload offer in Portable Document Format (PDF) Note: MS Excel files or other formats may be requested

North Slope Borough Department of Health (“NSBDHSS” or “Applicant”) seeks proposals in accordance with the terms and conditions posted within. The awarded contract(s) may cover both Rural Health Care eligible and non-eligible items. If eligible and non-eligible items or services are bid, service providers should break out the non-eligible items and list them as such. Contract award(s) shall be made in accordance with Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) Program Rules as administered by the Universal Service Administration Company (“USAC”).

All Service Providers must comply with applicable Federal, State and Local Rules and Regulations.

PREQUALIFICATION: None Required
MANDATORY JOB WALK: None Required
BID MARKING: RHC NSBDHSS20230814134202 (Solicitation ID)
METHOD OF BID RECEIPT: Bid offers shall be uploaded to http://adsadsi.com/itb_year_27.asp or the offer may be disqualified. Late offers shall not be considered.

In order to provide the products and/or services requested within, the winning service provider shall provide a valid service provider Identification Number (SPIN).

It is the intent to award all of the services sought within the ITB to either one or multiple Service Providers. By issuing the ITB, the Applicant is not required to award all services for which pricing is sought. An award may or may not be given for services requested. NSBDHSS retains the right to award contracts based on their evaluation of the offers received in accordance with the ITB. A notice of intent to award shall not constitute acceptance of a Bid Offer and shall not create a binding contract. Prior to execution of a written contract between the parties (or commencement of services if there is no written contract), Applicant reserves the right to withdraw any award.

PRESENTATION of PROPOSALS:

The applicant prefers that proposal be uploaded to the appropriate opportunity located at: http://adsadsi.com/itb_year_27.asp. On-site presentations are not necessary.

Offers to the ITB shall not require demonstrations. Responses requiring demonstrations for evaluation may result in disqualification of your proposal.

NEUTRAL LANGUAGE:

The mention of any manufacturer, make, or equipment model or service specifications provided are meant to provide an example or sense of configuration. In addition, equipment references, equipment lists and/or service designations are simply proposed to give service providers a better understanding of

project requirements. Equivalent options to the mention of terms such as a manufacturer or service provider's name, brand, product, or service shall be considered.

SUSPENSION or DEBARMENT:

If, within the past five (5) years, any firm, business, person, or service provider submitting a bid has been debarred, suspended or otherwise lawfully precluded from participating in any public procurement activity with any federal, state or local government, including USAC, the Service provider must include a letter with its response or bid setting forth the name and address of the public procurement unit, the effective date of the suspension or debarment, the duration of the suspension or debarment, and the relevant circumstances relating to the suspension or debarment. Failure to supply such a letter or failure to disclose in the letter all the pertinent information shall result in the cancellation of any contract. By signing the bid section, the Service provider certifies that no current suspension or debarment exists.

RED LIGHT RULE:

Any service provider, or the sub-contractor of any service provider, who is currently under, or has reason to believe that they may have a red-light status under, the FCC's "Red Light Rule" (47 C.F.R. § 1.1910) must disclose that information in this proposal. If any service provider, or the sub-contractor of any service provider, is found to have a red-light status under the FCC "Red Light Rule" during the term of this contract, this contract may be immediately terminated.

BILLING:

With respect to service, the Applicant prefers to pay their share and it is requested that the service provider "carry the reimbursed share" until the FRN is funded, or an appeal is resolved. The Applicant agrees to promptly pay its share and to do its part in working to assure funding, to include responding to all USAC inquiries.

If allowable by program rules, please indicate if your company is willing to waive any or all prorated fees that may be assessed due to Rural Health Care Funding Cap limitations.

QUESTIONS and SUBMITTING OFFERS:

All questions shall be posted to http://adsadsi.com/itb_year_27.asp to assure everyone has access to all information. In addition, Offers shall be uploaded to the same location.

To ask questions or submit an offer, please visit http://adsadsi.com/itb_year_27.asp and click the **REGISTER FOR ITB** link. You will need to enter your name, E-mail address, password, phone number, and your company's name/SPIN. After submitting your response, a verification code will be sent to the E-mail address supplied during registration and the code provided must be confirmed to complete your registration. Please validate your registration by following the instructions contained in the E-mail requesting the verification. If you do not see a verification E-mail, please check your SPAM, or register again. If problems persist, please E-mail NSBDHSS2024@adsadsi.com.

After your account has been verified, you may sign up to access specific Invitation to Bid(s) by clicking on **Rural Health Care (RHC)** and selecting the tick box next to the entity or entities that you wish to ask questions about, follow the answers posted, and/or upload offers.

Note: You may always look at the question(s) and answer(s) online. The service provider assumes complete responsibility for receiving and reviewing information, including E-mail notifications. All e-mail notifications are sent as a courtesy and neither NSBDHSS or ADS Advanced Data Services, Inc. may be held accountable for issues concerning the delivery and receipt of E-mail.

To ask a question, click on the Q/A link associated with the Applicant's ITB. In addition, you may click on the Q/A link associated with this application to review all questions asked and answered.

Reminder: If you do not have an immediate question but would like to stay current with questions asked and answered, simply the tick box next the entity or entities that you wish to follow and you will be automatically added to the distribution list for updates. It is considered a best practice to review questions prior to submitting an offer.

No other method of asking questions is acceptable. Questions asked in any other method than the acceptable method as described above will not be answered. To reiterate, questions submitted via text, E-mail, or asked via a telephone, or left on a voicemail will not be answered.

Bid Offers shall be submitted in an equivalent manner. Simply login to http://adsadsi.com/itb_year_27.asp, click on the **Upload** link associated with the corresponding Invitation to Bid, enter your comments, and **Click to Upload File(s)** link. The following type of files may be uploaded: .PDF, .XLS, .XLSX, .DOC, DOCX, and .ZIP. When you have finished uploading files, please make sure to click the "Finished" Button.

REFERENCES:

The service provider shall provide references that demonstrate successfully Funded Projects from recent Funding Years. In addition, please indicate the number of positive Funding Commitment Decision Letters that Applicants have received for your company's services. Applicant Name, Entity Number, and Individual Contact Information are requested for all references provided.

THE ADS ADVANCED DATA SERVICES, INC. ROLE

ADS works to help manage and memorialize an open and fair application process for support under the Rural Health Care Program. The ADS work effort is designed to provide a fully documented audit ready work product. ADS helps to assure all potential service providers have access to the same information concerning service needs.

Project Coordinator: Dan Kettwich, ADS Advanced Data Services, Inc.
Mailing address: Post Office Box 117, Saltillo, TX 75478
Email address: NSBDHSS2024@adsadsi.com

The project's management structure or leadership for this proposal shall be managed by the project coordinator and the work plan as determined by the service provider should be completed by the first day of July in the funding year for which services are sought. Sufficient budget is available to fund the applicant's share of any service funded by the Telecommunications Program.

ADS Advanced Data Services, Inc. does not evaluate Service Provider Service Offerings – The Applicant is responsible for selecting all Service Providers (see evaluation criteria). ADS does not and shall not recommend Service Providers.

If you have a proposal, or optional packages, please provide details and the eligible Applicant shall evaluate all options to select a winner. Pricing specific to the Applicant's requirements must be included for an evaluation to be completed. Please make sure any and all required Contracts or Statements of Work are authorized AND included in your offer. If the Applicant has a question on your service offering, terms, and/or pricing, clarification may be sought.

If you intend to respond to the ITB and have not done so, please register to ask and receive the answers to questions at http://adsadsi.com/itb_year_27.asp.

CONTRACTS:

If a contract/agreement is requested, the service provider shall have one (1) day to provide the requested terms. Failure to provide a contract or agreement within this period may disqualify the Bid Offer. If the service provider requires additional time, please specify the exact amount of time required within your Offer and make a note of the request in the offer submission comments when uploading Offer. Filing Universal Service Fund Forms is time-sensitive, and the filing window must be used effectively. Timely return of requested contracts/agreements is mandatory.

Should the Applicant request a change to a contract/agreement, Applicant will provide a reasonable amount of time to make changes. If Applicant becomes concerned that the service provider is not acting in a timely manner, or Applicant in its sole discretion concludes the service provider may be unable to provide the desired contract/agreement modifications, then the Bid Offer may be disqualified. It is possible the Applicant may ask multiple service providers to provide contracts in case the initially selected service provider is unable or unwilling to submit an acceptable contract/agreement.

Final contracts/agreements should be provided to the applicant one month prior to the close of the filing window to assure the applicant has sufficient time for review, internal approval, and the filing of paperwork with the Universal Services Administrative Company. If final contracts are not received within two weeks of the close of the filing window, then the Bid Offer may be disqualified.

NO GIFTS OR GRATUITIES.

Applicants or their representatives are prohibited from directly or indirectly soliciting or accepting gifts or anything of value (including meals, tickets to sporting events or trips) from service providers.

NON-COLLUSION, EMPLOYMENT, AND SERVICES.

By signing the Service Provider Authorized Response, the Service Provider certifies that: it did not offer any gifts or anything of value to Applicant or its representatives, or engage in collusion or other anti-competitive practices in connection with the preparation or submission of its offer; and that it does not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, or person to whom it provides services because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability, and that it complies with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and executive orders regarding employment.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

The applicant shall choose the most cost-effective service provider, which is defined by the FCC as, “the method that costs the least after consideration of the features, quality of transmission, reliability, and other factors that the [Applicant] deems relevant to choosing a method of providing the required health care services.”

Criteria	Explanation / Description of Criteria	Weight
Cost	Percent of low-cost service / service cost	50.00%
Leverage Existing Resources	Utilization of existing systems such as EHR	25.00%
Personnel Qualifications	Understanding of existing systems and their capabilities	25.00%

Please include specific information in your offer addressing each of the criteria listed. The rubric above describes how the most cost-effective solution is selected. Meeting the minimum requirement may not assure all points are awarded in a specific area. To remove subjectivity, Yes/No questions and questions with specific answers are used to determine the most cost-effective solution. Exceeding expectations is encouraged.

The cost should be the total cost of eligible services.

Interpretation of your offer shall be utilized in completing the evaluation rubric. Please consider these criteria as a request for sufficient information to grade your offer. The information above is intended to provide an understanding of evaluation, if you need clarification, please ask. Applicant reserves the right to select bid proposals which, in the sole judgment of the Applicant most nearly conforms to the specifications set forth herein.

The selection will be based on all factors indicated above and may not go to the lowest bidder if cost is outweighed by a combination of other features in the winning vendor's bid. The weight scale listed above will determine the most cost-effective solution for the Applicant.

The applicant is not responsible for any costs incurred by a vendor related to the preparation or delivery of the bid proposal, or any other activities conducted by the vendor as it relates to this ITB.

The selection decisions made by Applicant and reported to USAC under this ITB are final and appeals or re-submissions will not be considered.

DISQUALIFICATION

In addition to any reasons specified above for disqualification, the following reasons may also result in disqualification of a Bid Offer:

- Debarred, suspended, or otherwise lawfully prohibited from public procurement activity;
- SPAM style Offer submitted (see further below);
- Failure to submit Signed Service Provider Authorized Response ("SPAR");
- Failure to include Taxes;
- Failure to properly Mark Offer;
- Service Provider does not have a valid Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN); or
- Failure to cost allocate ineligible components

SPAM based offers include one or more of the following:

- 1) The offer is general in nature, meaning specific data concerning the request is arbitrary or not well defined within the offer. The applicant is not seeking a laundry list or price list of services. Quantities should be listed and calculated, along with taxes, fees, and surcharges.
- 2) Multiple options are presented, or provided (but are not requested), and the applicant is left trying to discern between the assorted options. If you have questions, please ask them as outlined within the ITB.
- 3) The proposal is not binding and does not include signatures for acceptance by all parties.
- 4) Proposals that include endless loop terminology. In other words, proposals offering to beat the lowest current or final proposed presented shall not be accepted. Firm fixed pricing must be presented.

INTENT to RESPOND and QUESTIONS

If you intend to respond to the ITB and have not done so, please register to ask and receive the answers to questions at http://adsadsi.com/itb_year_27.asp. Simply visit the website and click on the Q/A link associated with the Applicant's Form to submit a question and indicate you intend to respond to this ITB. In addition, you may click on the Q/A link associated with this application to review all posts, questions, and their answers.

Eligible Locations to which Service May be Required

Health Care Provider:	North Slope Borough Department of Health 5200 Karluk Street Barrow, AK 99273
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GENERAL REQUIREMENT

All proposals must identify the cost for all recurring and non-recurring expenses that may include but are not limited to assessment, engineering, project management, documentation, contingency, installation, and configuration fees. All surcharges and taxes shall be included as well. The services proposed should indicate the eligible costs for reimbursement under program rules. The costs for services not eligible should be clearly itemized.

SCOPE OF WORK

The ITB's objective is to solicit bids and negotiate a contract for Information Service to enable the provision of telehealth services via interconnecting EHRs into cloud-based system to facilitate HIPAA compliant telehealth suites of services offered by NSBDHSS and its partners in telehealth and telemedicine initiatives.

Please include all fees, including Monthly Recurring Costs, Non-Recurring Costs, including Installation, and applicable taxes. FCC rules require that an Applicant sign a contract with the service provider before filing forms to seek support. Contracts, Statements of Work, and/or Service Orders should be submitted with a handwritten signature and date. Failure to provide signed documents may disqualify your response for services sought.

Offers should include the Service Provider Authorized Response (“SPAR”). The SPAR may serve as a contract and provides proof of timely response. Additional contracts and service orders may be included and executed for service delivery.

Service providers should propose an implementation plan with a seamless transition for the delivery of service. The service delivery plan should be designed to mitigate the risk of downtime and assure continued uptime. Work that requires the interruption of the current service shall be performed after hours and/or at a time that is agreeable to NSBDHSS. All proposed solutions shall be fully assessed to assure the service expectations defined within this document. If a new service provider is selected and their services deployed, it is expected to run alongside the current solution and in conjunction with NSBDHSS expectations prior to replacing the existing service. Service Level Agreements are expected.

Contract Requirements:

Program Criteria for Evergreen Contracts (47 C.F.R. § 54.622(i)(3))
Signed by the individual HCP or consortium lead entity
Specifies the service type, bandwidth, and quantity
Specifies the term of the contract
Specifies the cost of services to be provided
Includes the physical addresses or other identifying info of the HCPs purchasing from the contract

Please confirm the contracts associated with your offer complies with the following statement (note the SPAR):

- Both parties must be clearly identified (please include physical addresses of the locations that services may be delivered),
- Both parties must sign and date the contract (if possible, please submit a signed and dated MSA with proposal as this will expedite the review process and allow the applicant to focus on service orders),
- Contract must specify type and term of service (duration),
- Contract must have specific pricing of the services to be provided (if possible, please include growth options).

Note: Applicants with evergreen contracts are permitted to add new locations, exercise voluntary contract extensions, and upgrade services without additional competitive bidding, as long as those options were contemplated in the original competitive bidding process, and the contract explicitly provided for them. See 47 C.F.R. § 54.626.

Applicant may add more sites to accommodate growth and requests pricing for additional sites located in Applicant's service area. Contracts shall include language allowing the substitution of sites and services over the life of the contract (this includes potential growth). This provision allows the applicant to add sites and/or upgrade or change services throughout the length of the contact term without having to re-bid.

Please provide options to include terms that deliver service on July 1, 2024.

All proposals/contracts may include language allowing for the termination of any resulting contract if funding from a previous application is approved. Similarly, contingencies may be proposed within new contracts to address existing contract(s) that may not be funded. Contracts may allow for the termination or disconnection of service without penalty. Short-term options are preferred, and voluntary extensions are okay. Month-to-Month Service terms are okay. Contracts may be proposed with voluntary extension(s) that do not exceed five years in the aggregate, (example, a one-year contract could have no more than five voluntary extensions of one year). It would be beneficial if contracts ended on 6/30/20XX.

Competitive Bidding Period

The bid period shall be the period USAC identifies after posting the associated 461(s) and 465(s). Offers shall be due by 11:59:59PM local standard time on the date identified by USAC - meaning there may be different due dates for the assorted services sought. It is acceptable to submit all offers and responses by the first due date - this would assure all due dates are met. The Applicant does not intend to extend due dates. If unsure of due dates, check the appropriate Form(s).

Requested Contract Period:

As listed on the 461(s) and 465(s), the preferred contract period is: 3 years, with five, 1-year voluntary extensions. It is understood that multi-year contracts may be required if the selected service provider commits to building infrastructure.

Connected Care: Please note Attachment 1 for additional Products and Services Information

In Report and Order FCC 20-44 released on April 2, 2020, the FCC established a three-year Connected Care Pilot Program which provides up to \$100 million of support from the Universal Service Fund (USF) to help defray eligible health care providers' costs of providing connected care services and help assess how USF funds might be used to support connected care services.

The Connected Care Pilot provides funding for selected pilot projects to cover 85% of the eligible costs of broadband connectivity, certain network equipment (e.g., network equipment needed to make a support broadband service functional, such as a router), and information services necessary to provide connected care services to the intended patient population. In selecting pilot projects from eligible health care providers (HCPs), the FCC had a strong preference for pilot projects that primarily benefit low-income Americans or veterans. These projects also address public health epidemics, opioid dependency, mental health conditions, maternal health/high-risk pregnancy, and chronic or recurring conditions, conditions that are the focus of the Pilot Program. Funding these projects will help bring connected care services to rural, Tribal, and other underserved areas nationwide.

The FCC defines "connected care services" as "a subset of telehealth that uses broadband Internet access service-enabled technologies to deliver remote medical, diagnostic, patient-centered, and treatment-related services directly to patients outside of traditional brick and mortar medical facilities—including specifically to patients at their mobile location or residence."

On November 5, 2020, the FCC released Public Notice DA 20-1315, further elaborating on eligible services.

Ineligible Services Include: End-user devices, Medical supplies, Provider (Doctor's) Fees, Administrative and Personnel costs, Live Translation Services, Internal Connections between Provider Sites, Storage Devices, IT support, Maintenance costs, DocuSign, VPN Solutions, Special Construction/Network Builds, Applications not purchased as part of connected care information service, Standalone Voice, including VoIP, Standalone messaging services and Network Equipment not necessary to make broadband functional or manage, control or operate a supported broadband service.

Service Provider Instructions

Service Provider Authorized Response (“SPAR”) Cover Sheet:

Service Provider shall complete the SPAR on the following page and include it as the first page of the Service Provider’s Offer. Bids submitted without a SPAR Cover Sheet may not be evaluated.

In addition to the SPAR, please include all relevant documentation such as but not limited to: Scope(s) of Work, Master Service Agreements, Service Orders, Detail Line-Item Pricing, Taxes, and Surcharges, etc.

Proposed contracts or service orders **should** specifically identify the eligible products and services as well as ineligible products and services.

Service Provider Offer:

By submitting an offer, Service Provider Agrees to the Terms and Conditions contained within. If Service Provider’s offer is selected, North Slope Borough Department of Health shall award NSBDHSS20230814134202 to Service Provider and authorize the SPAR - creating a contract. If required, an authorized and dated Master Service Agreement is encouraged to be submitted with the Service Provider’s offer.

In order to be considered for award, any and all terms, conditions and, or contracts required by the Service Provider should be signed, dated, and submitted with the ITB Offer. Failure to provide documents may disqualify your offer for services sought. If specific service orders cannot be signed due to required information, then please provide a sample of required contracts or service orders.

Pricing shall be included in the service provider’s offer by location and/or service. Eligible products and services shall be clearly separated from any and all ineligible products and services.

The successful service provider shall provide a complete inventory upon project completion. All Invoices shall cross reference the Inventory Documentation provided. In addition, the service provider should be familiar with all required invoicing certifications and must comply with the invoicing deadlines for both 463s and 467s (120-days following the service delivery deadline). See 47 C.F.R. § 54.627.

Include your Service Level Agreement (“SLA”) to help the applicant define quality and/or reliability metrics. These types of technical requirements may prove critical for the applicant in identifying an objective method to determine the most cost-effective offering. Please include the expected average latency, in milliseconds, for each site and if Quality of Service (QoS) is offered.

You may reject the terms and conditions contained herein. If you do so, please make note of that exception in writing and return a copy of the signed SPAR.

Service Provider Authorized Response - **Return this form with ITB Offer**

Eligible Entity:	North Slope Borough Department of Health , 5200 Karluk Street, Barrow, AK 99273
Project Description:	See NSBDHSS20230814134202 for Project Details
ITB Number:	NSBDHSS20230814134202
ITB Posting Date:	Date Posted by USAC via E-mail - note web posting
ITB Due Date:	28 days after the date posted by USAC - in accordance with Program Rules. Requests for extensions are not intended to be granted.

Service Provider Name:	
Service Provider Address:	
Service Provider City, State and Zip:	
Service Provider Contact Name:	
Service Provider Contact Phone Number:	
Service Provider Contact E-mail Address:	
Service Provider SPIN:	

☐ Please check the box to confirm contracts offered meet the requirements listed within the Scope of Work.

☐ Please check the box to confirm understanding of contracts section on page 4 of this ITB and their authorization.

Average Days for a response from the service provider legal department: _____

Number of days required to provide a boilerplate / standard contract: _____

Service providers may be held accountable for answers provided within their offers and on the SPAR.

Pricing shall be included in the service provider's offer by location. Eligible products and services shall be clearly separated from any and all ineligible products and services.

The Undersigned hereby offers and agrees to furnish the material, service, or construction in compliance with all terms, conditions, specifications, and amendments in the Solicitation. Signature also certifies understanding and compliance with understanding and compliance with the terms and conditions outlined within the Invitation to Bid. By submitting an offer, I confirm that the proposal is genuine and not sham or collusive, nor made in the interest or behalf of any person not herein named, and that the service provider has not directly or indirectly induced or solicited any other service provider to put in a sham bid, or any other person, firm, or corporation to refrain from bidding, and that the service provider has not in any manner sought by collusion to secure for itself an advantage over any other service provider.

Service Provider Authorized Signature

Date of Service Provider Signature

NSBDHSS Authorized Signature

Date of NSBDHSS Signature

Attachment 1: Product and Services Information

Requested Bandwidth Pricing (if required): 10MB up to 1GB

If appropriate, please provide a range of bandwidth options (in the form of a table)

If the minimum speeds requested cannot be provided, please provide options starting at 1.5 MB with options up to the maximum speed that can be implemented - not to exceed 1GB. This request is designed to provide a solution if the request exceeds actual availability as well as growth - higher requested speeds are for potential growth.

If appropriate, it may be advantageous for the Internet Access to be equivalent to or match the dedicated data transport provided to a Medical or Internet Cloud.

The "A" location for all Internet services is the HCP or the facility at which Internet is provided and/or originates.

Potential site to site connectivity options (all similar/equivalent services shall be evaluated):

Originating Facility Address	Terminating Facility Address	Bandwidth
Administrative Building	TBD – Most likely with a secure Internet Connection.	10MB-1GB
Data Center	TBD – Most likely with a secure Internet Connection.	10MB-1GB

New services may replace existing services or supplement existing services. Additional services, to include redundancy, may be offered and subsequently selected. All like, similar, and/or equivalent services shall be evaluated. All new or continuing service contract offers should, at minimum, provide pricing for the bandwidth listed with term and date installation could be completed if an order were issued by the close of the filing window.

Please identify any ineligible components required to provide service. If necessary, please include proof of the rural and urban rates in your response as well as all taxes, fees, and other surcharges.

The applicant shall comply with all applicable Connected Care Pilot Program rules, requirements, and procedures, including the requirement to pay its share of the costs of Connected Care services sought and funded.

All new or continuing service contract offers should, at minimum, provide pricing and implementation of requested services.

Please provide pricing in an MS Excel worksheet/book editable format. Reimbursement for services awarded shall only be sought for eligible services as outlined by program rules.

Redundant options may be proposed. Redundancy should be physically diverse from the primary path (example, satellite connectivity may provide the most cost-effective option to a fiber connection). CPE routers configured in an active/active state with links to each would be ideal so that in the event of an outage the failover between the active router to the passive router would be more of an automatic process, versus a manual process.

All applicable federal and state laws shall be observed.