Considering the specific needs and scope of the NetConnect project for Fast Brokers, selecting MariaDB as the database system aligns well with the project's objectives for several reasons:

1. **Compatibility and Open-Source Nature**: MariaDB, being a fork of MySQL, offers broad compatibility with existing systems and software that were initially designed for MySQL. This ensures that transitioning or integrating with other systems, if necessary, is smoother. Its open-source nature allows for flexibility in customization and development, which is crucial for a project aiming to create a tailored solution like NetConnect.
2. **Performance and Scalability**: MariaDB is known for its high performance and scalability. It can handle a significant volume of transactions and data operations, which is essential for NetConnect, given the requirement for scalability and the ability to surpass Google Drive's 5GB limit. MariaDB's storage engines, like Aria and InnoDB, provide robust data processing capabilities that can efficiently manage the diverse data types and operations (uploads, downloads, and file sharing) NetConnect will facilitate.
3. **Security Features**: Data integrity and security are paramount for Fast Brokers, as highlighted in the project proposal. MariaDB offers comprehensive security features, including robust data encryption, role-based access control, and auditing capabilities. These features ensure that sensitive financial and stock data managed by Fast Brokers through NetConnect is securely stored and accessed, aligning with the project's security requirements.
4. **Cost-Effectiveness**: As an open-source solution, MariaDB presents a cost-effective option for the NetConnect project. It can reduce the overall project and operational costs compared to proprietary database solutions, which is an essential consideration for a medium-sized company like Fast Brokers with less than 50 employees.
5. **Community and Support**: MariaDB has a strong community and ecosystem, providing access to a wealth of resources, documentation, and forums for troubleshooting and development support. This aspect is crucial for the NetConnect development team, ensuring they have the necessary resources and support to address any challenges during the project lifecycle.

Selecting MariaDB for the NetConnect project not only addresses the technical and functional requirements outlined by Fast Brokers but also aligns with the strategic goals of creating a secure, scalable, and user-friendly internal file-sharing web application.