Additional Resources

For additional information about USAC and the four USF programs, visit www.usac.org or any of the specific program links below:

www.usac.org/hc (High Cost)
www.usac.org/li (Low Income)
www.usac.org/rhc (Rural Health Care)
www.usac.org/sl (Schools and Libraries)

The Federal Communications Commission website provides additional information about universal service:

www.fcc.gov/wcb/universal_service/

About USAC

The Universal Service Administrative Company is a not-for-profit corporation selected as the administrator of the federal Universal Service Fund. Across the nation, consumers, rural health care facilities, schools, and libraries are provided affordable access to modern telecommunications services through the USF programs.

Contact Us

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Customer Relations Management Center: (888) 641-8722*

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USAC
Universal Service Administrative Company

Helping Keep Americans Connected

THE UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND

SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES PROGRAM
An Overview

www.usac.org

About the Schools and Libraries Program

The Schools and Libraries Program provides discounts to schools and libraries within the United States and territories for telecommunications and Internet access in order to make these services more affordable.

Discounts for applicants are based on the percentage of students eligible for the National School Lunch Program. Libraries and schools in low-income urban communities and rural areas qualify for the highest discounts to assure that every American, regardless of age, income, or location has access to the essential tools of the Information Age.

Funded at up to $2.25 billion per program year by contributions from telecommunications companies, the Schools and Libraries Program provides discounts of 20% to 90% on the cost of telecommunications, Internet access, internal connections, and basic maintenance of internal connections for schools and libraries. The discounts are paid directly to the companies that provide libraries and schools with these technology services.

The Schools and Libraries Program is administered by the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) of the Universal Service Administrative Company, a not-for-profit corporation overseen by the Federal Communications Commission to ensure that the benefits of universal service reach communities across the country.

Eligibility Requirements

For a School —
- All public schools, K-12
- All non-profit K-12 private and parochial schools with endowments not exceeding $50 million
- Must meet the federal definition of an elementary or secondary school

For a Library —
- All public libraries
- Many private, not-for-profit libraries accessible to the public
- Must meet the state LSTA requirements
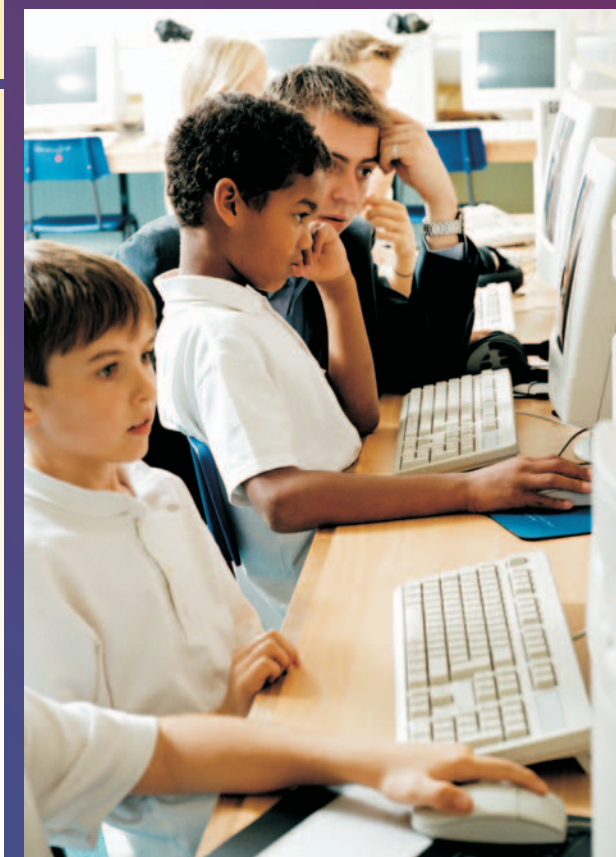
WHAT SERVICES ARE FUNDED

Telecommunications services

Internet access

Internal connections, including the wiring and network equipment needed to bring information directly to classrooms and library patrons

Basic maintenance of internal connections

Funds from the Schools and Libraries Program do *not* cover such things as desktop computers, learning software, or teacher / librarian training.

A Guide to the Application Process

SCHOOL OR LIBRARY DEVELOPS A TECHNOLOGY PLAN	*A technology plan is required for discounts on any products or services other than basic telephone service (e.g., local, wireless, and/or long distance). PBX or advanced telecommunication requires a technology plan. A plan must be written before Form 470 is filed.*
APPLICANT FILES FCC FORM 470	*Form 470 describes the products and/or services the applicant is seeking so that interested service providers can review and respond. Applicants must wait 28 days after the form is posted to the USAC website before selecting a service provider and signing a contract.*
AFTER 28 DAYS, APPLICANT SELECTS SERVICE PROVIDER AND NEGOTIATES A CONTRACT, IF NECESSARY	*The applicant receives a Receipt Notification Letter (RNL) from USAC upon successful posting of the Form 470. The RNL allows applicants to make allowable corrections to Form 470 without posting another form and indicates important dates and reminders.*
APPLICANT FILES FCC FORM 471	*Form 471 provides specific information on services ordered, quantities, from whom, and at what price. This form also includes the schools and libraries that will be receiving the services.*
USAC REVIEWS REQUEST AND ISSUES FUNDING COMMITMENT DECISION LETTERS (FCDLs) TO THE APPLICANT AND SERVICE PROVIDERS	*Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) tips—* ■ *Provide information to PIA promptly.* ■ *Provide complete responses to PIA's questions.* ■ *Be sure to have someone available to answer PIA inquires.*
APPLICANT FILES FCC FORM 486	*Form 486 must be postmarked or received by USAC no later than 120 days after the service start date or 120 days after the date of the FCDL, whichever is later. By this point, applicants must have their technology plan approved and, for services other than telecommunications, be in compliance with CIPA.*
USAC REIMBURSES THE SERVICE PROVIDER FOR THE DISCOUNT PORTION	*Invoices must be postmarked or received by USAC no later than 120 days after the last date to receive service or 120 days after the date of the Form 486 Notification Letter, whichever is later.*

5 TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL FILING

1. *File Forms Early, File Forms Online.*

By filing forms early:

■ Applicants can correct many errors before the window closes.

■ Applicants can file additional forms, if needed.

By filing forms online:

■ Applicants can file and certify documents and receive immediate confirmation.

■ The online system helps to prevent users from making errors when completing forms.

2. *Keep All Documents Related to Applications Filed for Five Years After the Last Date of Service.*

■ Applicants should keep legible proof of the date of post-mark or date of delivery for documents submitted on paper.

■ Document retention is required in the program and helps applicants to answer any inquiries.

■ For a list of documents that should be retained, visit www.usac.org/sl/about/audits/documentation-checklist.aspx.

3. *Technology Plans Must be Approved by a USAC-Certified Technology Plan Approver.*

■ Applicants should retain a copy of the technology plan approval letter for their records.

■ To locate a certified approver, visit www.usac.org/sl and use the Certified Technology Plan Approver tool.

■ A technology plan must contain all five elements. For more information on technology plans, visit www.usac.org/sl/applicants/step02.

4. *Wait 28 Days after the Form 470 is Posted to USAC's Website—or After Public Availability of the Request for Proposals (RFP), Whichever is Later—Before Selecting a Service Provider.*

■ Applicants must wait until after the 28-day bidding period to select a service provider for services, or to execute a contract for new contractual services.

■ If applicants receive one bid or no bids during this period, then they must document this fact in their records.

■ A service provider can only participate in the competitive bidding process as a bidder.

5. *When Filing Forms 471, Complete Separate Forms for Priority 1 and Priority 2 Services.*

■ Combining funding requests for both Priority 1 and Priority 2 services on the same Form 471 may result in delayed funding commitments.

■ Requests for Priority 1 services are funded first and the remaining program support is then applied to approved requests for Priority 2 services starting with the highest discount levels.

For more information, visit www.usac.org/sl