Tribal Library Pilot Program Launch Overview

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E-Rate Program Overview

Provides funding to help schools and libraries obtain affordable telecommunications and Internet access.

- **Eligible Applicants:** Public and private schools (K-12), libraries, and groups of schools and libraries (e.g., consortia, districts, library systems).

- **Eligible Services:** Schools and libraries are eligible for funding for 20% to 90% of the costs of eligible equipment and services:

  Category One: Services that support connectivity **to** schools and libraries. For example, data transmission and Internet access service, including special construction services for network builds.

  Category Two: Services that support connectivity **within** schools and libraries. This includes internal connections (i.e., routers, cabling, or other equipment needed for a Wi-Fi network); managed internal broadband services, and basic maintenance of internal connections.

  *Discount varies based on the school or library's level of poverty, the urban/rural status, and the type of service.

E-Rate and Tribal Libraries

— In January 2022, the FCC amended its rules to include "Tribal library" in its definition of "library," clarifying that Tribal libraries are eligible for E-Rate support.
— In July 2023, the FCC further amended its rules to include Tribal College and University (TCU) libraries that also serve as a public library to their communities are eligible for E-Rate funding.

What constitutes a Tribal library eligible for E-Rate support?
- Tribal Governments can designate a library as a Tribal library (Ex: through a Tribal Resolution).
- Tribal libraries should demonstrate three basic characteristics of a library:
  - (1) **regularly scheduled hours**;
  - (2) **staff**; and
  - (3) **materials** available for library users.
- Tribal libraries may also work with the state library administrative agency where they are located.

What will the Pilot Program Provide?

- One-on-One assistance during all aspects of preparing, applying for, and receiving E-Rate support for the upcoming funding year.

- Overview of the E-Rate program and its benefits.

- Information about program rules and requirements, including tools and resources available to applicants.

- Guided E-Rate Training using the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC) system.

- Walkthroughs on the competitive bidding and application processes and what services/equipment are now exempt from competitive bidding.

- Technical training sessions to better understand the requirements and processes.

- Opportunities to provide feedback on how to improve the E-Rate program and the application process.

How to Apply

- The Pilot Program is open to Tribal libraries that are new to the E-Rate program or had challenges applying to the E-Rate program in the past.

- Tribal libraries that are interested in participating should complete the application survey at https://tinyurl.com/triballibrarypilot.

- Interested Tribal libraries should be prepared to provide a brief description about your library, including existing broadband resources and what broadband services your library would like to offer to its library patrons, contact information, and Tribal affiliation.

Tribal Library Pilot Program

- Last year, for Funding Year 2023, the Tribal Library Pilot Program offered participants with a variety of group trainings as well as one-on-one assistance during the application and post-commitment processes.

- As a result, several Tribal Libraries received E-Rate funding for the first time and others are prepared to apply for E-Rate funding in future funding years.

- Reach out to native@fcc.gov or TribalTraining@usac.org if you have questions about the pilot.

- We are accepting applications on a rolling basis, so please apply soon! The Pilot will kick off with events starting in early October.

Resources and Contacts

- FCC Tribal Libraries webpage at **https://www.fcc.gov/tribal-libraries**

- USAC Tribal Libraries webpage at https://www.usac.org/about/tribal-nations/usf-programs/e-rate-program/

FCC Tribal Libraries Team

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USAC E-Rate Customer Service
   Call: (888) 203-8100
   Hours: M-F, 8 am - 8 pm ET

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