

Make the Most Out of E-Rate Funding



This is the second year of a five-year E-Rate funding cycle, and it's a perfect time to plan for your needs for next year, understand your options, and identify the right partners to deploy and maintain the infrastructure that enables you to deliver for your students and community.

Fortunately, you don't have to go through this process alone. VectorUSA has decades of educational technology experience and a deep bench of professionals well-versed in each technology domain.

To help you understand what to expect as you navigate the E-Rate program and how you can get the most out of your 2022 funding, here's an overview of the key steps in the process.

1

Pre-Bidding Discussions

September or Early Fall

Whether this is the first time you are leveraging E-Rate program dollars or you and your team are seasoned pros, the most important step in the process is to take time to document and prioritize your district's current infrastructure technology needs.



Technology Assessments

It helps to create a "current state" document that is a high-level inventory of the infrastructure technology in place at each school, noting key changes, upgrades, or patches required.

This is also a good time to record what new technologies could be utilized at each site. Reach out to trusted technology providers to explore new tools and receive demonstrations of how they work, to see if they are a good fit for your needs.

Finally, you should identify, plan, and document for any technology deployments from one school site to another, a feature that the E-Rate program began to allow in July 2021.



Program Eligibility Details

The E-Rate program allocates funding based on several factors, including the number of full-time students and the financial need of the school district.

Use this time to research the [E-Rate program's eligibility requirements and learn what your funding potential](#) could be.

2

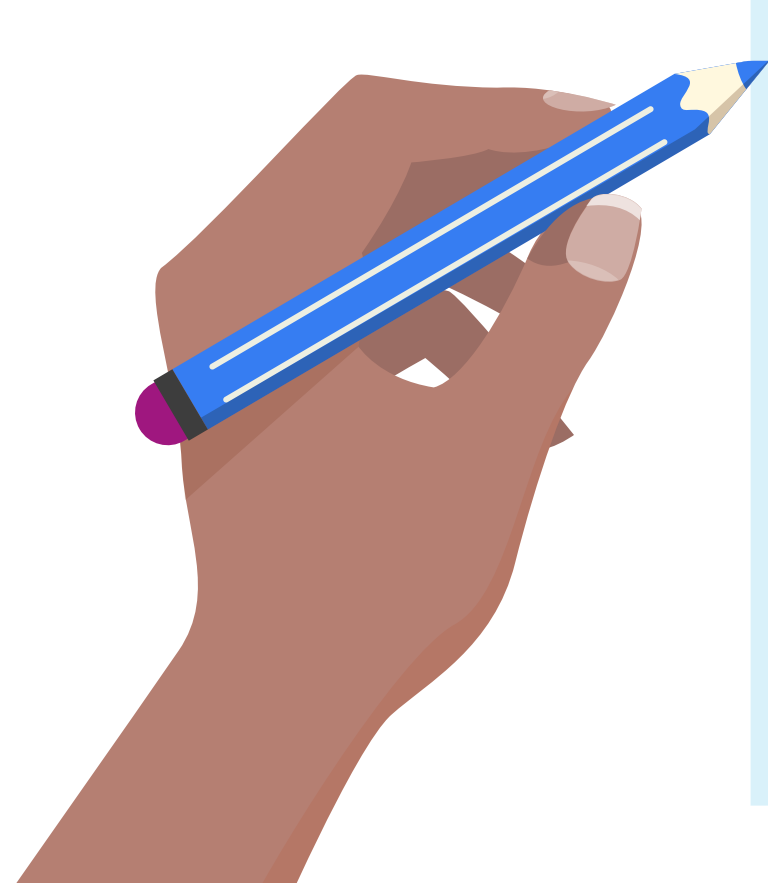
Prepare and Launch RFPs

Winter

With your technology priorities documented and a plan for implementation in place, now is the time to complete the required E-Rate program documentation and forms.

In short, the process will include:

- ☐ Completing and filing [Forms 470 with the USAC](#) to kick-start the funding and bidding process
- ☐ Developing requests for proposal (RFPs) and beginning the competitive bidding process
- ☐ Selecting your vendor(s), and [completing and submitting Form 471](#)
- ☐ Getting confirmation of your funding via the Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL) from the FCC
- ☐ Providing your vendor(s) with the details of your funding
- ☐ Initiating the services or product implementation



3

Implementation

Spring and Summer

After identifying your needs, identifying your technology partners is the next crucial step.

VectorUSA can be a trusted advisor to your organization in this phase. With our technology expertise and vendor-agnostic approach, we know how to turn your unique operating environment and technology requirements into a personalized technology plan to help your chosen vendors meet your needs.

As you select your partners, look for a team with experience serving schools and libraries that can handle complex technology projects using multi-year E-Rate funding. This will be critical as your organization works to maintain alignment with the invoicing process and reporting requirements tied with the E-Rate program. For example, your district will need to complete Form 486 once services have begun, but "no later than 120 days after the service start date or 120 days after the date of the FCDL."



4

Ongoing Support

Year-Round

Throughout the year, it's important to make the necessary investments to keep your existing technology running efficiently.



VectorUSA has more than 30 years of experience delivering multi-disciplinary support to the full range of technology solutions in districts just like yours. We know what it means to ensure that your infrastructure is secure, responsive, and available. We can help your team identify the managed services and maintenance plan your district needs to keep operations running smoothly.