

Nebraska E-Rate Special Construction Matching Fund Program (NUSF-117)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

A. Who is eligible to apply for NUSF-117 funds?

Because the NUSF-117 program is intended to leverage additional federal E-Rate funding, applicants for NUSF-117 must also apply and be found eligible for E-Rate special construction matching funds on the federal level. More information about E-Rate eligibility can be found on the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) website [HERE](#).

B. What projects are eligible for the state matching funds?

As the NUSF-117 dollars are intended to leverage additional federal E-Rate discounts, only the one-time non-recurring special construction costs related to a new fiber build for an eligible entity will be considered. Entities with existing fiber connections will not be considered for NUSF-117 funding.

Special construction charges are the upfront, non-recurring costs of deploying new fiber or upgrading facilities to E-Rate eligible entities. Special construction consists of three components: (1) Construction of network facilities; (2) Design and Engineering; and (3) Project management. Special construction does not include charges for Network Equipment.

Examples of eligible costs include Category 1 costs related to special construction such as: construction of network facilities, design and engineering costs, and project management costs. Examples of ineligible costs include but are not limited to: Category 2 related costs, and Category 1 costs related to internet access or transport, charges for Network Equipment, or costs related to an E-Rate filing.

C. What resources are available to assist entities with the application process?

The Nebraska Library Commission (NLC) is available to provide training and resources to libraries to inform them about the opportunity and guide them through the application process. Other possible resources include:

1. Nebraska E-Rate Resources:
 - [NUSF-117 Order Entered March 3, 2020](#) (includes NPSC Proposal)
 - [NUSF-117 Order Entered May 19, 2020](#)
 - [Nebraska E-Rate/NUSF-117 Application Form](#) (For best experience, open the file in Acrobat Reader or Professional, rather than a browser.)
 - [Nebraska Department of Education E-Rate Page](#)
 - [Nebraska Library Commission E-Rate Page](#)
2. Federal E-Rate Resources:
 - [USAC E-Rate Website](#)
 - [USAC E-Rate – Before you begin – Additional Discount for State Funding for Special Construction](#)
 - [Eligible Applicants List](#)
 - [Eligible Services List](#)

- [FCC Second Report and Order on Reconsideration](#)
- [FCC Sixth Report and Order](#)
- [FCC E-Rate Fiber Build Workshop](#)

D. Where is the application located?

The application can be found on the Nebraska Public Service Commission's website at <https://psc.nebraska.gov/telecommunications/nusf-forms>. It is recommended that you download the application, then open the file in Acrobat Reader or Professional, rather than accessing the form through an internet browser.

E. How do I submit the application?

The completed and signed application forms can be sent via e-mail to psc.nusf@nebraska.gov, mailed, or hand-delivered to the Nebraska Public Service Commission so that it is received no later than 5:00 PM on December 31st, in order to facilitate applicants filing in the USAC E-Rate filing window. Late applications will only be considered if funding is remaining, and time permits.

F. When is the NUSF-117 Nebraska E-Rate Special Construction Matching Program application due?

The application window for the NUSF-117 Nebraska E-Rate Special Construction Matching Program opens in November and closes the last day of December for the subsequent E-Rate support year. The completed and signed application forms and any supporting documentation for the upcoming funding year should be received at the Nebraska Public Service Commission (NPSC) by 5:00 PM, on December 31st. Priority will be given to applications received prior to this date. Late applications may be considered if funding is still available and time permits.

G. When will a decision regarding funding through the Nebraska E-Rate matching program be communicated?

In mid-January, the NPSC will provide notice to applicants that applied on or before December 31st, indicating whether their NUSF-117 application has been approved. A letter accompanying the order will be sent to the applicants regarding funding decisions. This information can be used by applicants in their FCC filings to indicate approval for state matching.

H. Will the application approval process involve a priority determination? If so, what factors will be considered?

If applications that we receive exceed the available support, the NPSC will prioritize applications based on a needs-based assessment. The priority determination will be based on the amount of an entity's E-Rate discount, with a greater priority weight to entities receiving higher E-Rate discounts. The priority assessment reasoning is based on the idea that the lower the E-Rate discount, the more able the library is to pay the cost itself.

I. How will the final grant funds be disbursed?

Reimbursement of the eligible state portion of up to 10% of the special construction costs would occur once the carrier has submitted proof of project completion, as well as documentation that the applicant has either paid their bill in full or has been invoiced for the construction costs. The NPSC will reimburse the carrier directly for the eligible portion of the state-matched cost of construction.

If you have additional questions, please contact us via e-mail to psc.nusf@nebraska.gov.