



Indiana Department of Education

Indiana State Match for Fiber Construction

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is announcing its participation in the E-rate match program for special construction projects. This is available to any public school in Indiana and is in the 3rd year of a pilot program for FY2021 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022). As described on the Universal Services Administration Company (USAC) web site: *"If a state provides eligible schools and libraries with funding for special construction charges for high-speed broadband that meets the FCC's long-term connectivity targets, the E-rate Program will increase an applicant's discount rate for these charges up to an additional ten percent to match the state funding on a one-to-one dollar basis."*

In accordance with the parameters established by E-rate, Indiana has set aside a portion of funding already earmarked for school connectivity to provide matching funds for this program. Schools interested in participating will need to complete a short application for the Indiana Department of Education funding. Applicants will also have to indicate on their FCC Form 471 (See below for instructions) that the special construction portion of the project may qualify for Indiana DOE match (Note that if for some reason DOE state match funding is not available, the application, without the matching funds will still be processed and evaluated by USAC).

In the event qualified applications exceed the available funds, schools in rural and underserved areas will receive priority followed by schools with the highest discount rates. If further prioritization is needed, an applicant's raw free and reduced lunch rate from the most recently available Pupil Enrollment count will be used. Please note, for the purposes of the matching program, "Special Construction" for E-rate refers to the upfront, non-recurring costs associated with the installation of new fiber to or between eligible entities.

In addition to carefully following all of the E-rate procurement processes, you will need to take two important steps to be eligible for the matching funds.

STEP 1: Signaling your interest in the match when you file your FRN

When you prepare your FRN, please prepare the following steps in order to signal your interest in the match.

1. If you indicate that your FRN includes special construction, you should be prompted with the question "Is there a state or tribal match available for your E-rate special construction funding request?" Please be sure to select "Yes."
2. You will then be asked to **specify the state match amount requested** (this will be 10% of the total special construction cost for districts at 80% or below discount rates, or 5% of the total special construction cost for districts at 90% discount).
3. You will also be asked to specify a source document or website for the matching fund. You can use this link: <https://www.usac.org/e-rate/applicant-process/before-you-begin/fiber-summary-overview/additional-discount-to-match-state-tribal-funding-for-special-construction/#IN>

Following this process is essential to ensure that if the matching fund does get approved, you will be able to secure the funding. But if for any reason the fund is rejected, you won't be penalized for including the state match information.

STEP 2: Completing the Application from the Indiana Department of Education.

Applications ([available here](#)) to participate must be received by 11:59 p.m. March 26th, 2021. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in writing by April 16th. All awards are conditional on the receipt of the federal match and availability of state funds. The funds for successful award applications will be distributed to the schools via a contract with the state. This program is available to any public school in Indiana meeting the E-rate criteria for the special construction program. Any questions about the pilot state matching program should be sent to: Dr. John Keller, jkeller@doe.in.gov.