Connections for Classrooms – Round 2
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. How is Round 2 related to the 2014 Connections for Classrooms program?
Both programs support advanced educational capabilities by providing technology assistance to Georgia schools, and the applications made for the 2014 Connections for Classroom program serve as the application mechanism for Round 2. The programs are unique in that Round 2 focuses solely on Tiers 2 and 3 services (equivalent to E-rate Category Two Eligible Services) and awards are specifically used to cover E-rate non-discounted costs (i.e., local matching funds) for approved Category Two expenditures.

2. Which LEAs are eligible for Round 2 funding?
An LEA is eligible for Round 2 funding if it applied to the 2014 Connections for Classrooms grant with a request for Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 expenditures that was not funded fully, either through CFC funds or if combined with E-rate funds. Put differently, those scoring 87 or higher in the 2014 grant program are not eligible. Eligible LEAs must then request, be granted, and expend FCC E-rate awards for Category Two Eligible Services for E-rate FY 2015 and/or E-rate FY 2016. As another option, if an eligible LEA currently has a Priority 2 E-rate commitment letter for a previous funding year for which it has been unable to provide the required local match, it may elect to use Round 2 funds toward that match. However, those funds will still count toward the cap of available funds for the district's E-rate match. A list of eligible LEAs was published on May 5, 2015 on the GOSA website located at http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information, and a notice was sent to eligible LEAs via the superintendent and the email address of the contact listed for the 2014 grant program.

3. How will funds be dispersed for Round 2?
Round 2 funds will be dispersed via a reimbursement method. The procedures to request reimbursement for the Round 2 funds are included in the Grant Overview and Procedures document on the GOSA website: http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information.

4. How was my Round 2 award determined?
The <u>unawarded</u> 2014 Connections for Classrooms Tier 2 and 3 requests were used as the basis for determining Round 2 grant awards. GOSA used the following steps to determine the Round 2 LEA eligible funding amounts:

1. GOSA calculated the amount that each LEA requested for Tier 2 and Tier 3 [including rescinded funds] LESS the amount that the LEA was awarded for those Tiers 2 and 3 requests. Funds rescinded due to misclassification of tiers (e.g., when an LEA classified Tier 3 needs as Tier 2) were included in this calculation.
2. GOSA calculated the projected E-Rate local match of the amount determined in Step 1. The match percentage was determined using E-rate guidelines and

was verified with the University System of Georgia's (USG) E-rate support team.

3. Using the match percentage used in Step 2 and FY2015 FTE-1 Student Enrollment Counts, GOSA calculated each LEA's maximum local match funding eligibility for E-rate Category 2 funding using E-rate guidelines. GOSA also verified this calculation with USG's E-rate support team.

4. If the local match amount calculated in Step 2 based on unawarded funds was less than the maximum local match calculated in Step 3, the LEA's Round 2 eligible funding was the amount calculated in Step 2. If the local match amount calculated in Step 2 based on unawarded funds was higher than the maximum local match calculated in Step 3, the LEA's Round 2 eligible funding was the amount calculated in Step 3.

LEAs that did not request Tier 2 or Tier 3 funding from the 2014 Connections for Classrooms grant are not eligible for Round 2 funding, nor are LEAs that requested Tier 2 or Tier 3 funding from this program and were awarded the entire amount of its requested funds when combined with E-rate funding (those scoring 87 or higher).

5. If part of my 2014 Connections for Classrooms award was rescinded due to tier eligibility, will I be eligible for that amount in Round 2?

Tier 2 and Tier 3 requests from the 2014 Connections for Classrooms grant that were not awarded, including rescinded amounts for miscategorized tiers, were included in the calculation of Round 2 allocations. See question 4 for more information on how Round 2 funding eligibility is determined.

6. How do I apply for Connections for Classrooms – Round 2?

There is no application process for Round 2 funding. Any LEA that meets the eligibility criteria outlined in Question 2 is eligible for an award. LEAs receiving a grant award must submit a Notice of Intent to reserve funds on or before **June 26, 2015**. LEAs that do not satisfy these criteria will not be considered for Connections for Classrooms – Round 2 funding but will be able to apply in Round, which will be announced in July 2015.

7. Will Round 2 affect my funding from my 2014 Connections for Classrooms award?

No, Round 2 funding does not affect any previous award.

8. Is there any way to alter my original application to increase my award for Round 2?

No, applications for the 2014 Connections for Classrooms program may not be revised in conjunction with Round 2. However, GOSA will hold a Round 3 with remaining funds for LEAs that did not apply in 2014 or who did not receive funds to support their maximum Category Two E-Rate eligibility. Round 3 will be announced in July 2015.

9. How much money is my LEA eligible to receive in Round 2?

Please see the answer to question 4, which outlines an LEA's award potential.

10. What equipment, materials and services are eligible for reimbursement under the Round 2 program?

Round 2 funds are exclusively used to cover E-rate matching funds required for E-rate Category Two Eligible Services. Round 2 funds cannot be used to purchase any items, services, or equipment that are not included in the USAC Commitment Letter. The E-rate Eligible Services List is updated each year and can be found on http://usac.org/sl.

11. What is the timeline for Round 2?

Round 2 awards may be used for E-rate Category Two Services matching funds for expenses incurred in E-rate FY 2015, E-rate FY 2016, and/or a previous funding year if the LEA currently has a Priority 2 E-rate commitment letter for which it has been unable to provide the required local match. LEAs that already applied for E-rate FY 2015 Category Two funds can apply the Connections for Classrooms – Round 2 grant to the local matching funds. For approved multi-year E-rate programs that extend into subsequent years, only expenditures made in E-rate FY 2015 and E-rate FY 2016 will be considered.

12. How do I reserve Round 2 funds awarded to my LEA?

On or before **June 26, 2015**, LEAs receiving a Connections for Classrooms – Round 2 award must submit a Notice of Intent stating their intention to use funds to Steve Korwan at skorwan@georgia.gov. Please follow Notice of Intent instructions in the Grant Program Overview and Procedures document published at http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information. Please note that, while this Notice of Intent reserves funds for local matching portion of Category Two E-rate funds, it should not be construed as an executed contract. GOSA will execute a contract once the LEA follows the procedures outlined in Section 3.4 Round 2 Award Setup in the Grant Program Overview and Procedures document. Any reserved funds for which the requirements outlined in this section are not met will be rescinded.

13. Will the reimbursement process be the same as the reimbursement process for the 2014 Connections for Classrooms program?

The reimbursement process will be similar to 2014 Connections for Classrooms procedures. Specific instructions are available in Section 3.5 of the Grant Overview and Procedures document, which is posted on http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information.

14. Is there a list of approved equipment, materials and services?

Equipment, materials, and services approved for Round 2 include any E-rate Category Two Eligible Services, which are outlined on http://usac.org/sl.

15. Will Category Two E-rate Eligible Services purchased before Round 2 of CFC be eligible for reimbursement?

No, Round 2 awards may only be used for reimbursement of local E-rate matching funds used for USAC approved E-rate expenses outlined in Question 2. Any purchases made prior to the award announcement on May 5, 2015 are ineligible.

16. If I decide not to apply for Category Two E-rate Eligible Services, can I submit a budget amendment to use the Round 2 funds for other purposes?
No, Round 2 funds can only be used to support local matching funds as outlined in Question 2. Any remaining funds will be rescinded.

17. When will my LEA receive a contract for my Round 2 award?
The LEA must send a request to Steve Korwan at skorwan@georgia.gov with the FCC Form 471 ("Description of Services Ordered and Certification Form") **and** USAC Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL). Connections for Classrooms administrators will confirm receipt of these materials and will review this information along with the LEA's previously submitted Notice of Intent. Once the information is considered, administrators will provide a Connections for Classrooms – Round 2 Contract Agreement, which must be executed before the LEA can request reimbursement for funds. This documentation is necessary for all E-rate funding years for which the LEA is requesting CFC funds.

18. Do I need to spend my entire original 2014 Connections for Classrooms grant award before I am eligible for reimbursement from my Round 2 award?
No, the spending deadlines outlined for the original 2014 Connections for Classrooms program will not affect your Round 2 eligibility or award reimbursement.

19. Where can I find additional information about Round 2 of Connections for Classrooms?
Connections for Classrooms – Round 2 information may be found on the GOSA website located at http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information.

20. My LEA did not apply for 2014 Connections for Classrooms funding. How can we apply for Round 2 funding?
LEAs that did not apply for the 2014 Connections for Classrooms program are not eligible for the Round 2 program. However, GOSA will hold a competitive Round 3 with remaining funds for LEAs that did not apply in 2014 or who did not receive funds to support their maximum Category Two E-Rate eligibility. Round 3 will be announced in July 2015.

21. My LEA's submission for the original Connections for Classrooms did not score high enough to get a full award for its Tier 2 and Tier 3 requests. Are we eligible for Round 2?
Yes, Round 2 funding is not predicated on the scores received for the 2014 Connections for Classrooms applications.

22. The application period for the E-rate program for E-rate FY 2015 has already closed. How can we take advantage of Round 2 funding?

LEAs that did not apply for E-rate FY 2015 may still apply for E-rate FY 2016. Regardless of when an LEA applies for E-rate, it must submit a Notice of Intent for Round 2 funding by June 26, 2015.