

Connections for Classrooms – Round 3 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. How is Round 3 related to the 2014 Connections for Classrooms (CfC) program?

Round 3 represents another phase of the 2014 Connections for Classrooms grant program that holds the same objective of funding network infrastructure to enable Georgia K-12 schools and classrooms to fully leverage high-speed broadband access. It requires a separate application for funds, regardless of whether an LEA applied during the 2014 grant program.

2. How much grant funding is available in this program?

Round 3 includes approximately \$8.5 million in funding, which will be awarded on a competitive basis.

3. Who will evaluate these applications and how will the applications be scored?

A team of independent evaluators will review each application and assign scores according to the rubric that includes the following criteria:

E-rate Request & Infrastructure Investment Plans:	10 possible points
Digital Learning Strategy:	20 possible points
Alignment with District Plans:	5 possible points
Alignment with State Plans:	5 possible points
Professional Development Plan	10 possible points
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TOTAL	50 possible points

The full rubric with more narrative on each criterion can be found in the Grant Application Instructions & Program Procedures guide located on the Connections for Classrooms website at <http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information>.

4. If an LEA applies early, will feedback and time for corrections/updating be a possibility?

No, once an application is submitted through the online process it may not be altered.

5. Will there be a review process that communicates back to us about the application prior to the final determination?

No, there is no intermediate process for application feedback prior to the grant award.

6. Which LEAs are eligible for Round 3 funding?

An LEA is eligible to compete for Round 3 funding if it has not already received Connections for Classrooms funding to meet the total of its maximum local matching funds for E-rate Category Two Eligible Services for the current multi-year funding cycle. An LEA that has a Priority 2 E-rate commitment letter for a funding year prior to FY15 for which it has been unable to provide the required local match may apply for Round 3 funding to pay for the required local match. However, this amount will be subtracted from the maximum local matching funds remaining for FY15 and FY16 funding requests. Please refer to the Round 3 Eligibility spreadsheet at this link to determine your funding eligibility: <http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information>.

7. Where are the application forms and submittal process located?

Information and documents related to Round 3 can be found on the Connections for Classrooms website at <http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information>.

8. What is the deadline for the application of the grant?

The application deadline is October 29, 2015, at 5:00 PM ET.

9. When will the grant awards be made?

Grant awards will be announced in December 2015. Contacts listed in the application will be notified of award decisions.

10. How much money can be requested in the application?

Round 3, similar to Round 2, provides LEAs funding to reduce or cover local matching funds requirement for E-rate Category Two Eligible Expenses. The most an LEA can receive is the total of its E-rate Category Two local matching funds requirement for the current E-rate funding cycle. Please refer to the Round 3 Eligibility List by LEA spreadsheet at this link to determine your funding eligibility: <http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information>.

11. How will funds be dispersed for Round 3 and how often can disbursements be requested?

Round 3 funds will be dispersed via a reimbursement method and may be requested once a calendar month. The procedures to request reimbursement for the Round 3 are included in the Grant Application Instructions & Program Procedures guide.

12. How will my Round 3 award be determined?

Awards will be based upon the competitive strength of the LEA's plan in achieving the program's goals, as determined by independent reviewers who score each application against the scoring rubric. Grant administrators must also balance the amount of funds requested and the amount of funds available in making award determinations. The rubric is included in the Grant Application Instructions & Program Procedures guide.

13. Will this affect my funding from previous CFC grant rounds?

No, Round 3 funding does not affect any previous Connections for Classrooms award.

14. What is the timeline for Round 3?

Key dates for Round 3 are as follows:

- July 15, 2015: Application period opening date
- October 29, 2015: Application period closing date
- December 2015: Award announcements made
- January 29, 2016: Due date for the LEA's Notice of Intent for Round 3 funding
- December 31, 2017: Last day to submit request for reimbursement of expenses

15. 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 prior rounds and is explained in the Grant Application Instructions & Program Procedures guide located on the Connections for Classrooms website at <http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information>.

16. Will Category Two E-rate Eligible Services purchased before Round 3 of CFC be eligible for reimbursement?

Round 3 will reimburse the LEA for required local matching funds related to approved E-rate Category Two Eligible Services for Funding Years 2015 and 2016. An LEA that has a Priority 2 E-rate commitment letter for a funding year prior to FY15 for which it has been unable to provide the required local match may apply for Round 3 funding to pay for the required local match. However, this amount will be subtracted from the maximum local matching funds remaining for FY15 and FY16 funding requests.

17. Do I need to spend my entire Round 1 award before I am eligible for reimbursement from my Round 3 award?

No, the spending deadlines outlined for the original 2014 Connections for Classrooms program will not affect your Round 3 eligibility or award reimbursement.

18. If part of my 2014 Connections for Classrooms award was rescinded due to tier eligibility, will I be eligible for that amount in Round 3?

Award eligibility is determined based upon remaining E-rate local match funding after the first two rounds of Connections for Classrooms awards. See the Grant Application Instructions & Program Procedures guide for complete information.

19. Where can I find additional information about Round 3 of Connections for Classrooms?

Complete information on Round 3 can be found on the Connections for Classrooms website at <http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information>.

20. How do I apply for Connections for Classrooms – Round 3?

Applications are submitted online at <https://gosaga.wufoo.com/forms/round-3/>. Complete instructions on the application process are found in the Grant Application Instructions & Program Procedures guide located on the Connections for Classrooms website at <http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information>. Please read the full instructions prior to beginning the application. The application must be submitted within one session.

21. My district did not apply for 2014 Connections for Classrooms funding. Is it possible to apply for Round 3 funding?

Yes, LEAs that did not apply for the 2014 Connections for Classrooms program may apply for the Round 3 phase.

22. Who should an LEA representative contact with questions during participation in the program?

Concise and complete information on Round 3 can be found on the Connections for Classrooms website at <http://gosa.georgia.gov/2015-cfc-program-information>. Further questions may be directed to the Round 3 program manager, Steve Korwan, at skorwan@georgia.gov.