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# Schools and Libraries News Brief

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**April 7, 2006**

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## Funding Year 2005 Waves

USAC will release Wave 43 funding commitment letters on April 12. This wave will include commitments for approved Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance funding requests at 88% and above. As of April 7, FY2005 commitments total over $1.53 billion. See Automated Search of Commitments for more information.

## Selective Reviews Start in April

Each year, a small number of entities are selected for a specialized review of their applications as part of USAC's broader Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review. This more detailed review is known as a Selective Review.

### *What does a Selective Review require?*

A Selective Review requires additional information and/or documents related to specific certifications made on your Form 471, including:

- A copy of your technology plan.
- Documentation of your competitive bidding process and a review to make sure that the process was fair and open.
- Verification that you have the money to pay for your share of the cost of services (the "non-discount share").
- Verification that you have secured access to other resources that are ineligible for discounts but that are necessary to make use of the eligible services you have requested. These resources, which allow you to successfully implement technology in your school or library, can include training, computers, software, electrical capacity, and maintenance.

A Selective Review takes place at the Billed Entity level. This is generally the school district, consortium, or library system identified in Block 1 of the Form 471. USAC requests and reviews information for **all** Form(s) 471 that were filed by the Billed Entity for the funding year being reviewed.

For Funding Year 2006 reviews, USAC has implemented a number of changes to make the Selective Review process clearer and faster for applicants.

### *What has changed about Selective Reviews?*

**Revised format.** The Selective Review Information Request or SRIR (pronounced "sir") is the document that USAC faxes or e-mails to the applicant to kick-start the review process. The applicant fills in the information requested on the SRIR and submits it to USAC together with the appropriate documentation. This year the SRIR has a new, streamlined format. USAC has reduced the document from 19 pages to nine to make the SRIR more transparent. A sample SRIR is posted on our website.

Note that the first page of the SRIR features your Selective Reviewer's contact information and the second page is a checklist for the documentation that you need to submit to your Selective Reviewer.

**Additional time to respond.** We are also providing you additional time to respond to the SRIR. You have **30 days** from the time the SRIR is faxed or e-mailed to you to respond to our request, which ensures that you have enough time to provide complete, documented answers to our questions. If we have not received a response from you and your 30-day deadline is near, your Selective Reviewer will send you a reminder letter via your preferred mode of contact and a copy of the reminder letter to your state coordinator. Remember that failure to provide

information in a timely manner means that we will have to process your review without the benefit of your response.

**Complete responses.** It is extremely important that you provide complete responses to our questions. If you do not respond to a question or provide an incomplete response, the Selective Reviewer will assume that you do not have more information to provide for that question. The Selective Reviewer will **not** follow up with you if your submission is missing requested documentation. If you are not sure what to provide, contact your Selective Reviewer and ask for clarification.

Does this mean your Selective Reviewer will not ask you any questions once you have submitted your SRIR? Not necessarily. If your Selective Reviewer needs you to clarify your answer, he or she will contact you. However, we urge you to review carefully your response before returning it to ensure that you have completely answered all questions and provided all requested documentation.

**Additional resources.** Please make use of the USAC website as a resource when you are preparing your response. You can review the SRIR instructions, download the SRIR instructions, and view other helpful documents — including sample copies — from the Undergo Selective Review webpage. Again, contact your Selective Reviewer if you still have questions.

*What should I keep in mind when completing my response?*

**Verify the Form(s) 471 application number(s) and Billed Entity Number.** The cover page of the SRIR lists all Forms 471 filed under your Billed Entity Number (BEN). Notify your Selective Reviewer immediately if your Billed Entity submitted any additional Form(s) 471 **not** listed on the SRIR cover page. You should also notify your reviewer if any applications that were filed under a different BEN should be included in your review. For example, the Blue School District filed a Form 471 on behalf of the Little Red School House. The Little Red School House filed its own application as well. The Little Red School House application should be included in the Blue School District Selective Review response.

**Submit all requested supporting documentation.** USAC requests copies of documents associated with your competitive bidding process, relevant pages of your operating budget, and a copy of your technology plan. On the first page of each submitted document, indicate the document title and the corresponding FRN(s).

If you do not have an approved budget, you may submit alternatives to demonstrate that you have secured the appropriate funding. For example, you can provide a letter signed and dated by a school or library official stating that the entity will secure the necessary resources for the non-discount share together with a draft budget or board resolution. The SRIR guidance on the website provides a complete listing of acceptable documents.

Make sure you provide all of the competitive bidding documents, including bid responses from all of the service providers that responded to your Form 470/RFP. To the extent that you documented the RFP process (e.g., memoranda discussing your selection process, evaluation criteria, and/or bid sheets) submit those items to your Selective Reviewer as well.

**Complete and submit SRIR certification and worksheets.** Note the following specific sections of the SRIR:

- Selective Review Information Request Checklist (page 2)
- Item 25 Worksheet Summary (page 3)
- Technology Implementation Level Worksheet (pages 6–7)
- Selective Review Information Request Completion Certification (page 9)

*Who can respond to the request for information?*

The applicant or the applicant's authorized representative can respond to the SRIR. If the applicant's authorized representative (e.g., a consultant) responds, the applicant must submit a Letter of Agency or Consultant Agreement authorizing the consultant to act on the applicant's behalf. Remember, however, that a service provider may not act as an applicant's representative and may not complete the SRIR for any applicant.

**Deadline for Information Requests on Item 21 Attachments**

Item 21 Attachments filed online or by e-mail are available to our PIA reviewers. All of the Item 21 Attachments prepared on paper and mailed in or faxed have also been scanned into our system. From this point forward, PIA reviewers will be applying the Deadline for Information Requests to Item 21 Attachments that have not yet been received. This means that, if a PIA reviewer requests an Item 21 Attachment and you do not submit it within the required period of time, you risk denial of your application.

Remember that you can still submit an Item 21 Attachment online if you have not already done so. You must have filed your Form 471 online and retained your security code.

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