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Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Schools and Libraries Program News Brief

November 9, 2018

TIP OF THE WEEK: You can still sign up for fall applicant training. See below for the dates and locations that still have space, and register for a training session from the [2018 Applicant Training](#) page or the [Tribal Training](#) page on the USAC website.

Commitments for Funding Year 2018

Funding Year 2018. USAC released Funding Year (FY) 2018 Wave 31 Funding Commitment Decision Letters (FCDLs) on November 9. As of November 9, FY2018 commitments total over \$1.89 billion.

On the date that FCDLs are issued, you can access your FCDL notification from the **Notifications** section of your landing page in the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC).

Update on Applicant Training

The remaining applicant training sessions still have seats available, and you are encouraged to register if you would like to attend.

Here is a list of the available dates and locations:

November 13–14 at Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska

- Tribal session option the morning of November 13. Participants are welcome to sign up for the additional training options in Omaha as well.
- Beginner training the afternoon of November 13.
- Full-day training on November 14, with some general sessions and tracks for beginners and advanced participants.

November 28–29 at Georgia Tech Research Institute Conference Center, Atlanta, Georgia

- Beginner training the afternoon of November 28.
- Full-day training on November 29, with some general sessions and tracks for beginners and advanced participants.

November 28 at Spokane Community College, Spokane, Washington

- Full-day sessions focused on Tribal training and information for beginners.

November 30 at San Juan College, Farmington, New Mexico

- Full-day sessions focused on Tribal training and information for beginners.

To register or get more information for each location, visit our [2018 Applicant Training page](#) and our [Tribal Training page](#) on the USAC website. Please note that our service provider training sessions in Washington DC on December 3, 4, and 5 are completely full, although we are processing registrations from our wait list as we receive cancellations.

New E-rate Dataset Launched in USAC's Open Data Platform

USAC's [Open Data platform](#) recently celebrated its one-year anniversary. This platform is designed to provide program data for all users in a clear and consistent format. Users are able to view, search, filter, and manipulate program data and extract that data in a variety of formats, including an API.

Program data in the Open Data platform is collected in groups called datasets. A dataset contains information that is related in a specific way. For example, the dataset "E-rate Request for Discount on Services: Discount Calculations (FCC Form 471 and Related Information)" contains detailed information on the discounts for each billed entity in the program and how they were calculated.

USAC recently launched a new dataset, [E-Rate Recipient Details And Commitments](#). This dataset combines key fields captured from the FCC Form 471 (Basic Information, FRN Status, FRN Line Items, Recipients Of Service, and Supplemental Entity Information). This dataset actually is a compilation of data from several existing datasets. It allows users to easily gather related data in one action instead of having to download and associate data from multiple datasets.

- Note: This dataset is very large. If you are looking for data related to a particular data point (e.g., a FCC Form 471 application number, a Funding Request Number, or an entity number), you should [set up a filter](#) rather than using the Search box.

This dataset is very useful to answer questions such as:

- What type of service is a particular recipient getting?
- How much is a recipient paying for a particular service?
- Who is the service provider for a particular recipient?
- Is the recipient a Tribal school or library, a public school or library, a charter school, etc.?
- Who are all the recipients in the E-rate Program?
- How many lines does a school or library have for Category One service?
- What are the Category Two cost allocations for a school or library by funding year, Funding Request Number (FRN), or FRN line item?

Users who are accustomed to manipulating large groups of data will find this particular dataset very helpful. However, as you can see from the above questions, occasional users can also benefit from learning how to use the Open Data platform.

If you are new to Open Data, we suggest that you take the following steps:

- **Set up an account.** To start, click the **Sign In** button at the top of the Open Data page. At the bottom of the screen, you will see the text "Don't have an account yet?" Click the **Sign Up** link and provide the information requested.
- **Watch the training videos.** Click the link to the [Video Trainings page](#) and watch each of the videos in turn. You will gain a basic understanding of how to sort and search a dataset, filter data, create a map or chart, and aggregate data.
- **Test your skills with a small dataset.** "E-rate Open Competitive Bidding: Consultants (FCC Form 470 and Related Information)" has only 12 unique fields. You can gain some skill by practicing what you have already learned on a small scale.
- **Contact the dataset owner if you have questions.** Each dataset has a button labeled **Contact Dataset Owner**. Click that button and provide a subject, a brief description of your question or comment, and your email (so someone can get back to you).

The greatest advantage of the Open Data platform is that it allows you to customize your view(s) of the available data. With your own account, you can choose the specific fields in a dataset that you would like to see, create a report, and then get an updated report based on your choices each time you log in. If you create and save a visualization – such as a chart, map, or graph – the visualization will also be updated daily without any action on your part.

We encourage you to explore the Open Data platform, perform searches, ask questions, and provide feedback so we can continue to improve the user experience.

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