Hi, everyone!

This is our webinar for the California State Library High-Speed Broadband Program for the Year 9 RFP. This webinar is specifically geared towards new libraries, or those who need a refresher sort of on the foundations of this program.

In this webinar I’m going to sort of do a lot of defining of different terms that are part of this program before I get into how, how you can participate.

So, if we could go ahead and get the next slide, please and we’ll do some introductions here.

So, I am Caroline Mueller. I am the project Coordinator for the California Library Connect program on behalf of the California State Library. We do our third-party administration of this program. Heather Mills is not here, but she is the Program Administrator. You may receive emails with her and other communications. Rachel Stogner, we have here today. She’s our Grants Coordinator. Kayleigh Pears is our Communications Coordinator. She is behind the scenes here operating the PowerPoint for us today. She does a lot of art, graphics and other things, and Jim Zimmerman is a name that you may see. He is our network engineer associated with this program, principal network engineer.

With us here today, we also have Stella Kwon and Josh Chisom.

Stella, would you like to go ahead and introduce yourself?

Yeah, hi, everyone my name, is Stella Kown, and I am the Project Manager for libraries at CENIC.

And Josh.

Hi and I am Josh Chisom. I am the Broadband Opportunities Program Manager with the California State Library, and really excited to get this next round of new applications going and please, you know, always
feel free to reach out to me at the State Library if you have any questions about this program or any of the other ones we offer related to broadband and technology, thank you.

CAROLINE MUELLER
Alright, we'll go ahead and take a look at the presentation agenda for today. Kayleigh, if we could get the next slide. Thank you.

So today, again, as I said I'm going to be giving an intro to the CLC - that's California Library Connect program - and terms, abbreviations, that you will see floating around a lot as we discuss this program.

Once I have sort of given that foundation we're going to talk about the E-Rate process and the RFP cycle. We're going to give sort of an overview of that process, and a timeline for next steps if you are interested.

I'm going to have two opportunities for questions in this presentation. I'm going to take a break after doing all those terms, definitions in case there's anything that didn't quite make any sense. Happy to resolve that at that time and then we'll have another opportunity for questions at the end.

So, moving to the next slide, we're going to start with CLC - California Library Connect. What is California Library Connect? So, California Library Connect is a program that is funded by the California State Library, where, my organization, CTC, works as the third-party administrator on behalf of the public libraries to facilitate public library connections to CENIC's CalREN. CalREN is the California Research and Education Network. It is a broadband network in the State of California. Through this program, CENIC applies CTF and E-Rate discounts to the services provided into libraries. And we also have a grant program that helps with expenses for, you know, upgrading wiring, other one-time expenses regarding equipment for broadband.

So, moving on, the next one. What is CENIC? CENIC is a nonprofit organization operating the California Research and Education Network, CalREN, and they serve K-12, universities, libraries, and other institutions to get them connected to that research and education broadband network. They provide cost-effective, high bandwidth, networking.

Stella, here today, is from CENIC. Stella, is there anything else you would like to say about CENIC while we're here?

STELLA KWON
No, I think you covered it.

CAROLINE MUELLER
Awesome. So, moving on to the next slide, is about letters of authority or LOAs. We had a couple of questions with this term last webinar. So, in order to apply for those discounts on services on your behalf, CENIC needs letters of authority from libraries. There's two: one for E-Rate, and one for CTF. I'm going to tell you what those mean in a minute as well, don't worry.
And then, once they have those LOAs, those discounts can cover up to like 95% of the cost of service sometimes. It depends on the E-Rate tier that your library falls into. But in a sense, they are just, you know, two documents that need to be signed in order to give CENIC the ability to apply for those discounts on your behalf.

Moving on, what is E-Rate? So, E-Rate is a federal subsidy program that provides discounts of about 20 to 90% on broadband services for service to schools and libraries, specifically. The annual cap of funding for this program is about 4 billion. Local localities and nonprofits are eligible providers as well as libraries and schools. And the goal of this program is to create a competitive marketplace that helps to drive down costs for schools and libraries.

E-Rate discounts, so you apply, or rather, CENIC applies upon your behalf for these discounts, and then generally it takes about 18 months for the USAC - that is the entity that processes E-Rate - to process that and get that credit back. So, that is also something to keep in mind with this program.

CTF, then is the next slide, and then, I believe CTF stands for California Teleconnect Fund. You will hear it floating around as just CTF with this program. It is a state subsidy program through the CPUC and covers 50% of the cost remaining on those services after E-Rate. So you apply your E-Rate discount, and then to whatever is left of that, the CTF covers 50% of that remainder. Only locations which provide services directly to the public are eligible for CTF. That's a fun little role they have. In order to receive these discounts as well, please be aware that you need to be registered with the CPUC.

We do have the next slide on that actually so, CPUC Registration. Public Library locations must be registered to receive CTF discounts. There's a form on the website for the CPUC for the CTF application and this needs to be updated whenever new locations are added to the library district. Library locations also need to be, I believe, certified by the State Library.

Josh, do you want to speak briefly to that process?

JOSH CHISOM
Sure. Basically, excuse me, either the library or, if you have a new branch coming up, or you haven't participated before, you may need to certify your locations with the E-Rate authorities, and we can help you with that. So, we just need a notification from you or from your E-Rate consultant, if you use one, requesting that we certify that a specific branch or location is eligible, we'll do the due diligence on that. We may have a couple of questions, and then I generate a letter that's signed by the State Librarian. We return that to you, you submit it to E-Rate, and that's basically it, pretty straightforward.

CAROLINE MUELLER
Excellent. So, then my last slide in this sort of definition section is going to be, what is a circuit?
So, you’ll hear us talking about circuits a lot with this program. Circuits are the infrastructure that connects your location to the CalREN backbone. So, the way this works is, CENIC contracts with last mile providers on your behalf for these circuits. So, when you go out to RFP - request for proposals - various carriers are able to bid on those circuits and say, I will provide this for this much money per month, and each of those services to each location is a different circuit.

So, that was a barrage of information. Do we have any questions at this time? Everybody kind of understands. There’s a lot going on.

No questions. Okay, cool. Well, sorry.

**JOSH CHISOM**
There are a couple of hands raised.

**CAROLINE MUELLER**
Oh, this they are okay. Let’s see. Kayleigh, would you mind calling on someone with a raised hand here? If we can maybe allow them to voice them. Of course.

**KAYLEIGH PEARS**
The first question is from Carlos Silva. It says, How often do we need to apply for LOA?

**CAROLINE MUELLER**
Yeah, so those always need to be refreshed every five years, or whenever a new location is added, they may need to be looked at.

Chat is disabled. Yeah, were we able to re-enable chat?

Any other… who is the single point of contact for the cycle equivalent to Califa last year? So, that would be the [admin@californialibraryconnect.org](mailto:admin@californialibraryconnect.org) email address. I am the one who is overseeing that, and we’ll be working with you.

Any other questions? So, if we are adding a new library, how would we know whether we need to refresh our LOA?

So, if you are adding a new library, we will be in contact, hopefully regarding that in order for that library to be put on the RFP. And we will review those documents at that time and let you know what needs to be done.

Will video recording/PowerPoint be available? Yes, so, we expect to be able to post this webinar to the website as soon as we finalize the transcripts. So, the transcript will also be available.

Anything else? Can I repeat the info about applying for CPUC? Yeah.
So, going back to that slide about C TF or a CPUC registration. Yeah. So, public library locations must be registered to receive the CTF discounts. There is an application form available on the CPUC's website again, if you, if your locations are already enrolled in this program, you have already done this. However, if you have a new location, you need to make sure that that new location is something that the CPUC is aware of the existence of, though. For the California State Library part of that all you have to do is email Josh and inform him that there is a new library location that needs to be certified. And then you need to go use the CTF application form available on the CPUC’s website, and make sure that all of your locations are listed.

Any other questions?

Will we have Josh's email? Josh, will you have your email?

**JOSH CHISOM**
I'm going to put it in chat right now. [(josh.chisom@library.ca.gov)](mailto:josh.chisom@library.ca.gov)

**CAROLINE MUELLER**
Excellent. thank you.

**RACHEL STOGNER**
If anybody had any Grant related questions as well feel free to ask in the chat, too, that's covering equipment, first year cause, wiring things like that. There's also more information available on our website which I will also drop in the chat. [(https://californialibraryconnect.org/grants/)](https://californialibraryconnect.org/grants/) But if there's any questions regarding that please also let me know.

**JOSH CHISOM**
So, for some reason I'm not able to send a chat to the participants. It's only going to the panelists, I'm not sure why. Oh, there we go, Kayleigh's got it. So, here's my email address, and again. Please feel free any questions about this or any of our other technology-related Grant programs just feel free to reach out to me.

**CAROLINE MUELLER**
Alright, no more questions at this time, it looks like. So, we will go ahead and dive into the second part of this presentation, which is discussing E-Rate and the Year 9 RFP Cycle.

So, E-Rate, you’ve probably heard of before. There are two categories for E-Rate, which is again a Federal program. Category One handles distribution of broadband services to eligible library buildings, and then Category Two deals with, within buildings. It's a little bit more complicated. All of CENIC’s services fall under Category One, and Category One has a very straightforward way of calculating that discount. And CENIC actually does that on your behalf, finds out what that is.

So, next slide. So, in order to take advantage of E-Rate using this program, we have these steps here. We're in Step One right now. We're doing a program overview webinar, that's this, and then we will have
discussions with you if you want to add branches or become part of the program, if you are not already. Please reach out to me via email at the admin@californialibraryconnect.org email address, and we will likely schedule a meeting to discuss your new locations, their service address, etc., what bandwidth you are looking for, and have those sort of network planning meetings.

In between Steps One and Two, there is a point where CENIC actually goes out to bid on the RFPs over the winter here and then gets those bids back and generates these quotes for the services that you desire and we'll have a meeting again in around March to review those to see which you would like to choose, and then to initiate a contract for those services. Once the contract is made with that new statement of work CENIC can again, work on getting that that circuit turned up and active. They do a consolidated hardware purchase at this time, too, they sort of, it's streamlined so that everything gets done at once. Bulk purchases can be made, and discounts can be realized in that way.

So yeah again, once they are able to get those, or once we have those contracts, CENIC will order those circuits, and prepare them, and then have conversations with you about their NOC and other services.

We then have another graphic here about the E-Rate process. This one's a little complicated.

Don't worry, you don't have to know most of this stuff, because CENIC handles it for you. But we are on that applicant track on the top there, is what you or CENIC does on your behalf, basically. So, the FCC Form 470, in that first white box there, that's the RFP. That's what CENIC puts out for service providers to bid on.

Then CENIC begins the evaluation of the bid, and then presents it to you. You say: yes, we would like to move forward with this or no, we would not. And then we hit that applying-for-discount stage in March. Then CENIC is able to fill out that Form 471 within the filing window to apply for those E-Rate discounts. And then they work with us to get that contract with that updated statement of work in place in order to begin services, and then you don't have to worry about the invoicing part here. CENIC also handles essentially getting those discounts and passing them on to you once they are processed by USAC. Okay, and that takes about 18 months generally.

So, I guess we can go on to the next slide and dive into the RFP Cycle itself. So, on that previous graphic, we had, you know, competitive bidding and I said that that Form 470 was basically the RFP.

So, moving into what that RFP entails. In order to figure out what services you need, if you are new to this program, we advise that you include all relevant stakeholders. You know, your procurement team, your IT team, or other relevant library staff. Come up with, you know, what services are needed, what bandwidth you need, to which locations? And then you can work with us, too. Put those on the RFP.

Other considerations we like to make sure you're aware of. If you have other broadband services already in place, the cancellation or determination of those existing services, that's something that that we hope you are looking into yourselves. And if you have services already in place, and they are already E-Rated,
please note that, E-Rate cannot apply to duplicative services at the same time. So, only one service can receive that discount at one time, and if you are switching services generally, there’s a couple of months of overlap there, just to make sure that a circuit is not shut off before you have another circuit in place, so that there’s no like, Internet outage. So, please note that during that period you will likely be having two services, but only one is E-Rateable at any given time, and we'll have to work together closely to make sure we have that all fluid.

So, our next graphic here is of the RFP Cycle. We are at Number One here, cycle opening reminder notification, August/September, that's where we are. You then please let us know again at that admin@californialibraryconnect.org email address, what services you would like to have on that RFP, so that CENIC can then, in Number Two here, release that RFP. Then carriers will bid, and CENIC will review those bids, and then we will all present them to you. And then you will select your services so that CENIC can go ahead and put those on the E-Rate applications, so that we can make sure that everything is discounted properly.

So, I have this. What happens next, two slides here. What happens next?

After the RFP is released, carriers bid on the circuits, as I said. After bidding is concluded, we will present the best options to you, or option, depending, around February or March of next year, and then we require you to say, “Yeah, that sounds good,” or “no, never mind,” in mid-March, so that CENIC knows what to put on the E-Rate application. Please note that this is a non-binding yes or no. The only binding thing is the contract. Once you have a contract executed, you know there is a contractual relationship. Anything before that we can, you know, decide not to continue at any point, if that becomes necessary.

Next slide. We like to have contracting done before July 1st. It just makes everything run more smoothly. So that would be, you know, once we have that, “Yes, we would like to make move forward with this,” decision from you. We would then again, work on that contract to make sure that we could have it in place as soon as possible. And then work on circuits will begin as soon as that document is in place.

Alright, now we have the last Q&A. And in fact, we can go ahead and go to the next slide because the next slide has that admin@californialibraryconnect.org email address and the website URL [www.californialibraryconnect.org] as well.

Alright, any questions?

So, for a new CENIC connection, we should email admin@californialibraryconnect.org with the site address. Any other info for the State, can be done before the CPUC registration happens for that new location?

Yes. So, what we would need from you is the service address of that library location. The bandwidth that you are looking for that location, and likely you'll end up going back and forth with Stella, who is currently typing an answer in the chat, just to make sure that we have everything that we need for those new
locations. We will work closely with you on making sure that we have all that information. But what, you know, we do need in order to get started with that process is the fact that you are interested in doing that and if you could email that information to that admin email that would be very helpful in getting us started.

Alright. Tammy asks: How long is the enrollment period? Two months.

When will the next enrollment be? So yeah, we are currently announcing this RFP. We would like to have the information on what services you are interested in before, I believe, Stella, it's mid-September that we're looking for that information for new circuits?

STELLA KWON
Yes, correct.

CAROLINE MUELLER
So, if you are interested in going on that RFP, we'd like to have that conversation in the next few weeks here, yes, and then this process occurs yearly. It's tied to that E-Rate cycle which is a yearly process.

Right. And we'll continue this conversation. I hope to be exchanging emails with many of you in the coming weeks. And again, this webinar will be posted. The recording and the transcript of this will be posted on our website for you to review.

Alright, well, thank you. anything from anyone else that you all think I missed?

No, alright, sounds good. Well, thank you everyone, I look forward to hearing from you.