CAROLINE MUELLER
Well, welcome everyone to our webinar on the new California Collaborative Connectivity Grant. We are excited to be here to announce this new grant opportunity to you today. Before we get into it, I'd just like to do a reintroduction, probably for most of you, to the CLC program staff.

If we could get the next slide.

Heather Mills is our program administrator. She is not here today. I am Caroline Mueller, the project coordinator for the California Library Connect program. We have with us, Rachel Stogner, who's our Grants Coordinator. And Kayleigh Pears, our Communications Coordinator, is running the presentation for us today, and also on our team we have Jim Zimmerman, who is our principal network engineer, and then from the California State Library, if you two would like to introduce yourselves.

JOSH CHISOM
My name is Josh Chisom. I'm the Program Manager for Broadband Opportunities at the California State Library and I'm very happy to be here. I've been in the position for about six months, for those I haven't interacted with before, and I'm excited to introduce this new opportunity and I'll hand it over to Wendy.

WENDY AMIREH
Hi, I'm Wendy Amireh and I'm the Grants Analyst for the Broadband Opportunities and I've been here about six weeks. So excited to hear more about this program.

CAROLINE MUELLER
Now we'll just take a look at a brief presentation agenda.

First, we're going to talk about this new grant. What is the California Collaborative Connectivity Grant? And we're going to go over purpose, eligibility, eligible costs, requirements; do a brief walkthrough of the application and then go over, sort of the timeline for applying; and then take any questions that you might have. So, we'll just dive right in, Josh. If you would like to introduce this.

JOSH CHISOM
Sure, thank you.

This grant opportunity was created by the California State Legislature. There, it's on the books there, and you can see the text here. It is specifically for local projects to expand broadband into isolated and underserved communities. And they specifically provide guidance that they want to see collaborative
partnerships of local regional libraries, local education agencies, so school districts, county offices of education, and then telehealth providers. So rural health care providers, the facilities that provide telehealth to rural areas or underserved areas. And the projects must be eligible and must leverage funding through the Federal Universal Service program.

So, any libraries or schools that participate will need to also participate in the E-rate program and this funding will be available for whatever the E-rate program does not cover. So, funding the gap between the discounts received through E-rate and the total cost of the project, and we'll get into the details of it. We'll talk about eligibility, specific costs, and so forth, but that's the basic gist.

You would apply for E-rate for a project to build fiber or fiber equivalent high-speed broadband to the anchor institutions, the libraries, educational facilities, and so forth that are part of the project. And then you would also apply for this grant to cover the costs that are not covered by the E-rate program.

CAROLINE MUELLER
Thank you, Josh. If we could go to the next slide.

So, as Josh said, the purpose of this grant opportunity is to support projects to expand broadband access in isolated and underserved communities, particularly in collaboration with various institutions. So, what that means, you know, expanding broadband access, network buildouts are covered by this grant, and upgrading equipment and network improvements are also covered by this grant.

Going a little bit further into that, into the eligible costs, on the next slide. These include construction and or installation, so turnkey solutions here are what we're looking at, including consultant fees for plans, specifications, construction documents, cost estimates, or design, grant [administration] can also be included, and we do recommend that you contain a contingency in your application.

In order to be eligible for this, you do have to have a collaborative partnership with another institution, so we are expecting to see, generally at least, one library in these partnerships and then, perhaps other libraries, perhaps other educational institutions, perhaps local telehealth institutions that you are partnering with for this project.

And again, as Josh said, this program is gap funding, so we expect to see a federal program application for project funding in your application for this grant, and then we fund the gap, and we have a fun graphic for that on the next slide here.

Gap funding is for funding not covered by a federal grant.

Going a little bit further into requirements again here. So again, we will want to see partners, a partner, multiple partners identified in the grant application, and we also will want to see a PDF of an application submission to a federal program. It could be E-rate. It could be another program. For this project we do expect to see an E-rate application. And that PDF, whether you have already submitted it to USAC or not, we will expect to see that included in your grant application. And when we do the walkthrough here in just a second, you will see exactly how that looks. Rachel, Are you ready?

RACHEL STOGNER
Sure, let me go ahead and start sharing my screen. Here we go. All right, can everybody see that? Wonderful.
Alright, when you receive the link to go through the grant process, you will be sent to this login screen. So, I already have an account, but if you didn’t have an account you would sign up and all it would ask is for you to make this e-mail and password, and once you have a login.

Well, let me log in. You can go ahead and create a profile to get started. So, this is going to include all of your identifying information. So, since I am just doing an example, that's what I'm going to do for this, so you'll have a lead applicant and then you'll have your partner applicants. So, your main applicants are whatever applicant is dealing with the majority of this application, whoever, is kind of putting in the majority of the sort of leadership. Or you could just pick someone to be the lead applicant. It's not necessarily amount of like funding or anything like that. It's just we want to know you know, if someone in particular is like the main contact we should be reaching out to. If not, we can also reach out to all of you. We will have all of the partner e-mail contact information as well.

So, from there, we're going to choose if you are a library, charitable organization, healthcare organization, or an educational organization. If you were an “other,” some other type of institution, please reach out to us and then we can go ahead and you know just, shoot an e-mail to grants@californialibraryconnect.org.

OK, yes and then we will also have our emails in the follow up after this presentation as well, so there are no institution restrictions. But if, you know, well just want to make sure that you know, pass it by us before you get started.

And so, then we'll need your application information, so that's going to be like any of your identifying data. So, like your street address, I'm going to pick that, and the library and, I'm just going to go ahead and put in some dummy data here. So yeah, then you'll have your website URL, contact names. All of that information, I'm going to go ahead and enter, will also only take a real e-mail.

And so, what you’re going to do is you are going to select the amount of partners that you have in this project. So, if you have more than five partners in the project, just contact us. Just, I want to make sure you know this is succinct. If it's you know multiple library branches, can they be collapsed into a jurisdiction? Things like that, but for our purposes we have one, and I'm going to do the exact same thing. And you have to combine all that information.

I'm sorry, Josh?

JOSH CHISOM
I was just going to say that the e-mail, the fake e-mail you put up top, there's, I think there's an issue with it. It's going to keep you from -

RACHEL STOGNER
Oh, thank you. So, my fast typing: not accurate.

So, once you've created your profile and it takes all that information, you'll be able to get started with your application. If you want to go back and change any aspects of your application profile, if you need to make any edits to the contact names or anything like that, you can always go back and edit your profile using this button, but once you're ready to get started with an application, go ahead and open this. [Rachel opens application.]
You will be sent to this tab. You will again, open. [Rachel opens next tab.] And then we'll have your organization up here, not example, but that's what I put in. So, then you'll enter your project title. You can be creative with this. You can go ahead and enter anything you feel like for your project. So, then you will also specify, again, the main applicant organization and the partner applicant organizations and these are, free space. You don't have to do that drop down, just enter the different names. Enter your library jurisdiction. So, whichever libraries are involved in this, go ahead and enter those along with the branches that will be impacted. So, branch or branches with addresses just so we can, you know, keep that for our records.

If any of your library branches are leased, I will want to have the location of that lease, the duration and how many years are left on it. And then next up, you'll have a very high-level executive summary. I've restricted this to 2000 characters, because I don't want you to ache over it. This is just where I want to know who's involved and the project goals so very high-level summary of the information, it's very basic, we need.

And we want to know those affected communities. So, in your area, as granular of information as you can get. But if there's you know all you have is you know more high-level information, depending on the size of your project, that's fine, but we just want to, as much as you can, identify those different areas. Census blocks would be great or just as long as we have those official designations, and we're also allowed to upload supporting documentation for this. If you have any like maps or anything like that, that would be great. If you don’t, no worries, it’s not a requirement. And if you have more than one file, please just upload it as a zip file into these file uploads.

So, next section, very easy, project cost calculation. So, your estimated total project cost, the requested amount you’re doing for federal funding, any other funding that you are receiving, and that will spit out your connectivity request. So, in this case, it would be $60.00, but that will be auto calculated for you.

So, in the detailed project narrative we have a little bit more granular information. This is where you can definitely lean into your federal application. If any of this information is pre-existing in any federal application, E-rate or anything like that, do not worry about copying and pasting, or saying, “see section, you know, so-and-so,” and then leaving it at that. We will read that application anyways, just you know, for whatever information we're looking for, so this is just a kind of a summary. Again, this is limited to 5000 characters. If you are well under that, do not worry about it. As long as each one of these sections are addressed that it would be fine. And if you could do one sentence each, that is totally OK, so don't worry too much about it.

But essentially, we just need each one of these different questions answered. So, everyone who's involved, the need of the community. So, if you, your community is very remote, there's high levels of poverty, lack of existing infrastructure, things like that, you want to take note of that. And if there's any kind of information that you have pre-existing, like on, say, like poverty demographics, you are also allowed to upload supporting documentation.

**JOSH CHISOM**

Rachel, I just wanted to jump in for just a second. So, we've got a few questions coming in and thank you for submitting them, please keep them coming, and once Rachel's done with the demo we’ll hop over and address those one by one.
RACHEL STOGNER
Thank you, Josh. And so, we'll also want to have a timeline of the project. This is very, very high level, so just anticipated, estimated dates of when you are expecting to submit more federal applications, when awards are anticipated, and that sort of information. And estimated dates are totally fine.

And the benefits that you anticipate for the project. So, if you're funding, you know, a library or a school, you know that kind of, how is this going to benefit your community. And if you can come up with some tangible things that you know those institutions provide for your community, which I'm sure they have many great things they provide, and brag on yourself, a little bit about, you know, what great things you'll do for your community. And then any previous attempts to have connectivity, if there have been, and then the roadblocks that have prevented that. And how hopefully this funding will allow you to overcome things like permitting issues and other turnkey things, environmental issues, anything that could, where funding could have been prohibitive.

So, once you have completed that section, if you have received bids on your project, please go ahead and tell the number of bids. If the winning bidder has been selected, you'll have some more things you need to upload at the bottom and then the status of your submission. So, if it's in process, submitted, or awarded. So, if you have any other funding that you're leveraging as well for this project, please just provide a brief narrative regarding what those funding sources are. Again, no need to go into a great amount of detail, just sort of say, you know, where you're getting the funding, and when you're anticipating it.

And so, in order for us to get a good grasp of what we want that to look like, we have also provided a Gantt chart for funding. Let me see if I can download that... so you'll download it through this link.

And it's just a Gantt chart of the different funding. So, the federal funding, the anticipated funding, and other funding, and what dates you anticipate, you know, putting in your application, receiving funding, and then a very high-level construction milestones, and what we're interested in is when you're starting your construction and, you know, when you're anticipating completion. And again, these can be very high level. No need to, you know, you don't want to make you stick to a day, if you want to put something as high as like you know, months and year. That's good, just depending on how far along you know your project is and when you're anticipating funding. So, we're trying to get a good idea of making sure that you have a good idea of how this project is going to be shaped in time. So, you have to upload that as well.

And then you will want to upload your federal applications. So, E-rate forms should be uploaded if you are an E-rate eligible entity. If you are not, then you can't.

Oh, so any other type of federal form is or, federal grant application, is also acceptable for the partner applicants. Please upload a zip file version. If you have received bids or awarded bids, please upload your bid evaluation matrix, your winning bid documentation, and if there's special construction costs breakdown, if it's special construction, done by winning vendor, please upload that as well.

Do not forget to save your draft. There is a save drop button at the bottom and at the top, this allows you to make sure that you don't lose any of this information. Once you have completed your application, please go ahead and hit this “mark as complete” button and then you'll be able to submit and once you've submitted, great job, it'll go to review on our end.
That is the whole application process. If you've completed all of your federal applications, there should be a lot of copying and pasting, so there shouldn't be a whole lot of original material. There should be a lot of things that you can really lean on that what you've already completed. I'm going to go ahead and stop sharing my screen.

**CAROLINE MUELLER**

So, we have one more slide before the Q&A slide after this, and this is a timeline. There is no date on this timeline. You may notice we have steps for you instead. We have applying for federal funding, identifying a partner community anchor institution and then we have a reminder that the grant application portal for this Collaborative Connectivity grant is open now and the deadline is rolling. We do expect, in general, that you may be beholden to the timeline for E-rate or whatever other federal grant that you're applying for, but we do encourage you to start your application for this now, and let us know if you know of other entities that might be interested. Feel free to share the recording of this presentation once it's uploaded to our website if you know people who might be interested in applying.

Now we can go to Q&A.

**JOSH CHISOM**

So, let's see the first question is from Chris. Can a cooperative system list the member library that would benefit from the funding as a partner institution for this grant?

Yes, I mean we would need to see, kind of, how the whole thing is structured, but if the cooperative system is the applicant and the member library is the beneficiary, then you would just explain that in the grant. You could list them as a partner. We would hope to see additional partners. Maybe the local school district again, other, I mean. It doesn't, the partners that are collaborating on the project or benefiting from the project don't have to necessarily be ones that we specifically mentioned. You know it could potentially be other public organizations, you know. Municipal buildings. That sort of thing. I think that the intent of this is sort of a concept that I've heard called “to and through.” So, the idea is we get together with other anchor institutions to put together a project that makes it affordable for those institutions and makes a business case for a vendor to push fiber into that community or into that area, at which point the vendor almost certainly is not just going to put just enough fiber for those applicants, they're going to put in enough so that they can sell on to businesses and homes, and so forth and therefore benefit the entire community. That's really the overarching intent, is to help get fiber out into these communities that are lacking it or high-speed broadband. So that's kind of more than the answer, but basically, yes, you can list additional libraries that are members of the cooperative as partner institutions.

Second question is, does the lead organization have to be CIPA compliant? What about partner organizations?

So, this is a little tricky and I know there's issues with libraries and CIPA compliance. So, this program, per the legislation, requires that E-rate eligible members of the project, applicants, apply for E-rate funding. And in order to apply for E-rate funding, you have to be CIPA compliant. Now, I think there is often some confusion about what that means. What it means is you have to have a policy and a mechanism for filtering. And you need to if you have, for example, computers that are specifically in a children's area, they need to be filtered. Otherwise, there's no specific websites or content that has to be filtered. And you just have to have the ability to do so, and it does not apply to any devices that are not owned by the institution. So, if, the only, if you have Wi-Fi and people are bringing their own
devices, that's not a part of this process. That's a little bit more information, but really again, you're required to, if you're E-rate eligible, because the Universal Service Fund Schools and Libraries Program is listed specifically in the legislation, the expectation is that you would have applied for funding through that program. If you're eligible to apply for that program and to be eligible, you have to be CIPA compliant.

And let's see. So, the third question is: for schools and libraries, the federal program they apply to does not have to be E-rate, right?

I kind of just answered that again. You know, we're beholden to the legislation that created this grant opportunity, and it does specifically mention schools and libraries. So pursuing funding through that program is a requirement for those applicants that are eligible for that funding. If you have other funding opportunities that are similar that are federal and you'd like to talk about it, please don't hesitate to reach out with the details to us and we can talk through it and see. I would probably have to go back to our legislative folks at the State Library and see if they felt that it met the spirit of the law. And that wouldn't be problematic, but we're obviously happy to talk about that with you, if you think you have another opportunity that would be of similar benefit.

Any other questions?

CAROLINE MUELLER
We can wait and see if others have questions, and we could go ahead and get the last slide of the presentation. So, if you have any questions that come to you after this. Please e-mail us the grants@californialibraryconnect.org e-mail address. This webinar will be posted along with a transcript on our website, which is also listed here.

RACHEL STOGNER
Also, we will have a checklist of all of the information that I reviewed during the overview of the application, so don't worry about keeping that all in your head. We will have a checklist of all the items that you need to get started for the application, so you can have all of your ducks in a row before you open up an application.

JOSH CHISOM
And if you have any questions about applying for E-rate special construction projects, which this would most certainly be, and how to negotiate that. I'm also the state E-rate coordinator for libraries and I'm here to help. You can reach out through the grant program. They'll pass any questions that deal with that area to me, and I'm happy to walk you through those requirements. We have sample RFPs we can provide to you. And you know, we're here to help, you know, get some of these projects off the ground.

RACHEL STOGNER
Josh looks like we have a question from Chris. It's E-rate regarding, so.

JOSH CHISOM
Let's see. So, can you give an example of an E-rate funding program with a non-library entity that would be eligible for this grant funding and be within E-rate rules? So, I mean an example would be partnering, say, a library system jurisdiction has a branch that is in a community that lacks affordable modern fiber to, just to the community, and you know. So, maybe partner, that library system would partner with the local school district or the County Office of Education. Perhaps some other non-E-rate eligible anchor
institutions, maybe the local healthcare facility and you know, what they would do is form a consortium, an E-rate consortium, and you can form those with non-eligible entities. You just sort of spell that out and the all the materials when you go out to bid and the folks that are the members that are eligible for E-rate funding would what? Of course, submit those applications. The other members would seek funding throughout through their own means.

So, the overall project would include, you know, a larger set of institutions. The E-rate portion would just be, say again, the school and the library, the library and the County Office of Education. This is fairly, yeah, well no. I mean consortia of various E-rate eligible institutions are fairly common in California. The big one is the CENIC consortium, which includes schools and libraries, and you know they sort of file for them separately, but really, they're all part of the same organization to get discounts on the fiber that already exists to those facilities. So, I hope that answers your question. If not, please follow up.

What about sharing the E-rate funded bandwidth off campus, is that now allowable?

My understanding is if you're putting well, for E-rate rules, for the for the E-rate portion that you're applying for, you know that that should be within the bounds of the property line. So, if you're you know, I mean, this is sort of hard to negotiate, but essentially if you're a library. Uh, you know, the Wi-Fi should be extended to the property lines. If you're a school, it's to extend to the property lines. However, there are you know things like book mobiles for libraries that's eligible, so they're I think they're moving towards opening that up a bit for us. If, for example, I think if you wanted to include something like, I just saw a project in Louisiana where they're putting towers on top of the libraries in a town, and I think, in or near Shreveport, Louisiana, and providing learning access points, and they're basically projecting the wireless internet from the library branches out to the local community. If you want to get involved in something like that, again, that is the intent, the spirit of this, and we would definitely consider that if it's cost effective and you know and you put the application together. And kind of show us how that's going to benefit the community, because of course, that's the nice thing about this grant opportunity is we don't have to necessarily be completely restricted to what E-rate funds. So, you wouldn't want to ask for any money on that portion from the E-rate application, but you can include that in your application to us.

Let's see, going to be another non-qualifying county department, Parks and Recreation. Absolutely, yes again. If it's the library and Parks and Rec, that's fine. Again, the library would need to apply for E-rate funding, and Parks and Rec, you would just need to explain how they're providing their share of the funding. And you know if they're just putting up the money. Just explain how the overall cost of the project is being dealt with and that, that's totally fine.

Anybody else? And we'll be posting the slides and the recording of this so you can share with other folks. And again, there's the e-mail address. If you have any questions afterwards, please let us know.

CAROLINE MUELLER
Alright, well, thank you everyone.

RACHEL STOGNER
Thank you.