E-Rate Bidding Requirements as of FY2027

Updated 10/28/26

1. Preferably bids should be submitted by or before the 28th day after the Form 470 has been posted, when the Allowable Contract Date (ACD) has been reached. Applicants may begin bid review on Allowable Contract Date. Any bids received after vendor evaluation begun will not be considered valid bid responses.
2. All bidder questions must be sent via email to the technical contact listed on the Form 470 within fourteen (14) calendar days after Form 470 certification, by EOD.
    a. All questions for all HWC's clients' Form 470s will be posted publicly as they are received here for Category One and here for Category Two. *Please find the tab for the relevant Form 470 number*. Do not include confidential or proprietary information in a question, as all questions and answers are made available to all bidders.
    b. At the end of the 14-calendar day Q&A period, these will be posted as an addendum to the respective Form 470 in EPC.
    c. If any response constitutes a cardinal change, the ACD is extended for another 28 days from the date the addendum is posted.
    d. No questions are to be reviewed or answered after the initial 14 calendar day Q&A due date.
    e. **If no responsive bids are received:** If the Form 470 receives no responsive bids by the ACD, the applicant may solicit proposals directly from service providers. No questions will be allowed during the solicitation period.
    f. **For site surveys:** Bidder questions will not be answered during the site survey. Bidders must submit questions to us according to the above process.
3. SPAM and/or robotic responses will not be considered valid bid responses and will be disqualified. A response will be treated as SPAM or robotic if it is not specific to the applicant, its sites, or the services requested, or consists of generic marketing material, a capabilities statement, or an automated reply rather than a proposal.
4. All contact should be made via email to the technical contact listed on Form 470.
    a. All bidder email subject lines should reference the applicant's name, Form 470 application number, and if the services are for Category One or Category Two.
    b. All bids should be in PDF format delivered via email.
5. Bidders should be eligible participants in the E-Rate program with a valid

SPIN (or in the process of applying for a SPIN).

6. All bids should contain the vendor's SPIN, company name, and contact information for the individual(s) responsible for the bid.
7. Bidders should have a current Service Provider Annual Certification (SPAC) (Form 473) form on file with USAC or, if not, be in the process of filing for it.
8. Applicants may request certificates of insurance.
9. If the bidder is not the original equipment manufacturer or the actual service provider, the bidder should be authorized by the original equipment manufacturer or the actual service provider to supply the product(s). Supporting documentation that verifies or provides evidence of the authorized arrangement should be submitted with the bid.
10. All bids should include any applicable taxes (if available), installation (if required by applicant), fees, shipping, etc. per requirements outlined in Form 470 narrative.
11. The winning bidder should provide a comprehensive list of services for the Form 471 application if requested by the consultant or the appointed contact.
12. All bids must comply with all applicable local and state laws, rules, and contract regulations.
13. Bid pricing should include:
    a. Bidders should identify and separately list all E-Rate eligible vs. ineligible items in their bids
    b. All bids should include actual pricing (e.g., not pricing with E-Rate discounts, unless the full price is also clearly listed)
    c. One-time onboarding or setup fees, for example
    d. Optional services clearly marked (e.g., training, policy development)
    e. Any applicable taxes
    f. Bidder is expected to provide the lowest corresponding price per E-Rate rules
14. Bidders should agree to provide the Applicant the choice of discount methods (SPI or BEAR).
    a. If the bidder does not offer SPI invoicing, this needs to be specified in the bid.
    b. If there are specific conditions that must be met for Applicant to utilize SPI invoicing, these conditions must be specified in the bid.
15. Bidders must be compliant with USAC rules, including but not limited to, gift rules and competitive bidding rules.
16. Bidders should be in good standing with the FCC and USAC and not on Red Light status at the time of bid submission.
17. All accepted bids will be subject to funding approval, including the right to cancel, add, remove, or amend in the event funding is terminated or denied.
18. CAT 1-specific
    a. Bids may be presented with a month-to-month/tariff option, a single-year option or a multi-year option up to five years, with voluntary extensions. Bidders are encouraged to make multiple

proposals/options if appropriate.

b. Bids should state if contracts will automatically go month-to-month at expiration and/or if they have voluntary contract extensions. For voluntary contract extensions, bids should also state the duration and the number of eligible extensions.

19. CAT 2-specific
    a. If there is a Bill of Materials (BOM), line items should be listed in the same order as in the BOM.
    b. If applicable, Internal Connections, Managed Services & Basic Maintenance should be totaled separately from one another. Any bids that do not meet this requirement may be asked to be redone.
    c. If applicable, bidders should include labor/taxes/fees/shipping (or indicate when they are not applicable). THESE COSTS SHOULD BE TOTALED SEPARATELY FROM EQUIPMENT TOTAL. Any bids that do not meet this requirement may be asked to be redone.
    d. If the applicant has multiple sites, Category Two bids should itemize the equipment, installation charges, taxes, shipping, etc. for each site separately.
        i. Also include a summary section for all sites.
    e. For Internal Connections: Proposals should allow for purchase to be made between April 1 (prior to the July 1 start of the funding year) through September 30 of the following year.
    f. The bidders should also be willing to work with the applicant to determine each entity's Category Two Funding Budget and note in the proposal if the amount exceeds the entity's Funding Budget.