



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 1627

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

The Florida Aquarium is undertaking the largest expansion in its 30 year history to transform the facility's footprint and nearly double its gallery space, adding new iconic species and redefining educational impact for visitors. The requested funding will support the construction of a new outdoor pavilion with habitats for Sea Lions and endangered African Penguins.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted?

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	5,000,000
Total State Funds Requested	5,000,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	5,000,000	10%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	15,000,000	30%
Other	30,000,000	60%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025	50,000,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding?

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. Is future funding likely to be requested?

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.

10. Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.



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TFA received two PPP loans totaling \$3,967,590. TFA was also awarded \$8,016,205 from the SBA's shuttered Venues Operators Grant. Funds were used to support operational deficits during COVID-19 related to closure and restrictions on attendance, as well as improving infrastructure to ensure that the Aquarium can welcome back guests safely during ongoing pandemic conditions.

Complete questions 11 and 12 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

11. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

- Planning
 Design
 Construction
 N/A

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

Yes

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

3/1/2024

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

12/31/2025

12. List the owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

The facility is owned by the City of Tampa. The Florida Aquarium is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that is under contract with the City to lease and operate the facility until 2059.

13. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Design and build outdoor pavilion and animal habitats	5,000,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		5,000,000

14. Program Performance

a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?

The purpose of this project is to serve more community members and animals while enhancing cultural and educational experiences for the community.

b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?



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An outdoor pavilion with habitats for California Sea Lions and African Penguins along with a large animal care building will be designed and constructed at The Florida Aquarium. By converting existing space that is currently used for a playground and splash pad, this project will allow us to provide an expansive outdoor viewing area for these two iconic species, connecting visitors to wildlife and inspiring conservation action.

c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?

The Florida Aquarium’s gallery space will be nearly doubled once the project is complete. More than 1,000,000 people visited The Florida Aquarium last year, making it one of Tampa Bay’s most attended cultural attractions and a crucial economic contributor. As an attraction, it generates \$138.3 million in economic benefit annually for Hillsborough County. The Aquarium also provides free and reduced admission to over 10,000 community members per year through sponsored admissions, summer camps, field trips, and donations to other non-profit organizations.

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

Community members in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, and surrounding counties that are part of the Aquarium's 17,000 household membership base. Two thirds of Aquarium guests live in Florida, and the other one third are visitors from other states or countries. This project will impact 1,000,000 visitors every year for the foreseeable future.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

The outcome will be the completed capital project which provides a greatly expanded Aquarium providing a high quality, engaging and inspirational experience with wildlife to more community members. The outcome will be measured by construction project milestones and visitation data pre- and post- project.

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for the contract?

If project is not completed, funds will be returned.

15. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name **Last Name**

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number **Ext.**

16. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

c. Organization Type

- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity
- University or College
- Other (please specify)



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d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number

17. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number