



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 1125

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

The heart of our project lies in the creation of a digital ecosystem that allows Florida's small businesses to tap into a consistent and year-round income stream. By facilitating their entry into this expansive digital realm, we are directly addressing the financial challenges they often face. These challenges are exacerbated by limited access to startup capital, which can be a major stumbling block to the growth and sustainability of small businesses, providing these businesses with the tools and support they need to not only enter but also thrive in the digital marketplace. This support extends to those seeking to expand their existing online presence.

Our ultimate aim is to empower these businesses to not only survive but also thrive.

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	500,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	500,000

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)	500,000	100%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025	500,000	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?



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

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)?

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

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.

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

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits	The duties of the Executive Director encompass recruiting businesses, managing onboarding assessments, conducting surveys, overseeing advertising campaigns, developing and supervising staff, establishing and administering company policies and procedures. Additionally, the Executive Director will be tasked with data analysis, ensuring quality control, and implementing process enhancements.	30,000
Other Salary and Benefits	The Assistant Director and Finance Manager are responsible for budgeting and supervision, writing and managing grants, negotiating and overseeing independent contractor agreements, managing accounts payable and receivable, handling tax filing and other necessary legal paperwork, and supporting the Executive Director in the general administration of the project.	25,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	The expenditures comprise equipment and costs associated with creating commercials and promotions. This includes the acquisition of 2 laptops, 2 DSLR cameras, camera lenses, production lighting, a green screen, Lavalier and shotgun microphones, a portable mobilized slider, acoustic paneling, and an audio interface. Additionally, other expenses encompass travel, shipping, supplies, software subscriptions, website hosting fees, and various miscellaneous business costs.	45,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Marketing & Advertising Consultant Website Developers Graphic Designers Legal Fees	40,000
Operational Costs: Other		



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Salary and Benefits	Administrative Technical Assistant, responsible for providing essential administrative and technical support to ensure the smooth operation of the organization. Their duties encompass tasks such as data entry, document preparation, scheduling, and office management. They also assist with technical issues, research, and project coordination. Their role is crucial in maintaining efficiency, supporting compliance, and contributing to the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives.	40,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Expenses encompass advertising expenditures across various media channels (radio, television, print, and social media), the production of promotional materials, participation in and hosting of Recruitment Fairs and Business Expos, as well as essential software subscriptions.	320,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		500,000

14. Program Performance

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

The purpose of the requested funds aligns seamlessly with Florida's state economic goal of "elevating its brand for business, innovation, and prosperity while concurrently expanding access to a larger market".

Our objective is to empower small businesses, enabling them to excel in the digital era and bolster their competitiveness. This involves tapping into the vast market of approximately 2.68 million online shoppers through the innovative expansion of a shared digital platform, exemplified by ShopzandShopz.com—an online mall at the forefront of this initiative.

At the core of this project is a commitment to addressing the critical need for small businesses to establish a robust online presence. Despite the fact that over 25% of business transactions occur online and three-quarters of shoppers first visit a business's website before its physical location, it is noteworthy that nearly one out of three small businesses in the US currently lacks an online presence.

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

The key activities and services to be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds include:

- Recruiting small businesses
- Hosting and attending Business Recruitment events
- Website domain purchases
- Website development
- Graphic design and logo and brand development
- Advertising and promotions
- Business website and social media technical support

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

Participating citizens that own small businesses will be provided with the following services:

- A digital storefront @ shopzandshopz.com
- Company and products/services advertising across various platforms, including radio, social media, print, and cable
- Website domain
- Logo development
- Professional email
- E-commerce website design and development
- Website enhancement for businesses with existing websites
- Video ad production assistance
- Professional website images for business websites
- Technical support and training in the areas of website development/management, e-commerce, social media

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



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The target population for this initiative comprises the one out of three small businesses in Florida currently without websites or possessing limited e-commerce capabilities and online traffic to their sites. Specifically, the project targets small businesses encountering challenges related to accessing e-commerce startup capital, lacking marketing expertise, and facing technical obstacles. This demographic also includes small businesses with limited time availability to effectively engage in marketing and promotions.

Anticipated to benefit from this project are between 250 to 500 small businesses, reflecting the range of enterprises in need of support to establish and enhance their online presence and capabilities. Through targeted assistance in e-commerce startup capital, marketing strategies, and technical expertise, the project aims to empower these businesses to thrive in the digital landscape.

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

- Participating small businesses are expected to benefit by:
- creating and additional revenue stream.
 - expanding the digital footprint to drive more traffic to their business.
 - enhanced brand reliability through their association with a trusted digital platform .
 - target marketing for their specific business.
 - collective advertising resulting in a stronger digital presence.
 - visibility in national promotions like "Cyber Monday.
 - bolster their long-term viability and sustainability, particularly during challenging periods.

- The methodology used to measure outcomes will include:
- website analytics will be used to access the number of visitors to the online mall.
 - accessing the number of "click-throughs" from shopzandshopz.com to their business website.
 - social media analytics will be used to access the reach and affectiveness of social media ads.
 - participating business feedback surveys.
 - shoppers comments and Google reviews.

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?

- In addition to the standard penalties stipulated in the contract, the contracting agency may consider the following potential consequences for failing to meet our deliverables:
- 1) The requirement to return allocated funds.
 - 2) The risk of damaging our brand reputation.
 - 3) Diminishing future prospects for securing funding.
 - 4) Threatening the ongoing sustainability of the company and the project.

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)



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

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