



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 1550

1. Project Title
2. Senate Sponsor
3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

The Florida Debate Initiative funding request is a strategic step toward bridging the geographical divide in students' access to vital programs in civic literacy and speech and debate. By making these programs widely available, we empower our students with essential life skills. They gain confidence, sharpen critical thinking, and master effective communication. Additionally, this initiative provides a platform for students to engage with diverse perspectives, promoting civil discourse and deeper understanding of civics.

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	1,500,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	1,500,000

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)	1,500,000	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	1,500,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding?

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2023-24	0	1,500,000	96	No

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.

The Florida Debate Initiative is diversifying funding sources for financial self-sufficiency, overcoming limitations tied to state agreements. We're exploring corporate sponsorships, grants, individual donations, fundraising events, and strategic partnerships to sustain and grow our impactful civic and debate programs.

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.

Yes, the FDI received \$1,183,723.55 in COVID-19 funding from the Department of Education. These funds were dedicated to expanding civics, speech, and debate programs statewide. Partnering with Florida State University and CPALMS, we developed teaching resources for educators. It's essential to note that no administrative funds were allocated for our program development and implementation work for the department.

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	FDI prioritizes fiscal responsibility and relies heavily on dedicated unpaid volunteers, emphasizing operational efficiency. However, there are necessary administrative expenses, which the President, who serves as both the project leader and manager, oversees diligently. This underscores our commitment to advancing our mission while maintaining prudent stewardship of resources.	150,710
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Website maintenance, payroll processing, rent, utilities, bank fees, technology, hardware and software licenses, audio/visual supplies, office supplies, memberships, dues, insurance, marketing, printing, postage, and travel.	100,180
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	This line item is crucial for securing the services of our Accountant, Programs Consultant, Development Consultant, Administrative Assistant Consultant, Grants Management Consultant, and Public Relations Consultant. It's important to highlight that these positions are contractual services, devoid of staff employment benefits, reflecting our commitment to prudent financial stewardship.	252,000
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits		0



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Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	This line item serves to cover a spectrum of programmatic and operational expenses, encompassing tournament operations and travel costs, as well as trophies, awards, and special recognitions. It also facilitates essential initiatives like the Civics Bee, Civics Immersion Experience, FDI Fellows Program, Summer Debate Coach Retreats, and the development of valuable resources for debate teachers.	543,262
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	This line item is dedicated to providing invaluable support to debate teachers and coaches across the state as they guide students in civics, speech, and debate programming. Additionally, it will facilitate expert capacity building and offer essential technical assistance services to enhance the capabilities of these educators and debate coaches.	453,848
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		1,500,000

14. Program Performance

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

The purpose of this funding request is to strategically eliminate the geographical barriers hindering students' access to crucial civic literacy and speech and debate programs. Our goal is to make these programs universally available, empowering students with vital life skills, fostering confidence, honing critical thinking abilities, and refining communication proficiency. Moreover, this initiative aims to create a platform for students to interact with diverse perspectives, encouraging civil discourse, and enhancing their understanding of civics. The FDI is committed to serving every school district in the state and persistently expanding its reach to encompass every school therein.

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

We'll use the funds to back crucial activities: resources in schools without programs, support those with programs, provide affordable academic competitions, and, most importantly, promote civic literacy through speech and debate participation.

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

FDI is the educational support organization for speech and debate coaching, student training, judge training, and competition standards. We'll serve 300+ schools in all 67 counties this school year.

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

The target population served by this project is grade school and high school students across the state of Florida, encompassing both urban and rural communities. The Florida Debate Initiative aims to reach over 300 public schools through its programs, serving thousands of students.

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

The expected benefit of this project is to equip students with confidence, critical thinking, and communication skills through speech and debate. Serving as their advocates, students will engage in civil discourse, exposed to diverse perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds. Speech and debate acts as an educational equalizer, expanding learning beyond classrooms, fostering the ability to critically analyze information. The project aims to deepen understanding of civics, our system of government, and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. The Florida Department of Education will establish the outcome assessment process, ensuring the project's effectiveness in achieving these educational goals.

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?



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While we cannot foresee an applicable scenario under this question arising, if some unforeseeable event occurred where the deliverables/performance measures were not being met, the FDOE would have the discretion to restrict access to funding.

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)

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