



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2021-2022

LFIR # 1224

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

4. Project/Program Description

There are about 25,000 adults returning to Hillsborough County each year from federal, state and county facilities. Almost half of these persons have a violent conviction which makes it very difficult, or even inappropriate, for them to work in private sector jobs until they have done the following: a) completed rehabilitative programming, b) been assigned a life coach/mentor, and c) maintained a healthy, productive and crime-free life for a predetermined period of time. Operation Empower (OE) will operate an enterprise that will provide low-skilled work, e.g., lawn care, cleaning, painting, moving, construction clean-up, and minor building repair services, to small businesses and residential customers in under-served communities in Hillsborough and contiguous counties. This funding will provide the social enterprise start-up cost for OE to provide 6-12 month transitional jobs for medium to high risk individuals which will include skills training to the vulnerable group of Floridians.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds
- State Agency contacted?

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	200,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	200,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	200,000	50%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	50,000	12%
Other	155,701	38%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2021-2022	405,701	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.



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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.

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

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits	The Executive Coordinator, who reports to a Community Advisory Board of the PowerNet Institute for Personal and Community Development, will provide strategic leadership, oversee all programmatic, operational, financial, and business development activities of Operation Empower and serve as its primary spokes person.	23,000
Other Salary and Benefits	The Administrative Coordinator will manage the daily bookkeeping, monthly financial reports, the marketing and advertising campaign as well as the human resource services required to implement Operation Empower.	29,500
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	The administrative and marketing supplies, materials and insurances needed to run the company and market Operation Empower to the targeted communities and advertise the services to the general public.	7,500
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	The third party accounting (USF School of Business) oversight, bank reconciliation and monthly balance sheets and, profit and loss statements.	0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits	The Operations Coordinator will manage the day-to-day business operations including supervising the staff and managing the equipment, material and supplies used to provide direct services to the customer base.	45,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	This will be the budget used to acquire trucks (used), trailers, vans, specialized equipment and the initial allotment of supplies and fuel to start the business.	92,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	This will cover the cost of a social media specialist and webmaster to create a web presence to market 1) the services of the company, and 2) our program participants to private sector employers.	3,000
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		200,000

12. Program Performance**a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?**

The specific goal is to reduce recidivism and improve the quality of life in the distressed neighborhoods within Hillsborough and contiguous counties by providing "transitional jobs" to medium and high-risk inmates with violent convictions. In this uncertain economic environment, persons being released from federal, state and county facilities are not being targeted for any special programs. If we do not create a proactive strategy to provide a safety net for these individuals, we may inadvertently set the stage for an increase in crime and violence during the same time period that our government officials will be working hard to relieve the stress our society has been under for sometime now.

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



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The services provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds include the following transitional jobs: lawn care, commercial cleaning, exterior painting, furniture moving, transportation and delivery services, construction clean-up, and minor repair services to small businesses and residential customers in under-served communities in Hillsborough and contiguous counties.

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

The direct services to be provided to the citizens will be those related to a best practice "transitional Jobs program" which include the following: daily paid work assignments, case management, leadership and soft skills training, peer coaching/mentoring, hard skills training, budgeting and other life-skills training and career assessment/counseling. Based on the criminogenic and individual needs of each client, a schedule of their work vs classroom hours will be created to meet their individual needs.

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

The target population to be served by this project is medium to high-risk adult males and females being released from state prisons initially and eventually others being released from federal prisons and county jails. During the first year we expect to serve 75-90 individuals. This number will at least double by the second year and quadruple by the third year.

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

The returning inmates will benefit from the soft-skills and job readiness training as well as the income realized while "giving back" to communities to which they may have harmed (restorative justice). The inner city residents/small businesses will benefit from needed services at an affordable cost. The local neighborhoods will benefit from: 1) an increased number of formerly incarcerated citizens with more financial resources to spend, 2) the physical improvements to their small businesses and residential properties, 3) the no-cost community service projects completed, and 4) the reduced crime and violence from having these individuals on a path to social and economic reintegration. The USF Business students will assist with outcome measurements, which will include: number of transitional and permanent job placements, total income earned from all clients, client recidivism rate and services provided in the community. These results will be kept on a publically accessible project website

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?

This project will receive technical assistance from Dr. Jean Kabongo -Dean USF School of Business, Dr. Jessica Groholz -USF criminology professor and Dr. Sondra Fogel -USF social work professor. Therefore it is very unlikely that the deliverables or the performance measures will not be met. However, in the unlikely case this project fails to meet deliverables and performance measures, all of the vehicles, equipment and supplies purchased with state funds will be returned or sold to refund as much of the funding to the state as possible.

13. 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.

N/A



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14. Requestor Contact Information

a. First Name Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number Ext.

15. 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

16. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number