



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2022-2023

LFIR # 1314

1. Project Title Easterseals Better Together - improving autism statewide by sharing affiliate innovations and

2. Senate Sponsor Jim Boyd

3. Date of Request 11/12/2021

4. Project/Program Description

All five Florida Easterseals affiliates propose to share, scale and expand program innovations and success in services for persons with autism and related disabilities. Target programs include (1) the PLAY Project, a parent-centered, evidence-based autism intervention for young children, (2) autism early diagnosis, interventions, intensive education and therapies; (3) STRIVE - vocational skills training towards industry-recognized certifications and pre-employment life and social skills; (4) Micro-enterprises focusing on entrepreneurial goal and Virtual Reality - digital simulation training in retail/hospitality/culinary; and (5) Comprehensive behavioral health/ mental health services for children and adults with autism. Our goal is that the strength of our state network and our collective outcomes will inform public policy decisions towards 100% equity, inclusion, accessibility and improved local access for 1,500+ Floridians with disabilities.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds Agency for Persons with Disabilities

State Agency contacted? No

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

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

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	5,000,000	44%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	6,477,614	56%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2022-2023	11,477,614	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding? Yes

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2021-22	0	3,147,192	242	No

9. Is future funding likely to be requested? No

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?

Yes

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

Affiliates received \$4,860,916 thru PPP Loans used for payroll and utilities expenses, and to obtain additional PPE throughout the pandemic to ensure the safety of our staff and clients; Additional \$500,000 Small Business Loan for same purposes.

11. 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	Administrative Cost Allocation (8.9%)	442,964
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Contract Management Adults and Art	108,000
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits	Salaries/Wages; Benefits	2,684,990
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/ Other	Program supplies; Training, Rent, Supplies, Travel and Virtual Reality Module and Equipment expenses; Diagnostic Supplies, Educational Supplies, Office supplies; Cont. Ed; IT; Telephone/Utilities; Equipment lease/purchase;+ Insurance/ Maintenance/Repair; Postage; Bank Fees; Payroll service fees; PLAY Project License; Staff travel; Maintenance; Misc	816,709
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Professional Fees (psychiatrist/ clinical psychologist/ PLAY home consultants); Contracted Mental Health Clinicians	947,337
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/ Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		5,000,000

12. Program Performance

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

All five Florida Easterseals affiliates propose to share, scale and expand program innovations and success in autism early diagnosis and intervention, comprehensive behavioral health/mental health, supported workforce training , intensive education and therapies. Our goal is that the strength of our state network and our collective outcomes will inform public policy decisions towards 100% equity, inclusion, and improved local access for 1,500+ Floridians with disabilities. It is requested that \$1 million be earmarked in the final contract for Easterseals Northeast Central Florida to spearhead the third year statewide expansion of the PLAY Project to grow from 40 children in the original pilot to 160 young children with autism statewide.

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

Each affiliate has a uniquely successful client approach appropriate for scaling across affiliates via virtual training, consultative services, direct service delivery, etc. Together, affiliates will identify capacity gaps and expand local access to early intervention and clinical therapies, supported workforce training, intensive education and comprehensive behavioral health/ mental health services.

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



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PLAY - parent implemented intervention for young children with autism
Autism early diagnosis and interventions
STRIVE - vocational skills training towards industry-recognized certifications and pre-employment life and social skills
Micro-enterprises focusing on entrepreneurial goals
Virtual Reality - digital simulation training in retail/ hospitality
Early intervention therapies, intensive education and comprehensive behavioral health/ mental health services

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

Easterseals' target population is (1) children and adults with autism and other developmental disabilities that reside in Florida, as well as their families/caregivers, (2) Local businesses and industries who rely on a qualified, dependable workforce, and (3) Members of the local community who benefit from an inclusive and diverse society. Up to 1,500 +children and adults with disabilities are expected to be served directly through our collaborative efforts.

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

More children and adults with disabilities will benefit by our collective sharing of innovative programming in key areas that impact overall lifetime success, including, (1) autism early diagnosis and cost-effective interventions that result in increased functional development levels, (2) vocational skills training that respects the person's own choices and leads to industry-recognized certifications for increased independence and employability, (3) job focused/entrepreneurial skills to improve management/communication, financial/service, self management adaptive skills; (4) comprehensive behavioral/mental health therapeutic and educational services that reduce maladaptive behaviors, learning disabilities and improve overall independence and self-esteem. In-depth performance measures across multiple programs will include data collection/analysis, diagnostic testing, treatment plans, job placements, retention, skills improvement, case management notes, and improved economic status.

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?

Since we are proposing a direct services contract, we would expect not to be paid until the monthly reporting of performance levels met the contract expectation.
It is requested that \$1 million be earmarked in the final contract for Easterseals Northeast Central Florida to spearhead the third year statewide expansion of the PLAY Project to grow from 40 children in the original pilot to 160 young children with autism statewide.

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.

No capital outlay funding.



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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