



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2022-2023

LFIR # 2704

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

The current 60 year old Science Center located in West Palm Beach has (to date) raised more than \$30 million in private funds and plans to double in size to 100,000 sq. ft. and 11 acres. In Line 2281 of the Governor's recommended budget it sets forth the following recommended appropriation: 2281 Special Categories Grants and Aids - Housing and Community Development Projects From State Economic Enhancement and Development Trust Fund - \$10,000,000. Funds in specific appropriation 2281 are provided for the expansion of the Cox Science Center and Aquarium in West Palm Beach. Project is in design stage with construction expected to commence in mid-2023 and open to the public in mid-2025. This is a major project costing \$45-50 million. When built, the new facility will be the 3rd largest science center in Florida with the 4th largest aquarium in the state. The facility is named Cox Science Center and Aquarium in honor of lead donor. First year attendance estimated to exceed 600,000 visitors.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted?

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

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	10,000,000
Total State Funds Requested	10,000,000

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)	10,000,000	19%
Matching Funds		
Federal	5,000,000	10%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	1,000,000	2%
Other	35,000,000	69%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2022-2023	51,000,000	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.



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State Capital Facilities Grant Program - competitive, peer-reviewed program where proposals are ranked by experts and Legislature appropriates year-to-year funding levels to fund highest ranked proposals.

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.

PPP funding was received in the first round in the amount of \$360,832. Also funds were received in the second round of PPP funding in the amount of \$382,662. Both of those loans met every parameter and have been fully forgiven.

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		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	The funds will be utilized for the construction of a centerpiece component that is a new 3-story, 50,000 sq. ft. Science Pavilion facility with easy access to I-95. This state-of-the-art facility will incorporate advanced building and construction techniques into its design, and will feature the latest exhibit technologies such as virtual and augmented reality, and ubiquitous computing. to provide experiences that are engaging, compelling, and inspiring to visitors of all ages.	10,000,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		10,000,000

12. Program Performance

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

Cox Science is moving forward with a major expansion of its main campus in West Palm Beach. This expansion will add new attractions that will increase and broaden its audience base. Projections prepared by industry experts in attractions attendance, forecast that the expanded science center will become the most visited ticketed destination in Palm Beach County, attracting more than 600,000 visitors per year. This project will give the greater Palm Beaches, an area highly dependent on tourists, a new multi-day visitor destination that will play a major role in helping the region recover from the damage done to the regional tourism industry by the coronavirus pandemic.

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



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The centerpiece component is a new 3-story, 50,000 sq. ft. Science Pavilion facility with easy access to I-95. Science Pavilion will offer world-class science themed experiences that have proven very popular with consumers in market research conducted by Cox Science. The new attractions to be housed in the Science Pavilion include a major new aquarium complex featuring 57,000 sq. ft. of indoor and outdoor Florida-themed exhibits; a 7,500 sq. ft. traveling exhibition gallery enabling the Science Center to host the best touring exhibits on the circuit; and future Florida exhibitions, a series of permanent exhibits featuring forward-looking trends in science and technology demonstrated by local companies.

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

The planned rehabilitation of our existing 45,000 sq. ft. building will create brand new STEM educational facilities that will address the disparities in education resources for Title I schools and vulnerable students, and provide training to low-income residents that will qualify for STEM jobs that pay family-sustaining wages. The Science Center currently serves 150,000 school children every year in four counties surrounding its West Palm Beach location. That number will increase by 100,000 in 2025 when the new facility opens. In addition to general science education, instruction is provided in coding, digital arts, 3-D printing, robotics, math and other key areas. In 2019, Cox Science received a major award from Florida's Education Commissioner for our impact in STEM not only regionally, but throughout the entire state.

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

The expanded Science Center will attract visitors from a wide market area including tourists from across the United States and internationally. Market research was conducted among 850 consumers from a professionally managed panel of attractions visitors who live in Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie and Broward counties, as well as other zip codes within 100 miles of our location. Nearly nine in ten prospects found the expansion concept appealing and planned to visit and this is consistent among those living closest and farther away. In 2019 the center served a total of 375,000 people, 130,000 of them were tourists. Studies show opening year attendance will be well over 600,000, while stabilized (3rd year) attendance settles around 550,000 visitors.

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

The Science Center has recruited key strategic partners including the City of West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, and the Tourist Development Council of Palm Beach County, all of whom recognize the many direct and indirect benefits of adding a major attraction to the regions offerings. The economic impacts that the expanded Science Center operation will have in the region are significant:

- Construction economic impact - \$55 million over two years.
- Construction jobs - 380 FTE jobs.
- Operational impact - \$46 million annually, beginning in 2025.
- Operational impact jobs - 488 FTE jobs.

The Science Center is located in a Qualified Census Tract with a median household income that is only 60% of the median for Palm Beach County, with 20% of residents and 30% of children living below the poverty line.

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?

Construction Contract is to be a Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) document. Any costs over the negotiated Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) will be paid for by the Construction Manager (CM). CM will have an incentive to participate in cost recovery distribution if the final prices comes in under the negotiated GMP. Project is currently in schematic design with construction estimated to start during the first quarter of 2023. This will allow time to introduce new elements to the contracting process. All subs will be bid out by the CM and Science Center is prepared to manage this project in accordance with the State of Florida procedures and requirements.

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.

Board of Trustees of Cox Science Center and Aquarium. Cox Science Center and Aquarium is the new name of the former South Florida Science Center and Aquarium. Name of the facility was changed in honor of our Lead Donor's \$20,000,000 gift to the Science Center for its planned expansion as set forth in this document.



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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