



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 1550

1. **Project Title**

2. **Senate Sponsor**

3. **Date of Request**

4. **Project/Program Description**

State funds will provide a platform for paid workforce development of underserved high school interns, amplifying job readiness STEM skills in pursuit of high demand careers that strengthen Florida's aviation and space industry. State funds provide for modernizing 3D animation, motion and audio of the Mars Rover Simulator, enabling interns to use this and other simulators to amplify public understanding of the scientific, technological and economic benefits of space and aviation exploration.

5. **State Agency to receive requested funds**

State Agency contacted?

6. **Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2025-2026**

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	200,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	300,000
Total State Funds Requested	500,000

7. **Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (including matching funds available for this project)**

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	500,000	55%
Matching Funds		
Federal	40,812	5%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	131,842	15%
Other	219,915	25%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	892,569	100%

8. **Has this project previously received state funding?**

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. **Is future-year 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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Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

10. 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)?

Yes

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

07/01/2025

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

01/05/2026

e. What funding stream will be used for ongoing operations and maintenance of the project?

The Museum of Discovery and Science (MODS) will use annual earned revenue to support ongoing operations and maintenance of this project.

11. 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.

The Museum of Discovery and Science (MODS) will receive and manage all fixed capital outlay funding.

12. 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		
Salary and Benefits	A portion of the hourly workforce development wage for Aviation Academy interns to develop and activate programs for public engagement utilizing the Mars Rover and other simulators as an educational platform.	65,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Educational materials and supplies for programs that augment the Mars Rover and other simulators developed and activated by Aviation Academy interns for the benefit of 500,000 annual visitors.	135,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Interior and exterior upgrades, 3D animation, motion and audio production, fabrication and installation of Mars Rover Simulator that amplifies job readiness skills and public engagement, inspiring youth to pursue high-demand careers that strengthen Florida's industry pipeline.	300,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		500,000

13. Program Performance



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

State funds will provide for the production and installation of a unique educational experience with real-world connection that will inspire youth to embrace STEM learning, reinforce critical thinking skills and develop a passion for aviation and space exploration, leading to the pursuit of high demand careers in support of Florida as a leader in the aviation and space industries.

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

MODS will undertake a complete upgrade of software, hardware and systems to replace outdated technology originally installed in 1992. The upgrade enables MODS to significantly amplify public engagement through customizable animation and simulations and provide a workforce development platform for high school interns that strengthens their job readiness skills and public communication.

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

The project raises public awareness of the important scientific, technological and economic benefits of aviation and space exploration; provides a platform for underserved youth that strengthens workforce readiness; inspires youth to pursue high demand careers such as aerospace technicians, engineers, biologists and chemists that strengthen Florida's industry pipeline; and broadens civic engagement to educate 500,000 Florida citizens and tourists annually.

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

The funds requested will impact target populations including economically disadvantaged persons; at-risk youth; preschool, grade school, high school and university/college students. The workforce development internship will impact 35 underserved high school youth, providing job readiness training, paid employment, uniforms and transportation. Together the capital and workforce development project will annually impact 500,000 Florida citizens from at least 67% of Florida counties and tourists from all 50 U.S. states and 27 foreign countries.

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

State funds will educate 500,000 citizens annually from at least 67% of Florida counties, increasing awareness of the positive scientific, technological and economic impact of Florida's space industry. Funds will also provide workforce readiness, paid employment, uniforms, educational materials and transportation for 35 underserved high school youth who will use the MRSE as a platform for public engagement through activation of related programs. The outcome will be measured by surveys of the public and interns determining knowledge gained.

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 in the contract?

Funding will be withheld for failing to: (1) Complete all upgrades to software and system components by June 2026 (2) Provide a platform that enhances workforce readiness skills and public engagement through development of programs and activation of the Mars Rover and other simulators for 35 underserved high school interns and (3) Impact 500,000 Florida citizens and tourists annually.

14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster? No

a. If Yes, what phase best describes the project?

- Mitigation (reducing or eliminating potential loss of life or property)
- Response (addressing the immediate and short-term effects of a natural disaster)
- Recovery (assisting communities return to normal operations, including rebuilding damaged infrastructure)

b. Name of the natural disaster (or Executive Order # for events not under a federal declaration):

15. Has the entity applied for or received federal assistance for this project?



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- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, provide the FEMA project worksheet ID#:

b. Provide the total project cost listed on the FEMA project worksheet:

16. Has the entity applied for or received state assistance for this project (other than this request)?

- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, specify the program and state agency (ex. Local Government Emergency Bridge Loan, Department of Commerce):

17. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name **Last Name**

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number **Ext.**

18. 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



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University or College

Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number Ext.

19. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number

The information provided will be posted to the Florida Senate website for public viewing if sponsored by a Senator.