



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2127

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

4. Project/Program Description

Established in 1959, the Science Center of Pinellas County was the premier science learning location in the U.S. for decades, serving as many as 22,000 children per year. Reactivating it will enable new generations of Pinellas children and families to immerse themselves in STEM learning while building community connections and enjoying family-friendly programming.

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	500,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	2,000,000
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>2,500,000</b>

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)	2,500,000	100%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026</b>	<b>2,500,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

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		
2024-25	0	2,500,000	3266A	No

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.

**Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects**



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**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?** 4/1/2025

**d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?** 10/31/2026

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

Facility is currently owned by the City of St. Petersburg who is in the process of selling it to St. Pete for STEAM, LLC for the express purpose of re-activating the Science Center.

**12. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended**

Spending Category	Description	Amount
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Operational Costs</b>		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Funding will be used for preservation of the existing, historically protected structure and construction of a new building to support new building codes, grading the land, landscaping the historic garden and repaving the parking lot.	2,500,000
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>2,500,000</b>

**13. Program Performance**

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

To provide an opportunity for engaging, hands-on emerging technology and science programs that educate and prepare students for the jobs of tomorrow. While partnering with local educators, schools, universities and government, St. Petersburg Foundation will build a center of excellence for emerging technologies that help St Petersburg, and Florida compete in the new artificial intelligence centered economy.

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



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The additional requested funds will be used to reactivate the Science Center and to get the building located at 7701 22nd Ave N, Saint Petersburg. The facility will include an AI Village serving thousands of students and campers a year, an artificial intelligence center of excellence focused on preparing citizens and our region to compete, working space for A.I. startups, companies and groups. A cutting edge auditorium made for hybrid events and a digital platform that makes facility curriculum available beyond the physical visit.

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

The Science Center will be a space where hands-on, discovery-based learning and STEM enrichment fuel inquisitive minds and enthusiasm for all things science. A place where all children, adults, and families can go to observe, analyze, and explore emerging technologies. A coalition of service providers will provide a matrix of programming, events, and classes. The AI Village will serve students daily, as well as with day and week long emerging technology camps.

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

Children, adults, and the families of Pinellas will be welcome to participate in the programs, events, exhibits, and classes held at the science center. Programming will also provide specific opportunities for day camps and summer camps open to residents and to tourists looking to enroll children in fun and educational activities while visiting Pinellas County. Opportunities for exposure to STEM/STEAM learning and career paths will be especially extended to low -income, and disenfranchised youth in Pinellas County.

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

Pinellas has a higher percentage of low-income workers than the national average. Building wealth through higher paying jobs is the path to a better future for the county and the region. Exposing youth to STEM fields at the center is an important first step on a pathway to a variety of career paths that pay well and increase the overall prosperity of the community. Careers in STEM and STEAM have grown 79% since the mid-1990s. These education opportunities will lead students directly into a STEM pipeline of needed labor in the Pinellas market. Students who move into STEM careers out of high school and college make more money than their non-STEM counterparts. Workers with STEM training and skills are in very high demand now and that demand is only expected to increase in the future.

**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?**

Standard contract penalties are sufficient.

**14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster?**

**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?**

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



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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
- University or College
- Other (please specify)

d. First Name  Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number  Ext.



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#### 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.*