



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2162

1. **Project Title**

2. **Senate Sponsor**

3. **Date of Request**

4. Project/Program Description

The State Science Engineering Fair of Florida (SSEF-Florida) has been a mainstay of middle and high school science education in Florida since 1956! This event offers a competitive academic platform for all Florida grades 6-12 students. Interested students select their own independent STEM research project at the school level in early September. Schools select students to advance to their geographic Regional Science and Engineering Fair (36+ in Florida). Students selected by their RSEFs become finalists at SSEF-Florida to compete for more than 1.2 M dollars in awards, and scholarships to Florida colleges and universities. Each of the 700+ SSEF finalists can say "I went to state!" Guidance in student safety, ethics, protocols, procedures,

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

State Agency contacted? Yes

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

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	139,082
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	139,082

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)	139,082	100%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	139,082	100%

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

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

Fiscal Year (YYYY-YY)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2024-25	0	71,484	100	No

9. **Is future-year funding likely to be requested?** Yes

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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We are working to identify STEM-related organizations, industries, private individuals, and other entities in Florida who believe that what we do is worthwhile to the economic development of Florida. We have been developing STEM skills in Florida students since 1956, and we believe that we are an integral part of the development of Florida's STEM ready workforce. Without this additional support we will no longer be able to continue the SSEF-Florida 2026

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)?

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

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.

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

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits	Executive Director: Responsible for yearlong support and development of policies and procedures, regional fair directors training, securing donations for scholarships and awards, recruitment of judges, maintenance of SSEF Scientific Review Committee, SSEF contact for regional fairs, coordination with International Science and Engineering Fair.	44,758
Other Salary and Benefits	PI at University of Central Florida: Administration of all financial functions associated with the Florida Department of Education grant supporting this project. In addition, the PI provides over-site and direction for a research study being conducted to gain a better understanding of the impact of the SSEF-Florida on students, educators, and the broader community.	4,348
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs		



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Salary and Benefits	The SSEF-Florida Project Assistant provides support for activities, organizes and maintains the student project files, the SSEF-Florida data base, and generates reports essential for this yearlong project. The Research Associate at UCF designs, conducts, analyzes, and reports results of the research study associated with SSEF-Florida and this project.	69,976
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Office consumables for workshops and events, storage facilities and transportation expenses for supplies associated with teacher training in Orlando and set-up of the SSEF-Florida at the RP Funding Center in Lakeland.	20,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		139,082

13. Program Performance

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

We will be conducting the 70th State Science and Engineering Fair of Florida in Lakeland March 25-27th. We are working to identify STEM-related organizations, industries, private individuals, and other entities in Florida who believe that what we do is worthwhile to the economic development of Florida. We have been developing STEM skills in Florida students since 1956, and we believe that we are an integral part of the development of Florida's STEM ready workforce.

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

The SSEF-Florida will be able to conduct another event in the spring of 2026. During the 2026-26 fiscal year, we should be able to generate non-taxpayer funding to support the SSEF-Florida. Our ultimate goal is to conduct the event without taxpayer support.

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

The SSEF-Florida will continue to provide a platform for STEM Experimental Research experiences for impressionable middle and high school students. Students will experience first hand that the State of Florida values their learning in STEM related experimental research. Adult volunteers in the state will benefit through their experiences in judging projects at school, county, regional, and the SSEF-Florida. Student researchers will remain safe from hazardous practices and unethical "research". Florida will continue to be recognized among the most successful regions for youthful STEM Experimental Researchers in national and international STEM

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

The target population is middle and high school students all over Florida who want to learn how to conduct STEM experimental research by doing the research, rather than listen to someone tell them about it!

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

Every Florida student who participates in carefully conducted STEM experimental research, benefits by learning skills and habits of mind, that can only be assimilated through direct involvement. That involvement is enhanced when the researcher actually chooses his/her own topic of interest, and has the opportunity to research that topic within a carefully constructed, safe framework. We track outcome through student achievements in national and international competitions.

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?



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The Florida Foundation for Future Scientists, recognized by the Florida Legislature in 1957, has never failed to provide deliverables or performance measures provided for in any contract. We are 35 volunteers who are passionate about what we do and what impact we can have on building a better future for our students and for the economy of Florida. If we fail to conduct a State Science and Engineering Fair of Florida in 2026, we should return all unencumbered funds to the contracting agency (Florida Department of Education).

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?

- 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



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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.

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.