



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2294

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

Florida businesses need more workers in technical careers in fields like IT, engineering, manufacturing, construction, and logistics. This project works to increase the number of students following these pathways by introducing these careers to students while in middle school. Studies have shown that this helps students to envision themselves in these careers while work attitudes are still in formation. Specifically, this project will continue a statewide network by providing the Learning Blade career awareness and interest system to primarily middle schools and other K-12 schools statewide and allow schools to interact with each other. This system is currently successfully offered statewide in 12 other states and has demonstrated excellent results over the past 10 years. To date this program has served over 24,000 Florida students online and over 100,000 with classroom projects in Florida.

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                          | 1,900,000        |
| Fixed Capital Outlay               | 0                |
| <b>Total State Funds Requested</b> | <b>1,900,000</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)       | 1,900,000        | 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>1,900,000</b> | <b>100%</b> |

8. Has this project previously received state funding?  Yes

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

| Fiscal Year<br>(YYYY-YY) | Amount    |              | Specific<br>Appropriation # | Vetoed |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------|
|                          | Recurring | Nonrecurring |                             |        |
| 2024-25                  | 0         | 950,000      | 100                         | No     |

9. Is future-year 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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### 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           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| <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                                | Learning Blade curriculum licenses | 1,900,000        |
| Consultants/Contracted Services/Study                                  |                                    | 0                |
| <b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>                    |                                    |                  |
| Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering                      |                                    | 0                |
| <b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b> |                                    | <b>1,900,000</b> |

**13. Program Performance**

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

Create a more skilled workforce for Florida by building interest in middle grade students in high-demand careers in STEM, computer science, and CTE (Career and Technical Education). Studies have shown that introducing these careers earlier and in the context of real-world problems increases student desire to follow these pathways that businesses need the most. This provides actionable resources and connections for educators allowing them to deliver a more robust experience for all students.

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



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Continue to provide statewide access to supplemental academic lessons and hands-on activities that any teacher can utilize without the need for any additional purchases. Teachers in Florida and 12 other states have completed nearly 12,000,000 lessons using this. These efforts will also allow teachers to be trained and connected to other educators statewide at no additional cost

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

This will continue to provide Learning Blade to all schools statewide. It provides 13 "Missions" that involve students in grand problems that show the careers and skills that would solve these in real life. To date the program has served over 24,000 students in Florida.

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

Over 24,000 grade school students and high school students in Florida.

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

This project will increase student awareness and interest in high-demand careers in STEM, computer science and CTE. This will be measured by the number of lessons completed, the number of schools enrolled, and by surveys of students and teachers participating in the program. Students in Florida and other states have completed nearly 12,000,000 lessons in this program. Summary reports will be provided after every semester of the project.

**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?**

The standard penalty for a program such as this would be to not renew it for the next school year. However, the Learning Blade program has never failed to be renewed for failure to meet deliverables or performance in any other 9 statewide contracts, which have been in progress for up to 8 consecutive years.

**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

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

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



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**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.**

**19. Lobbyist Contact Information**

**a. Name**

**b. Firm Name**

**c. E-mail Address**



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d. Phone Number

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