



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2388

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

Learning Independence For Tomorrow Inc. (LiFT) is a private, nonprofit organization specializing in the education of K-12 students and adult learners with neurodiversity. The LiFT University Transition Program (ages 18-22+) and the Adult Training Program (serving adults 23 and older) provide integrated academics, essential life skills training (how to cook, take public transportation, grocery shop and balance finances), and career pathways designed to help students gain and keep employment. State funding for campus renovations to add a café and retail space will enable hundreds of students to gain direct experience with front and back of the house operations and advance their culinary, hospitality, and customer service skills.

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	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	925,000
Total State Funds Requested	925,000

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)	925,000	5%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	4,042,836	25%
Local	0	0%
Other	11,400,000	70%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	16,367,836	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	800,000	111	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)?

No

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

07/01/2025

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

06/30/2026

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

For ongoing operations and maintenance, LiFT will utilize private support and operating revenue.

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.

LiFT is the owner of the facility receiving 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		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Construction costs related to the build out for cafe and retail space.	925,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		925,000

13. Program Performance

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

State support will enable LiFT expand its successful microbusiness, vocational, and job preparedness training programs through a cafe and retail space that will equip neurodivergent adults with practical skills and empower them to excel in the workplace. This exposure will not only create invaluable work experience and job placement opportunities for students but will further demonstrate to the community that this population has much more to offer the community than they ever thought possible.

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



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Funding for this project will provide space where students will be able to gain valuable, hands on experience with front and back of the house operations and advance their culinary, hospitality, and customer service skills at both the entry and managerial levels in food and beverage preparation and service, retail management, production and management of inventory, and business marketing while also serving as a platform for industry certifications in the hospitality industry.

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

This project will provide experience and job training for neurodiverse students and young adults as they work towards being fully independent adults. In addition to providing valuable job training, students will also be able to utilize the space as they train for industry certifications in the hospitality industry providing crucial career advancement opportunities. Furthermore, tapping into the skills of neurodiverse individuals broadens the talent pool and offers an effective solutions to labor shortages while enhancing workforce diversity.

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

Students and young adults with neurodiversity. LiFT Currently has 180 students enrolled on its campus.

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

On the job training and community interaction will develop participants capacity to learn new skills and achieve a sense of accomplishment and independence; students will gain increased community exposure through serving members of the community cafe and selling products made by students, enhancing their coping, communication, interpersonal, and social skills development and creating invaluable work experience and job training for students after graduation. Outcomes will be measured by the number of students participating in and completing vocational and skills training and living independently after graduation.

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?

Funds for deliverables not met will be returned to the State.

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



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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.