



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2641

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

4. Project/Program Description

The goal of NextStep at Endeavor Academy is to build an inclusive community where the benefits of educating and employing individuals with autism are broadly understood. Adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) will receive curriculum, services, and supports needed to complete intensive learning experiences to increase their ability to maintain competitive employment and live independently. NextStep's short courses also provide coaching and instruction for the neurodivergent population.

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	400,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	400,000

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)	400,000	57%
Matching Funds		
Federal	300,000	43%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	700,000	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	400,000	28	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.**

NextStep's Foundation Board actively seeks private donations, grants, and cooperate sponsorships to build sustainability of the program. However, a top goal for NextStep is to keep tuition low to ensure accessibility for all students, particularly those who require financial assistance, which makes it challenging to sustain our operations solely through tuition revenue. The Board will continue to pursue alternate funding sources.



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2641

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		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs		
Salary and Benefits	Program Director (\$112,725 including benefits), Office Manager/Instructor Assistant (\$55,388 including benefits), Instructor (\$85,560 including benefits), and Transition Coach (\$65,174 including benefits).	318,847
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Learn4Independence Curriculum®, \$5,000; Fuel, insurance, and vehicle maintenance, \$3,000; Copier Lease, \$2500; Consumable classroom supplies, \$2,400; Technology-related rentals, \$1,800; Communications (cell phone service, postage, etc.), \$6,200; Staff Development, \$253; and Travel, \$2,000.	23,153
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Contracted Services for job coaches, \$50,000; Contracted Services for Board Certified Behavior Analyst-BCBA, \$8,000	58,000
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		400,000

13. Program Performance

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



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2641

The goal of NextStep at Endeavor Academy is to build an inclusive community where the benefits of educating and employing individuals with autism are broadly understood. Adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) will receive curriculum, services, and supports needed to complete intensive learning experiences to increase their ability to maintain competitive employment and live independently. NextStep's short courses also provide coaching and instruction for the neurodivergent population.

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

Direct instruction in Learn4Independence® coursework, applied learning in job settings (volunteer, paid and unpaid internships, competitive employment, and self-employment), direct instruction in independent living skills, and applied learning in the community and through the residential component of NextStep Academy; direct instruction in social competencies offered across all settings.

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

Direct instruction in both classroom and natural (applied) settings; job coaching; help with identifying and accessing natural supports at work and in the community; assessment; targeted goals (employment, social, communication, independent living); maintenance of goals; follow-up checks to measure long-term progress after completing the program.

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

The target population served by this project will include adults with autism who have aged out of the K-12 educational system but still need support for success. These individuals may be jobless, economically disadvantaged, developmentally disabled, and/or college students. The project will serve between 51-100 individuals.

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

Participants enrolled in NextStep's Transition Academy will complete the Learn4Independence® coursework (a 32-course curriculum focusing on employment/life skills). Lessons include the areas of work, finances, safety, relationships, nutrition, community, health, problem-solving, transportation, and living independently. Participants enrolled in NextStep's Transition Academy will receive experience and support in an employment setting. Outcomes will be measured through participant mastery of the coursework modules and individualized goals related to employment and living independently.

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 agency will determine the penalties and include in the contract.

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



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2641

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

University or College

Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2641

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.