



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2729

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

4. Project/Program Description

The goal of the Agricultural Education Initiative is to expand the reach of Farm-Ed's AI-powered, data-driven agricultural education program to 220 classrooms. We will integrate cutting-edge Grow Chamber technology, standards-aligned curricula, and professional development into K-12 education across Florida. The initiative will provide over 30,000 students with access to 220 AI-powered Grow Chambers for hands-on STEM learning, real-time data analysis via dashboards, and 36 curriculum modules aligned with industry standards. Those students will earn AEST Agricultural Biotechnology Specialist certifications, preparing them for STEM careers.

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	2,200,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	2,200,000

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)	2,200,000	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	2,200,000	100%

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	1,100,000	105	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.
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The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2729

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	Garyn Angel, Chief Executive Officer	200,000
Other Salary and Benefits	Anne Mikos, Chief Education Officer	100,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs		
Salary and Benefits	Chase Mills, Chief Biologist	85,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Farm-Ed Grow Chambers, Consumables, Site Visits	1,760,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Site Technician, Data Dashboard, Curriculum Contractors, Classroom Implementation Coaching	55,000
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		2,200,000

13. Program Performance

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

The goal of the Agricultural Education Initiative is to expand the reach of Farm-Ed's AI-powered, data-driven agricultural education program to 220 classrooms. We will integrate cutting-edge Grow Chamber technology, standards-aligned curricula, and professional development into K-12 education across Florida. The goals include delivering inquiry-based curriculum, analyzing real-world data as preparation for STEM careers, and integrating agricultural technology into teaching practices.

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



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2729

The Agricultural Education Initiative will provide 220 AI-powered Grow Chambers to classrooms, access to a Data Dashboard for real-time analysis, 36 standards-aligned curriculum supplements, and AEST Agricultural Biotechnology Specialist certification exams. It includes teacher training, ongoing support, consumables, and technology integration to enhance STEM and CTE education.

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

The initiative will provide over 30,000 students with access to 220 AI-powered Grow Chambers for hands-on STEM learning, real-time data analysis via dashboards, and 36 curriculum modules aligned with industry standards. Those students will earn AEST Agricultural Biotechnology Specialist certifications, preparing them for STEM careers. Teachers receive training and support throughout.

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

The target population to be served are grade school students, high school students, economically disadvantaged persons, and at-risk youth. We are expected to serve over 30,000 learners across Florida.

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

Students are prepared for entry-level roles in agricultural biotechnology and related fields through certification in the AEST Agricultural Biotechnology Specialist program. Students earning AEST certifications gain credentials linked to an average 20% wage increase in biotechnology and agriculture roles, addressing skills gaps in high-demand industries. We will track the number of AEST certifications earned and compare certification rates with those of non-participating schools. We will also use job placement metrics from alumni surveys and employer feedback, as well as analyze employment and wage data from certified students over time.

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?

Withholding future payments, imposing performance improvement plans, requiring additional quality control measures, and assigning a dedicated project manager.

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#:



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2729

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.

19. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2729

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.