



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 3102

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

The Innovation Lab at Florida SouthWestern State College (FSW) is a multidisciplinary hub designed to bridge theoretical learning with practical applications, supporting Florida's workforce needs and fostering innovation. It introduces three new academic programs at FSW: Business Entrepreneurship (AS and CCC) and Entrepreneurship Operations (CCC). These programs are complemented by innovative micro-credentials and digital badges that validate skill development across essential areas, including prototyping, fabrication, manufacturing, market research, pitch development, and project management. Beyond supporting entrepreneurship students, the Innovation Lab will serve as a dynamic resource for students across multiple academic disciplines, providing state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, benefiting programs such as Architectural Design and Construction, Audio Technology, Cybersecurity Operations, Digital Arts and Multimedia Production, Stage Technology, and numerous others.

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	2,250,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	2,250,000

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)	2,250,000	54%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	1,920,000	46%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	4,170,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding? No

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

Fiscal Year (YYYY-YY)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

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
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	The equipment purchased with the funds will include advanced 3D printers, CNC machines, laser cutters, audio-visual recording and editing tools, woodworking and metalworking equipment, electronics fabrication tools, and software for design, prototyping, and business development. This state-of-the-art technology will support product design, manufacturing, marketing, and entrepreneurial training at FSW.	2,250,000
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)		2,250,000

13. Program Performance

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



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The funds requested will establish the Innovation Lab at FSW, a multidisciplinary hub designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet Florida's workforce demands and foster innovation and entrepreneurship. The Lab will support the creation of three new academic programs, each of which are aligned with in-demand occupations identified by Florida's workforce and economic development goals. It will also provide cutting-edge facilities and training opportunities for students across multiple disciplines and the local business community. By fostering business growth and career readiness, the Innovation Lab supports Florida's 2030 blueprint goal of becoming the top state for business startups while addressing workforce needs in SWFL.

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

FSW is seeking funding to equip the Innovation Lab to serve the students, community, and businesses of Southwest Florida, launch three new academic programs, develop and implement comprehensive skills training with documented outcomes in design, prototyping, fabrication, manufacturing, and programming & automation, provide hands-on training for students, support and guide students toward successful completion of relevant degrees and certificates, Establish and deliver specialized training to community members and business leaders through FSW's Office of Corporate and Community Education, and drive business motivation and product development through an annual pitch competition that connects promising students with potential funders and awards substantial seed money to top proposals.

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

This appropriation will provide direct services to citizens by establishing an accessible hub for education, entrepreneurship, and workforce development. The Lab will offer training, workshops, and mentoring for aspiring and current small business owners, providing them with advanced prototyping equipment, state-of-the-art facilities, and customized training opportunities. Through outreach initiatives, such as partnerships with local high schools, chambers of commerce, and economic development organizations, the Lab will engage diverse groups, including dual-enrolled students, veterans, working professionals, and underserved populations. By fostering collaboration between established business owners and new entrepreneurs, the Lab will drive economic mobility, enhance public access to cutting-edge resources, and strengthen SWFL's small business ecosystem.

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

This project is specifically designed to be inclusive and accessible to individuals with a strong focus on providing opportunities for skill development and economic advancement. FSW's status as an open-access institution forms the foundation of this project by serving dual-enrolled students, traditional college-age learners, adult learners, veterans, and working professionals seeking to enhance their careers through up-skilling or re-skilling opportunities.

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

The expected benefit or outcome of the Innovation Lab is the development of highly transferable and sustainable workforce skills that benefit participants across multiple employment contexts through several integrated approaches. The sustainability of these skills is evidenced by strong projected growth rates across multiple related occupations through 2030 in Florida. Rather than preparing students for a single employer or role, the program's combination of technical proficiency, business acumen, and soft skills creates adaptable professionals ready for evolving career opportunities. This comprehensive approach ensures that graduates possess a robust toolkit of transferable skills that maintain their relevance and value across different employment contexts and throughout their professional journey.

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?

Return of appropriated funds.

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)



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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

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)



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- 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.