



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 3315

1. **Project Title**

2. **Senate Sponsor**

3. **Date of Request**

4. Project/Program Description

The Freedom Waters Foundation is dedicated to transforming lives through the power of therapeutic boating and fishing experiences. Our programs are designed to enhance the well-being of individuals with disabilities and veterans by providing them with unique and accessible opportunities to connect with nature, build confidence, and foster meaningful relationships.

At the heart of our mission is the belief that everyone deserves access to the healing and restorative benefits of the water. Through our carefully curated outings, participants engage in therapeutic boating experiences that promote relaxation, reduce stress, and encourage physical activity. Our guided fishing programs not only teach valuable skills but also create a supportive environment where participants can bond over shared experiences and triumphs.

We prioritize inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their abilities, can participate fully in our activities.

5. **State Agency to receive requested funds**

State Agency contacted? No

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	50,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	50,000

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)	50,000	4%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	200,000	15%
Other	1,100,000	81%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	1,350,000	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?** Yes

a. **If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.**



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b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.

We receive several other grants and also host a large fundraiser each year. The state funding will be helpful for us to increase our number of participants and ensure that we do not have a waitlist.

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	A portion of the Executive Director's salary will be supported by this grant. The funding helps secure the person who drives the organization's programs and initiatives. This approach demonstrates the organization's commitment to responsible fiscal management and the effective use of grant resources to enhance program delivery and organization stability.	10,000
Other Salary and Benefits	A portion of the Program Director's salary will be supported by this grant. The funding helps secure the person who leads program development, delivery, and evaluation.	10,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	The funding will support essential program supplies and fees necessary for program delivery to include: Docking fees, vessel fuel, fishing equipment, fishing bait, food and water served during boat trips. We estimate these expenses to be \$125/participant.	30,000
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:		



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Construction/Renovation/Land/ Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		50,000

13. Program Performance

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

The funds requested will specifically achieve the goal of enhancing the physical and emotional well-being of individuals with disabilities and veterans through access to therapeutic boating and fishing programs. These funds will enable the Freedom Waters Foundation to:

Expand Program Reach: Increase the number of participants served, allowing more individuals to benefit from therapeutic experiences that promote relaxation and stress relief.

Volunteer Recruitment and Training: Recruit and develop additional marine specialized volunteers to support participants and train them on supporting individuals with special needs.

Create Community Connections**: Facilitate family engagement events and social activities that strengthen relationships and build a supportive community around participants.

Ultimately, the funds will empower individuals to lead healthier, more fulfilling lives while fostering a sense of belonging and connection with others.

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

FWF will provide services including therapeutic boating experiences, guided fishing trips, and educational workshops on water safety and fishing techniques. Supportive recreational activities will encourage teamwork and social interaction, while family engagement events will strengthen bonds among participants. These initiatives aim to enhance quality of life for individuals with special needs.

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

Despite their proximity to the sea, many of our participants have never experienced the therapeutic value of boating. This funding will directly support accessible boating. We have access to 90+ volunteered vessels that accommodate a range of special needs and disabilities, allowing every participant an opportunity to experience the healing properties of being on the water.

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

The target population for the Freedom Waters Foundation includes individuals with disabilities and veterans. These groups often face unique challenges that can impact their physical and emotional well-being, making access to therapeutic and recreational activities essential for their development and healing. With the funding requested, the foundation aims to serve approximately 1500 Collier County based individuals annually. This includes providing therapeutic boating and fishing experiences, educational workshops, and community engagement activities. By focusing on these specific populations, the Freedom Waters Foundation seeks to create a positive impact on their quality of life, promote social inclusion, and foster resilience through meaningful outdoor experiences.

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 of this project is to significantly improve the physical and emotional well-being of participants, including individuals with disabilities and veterans. The project aims to foster greater social connections, enhance self-esteem, and promote physical activity through therapeutic boating and fishing experiences.

Expected Outcomes:

Increased Physical Activity: Participants will engage in more outdoor activities, leading to improved physical health and fitness levels.

Enhanced Emotional Well-Being: Participants will report reduced stress, anxiety, and depression, contributing to overall mental health improvement.

Stronger Social Connections: Participants will develop friendships and support networks, reducing feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Methodology for Measuring Outcomes:

1. Pre- and Post-Program Surveys: Participants will complete surveys before and after the program to assess changes in emotional well-being and social engagement.

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties



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for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for in the contract?

The contracting agency may consider implementing the following suggested penalties:
 Withholding Payments: The agency could withhold payments until the contractor meets the required deliverables.
 Scope Reduction: The agency may reduce the scope of the project, limiting resources.
 Financial Consequences: The agency may assess financial penalties.

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:

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



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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

d. Phone Number

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