



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 3474

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

This project will advance genetic and epigenetic research to improve diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of inherited eye diseases and ocular cancers for Florida patients. Using advanced sequencing and bioinformatics, it will refine diagnoses, guide early intervention, and identify new therapeutic targets. With Florida's high cancer incidence, the program will focus on ocular and metastatic eye cancers, developing biomarkers for early detection and advancing precision treatments. By integrating cutting-edge research, it will enable earlier diagnosis, targeted therapies, and better patient outcomes.

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	6,000,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	6,000,000

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)	6,000,000	39%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	9,500,000	61%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	15,500,000	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		

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.

Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects



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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	Laboratory Faculty, researchers, geneticists, oncologists, and project support team.	1,000,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Expense/Equipment/Supplies/Other including: genetic testing laboratory supplies and materials, database and software equipment, next-generation sequencing (NGS) platforms, AI-powered genetic analysis tools, molecular diagnostic equipment, laboratory infrastructure, and research tools.	5,000,000
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)		6,000,000

13. Program Performance

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

The funds requested will advance research for inherited rare eye diseases and ocular cancers leading to a better understanding of mechanisms for disease, while improving diagnosis, treatment, and prevention. A clinical trial database and bioinformatics will help identify new therapeutic targets. The project will also develop early detection and biomarkers for precision treatments for ocular cancer patients which will improve outcomes.

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



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Propel activation of a genetic testing laboratory to conduct groundbreaking research for inherited rare eye diseases and ocular cancers using the latest technology equipment and genetic testing supplies through the recruitment of expert faculty, researchers, geneticists, clinicians, and program support for a faster research product.

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

Direct services provided to citizens include the participation in cutting-edge clinical research trials and genetic testing for inherited rare eye diseases and ocular cancers for eligible citizens, access to the only licensed eye emergency room in Florida, and the advancement of research leading to better patient outcomes for current or future patients who may be diagnosed with vision or eye disease.

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

The target population is Florida residents with inherited rare eye diseases and/or ocular cancers. The Bascom Palmer Eye Institute at the University of Miami encounters nearly 40,000 patients annually, and is recognized as one of the world's premier eye care and research institutions. Any number of patients seen for rare eye diseases or ocular cancers can expect to be served through this project.

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

Advancement of research to improve patient outcomes for inherited rare eye diseases and ocular cancers. The methodology will include research trials conducted, research participation by eligible participants, peer reviewed journal publications, grants secured to advance the mission of the genetic testing center, and other metrics and methodologies proposed by the department.

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?

Subject to the penalties put forth by the Florida Department of Health.

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



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b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

raenawright@miami.edu

d. Phone Number

(305)284-2618

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