



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 1295

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

4. Project/Program Description

Focus Forward requests funding to enhance services for young people with developmental disabilities, which are currently constrained by limited resources. Focus Forward is an entity of the Project Focus Foundation and was founded to empower young people with developmental disabilities who have aged out of school programming. Through adult day training they learn skills that will lead to an independent lifestyle and reduce their dependence on public services. These funds would increase staffing, ensuring compliance with Florida's staff-to-client ratio and enable wider community engagement, including gym memberships, animal shelter partnerships, and other local activities. The addition of a mental health counselor would provide emotional support to clients. Funding would also upgrade facilities, introduce a computer lab, a sensory relaxation zone, and a life skills simulator module. This expansion aims to foster independent living skills and provide clients with broader experience.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds
- State Agency contacted?

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	700,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	200,000
Total State Funds Requested	900,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	900,000	89%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	107,500	11%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025	1,007,500	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding?

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. Is future 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.

We are actively working on building private, corporate and individual partnerships to support funding Focus Forward and the other programs on the Focus Campus.



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10. Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.

Complete questions 11 and 12 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

11. 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?

12. 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.

13. 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: Other		
Salary and Benefits	Our Focus campus encompasses 160+ young people, and all are on access point curriculum, programming tailored for those who have an IQ of 69 or below. Over 60% of our students are also income challenged and on free or reduced lunch, and 52%+ of our students are non-white. Lastly, 10% of our young people come from foster care or live with a grandparent, adding additional challenges.	100,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Focus Forward to upgrade services and learning equipment for disabled young people, ensuring safety, enhancing mental health support, and broadening community integration. This investment will expand partnership opportunities, the number of young people we can serve, and enhance the learning environment.	550,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	We will utilize additional public relations consultant services to provide data on our population (workforce participation, demographic trends, opportunities available), to raise awareness of our organization, the population served, and resources available to families throughout Tampa Bay.	50,000
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		



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Construction/Renovation/Land/ Planning Engineering	These expansions could include, but are not limited to, adding a computer lab to provide opportunities for our clients to practice typing skills; adding a relaxation and sensory zone to allow our clients the space they need to decompress and recharge; and buying a modular to use as a life skills simulator, complete with a laundry room, mock bedroom, and kitchen table setup.	200,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		900,000

14. Program Performance

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

Funding will enhance Focus Forward's services for young adults with developmental disabilities who have aged out of school programming. The program expansion will increase our reach into the community to empower young people to lead a more independent life and engage in the community. This funding reduces our young people's dependence on public services, increase their quality of life, and provide relief to Florida families.

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

Grant funds will enable Focus Forward to enhance client services by increasing staff, ensuring safety, and offering enriched partnerships and activities, along with crucial mental health counseling for better life navigation. Increasing programming and reach of programs will produce outcomes beneficial to the state.

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

The state grant enables vital services that empower an often-ignored segment of the population, delivering benefits to local enterprises and financially constrained households. It effectively reduces the broader economic impact by addressing the distinctive needs associated with developmental disabilities, thereby creating a more inclusive and prosperous community for all.

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

The funding will support our campus of over 160+ young people with developmental disabilities and 40+ staff, their families and community at large. Our young people have IQ's under 69, 60% are on free and reduced lunch, and 52% are non white. 10% of our students come from foster care or live with a grandparent.

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

Improvements in physical fitness, mental health, enriched cultural experience, improved quality of education enhanced economic self-sufficiency, and a reduction in the chances of being incarcerated. The tools to measure will include skill assessments, progress reports, tracking student attendance, tracking the number of partnerships, and measuring fitness in the beginning and end of the academic year.

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 the contract?

Return funds back to the state.

15. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name **Last Name**

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number **Ext.**

16. Recipient Contact Information



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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

17. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number