



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 1942

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

**4. Project/Program Description**

Learning Independence For Tomorrow Inc. (LiFT) is a private, nonprofit organization specializing in the education of students with neurodiversity. LiFT is a community for those with neurodiversity, providing an exceptional education for K-12 students and empowering adult learners with skills and opportunities for employment and independence. LiFT is the only local educational resource for neurodiverse students with the breadth to serve students beginning in kindergarten and continuously providing a path forward through adulthood.

State funding would allow LiFT to complete its campus Culinary Teaching Kitchen, providing hundreds of students with neurodiversity with personal culinary skills and experience in commercial kitchen operations, creating invaluable vocational experience and job placement opportunities after graduation, and enhancing their culinary microbusiness, demonstrating to the community that this population has much more to offer than they ever thought possible.

5. **State Agency to receive requested funds**
- State Agency contacted?**  No  Yes

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

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	800,000
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>800,000</b>

**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)	800,000	5%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	3,242,836	20%
Local	0	0%
Other	12,357,164	75%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025</b>	<b>16,400,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

8. **Has this project previously received state funding?**  Yes  No

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2023-24	0	750,000	105	No

9. **Is future funding likely to be requested?**  Yes  No

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

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

State funding would leverage the remaining \$7 million in additional private support LiFT will raise to fund the \$16 million total cost of the project (including the \$3.8M site purchase, repayment of an \$11 million bank loan for construction/renovation expenses).



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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.

LiFT received PPP loans of \$318,233 in April 2020 and \$337,563 in May 2021, and an Economic Impact Disaster Loan (EIDL) for \$149,900 in July 2020. All loans supported pandemic-related expenses and have been forgiven or paid back with interest.

## 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.

LiFT is the owner of the facility to receive FCO funding.

13. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Operational Costs: Other</b>		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Construction, renovation, and equipment costs associated with a new LiFT Culinary Teaching Kitchen to provide culinary training, community exposure, and vocational readiness for hundreds of students with neurodiversity each year.	800,000
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>800,000</b>

14. Program Performance

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



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LiFT opened its doors to the new campus with 166 students on August 17, 2023, and currently has 170 students enrolled for this academic year, an all-time high for LiFT. State funding would allow LiFT to complete its campus Culinary Teaching Kitchen, providing hundreds of students with neurodiversity with personal culinary skills and experience in commercial kitchen operations, creating invaluable vocational experience and job placement opportunities after graduation, and enhancing their culinary microbusiness, demonstrating to the community that this population has much more to offer than they ever thought possible.

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

State funding over the next 12 months would support final campus renovations to add a culinary teaching kitchen to support LiFT Learners. This investment will allow LiFT to teach students how to advance their culinary skills through grocery shopping, ingredient selection, and food preparation. It will also enable hundreds of students to gain experience with commercial grade ovens, stove tops, dishwashing stations, and both front and back of the house operations.

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

Hundreds of students with neurodiversity will be provided with personal culinary skills and experience in commercial kitchen operations, creating invaluable vocational experience and job placement opportunities after graduation, and enhancing their culinary microbusiness, demonstrating to the community that this population has much more to offer than they ever thought possible.

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

Students and young adults with neurodiversity.

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

Student culinary training and microbusinesses will develop their capacity to learn new skills and achieve a sense of accomplishment and independence; students will gain increased community exposure through catering events, serving members of the community in the LiFT Community Café, and showcasing food, coffee, and products made by the students, enhancing their coping, communication, interpersonal, and social skills development and creating invaluable work experience and job training for students after graduation. Outcomes will be measured by the number of students participating in and completing culinary vocational and skills training and living independently after graduation.

**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?**

Disbursed funds for deliverables not met would be returned 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**

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**

#### 17. Lobbyist Contact Information

**a. Name**

**b. Firm Name**

**c. E-mail Address**

**d. Phone Number**