



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2023-2024

LFIR # 1735

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

The goal of NextStep Academy is to build an inclusive community where the benefits of educating and employing individuals with autism are broadly understood. Adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) will be given the curriculum, services, and supports needed to complete intensive learning experiences to increase their ability to maintain competitive employment and live independently.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted? Yes

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	400,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	576,000
Total State Funds Requested	976,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	976,000	84%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	187,000	16%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2023-2024	1,163,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding? Yes

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2022-23	0	400,000	26	No

9. Is future funding likely to be requested? Yes

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

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

Endeavor continues to initiate private donors through the foundation. Some funds will be raised through tuition; however, tuition costs are kept at a low rate to provide greater access to students.

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

No



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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

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

Yes

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

08/01/2023

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

06/01/2024

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.

The local government will maintain ownership of the facility.

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	Contracted services for accountant and grant manager	11,000
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits	Program Director (\$114,951-including benefits), Program Coordinator (\$43,012-including benefits), Transition Coach/Instructor (\$76,934-including benefits)	234,897
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Learn4Independence® curriculum (\$5,000/year), data collection software (7 licenses=\$2,100/year), office supplies (\$1,556), copier lease (\$2,200/year), postage (\$50), small equipment/adaptive devices for participants (\$2,000), fuel, insurance, and vehicle maintenance (\$4,125), training (\$600), and building operating costs (property insurance, maintenance, utilities, and internet-\$35,000)	52,631
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Contracted services for job coaches (\$79,200), Board Certified Behavior Analyst (\$15,360), and Registered Behavior Technician (\$6,912) to provide assessments, data collection, evaluations, coaching, and instruction in employment, community, and independent living settings—and to provide training and supervision to staff and other contractors as needed.	101,472
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Funds will be used to renovate an existing building on the campus of NextStep Academy. Participants attending NextStep's two-year transition academy program will live in these renovated spaces to learn, practice, and apply the skills necessary to live independently.	576,000



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Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)	976,000
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14. Program Performance

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

The goal of NextStep Academy is to build an inclusive community where the benefits of educating and employing individuals with autism are broadly understood. Adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) will be given the curriculum, services, and supports needed to complete intensive learning experiences to increase their ability to maintain competitive employment and live independently.

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

Direct instruction in Learn4Independence® coursework, applied learning in job settings (volunteer, paid and unpaid internships, competitive employment, and self-employment), direct instruction in independent living skills, and applied learning through the residential component of NextStep Academy. Direct instruction in social competencies will be offered across all settings.

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

Direct instruction in both classroom and natural (applied) settings, job coaching, help with identifying and accessing natural supports at work and in the community, assessment, targeted goals (employment, social, communication, independent living), maintenance, follow-up checks to measure long-term progress after completing the program.

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

The target population served by this project will be adults with autism who have aged out of the K-12 educational system but still need support for success. These individuals may be jobless, economically disadvantaged, developmentally disabled, and/or college students. The project will serve between 51-100 individuals.

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

Participants enrolled in NextStep's transition academy will complete the Learn4Independence® coursework (a comprehensive 32-course curriculum focusing on employment and life skills). Each course has lessons in the areas of work, finances, safety, relationships, organization, nutrition, community, health, problem-solving, etiquette, transportation, and living independently. Participants enrolled in NextStep's transition academy will receive placement and support in an employment setting. Outcomes will be measured through participant mastery of the coursework modules related to finances, employment, and living independently. Outcomes will also be measured in the number of participants maintaining employment/living in their community of choice throughout their enrollment at NextStep and during planned maintenance checks 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?

The agency will determine the penalties and include in the contract.

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



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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