



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2021-2022

LFIR # 1408

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

Florida's Vision Quest (501c3) promotes the academic and social advancement of at-risk children by ensuring they can see their world clearly. Funded by the State of Florida DOH for the past 20+ years, this comprehensive vision program provides vision exams and quality new eyeglasses on school grounds each year for approximately 7,500+ low income children who have failed a school-based vision screening and have no access to vision care. Since inception in 1994, this State funded program has provided vision exams and new eyeglasses for 360,000+ children throughout the State of Florida. This evidence based program provides seamless coordinated vision care through a collective partnership with local school districts, foundations, health departments and state government to ensure children are provided the tools critical for social and academic success.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted?

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	500,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	500,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	500,000	25%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	1,000,000	50%
Local	500,000	25%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2021-2022	2,000,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding?

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2020-21	1,000,000	250,000	452	No

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.



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2021-2022

LFIR # 1408

Florida's Vision Quest does not rest on its laurels, we foster public-private partnerships, raising funds through grants, foundations, corporations, and the private sector to leverage these allocated State resources to further serve the enormous need that's present.

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

Yes

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

Yes, Florida's Vision Quest received an SBA grant in the amount of \$10,000 and a Paycheck Protection Program Loan in the amount of \$128,300 which were used for utilities and to keep our workforce employed during the COVID-19 crisis.

11. 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	Maintain current fee-for-service DOH contract with 15% administrative costs.	75,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Maintain current fee-for-service DOH contract from Specific Appropriation 452 which provides funds to VisionQuest on a reimbursement basis to provide no cost comprehensive eye examinations and eyeglasses to financially disadvantaged school children who have no access to vision care. These services will be provided statewide and shall be reimbursed at current Medicaid rates for exams, refractions, and dispensing; and at a flat rate of \$48 for eyeglasses.	425,000
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)		500,000

12. Program Performance

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

The goal of this funding request is to be able to reach more students each year and to increase the number of schools served. In 1999, the Florida Legislature appropriated \$1,000,000 to FLVQ for the purpose of ensuring that low income, underserved, visually impaired students attending Florida public schools have access to follow-up vision exams and eyeglasses. Since that time, student populations have grown significantly and operating expenses have increased, yet funding has remained largely the same. The result is that FLVQ runs out of State dollars well before all visually impaired students can be served each year. Currently, FLVQ mobile clinics serve some 300+ schools. This funding will allow this program to reach more students in more counties throughout Florida.

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



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2021-2022

LFIR # 1408

Students who qualify for this program are low income, have failed a school-based vision screening and have no insurance or access to vision care. Qualified students are provided comprehensive vision exams including dilation and refraction, aboard FLVQ mobile vision clinics that travels to 300+ schools annually and are staffed by licensed optometrists and optical technicians. Students select from over 100 contemporary frames and eyeglasses are manufactured to the highest standards and dispensed. In addition, in remote geographic locations, qualified students are referred to the office of local optometrists within the FLVQ network.

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

Qualified students will receive comprehensive vision exams (primarily on school grounds), and quality new eyeglasses, if needed, at no cost to the child or family.

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

This programs target population are financially disadvantaged children attending public schools throughout Florida in grades Pre-K through grade 12. Historic demographics of students served are as follows:

Hispanic 41%
African American 28%
Caucasian 22%
Asian 5%
Multi Racial 3%
Other 1%

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

Research data confirms that improving the vision of children with diagnosed impairments has a direct and measured improvement in their performance at school, in their social interactions and in their overall quality of life. Since 1994, the FLVQ program has improved the vision of over 360,000 students in Florida. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the annual rate of growth of Florida students in math, reading and science improved dramatically. A simple pair of eyeglasses must be considered an important element in moving the needle. In 2013, an independent academic institution (University of Minn) conducted a first of its kind randomized trial of the impact of providing eyeglasses on academic outcomes of disadvantaged students served by the FLVQ program. This study concluded 'robust' improvement in reading and math following vision intervention (exams/eyeglasses on school grounds) by the FLVQ program which validates this approach to improving student outcomes.

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?

FLVQ's current contract with DOH is 'fee-for-service'. Payment is made to FLVQ only after certain deliverables (vision exams and eyeglasses) are provided. This payment method is set forth in legislative proviso language, (reimbursement for vision services based on current Medicaid billing codes and rates, reimbursement for eyeglasses set at a flat rate of \$48 per pair regardless of prescription strength.) State dollars are only expended after services are delivered. Exams are documented by optometric electronic health records and eyeglasses are documented by optical lab work order invoices. We would encourage the same current proviso language be used in the implementation of this new non-recurring funding so that State dollars are not spent unless deliverables are met.

13. 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.

n/a



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2021-2022

LFIR # 1408

14. Requestor Contact Information

a. First Name Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number Ext.

15. 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

16. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number