



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2021-2022

LFIR # 1827

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

COVID isolation has placed foster children in more danger from neglect and abuse that will go unnoticed. Coupled with the continual shortage of recruited, trained and vetted foster parents and the increase in the number of children in foster care caused by the opioid crisis, the Heart Gallery of Florida is requesting funding for a digital transformation of the foster and adoption recruitment and licensing process. Using Family Finder, a digital technology platform created and managed by the Heart Gallery of Florida, the number of foster parent licensing requests in the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2020 increased by more than 300% above traditional recruitment methods of the CBCs. Increases in the number of children in foster care, the high cost of group homes and increases in annual recruiting costs of CBCs reported to the state will be decreased with the implementation of Family Finder.

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
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>500,000</b>

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	50%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	500,000	50%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2021-2022</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

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.

Private funding of \$500,000 will be sought per year and \$500,000 in state funding will be requested each year.



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

No

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

**11. 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	Executive Director to oversee all aspects of the initiative in addition to primary tasks of fundraising and grant writing.	30,000
Other Salary and Benefits	\$12,500 a year for an administrator for each of the 14 Heart Galleries and CBCs - \$175,000; Project Manager to coordinate the retrieval and reporting of outcomes to the state - \$15,000	190,000
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	Marketing and webinar for each of the 14 Heart Galleries and CBCs in each Judicial Circuit.	105,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Recruitment costs, technology implementation, support and administration of technology - fees to software developers and cloud platform migration; finalization of the software development for daily use and support	175,000
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>500,000</b>

**12. Program Performance**

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

Family Finder has proven to find more families for more of Florida's foster children faster. It has been used for more than 20 years in the private sector to recruit, train and vet prospective parents. A pilot conducted for a Central Florida CBC yielded 8,000 new families vs. 100 using traditional methods and increased the number of foster families in Judicial Circuit 12 by 300% since it was launched at the beginning of the COVID outbreak to overcome the decline in inquiries. Increases in the number of children in foster care, the high cost of group homes and increases in annual recruiting costs of CBCs will decrease with the implementation of Family Finder.

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

Family Finder creates efficiency, provides quantitative data of matches, and exposes areas of opportunities in the current system of care. Services provided to child welfare organizations include - established profiles detailing family information prioritized by likelihood of interest and categorized for algorithmic matching - implementation of single website page for conversions in each Judicial Circuit - optimization of ad reach and conversions with Google and Facebook - client portal set up and integration with Florida Foster Family dedicated website, State and CBC system requirements.

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

Combination of foster/adoption training, matching, and education.

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



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All foster children in the state will be served by Family Finder as will our communities at large. Youth in congregate care are more likely to drop out of school, have poorer educational outcomes including test scores in English and math (per Casey Family Programs, 2018: What are the Outcomes of Youth Placed in Congregate Care), compared to their peers placed with families.

Families hoping to provide stable loving homes will also be served and supported.

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

The cost for a child in a group home is \$3,000 per month vs. \$650 for a child placed in an adoptive or foster home. Investing in statewide implementation of Family Finder recruitment technology pays for itself with only 30 additional families. Based on 1260 additional homes, the state saves the difference, a total annual savings of \$35,532,000. Digital assets such as analytics, inquiry form submissions and licensing applications measure outcomes of the technology and have already proven successful.

**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 organization will be held responsible to provide restitution if deliverables are not 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



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#### 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