



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2026-2027

LFIR # 1003

1. Project Title REMARCABLE AQUAPONICS PROJECT

2. Senate Sponsor Ana Maria Rodriguez

3. Date of Request 10/13/2025

4. Project/Program Description

The ReMARCAble Aquaponics Project will offer a new greenhouse approach to produce education & food for adults with developmental & physical disabilities who are food insecure. The Project assists adults living with unique abilities who live below the poverty level through training, education & improved mental health. The ReMARCAble Aquaponics Project will also be used for educational, social and environmental awareness for school students & the community. This will be a collaboration with the SOS Foundation food pantry with their Farm-to-School grant. The Project also addresses food security and agricultural production. The structure for aquaponics is also hurricane resistant fresh grown fruits and vegetables during the recovery if a disaster of that magnitude occurs. This aquaponics greenhouse uses 95% less water than traditional systems. It creates no waste, uses no chemical fertilizers or pesticides, and is solar powered.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds Agency for Persons with Disabilities

State Agency contacted? Yes

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	125,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	225,000
Total State Funds Requested	350,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	350,000	51%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	341,460	49%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2026-2027	691,460	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding? No

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

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

9. Is future-year funding likely to be requested? No

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

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



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Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

10. 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)?

No

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

8/1/2026

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

9/1/2026

e. What funding stream will be used for ongoing operations and maintenance of the project?

Monroe Association for ReMARCable Citizens will use profit from the plants produced in the aquaponics structure to support ongoing operations and maintenance. MARC will also be working with the SOS Foundation, local restaurants and the public to sell a portion of the products produced to maintain the aquaponics project.

11. 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.

Monroe County School system owns the land that MARC leases for its Adult Day Training program. MARC has a 25-year lease with the school board for this program. MARC has school adults with disabilities coming to the facility "ADT" weekly to learn about plants in our current horticulture program. This will significantly expand their education by introducing aquaponics to these students

12. 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		
Salary and Benefits	MARC will employ 1 full time horticulturist, 1 half time plant store worker, and 1 full time vocational trainer.	125,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	The One World Fresh Aquaponics Greenhouse Model 3 will cost \$225,000. This will include delivery, build out, training and monitoring of the aquaponics structure. This model is 100% solar powered and uses 95% less water than regular systems. MARC will provide the 630 square feet of land and concrete base which is valued at \$341,460 which is the going price for land in Monroe County.	225,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		350,000



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13. Program Performance

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

The goal for this project will be to provide training and education to 85 adults with intellectual and physical disabilities, school aged children and members of the community who are economically challenged. The Project seeks to improve their awareness of innovative horticultural, healthy food choices, therapeutic opportunities, and creation of a healthy lifestyle.

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

The MARC horticulturists and vocational trainer will provide job training in farming produce, environmental awareness, and food production to persons with intellectual and physical disabilities. MARC will also collaborate with the SOS Foundation, a local food pantry through their Farm-to-School grant to help with the education in local school classrooms. MARC and SOS will have 10 to 20 community groups per year to tour the facility to be educated on aquaponics and food sustainability.

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

Direct services will be job training in farming produce, agricultural awareness, and food production. Classroom education on the social, environmental and humanitarian advantages aquaponics provides as a reliable solution to food insecurity.

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

85 adults and teens with intellectual and physical disabilities, who are living at or below the poverty level. Community education to the classroom will target 300 or more students annually. Community outreach will target 100 to 200 members of the community annually.

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

Individuals with developmental and physical disabilities will achieve benchmarks on their individual program goals. This will be measured by the vocational trainer and horticulturist daily, calculated monthly and submitted to APD quarterly. The school programs will be measured by the number of classroom trainings that occur monthly and reported annually. The community outreach will be measured by the number of groups that tour the aquaponics facility monthly and reported annually.

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 in the contract?

Failure to provide the deliverables per number of clients served per month or number of outreach activities to schools and community groups will result in a (0.25%) reduction in funds per deliverable.

14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster?

a. If Yes, what phase best describes the project?

- ☐ Mitigation (reducing or eliminating potential loss of life or property)
- ☐ Response (addressing the immediate and short-term effects of a natural disaster)
- ☐ Recovery (assisting communities return to normal operations, including rebuilding damaged infrastructure)

b. Name of the natural disaster (or Executive Order # for events not under a federal declaration):

15. Has the entity applied for or received federal assistance for this project?



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- ☐ Yes, Applied
- ☐ Yes, Received
- ☐ No
- ☐ No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, provide the FEMA project worksheet ID#:

b. Provide the total project cost listed on the FEMA project worksheet:

16. Has the entity applied for or received state assistance for this project (other than this request)?

- ☐ Yes, Applied
- ☐ Yes, Received
- ☐ No
- ☐ No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, specify the program and state agency (ex. Local Government Emergency Bridge Loan, Department of Commerce):

17. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number Ext.

18. 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



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☐ University or College

☐ Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number Ext.

19. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number

The information provided will be posted to the Florida Senate website for public viewing if sponsored by a Senator.