



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2026-2027

LFIR # 1465

1. Project Title ARI Big Bend North Florida Educational Program

2. Senate Sponsor Corey Simon

3. Date of Request 11/10/2025

#### 4. Project/Program Description

The Aucilla Research Institute (ARI) will continue to provide historical, archaeological, and scientific education programs, exhibits and opportunities to a region of Florida which is traditionally under-served for such programs. In addition, ARI will expand both the number and types of programs available and continue to improve programs previously created through expansion of on-line resources and continued receipt of student and educator feedback.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds Department of Education

State Agency contacted? Yes

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

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	400,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>400,000</b>

#### 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)	400,000	100%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2026-2027</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

8. Has this project previously received state funding? Yes

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2025-26	0	400,000	111	No

9. Is future-year funding likely to be requested? Yes

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year. 400,000

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

Federal Grants

**Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects**



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#### 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)?

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

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

#### 12. 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	Administrative expenses will be provided by Healthyways, Inc. - including support staff, classroom facilities, office space, exhibit space, and utilities.	160,000
<b>Operational Costs</b>		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Brochures, handouts, classroom supplies and equipment. Maintenance, transportation of traveling exhibits and crew.	51,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Contracted researchers, educators, support team, IT, Social Media, and Videographer for production of educational material	189,000
<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>400,000</b>

#### 13. Program Performance

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

The specific purpose and goal of the funding requested is to provide educational programs and resources in support of multiple student populations (public, private, and home schoolers) for the areas of the Big Bend and northern Florida which are traditionally under-served.

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



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The activities and services provided will include classroom and field programs for students and educators within the area served; video classes and instructional resources which can be used by educators and students; training for educators to allow such programs and resources to be provided by each district and school for their students; and improvement based on feedback and assessment results.

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

Direct services provided will include classes, both within classrooms and in the field, provided by ARI, creation of educational resources as requested by educators, administrators and others based on existing needs provided by educators and administrators; and hands-on training of educators in the programs created so they can be used throughout the area served in the future.

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

Pre, grade and high school students as well as home school students and at risk students, underserved and low-income communities who have little or no access to such programming. The target area includes Madison, Taylor, Dixie, Hamilton, Suwannee, Leon, Wakulla, Jackson, Franklin and Jefferson Counties. The total student population in these areas is 75,994.

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

The expected outcome of this project is the providing of educational opportunities and resources throughout the area served that are normally not available for students in the region, including particularly under-served communities and districts, and the engagement of students in the learning process through "hands-on" learning. The methodology for the measurement of these projected outcomes includes both direct measurement of improved student learning through test scores and through feedback from both students and educators.

**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?**

The institute, in the event of willful failure to meet the deliverables outlined, will return unexpended funds to the state and provide a statement of the circumstances surrounding such failure if needed.

**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?**

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

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



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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

☐ 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



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b. Firm Name

The Southern Group

c. E-mail Address

kelly@thesoutherngroup.com

d. Phone Number

(850)671-4401

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