



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2026-2027

LFIR # 2016

1. Project Title Florida Oceanographic Society Seagrass Gene Bank and Resilient Seawater Source

2. Senate Sponsor Gayle Harrell

3. Date of Request 11/24/2025

4. Project/Program Description

Florida Oceanographic Society will build a Seagrass Gene Bank and develop a plan to renovate the seawater source infrastructure aquatic systems to improve the operational capacity, resiliency, and sustainability needed to support seagrass nurseries, restoration efforts and life support systems at the Florida Oceanographic Coastal Center on Hutchinson Island. This transformative project will help ensure State resources allocated for seagrass recovery and restoration are used successfully.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

State Agency contacted? Yes

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

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	750,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	750,000

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)	750,000	100%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2026-2027	750,000	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)?

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
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits	Salaries and benefits are included for the Director of Research & Conservation, 20% FTE and Director of Animal Care & Life Support Systems, 30% FTE.	125,000
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Indirect costs (10%).	75,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Pre-application meetings with the county and FDOT.	35,000
Operational Costs		
Salary and Benefits	Salaries and benefits are included for the Genetic Librarian, 100% FT and Life Support Systems Coordinator, 50% FTE.	175,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Equipment costs associated with operating a seagrass nursery and life support system repairs and replacements during planning phase.	150,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Offsite genetic analysis services and contracted consulting services aquarium design.	190,000
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		750,000

13. Program Performance

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



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The Florida Oceanographic seagrass gene bank will provide specimens for restoration that have been tested for resilience to specific stressors so that transplantations can be conducted with specimens that are likely to survive. The results of this project will help ensure State resources allocated for seagrass recovery are used successfully. These improvements are critical our mission to inspire conservation of Florida's coastal ecosystems through education, research, and advocacy.

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

A gene bank conserves and safeguards the genetic diversity of plants for future use, ensuring long-term availability of genetic resources. By preserving seeds, tissues, or living specimens, gene banks provide access to genetic material to help rebuild populations and adapt to diseases and environmental changes. Planning an improved infrastructure that will directly enhance Florida Oceanographics's seagrass propagation nurseries and aquaria.

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

A seagrass gene bank will help ensure State resources allocated for seagrass recovery are used successfully. The improvements to the Coastal Center infrastructure will directly benefit the residents of Martin County and the 60,000 visitors that come to the Coastal Center annually to be inspired by the education, research, and advocacy conducted at Florida Oceanographic.

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

The world-wide seagrass science community and the 60,000 visitors that come to the Coastal Center annually to be inspired by the education, research, and advocacy conducted at Florida Oceanographic.

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

Successful seagrass recovery will be the measure of success. We will share our results through scientific conferences and publications, which can be provided to policymakers to enact change. Infrastructure improvements will be measured by improved water quality stability and reduced maintenance needs.

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?

Florida Oceanographic Society will return all funds if deliverables are not met.

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



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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
- ☐ University or College
- ☐ Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number Ext.



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19. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name	<input type="text" value="None"/>
b. Firm Name	<input type="text"/>
c. E-mail Address	<input type="text"/>
d. Phone Number	<input type="text"/>

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