



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 1853

1. **Project Title**
2. **Senate Sponsor**
3. **Date of Request**

**4. Project/Program Description**

Soldiers Freedom Outdoors is a 501(c)3, founded in 2011 and became a public charity in 2013. SFO offers alternative treatment for active duty service members and veterans suffering from PTSD and TBIs. In ten years of service, SFO has provided eco and equine therapy to hundreds of soldiers, regardless of gender, branch or era. The main program consist of intimate (6-8 people) 4 day retreats where they can pick and choose their adventure at their leisure. Amenities include, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, and other outdoor activities. These activities are designed to build confidence within the group and to start an organic conversation that leads to fishbowl therapy and ends the stigma of the traditional therapist or prescription of medications that sometimes have more adverse side effects than the diagnosis, for example suicidal ideation's.

5. **State Agency to receive requested funds**
- State Agency contacted?**  Yes

**6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2024-2025**

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	228,568
Fixed Capital Outlay	38,675
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>267,243</b>

**7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (including matching funds available for this project)**

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	267,243	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 2024-2025</b>	<b>267,243</b>	<b>100%</b>

8. **Has this project previously received state funding?**  No

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

9. **Is future 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.**

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



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Yes

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

SFO received EIDL loan for \$46,000 and in-process of repayment

## Complete questions 11 and 12 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

### 11. 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?

### 12. 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.

Lee Saunders. Relationship is lessor/lessee and in good standing.

### 13. 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	CEO Salary	35,000
Other Salary and Benefits	N/A	0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	N/A	0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	N/A	0
<b>Operational Costs: Other</b>		
Salary and Benefits	N/A	0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Water Recreation project \$32,763, Equipment \$25,800, Chicken Project \$288, Hunting project \$5,317, Equine project \$36,600, General Retreat \$79,800	180,568
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Lake Restoration	13,000
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Outside kitchen project \$4,800.00, Walk in cooler \$2,500.00, Barn roof repair \$5,500.00, New fencing \$10,000.00, New pole barn \$15,000.00, Chicken house extension \$875.00	38,675
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>267,243</b>

### 14. Program Performance

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



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Provide Alternate Treatments for active duty service members and veterans suffering from PTSD and TBIs. Eliminates the stigma of seeing a traditional therapist or being prescribed medications that can potentially be more harmful. Reduce the number of veterans on opiates and antidepressants. Provide a network of like-minded individuals for suffering veterans to eliminate loneliness/emptiness of not having a battle buddy after discharge (group/fishbowl therapy).

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

The main program consist of intimate (6-8 people) 4 day retreats. Amenities include but not limited to, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, and other outdoor activities. These activities are designed to build confidence within the group and to start an organic conversation. SFO now also offers a Blacksmith 101 class whereas this class is a smaller group of 2-4 people over a 2 day period and often an introduction to Camp Freedom. This tends to lead to the students signing up for the larger 4 day retreat. The organization also offers family bonding experiences such as Horse 101 for dependent children and water sports days. All events are free of charge; this includes meals and lodging.

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

The organization also offers family bonding experiences such as Horse 101 for dependent children and water sports days. All events are free of charge, this includes meals and lodging. These services help provide spouses with networks of like-minded individuals to call upon for advice or a friendly ear, especially when in stressful situations. SFO on a case by case basis has provided housing for transitioning/homeless veterans until they can get on their feet. Some just need a reset and can use the facility as needed.

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

Veterans, active duty service members, and dependents. 210 Veterans per year via retreats. 40 Veterans per year for Blacksmith 101. 100 veterans, 100 dependent children, 100 spouses per year for Horse 101. 30 veterans, 70 dependents per year for Water Sports Day. Total 340 veterans and 270 dependents per year with all services and activities. Total veterans and dependents for all services and activities is 610.

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

Expected benefit is to have less veterans in VA programs that are not beneficial to the particular veteran. This will free up much needed resources for veterans that do benefit from traditional VA programs and add alternative choices for the veteran and the VA. The outcome is to create a networks (Battle Buddies) that will continually do buddy checks on in need veterans. SFO requests each individual who stays at a retreat to complete a survey to let them know how the stay was and what needs improvement. All veterans who stay are added to a database and are contacted by email on a regular basis just to check up and let them know of new things happening at the foundation. Phone calls and contacts are given out to the most in need.

**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?**

All SFO books are fully audit-able. The foundation will be fully accountable to the FDVA. Findings from any required entity will have to have root cause analysis and corrective action to ensure the findings do not happen again. Any repeat findings will require root cause analysis and new corrective action. Any egregious findings from any required entity will require necessary corrective action acceptable by that entity.

**15. Requester Contact Information**

**a. First Name**  **Last Name**

**b. Organization**

**c. E-mail Address**

**d. Phone Number**  **Ext.**

**16. Recipient Contact Information**

**a. Organization**



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**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**

**17. Lobbyist Contact Information**

**a. Name**

**b. Firm Name**

**c. E-mail Address**

**d. Phone Number**