

State Farm Florida Service-Learning & Home Safety Initiative Request for Proposals (RFP), 2006-2007

A. Introduction

State Farm Insurance and the State Farm Companies Foundation have awarded funds for a second year to Florida to support student advocacy and information campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of building codes and disaster preparation. Florida schools, from kindergarten through higher education, can receive funds to have students learn about these issues and educate their peers, parents, and the public about them.

State Farm is America’s largest corporate supporter of service learning. Through State Farm’s efforts, thousands of students have learned about and engaged in service-learning projects. The State of Florida has supported service learning for 16 years, providing funds, training, technical assistance, and oversight of nearly 3,000 projects involving over 500,000 students.

In a new and groundbreaking initiative—and in the wake of Florida’s being struck by eight hurricanes in 2004 and 2005—State Farm Insurance, the State Farm Companies Foundation, and Florida have partnered to promote, establish, expand, and institutionalize student service-learning projects that focus on the following areas:

- Home and community disaster preparation, mitigation, response, and recovery, and/or
- Raising awareness about building codes: rules, regulations, differences within and among communities, limitations, retrofitting/remodeling, going “Code Plus” (i.e., beyond minimum requirements).

At least half of award funds will support the improvement, expansion, dissemination, replication, and institutionalization of existing projects under this initiative.

See the following sections for complete information on this program, which will be administered by the Florida Alliance for Student Service (a part of Florida State University’s Center for Civic Education and Service). State Farm funds will be issued through the Florida Education Foundation.

B. Program Basics

Program Title	State Farm Florida Service-Learning & Home Safety Initiative
Funding Source	State Farm Insurance and the State Farm Companies Foundation, via the Florida Education Foundation
Funding Purpose	Engage students in service learning—school and/or community service activities that apply academic curricula and education standards—to raise public awareness about building codes and home disaster preparation, mitigation, response, and recovery.
Type of Award	Competitive
Total Available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately \$75,000 available for 2006-07 school year and

Amount	summer, 2007. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New applicants may apply for up to \$8,000
Target Population	Students from kindergarten-college
Eligible Applicants	1. Public (including charter) schools (grades K-12) applying through their school districts or school district consortia 2. Institutions of higher education (public and private).
Funding Method	The Florida Education Foundation will issue checks to selected sites.
Application Due Date	Proposals must be <u>received</u> by 5:30 p.m. e.d.t. on December 15, 2006.
Project Period	January 2007-August 2007
Contact Person	Joe Follman, Florida Alliance for Student Service Phone: 850-488-9661, SunCom: 278-9661, Fax: 850-922-2928 E-mail: jfollman@admin.fsu.edu ; web site: www.fsu.edu/statefarminitiative

C. Narrative Component/Requirements

State Farm Insurance, the State Farm Companies Foundation, and the Florida Alliance for Student Service support school-based student service learning to enhance academic performance and meet community needs. This program has the capacity to improve academic performance, promote civic engagement and career exploration while raising public awareness about building codes and reducing the vulnerability of homes and communities to disasters such as hurricanes, floods, tornados, and wildfires.

Awards are also designed to improve student attendance and graduation rates, promote career exploration, increase civic participation, expand school/community partnerships, and build infrastructure for sustained service learning. Only one award will be issued per school, but that award can support multiple projects. Awards are for one year, with a possibility to reapply for renewal funding in 2007 if funds are available. (Awards issued in 2007 would focus solely on program dissemination, sustainability, and replication activities.)

Projects funded under this program will engage students in curriculum-based service learning, or build infrastructure for such efforts. In service-learning projects, students practice/apply skills, knowledge, and behaviors they need to learn through service to others in their school or community. Projects must address education standards and be tied to one or more actual courses and the participating students' course grades. Activities can occur during the school day, or after school. Summer course-based programs are also eligible.

Effective projects include the elements of preparation, action, demonstration, reflection, youth empowerment, collaboration, and recognition. Before writing and submitting a proposal under this program, applicants need to understand the elements of service learning and integrate them into proposed activities. See Attachment 5 for detail on the elements of service learning.

Successful applicants use service learning not only to address disaster preparation and response, but also as a strategy to reach specific academic and behavioral goals for students. Such goals could include raising student academic performance, increasing test scores (such as FCAT) in specific

subjects, improving attendance, reducing conflict, fostering career exploration, enhancing school/community collaboration, or as a prevention and intervention strategy for at-risk students.

Activities should directly address identified needs for those serving and served, and apply needed skills and behaviors. For example, having 10th graders who test poorly in reading compose and produce brochures about building code requirements and strategies for disaster mitigation can help educate both the students and the homeowners who receive the brochures.

Examples of service-learning activities that could be funded under this initiative include the following:

- Creation of products that teach homeowners, builders, and others about building codes and disaster preparation, mitigation, response, and recovery (brochures, videos, tip sheets, models of disaster-resistant homes, disaster preparation kits, etc.)
- Direct assistance to homeowners and communities (home inspections, hazard removal, disaster retrofits with items donated from business partners, collection/assembly/dissemination of emergency supplies, activities by youth community emergency response teams—CERTs, etc.)
- Education/Advocacy programs to raise awareness about building codes and disasters (public presentations, lessons to younger peers, presentations to parents, disaster preparation fairs, letters to the editor, media campaigns, creation of web sites, videos, public service announcements on radio and TV, in-school TV productions, etc.)
- Teaching through performance (plays, skits, poems, songs, raps, public art, etc.)

Examples of dissemination, replication, expansion, and institutionalization activities that could be funded include the following:

- Efforts to establish dedicated staff and funding for the initiative, links with school policy, replication efforts, new partnerships, and evidence (research) to prove and/or promote project effectiveness
- Creation and provision of presentations/trainings and training materials (including curricula and lesson plans) to others (schools, teachers, students) who are interested in adopting or adapting similar activities
- Creation of youth service-learning councils that issue mini-grants to other teachers for additional service-learning projects

Please see the program web site for other examples and descriptions of previously funded projects: www.fsu.edu/statefarminitiative

There are many free or low-cost resources, curricula, and model programs available. Organizations and programs that provide such materials include the following:

- State Farm Insurance—<http://www.statefarm.com/consumer/disaster.htm>
- FLASH (Florida Alliance for Safe Homes)—www.flash.org
- Volunteer Florida—<http://www.volunteerflorida.org/secondgui/emergencymgmt.html>
- Federal Emergency Management Agency—www.fema.gov, including the FEMA for Kids page—<http://www.fema.gov/kids/>

- International Code Council—<http://www.iccsafe.org/safety/pdf/SafetyFirst.pdf>
- Florida Department of Community Affairs, Florida Building Commission—<http://www.floridabuilding.org/>
- Institute for Business and Home Safety—<http://www.ibhs.org/>

Funds can support the purchase of curricula or educational materials focused on project goals, as well as lesson planning and curriculum development. K-12 proposals should address Florida’s Sunshine State Standards—see <http://www.fsu.edu/~flserve/sl/standards.html> for many examples.

Effective projects include opportunities for students to demonstrate what they have learned through teaching/presenting to others—peers, younger students, or the community—about their efforts and/or the needs being addressed. Projects should be at least a semester in duration, and students need to conduct an average minimum of 20 service hours each semester. Time spent on elements of course- and curriculum-based service learning—project preparation, action, demonstration, and reflection (celebrations excepted) may be counted as service hours.

Student dissemination activities expand service learning, promote the project, and help others interested in similar efforts.

D. Applicant Instructions and Scoring Criteria—New and Renewal Applicants

For new applicants, the narrative portion of the proposal (numbers 1-4 below) cannot exceed four single-spaced pages. For renewal applicants, the narrative portion cannot exceed six pages. See “Conditions for Acceptance” (p. 7) for formatting requirements.

1. Needs to be Addressed—15% of Score

Describe the primary academic and/or behavioral need of students to be addressed, as well as the needs of people or community to be served, and provide back-up data on needs.

2. Activities, Elements, and Timeline—25%

- Detail planned activities and how they will incorporate the elements of service learning and be integrated with curricula, standards, and course-based assessments.
- Describe student roles in project preparation, design, and implementation.
- Provide a clear and realistic project timeline, in the narrative or as an attachment.
- Additional for Renewal Applicants: On an additional page, describe the activities conducted through your 2005-06 project. Include information on the elements of service learning, youth roles, partnerships, and the scale and scope of effort.
- Additional for Renewal Applicants: Describe plans to improve, expand, replicate, disseminate and sustain the project. Include information on how new activities build on previous efforts, details on efforts to establish dedicated staff and funding, and policy links.

3. Partnerships and Match—15%

- Describe the key planned partnership(s) to help with project design and implementation, and tell how partners will contribute to project success. Attach letters from primary partners that confirm partner roles and contributions.
- Describe and calculate the minimum required 33% cash and/or in-kind match being provided directly to the project. Cash match is defined as funds contributed to the project.

In-kind match is services, goods, or materials. Cash match is valued more highly than in-kind match.

- Additional for Renewal Applicants: Describe any new partnerships and the minimum required 50% cash and/or in-kind match.

4. Evaluation—20%

- Identify a quantitative academic or behavioral objective for the project that can be averaged/aggregated across the students serving, and describe how it will be measured/assessed. Examples include improvement in grades/in the course(s) involved, pre- and post-GPA or test scores, skill mastery, or meeting of standards.
- Identify a clear project service objective for the people, sites, needs, or organization(s) served by the project, and describe how this objective will be measured/assessed. Effective projects have students measure (or help measure) impacts of their service through surveys, interviews, focus groups, observations, and reports.
- Additional for Renewal Applicants: Describe and quantify one academic or behavioral impact the 2005-06 project had across the students serving; describe how it was measured.
- Additional for Renewal Applicants: Describe an impact the 2005-06 project had on the people, sites, needs, or organization(s) served by the project; describe how it was measured.

5. Proposal Data Form—10% (Attachment 3) Respond to all applicable items.

6. Proposal Budget Narrative—15%

- Budget Narrative Form (Attachment 2). In the boxes provided, provide a detailed, clear, and accurate breakdown and calculation by category of the resources needed for the project. In addition, provide justification and explanation for major requests (salary, materials, transportation, etc.—either within the boxes or on a separate sheet).
- Additional for Renewal Applicants: At least 33% of the budget must be focused on program institutionalization, dissemination, and/or replication.

E. Fiscal Requirements

Awards are designed to support service learning and build the infrastructure to initiate, improve, expand, and sustain such activities. Allowable expenditures may support activities related to the elements of service learning.

No more than 50% of the total request may support salaries and benefits (of all types). Substitute, trainer, and consultant costs are counted as salary. Driver salary and benefits are considered transportation expenses. Guidelines on expenditures include the following:

- Travel/trips supported by grant funds can only be (1) to provide service, (2) to familiarize students with service sites or prepare them for service-learning activities, (3) to attend service-learning training or provide training, presentations, or assistance to others interested in service learning, and (4) to attend a required sub-grantee meeting—include up to \$500 for expenses associated with attending this meeting, to be held in Spring 2007 (per diem, hotel, tolls, mileage, substitutes, etc.).
- Award funds may not be used for general field trips, travel to conferences not related to service learning, travel to recognition or award ceremonies, or reward trips.
- Funds may not be used for indirect or administrative expenses. Applicants may claim their negotiated indirect cost rates as match.

- Funds cannot be spent on stipends, allowances, or other financial incentives for students or service beneficiaries except to reimburse transportation, meals for out-of county travel (see next item), or other reasonable out-of-pocket expenses directly related to the project.
- Funds may not be used to pay for food or refreshments other than those associated with (1) out-of-county travel at the state rate of \$21 per day, or (2) training that would be disrupted if participants had to travel to procure food.
- No more than \$200 may be spent on recognition/awards items such as badges, nametags, certificates, and ribbons.
- Funds cannot buy “off-the-shelf” gifts for service recipients (food, flowers, cards, etc.)
- Funds may not be used for capital improvements on school property.
- Funds are not designed to supplant funding for regular school materials and supplies.
- Funds may support after-school, evening, and/or weekend activities, but only if the service learning is conducted as part of or as an assignment for a credit-bearing class.

Funds do not support the purchase of equipment unless all three criteria below are met (through text in either the main narrative or the budget narrative). These criteria are also applied to other permanent or large budget items, including salary, supplies, materials, and transportation:

1. The item is critical to the project; i.e., the project cannot meet its objectives without it.
2. Evidence is provided that there is no other way to pay for, obtain, or use the item.
3. The dedicated and permanent use of the item will be for service learning.

F. Reporting Outcomes

Applicants who receive an award will submit the following information by the specified dates:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Requirement/Scale</i>
1/15/07	Student pre-service survey (1 page—survey to be provided)
4/15/07	Mid-term update (2 pages)
7/31/07	Student post-service survey (1 page—survey to be provided)
7/31/07	Final narrative and financial reports

G. Application Submittal and Review

Formatting Requirements

- Submit one single-sided original, and three two-sided copies. Clip original. Staple duplexed copies. Do not submit proposals in binders or folders or use tabs or dividers.
- Font and Margins—12 points or larger, margins at least 1 inch on all sides.
- One side of a page equals one page. Only information within allowed page limits will be reviewed; additional pages will be removed prior to review.

Conditions for Acceptance

The requirements listed below must be met for proposals to be reviewed:

1. Project Application Form (Attachment 1), with original copy signed by the appropriate agency head or designate.
2. Proposal Narrative—Application criteria sections 1-4—up to four (4) single-spaced, numbered pages for new applicants; up to six (6) single-spaced, numbered pages for renewal applicants. This information is worth 75% of the total score.
3. Proposal Data Form (Attachment 3). 10% of the total score.
4. Budget Narrative Form (Attachment 2). 15% of the total score.
5. Letters from primary partners, and other attachments up to six (6) pages.
6. Applicant Checklist (Attachment 4)

Applications must be received at the following address by the close of business on December 15, 2006. Fax and electronic submissions will not be accepted.

Florida Alliance for Student Service
325 John Knox Drive
Building F, Suite 210
Tallahassee, FL 32303
Phone: 850-488-9661
Attn: Joe Follman

Method of Review/Selection

Reviewers will score proposals based on the RFP scoring criteria. Every proposal will have at least three reviewers. Program and budget recommendations are subject to modification, and not all proposals will be funded. Proposed activities and budgets are subject to revision.

Attachments

1. Project Application Form
2. Budget Narrative Form
3. Proposal Data Form
4. Applicant Checklist
5. Service-Learning Definitions, Elements, and Examples