

FUNDING GUIDE

Successfully Identifying Funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

Strategies for Floridians

This is a “how-to” guide for Floridians wishing to pursue funding opportunities under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act). Included is a brief introduction to the Recovery Act and some tips for indentifying and obtaining potentially available funds.

What is the Recovery Act?

The Recovery (known to some as “Stimulus”) Act is a federal law that provides federal funds designed to create and preserve jobs, stimulate economic development and provide help for people affected by the recession.

How does the funding work?

These dollars are not held in one large funding pot, but in literally hundreds of federal accounts. The common theme is that all of the money is designed to achieve basic goals such as job creation and preservation, investment in infrastructure (such as highways and environmental improvement), economic development, stabilization of state and local government budgets and help for individuals and families affected by the economic downturn. However, each source of funds has unique requirements. Some common funding approaches in the Recovery Act include:

- **Funds that flow from federal agencies to state agencies.** These are determined by a formula, such as population or other criteria. Use of these funds must be approved by the Florida Legislature and are used in a variety of ways to provide services or to contract for products or services. Examples include funding for transportation projects, home repairs to improve energy efficiency, or increased funding for special education.
- **Funds that flow from federal agencies to local government or local authorities.** This includes items such as funds to airport authorities for runway extension, funds to housing authorities to refurbish public housing or funds for homeless prevention (some of which goes through a state agency and some of which goes directly to cities or counties).
- **Funds that flow from federal agencies through competitive grants.** In these instances, federal agencies will announce the availability of grant opportunities and post

information about the application process and deadlines. Competitive grants would include very large projects (such as linking communication networks in counties), small projects (such as funding for arts projects in jeopardy due to the economy), and many other opportunities such as funding for fire stations or rural development projects.

- **Funds that flow directly from federal agencies to individuals.** These include one-time increases in Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments, Social Security or changes in the tax rules like expansion of the refundable Earned Income Tax Credit.

As these examples show, there will be many opportunities, but knowledge of the process is a key to success.

What are the strategies for success in finding funding opportunities?

There is no magic solution, but here are some strategies:

Check the FlaRecovery.com web site often. The Office of Economic Recovery updates the site daily with new funding information. A good place to check is the “State and Local Projects” link under the “About” tab at the top of the home page. This will take you to categories of projects where you can click for more specific information. For example, click on “JOBS” and go to the item “Workforce Employment and Training”. This takes you to a page with a brief description of the programs and funds. If you click on the “download related file” link, you may view and print a brief summary (about 2 to 3 pages) with relevant information and links to resources for more detail.

Check the Federal site, Recovery.gov. This site contains overall information about Recovery Act activities. The “Agency Progress and Resources” link takes you a listing of federal agencies’ Recovery Act resources.

Check the Grants.gov web site. This site is the central listing of federal competitive grant opportunities.

Check the state’s Vendor Bid System through the Vendors link on the MyFloridaMarketPlace web site (<http://dms.myflorida.com/mfmp>). Companies can register and receive alerts related to state purchases.

The more businesses and organizations in Florida are successful in applying for and using Recovery Act funds, the more jobs are created and the quicker our state’s economy rebounds. Please check FlaRecovery.com often for updated information about Recovery Act funds as they become available.