



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

2019/2020 Florida Manufacturers Business Growth Program

Regional and Local Awards Available

SCHEDULE

- **March 11, 2019** – RFP Issued
- **April 5, 2019** – GrowFL RFP Webinar - Florida Manufacturers Business Growth Program
 - 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EDT
 - <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/157494189>
 - Dial: +1 (571) 317-3112 Access Code: 157-494-189
- **April 8-18, 2019** – Question period open. Email questions to tsweet@growfl.com. Questions will only be accepted via email. Please plan to participate in one or more of the webinars as additional opportunities to discuss the RFP. Webinars will be recorded and available at <http://GrowFL.com>
- **April 19, 2019, 5:00 pm EST** – Deadline to submit intent to respond. Submit your intent via email to tsweet@growfl.com. This email is required to be considered eligible to respond to this RFP.
- **May 17, 2019, 5:00 pm EST** – Deadline to submit RFP and deadline for companies to submit online application at <https://growfl1.nationalcentereg.org/>

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

This RFP process seeks to identify partner organizations that are local Entrepreneur Support Organizations (ESOs) or a team of ESOs that will partner with the GrowFL to deliver programs and services to second-stage growth manufacturing and manufacturing-related growth companies within a county or on a regional basis. Up to ten (10) awardees will be selected as part of this program. Any organization or teams of organizations in Florida that meet the criteria set forth in the Entrepreneur Support Organization description below are encouraged to apply.

BACKGROUND

Florida's top priority is creating the jobs of tomorrow, and at GrowFL, we recognize second-stage companies are among the most essential sector of Florida's economy. And even more specifically, the impact that the manufacturing and manufacturing-related companies can have. Florida's manufacturing sector ranks 34th in the nation in terms of productivity (value-added/employee); the primary measure of manufacturing competitiveness. If Florida increases its manufacturing productivity to the national average, it will add roughly \$20B to the State's economy.

At GrowFL, we understand the challenges CEO's experience, which is why for nearly a decade, we have supplied thousands of Florida's growing second-stage companies the most comprehensive market research, professional coaching, peer group accountability and practical tools needed to scale their businesses.

GrowFL, is driven by one goal, to cultivate growth companies across the state. Through our partnership with FloridaMakes, we are committed to local delivery of services that help second-stage growth companies achieve their potential. GrowFL offers a suite of high-end, high-speed strategic research and business resources. A team of highly trained and experienced analysts are deployed to function, not as consultants, but as an extension of the company. CEOs consider them an elite staff to help take their company to the next level. The GrowFL program is designed to provide business information and intelligence to second-stage companies that have the intent and capacity to grow their business.

OVERVIEW

GrowFL is an innovative entrepreneur-centered economic growth strategy that offers a balanced approach to the economic development service offerings in Florida. In partnership with FloridaMakes, GrowFL has developed a program specifically for manufacturing and manufacturing-related businesses in Florida. This manufacturing-centric program will provide a suite of services to support top-line revenue growth and peer-to-peer support for the CEOs who are leading this extraordinary businesses in Florida.

The three basic elements of GrowFL are:

1. Provide critical information needed by businesses to survive and thrive.
2. Develop and cultivate an infrastructure that goes beyond basic physical infrastructure and includes quality of life, a culture that embraces growth and change, and access to intellectual resources, including qualified and talented employees.
3. Develop connections between businesses and the people and organizations that can help take them to the next level — business associations, universities, roundtable groups, service providers and more.

GrowFL builds on the experiences and insights of experts across the nation who work at the cutting edge of business development policies and practices. This program will:

- Rely on providing knowledge and expertise to companies through strategic research and peer-to-peer learning environments.
- Focus on small companies that have the capacity and intent to grow.
- Emphasize a market-based role for the economic development efforts, rather than one that focuses principally on providing services.
- Acknowledge that the economic strategy to provide targeted support to skilled entrepreneurs is aligned with quality-of-life and place-making strategies.

The **Florida Manufacturers Business Growth Program** offers an opportunity for a local, or regional team of, entrepreneur support organization(s) to develop a year-long program for second-stage growth companies in the manufacturing sector to participate in Strategic Research, Mastermind Groups, CEO Forums, Webinars, Florida Companies to Watch, and a number of other opportunities designed to help this target group of companies continue to grow in Florida.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

GrowFL intends to contract with up to ten (10) Entrepreneur Support Organizations (ESOs), seeking to expand entrepreneur initiatives and support for second-stage growth entrepreneurs in the manufacturing and manufacturing-related industry sector.

Local or regional teams of ESOs are invited to submit proposals to support for up to fifteen (15) CEOs of second-stage growth companies, who will participate in a one-year program to include Strategic Research, Mastermind Groups, CEO Forums, Webinars, Florida Companies to Watch and other programs to support their growth. Proposals must pre-identify the participating companies and all companies must meet the criteria as set forth within this RFP.

ENTREPRENEUR SUPPORT ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

There are a vast number of organizations that drive the infrastructure and culture needed to build entrepreneurial communities. Entrepreneur Support Organizations (ESOs), for the purpose of this request for proposal are not-for-profit or government organizations that serve, or have an ability to serve, second-stage manufacturing and manufacturing-related businesses, and are devoted to the GrowFL philosophy of growing their economies from the "inside out." ESOs make a fundamental decision to devote significant resources to growing the already established companies that reside within their local areas. ESOs include any organization that directly affect entrepreneurs and/or the culture and infrastructure in which they do business. ESOs work in concert with the public and private sector to provide the resources, both tangible and intangible, to help second stage businesses grow and succeed. ESOs can include economic development organizations, regional manufacturing associations, incubators, trade associations, chambers of commerce, or small business development centers, etc. Regional teams may include multiple ESOs, with a single ESO identified as the lead contractor.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to participate in this program, a company must:

- A privately held company, headquartered in Florida.
- Employ at least 6 persons, but not more than 150 persons;
- Generate at least \$750,000, but not more than \$100 million in annual revenue;
- Be within following industries as identified by NAICS code prefix:
 - 31-33 Manufacturing
 - 423510 Metal Service Centers and Other Metal Merchant Wholesalers
 - 488991 Packing and Crating
 - 541330 Engineering Services
 - 541380 Testing Laboratories
 - 541711 – Research and Development in Biotechnology
 - 541712 Research and Development in Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Biotechnology)
 - 541713 Research and Development in Nanotechnology
 - 541714 Research and Development in Biotechnology (except Nanobiotechnology)
 - 541715 Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences
 - 561910 Packaging and Labeling Services
 - 811310 Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment Repair and Maintenance (excludes Automotive and Electronic)
- Be able to enter into an agreement with GrowFL at the University of Central Florida to establish the business's commitment to participate in the GrowFL program;
- Be able to financially support their participation in the program with an investment of \$7,500. Grant funding may be available to help offset the participation fee up to 50%;
- Participate in Strategic Research, Mastermind Groups, CEO Forums, Webinars and Florida Companies to Watch between May 2019 and February 2020; and
- Provide revenue, job and average wage data upon completion of the program, as well as a mid-year and post-performance evaluation.



STRATEGIC RESEARCH DESCRIPTION

Strategic Research matches businesses with the GrowFL group of experts that help to analyze a company's overall business strategy. The Strategic Research Group uses high end corporate level tools and cutting edge scientific concepts to help second-stage companies positively affect sales and marketing efforts, resulting in business growth and sustainable job creation.

Strategic Research tools identify markets, monitor competitors, track industry trends, locate customer clusters on maps and use search engine optimization/social media for marketing and various customized research. The tools focus on front-end strategic issues of business including core strategy, market dynamics, marketing, teams and finance that draw on scientific theories based on complexity science, network theory, temperament of individuals, and systems thinking.

A typical Strategic Research project is initiated with two one (1) hour "discovery" calls with the CEO of the company, and at least 3 members of their sales & marketing team, along with the GrowFL Team Leader. The CEO is interviewed about the business and their current business issues. During the call, the GrowFL team leader will probe into the issues and establish a task list of activities to be performed for the client. The discovery call is followed by a kick-off call with the entire Strategic Research Group of experts. The CEO will be asked to describe the challenges or opportunities within their business. The Group of experts can then determine which key specialty areas suits the CEO and begin to work on individual efforts that will support the growth of the business. Tasks are worked on over a period of weeks involving the team's research effort and subsequent monthly telephone and email communications with the CEO and their sales and marketing team to review and confirm the client's understanding of the information provided. It is anticipated that a CEO will have multiple encounters with the GrowFL team throughout the course of the year. The cost for the Strategic Research program is \$7,500, but grants may be available to help offset the cost by at least 50%.

Strategic Research may include:

- Core business strategy review Market research
- Digital media research
- HR (recruiting and retention as well as compliance)
- Operations and finance
- Global markets
- Succession planning
- Supply chain management
- Primary market research
- Referrals - inclusive but not limited to accounting, trademark and licensing, process design, information technology, business valuation, lean manufacturing, and international trade.

MANUFACTURING MASTERMIND GROUPS

Manufacturing Mastermind Groups will meet quarterly and focus on issues specific to the manufacturing and manufacturing-related industry sector. Mastermind groups offer a combination of brainstorming, education, peer accountability and support in a group setting to sharpen a CEO's business and personal skills. A mastermind group helps the CEO achieve success. Members will challenge each other to set strong goals, and more importantly, to accomplish them. Mastermind Group meetings will take a deeper dive into topics of need revealed during the Strategic Research process.

CEO FORUMS

CEO Forums take place twice a year and allow experienced CEOs to share "lessons learned" with leaders in second-stage growth companies. The forums are intended for CEOs to learn from entrepreneurs who have grown successful businesses, network with other entrepreneurs and build a stronger entrepreneurial culture in the community or region.

EVENTS/WEBINARS

Florida Companies to Watch: The Florida Companies to Watch awards program is an additional opportunity for recognition of your region's second-stage growth entrepreneurs. Each year, typically in October, up to 50 companies are chosen who exemplify growth and success. ESOs serve as our Community Partners in this effort to identify, nominate, award and celebrate our Florida Companies to Watch through localized marketing and public relations.

CEO Webinars: GrowFL uses a network of experts from around Florida to bring needed information and resources to CEOs through online webinars. Webinars are held once a month and offer an additional opportunity to highlight programs in Florida or individuals that CEOs can contact for additional assistance.

AWARD DESCRIPTION

All regional and local award recipients will agree to implement a one-year program that will include the following. A complete scope of work is included in Attachment B:

- A. Recruit up to fifteen (15) CEOs of eligible second-stage growth companies per the eligibility criteria in this RFP. Eighty-percent (80%) of the companies must be new participants in the GrowFL FloridaMakes program as verified by GrowFL. Companies are considered recruited upon receiving an official acceptance notification from GrowFL.
- B. Market and promote all the GrowFL programs and services within the ESO service area.
- C. Report to GrowFL on the schedule within this RFP program activities.
- D. Demonstrate a willingness to invest in second-stage companies by augmenting awarded funds through this program with other local funding or activities (see Attachment A: Budget Template). Can include direct and in-kind funding.

In order to ensure that organizations and communities of all sizes in diverse geographic regions in Florida have an opportunity to participate, proposals will be awarded in the following categories:

1. Regional Awards

Awarded to an existing regional team of entrepreneur support organizations consisting of two-or-more organizations in multiple counties working together to support economic development and entrepreneurs in Florida. Priority will be given to proposals that can demonstrate dedicated funding to support the GrowFL programs beyond the requirements of this RFP in the service region. For regional awards, a lead organization must be identified and the lead organization must identify other partners/participant organizations included in the proposal.

2. Local Awards

An award to a single ESO serving a county or city that has demonstrated an expertise in working with second- stage growth entrepreneurs in their community. Priority will be given to proposals that can demonstrate dedicated funding to support the GrowFL programs beyond the requirements of this RFP in the service area.

ELIGIBILITY/AWARD AMOUNT

All economic development organizations, regional economic development organizations, regional manufacturing associations, multi-county consortiums formed for award purposes, trade associations, technology centers, or any other organization that matches the criteria as an ESO will be eligible to submit proposals. Multiple ESOs coming together as regional teams are also allowed as long as one ESO is identified as the lead contractor.

Award Amount

- Up to ten (10) contracted ESOs are anticipated to be selected for awards
- Award amount can be up to \$22,500 per contracted ESO
- The anticipated period of performance will be from June 1, 2019 through February 28, 2020 and will be performance- based.

PROPOSAL PROCESS

The objective of this RFP is to allow local and regional teams of entrepreneur support organizations to apply for funding under the Florida Manufacturers Business Growth Program Initiative.

1. All interested organizations – through a single point of contact – should provide a Proposal to the Florida Economic Gardening Institute by the RFP deadline. (See “RFP Deadline”).
2. A Selection Committee will review and evaluate the Proposals based on the Selection Criteria listed below.
3. Notification of award is anticipated in mid May 2019.

Recipients will be required to sign an Agreement with the University of Central Florida Research Foundation outlining the performance and reporting requirements of the award prior to the disbursement of funds. See Performance Measures in following section.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Contracts will be awarded on a competitive basis, to up to ten (10) Regional and Local awards. Selection criteria for Regional and Local Awards (generally prioritized as follows):

1. A complete and thorough RFP response.
2. Geographic dispersion of ESOs.
3. Has completed applications (<https://growfl1.nationalcentereg.org/>) from a minimum of ten (10) companies and those companies have been officially accepted into the program by GrowFL. The Attachment C Worksheet can help prepare companies for going online to complete their application.
4. Responses that have identified and confirmed the most qualified NEW to the program eligible companies.
5. Potential for this one-time funding to establish an ongoing GrowFL program in their community or region. For example, this can be demonstrated by showing a plan for local investment of funding or activities as part of the local or regional strategy.
6. Incorporates partnerships with other existing local, regional, and/or statewide entrepreneur support organizations.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Please submit Proposal in electronic format. The Proposal should not exceed 5 pages.

Part 1: Organization / Proposal Team Background

General information to be included for submitting organization or **each member** of the proposal team:

1. Organization name, individual contact name and title, address, phone, email, website, general description of each organization, and Federal ID#.
2. A list of staffing dedicated to this proposal, along with their professional training or experience.
3. For teams with multiple participants, please identify the contracting entity and the single, primary point-of-contact regarding contract coordination and facilitation.
4. For teams with multiple participants, please include the following statement, **signed by each of the proposal team members:**

“The following organizations and participants submit this proposal under the coordination and facilitation of (name of primary point-of-contact organization). The members understand and agree that all communications, reports, and fund disbursement will be handled by (name of primary-point-of contact organization).”

Part 2: Program Outline

This section should provide enough detail about your program for the Selection Committee to evaluate the proposal based on the Selection Criteria outlined in this RFP.

1. Please provide a brief overview of your organizations’ current entrepreneurial support activities and how this program will enhance your efforts.
2. Geographic market that will be targeted.
3. Experience in working with target industry sectors.

Part 3: Budget

A. Using the **Attachment A** template provided, please provide a budget outlining how the award funds will be utilized, as well as local support.



RFP DEADLINE/SUBMISSION

Please email an electronic copy to:

Tammie Sweet, Director

GrowFL

TSweet@GrowFL.com

By: May 17, 2019, 5:00pm EST

Businesses included in the RFP response must complete an online application at <https://growfl1.nationalcentereg.org/> by the RFP Deadline of May 17, 2019.



TAKING SUCCESSFUL COMPANIES TO THE NEXT LEVEL

ATTACHMENT A: BUDGET TEMPLATE

Description	Program Award Funds	ESO Investment Beyond Program Award Funds. Direct or in-kind value	Brief Description of ESO Investment Items
Personnel (labor & fringe benefits)	\$	\$	
Outreach/Marketing (non-labor)	\$	\$	
CEO Forums (non-labor)	\$	\$	
CEO Roundtables (non-labor)	\$	\$	
Other* (non-labor)	\$	\$	
Total	\$	\$	

*Please provide details for other costs:

ATTACHMENT B: SCOPE OF WORK

ESO Partner Support – CEO Application Process

Assist CEO in completing on-line application at <https://growfl1.nationalcentereg.org/> to determine eligibility and approval in the program.

- Recruitment is verified after a company submits the online application and is officially accepted into the program.
- If grant applications are required, a company is not officially accepted until the grant is approved.
- GrowFL reviews the application data to verify the company meets the eligibility criteria, and then will accept the application, which results in a notification to the CEO and the ESO.
- Companies must have an online application completed by May 17, 2019 in order to be considered in the ESO selection process.

ESO Partner Support - Strategic Research

- Review individual CEO strategic research pre-call notes and task lists as provided by GROWFL – *all information about the CEO's business provided by GrowFL should be handled as confidential information.*
- Support GrowFL's Strategic Research Team by providing referral sources for local resources, as necessary. Initiate regular contact with the CEOs during the period of performance.
- Work with the CEO on longer term needs that help the CEO achieve implementation of any action items that come from Strategic Research.

ESO Partner Support - Market and Promote the GrowFL program

- GrowFL may provide marketing material templates. The ESO is encouraged to use the templates when applicable.
- Support marketing efforts of Florida Companies to Watch.
- Issue press releases, direct emails, and other marketing communications in support of GrowFL within ESOs service area. GrowFL will coordinate content with the ESO.
- Participate in GrowFL's social media channels including Facebook and Twitter.
- As required, produce brochures and flyers to support GrowFL in the ESOs service area.

ESO Partner Support – Reporting and Support of the GrowFL Team

- Respond within a reasonable amount of time to requests from GrowFL and other GrowFL team members.
- Be an active participant in the GrowFL.
- Provide feedback as necessary to GrowFL to ensure GrowFL program delivery is meeting needs.
- Submit a program activity report and an invoice to GrowFL due on the following dates. Invoicing is at a rate of \$1,500 per company accepted and split into 4 payments during the performance period:
 - September 15, 2019 – up to \$6,000
 - November 15, 2019 – up to \$3,000
 - January 15, 2019 – up to \$3,000
 - February 15, 2020 – up to \$10,500

ESO Partner Support - Gathering Program Outcome Data

Assist GrowFL collecting feedback and data for a mid-year customer satisfaction survey in October 2019 and a full program outcomes survey, including information on jobs, revenues and wages in February 2020.

ATTACHMENT C: GROWFL PARTICIPANT WORKSHEET

Thank you for your interest in the GrowFL program. We are eager to work with you to help grow your company. Please use this worksheet to determine your eligibility. The grants made available by the state have certain criteria that must be met and this worksheet can help you determine if you qualify. Please note that this is a worksheet only and your official application is made online at <https://growfl1.nationalcentereg.org/>. You may also go directly online and apply and we will contact you regarding your eligibility. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions.

Company Name _____ **Name of CEO participating:** _____
Email Address: _____ **Phone:** _____

Qualifying Industry – check one

- 31-33 Manufacturing
- 423510 Metal Service Centers and Other Metal Merchant Wholesalers
- 488991 Packing and Crating
- 541330 Engineering Services
- 541380 Testing Laboratories
- 541711 – Research and Development in Biotechnology
- 541712 Research and Development in Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Biotechnology)
- 541713 Research and Development in Nanotechnology
- 541714 Research and Development in Biotechnology (except Nanobiotechnology)
- 541715 Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences
- 561910 Packaging and Labeling Services
- 811310 Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment Repair and Maintenance (excludes Automotive and Electronic)

Revenue and Employment History

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 (projected)	2020 (projected)
Full-time Employees						
Part-time Employees						
Contract Employees						
Revenue						

To qualify, all of the following criteria must be met.

- A privately held company, headquartered in Florida.
- Within a qualifying industry as noted above.
- Employs at least 6 full-time equivalent persons, but not more than 150 full-time equivalent persons.
- Generates at least \$750,000, but not more than \$100 million in annual revenue.
- Will be able to enter into an agreement with the University of Central Florida Research Foundation to establish the business’s commitment to participate in the GrowFL program.
- Will provide financial data and report job creation data as prescribed in both the online application and post- performance evaluation.