

## 2019-2020 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training Grant Proposal

Proposal Instructions: The Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Proposal (this document) must be completed and signed by an authorized representative of the entity applying for the grant. Please read the proposal carefully as some questions may require a separate narrative to be completed. If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.

### Entity Information

Name of Entity: AXPIRE LLC

Federal Employer Identification Number (if applicable): ██████████

Primary Contact Name: Matthew Markham

Title: Chief Operating Officer

Mailing Address: 80 SW 8th Street, Miami, FL 33130

Phone Number: 9176807897

Email: mm@axpire.com

Secondary Contact Name: Gary Markham

Title: Chief Executive Officer

Phone Number: 9176807899

### Workforce Training Grant Eligibility

Pursuant to 288.101, F.S., the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund was created to promote economic opportunity by improving public infrastructure and enhancing workforce training. This includes workforce training grants to support programs offered at state colleges and state technical centers.

Eligible entities must submit proposals that:

- Support programs and associated equipment at state colleges and state technical centers.
- Provide participants with transferable and sustainable workforce skills applicable to more than a single employer.
- Are offered to the public.
- Are based on criteria established by the state colleges and state technical centers.
- Prohibit the exclusion of applicants who are unemployed or underemployed.

## 1. Program Requirements:

(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

Each proposal must include the following information describing how the program satisfies the eligibility requirements listed on page 1.

**A. Provide the title and a detailed description of the proposed workforce training.**

Software Product Design, Development and Sales. We are offering a software technology program at aXpire in Brickell, Miami to train and hire interns/full time applicants from local colleges, such as Miami Dade College, to design, develop and sell software. These are transferable skills, such as Java, and the role is open to the public.

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**B. Describe how this proposal supports programs at state colleges or state technical centers.**

We are already an internship provider to over 50 schools via JoinHandshake.com, such as FIU. We will provide these colleges with a venue for their students to learn technology skills that will apply to any software company, and will also offer full time roles in Miami to promising candidates. FIU Professor Curba Lampert is supporting us.

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**C. Describe how this proposal provides participants transferable, sustainable workforce skills applicable to more than a single employer.**

More than 40 percent of the \$5 trillion global IT market is in North America, primarily the United States. The industry accounts for \$1.8 trillion of U.S. GDP and ~12 million jobs. Software design, development and sales training and work will create applicants with skills viable for the majority of the N.American IT market.

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**D. Describe how this proposal supports a program(s) that is offered to the public?**

This proposal would tie into our Apprenticeship Florida application, our offering to the public to attain high skill high wage jobs as a result of being trained within an information technology role at aXpire.

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**E. Describe how this proposal is based on criteria established by the state colleges and state technical centers.**

As mentioned, we are already compliant with college hiring processes, per their detailed requirements in JoinHandshake.com, the "de facto" internship and student hiring platform. We are working with Florida International University's Department of International Business to target trainees for this program.

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**F. Does this proposal support a program(s) that will not exclude unemployed or underemployed individuals?**

Yes       No

It's available to unemployed or underemployed people.

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- G.** Describe how this proposal will promote economic opportunity by enhancing workforce training. Please include the number of program completers anticipated to be created from the proposed training. Further, please include the economic impact on the community, region, or state and the associated metrics used to measure the success of the proposed training.

ZipRecruiter quotes the average salary of software developers in Miami, FL as \$105,552/year, as of April 20, 2020. According to Investopedia, this software-related salary is more than 40% higher than the national median salary of \$63,179, as of February 5, 2020. We anticipate taking on a steady increase in the workforce under training, starting with 8 year long roles and 4 summer internship roles, over a 2 year period. We will cover half of their costs.

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**2. Additional Information:**

(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

- A.** Is this an expansion of an existing training program?  Yes  No  
 If yes, please provide an explanation for how the funds from this grant will be used to enhance the existing program.

N/A

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- B.** Does the proposal align with Florida’s Targeted Industries?  
 ([View Florida’s Targeted Industries here.](#))  Yes  No

If yes, please indicate the specific targeted industries with which the proposal aligns.  
 If no, with which industries does the proposal align?

Infotech, Software; Professional Services, Consulting.

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- C.** Does the proposal align with an occupation(s) on the Statewide Demand Occupations List and/ or the Regional Demand Occupations List?  
 ([View Florida’s Demand Occupations Lists here.](#))  Yes  No

If yes, please indicate the specific occupation(s) with which the proposal aligns.  
 If no, with which occupation does the proposal align?

151134 (HSHW)

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- D.** Indicate how the training will be delivered (e.g., classroom-based, computer-based, other).  
If in-person, identify the location(s) (e.g., city, campus, etc.) where the training will be available.

If computer-based, identify the targeted location(s) (e.g. city, county, statewide, etc.) where the training will be available.

In-person at 80 SW 8th Street, Suite 2170, aXpire's office. We will train candidates in an apprenticeship model; both watching and actively participating in our business from the development, design and sales perspective.

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- E.** Indicate the number of anticipated annual enrolled students and completers in the proposed program.

8 full time candidates (up to 2 years) and up to 4 intern students (up to 2 summers), over the length of the grant. We aim to achieve increase organic funding as a result, which will sustain further funding.

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- F.** Indicate the length of program (e.g., quarters, semesters, weeks, etc.), including anticipated beginning and ending dates.

Begin Date: July 2020 End Date: July 2022

For students, July-September 2020, July September 2021  
Full FTEs: July 2020-2022

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- G.** Describe the plan to support the sustainability of the program after grant completion.

After the grant completion, we are aiming to have completed both product and business development goals that will generate sustainable revenues to support onboarded candidates on a full time basis going forward. In other words, we will seek to use the grant as a sort of seed capital with dedicated roles for Miami-based trainees. We will support trainees in early phases of other jobs should they choose to start their own business in our offices.

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- H.** Identify any certifications, degrees, etc. that will result from the completion of the program. Please include the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code and the percent of completers in each code, corresponding with Section E.

Six Sigma Green Belt (all will complete), Web Page, Digital/Multimedia and Information Resources Design (CIP: 11.0801, up to 6 of the full time trainees will complete)

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- I.** Does this project have a local match amount?

Yes  No

If yes, please describe the entity providing the match and the amount. (Do not include in-kind.)

N/A

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J. Provide any additional information or attachments to be considered for the proposal.

Websites and products that will be utilized in the program: www.axpire.com, www.getbilr.com, www.getresolvr.com, www.lsg.com. Training for the CIP-related courses will be completed online, ideally during business hours, and on the weekends if not.

### 3. Program Budget

(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

**Estimated Costs and Sources of Funding:** Include all applicable workforce training costs and other funding sources available to support the proposal.

1.) **Total Amount Requested**      \$ 1,056,000.00  
 Florida Job Growth Grant Fund \_\_\_\_\_

A. Other Workforce Training Project Funding: Sources:

City/County	\$ 0.00	_____
Private Sources	\$ 0.00	_____
Other (grants, etc.)	\$ 0.00	_____
<b>Total Other Funding</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	_____

Please Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Workforce Training Project Costs:

Equipment	\$ 0.00	_____
Personnel	\$ 888,000.00	_____
Facilities	\$ 168,000.00	_____
Tuition	\$ 0.00	_____
Training Materials	\$ 0.00	_____
Other	\$ 0.00	_____
<b>Total Project Costs</b>	<b>\$ 1,056,000.00</b>	_____

Please Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** The total amount requested must be calculated by subtracting the total other workforce training project funding sources in A. from the total workforce training project costs in B.

- C.** Provide a detailed budget narrative, including the timing and steps necessary to obtain the funding, how equipment purchases will be associated with the training program, if applicable, and any other pertinent budget-related information.

We are looking to hire 8 full time employees during the first anniversary of this grant program, which translates to \$424,000 in annual salaries. The two student summer internships will cost \$10,000 per student, which translates to \$20,000 in summer internship salaries, so \$444,000 in total personnel costs. Office costs at 80 SW 8th Street run ~\$7,000 per month, or \$84,000 over the course of a year. In total, costs for the program will run ~\$530,000. This does not include the salaries of the training staff, the aXpire team in Miami, at least 4 full time employees, which we will continue to cover. This represents 1 year of costs to run this program, so 2 years would be approximately double that cost, or \$1,056,000. We can, of course, go year by year. We will cover the salary for the full time trainees and interns not covered by this grant, but we require this grant to hire them.

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#### 4. Approvals and Authority

(If additional space is needed, attach a word document with your entire answer.)

- A.** If entity is awarded grant funds based on this proposal, what approvals must be obtained before it can execute a grant agreement with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (e.g. approval of a board, commission or council)?

Board approval of aXpire.

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- B.** If approval of a board, commission, council or other group is needed prior to execution of an agreement between the entity and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity:

- i. Provide the schedule of upcoming meetings for the group for a period of at least six months.
- ii. State whether entity is willing and able to hold special meetings, and if so, upon how many days' notice.

i. Board of aXpire meets on the first Friday of the month each month

ii. Yes, upon seven (7) days notice prior to the meeting.

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- C.** Attach evidence that the undersigned has all necessary authority to execute this proposal on behalf of the entity. This evidence may take a variety of forms, including but not limited to: a delegation of authority, citation to relevant laws or codes, policy documents, etc.

Gary Markham, CEO of aXpire, LLC

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I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I have express authority to sign this proposal on behalf of the above-described entity and to the best of my knowledge, that all data and information submitted in proposal is truthful and accurate and no material fact has been omitted.

Name of Entity: AXPIRE LLC

Name and Title of Authorized Representative: Gary Markham

Representative Signature: /GARY MARKHAM/

Signature Date: 5/5/2020



May 18<sup>th</sup> 2020

Dear Enterprise Florida, Dept of Economic Growth and Governor DeSantis:

Please find attached our duly completed application for grant funding under the Jobs Growth Grant Fund, along with a number of letters of support from:

- Beacon Council
- Miami Downtown Development Authority
- Florida International University
- Florida International Bankers Association

In October 2019, aXpire LLC was honored by Mayor Carlos Gimenez with the “Key to the County” at a ceremony held at Miami’s Ziff Opera House.

We work closely with FIU and other local education bodies, in order to garner and grow interest in the FinTech space, where we are considered thought leaders.

Our CEO – Gary R Markham – sits on the Global Board of Directors for the Hedge Fund Association, the board of the FIBA FinTech innovations committee, is a member of the Miami Finance Forum and works together with the Beacon Council and Miami DDA to help drive new business into the South Florida area.

We wish to expand our footprint, by giving those in higher education, the opportunity to be trained and be involved in real-life use cases for financial services technology, and continue to push the envelope for transformative innovation.

These grant funds will aid the pace at which we can grow out new job opportunities for interns and graduates and help us train and retain the best minds in Florida.

Thank you in advance for kindly considering our application and we are more than happy to provide further information, should you need it.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary R Markham".

Gary R Markham  
Chief Executive





Enterprise Florida  
800 North Magnolia Avenue  
Suite 1100  
Orlando, FL 32803

RE: Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Application

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write in support of the Axpire, LLC Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training Application. Axpire, LLC is an innovative fintech company established in Downtown Miami. In partnership with Miami-Dade College and Florida International University, Axpire proposes a software technology program to train applicants to design, develop, and sell software. Partnerships between private business and our publicly funded education institutions will be essential to address the fintech talent demands in our dynamic and growing financial services industry in the years to come.

The Miami-Dade Beacon Council is the Economic Development agency for Miami-Dade County, FL charged with diversifying our economic base and driving job creation across our targeted industries. Financial services, in particular Fintech, is a leading targeted industry in Miami. In order to retain and grow our existing businesses and recruit new fintech opportunities to our community, we need to expand our offerings of innovative financial training programs. We believe this proposal, with the partnership from Miami-Dade College and Florida International University, is an important part of our growth.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Kohnstamm'.

James Kohnstamm  
Executive Vice President  
The Miami-Dade Beacon Council

## Board of Directors

**Manolo Reyes**  
Chairman  
Commissioner, City of Miami

**Eileen Higgins**  
Vice-Chairwoman  
Commissioner, District 5  
Miami-Dade County

**Suzanne M. Amaducci-Adams**  
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**Alicia Cervera Lamadrid**  
Cervera Real Estate

**T. Spencer Crowley III**  
Akerman

**Philippe Houdard**  
Pipeline Workspaces

**Danet Linares**  
Blanca Commercial Real Estate

**Richard Lydecker**  
Lydecker | Diaz

**Jose Mallea**  
Biscayne Bay Brewing Company

**Nitin Motwani**  
Miami Worldcenter Group

**Alan Ojeda**  
Rilea Development Group

**Gary Ressler**  
Tilia Companies

**Franklin Sirmans**  
Pérez Art Museum Miami

**Marta Viciedo**  
Urban Impact Lab

**Greg West**  
ZOM Living

## Executive Staff

**Christina Crespi**  
Executive Director

April 23, 2020

Florida Opportunity Fund  
c/o Enterprise Florida  
800 North Magnolia Avenue  
Suite 1100  
Orlando, Florida 32803

Re: aXpire

Dear Sir/Madaam,

Thank you for accepting this letter of support for aXpire, an innovative company with headquarters in downtown Miami. aXpire is a software development firm specialized in helping clients digitize their businesses so they can increase their productivity and profits.

The Miami Downtown Development Authority is an independent agency of the City of Miami with a mission to grow, strengthen and promote the economic vitality of downtown Miami. The agency does many things like ensure that the downtown Miami streets are safe and clean; advocate for adequate green and public space for residents; produce timely market research data and promote business development, among other services.

Specific to business development we support the growth of high-wage and strategic industries like technology and finance in our district. aXpire is well within our Downtown Miami district and is an example of the kind of business we consider to be strategic for the continued growth of our economy. As they grow their Downtown Miami footprint, they will be developing 21<sup>st</sup> century talent in addition to creating high wage jobs. For this reason, the Miami Downtown Development Authority submits this letter of support for aXpire and their application for the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund.

We thank you for your consideration and your time.

Sincerely,



Ilona Vega  
Business Development

May 11, 2020

Florida Opportunity Fund  
c/o Enterprise Florida  
800 North Magnolia Avenue STE 1100  
Orlando, Florida, 32803

Re: aXpire

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing this in support of the firm aXpire, LLC for their Florida Job Growth Grant Fund Workforce Training Application.

aXpire is a fintech company that has been established in Miami and has established a partnership with the Office of Business Career Management at FIU Business, in addition to the University's Career & Talent Development office. They are creating exciting and highly sought-after internship programs in the growing fintech field here in South Florida.

One of the aims of Fintech is to make financial services more accessible to the general public, and this aligns with my office's mission of making career advising and education more accessible to over 10,000 current FIU Business students and 8,000+ local alumni in South Florida.

We support aXpire's proposal. The firm's partnership with FIU, FIU Business, and Miami Dade College, will continue to expand and grow the cutting-edge technology and related fintech jobs.

In the coming months I anticipate seeing an increase of students who will want to learn more about fintech and will naturally see keen interest in this growing tech sector. Firms like aXpire will help lead the expansion of training and jobs in Miami's growing fintech industry.

Kind Regards,



John P. Nykolaiszyn  
Director, Office of Business Career Management  
FIU Business



FLORIDA  
INTERNATIONAL  
BANKERS  
ASSOCIATION

Enterprise Florida

April 26, 2020

Via email: [FloridaJobGrowthGrantFund@enterpriseFlorida.com](mailto:FloridaJobGrowthGrantFund@enterpriseFlorida.com)

Re: The Florida Job Growth Grant Fund

Dear Sir/Madam,

We would like to present our support for aXpire's application to the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund. We believe the company will add value to the Miami technology ecosystem, both as a standalone company and in taking in trainees through this grant. This increase in high wage workers in the area should see an increase in the living standards of the community overall and will continue to set Miami apart as a center for innovation. We believe this application is in line with our mission at Florida International Bankers Association (FIBA).

Built on a legacy that spans more than 35 years, FIBA is a non-profit trade association and international center for financial excellence. The Florida-based, and globally connected, organization's membership includes the largest financial institutions from Europe, the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean. The core of FIBA's work is education; FIBA applies practical ideas and real-world solutions to train and certify thousands in anti-money laundering compliance.

We believe aXpire's application will further education in both the technology and financial services industry through their fintech use cases.

As a respected industry voice, FIBA has built a network of partnerships with regulators and policy makers through a comprehensive, hands-on approach to advocacy. Its impact and influence on regulation and legislation affecting the industry extends to all levels of government; state, federal and international.

In this vein, we are putting our recommendation forward that you consider aXpire's application in earnest, as the grant would represent a strong partnership between government and business.

Thank you for taking the time to read our letter, and we look forward to hearing of the results.

All the best,

David Schwartz  
President & CEO

80 S.W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Suite 2590  
Miami, FL 33130