Requester Information

Legislator Name: Cullimore, Kirk A.

Created Date: January 29th 2026 **Submitted Date:** January 29th 2026

Section 1: Requester Details

Description:

In partnership with Lehi City, Utah County and private donors, the request is for $10 million of appropriation to fund a portion of the new Children's Tech & Science Center at Thanksgiving Point, a community led 501(c)(3) organization. The center will house hands-on exhibits, labs, and programming spaces centered on technology used to advance Utah's leading industries including: energy, aerospace, biotech, fintech, AI, and other industries. Expected to host 600,000 visitors per year the center will be home to 60 weekly STEM lab sessions, hundreds of field trips, after-school programs and a hub for volunteers from Utah's tech companies to mentor and inspire the next generation of STEM workers. Free admission will be provided to Utah's low-income kids.

Legislative designee contact information:

Name: McKay Christensen

Organization: Thanksgiving Point

Position: CEO

Section 2: Funding Information

How will the appropriation be used?

Category	One-time		Ongoing
Personnel Services	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
In-State Travel	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00

Category	One-time		Ongoing
Out-of-State Travel	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
Supplies and Equipment	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
Technology Purchases	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
Infrastructure/Capital Investments	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $10,000,000.00	$0.00
Other Charges/Pass Thru	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00

Expenditure Total

One-time 2026	One-time 2027	Ongoing 2027
$0.00	**$10,000,000.00**	**$0.00**

Funding Sources:

Income Tax Fund

Amount Requested:

2026 (One-time)	$0.00
2027 (One-time)	$10,000,000.00
2027 (Ongoing)	$0.00

Revenue Total

One-time 2026	One-time 2027	Ongoing 2027
$0.00	**$10,000,000.00**	**$0.00**

Is this a multi-year project?

Yes

Is this project scalable if the Legislature does not fund the full requested amount?

Yes

A short explanation describing how the project might be scaled?

The project will be built over a period of three years beginning with remodel of an existing building, construction of a new adjacent building, then improvements, and then permanent exhibit installation.

Section 3: Agency Information

Subjects:

Economy

00790

Agency:

063 / Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity

Type of entity to receive pass-through funding:

Private Not for Profit

Grant recipient

Yes

Requested Direct Award Grant Recipient

Thanksgiving Point

Section 4: Performance Outcome Measurement

Who would benefit the most from this request (who is the target audience)?

Utah's children and their families, with a special focus on low-income children (determined by whether parents are on WIC or SNAP) who will receive free admission to the center and the programs. Utah's students who attend through field trips, after school programs, summer camps, and other programs. Students who attend Girls Who Code and Boys & Girls in STEM programs, and teachers who participate in summer certification.

What is this project or program intended to accomplish?

Significantly more kids from high income homes go on to work in STEM jobs than kids from low-income homes and STEM jobs pay 2.5 times more than non-STEM jobs. The National Center for Education Statistics longitudinal studies concluded that children's confidence in STEM in elementary and middle school predicted whether they would go on to work in a STEM career. The new Tech Center enrichment programs and exhibits are designed to give kids confidence in themselves and STEM, and be a hub for Silicon Slope company volunteers to mentor young women and men in tech.

How will the Legislature know whether the project or program achieved its intended purpose?

In pre and post participation evaluation, children and youth measured will show significant improvement in self-confidence, tech & science identity (they see themselves as a tech or science person), belief in their ability to do STEM, exposure to role models in tech, resilience, tech career understanding, and understanding of how science is used in their everyday lives. In terms of the project completion, the center is completed and open in 2028.

Section 5: Other Supporting Documents

Intent Language Documents

Previous Funding Documents

Full Time Employees

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