



Bridge Funding Request: Operations & Education Activation

Overview

The FiberMax Center for Discovery is preparing to open its new Agricultural Literacy Wing in August 2026. Due to exhibit delays, the facility is currently operating at increased cost without the full revenue capacity the expansion was designed to generate.

This request seeks bridge funding to support operations, education programming, and staffing until the new wing is fully open and revenue-generating.

Current Situation

- Expanded facility with increased utilities, insurance, and maintenance costs
- Limited ability to generate full admissions revenue until new wing opens
- Reduced program capacity due to incomplete exhibit spaces
- Existing funds being redirected from planned operations to cover exhibit completion

Post-Opening Revenue Plan

Upon opening of the Children's Wing, the Center will:

- Implement increased admission rates
- Expand facility rental capacity with additional meeting and event spaces
- Grow youth and school programming
- Increase visitor traffic and regional engagement

These changes are expected to significantly strengthen long-term sustainability.

Education & Workforce Impact

Bridge funding will directly support:

- Expansion of youth education programming
- Increased access for school field trips
- Development of agricultural literacy curriculum
- Workforce exposure for students in agriculture and related industries

Staffing Needs (Essential Operations)

Staffing is critical to activating the new wing and supporting increased programming.

- Two Summer Interns (May–August)
 - \$11/hour, 25 hours/week
 - Total per intern: ~\$5,500 (including taxes/overhead)
 - Total for two interns: ~\$11,000
- Ongoing staff time required for:
 - Program delivery
 - Visitor services
 - Facility operations

Staffing represents a core, ongoing operational cost necessary to ensure successful activation of the new wing.

Bridge Funding Budget

Category	Estimated Cost
• Two Summer Interns	\$11,000.00
• Program & Education Support	\$10,000.00 – \$20,000.00
• Operational Costs (utilities, staffing, etc.)	\$20,000.00 – \$40,000.00
Total Bridge Funding Need	\$40,000.00 – \$70,000.00

Outcome

Bridge funding will allow the Center to:

- Sustain operations through opening
- Deliver education programming during summer months
- Properly staff and activate the new wing
- Transition into a self-sustaining model upon opening

This request ensures that a completed public investment is not only opened, but fully activated for education, community use, and long-term impact.



Children’s Wing Completion & Activation Request

Project Overview

The FiberMax Center for Discovery completed construction of its new Agricultural Literacy Wing in late 2023. However, due to the unexpected closure of our exhibit fabrication company in October 2025, several key children’s exhibits remain unfinished.

While much of the exhibit material has been recovered, completing and integrating these elements requires additional funding. As a result, the new wing has not yet been able to open to the public.

Goal: Fully complete and open the Children’s Wing by August 2026

Important Context

- Several exhibits were previously sponsored, and funds were paid to the exhibit firm prior to completion.
- With the firm no longer in business, exhibits must now be rebuilt or completed with new vendors.
- The Center has limited funds available, but these were intended for operating the new wing.
- Using those funds for exhibit completion will limit the ability to operate the facility once opened.

Why This Matters

- Expands youth education programming
- Increases tourism and facility rentals
- Activates a completed public asset
- Supports agricultural literacy

Exhibit Completion Budget

Item	Estimated Cost
Crop Cycle Exhibit	\$10,560.00
Dirt to Shirt Exhibit	\$6,538.00
Vet Clinic Exhibit	\$5,262.00
Animal Barn Components	\$9,000.00 – \$13,000.00
Sheep Tactile Interactive	\$3,200.00
Aquifer Interactive Exhibit	\$20,000.00
Subtotal	\$54,560.00 – \$58,560.00
Travel & Installation (10%)	\$5,456.00 – \$5,856.00
Total Estimated Cost	\$60,000.00 – \$65,000.00
Total with Contingency	\$75,000.00 - \$90,000.00

Additional Considerations

- Combine exhibit requires further engineering
- Animal Nutrition redesign
- Story Barn material replacement
- Integration of recovered exhibit components

Recommended total with contingency: \$75,000–\$90,000

Project Outcome

- Opening of Children’s Wing by August 2026
- Expanded school programming
- Increased admissions and rentals
- Immediate community impact

We are not seeking funding to start a project—we are seeking support to complete and open one that is already built but temporarily stalled.

Overview

The FiberMax Center for Discovery is advancing key projects that expand educational capacity, improve operational efficiency, and strengthen long-term sustainability. These projects directly support Lubbock County through increased access to agricultural education, preservation of regional history, and improved public programming.

Project 1: Onsite Storage & Shop Facility

This project will construct a dedicated onsite storage and shop facility to house tools, exhibit components, and historical artifacts.

Currently, these materials are stored in a downtown county warehouse, which presents long-term uncertainty and logistical challenges. Relocating these assets onsite will:

- Protect and preserve valuable agricultural artifacts
- Improve staff efficiency and reduce transportation costs
- Increase capacity for exhibit maintenance and program development
- Ensure long-term stability independent of external storage availability

A lead gift of \$85,000 has already been secured for this project through Terry and Sheri Hurst.

Project 2: Crops Exhibit (8-Panel Display) Modernization

The Crops 8-panel display is a central, high-visibility educational exhibit within the Hurst Exhibit Hall. This exhibit serves as a primary teaching tool for visitors, students, and agricultural groups.

The current system is outdated and unreliable. The proposed refresh will:

- Replace aging hardware and rebuild software systems
- Enable in-house and remote content updates
- Provide interactive, modern educational experiences
- Support long-term reliability and reduced maintenance costs

The project includes hardware replacement, software redevelopment, and installation, totaling approximately \$40,668 .00.

One-third of the required funding for this project has already been secured.

Project Funding Summary

Project	Estimated Need
Onsite Storage & Shop Facility	\$200,000.00 (approximate project cost)
- Less Committed Funding (Hurst Gift)	(\$85,000.00)
Remaining Need – Storage/Shop	\$115,000.00
Crops Display Modernization	\$40,668.00
- Less Secured Funding (~1/3)	(\$13,500.00 approx.)
Remaining Need – Crops Display	\$27,000.00 approx.

Impact for Lubbock County

These projects directly support county priorities by:

- Expanding educational capacity for youth and school groups
- Enhancing workforce awareness in agriculture and related industries
- Preserving regional agricultural history and assets
- Increasing the Center’s ability to serve as a community and regional resource
- Strengthening long-term operational sustainability

These investments ensure that the FiberMax Center for Discovery continues to serve as a leading educational and cultural resource for Lubbock County, with the capacity to grow programming, protect assets, and deliver long-term public value.