

TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. PRE-APPLICATION FORM

Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. ("Triumph Gulf Coast") has created a pre-application process to provide initial consideration of eligibility for potential ideas of projects or programs that may seek an award of funding. Applicants are required to participate in the pre-application process. Notwithstanding the response from Triumph Gulf Coast on the pre-application form, an Applicant may still elect to submit an Application.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Individual/Entity/Organization: Florida's Great Northwest

Proposal Title: **FGNW: United FORWARD - Economic Development Strategy, Market Activation**

Amount of Triumph Funds Requested: \$10,552,000

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$12,978,960

Brief Description of Individual/Entity/Organization: Florida's Great Northwest (FGNW) serves as a unified voice for the region that promotes Northwest Florida as a globally competitive location for business, advocates for economic development issues that impact the region, and collaborates across county lines to improve regional competitiveness.

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Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program: N/A

REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In a maximum of two (2) pages, please describe the proposed project or program and anticipated outcomes including (i) the amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast; (ii) the amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project or program; (iii) the location of the project or program; (iv) summary description of the proposed program, including how the program will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties, and (v) a summary timeline for the proposed project or program.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This pre-application process will **not** result in an award of funding by Triumph Gulf Coast. Rather, this process is designed to facilitate submission of ideas for potential projects or programs before the Applicant expends time and/or resources to complete a full Application. All Applicants for funding are required to complete an Application, which will be reviewed and then considered for award at the discretion of Triumph Gulf Coast Board.

Please Select the Proposal's Eligibility Category(s)

Pursuant to Section 288.8017, Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. was created to make awards from available funds to projects or programs that meet the priorities for economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties. The disproportionately affected counties are: Bay County, Escambia County, Franklin County, Gulf County, Okaloosa County, Santa Rosa County, Walton County, or Wakulla County. *See*, Section 288.08012.

1. From the choices below, please check the box that describes the purpose of the proposed project or program (check all that apply):

- ☐ Ad valorem tax rate reduction within disproportionately affected counties;
- ☐ Local match requirements of s. 288.0655 for projects in the disproportionately affected counties;
- ☐ Public infrastructure projects for construction, expansion, or maintenance which are shown to enhance economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties;
- ☐ Grants to local governments in the disproportionately affected counties to establish and maintain equipment and trained personnel for local action plans of response to respond to disasters, such as plans created for the Coastal Impacts Assistance Program;
- ☐ Grants to support programs that prepare students for future occupations and careers at K-20 institutions that have campuses in the disproportionately affected counties. Eligible programs include those that increase students' technology skills and knowledge; encourage industry certifications; provide rigorous, alternative pathways for students to meet high school graduation requirements; strengthen career readiness initiatives; fund high-demand programs of emphasis at the bachelor's and master's level designated by the Board of Governors; and, similar to or the same as talent retention programs created by the Chancellor of the State University System and the Commission of Education, encourage students with interest or aptitude for science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medical disciplines to pursue postsecondary education at a state university or a Florida College System institution within the disproportionately affected counties;
- ☐ Grants to support programs that provide participants in the disproportionately affected counties with transferable, sustainable workforce skills that are not confined to a single employer; and
- ☒ Grants to the tourism entity created under s. 288.1226 for the purpose of advertising and promoting tourism and Fresh From Florida, and grants to promote workforce and infrastructure, on behalf of all of the disproportionately affected counties.

Please Select the Priorities this Proposal's Outcomes will Achieve

1. Please check the box if the proposed project or program will meet any of the following priorities (check all that apply):

- ☒ Generate maximum estimated economic benefits, based on tools and models not generally employed by economic input-output analyses, including cost-benefit, return-on-investment, or dynamic scoring techniques to determine how the long-term economic growth potential of the disproportionately affected counties may be enhanced by the investment.
- ☒ Increase household income in the disproportionately affected counties above national average household income.
- ☒ Leverage or further enhance key regional assets, including educational institutions, research facilities, and military bases.
- ☐ Partner with local governments to provide funds, infrastructure, land, or other assistance for the project.
- ☐ Benefit the environment, in addition to the economy.
- ☒ Provide outcome measures.
- ☒ Partner with K-20 educational institutions or school districts located within the disproportionately affected counties as of January 1, 2017.
- ☐ Are recommended by the board of county commissioners of the county in which the project or program will be located.
- ☒ Partner with convention and visitor bureaus, tourist development councils, or chambers of commerce located within the disproportionately affected counties.



REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

FGNW: United FORWARD – Economic Development Strategy, Market Activation

- (i) **Triumph Funding Request:** \$10,552,000 (2025 – 2030)
- (ii) **Matching Fund Sources:** \$2,426,960 (23%)
- (iii) **Program Location:** The eight disproportionately affected counties
- (iv) **Summary Description:**

Florida's Great Northwest (FGNW) is the regional economic development organization for the 13-county region of Florida's panhandle. Building on FGNW's successful track record of recruiting companies like Central Moloney, IAG Aero Group, and Probes Unlimited, **FGNW: United FORWARD** launches a comprehensive two-pronged approach to accelerate Northwest Florida's economic transformation. This initiative strategically advances our region through Economic Development Strategy (Part 1) and Market Activation (Part 2), creating a powerful framework to drive diversification and economic growth across Northwest Florida. The awareness of Northwest Florida as a business destination and the unmatched opportunities through the Triumph Gulf Coast funds have been amplified through FGNW's partnership with Triumph on Project #213, Education ROI Research and Marketing Grant. As this grant concludes, FGNW proposes a strategic approach to build upon our achievements and create sustainable economic growth through a new comprehensive initiative.

Economic Development Strategy: Part 1 of **FGNW: United FORWARD** will develop a comprehensive strategic action plan to drive transformational economic impact across Northwest Florida. Building upon the foundational work of Northwest Florida *FORWARD* (released in February 2017), the vision for the “next generation” of *FORWARD* will focus on marketable data collection and actionable strategies for FGNW in its target industry sectors.

The original *FORWARD* strategy had five focus areas for creating a thriving region: Business Vitality, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Transportation, Quality of Place, and Talent. FGNW's core influence is centered on Business Vitality. Building on past successes, Northwest Florida *FORWARD – The Next Generation* will provide a refined roadmap specifically tailored for FGNW and its economic development organization (EDO) partners. This targeted approach will enable FGNW to attract companies within the region's target industry sectors while also empowering local EDOs to support the growth of existing companies in their respective sectors. Recognizing the importance of all five focus areas, the Next Generation plan will offer broad recommendations to empower community leaders and organizations across the region to implement strategies through appropriate organizations and funding sources.

To implement Part 1 of the grant, FGNW will utilize Triumph Gulf Coast funds to:

Build upon the original 2017 Northwest Florida *FORWARD* regional strategy for economic transformation to create Northwest Florida *FORWARD – The Next Generation*. This will serve as a strategic action plan focused on attracting, expanding, and retaining target industries to promote the creation of high-quality jobs and investment.

- **Refine the FORWARD Technical Report:** The updated report will inform the regional strategic action plan.
- **Develop a Northwest Florida FORWARD Dashboard:** This publicly available dashboard will track key economic indicators, educate stakeholders on regional business vitality, and serve as a ‘living report’ to complement the Technical Report.
- **Create Northwest Florida FORWARD – The Next Generation.** Utilizing the Technical Report, the strategic action plan will validate existing and emerging target sectors for growth at the six-digit NAICS



code level, prioritizing diversification that leverages existing assets. It will provide insights for competitive advantages to attract companies by identifying gaps in the supply chain for major regional traded industries.

- **Enhance business attraction, expansion, and retention strategies:** This plan will expand current strategies and recommend new tactics, including targeted trade shows, digital marketing campaigns, recruitment initiatives, trade missions, and best practices for business engagement and resource connection.
- **Lead *FORWARD* implementation:** A dedicated *FORWARD* Facilitator will ensure the successful education and implementation of the *FORWARD* initiative across the region and among stakeholders.

Market Activation: Part 2 of **FGNW: United FORWARD** will showcase our region's economic development assets and create a cycle of prosperity. Increased visibility leads to greater awareness, generating more quality jobs, capital investment, and enhanced wages for residents in Northwest Florida.

To implement Part 2 of the grant, FGNW will utilize Triumph Gulf Coast funds to:

Drive prospect leads and target audience engagement through research-validated marketing initiatives, creating new promotional programs, and developing and implementing a comprehensive marketing strategy that integrates paid, owned, earned, and converged methods to highlight Northwest Florida's strategic business advantages, amplified by the Triumph Gulf Coast Fund. This approach ensures a cohesive and impactful campaign that maximizes reach and effectiveness across all channels. Key components include:

- **Elevate Northwest Florida's national and international profile:** Building on the award-winning "Go Beyond Our Beaches" marketing plan, FGNW will continue targeted promotion, refreshing messaging, and media outreach to maximize impact.
- **Boost brand awareness and engagement with target audiences:** Partnering with a strategic public relations and marketing agency, FGNW will implement a comprehensive strategy utilizing paid, owned, earned, and converged media to enhance brand visibility and resonance.
- **Drive engagement and lead generation:** FGNW will expand engagement with key audiences (site selectors and company decision-makers) through strategic participation and sponsorships at industry events and trade shows.
- **Strengthen marketing execution:** A new Marketing Coordinator will ensure the seamless implementation of FGNW's marketing, public relations, and promotional campaigns.

This grant will directly benefit Triumph Gulf Coast counties by fostering a more robust and diversified regional economy. It will provide FGNW, local EDOs, and community stakeholders with the data, knowledge, and messages to enhance regional collaboration and drive targeted attraction and expansion efforts.

This strategic investment launches the most extensive, strategically focused marketing campaign in Northwest Florida's history, driving diversification and unprecedented economic growth across the region!

United FORWARD	2025 Jul-Dec	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total	Percentages
<i>Economic Development Strategy</i>	\$35,000	\$180,000	\$5,000	\$46,000	\$81,000	\$6,000	\$353,000	3%
<i>Activation Plan</i>	\$800,000	\$1,660,000	\$1,660,000	\$1,710,000	\$1,660,000	\$1,710,000	\$9,200,000	87%
<i>Personnel + Software & Supplies</i>	\$76,000	\$152,000	\$157,000	\$162,000	\$162,000	\$167,000	\$876,000	10%
<i>Grant Administration & Compliance</i>	\$9,000	\$18,000	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$123,000	
Totals	\$920,000	\$2,010,000	\$1,846,000	\$1,942,000	\$1,927,000	\$1,907,000	\$10,552,000	100%