



*Champions For Our Children*

**Community Opportunities Fund Policy  
and Advocacy Grantee Technical  
Assistance Facilitator Contractor  
Request for Qualifications (RFQ)**

**Los Angeles County Children and Families First –  
Proposition 10 Commission (aka First 5 LA)**

**RELEASE DATE: December 22, 2009**



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## I. TIMELINE FOR SELECTION PROCESS<sup>1</sup>

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFQ Released	<b>December 16, 2009</b>
Final date to submit questions and requests for additional information	January 8, 2009
Pre-Proposal Information Session	<b>January 13, 2010</b>
Due Date for Qualifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Online applications plus all forms</li><li>• One (1) original and signed copy of First 5 LA's "Signature Authorization" and "Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties" forms, along with all work samples, sent or delivered to First 5 LA</li></ul>	<b>January 25, 2010 at 5:00 PM</b>
Interviews Qualified Applicants:	<b>Week of February 16 – 19, 2010</b>
Qualified Consultant Notified:	<b>Week of February 23, 2010</b>
<b>Contract Start Date</b> <sup>1</sup>	<b>March 1, 2010</b>

All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFQ must be received in writing by First 5 LA via mail, fax, or email before 5 p.m. on Friday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010. First 5 LA reserves the sole right to determine the timing and content of the responses to all questions and requests for additional information.

Questions and information requests can be submitted to:

Lee Werbel, Program Officer  
First 5 LA  
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: 213. 482. 7554  
Fax: 213.482.5552  
E-mail: [lwerbel@first5la.org](mailto:lwerbel@first5la.org)

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<sup>1</sup> Note: While it is First 5 LA's desire to execute the Contract for a **March 1, 2010** start date, all dates are subject to change at First 5 LA's sole discretion.

## II. BACKGROUND

### ABOUT FIRST 5 LA

In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10, which levied a 50-cent per pack tax on all tobacco products. The resulting tax revenues were earmarked for the creation of a comprehensive system of information and services to advance early childhood development and school readiness within each county in California. In Los Angeles County, First 5 LA was formed as a public entity to develop and oversee various early childhood initiatives and to manage the funding from Proposition 10 (<http://www.first5la.org>). First 5 LA champions health, education, and safety issues benefiting young children and families. Since 1998, First 5 LA has invested \$800 million to support initiatives in all three of its goal areas.

### THE COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES FUND BACKGROUND

First 5 LA's Community Opportunities Fund (COF) established a new funding mechanism for the Commission. COF reflects a responsive giving approach with a focus on funding sustainable change within both organizations and communities. A total of \$13 million was allocated to COF with \$3.25 million available for each of four funding cycles.

#### Types of Grants

Because COF is intended to initiate sustainable and systematic change at the organizational and community levels, COF is not designed to fund direct services. Two specific types of support are funded: (1) organizational capacity building and (2) policy and advocacy grants. Cycles One and Two funded both organizational capacity building and policy and advocacy projects. Cycle Three is funding only policy and advocacy.

Additionally, for Cycle Three, COF was designed to support policy change related to the following goal statements as outlined in the 2009-2015 Strategic Plan:

- Babies are born healthy (Decrease the percent of babies born at a low birth weight)
- Children maintain a healthy weight (Decrease the percent of overweight children)
- Children are safe from abuse and neglect (Number of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect)
- Children are ready for kindergarten (Increase the percent of children reading at grade level at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade)

Policy and Advocacy projects may include policy activities, advocacy activities, or both, in an effort to achieve systems change. For the purposes of COF, policy is defined as rules, standards, guidelines or laws enacted by government, organizations or communities to influence the behavior of systems, communities or individuals and/or to direct resources to lead to long-term sustainable impact on one of the attached COF Policy Goals. For the purposes of COF, advocacy is defined as the effort to raise public or policymaker awareness in order to achieve one of the policy goals at the organizational, community, city, county, state, or federal level. Selected applicants were awarded a maximum of \$500,000 to be distributed over no more than five years.



To date, grants have been awarded to 29 agencies through the first and second cycles of the Community Opportunities Fund (COF). The 29 awards consist of 23 Capacity Building projects and six Policy and Advocacy projects. These funded projects are all underway.

For the third cycle, up to six additional Policy and Advocacy projects will be supported, bringing the total Policy and Advocacy projects to twelve (list of all twelve COF Policy and Advocacy grantees attached).

Following the approval of the Open Grantmaking Implementation (COF) Plan, a white paper was commissioned from the fund's planning consultants to provide recommendations for, and information regarding best practices in, funding Capacity Building and Policy and Advocacy for implementation of COF. One of the key recommendations presented in the white paper was the provision of grantee support and technical assistance for grantees.

The White Paper emphasized the importance of building grantees' organizational capacity to become sustainable by assisting their development of basic attributes of successful organizations, including having a clear mission, a viable financial model, a diversified funding stream, well developed planning mechanisms, strong staff and a solid professional development plan, and flexibility and dexterity to take advantage of outside opportunities for organizational growth and impact.

While it is critical that organizations engaging in policy and advocacy work have a certain level of capacity as outlined above, the White Paper also discussed essential ingredients that lead to success for organizations engaging in policy and advocacy: Good information/data, and understanding of how to use it; on-going personal contact with policy makers; direct involvement of constituents, strong media relations; relevant relationships outside of government; a range of strategies; and effective use of the internet.

#### Types of Grantee Support

In order to best support the Policy and Advocacy COF grantees and help ensure success and sustainability of the efforts beyond the grant, the following grantee support activities will be implemented in coordination with the current six Policy and Advocacy grants and the roll out of the six Cycle Three Policy and Advocacy grants. First 5 LA will select a consultant or a team of consultants with expertise in policy and advocacy based upon the response to this RFQ to provide support for grantees' implementation of their projects.

#### *Grantee Technical Assistance*

Consultants will work with grantees to provide intermediary support in grantees' project implementation. Assistance will be focused on grantee utilization of data from a baseline organizational self-assessment (described below), as well as the expressed needs identified within the COF proposal, and the remaining needs to be addressed to support the scope of work.

#### *Grantee Self-Assessment*

Each grantee will be required to complete an organizational self-assessment using The Conservation Company's (TCC Group's) Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT) organizational assessment (with the policy and advocacy component) at the beginning of the



award period as well as prior to the close of the grant. The TCC Group's CCAT was selected because of its thoroughness and its focus on both utilizing the strengths of an agency as well as addressing its capacity building needs. The CCAT is an online, anonymous and confidential self-assessment of the organization's four core capacities—*Adaptive, Leadership, Management, and Technical Capacities*, along with a written report analyzing the organization's strengths and providing specific recommendations for future growth and change.

The consultant(s) will assist grantees with the reading and interpreting of the report, scores, especially the policy and advocacy components. (If needed, for each organizational capacity area, and/or recommendations for building policy and advocacy capacity, the capacity building COF consultant may be available to assist.)

#### *Group/Peer Learning/Networking*

First 5 LA will convene grantees to provide group trainings and opportunities for peer learning and networking regarding issues common across COF-funded agencies, and to address capacity building needs related to implementation of policy and/or advocacy projects as identified through the self-assessments and their scopes of work.

It is intended that group technical assistance will be designed to additionally provide an opportunity for grantees to learn from one another as peers and to network with each other. This is an opportunity that is especially important for Policy and Advocacy grantees, as successful advocacy is often achieved through collaboration.

The selected consultant(s) will either conduct the trainings or select guest speakers who are experts in areas of organizational effectiveness and policy and advocacy to provide the important learning experiences.



### **III. CONSULTANT SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES**

Under the supervision of the First 5 LA staff, the responsibilities of the Contractor include, but are not limited to, the following:

#### **Summary**

First 5 LA is seeking a consultant or a team of consultants with expertise in policy and advocacy to provide the technical assistance support outlined above as “Types of Grantee Support.” Additionally, depending on qualifications, the selected consultant(s) will be requested to also develop and facilitate the grantee group trainings.

Consultant(s) will provide assistance on reconciling the results of the baseline organizational self-assessment with the needs identified within the COF proposal, and identify what needs remain to be addressed to support the scope of work, specifically in regards to the policy and advocacy components. Consultants will provide periodic consultations with grantees to assess needs and provide recommendations regarding ongoing implementation. While the consultant(s) will not be responsible for implementing the specifically funded project, they will primarily provide linkages to experts in the field and help organizations maneuver the policy and advocacy landscape.

The selected consultant(s) will provide approximately 256 of service per year. This includes 16 hours of consultation with First 5 LA and approximately 20 hours of support per grantee per year.

It is also proposed, depending on qualifications, that the consultant(s) design and facilitate grantee group trainings and opportunities for peer learning regarding issues common across COF-funded agencies, to address gaps in organizational effectiveness and policy and advocacy skills as identified through the self-assessments.

#### **Deliverables**

Under the direction of, and in coordination with First 5 LA staff, provide technical assistance to COF grantees, along with designing and facilitating grantee group trainings. Specifically, selected consultant(s) will be responsible for the following components of the Community Opportunities Fund for the twelve Policy and Advocacy grantees (Cycles One through Three):

##### *Grantee Technical Assistance*

Provision of technical assistance to COF grantees (either onsite or by telephone) regarding ongoing project implementation (expressed needs with the COF proposal) and organizational self-assessment results. The selected consultant(s) will provide approximately 256 of service per year. This includes 16 hours of consultation with First 5 LA and approximately 20 hours of support per grantee per year.

1. Review results of organizational self-assessment tool (CCAT) with grantee.
2. When appropriate or needed, match organizational needs to an outside consultant.

##### *Grantee Trainings*



3. Facilitation of up to two (2) grantee group trainings per year regarding issues common to all or a majority of grantees and/or to address gaps in organizational effectiveness or policy and advocacy as identified through the self-assessments.

#### *Coordination with First 5 LA*

4. Coordination and tracking of grantee consultancies including providing an outline and timeline of each grantee technical assistance project and relevant deliverables.
5. Ongoing feedback and communication to First 5 LA; troubleshooting, best practices and recommendations for additional technical assistance support for grantees. (Frequency and method of feedback to be determined.)
6. Interaction and communication with COF initiative-wide evaluator who will be responsible for providing grantees technical assistance in development and implementation of their project evaluation plan.
7. The consultant(s) may also be asked to provide additional training, consultation and support related to policy and advocacy support to grantees. First 5 LA staff will identify and communicate the need for any related training, consultation and support to the consultant.

## **IV. ELIGIBILITY**

Applicants must have the qualifications, experience and competency, and ability to successfully carry out the Community Opportunities Fund technical assistance and peer learning activities/grantee group trainings. Applications will be considered from individuals, not-for-profit or for-profit agencies, and/or public or private organizations. Applicants should have a presence in California, the capacity to work in Los Angeles County and have familiarity with conducting similar technical assistance and trainings.

The ideal applicant(s) will be familiar with the fields of policy and advocacy, organizational capacity building, strategic planning, nonprofit management, and will have extensive experience providing technical assistance and group training. Knowledge of systems and services for children 0-5 and their families is also important. Selected applicants will be invited for an interview with First 5 LA staff.

## **V. SUMMARY OF DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Desirable Community Opportunities Fund Technical Assistance Consultant(s) Qualities**

An ideal applicant will have all or some of the following qualifications:

- Demonstrated effective provision of capacity building and/or technical assistance
- Demonstrated effective provision of developing policy and advocacy skills
- Engaging and effective facilitation and technical assistance provision skills.
- Ability to design, manage and track multiple technical assistance and group training projects.
- Ability to work independently without direct supervision.
- Ability to work effectively with individuals and teams with diverse strengths and varying backgrounds.



- Ability to initiate and facilitate conversations with multiple stakeholders.
- Ability to be accessible and flexible in accordance with product timelines and due dates associated with deliverables.
- Willingness to communicate regularly with First 5 LA staff and work effectively as part of the COF team.
- Ability to maintain responsibility for all deliverables, associated activities and deadlines.
- Practical and culturally-appropriate perspectives on issues facing young children and families in LA County.

## **VI. TERMS OF PROJECT**

### **Available Funding**

The consultant(s) will be compensated at an hourly rate commensurate with their experience and compensation history. The consultant is responsible for supplying all business equipment needed to implement the tasks above (e.g., computer, printer, fax, internet access, etc.). Successful applicants will function as part of a larger staff/consultant team. The consultant will be responsible for maintaining a daily log to capture time spent on activities. This will support First 5 LA staff management of costs to ensure execution of all tasks related to the scope of work. Total allocation (from the COF Technical Assistance budget) for this project is not to exceed \$190,000.

(Final length of contract and available funding will be determined by the contract execution date. Yearly contracts with First 5 LA will coincide with First 5 LA's fiscal year, which ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>.) Annual expenditures will be negotiated during the finalization of the contract's Scope of Work and Budget. *Funds will be granted through monthly invoices based on services rendered and actual expenses.*

### **Contract Period**

The Commission expects to enter into an approximate 60-month contract with the selected consultant(s). The contract start and end dates will align with the appropriate schedule for COF Cycle Three. Although Cycle Three will be between up to five years, depending on the projects, it is anticipated that consultant services for all twelve policy and advocacy grantees shall commence on approximately March 1, 2010 and conclude in June, 2015.

### **Contractual Obligation**

The selected Community Opportunities Fund Policy and Advocacy Grantee Technical Assistance Facilitator Contractor is required by law to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this document, including the First 5 LA Contract. (See Sample Contract)



## VII. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

In order to respond to this RFQ, please complete and submit your proposal and all required documents to First 5 LA no later than **5:00 PM on January 25, 2010**. Applications received after this deadline **will not** be considered.

### **Required Documents to Respond to RFQ:**

The proposal, including all required attachments, must be submitted online at [www.first5la.org/FundingCenter.In](http://www.first5la.org/FundingCenter.In) in addition to the electronic versions, applicants must also submit one (1) original and signed copy of the application cover letter, First 5 LA's "Signature Authorization," and "Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties" forms, as well as all work samples, to:

*Evelyn V. Martinez, Executive Director*

**First 5 LA  
750 N Alameda Street, Suite 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90012**

**Attention: Community Opportunities Fund Policy and Advocacy Grantee  
Technical Assistance Facilitator**

1. Proposal Package Checklist
2. Proposal Cover Page
3. Cover Letter: Introducing the consultant(s) and clearly showing the consultant's name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, the date, and stating that the letter is in response to an RFQ for the COF Technical Assistance consultant(s).
4. Proposal Narrative: A 3- to 5-page proposal outlining the consultant's plan for the grantee support outlined above, as well as how the consultant's demonstrated ability, based on qualifications and experience, will facilitate the accomplishment of the eight deliverables outlined above.
5. Résumé(s) or Curriculum Vitae(s): Outlining all relevant work history, educational attainment, publications, prior research projects, etc.
6. Proposed Budget: Please include costs for planning, facilitating, providing technical assistance. Additionally, please include costs for group trainings. (Total budget for this project is not to exceed \$190,000)
7. References (*minimum of three, maximum of five*): Include three references of recent consulting clients or attendees of training / workshops. Please include phone and email contact information. References may be from colleagues, current or former clients, or peers. Each reference should include name, company, address, phone



number, email, length of time known, and a short statement about your relationship. In addition, written statements from each reference may be included. First 5 LA must be able to contact at least two (2) of the references provided by the applicant. If two (2) references cannot be reached within a timely manner (no more than three attempts, no longer than one week), First 5 LA may deem the applicant ineligible for this opportunity.

Additional Required Attachments:

8. Signature Authorization Form (1 original SIGNED with BLUE INK): This form is required in order to verify signature authority to enter into contractual agreement with First 5 LA. If not outlined in the Bylaws, a Board Resolution or Partnership Agreement must be submitted, as applicable, that indicates signature authority. Applicants must submit one original form signed in **blue** ink.
9. Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties (Appendix E): Please read the information on the required Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties form thoroughly. An unsigned form or its omission will constitute an incomplete application and will be grounds for disqualification.
10. Annual Independent Audit:  
The applicant must include the most recent independent financial audit including the following, as appropriate:
  - Management Letter
  - Auditor's Report
  - Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)
  - Statement of Activities (P/L, Income and Expenses Report)
  - Statement of Cash Flow
  - Functional Expense Report
  - Notes to Financial Statements
  - Federal "single-item" audit (if applicable)
11. Bylaws ( if applicable)
12. Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)



## VIII. SELECTION PROCESS AND REVIEW CRITERIA

### Selection Process

- First 5 LA will award a contract to applicant(s) that has the expertise and qualifications outlined in the RFQ.
- First 5 LA staff will review each application to ensure that basic requirements are met. Basic requirements include: timely receipt of application, format as required, inclusion of all appropriate attachments, etc. Proposals with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualifications.
- Qualifications will be evaluated by a panel to be determined by First 5 LA staff.

The First 5 LA staff and/or Commission reserve the right without prejudice to reject any or all submitted qualifications. An appeal process is not available.

### Selection Criteria

- First 5 LA will award a Contract to one applicant with the expertise and qualifications outlined in the RFQ. The following represents the selection criteria that will be considered during the evaluation process:
  - The consultant's past experience in performing comparable work;
  - The consultant's knowledge of and experience in policy and advocacy;
  - Experience in program implementation;
  - The consultant's knowledge and understanding of the issues facing young children and families in LA County (especially specific to the funding priorities);
  - Thoroughness, viability, and quality of the consultant's proposal;
  - The consultant's abilities in providing technical assistance;
  - The consultant's abilities in group training and facilitation; and
  - Cost-effectiveness of the consultant's proposal.

First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted qualifications. An appeals process is not available, all decisions of First 5 LA are final.

## IX. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Specific contractual considerations, including but not limited to the following, apply to RFQ submission process and project implementation and to any contracts that result from the submission and implementation of the project/proposal. The contractor will need to comply with all of the provisions in the attached sample contract (See Sample Contract).

### A. *Conflict of Interest*

**The selected Contractor will be required to comply with the COMMISSION's Conflict of Interest provisions, as outlined in the contract, and as applicable under California Law.** Contractor acknowledges that he/she/it is acting as public official pursuant to the Contract and shall therefore avoid undertaking any activity or accepting any payment, employment or gift from any third party that could create a legal conflict of interest or the appearance of any such conflict. A conflict of interest exists when one has the opportunity to advance or protect one's own interest or private interest of others, with whom one has a relationship, in a way that is detrimental to the interest, or potentially harmful for the integrity or fundamental mission of the COMMISSION. Contractor shall maintain the confidentiality of any confidential information obtained from the COMMISSION during the Contract and shall not use such information for personal or commercial gain outside the Contract. By agreeing to the Contract and accepting financial compensation for services rendered hereunder, Contractor agrees that he/she/it will not subsequently solicit or accept employment or compensation under any program, grant or service that results from or arises out of the funded project and related initiative(s). During the term of the Contract and for one year thereafter, Contractor will not knowingly solicit or accept employment and/or compensation from any COMMISSION collaborator or Contractor without the prior written consent of the COMMISSION.

### B. *Compliance*

Current/Former grantees and/or Contractors must be in good standing and in compliance with all aspects of their contract with the COMMISSION in order to be eligible to apply for the current Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The COMMISSION may deem an applicant ineligible if it finds in its reasonable discretion, that applicant has done any of the following, including but not limited to: (1) violated any significant terms or conditions of Grant Agreement/Contract; (2) committed any act or omission which negatively reflects on Applicant's quality, fitness or capacity to perform services listed in RFQ with the COMMISSION or any other public entity, or engaged in a pattern or practice which negatively reflects on the same; (3) committed an act or offense which indicates a lack of business integrity or business dishonesty; or (4) made or submitted a false claim against the COMMISSION or any other public entity.

### C. *Contract Information*

1. The COMMISSION may, at its sole discretion, reject any or all submissions in response to this RFQ. The COMMISSION also reserves the right to cancel this RFQ, at its sole discretion, at any time before execution of a contract. The COMMISSION shall not be liable for any costs incurred in connection with the preparation of any submissions in



response to this RFQ. Any cover letters, résumés and/or curriculum vita, including attached materials, submitted in response to this RFQ shall become property of the COMMISSION and subject to public disclosure.

2. The agency/organization submitting an application agrees that by submitting an application it authorizes the COMMISSION to verify any or all information and/or references given in the application.
3. The COMMISSION reserves the right, after contract award, to amend the resulting contract, scope of work, and any other exhibits as needed throughout the term of the contract to best meet the needs of all parties.
4. The COMMISSION reserves the right to request additional financial information to verify applicant's past and current financial status. This information includes, but is not limited to: the most recent independent audit ending Calendar Year 2008 Fiscal Year June 30, 2008, Cash Flow Statement, Statement of Activities (Income Statement), and Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet).
5. Consistent with the intent of Proposition 10: California Children and Families Act of 1998, no monies for this Project may be used to supplant Federal, State, County and/or other monies available to the organization for any purpose. Activities funded under this proposal must be new or enhancements to existing activities.
6. The award of a contract by the COMMISSION to an individual/agency/organization that proposes to use sub contractors for the performance of work under the contract resulting from this application process shall not be interpreted to limit the COMMISSION's right to approve subcontractors, assemble teams and/or assign leads. Each applicant will be evaluated independently for added value to the overall team. A copy of executed subcontract(s) related to Program funding must be provided to the COMMISSION.
7. The selected Contractor will be required to sign the contract at least two (2) weeks prior to the intended start date of the contract, as outlined in Terms of Contract section, to assure the timely completion of the signature process by all parties. If the contract is not signed prior to the intended start date, the commencement of any activities under the Exhibit A – Scope of Work will not begin until the contract execution date (the date all parties have signed the contract) and Contractor will not be eligible to obtain reimbursement for any costs incurred prior to the contract execution date, unless otherwise approved by the COMMISSION. If this Contract is not signed within the thirty-day (30) period from the intended start date, the COMMISSION has the right to withdraw the contract award. Any agreed upon changes to the intended start date must be confirmed in writing by both parties.
8. Unless otherwise submitted during the application process, the selected Contractor will be required to submit the required documentation listed on the Contractor Checklist, which includes, but not limited to, the following documents before the Contract can be fully executed:



- Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties Form
  - By-laws (if applicable)
  - Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)
  - Board of Directors or List of Partners (as applicable)
  - Signature Authorization Form
  - Form RRF-1 (required and filed annually with the California Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts) and IRS Form 990 (if applicable)
  - Annual Independent Audit for prior fiscal year or calendar year (if applicable)
  - Appropriate business licenses (for vendors or private organizations)
  - IRS Letter of Determination (if applicable) or completed IRS Form W-9
  - Memorandums of Understanding (for any sub-contractors, collaborators, and/or partners listed under Contracted Services and Evaluation sections of Exhibit B – Budget Forms)
  - Certificates of Insurance for all insurance requirements outlined in the contract.
9. Per the COMMISSION's Policy and Guidelines for Hiring Consultants (Section 7), the total composite rate for a Consultant may not exceed \$150 an hour. This means that the total cost of billable hours associated with a contract divided by the total number of hours billed must be equal to or less than \$150. A blended rate is allowable. For example, for a contract totaling \$150,000, a consultant may bill 500 hours for Consultant A at \$200/hour, and 500 hours for Consultant B at \$100/hour, with a total composite rate of \$150/hour (1,000 total hours divided by \$150,000 in billable hours = \$150/hour).
10. The sample contract and contracting requirements are attached (See Sample Contract). If successful, the Contractor will be required to meet all of the terms and provisions set forth in these documents and within the timeframe identified.