

ECE WORKFORCE POLICY PROJECT
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

**Los Angeles County Children and Families First –
Proposition 10 Commission (aka First 5 LA)**
RELEASE DATE: December 17, 2008

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I. TIMELINE

Note: First 5 LA reserves the right to modify the stated schedule of events at any time.

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFQ Released	December 17, 2008
RFQ Information Meeting	January 9, 2009
Deadline for Submitting Questions Regarding RFQ	January 21, 2009
Proposal Due (1 original, 7 copies and 1 CD with digital version of Proposal)	February 4, 2009 by 5 p.m.
Interviews with Selected Applicants	February 17, 2009
Selected Contractor Notified	Week of February 23, 2009
Initial Meeting with Contractor	Week of March 2, 2009
Contract Start Date	April 27, 2009

All questions and requests for information regarding this RFQ must be received by First 5 LA via email or phone before 5 p.m. on **Wednesday, January 21, 2009**. 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:

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

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II. BACKGROUND

A. 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 LA County, First 5 LA was formed as a public entity to develop and oversee various early childhood initiatives and to administer and manage the funding from Proposition 10. To address the needs of LA County communities, in 2004 the Commission adopted the *Next Five* Strategic Plan (FY 2004-2009), focusing on the goal areas of Early Learning, Health and Safety.

First 5 LA's vision and commitment is to create a future throughout LA's diverse communities where all young children are born healthy and raised in a loving and nurturing environment so they grow up healthy, are eager to learn and reach their full potential. First 5 LA's mission, from July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2009, is to make significant and measurable progress towards this vision by increasing the number of children from the prenatal stage through age five who are physically and emotionally healthy, safe and ready to learn.¹

As an extension of its many investments in support of its Early Learning goal identified in the Strategic Plan, First 5 LA is committed to improving the quality of early care and education (ECE) services provided to young children by addressing the challenges faced by the ECE workforce. According to the 2006 report "Child Care Needs Assessment for LA County," there is an estimated shortfall of close to 58,000 ECE infant and preschool spaces in LA County. In addition, the California Employment Development Department estimates that the supply of the ECE workforce will need to be increased by 4,480 new child care providers annually from the years 2004 to 2014 to meet increasing demand.² The 2006 California Early Care and Education Workforce Study indicates that low salaries, high turnover and an aging ECE workforce threaten the future availability and quality of child care services. ECE workforce sustainability must address compensation, the number of people entering the ECE work force and retention within the field. Further, an unmet need exists to have a workforce that reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of the children being served.

While it is important to provide current and potential ECE providers³ the guidance, encouragement and necessary support they need, ECE providers often face barriers in acquiring career development services. Many of the ECE career development services offered in LA County range from *general* education and training to *specialized* education and training support services.⁴ Frequently, the breadth of education and training services

¹ Additional information regarding First 5 LA can be found at www.first5la.org.

² The 4,480 new child care providers needed annually are in addition to the replacement of providers leaving the field.

³ For this RFQ, "current ECE providers" includes anyone providing early care and education services to children ages zero to five such as child care center employees and licensed or licensed-exempt providers.

⁴ This RFQ defines "ECE career development services" as education, training and other career development services aimed at increasing the education and training levels of current and potential ECE providers. Education services include but are not limited to pursuing a Child Development Permit, Associate of Arts (AA), Bachelor of Arts (BA) in ECE related subjects to college counseling focused on ECE subjects, to higher education financial support

current and potential ECE providers can benefit from or need are not offered by one organization, thus, typically requiring current and potential ECE providers to independently navigate through various organizations to acquire career development information and/or access services to meet their career development needs. Ultimately, career development support services exist in a fragmented “system.”⁵ The education and training needs of current and potential ECE providers can be more effectively met if every entry point to the career development services system provides access to the full range of needed information, services and referrals.

To address the challenges faced by the ECE workforce and continue to improve the quality of ECE services to ensure that children reach their full developmental potential in LA County, First 5 LA approved a \$15 million allocation for the ECE Workforce Development Initiative. The ECE Workforce Development Initiative addresses multiple needs of the ECE workforce in the areas of recruitment, retention, increased diversity, training and education and sustainability.

B. EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The ECE Workforce Development Initiative (Initiative) focuses on supporting current and potential ECE providers entering and/or moving through the ECE career lattice.⁶ The Initiative is multifaceted in order to address the needs of the full continuum of the ECE workforce and the complexity of the barriers faced by this group. The Initiative is designed to promote career opportunities in the ECE field, increase the supply of ECE providers, promote policy and advocacy activities to affect the systemic issues impacting long-term capacity of the ECE workforce and promote public education activities to improve awareness of the ECE field and the importance of the services it provides.⁷ The Initiative is comprised of six components designed to work in coordination to achieve the goals of the Initiative and to comprehensively address the needs of the continuum of the ECE workforce in order to ultimately support children’s attainment of their developmental potential as described in the First 5 LA Strategic Plan. The Initiative components consist of: 1) Families, Friends and Neighbors; 2) High School Recruitment; 3) Public Education; 4) Career Development; 5) Access to Higher Education and Training; and 6) ECE Workforce Sustainability. The Initiative’s policy focus consists of the latter three components: Career Development; Access to Higher Education and Training; and Sustainability. These three components will be implemented as interrelated strategies that will achieve and strengthen the impact of the Initiative’s policy goals. The Initiative’s policy focus will be implemented through the ECE Workforce Policy Project (Project) as outlined in this RFQ. This Project and all other Initiative activities funded by First 5 LA support First 5 LA’s Strategic Plan efforts.

services. ECE career development training services may include but are not limited to training subjects and classes such as Early Learning, Early Childhood Development, Language Development, Special Needs and ECE Business Development and Administration. Other career development services may also include career planning, coaching and mentoring.

⁵ This RFQ defines “career development services system” as the collective of career development services mentioned above and in corresponding footnotes that aim to increase education and training levels of current and potential ECE providers in Los Angeles County.

⁶ The ECE “career lattice” refers to the numerous career opportunities within the ECE field and the progression of moving from one position to another within the ECE field.

⁷ Additional information regarding the Initiative can be found in the ECE Workforce Development Concept Paper which is accessible on First 5 LA’s Web site, www.first5la.org.

First 5 LA seeks to secure a Contractor through this RFQ to support First 5 LA's implementation of the ECE Workforce Policy Project. Funding will be provided for the ECE Workforce Policy Project in an amount up to \$5.71 million for up to six years.

C. ECE WORKFORCE POLICY PROJECT

Through the implementation of the Career Development, Access to Higher Education and Training and Sustainability strategies, the ECE Workforce Policy Project seeks to achieve the goal of identifying and implementing the policies and practices that increase the training and education levels, supply and diversity of the ECE workforce. The ECE Workforce Policy Project is anchored in impacting and influencing policies and practices that eliminate fragmentation within the ECE career development services system, thus, ultimately reducing the barriers current and potential ECE providers face in accessing and utilizing ECE education and training services.

The ECE Workforce Policy Project (Project) will implement the three policy focused strategies as follows: Career Development will be implemented through **Career Development Demonstration Collaboratives (Collaboratives)**; Access to Higher Education and Training will be implemented through the **Access to Higher Education and Training Policy Workgroup (Access Policy Workgroup)**; and ECE Workforce Sustainability will be implemented through the **ECE Workforce Sustainability Policy Workgroup (Sustainability Policy Workgroup)**. The Collaboratives will influence policies through the demonstration of effective ECE career development system supports, organizational and career planning practices. The Access Policy Workgroup and Sustainability Policy Workgroup will each focus on influencing different and distinct areas of policy change, specifically, increased access to ECE career development services in LA County and improved sustainability of the ECE workforce in LA County respectively. It is important to note that the two Policy Workgroups will not only focus on different policy outcomes but will also include vastly different stakeholders, thus, requiring the need to implement two separate Policy Workgroups.

The Project's three interrelated strategies will work in concert to inform, influence and support the activities and policy changes identified and pursued within all of the strategies. The three strategies will be coordinated and connected through cross-participation, with each strategy including key participants from the other two strategies. All three policy strategies working together support First 5 LA's commitment to a strong early learning workforce system which has the capacity to recruit, train, retain and advance the careers of a professional, culturally competent staff reflective of the communities they serve. The three strategies will build off of existing First 5 LA investments as well as other community efforts to achieve the goal of the Project.

Project Implementation in Five Geographic Areas

The Project will be implemented in five geographic areas within LA County using a demonstration approach to inform and influence policy change efforts; determine which system support, organizational and career planning practices are effective; and identify which of these practices are potentially sustainable and scalable. Implementation through five separate geographic areas allows for the Project's strategies to address the unique needs of current and potential ECE providers in different environments. As a result, a

diverse range of ECE career development policies and practices will be identified and tested to inform effectiveness. Testing of diverse policies and practices is more likely to result in addressing the various needs of current and potential ECE providers in other areas of LA County, thus, increasing the potential sustainability and scalability of policies, practices and improvements in the ECE career development services system county wide.

The Demonstration Collaboratives and Policy Workgroups will work together to impact ECE provider and career development services system outcomes: 1) identify effective policies and practices that improves ECE providers' access to ECE career development services; 2) identify effective policies to improve the sustainability of the ECE workforce; 3) reduce barriers to accessing ECE career development services, and 4) increase the training and education levels *and* supply of the ECE workforce in the geographic areas. The combined efforts of the three strategies will measurably impact ECE providers in each of the five geographic areas.

Career Development Demonstration Collaboratives

The Career Development Demonstration Collaboratives seek to identify, build off of and influence: 1) policy changes necessary for improving the ECE career development services system; 2) policies and practices that support implementation of effective ECE career development practices in the five geographic areas; and 3) policies and practices to sustain ECE career development system support, organizational and career planning practices in the five geographic areas and potentially other areas of the county. The Career Development Demonstration Collaboratives utilize a collaborative approach to address issues and barriers contributing to a fragmented ECE career development services system. The Collaboratives will inform and test policy changes, as well as identify, test and refine ECE career development system supports, organizational and career planning practices.

Through the Career Development Demonstration Collaboratives' process of testing practices, the Project will acquire information regarding policy changes needed to move toward a county wide ECE career development services system that is easily accessible, "seamless,"⁸ provides added-value⁹ and increases the training and education levels of the ECE workforce. The following outcomes will be achieved in the five geographic areas as a result of the Career Development Demonstration Collaboratives:

- Identification of practices and/or policies needed to improve ECE career development services system
- Increased awareness of ECE career development opportunities by current and potential ECE providers
- Improvement in deepening ECE knowledge by current and potential ECE providers
- Reduced systemic barriers for current and potential ECE providers in accessing ECE career development opportunities
- Increased access to, and use of, career development opportunities by current and potential ECE providers

⁸ "Seamless" refers to current and potential ECE providers' ability to access information about and/or receive referrals regarding the full range of educational, training and other ECE career development supports.

⁹ "Added-value" refers to the target population viewing the access to services that result in increased education, knowledge and skills as being of value.

- Improvement in ECE career advancement by current and potential ECE providers
- Increase in training and education levels of the ECE workforce

These Career Development Demonstration Collaboratives will be established with the objectives of: 1) identifying ECE career development services system needs within each geographic area; 2) identifying the ideal ECE career development services system for each area; 3) identifying the causes of gaps in the current ECE career development services system from a policy and practices perspective; 4) assessing current ECE career development system assets in each geographic area; 5) identifying the ECE career development policies and practices to address gaps in the system; and 6) testing policies and practices to improve the ECE career development services system.

Career Development Demonstration Collaboratives will address the full spectrum of current and potential ECE providers. This target population ranges from those currently providing ECE services to those who are interested in becoming ECE providers. It is noteworthy to add that the target populations' utilization of career development services is considered "fluid" given that at any time any ECE provider along the spectrum might or might not be accessing ECE career development services.

Each ECE Career Development Demonstration Collaborative will include organizations that represent the spectrum of ECE career development services that support and/or provide career development services for current and potential ECE providers in a defined geographic area. Career development services organizations include but are not limited to institutions of higher learning, support networks for ECE providers, local and county agencies and organizations that provide ECE career development support services to current and potential ECE providers. Collaboratives, at a minimum, will include the following key stakeholders as participants: child care Resource and Referral agencies and networks, Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP), LA County Office of Childcare and LACOE Head Start-State Preschool.

Policies and practices that will be tested and refined within the five geographic areas by the Collaboratives may include but are not limited to: approaches for improving information exchange among Collaborative participant organizations; improvements in communicating career development opportunities to current and potential ECE providers; web based ECE career support services; practices to improve access to ECE career development services for an underserved segment of the ECE workforce; refinements in how career development services are delivered; and ECE career development supports from county level organizations participating in the Collaboratives.

Once established, the Collaboratives will convene on a regular basis throughout the Project period. The Collaborative participants will establish and build off of working relationships that result in an agreement to test policies and practices specific to the needs of current and potential ECE providers in the geographic areas they serve. The information gathered from the Collaboratives will also help inform potential policy changes to be addressed by the two other Policy Project strategies: the Access Policy Workgroup and Sustainability Policy Workgroup.

Access to Higher Education and Training Policy Workgroup

Barriers exist for ECE providers attempting to access the education and training needed in order to improve their ECE knowledge and/or advance their ECE careers. Examples of access barriers include the current separation of information on college courses and training opportunities and difficulties for current and potential ECE providers in knowing how to access higher education and training programs. To address these issues, First 5 LA will establish and lead an Access to Higher Education and Training Policy Workgroup to focus on the policies that influence and impact barriers. The Access Policy Workgroup will include leaders from organizations and institutions such as higher education, training entities, and county level supports as well as key participants from the Collaboratives. The Access Policy Workgroup will impact the career development services systems in the five geographic areas and county wide. A county wide vision for improving access to ECE career development opportunities will be created by the Access Policy Workgroup and the Workgroup will identify and influence policy changes needed to realize this vision and achieve the outcomes described in this RFQ. The Access Policy Workgroup will seek to influence identified policy changes through the efforts of its participants. Policy changes will be tested within the five geographic areas to determine their effectiveness in improving access to ECE education and training opportunities. The need for new policy change efforts as well as opportunities to build off existing policy efforts will be examined and pursued by the Policy Workgroup. The Policy Workgroup will be convened over the course of the Project period and will establish a strong, dynamic level of coordination with the Career Development Demonstration Collaboratives and ECE Sustainability Policy Workgroup. The following outcomes will be achieved in the five geographic areas as a result of the Policy Workgroup:

- Increased awareness among education and training organizations of the barriers and potential solutions for current and potential ECE providers in LA County to increase their education and training levels
- Increase in collaborative efforts among education and training organizations in addressing systemic issues related to access to ECE education and training opportunities
- Reduced systemic barriers for current and potential ECE providers in accessing ECE education and training opportunities
- Increased access to, and use of, ECE education and training opportunities by current and potential ECE providers
- Increase in training and education levels of the ECE workforce

ECE Workforce Sustainability Policy Workgroup

First 5 LA will establish and lead an ECE Workforce Sustainability Policy Workgroup to focus on policies related to increasing the sustainability of the ECE workforce including policies that influence ECE workforce compensation and supply. Many factors impact the sustainability of the ECE workforce, thus, areas the Sustainability Policy Workgroup may focus on range from identifying ways to positively impact overall compensation¹⁰ to adoption of innovative approaches for retaining ECE providers. The Sustainability Policy

¹⁰ For this Project, compensation is considered a comprehensive concept that includes not only monetary compensation, but also other tangible and intangible assets. Non-monetary compensation may include benefits such as time off, insurance to protect income (health disability, social security, etc.) and incentives.

Workgroup will include stakeholders who are positioned to influence policy decisions regarding the sustainability of the ECE Workforce, particularly issues pertaining to compensation and retention. Key participants from the Collaboratives will also be included in the Sustainability Policy Workgroup. The Sustainability Policy Workgroup participants will include representatives from different segments of the ECE field, private sector, academia and other key stakeholders. A county wide vision for increasing the sustainability of the ECE workforce will be created by the Sustainability Policy Workgroup and the Workgroup will identify and influence policy changes needed to realize this vision and achieve the outcomes described in this RFQ. The Sustainability Policy Workgroup will seek to influence indentified policy changes through the efforts of its participants. Policy changes will be tested within the five geographic areas to determine their effectiveness in increasing the sustainability of the ECE workforce. The need for new policy change efforts as well as opportunities to build off existing policy efforts will be examined and pursued by the Sustainability Policy Workgroup. The Sustainability Policy Workgroup will be convened over the course of the Project period of six years and will establish a strong, dynamic level of coordination with the Career Development Demonstration Collaboratives and Access Policy Workgroup. The following outcomes will be achieved in the five geographic areas as a result of the Sustainability Policy Workgroup:

- Define and implement a Policy agenda to improve the sustainability of the ECE Workforce
- Increased awareness among key stakeholders of the barriers and potential solutions to sustain the ECE workforce
- Improvement in compensation and retention for ECE providers
- Improvement in number and diversity of people entering the ECE field
- Improvement in retention rate of ECE providers

III. CONTRACTOR REQUIREMENTS AND DELIVERABLES

This RFQ seeks to secure a Contractor to support First 5 LA's implementation of the three strategies which constitute the ECE Workforce Policy Project. During the six year Project period, under the direction of First 5 LA, the Contractor will perform activities and provide work products for the Project's implementation. Some activities and work products will be similar across the three strategies and some will be unique for each strategy. As part of this contracted work, the Contractor will help inform the selection of the five geographic areas. The Contractor will provide facilitation and logistical support for Project meetings, provide reports and documents regarding Project activities for First 5 LA, support First 5 LA's evaluation of the Project and support the Project's administration and fiscal management.

A. CAREER DEVELOPMENT DEMONSTRATION COLLABORATIVES

In coordination with First 5 LA, the Contractor will conduct and provide research to inform the selection of the Collaborative participants and conduct outreach activities for recruiting Collaborative participants. In coordination with First 5 LA, Contractor will be responsible for conducting all Collaborative meetings, including facilitating conversations and group discussions within the meetings and ensuring that meeting goals are achieved. The Contractor will also coordinate the Collaboratives' efforts to identify ECE career development practices for testing, provide direction during the meetings and monitor the

progress of each Collaborative in identifying, testing and refining ECE career development practices. Between Collaborative meetings, the Contractor will conduct and provide ongoing research needed to inform group discussion and assist in the identification of meeting goals. The Contractor will conduct an assessment of each meeting including a summary and analysis of issues addressed. The Contractor will also provide advice and expertise to individual participants of the Collaboratives in identifying, testing and refining ECE career development practices as well as provide recommendations for sustaining practices. The Contractor will ensure linkages are made between the work of the Collaboratives and the Access Policy Workgroup and Sustainability Policy Workgroup.

B. POLICY WORKGROUPS

The Contractor will assist First 5 LA with its implementation of the Access Policy Workgroup and Sustainability Policy Workgroup. In coordination with First 5 LA, the Contractor will conduct and provide research to inform the selection of the Access Policy Workgroup and Sustainability Policy Workgroup participants. Outreach activities for recruiting Policy Workgroup participants will be conducted by the Contractor in coordination with First 5 LA. In coordination with First 5 LA, the Contractor will provide assistance in Policy Workgroup meetings including facilitating group discussions and helping to ensure meeting goals are achieved. Between meetings, the Contractor will conduct and provide research needed to inform group discussion and assist in the identification of meeting goals. The Contractor will also develop reports to identify potential policies and strategies the Policy Workgroups can pursue.

C. LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FOR PROJECT MEETINGS

The Contractor will be responsible for providing logistical support for the five Demonstration Collaboratives, Access Policy Workgroup and Sustainability Policy Workgroup meetings. Contractor logistical support activities for meetings will include, but are not limited to, securing meeting venues and preparing the venue for use, preparing and sending out meeting materials to participants and securing supplies and services needed to support each meeting.

D. WRITTEN MATERIALS AND REPORTS

In coordination with First 5 LA, the Contractor will prepare outreach materials for all three Project strategies. The Contractor will provide First 5 LA with update reports on a regular basis and other reports as needed on Project activities. The Contractor will also assist First 5 LA in preparing Project reports for the public including the preparation of policy briefs.

E. EVALUATION

The Contractor will work with First 5 LA staff and its contractors to develop an evaluation plan within the first six months of the Project that encompasses each of the Project's three strategies. The Contractor will also work with First 5 LA to identify the data the Contractor will collect to inform the evaluation of the Project.

F. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

The Contractor will be responsible for securing necessary staffing and equipment, establishing administrative supports, developing detailed timelines and participating in planning activities with First 5 LA at the beginning of the Project and on an ongoing basis throughout the Project period.

The Contractor will provide fiscal management support to the Project. Specifically, the Contractor will provide participants of the three strategies with financial support as part of the Contract to cover costs associated with participating in the Project. The Contractor will manage the process for providing and overseeing the financial resources that support the Collaboratives' testing and refining of ECE career development practices. The Contractor must have the capacity to implement the fiscal management of the Project given the size and scope of the activities described in this RFQ.

G. SUMMARY OF DELIVERABLES

During the term of the Project the Contractor will be responsible for completing deliverables under the direction of First 5 LA including, but not limited to, the following:

- Conduct and provide ongoing research to inform selection of the Project's five geographic areas and Collaborative, Access Policy Workgroup and Sustainability Policy Workgroup participants
- Conduct outreach activities for recruiting Collaborative and Policy Workgroup participants, including preparing outreach materials
- Conduct and provide ongoing research needed to identify meeting goals and inform Collaborative and Policy Workgroup meeting discussions
- Conduct an assessment of each meeting of the Collaboratives and Policy Workgroups including a summary and analysis of key issues addressed
- Conduct and provide direction for Collaborative meetings, including facilitating conversations and group discussions within the meetings, and ensuring that meeting goals are achieved
- Assist with the activities of individual Collaborative participants in working toward Collaborative objectives including providing advice and expertise in the implementation, testing and refinement of ECE career development practices
- Coordinate the Collaboratives' efforts to identify ECE career development practices for testing
- Provide direction for and monitoring of the process for each Collaborative to identify, test and refine ECE career development practices
- Ensure linkages between the work of the Collaboratives, Access Policy Workgroup and Sustainability Policy Workgroup
- Provide assistance in Policy Workgroup meetings including facilitating conversations and group discussions and helping to ensure meeting goals are achieved
- Provide logistical support activities for Collaborative and Policy Workgroup meetings including, but not limited to, securing meeting venues and preparing the venue for use, preparing and sending out meeting materials to participants and securing any supplies or services needed to support each meeting
- Provide update reports to First 5 LA on a regular basis¹¹ and other reports as needed on all Project activities
- In coordination with First 5 LA and during the first 12 months of the Project, provide a Project timeline and cost projections which include key benchmarks and deliverables for the course of the Project

¹¹Contractor will provide at minimum monthly reports for Collaboratives, quarterly reports for Policy Workgroups, annual reports for the entire Project, and a final Project analysis and report at the end of the Project.

- Assist First 5 LA in preparing Project reports for the public including the preparation of policy briefs for the Access Policy Workgroup and Sustainability Policy Workgroup
- Develop Project evaluation plan, in conjunction with First 5 LA and its contractors, that encompasses each of the Project's three strategies including identifying data the Contractor will collect to inform the evaluation of the Project
- In coordination with First 5 LA, ensure linkages between the Project and other First 5 LA investments
- Recruit and hire staffing for the Project
- Provide administrative supports, fiscal management and monitoring of activities funded by the Project
- Provide detailed timelines for Project implementation

IV. ELIGIBILITY AND CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATIONS

A. ELIGIBILITY

Applicants will be considered from not-for-profit and for-profit agencies, public and private organizations and collaborative efforts. Collaborative efforts must identify a primary applicant (lead agency) responsible for the overall administration and coordination of the Project, and for entering into a contractual relationship with the Commission. Applicants responding to this RFQ must demonstrate the qualifications, experience, competency and ability to successfully build a network of education and training organizations that coordinate and integrate ECE career development services within defined geographic areas. Applicants must demonstrate policy expertise and experience in implementing policy change efforts involving the collaboration of multiple and diverse stakeholders. Applicants will need to demonstrate knowledge and experience in ECE workforce related issues including areas such as public policy, economics, higher education, public awareness of ECE issues and organizational and business development. Applicants must have a presence in and the capacity to work throughout LA County. The most highly qualified Applicants will be invited for an interview with First 5 LA staff and/or Commissioners.

B. CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants must have the experience, knowledge and skills necessary to successfully implement the three Project strategies. These qualifications include:

- Knowledge of and familiarity with the early care and education field and ECE career development opportunities and resources available in LA County and California
- Knowledge of the underlying issues and complexities that provide a context for issues affecting the ECE workforce and delivery of ECE career development services including trends in the ECE field, public policy issues and current research on providing quality ECE services
- Understanding and ability to work with diverse community perspectives around ECE career development issues including working with both the public and private sectors and segments of the community that have not been traditionally associated with ECE workforce development

- Expertise in facilitating collaborative projects, specifically the ability to build consensus to identify and implement specific practices amongst an expansive and diverse array of stakeholders with varied interests
- History of working in a lead role with multiple collaboratives involving policy and system change efforts
- Established relationships and access to key stakeholders such as policy makers and leaders in the ECE community, higher education institutions and career development services organizations within LA County and California
- Ability to provide support to First 5 LA and assist in the development of strategies for sustaining and leveraging resources
- Ability to assess short- and long-term outcomes, activities and goals
- Experience in evaluation methodologies, such as continuous quality improvement methodologies and have sufficient capacity to implement evaluation activities including data collection
- Knowledge and experience in evaluating collaborative partnerships involving organizations and communities including and ability to document collaboration techniques, methods, indicators of success and other evidence-based measures
- Strong written and oral communication skills and the ability to communicate complex issues, synthesize information from multiple sources, stimulate creative thinking and negotiate differences
- Strong management and team building skills
- Ability and capacity to provide and support administrative and financial management and sub-contracting of activities associated with the Project
- Ability to be accessible and flexible in accordance with Project timelines and activities

C. TERMS OF PROJECT

Available Funding

Applicants submitting a proposal for funding to implement this Project can request up to \$5.71 million for up to six years. The ECE Workforce Policy Project funding will be provided through a competitive RFQ process. A minimum of \$1,530,000 of the \$5.71 million must be dedicated to support the five Collaboratives' identification and testing of ECE career development practices as well as to support Collaborative and Policy Workgroup participants' costs associated with attending meetings and other costs.

Contract Period

The Contract period for Year One will be contingent upon documents submitted by the selected Contractor(s) and First 5 LA approval. Each subsequent Contract, if awarded, will be renewed on an annual basis. Contract years will occur based on the following schedule:

- May 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010
- July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011
- July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012
- July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013
- July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014
- July 1, 2004 to April 30, 2015

Contractual Obligation

The selected Contractor is required by law to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this RFQ, including the First 5 LA Contract (See Appendix 8: *Sample Contract*).

V. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

A. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

The Statement of Qualifications must contain all of the following items in the order listed below. Refer to section VI: *Submission Requirements* for more details.

Cover Letter (two page maximum)

Each Applicant is required to include a cover letter on the organization's letterhead addressed to Evelyn V. Martinez, Executive Director, First 5 LA, containing the following:

- Date
- Applicant's name, address, telephone, fax and e-mail address
- The primary contact person's name, title, address, telephone, fax and e-mail address (if different from organization's information)
- A statement indicating that the submission is in response to an RFQ for the ECE Workforce Policy Project
- A general overview of the Applicant's qualifications
- The cover letter must be signed by an authorized signatory such as the organization's president, chief executive officer or director.

Description of Applicant's Qualifications (ten page maximum)

Applicant must clearly illustrate the experience, skills and knowledge specified in Section IV: *Eligibility and Contractor Qualifications*. Applicants submitting a proposal as part of a collaborative effort must provide information regarding the collaborative partners, describe the types of collaborative activities that will help carry out the goals of the Project, and describe how the proposed Project will build on the strengths and resources of the partners to implement the Project and proposed activities. Applicants must provide narrative examples of past and/or current experiences in successfully bringing organizations together for collaborative efforts and identify the Applicant's role in these projects. The description of collaborative efforts should include any specific strategies that were implemented by the collaborative(s) and what outcomes were achieved as a result. Describe the Applicant's previous experience working with system and policy change efforts. Briefly describe the Applicant's experience providing funding to other organizations and the financial management and oversight to ensure accountability. Also provide a description of the Applicant's experience with evaluation methodologies as well as sustainability efforts for funding and/or sustaining the outcomes of a project.

List proposed key personnel who will participate in this Project and their relevant skills and experience. As an attachment, provide a detailed professional resume for each key staff member expected to work on the Project, including all relevant work history, educational

attainment, publications, prior research projects, etc. Applicants must also specify qualifications of all other individuals and/or organizations, if any, which will be included as a subcontractor in the Contractor's implementation of the work. Include the resumes for subcontractors as well. All subcontractors must be clearly identified and approved by First 5 LA prior to commencing work.

B. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION CONTENT (twenty page maximum)

Description of Project Implementation for First 14 Months (May 2009 to June 2010)

Describe the work processes (and/or methodology) that will be utilized to accomplish the Contractor Requirements and Deliverables as described in Section III: *Contractor Requirements and Deliverables* for the stated time period. Describe the strategies that will be utilized to outreach and recruit Collaborative participants. Provide information regarding how the Applicant will facilitate the Collaboratives including how the facilitation of the Collaboratives will advance the goals of the Project and ensure the unique needs of each Collaborative are addressed throughout the process. Describe how the Applicant will also coordinate with First 5 LA to implement, monitor and assess a process for Collaboratives to identify, test and refine ECE career development practices including capturing opportunities to build off of existing efforts. Describe the process that will be utilized to facilitate the Policy Workgroups in order to achieve the goals of the Project and how the Applicant will assist First 5 LA in conducting Policy Workgroup meetings. Describe the process to be used by the Applicant to coordinate with First 5 LA in order for the three strategies to inform and be informed by one another.

Describe how the Applicant will provide fiscal management for the Project including how the Applicant will manage the process for providing and overseeing the financial resources to support Collaborative participants' involvement in the Project, testing and refining of practices and Policy Workgroup participation costs as needed. Describe any monetary and/or in-kind resources the Applicant will leverage to support the implementation of the Project.

Project Evaluation Plan

The Applicant must propose an appropriate evaluation approach that addresses each of the Project's three strategies based on outcomes and deliverables identified in this RFQ. Describe the Applicant's plan for evaluating the Project outcomes and deliverables identified in this RFQ. Describe the methods, tools and processes that will be used to collect data and conduct evaluation analysis.

C. SCOPE OF WORK

The Applicant must provide Appendix 1: *Scope of Work* by Contract years, one *Scope of Work* for each of the following contract periods:

- May 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010
- July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011

- July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012
- July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013
- July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014
- July 1, 2014 to April 30, 2015

Applicants must provide a detailed list of the objectives, sequence of tasks and/or activities, personnel responsible and deliverables to be completed in the Project timeline within Appendix 1: *Scope of Work* for the first contract period (May 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010) of the Project. The Scopes of Work for the remaining contract periods (July 1, 2010 to April 30, 2015) only need to include key milestones and deliverables of the Project¹².

D. PROJECT BUDGET

Applicants submitting a Proposal for ECE Workforce Policy Project funding must develop a budget that is in line with common business practices to ensure the success of the Project. Applicants must complete the required line items in Appendix 2: *Budget Form*. Complete a *Budget Form* for each fiscal year of the Project for the first 14 months of the Project reflecting the following periods:

- May 1, 2009 to June 30, 2009
- July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010

The *Budget Form* must identify costs and number of hours for personnel who will be assigned to the Project, including the rate of pay per hour, the formula used to determine the total amount and a brief description of the services that will be performed by personnel. Identify and provide a general description of all other non-personnel costs (i.e., equipment, printing, copying, space, telephone, supplies, etc.) required to complete the Project deliverables. Specify the quantity, cost per unit, duration of use and purpose of these items. The *Budget* must adhere to the allocation amount identified in Section IV: *Eligibility and Contractor Qualifications, Terms of Project*. 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*. The *Scope of Work* and *Budget* will be the basis of Contract negotiations if the Proposal is recommended for funding. The Commission expressly reserves the right to negotiate changes to the Applicant's *Scope of Work* and *Budget*.

Complete a *Budget Narrative* justifying all included costs. The *Budget Narrative* must include the name of the line item, the budgeted amount, a brief description of the purpose for the item of the Project and a detailed and total calculation for the line item. Applicants must also include the most recent copy of audited financial statements, including the following: the management letter, the 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 and Federal "Single Audit" (if applicable). Additionally, Applicants must complete Appendix 2: *Projected Budget Form* indicating projected costs for each of the six years of the Project.

¹² Please note that detailed Scopes of Work and Budgets will be required prior to each of these contract years being renewed.

Per the Commission's *Policy and Guidelines for Hiring Consultants*¹³, the total composite rate for any Consultant utilized as part of the Project 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).

The total budget for this RFQ shall not exceed a total estimated amount of \$5.71 million for the 6 year funding period.

VI. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The cost of developing a Proposal is entirely the responsibility of the Applicant submitting a Proposal and cannot be charged to the Commission or included in the proposed *Budget*. The Commission is prohibited from funding any services performed and/or paid for prior to an agreement approved by the Commission.

Applicants are required to submit a Proposal that meets the following criteria:

- White, 8½" by 11", paper only
- Times New Roman font, no less than 12-point
- Single-sided pages only
- No less than 1-inch margins, with no less than 1.5 line spacing
- All pages and page numbers must be numbered sequentially with the name of the Applicant clearly indicated on each page. Materials must not be bound, although a heavy clasp or thick rubber band is acceptable.
- One (1) original plus seven (7) copies** of the full Proposal (including all Appendices/Attachments) must be submitted. In addition, submit **one (1) digital version** of the full Proposal including all Appendices/Attachments on a Compact Disc (CD).
- All forms that require a signature (i.e., Cover Letter, Signature Authorization Form, etc.) must be signed in **blue** ink for the original Proposal package. Signature stamps are not acceptable. The seven (7) additional copies may have photocopied signatures.

PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

The following documents for the Proposal must be included in the order listed below. Failure to submit any required item may result in disqualification.

- Cover Letter
- Description of Applicant's Qualifications
- Project Implementation Content
- Résumé or Curriculum Vitae for Key Staff and Subcontractor(s)
- Scope of Work

¹³ First 5 LA Commission's *Policy and Guidelines for Hiring Consultants* adopted on June 8, 2006 can be found at www.first5la.org.

- Budget and Budget Narrative
- Key Staff and Subcontractor(s) Rate Table
- Memorandum(s) of Understanding
- Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties Form, (1 original, signed in **blue** ink)
- Signature Authorization Form (1 original, signed in **blue** ink)
- Board Resolution, *if applicable* (1 original, signed in **blue** ink). See Appendix 7: *Sample Board Resolution*
- Independent Financial Audit Documents (see Section VI: *Statement of Qualifications, Project Implementation Content* for complete list)
- By-laws, *if applicable*
- Articles of Incorporation, *if applicable*
- Board of Directors or List of Partners, *if applicable*
- IRS Form 990, *if applicable*
- IRS Letter of Determination, *if applicable*, or completed IRS Form W-9
- Single Source Audit, *if applicable*

Submit one (1) original and seven (7) copies of your Proposal and one (1) digital version of the full Proposal on a CD:

Evelyn V. Martinez, Executive Director

First 5 LA

750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: ECE Workforce Policy Project

VII. SELECTION REVIEW PROCESS AND REVIEW CRITERIA

Selection Review Process

The selection review process will consist of the review of the Proposals and an interview with selected Applicant(s). First 5 LA will review each Proposal to ensure basic requirements were met. Please refer to Section IV: *Eligibility and Contractor Qualifications* for further information. Proposals with omissions of any of the requirements are subject to disqualification. Selected proposals will be reviewed by a review team consisting of a multi-departmental team of First 5 LA staff as a well as external reviewer(s). The review team will assess the adequacy and thoroughness of the responses to the requirements set forth in this RFQ. The interview will involve a presentation by the Applicant(s) illustrating the Applicant's vision, capacity and proposed plan for implementation of the described *Scope of Work*. The projected interview schedule is identified in Section I: *Timeline*. These dates are subject to change at First 5 LA's sole discretion. Interviews will be held at First 5 LA. Further written materials regarding qualifications may be requested during the review process. First 5 LA reserves the right to modify or suspend the stated schedule of events at any time.

First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted Proposals. Proposals that do not include all the information requested in this RFQ may not be reviewed and/or may be disqualified. Proposals received after 5:00 p.m. on February 4, 2009 at First 5 LA's office will not be accepted. No faxed or e-mail submissions will be accepted. All decisions of First 5 LA are final. *An appeals process is not available.*

Individuals or groups interested in submitting a Proposal to receive funding to support First 5 LA's implementation of the ECE Workforce Policy Project may attend the ECE Workforce Policy Project RFQ Information Meeting from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Friday, January 9, 2009. Attendance at the Information Meeting is not required to submit a Proposal. Interested individuals or groups that plan to attend the Information Meeting are encouraged to RSVP to ece@first5la.org by Wednesday, January 7, 2009. The Information Meeting will be accessible via conference call. Interested individuals or groups that plan to participate via conference call must RSVP to ece@first5la.org by 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 7, 2009. Conference call participation information will be provided upon receiving a RSVP. For additional information or further questions please contact Michael Arnot, Program Officer, at (213) 482-7563.

Review Criteria

First 5 LA will award a Contract to one or more Applicant(s) that possesses the expertise, experience, qualifications and capacity needed to support the implementation of this RFQ. The following represents the selection criteria that will be considered during the review process:

- Applicant must demonstrate the ability to facilitate the Collaboratives and assist First 5 LA in facilitating the Policy Workgroups to build consensus amongst an expansive and diverse array of stakeholders and achieve the goals of the Project as described in this RFQ. Thus, the Contractor is not permitted to be a "participant" as defined in this RFQ. Contractor must be able to facilitate Collaborative and Policy Workgroup meetings and discussions that, at a minimum, include the following key stakeholder participants: child care Resource and Referral agencies and networks, Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP), LA County Office of Childcare and LACOE Head Start-State Preschool.
- Knowledge of and familiarity with the early care and education field, the underlying issues and complexities affecting the ECE workforce and delivery of ECE career development services and ECE career development opportunities and resources available in LA County and California
- Understanding of and ability to work with diverse community perspectives around ECE career development issues, lead collaborative projects involving policy and/or system change efforts, and ability to coordinate the work of multiple collaboratives
- Experience in conducting outreach activities to a diverse range of stakeholders similar to those identified in this RFQ
- Established relationships and access to key stakeholders such as policy makers and leaders in the ECE community, higher education institutions and career development service organizations within LA County and California
- Ability to provide guidance and support for the identification, implementation, testing and refining of ECE career development practices as well as strategies for sustaining and leveraging resources

- Experience in conducting research and providing analysis for research needs similar to those of this Project
- Ability to assess short- and long-term outcomes, activities and goals
- Experience and capacity to implement evaluation methodologies including evaluating collaborative partnerships
- Strong written and oral communication skills and the ability to communicate complex issues to multiple audiences, synthesize information from multiple sources, stimulate creative thinking and negotiate differences
- Strong management and team building skills
- Ability and capacity to provide and support Project administrative and financial management and sub-contracting of activities associated with the Project
- Applicant must be an established entity for at least five years
- Ability to be accessible and flexible in accordance with Project timelines and activities

VIII. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Specific contractual considerations, including but not limited to the following, apply to this 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 Appendix 8: *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 a 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. 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 are subject to public disclosure.
2. The agency/organization submitting a Proposal agrees that by submitting a Proposal 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 status information to verify applicants past and current financial status. This information includes, but is not limited to: the most recent independent audit ending Calendar Year 2007 or Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2008, Statement of Cash Flow, 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 subcontractors for the performance of work under the Contract resulting from this RFQ 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 Project 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 Term of Contract section of Contract, 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 in Appendix 1: *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 (30) days 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 Proposal (RFQ, RFP, etc.) process, the selected Contractor will be required to submit the required documentation listed in the Contractor Checklist, which includes, but is not limited to, the following documents before the Contract can be fully executed:
 - Memorandums of Understanding (for any sub-contractors, collaborators, and/or partners listed under Contracted Services and Evaluation sections of Exhibit B – Budget Forms)
 - Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties Form
 - Signature Authorization Form (2 originals)
 - Annual Independent Financial Audit for prior fiscal year or calendar year (if applicable)
 - By-laws (if applicable)
 - Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)
 - Board of Directors or List of Partners (as applicable)
 - Form RRF-1 (required and filed annually with the California Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts) and IRS Form 990 (if applicable)
 - IRS Letter of Determination (if applicable) or completed IRS Form W-9
 - Appropriate business licenses (for vendors or private organizations)
 - Certificates of Insurance for all insurance requirements outlined in the Contract

9. The Sample Contract (Appendix 8) and contracting requirements are attached. If successful, the Contractor will be required to meet all of the terms set out in these documents within the timeframe identified.

IX. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Scope of Work Form
- Appendix 2: Budget Form
 - Budget Instruction Form
 - Sample Budget Narrative
 - Projected Budget Form
- Appendix 3: Key Staff and Subcontractor(s) Rates Table
- Appendix 4: Sample Memorandum of Understanding
- Appendix 5: Agency Involvement in Litigation and Contract Compliance Difficulties Form
- Appendix 6: Contractor Signature Authorization Form
- Appendix 7: Sample Board Resolution
- Appendix 8: Sample Contractor Contract