



Champions For Our Children

**FIRST 5 LA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
POOL OF REVIEWERS
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)**

**Los Angeles County Children and Families First –
Proposition 10 Commission (aka First 5 LA)
RELEASE DATE: July 23, 2010**



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	TIMELINE.....	3
II.	BACKGROUND.....	4
III.	ELIGIBILITY.....	5
IV.	SUMMARY OF DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND REVIEW CRITERIA ..	5
V.	SELECTION PROCESS.....	6
VI.	STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS (Submission Instructions).....	6
VII.	LIMITATIONS.....	7

I. TIMELINE¹

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFQ Released	July 23, 2010
Due date for questions, requests for additional information	July 30, 2010
Due Date: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online application plus all required attachments• One (1) original signed copy of the First 5 LA “Signature Authorization” and “Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties” forms mailed or delivered to First 5 LA	August 6, 2010
Application Review	August 9- August 13, 2010
Pool of Reviewers Finalized	August 16, 2010
Notification of Acceptance	August 20, 2010
Pool of Reviewers Updates	Every 12 months

All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFQ must be received in writing by First 5 LA via email before 5 p.m. on Thursday, July 30, 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 may be submitted to:

Erika Estrada
Senior Contracts Compliance Officer

Email: eestrada@first5la.org

¹ Note: All dates are subject to change at the sole discretion of First 5 LA.

II. BACKGROUND

ABOUT FIRST 5 LA

In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10, which levies 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 early childhood initiatives and to manage the funding from Proposition 10 (<http://www.first5la.org/>). Since 1998, First 5 LA has invested more than \$800 million to champion and support health, education, and safety issues and programs benefiting young children and families.

In June 2009, the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners adopted a strategic plan to guide its investments through 2015: "Strengthening Families and Communities in L.A. County." The plan was developed during a public process that engaged community stakeholders, grantees, commissioners and staff and in conjunction with research in the field of early child development. We believe, and research confirms, that children are strongest when they live in safe and thriving families and neighborhoods. Therefore, First 5 LA will focus on strengthening families, while also building the capacity of communities and organizations to create and sustain nurturing environments for children. This new "place-based approach" will allow First 5 LA to have a deeper impact in select areas, while also supporting countywide objectives, and to better measure the impact of its investments.

THE FIRST 5 LA POOL OF REVIEWERS

First 5 LA is interested in promoting transparency and an unbiased process in the procurement of projects, services and/or products purchased on behalf of the Commission. As a proactive approach, the Commission seeks to create a Pool of External Reviewers in order to assist us with the Level 2 reviews of Request for Proposals (RFP) and Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Letters of Intent/Interest.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

First 5 LA seeks qualified proposal reviewers to periodically review and score proposals or qualifications for Requests for Qualifications or Proposals relating to the Department of Finance. The Finance Department is responsible for maintaining and monitoring all finance-related activities, as well as providing support in the oversight of financial compliance for First 5 LA and funded agencies. Additionally, the Finance Department is responsible for ensuring that budgets are in alignment with First 5 LA policies and generally accepted accounting practices. In addition to being approved by a representative from the initiating department, each budget must also be approved by the Finance Department prior to the execution of a Grant Agreement or Contract.

As a Finance Department reviewer, you will have the opportunity to be directly involved in determining partnerships for First 5 LA which further the vision of creating and sustaining a future where all young children grow up healthy, are eager to learn, and can reach their full potential.

Selected applicants will be part of a pool of between 7 and 12 qualified Reviewers, who will be asked, on a rotating basis, to participate in the review of proposals or applications that may include the following:

- Reviews may consist of Letters of Interest or Intent (LOI) consisting of 2 pages
- Request for Qualifications (RFQ) which may be up to 10 pages
- Request for Proposals (RFP) which may include up to 30-40 pages

If selected, reviewers selected as part of the pool will be assigned a reviewer number and will be contacted when RFP's and RFQ are posted on the First 5 LA website. Reviewers will maintain the option of declining to participate in any given rotation.

Reviewers will sign a Conflict on Interest statement and confidentiality statement for each project they review.

III. ELIGIBILITY

Applicants responding to this RFQ must demonstrate the qualifications, experience, competency, and ability to successfully provide professional critique of applications or proposals relating to the Department of Finance. Applications will be considered from individuals and/or groups with a presence in California and the capacity to work throughout Los Angeles County.

Knowledge of organizations, programs and systems in the fields of early learning/childhood development, parental education, community engagement, health and social services, Kindergarten readiness, as well as capacity building, sustainability, organizational effectiveness and life cycles is also important.

IV. SUMMARY OF DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed in consideration of the following criteria, which should be clearly evident in the responses and information included in the application and materials provided and through First 5 LA communications with client references.

General Knowledge:

- Knowledge of nonprofit organizational effectiveness and administration, financial model, management, infrastructure and operations
- Substantive proven experience as a consultant and within specified areas of expertise
- Knowledge of and familiarity with organizations providing and or working with early childcare, education, child development and family support needs and resources.

Experience and Expertise:

- Knowledge of financial operations, management and oversight of public entities
- Experience with performing audits
- Knowledge of financial management for public entities with budgets ranging from \$2 million to \$100 million. *(These ranges are provided as an example; the actual range we may want to indicate may be different)*

References:

- Client Recommendations

Non-conflict-of-interest agreements

In accordance with First 5 LA policy, external and internal reviewers sign a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Statement. Experts will be required to notify the Commission

in writing of any connection or interest, which could result in a conflict, or potential conflict, of interest related to the review. Experts will be required to notify the Commission as soon as possible of any changes in or additions to the interests already disclosed which occur during the review process. If experts are unsure as to whether an interest should be disclosed, they should discuss the matter with the Commission.

Reviewers will be paid according to the external reviewer rates listed in the table.

V. SELECTION PROCESS

First 5 LA staff will review each application to ensure that basic requirements are met including: timely receipt, format as required, inclusion of all appropriate attachments, etc. Submissions with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualification.

Applications will be reviewed by a First 5 LA internal staff team with relevant expertise employing the Review Tool posted with the RFQ. Review tools are adhered to by all staff and external reviewers to mitigate any potential for bias. In accordance with First 5 LA policy, external and internal reviewers sign a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Statement.

Reference checks will be completed as necessary to complement rankings resulting from the internal and external review process. First 5 LA must be able to contact at least three (3) of the five (5) references provided by the applicant. If three (3) references cannot be reached, First 5 LA may deem the applicant ineligible for this opportunity.

Applicants approved for inclusion in the Pool of Reviewers will be contacted according to the schedule indicated in the Timeline. First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted qualifications. An appeals process is not available.

VI. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS (Submission Instructions)

In order to respond to this RFQ, please complete and submit your proposal and all required documents to First 5 LA as instructed no later than **5:00 PM on June 28, 2010**. Applications received after this deadline **will not** be considered.

Applications, including all required attachments, must be submitted online at <http://www.first5la.org/Funding-Center>. *In addition to the electronic versions of the Signature Authorization and Agency Litigation Forms, please mail an original of the RFQ checklist, cover letter and these two signed forms to:*

Evelyn V. Martinez, Executive Director

First 5 LA

750 N Alameda Street, Suite 300

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: Department of Finance External Reviewer Pool

Required Items:

1. Appendix A: RFQ Package Checklist
2. Completed Pool of Reviewers Application: Complete the online application form accessible at <http://www.first5la.org/Funding-Center>
3. Résumé or Curriculum Vitae Résumé(s) or curriculum vitae for up to three (3) principals of the consulting business, outlining relevant work and/or consulting history, education, publications, prior research projects, etc. Please provide no more than six (6) pages per person.
4. Client References (Appendix C): Please complete the information, outlined in the instructions for Appendix C, for at least three (3) and no more than five (5) references. References must be from organizations and/or individuals for whom the applicant has provided similar services, and must be able to provide information regarding the consultant's skills and performance regarding the provision of such services. Please be sure to provide current contact information and permission for those clients who have agreed to serve as references for purposes of review and inclusion in the directory.
5. Signature Authorization Form (Appendix D): This form is required to verify signature authority to enter into any contractual agreement. If not outlined in the By-laws, a Board Resolution, Partnership Agreement or Business License must be submitted, as applicable, that indicates signature authority. Applicants must submit one original form signed in **blue** ink.
6. Disclosure Regarding Involvement in Litigation, Legal and/or Professional Contractual Difficulties (Appendix E) Please read, complete and provide an authorized signature in **blue** ink on the *Disclosure Regarding Involvement in Litigation and/or Professional Contractual Difficulties* form. An unsigned form or omission of this signed form will constitute an incomplete application and grounds for disqualification from consideration.
7. W-9 Form

VII. LIMITATIONS

The following limitations apply to this RFQ submission process.

1. The Commission may, at its sole discretion, reject any or all submissions in response to this RFQ. An appeals process is not available.
2. The Commission also reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to cancel this RFQ at any time. 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 supplementary materials, submitted in response to this RFQ shall become property of the Commission and are subject to public disclosure.
3. The individual/organization submitting an application agrees that by submitting an application authorization for the Commission to verify any or all information and/or references given in the application.
4. The Commission reserves the right to amend the External Reviewer Pool as needed to best meet the needs of all parties. At the Commission's discretion, reviewers may be revised or removed.