



*Champions For Our Children*

## BEST START LA

### Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant RFP

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

RELEASE DATE: April 1, 2009



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. TIMELINE .....	4
II. BACKGROUND	
A. First 5 LA.....	5
B. Best Start LA Overview .....	5
C. Best Start LA Pilot Community Geographic Area .....	9
D. Best Start LA Evaluation Framework .....	9
E. Questions to be Answered by the Evaluation.....	13
F. Data Collection Activities.....	17
G. Best Start LA Timeline.....	19
H. Data Analysis Plan.....	19
III. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS AND DELIVERABLES	
A. Working with the Lead Entity .....	20
B. Working with the Home Visitation Oversight Agency .....	24
C. Plans for Data Collection, Data Analysis Plan and Data Dissemination.....	26
IV. ELIGIBILITY AND QUALIFICATIONS	
A. Eligibility.....	32
B. Qualifications .....	33
V. TERMS OF PROJECT	
A. Budget .....	34
B. Policy and Guidelines for Hiring Consultants .....	35
C. Contract Period .....	36
D. Contractual Obligations .....	36
VI. SELECTION PROCESS AND REVIEW CRITERIA	
A. Review Process and Criteria .....	36
B. Review Tools .....	37
VII. APPLICATION PROPOSAL	
A. Statement of Qualifications.....	38
B. Scope of Work.....	39
C. Budget .....	39
VIII. PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES	
A. General Guidelines.....	40
B. Proposal Package.....	40

IX. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	41
X. APPENDICES.....	44
Appendix A: Proposal Cover Sheet	
Appendix B: Proposal Package Checklist	
Appendix C: Memorandum(s) of Understanding	
Appendix D: Previous Client Form (limit of 3 previous clients)	
Appendix E: Scope of Work	
Appendix F: Budget Forms and Budget Narrative	
Appendix G: Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties	
Appendix H: Contractor Signature Authorization Form	
Appendix I: Sample Contract	
Appendix J: Best Start Outcomes	
Appendix K: Potential Data Collection Areas	
Appendix L: Working with other contractors and First 5 LA staff	
Appendix M: Best Start LA Fact Sheet	

## I. TIMELINE<sup>1</sup>

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFP Release	April 1, 2009
Information Session	April 30, 2009
Due Date for RFP	May 11, 2009
Applicants Notified	June 1, 2009
Interviews for Qualified Applicants	Week of June 8-12th, 2009
Contractor Selected:	June 15, 2009
<b>Contract Start Date</b>	August 15, 2009

All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFP must be received in writing by First 5 LA on **May 11, 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:

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<sup>1</sup> Note: While it is First 5 LA's desire to execute the contract on, August 15, all dates are subject to change at First 5 LA's sole discretion.

## 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 Los Angeles 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 (<http://www.first5la.org/>).

To address the needs of underserved communities, the First 5 LA's Commission adopted the next Five Strategic Plan (FY 2004-2009), focusing on the goals of Early Learning, Health and Safety. First 5 LA's mission, from July 1, 2004 until June 30, 2009, is to make significant and measurable progress towards our 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*.

### B. **Best Start LA Overview**

The purpose and goal of Best Start LA is to increase the number of children who achieve appropriate social, emotional, cognitive, language, physical and motor developmental milestones to the best of their potential. Further, the First 5 LA Commission recognizes that addressing the developmental potential of young children must be done in the context of the multiple environments that affect their development: (1) Pregnancy; (2) Parent/Caretaker; (3) Family; (4) Neighborhoods and Communities. Best Start will achieve its goals using three primary strategies: family engagement, community mobilization and place-based activities

Best Start LA is innovative in its focus on integrating family-, community- and organizational-strengthening strategies with the flexibility required to be successful in diverse communities found within Los Angeles County. Best Start LA is designed to integrate existing First 5 LA investments and to inform future investments using the best available evidence of what works as a key criterion. The long-term vision is a Best Start LA model that is sustainable and scalable for all communities in the county.

Through Best Start LA, First 5 LA is launching a broad based partnership with families, community organizations, government agencies, funders, elected public officials, civic organizations, urban planning organizations, and neighborhood associations who share our commitment to create "baby and toddler friendly" neighborhoods and communities. Best Start LA communities will positively contribute to the well being of its members by emphasizing the role communities can and will play in strengthening and linking existing community, organizational, and family assets, in creatively redesigning existing assets to support baby and toddler friendly environments, and in developing new assets to achieve Best Start LA outcomes.

First 5 LA recognizes that long-term change envisioned by Best Start LA is most commonly developed over a period of time. Best Start LA will encourage community environments where members learn to trust each other, share ideas, and work cooperatively toward

common goals and outcomes. Trust and mutual respect will be enhanced through a broad-based, collective effort which identifies the existing strengths and resources of a community and collaboratively builds on those assets successfully. As people pool their talent, time, and resources, they form and strengthen the foundation for a community partnership firmly grounded in the principle of cooperation among diverse groups and individuals. Formalizing this structural foundation through the concept of a “Best Start LA community” provides stability, continuity and capacity for community participants and organizations to sustain their efforts over time and achieve desired results. All Best Start LA activities funded by First 5 LA will support the First 5 LA 2004-2009 strategic plan efforts and will continue into the next strategic planning period.

## **Best Start LA Strategies and Components**

- Best Start LA Demonstration Communities. In order to fully develop and illustrate the Best Start LA model in diverse settings with unique assets and needs, the Commission will invest in five demonstration communities. Each community will launch with a lead facilitator or entity that will be responsible for convening and collaborating with all partners necessary to implement all strategies within the model, including the place-based and community mobilizing strategies.
  - Pilot community: The first of the five demonstration communities is referred to as “the pilot.” The pilot will play a unique role in completing initial testing and refinement of the three key strategies of family engagement, community mobilizing, and place-based activities for Best Start LA and will assist First 5 LA in developing lessons learned from which the other four demonstration communities will benefit. Thus, applicants to this RFP should give substantial consideration to the particular evaluation questions that will be applied to the pilot community, in addition to addressing the main evaluation questions which are outlined in this RFP.

### Strategies

- Family Engagement Strategy: Home visitation As a way of introducing families to the wider range of services within a Best Start LA community, a registered nurse or community worker or parent coach will conduct a series of prenatal, hospital and home visits to all parents through the home visitation program. The purpose of these visits is to invite and welcome families into an array of supportive resources existing in their communities and connect them to these resources when desired. During these voluntary visits, parents will receive:
  - Information about parent-infant attachment, infant behavior, and their child’s development
  - Breastfeeding support
  - Referrals to community-based supports, if desired.

During the pilot phase of the home visitation strategy the Commission will build upon its investment in the Healthy Births Initiative by connecting families to community-based supports, resulting in:

- An increase in the initiation and duration of breastfeeding;
  - Broader access to and use of appropriate health and development care;
  - A strengthened connection to resources and services in their community.
- Community Mobilization: Community Based Action Research (CBAR). First 5 LA will provide a CBAR contractor to facilitate a community planning process that builds knowledge a community creates, owns and uses to transform everyday knowledge into social capital for social change. The CBAR process builds an “inquiry” culture that is imbedded in existing patterns of interaction. The CBAR contractor’s primary tasks will include engaging all relevant agencies, key champions, informal organizations, and community members in the CBAR process to define local issues and problems and envisioning what CBAR participants want; develop questions relevant to the issues and visions identified; gather and analyze relevant data; and prepare recommendations for the Best Start LA Partnership..
  - Place-Based Activities. Along with an early intervention provider network coordinating and linking neighborhood based services and supports, local activities for families will be identified or developed. These may include places designed for playing, learning and coming together, family education and supportive services, resource centers, information and guidance on developmental screening, opportunities to build social connections, and an interactive “Baby Registry,” for example:
    - Family Place Libraries (FPL). FPL is a place-based activity that First 5 LA will support through the Best Start LA process. FPL is a national program intended to transform libraries into community hubs for healthy child and family development, parent and community involvement, and lifelong learning beginning at birth. FPL aligns closely with Best Start LA’s identification of place-based strategies as well as outcomes at both the family and organization-level. FPL was identified as a scalable model and sustainable investment that has strong linkages with the goals and strategies of Best Start LA, including the development of a welcoming, non-stigmatized environment for families with infants and very young children. Libraries existing within the five demonstration communities will initially be targeted for FPL implementation. One to two libraries within each of the five Best Start LA demonstration communities may be available to select as FPL locations. Applicants to this RFP will be expected participate in some evaluation of FPL outcomes within each demonstration community.

### Capacity Building and the Best Start Building blocks

Capacity building is a critical component of the family-, community- and organizational-strengthening strategies within the Best Start model. Capacity building activities will be centered on a number of building blocks which are intended to provide the sustainability and scalability required to reach the long term vision for Best Start LA.

- Workforce Development (WFD). This investment will enhance and/or establish career pathways for the professions associated with Best Start LA demonstration community implementation, as well as increasing partnerships with and training of those professions that work with pregnant women, infants and toddlers in order to provide a foundation which supports countywide spread of the vision. WFD is a critical element in the scalability of Best Start LA countywide. As the work associated with WFD unfolds, it will be expected that applicants to this RFP will participate in the evaluation of WFD outcomes within each demonstration community.
- Sustainability. In September 2007 the Board approved the release of a Sustainability RFP with the overarching goal of identifying, prioritizing and implementing strategies that will ensure long-term solutions for improving the environments in which young children and their families live. The Best Start LA program plan assumes a shared interest by the Commission and the greater LA county community in reaching this goal by creating lasting improvements in the systems of care and support for pregnant women, very young children and their families. Applicants to this RFP will be expected to work with and assist the Sustainability contractor as needed.
- Data. First 5 LA will also invest in a comprehensive data system that will have the capacity to track child- and family-level data countywide, as well integrate with other large data systems, including e-health record data systems. The data collected by this system will play key roles in planning services, supports and changes to built environments for families, evaluating efforts to promote family health and well-being and assisting with portability of records for use by families. Efforts to develop this system will include a data needs assessment, a feasibility study and design of the infrastructure for the system, including a participation tracking component, child-centric reporting, system interface, and data storage and exchange environments. Building of this comprehensive data system is estimated to begin in the summer of 2009.

Applicants to this RFP should note that a significant element of the data system to be developed in the pilot community is a component that will be used to track family-level data collected through the Home Visitation and Place-Based Activities. This component will build on existing systems being utilized by First 5 LA and its grantees. System design will directly contribute to the design of the larger data system. Applicants to this RFP will be expected to utilize this data system within their evaluation efforts and will be expected to work with and assist the Data system contractor as needed.

- Policy. Community resources, supports and services are dynamic representations of community strengths and unique responses to community needs. Many of the issues addressed by the community's mobilization around these issues provide opportunities for local policy solutions, i.e. business practices, local ordinances and service protocols and procedures. Through its policy efforts, First 5 LA will promote and support these types of activities to achieve sustainable change in Best Start LA

demonstration communities. This approach will also elucidate issues to be addressed at a county-wide or broader level and/or are raised by a number of Best Start LA communities.

### Implementation and Integration of Best Start LA Components

The Commission recognizes that the opportunity to move components of the Best Start LA model forward may not occur simultaneously and therefore individual components may be expanded or implemented at different intervals, but the selected applicant for this RFP will be expected to coordinate with First 5 LA staff and strategic partners on all components as listed above, as they are implemented and evaluated:

### **C. Best Start LA Pilot Community Geographic Area**

#### Best Start LA Pilot Community

The first of the Best Start LA demonstration communities will be known as the pilot. It will encompass portions of what are commonly referred to as Pico-Union, Korea Town and South LA. Major street boundaries include Olympic to the North, Jefferson to the South, San Pedro to the East and Normandie to the West. This area was selected because this community has a commitment to service integration and is supported by Los Angeles County's Centralized Case Management effort or CCM. CCM is designed to provide both data and service integration to families who currently use or who are referred to any of the breadth of services provided by the various Los Angeles County Departments. This integration of services will streamline case management of families and ensure there is no 'wrong door' into the county system. By building upon the existing work and community networks in this geographic area, Best Start LA can be coordinated with a safety net of services and case management for those families that choose to utilize it as they participate in Best Start LA. The Commission will also be able to leverage the coordination, collaboration, and relationships already taking place in this particular geographic community.

### **D. Best Start LA Evaluation framework**

Best Start LA is intended to enhance informal supports within communities and transform environments where families can be found. In order to engage all families and strengthen their bond to community networks and these informal supports, Best Start LA, particularly the home visitation strategy, aims to ensure that families' concerns about their child's health and well-being will be addressed and their questions answered. Best Start LA is a strengths-based model that relies on the capacity of communities and families. Ensuring families have a place to have their emergent matters addressed will improve the ability of the Best Start LA's investment to achieve its outcomes. The evaluation of the Best Start LA model needs to reflect this vision of integrated strategies as well as capture the 'place based' essence of these community mobilizing and capacity building activities.

## Main evaluation questions

Globally, the evaluation will need to capture outcomes Best Start LA can achieve in the short, mid and long term in the following categories:

- Child and family
- Community
- Data infrastructure
- Sustainability/Scalability
- Workforce development
- Organizational
- Policy
- Economics

For the purposes of the RFP short term refers to 0-5 years, mid term refers to 5-10 years and long term refers to 10 years and up.

Evaluation work will be undertaken in a place based manner within each of the Best Start LA demonstration communities. In addition there will be a broader level evaluation to examine county wide indicators of change in community, systems, data, policy and sustainability outcomes related to the Best Start model.

For the purposes of this RFP, the evaluation work to be completed will **be limited to the evaluation of the Pilot Community only**. Applicants to this RFP will not be precluded from applying for evaluation contracts for subsequent demonstration communities as they roll out, or to the countywide evaluation RFP upon its release. However, any such expansion of role is not guaranteed and applicants should understand that the initial contract will be limited to the scope of work as described in this RFP.

## Placed-Based evaluation of Demonstration Communities

Because Best Start LA is a comprehensive place-based investment, each strategy must work together to positively affect child, family, and community level outcomes. The outcomes outlined below apply to all demonstration communities selected to participate in Best Start LA and demonstrate how all three strategies of Family Engagement, Community Mobilization and Place-Based Activities will collectively result in the achievement of the outcomes. To allow for specificity and a targeted evaluation of the core set of outcomes, preliminary definitions of success have been quantified for each outcome along with preliminary indicators. This document is titled the “Best Start Outcomes” and is included in the appendices of this RFP (Appendix J). The purpose of the Best Start Outcomes document is to conceptualize a comprehensive approach to measurement of impact and tracking of achievement of planned focus area goals.

*Please note that the Best Start outcomes document is provided for guidance only and is subject to revision. Consultants responding to this RFP are expected to make suggestions for the inclusion of modified or additional indicators, measures and data collection tools.*

Within demonstration communities, the Commission is interested in looking at how the evaluation could focus on a number of separate groups who are receiving either all strategies within the Best Start LA model or a subset of strategies as follows:

- Intervention group  
Families who reside in the Best Start demonstration community and are receiving home visitation services and community strategies (all 3 Best Start LA strategies)
  
- Comparison groups
  1. Community strategies only – families who reside in a demonstration community but are not receiving home visitation services. (Home visitation services are offered to families based on the birthing hospital they attended. Not all hospitals within range of demonstration communities will offer home visitation so certain women within the demonstration community will deliver at a hospital where home visitation was not available to them).
  2. Home Visitation services only – families who reside outside of a Best Start demonstration community but are receiving home visitation services. (Home visitation services are offered to families based on the birthing hospital they attended. Not all women who deliver at a hospital offering home visitation will reside in a demonstration communities so certain women who accept home visitation services will reside outside of a demonstration community).

### Best Start Outcomes

#### Child and Family Outcomes

- Strengthened ability of families to understand their child’s cues and actively address their child’s health, development, needs, and uniqueness
- Increased ability and efforts of families to foster the developmental function of their children so that they are ready for school
- Strengthened attachment and bonding between members of families and children
- Strengthened personal and social relationships within and between families

#### Community Outcomes

- Community resources will meet the needs of the community so that their usage is increased
- Strengthened local community mobilization and advocacy
- Improvements to home and community built environments to support optimal child development

#### Policy Outcomes

- Developed/improved policies that impact the Best Start LA population

#### Systems/Organizational Outcomes

- Increased capacity to meet the needs of families through improved workforce competencies in infant and toddler issues in three sectors (health, early care and education, mental health/social services)

#### Data Systems Outcomes

- Improvement in information and technology systems that support the common use of data and information for family access and support, community planning and organizational efficiency

Indicators should be developed at the level appropriate for each of the outcome areas. Data collection methods may be included where possible within the home visitation curriculum and via interactions with families and community members and community stakeholders via the place based and community mobilizing activities. The Commission is interested in using both qualitative and quantitative measures and the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant should look to use a broad array of data collection methodologies, both novel and traditional within this study i.e. self report questionnaires, observational data, home visitation case notes, qualitative interviewing, the Best Start data system, FPL library data, population based statistics, photo voice, online community forums, built environmental scans, community questionnaires, community events, stakeholder journals and event logs, and CBAR data. Thus the proposed data collection methods will require the consultant to be innovative and creative in their approach to thinking about how to capture and measure data and the appropriate use of qualitative and quantitative measures.

### Home Visitation Outcomes

Interrelated and in addition to the core set of Best Start LA outcomes, the following intermediate home visitation outcomes are expected to be directly affected by engaging families through the home visitation strategy. Measuring and tracking data at each family engagement point would allow the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant to engage in the additional evaluation of these outcomes, which represent the modest improvements this strategy is expected to make in the lives of the families and children they serve.

- Increased breastfeeding
  - Increased duration and exclusivity of breastfeeding
  - Improved parent knowledge of nutrition
- Families will receive appropriate health and developmental care
  - Increased numbers of families with a medical home
  - Higher immunization rates
  - Higher rates of health insurance coverage
  - Increased number of mothers screened for post-partum depression
  - Increased numbers of infants receiving high quality (PEDS or Ages and Stages Questionnaire) developmental screens
- Families will experience improved connections to resources and services in their community, resulting in more referrals and increased utilization of existing resources for families with unmet basic needs; drug, alcohol, or domestic violence exposure; social isolation; post-partum depression; or risk factors for developmental delays.

### Community Activities and CBAR Outcomes

Interrelated and in addition to the core set of outcomes, the following factors are expected to be directly affected by engaging community members through place based activities and the CBAR process. Measuring and tracking data during community events and CBAR

activities would allow the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant to engage in the additional evaluation of these factors which represent the modest improvements these 2 strategies are expected to make in the lives of community members they engage.

1. The Environment
2. Health
3. Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs
4. Education
5. The Economy and Employment
6. Housing
7. Arts and Culture
8. Recreation and Open Spaces
9. Transportation
10. Community Safety

## **E. Questions to be answered by the evaluation**

The evaluation will also need to address the following research questions in the overall consideration of the Best Start LA model and its effectiveness and impact:

*Please note that this section is not designed to be a fixed or exhaustive list of data collection questions and is included to give an overview of the current thinking of the commission as regards proposed Best Start evaluation questions. First 5 LA would expect consultants applying to this RFP to make suggestions and amendments to this section as they deem appropriate and feasible.*

### Intervention Group

1. What child and family outcomes can be achieved through a combination of home visitation, place-based activities, and community mobilization? Specifically,
  - changes in knowledge, attitudes, relationships and behaviors that have resulted from exposure to and participation in Best Start activities
  - early identification of developmental concerns
  - improving the health and well-being of young children and their families
  - policy interventions on the health and well-being of young children and their families
  - transformation of the physical and social environments where children and their families interact
2. Which elements of home visitation/place-based activities/community mobilization are having the most impact on children 0-3 and their families? i.e., what strategies are most effective for increasing awareness of child development and community resources, obtaining information about families, and increasing connections to formal and informal systems of care?
3. What is the critical subset of home visitation /place-based activities/community mobilization needed to support and augment home visitation services so that it could be sustainable and scalable i.e., replicated in other geographic areas?

4. How have the Best Start LA investments changed the landscape of service provision and collaboration within the demonstration communities?
5. How are various factors at the community level associated with outcomes at the family and child levels?
6. How did Best Start LA leverage social and financial capital within the demonstration communities?
7. How did Best Start LA transform or create new assets within the demonstration communities? How did these assets leverage social and financial capital, and to what extent have such capital been used?
8. How did Best Start LA enhance and support linkages with other existing F5LA initiatives?
9. To what extent has Best Start LA strengthened leadership capacity and promote its sustainability within the demonstration communities? i.e., is there a new kind of leadership in the demonstration community that was not there before? Can this leadership be sustained long term and independent of Best Start LA?

#### Comparison groups

Group 1: What child and family outcomes are achieved through the community activities and community mobilization strategies alone?

Group 2: What child and family outcomes are achieved through home visitation only?

#### Home Visitation – CQI and process outcomes evaluation

The evaluator may also consider looking at the strengths and weaknesses of the Home Visitation model and monitor process and quality improvement factors to facilitate fine tuning of the home visitation model and home visitation curriculum. Questions could be expected to include:

What factors influence the success of home visitation services in the following areas?

- enrollment
- retention/attrition
- parent satisfaction
- home visitor characteristics (cultural competency, rapport building skills, education level required, etc.)
- optimal home visitation model (determine optimal # of visits within the context of costs and achievement of goals and outcomes)
- program fidelity (reliability and replicability of home visitation service delivery, fidelity of home visitor to home visitation program content overseen by home visitation oversight agency)

### Place-based activities and CBAR process – CQI and process outcomes evaluation

The evaluator may also consider looking at the strengths and weaknesses of the place based activities and CBAR process to monitor process and quality improvement factors to facilitate fine tuning of these strategies. Questions could be expected to include:

What factors influence the success of community activities in the following areas?

- engagement/involvement of stakeholders in community activities
- retention/attrition of stakeholders
- ongoing stakeholder satisfaction with community activities

### Unintended outcomes

The evaluator may also consider looking at outcomes resulting from the Best Start model that were not foreseen and are unintended consequences of the Best Start strategies and work within demonstration communities. These outcomes may be both positive and negative in terms of impact to communities and community members. Examples of questions we may wish to ask could be as follows, although this is not intended to be an exhaustive list:

1. Do existing community resources benefit or suffer as a result of Best Start LA? Is there a siphoning effect or capacity building effect?
2. Is social mobility increased or decreased as a result of Best Start LA? Are families forced out of or drawn into the demonstration communities?
3. What gains are achieved particularly for mothers in the Best Start LA community? i.e. increases in workforce participation, education, health promoting behaviors, decreased risk behaviors and criminality etc.
4. Is there a change in the efficacy of existing community relationships and partnerships and the level of community resources as Best Start and the Best Start lead entity comes into a community and “takes over”.
5. What gains can be seen for older children in families due to community activities and the family engagement strategy? How do the immediate effects go beyond years 0-3?

### Economic and Cost-Related Questions

As mentioned earlier in this RFP, the commission requires that the evaluation of the Best Start LA include intentional economic and cost related analysis to inform the impact evaluation. As this represents an area of specialization, we will be engaging the services of a dedicated economic evaluation consultant to work with First 5 LA staff and with the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant selected through this RFP to provide input, critical thinking and concrete strategies for economic analysis within the Best Start evaluation framework. .

The economic evaluation consultant will provide concrete strategies to the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant and to First 5 LA staff around collection of data which via the appropriate application of costs and/or economic analysis can demonstrate economic changes attributable to the Best Start LA model. Specifically, the evaluation should highlight changes in child and family, social and community indicators that also have relevance for economic analysis within and across our broad outcome areas i.e., at the level of the child and family and at the level of the community. The evaluation should also provide a review of the overall key economic factors associated with the Best Start LA model.

The period of consultation and planning around the types of economic and cost related analyses that are appropriate and feasible for the Best Start LA focus area is scheduled to begin around the same time that this contract will be executed. Thus the economic evaluation consultant will be able to provide early on in the evaluation planning process recommendations on the kinds of analyses to plan for, how to use multiple forms of economic analyses to inform the impact evaluation, and whether the proposed data collection plan is sufficient for these aims.

#### The Pilot Community and Measurement Challenges

There are many inherent challenges associated with the design and implementation of evaluations of programs related to children, families and communities. However, given the substantial number of culturally and linguistically diverse children and families living in Los Angeles County, particular consideration will need to be given to addressing these challenges within the evaluation.

As noted earlier, a primary focus of the pilot community is to test the Best Start LA model and the various data collection strategies and measures. Given the increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse populations within Los Angeles County, the evaluation will need to explore practical data collection approaches that will allow for testing of different combinations of measures and measurement approaches, including potential simultaneous use of multiple measures of the same construct to fully explore the most appropriate measurement strategies, among others. Applicants to this RFP are encouraged to propose testing the feasibility of different measures and methodologies, but any such proposed approaches must also address the evaluation questions and outcome areas defined above.

In summary, there are challenges that will need to be addressed within the context of this proposed pilot community evaluation effort in order to provide accurate, helpful, and policy-relevant information for subsequent demonstration communities. Thus, a successful evaluation framework will need to clearly demonstrate the ability to advance the current knowledge base within the context of these challenges.

#### Beyond the Pilot Community: Ongoing Refinement of the Evaluation Framework

In addition to monitoring the implementation and impact of the strategies within the Best Start model through the pilot community, the evaluation framework will benefit from an ongoing process of reflection, testing and refinement. It is the intention of First 5 LA to expand our current preschool Research Advisory Committee (RAC) to include research and

evaluation experts who will ask questions and provide technical input, guidance, and recommendations to the Best Start LA team, to include the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant, around achievement of the Best Start Outcomes.

The RAC will comprise of individuals representing a varied depth and breadth of research and evaluation expertise and experience, including a balance of local and national representatives. A number of members would have technical expertise reflecting their involvement in significant local, state and national evaluation efforts within the field of family and community engagement programs

Through an iterative process, input from the RAC may be incorporated by the Best Start LA team and the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant into an overall long-term research and evaluation plan that will provide a framework for measuring the implementation, sustainability effectiveness and impact of the Best Start LA's focus area.

The RAC will help address specific Best Start LA research and evaluation challenges, provide input and make appropriate recommendations to the Best Start LA team, particularly around anticipated methodology and measurement challenges, research to practice, research to policy strategies, and dissemination approaches for findings as they emerge. Technical and logistical support for the meetings will be provided by staff from the Best Start LA team, in collaboration with First 5 LA staff. The RAC would meet biannually.

## **F. Data Collection Activities**

*Please note, that this section is not designed to be a fixed or exhaustive list of data collection activities and is included to give an overview of the current thinking of the commission as regards proposed Best Start evaluation activities. First 5 LA would expect consultants applying to this RFP to make suggestions and amendments to this section as they deem appropriate and feasible.*

### Flexible and Responsive Data Collection Activities

As alluded to in the preceding paragraph relating to the RAC and in section D, we see the strategies within the Best Start model and the evaluation of the model is subject to ongoing reflection, testing and refinement. The specific role of the pilot community is to provide a mechanism by which we can monitor the roll out of all three strategies and gather data to allow for scrutiny of the implementation and impact of the Best Start model against desired benchmarks and protocols. These will include consideration of data that reflects the implementation process, sustainability aspects and the impact achieved by the Best Start model in the pilot community. The evaluation framework and data collection plan will be critical in providing timely feedback to allow for 'lessons learned' and midway corrections. As such applicants to this RFP should expect to be flexible and adapt to any new circumstances that may arise which impact and require a revision of the evaluation framework and data collection plan.

In addition to providing data on implementation, sustainability and impact, and incorporating suggestions from the RAC, we would require that the data collection plan and

evaluation activities in the pilot community be open to revisions in terms of oversight, fulfilling data collection requirements and meeting evaluation targets. This overall process of evaluation refinement, re-tooling and re-strategizing will require a flexible scope of work for the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant, timely feedback from the RAC, and adaptability and willingness on the part of the consultant to receive input from others and making ongoing changes to evaluation activities. The consultant will also need to engage in internal performance monitoring and oversight as appropriate when executing and adhering to potential performance based contractual agreements and budgets.

The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will be well supported during data collection activities and refinements to data collection plans in that the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will have access to the collective expertise of the RAC, regular meetings with First 5 LA evaluation staff and other externally contracted personnel, such as the Economic Evaluation Consultant and Data Systems Consultant, to ensure that we have optimal data collection and data analysis strategies.

#### Data Collection within the Pilot Community

The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant would need to work autonomously as well as in tandem with the home visitation oversight agency, lead community agencies, CBAR conveners, and Community Based Organizations to manage and collect data over time as well as offering technical assistance around data collection within demonstration communities where feasible and appropriate. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant would also be expected to meet regularly with First 5 evaluation staff and other externally contracted personnel to ensure that we have responsive and embedded data collection strategies as well as the necessary objectivity required for the analysis and interpretation of data collected.

As mentioned earlier in this RFP, the Commission would like to include comparison groups within the 5 year Pilot Community evaluation framework.

The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will be able to utilize the services of the Pilot Community Partnership and First 5 LA's Public Affairs department in terms of communication and outreach to families who may be included in these comparison groups. The Commission would also permit the payment of modest incentives to community workers or community members who make referrals that lead to the enrollment of families.

#### Possible data collection targets

The pilot community has an anticipated birth rate of around 1600 babies per year. Of those 1600 births, roughly 50 percent will take place at birthing facilities that offer the home visitation program. Of those women offered home visitation, the estimated take up rates for the home visitation program in the first (start up) year and then later at maturity are illustrated below.

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<u>First Year</u>	<u>Maturity</u>
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Prenatal engagement point	40% (320)	60% (480)
Hospital engagement point	50% (400)	90% (720)
Home Visit 1	40% (320)	80% (640)

These estimated take up rates were derived from calculations from the First 5 LA Prenatal through Three Focus Area Family Engagement Strategy Model Implementation Guide (Nathan G. & Kaczmarek, J., 2007).

The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will be expected to embed in data collection activities strategies to retain families yearly in the respective birth cohorts and keep attrition levels within an acceptable range.

**G: Best Start LA timeline**

Demonstration Communities: Roll out of Place-Based and CBAR process (referred to as community strategies) and Home visitation program.

Data collection should commence in the fall of 2009 within the pilot community and should continue until the completion of all activities within the community at around 2015. Thus evaluation activities are projected to cover approximately a 5 year time period within the pilot community.

*\*\*Please note all dates are subject to change and are included for reference purposes only.*

**H: Data Analysis Plan**

The evaluation contractor will be asked to propose an appropriate data analysis plan to tackle each of the questions outlined in section E as well as measuring our effectiveness in achieving the outcomes mentioned in the Best Start Outcomes document (Appendix J).

In the pilot community an initial emphasis can be on testing the feasibility of measures and methodologies and later looking at the impact of the Best Start model within the pilot community. In contrast, subsequent demonstration communities may focus more on the impact of the Best Start model and the evaluation questions. The design of the proposed Best Start evaluation will require data collection from multiple data sources both primary and secondary in nature. Applicants are encouraged to refer to the Best Start Outcomes document (Appendix J). The Best Start Outcomes document is provided as a tool for reference, to stimulate thinking around the evaluation framework and data analysis plan and is not intended to be taken as a final and decisive document.

Data Collection Staffing Plan

It is expected that the data collection plan would include a staffing plan to ensure that data collection personnel work closely with other F5LA departments and related contractors in the tracking and collection of data relevant to Best Start activities i.e., First 5’s Technical Assistance Institute for community collaboratives, First 5’s Public Affairs dept around the

marketing and communications plan and the First 5 Policy Department around local policy efforts. We would recommend in the Data Collection staff plan that applicants consider, where possible, how to integrate data collection staff into the community and how to ensure consistency in terms of staff who interact with families on a regular basis and for retention efforts.

We make this recommendation to show that we envisage data collection staff as playing a critical role in building trusting relationships in the community with families and with Best Start community network members.

### **III. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS AND DELIVERABLES**

*Please note that this section is not designed to be a fixed or exhaustive description of the role of Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant with regard to specific components of the evaluation and is included to give an overview of the current thinking of the commission as regards the role of the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant. First 5 LA would expect consultants applying to this RFP to make suggestions and amendments to this section as they deem appropriate and feasible.*

The next sections describe the main data collection and evaluation activities as proposed by First 5 LA and outlines the role First 5 LA envisions the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant assuming for each activities as well as the resources First 5 LA will provide to the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant especially as regards the Best Start LA partners working within the pilot community and the relationships and roles that will be developed between the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant and other Best Start LA partners.

The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will play a broad role in data collection across multiple capacity building and community mobilization strategies within the pilot community.

#### **Project Requirements**

##### **Data collection overview in the Pilot Community**

###### **A. Working with the Lead Entity – Place Based Activities, CBAR and Policy**

As mentioned earlier, each demonstration community will launch with a Lead Entity that is responsible for convening and collaborating with community partners who are necessary to the implementation of Best Start LA strategies. In cooperation with First 5 LA, the Lead Entity will facilitate the creation of an inclusive Best Start LA Partnership network which represents the diverse stakeholders in communities and serves as the sustainable infrastructure for the implementation of the Best Start LA model.

In addition, the Lead Entity will work collectively with First 5 LA and the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant to develop an evaluation plan for demonstration communities that will include milestones and indicators of achievement and accountability towards the Best Start focus area outcomes. The Lead Entity will establish and launch a locally based

accountability infrastructure and protocols and will also implement recommendations for improvement based on results from the evaluation. After appropriate consultation and planning, the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant can expect the lead entity to assist in evaluation activities as outlined below.

The lead entity will:

1. Attend and participate in regular meetings with Best Start LA staff, evaluation consultants, other First 5 LA Departments, Home Visitation Oversight Agency, and Partnership members and agencies;
2. Coordinate with CBAR conveners on necessary data collection related to community mobilization efforts;
3. Ensure Partnership members are collecting and entering accurate data into appropriate databases in a timely manner;
4. Collection and consolidation of quantitative and qualitative data from all Partnership members and agencies within the Partnership for dissemination to Best Start LA staff;
5. Keep journal log of all activities related to Best Start LA strategies and components;
6. Ensure process and outcome measures from all Partnership-related activities are being collected;
7. Provide periodic updates on activities relating to the Best Start LA components;
8. Monitor trends within and external to the community that have an impact on issues relevant to Best Start LA; and
9. Coordinate with the home visitation services administrator in collection and presentation of data.

In turn the Commission requires that the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant, with support from First 5, provides the following to the pilot community's Lead Entity and Best Start LA Partnership members:

The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will

1. Coordinate efforts with pilot community Lead Entity to ensure data is being collected;
2. Provide training and technical assistance on data collection and data entry;
3. Develop appointment scheduling system to facilitate meetings with Partnership Lead Entity;
4. Assist in data collection efforts on both process and outcome evaluation, particularly during developmental phase of the Partnership;
5. Represent First 5 LA evaluation interests during CBAR process;
6. Obtain data from the Partnership Lead Entity and Partnership members;
7. Assist Partnership Lead Entity and Partnership members in the dissemination of surveys throughout the Partnership;
8. Attend, support, and participate in Best Start LA Partnership meetings to provide data collection-related services;
9. Develop schedule for generating reports on missing data or data errors and work with the appropriate entities to collect missing data or correct data errors.

As such, the lead entity will play an integral role in all data collection efforts, particularly as regards the community activities and CBAR data. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will need to work extremely closely with the lead entity in order to formalize and prioritize data collection activities and monitor their progress. In essence, the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will form a working relationship with the lead entity in which they use the lead entity as their most effective data collection resource. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant should also take into consideration the substantial responsibilities the lead entity has towards executing the Best Start strategies in the community and how that will need to be balanced as regards their role in data collection and the support that the lead entity will need from the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant around data collection. More specifics on data collection activities are outlined below.

### **Community Based Action Research (CBAR) Data Collection**

First 5 LA will provide to the lead entity a Community Based Action Research (CBAR) contractor to facilitate a community planning process with all relevant agencies, key champions, informal organizations, and community members in the CBAR process to:

1. Define local issues and problems and envisioning what the CBAR community wants;
2. Develop questions relevant to the issues and visions identified;
3. Gather and analyze relevant data; and
4. Prepare recommendations for the Best Start LA Partnership.

First 5 LA will also build and nurture ownership of and participation in the Best Start LA vision, across the county, develop partnerships with individuals and entities working to achieve similar results, and establish recommendations for engaging key champions and volunteers across demonstration sites.

The lead entity, either directly or using the services of a sub contractor will compile comprehensive records to document the involvement, project and outcomes for the CBAR process.

In consultation with the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant the lead entity will be expected to compile tracking logs of community events at the commencement of the CBAR process, activities and demographics of participants, level of participation, coalitions and collaboration etc. Data should also be collected on the CBAR process such as process outcomes involved in working towards these goals. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant should expect to play a supporting role in these data collection activities and also contribute to the dissemination and completion of community surveys that document the impact of the CBAR process at the end of the CBAR lifecycle. The lead entity will also conduct an assessment of the community's capacity to engage in policy development and advocacy as part of the initial scan conducted by collaborative members. This work may be undertaken in conjunction with the policy department at First 5 LA and should involve the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant where possible.

### **Community Activities Data Collection: Place-Based Services**

The following Place-Based strategies have been identified to facilitate a common approach to achieving the Best Start LA outcomes and to link activities within the Pilot Community and eventually across further demonstration sites:

- Play environments for children:
- Family Education and Supportive Services:
- Resource Center:
- Interactive Baby Registry
- Information and Guidance on Developmental Screenings:
- Building Social Connectedness:

The Community Based Action Research (CBAR) process will provide the necessary information that will form the basis of developing, expanding or changing Place-Based services within the Pilot Community and as such the Lead Entity will be responsible for monitoring action plans with the Pilot Community Partnership to address the CBAR recommendations for Place-Based services.

In consultation with the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant the lead entity will be expected to monitor the development of action plans and subsequent place based activities within the pilot community. The information recorded by the lead entity should include types of place based services offered and the demographics of participants, level of participation, coalitions and collaboration etc. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant should expect to play a supporting role in these data collection activities and also contribute to the dissemination and completion of community surveys that document for example, levels of social connectedness, use of educational and supportive services and use of interactive baby registry.

The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will also coordinate with the Family Place Libraries (FPL) initiative around data collection and analysis regarding utilization and effectiveness of Family Place libraries with First 5 LA evaluation staff, the County of Los Angeles Public Library and the California State Library Family Place evaluator.

### **Policy Agenda Data Collection**

Within the pilot community, the lead entity will identify one of Best Start LA Partnership staff to act as the lead policy person in coordinating the partnership's local policy efforts. In terms of evaluation, the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will be required to liaise with the designed lead policy person regarding data collection efforts related to policy development and implementation. This would include tracking actions taken at Partnership level on policy alerts and the effectiveness/relevance of the alerts and success of the actions.

Examples of indicators that could be referenced when formulating a data collection strategy within the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant related to community, policy and place based outcomes are illustrated in appendix J (Best Start Outcomes).

Again, this appendix is provided for reference purposes only and is not meant to represent fixed data collection protocol.

## **B. Working with Home Visitation Oversight Agency- Home Visitation Data Collection**

The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will play a broad role in data collection across multiple evaluations efforts as regards home visitation. Initially, the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will be required to liaise with individual home visitation agencies as well as the home visitation oversight agency in order to collect and analyze data relating to child and family level indicators from the multiple home visits as well as home visitation program improvement (CQI) data.

### **Child and Family Outcomes**

Specifically, data relating to child and family outcomes will be collected by the home visitation staff during the course of home visits up to the final 9 month visit. This will be the case for both the intervention and for families receiving home visitation services who do not reside in the pilot community. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will be responsible for obtaining this data from the home visitation oversight agency and from the individual agencies providing home visitation services when necessary. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will also be expected to continue data collection efforts with these families at the 12 month time point up until data collection effects cease. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant may wish to consider attending the final 9 month visit with the home visitor in order to be introduced to the family and to lay the groundwork with the family for continued data collection by the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant.

The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will also be expected to enroll, recruit and oversee data collection activities for any families residing in the Pilot Community who did not receive home visitation services, i.e. the community strategies only group. Examples of the data that could be collected by the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant around child and family outcomes and the home visitation strategy are illustrated in appendix K: Potential Data Collection Areas. Again, this appendix is provided for reference purposes only and is not meant to represent final and definitive data collection areas.

### **Home Visitation – CQI data**

The Lead Entity will coordinate efforts with the home visitation oversight agency to ensure effective and efficient delivery of Home visitation services to families and a responsive and effective community process for referrals and follow up activities with families within the pilot community. First 5 LA will hire a home visitation administrator to oversee the centralized functions necessary for the implementation of the Family Engagement activities that include: engagement protocol development, training and hiring of home visitation teams, oversights and quality assurance of teams, partnership development with hospitals and larger county systems necessary for implementation. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will work with the lead entity and the home visitation oversight agency in order to collect and analyze this data.

## **C Working with other contractors and First 5 LA staff**

In addition to the various agencies within the pilot community the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will be expected to assimilate data from, or assist in the acquisition

of data for, the commission, as well as the contractors and consultants hired by the commission.

Examples of potential collaborative evaluation efforts are illustrated below

- Workforce Development Contractor (WFD). WFD is a critical element in the scalability of Best Start LA countywide. As the work associated with WFD unfolds, it may be expected that the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will participate in some evaluation of WFD outcomes within the pilot community.
- Sustainability Contractor. The overarching goal of identifying, prioritizing and implementing strategies that will ensure long-term solutions for improving the environments in which young children and their families live. Applicants to this RFP will be expected to be available to the Sustainability contractor and assist this contractor in their work as needed within the pilot community.
- Data System Contractor. Applicants to this RFP should be mindful that a significant element of the data system to be developed in the pilot community is a component that will be used to track family-level data collected through the Home Visitation and Place-Based Activities. This component will build on existing systems being utilized by First 5 LA and its grantees. System design will directly contribute to design of the larger data system. Applicants to this RFP will be expected to utilize this data system within their evaluation efforts and will be expected to liaise closely with the data systems contractor in order align their data collection activities, and data storage procedures with the developing Best Start LA data system, as well as assisting the contractor with any data collection activities they may require assistance with within the pilot community.
- Economic Analysis Contractor The economic evaluation consultant's role is to provide concrete strategies to the evaluation consultant and to First 5 LA staff around collection of data which via the appropriate application of costs and/or economic analysis can demonstrate economic changes attributable to the Best Start LA model. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant should expect to receive input early on from the economic evaluation consultant as regards data collection plans and to liaise with the economic analysis consultant regularly and provide data to them which will allow for refinement to costs and/or economic analysis strategies.
- Research Advisory Committee (RAC) The research and evaluation experts who make up the Research Advisory Committee will provide technical input, guidance, and recommendations to the Best Start LA team around achievement of the Best Start Outcomes. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant selected through this RFP, would be expected to assist the RAC in this endeavor via participation in bi-annual RAC conferences and through the preparation of research briefings, evaluation summaries and data analysis reports.
- First 5 LA Policy Dept. Through its policy efforts, First 5 LA will promote and support policy activities to achieve sustainable change in Best Start LA demonstration communities. This approach will also elucidate issues to be addressed at a county-wide or broader level and/or are raised by the pilot community. The evaluation consultant may be required to assist the Policy Dept in

its efforts to follow up on and evaluate the relevance and user-friendliness of policy updates.

- First 5 LA Public Affairs Dept. Through its Public Affairs department, First 5 LA will provide assistance to achieve consistent messaging around Best Start LA vision and outcomes across the pilot community and subsequent demonstration communities. The Communications Plan focuses on three goal areas:
  1. To increase and strengthen channels of communication among and between the members of the Best Start LA Pilot Community Partnership to effectively accomplish Best Start LA outcomes;
  2. To develop and strengthen channels of communication among and between the various community networks operating within Best Start LA communities who are directly or indirectly impacted by Best Start LA activities (e.g. School Readiness Initiative, Best Babies Collaborative, Children’s Planning Council, Department of Child and Family Services Prevention Initiative).
  3. To build, strengthen and sustain relationships among Partnership members, stakeholders, clients and community members regarding implementation of all components of Best Start LA in the Pilot Community.

Using data collected in the pilot community, the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant may be required to assist the Public Affairs dept in its efforts to track the attainment of the three goals and to evaluate the effectiveness of these goals in achieving consistent messaging around the Best Start LA vision.

- First 5 LA Research and Evaluation Dept. Upon execution of the contract, the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will work collectively with First 5 LA Research and Evaluation staff and other consultants under contract to First 5 LA, such as the Economic Evaluation Consultant and Data Systems Consultant to develop an evaluation plan for the pilot period that will include milestones and indicators of achievement and accountability. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant and the First 5 LA team, to include other consultants, will work in partnership to develop and execute the evaluation plan. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will also be required to meet weekly with First 5 LA evaluation staff to monitor progress and to plan and review data collection plans and activities.

A table summarizing the work to be undertaken with other contractors, as illustrated in this section is provided in appendix L

## **Project Deliverables**

### **C. Plans for Data Collection, Data Analysis Plan and Data Dissemination**

Applicants to this RFP will be expected to produce draft plans to cover Data Collection, Data Analysis and Data dissemination which encompasses all of the project requirement outlined above and addresses all of the evaluation questions set out in this RFP. In the formation of the draft Data Collection, Data Analysis and Data Dissemination plans applicants are strongly advised to make use of any evaluation planning materials provided in the appendices of this RFP. This would include the Best Start outcomes document and child and family data collection chart. These documents are provided as guidelines and are

not meant to represent final data collection materials.

## **Data Collection Plan**

Within the draft Data Collection plan, the evaluation contractor will present a detailed timeline for data collection activities for the pilot community that ensures the timely collection of data, as well as adequate quality control of both qualitative and quantitative data.

To ensure that the data collection staff assigned to the Best Start evaluation have the skills necessary to perform their duties, the evaluation contractor will design and implement comprehensive training programs during each data collection period.

Along with the training plan, the evaluation contractor will submit a plan that describes how the evaluation contractor will monitor all data collection activities to ensure that high quality data are collected. The evaluation contractor will include in this plan a description of the evaluation and correction methods the evaluation contractor will use to assure quality control, maintain standards, identify poor performance, and procedures for correcting poor performance of data collection staff. The plan should also outline the approach the evaluation contractor proposes to use to address staff turnover, e.g., in the replacement and training of data collection staff.

Because high numbers of ethnically and linguistically diverse children and families are expected to be included in the sample, the evaluation contractor must have sufficient numbers of data collection staff who are qualified to interact with children and families of ethnically and linguistically diverse groups, and who can conduct culturally sensitive interviews in the major languages other than English. At a minimum, the evaluation contractor must have field staff who are fluent in Spanish. The evaluation contractor will document how field staff will be recruited and deployed to address this issue.

All persons who collect or have access to raw data must be trained in ethical and confidentiality issues relating to protection of human subjects and will provide signed assurances of nondisclosure of confidential information. The evaluation contractor will maintain these records and provide them to the First 5 LA upon request.

The evaluation contractor will develop and implement a plan to have BSLA senior evaluation staff conduct periodic site/community visits during data collection periods to monitor evaluation staff, ensure quality control, and maintain good working relationships with Best Start partnership members, community members and families. The evaluation contractor will incorporate into the Annual Report and provide to First 5 LA periodic written summaries of the results of such quality control visits, including steps taken to correct or improve any difficulties encountered.

For retention and incentivizing purposes, the evaluation contractor can include in the proposed budget modest incentive payments for scheduled annual data collection activity, or in-kind contribution of similar value, for each family who participates in each scheduled home visitation annual data collection activity, along with home visitation biannual retention incentives. As part of their recruitment strategy costs, the evaluation contractor may provide similar incentive payments to Best Start partnership members, agencies, providers, or community stakeholders for referral of families to the “community strategies only” comparison groups.

The Evaluation contractor must allow for sample mobility and make every effort to minimize sample attrition and should specify plans for how attrition will be minimized.

### **Timeline for Collecting and Assimilating Data**

Data collection and data assimilation (gathering of data collected by other Best Start partnership members) should be completed along a prescribed time line for data collection activities as relates to the child and family outcomes data (home visitation) and periodically as necessary and as arranged with other Best Start partnership members for CBAR and placed based activities data collection and data assimilation activities. The draft Data Collection and Data Analysis plan shall have proposed timelines for data collection and data assimilation activities. The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant is encouraged to plan for frequent meetings with First 5 LA staff, other contractors and Best Start partnership members.

### **Monitoring the Progress of the Evaluation and the Quality of the Data**

The Best Start evaluation will require large amounts of information to be collected, processed, and stored in a short period of time. Within the overall Best Start LA data system, a methodology and process must be developed and maintained to keep control of all data collection activities associated with the Best Start LA evaluation. In tandem with the Best Start LA data system contractor, the evaluation contractor will design and implement a system to ensure that each designated sample unit (child, family, community) is properly surveyed and that all required information is obtained, properly identified, and stored. This system component must have the means for correcting materials/data found to be incomplete or inaccurate. The system component must permit project staff to monitor the flow of information and to produce periodic reports of the study's progress. These reports will be provided to First 5 LA upon request and will be incorporated into the Annual Report.

To ensure that data collected are of high quality, the Evaluation contractor will have, in addition to procedures for monitoring data collectors' performance in the field, a system in place for quickly identifying patterns of inaccuracies and anomalies in the data (such as out-of-range variables, missing data, and unusual distributions of scores), such that immediate corrective action can be initiated. All such problems and subsequent corrections must be carefully documented and compiled into a technical report that will be included with the final archived data set.

### **Deliverable Based Expenditure Report**

Within the draft Data Collection plan, the evaluation contractor will be required to formulate a draft *Deliverable Based Expenditure Report* to demonstrate how the total dollar amount requested over the 5 year period can be recalculated from the line item budget format into a report that represents discrete evaluation activities and deliverables.

Examples of deliverables that must be included in the draft *Deliverable Based Expenditure Report* are as follows:

Sampling and Piloting  
Data Collection  
Recruitment and Retention  
Data Analysis  
Data Dissemination

Applicants may choose to format the draft *Deliverables Based Expenditure Report* as they deem appropriate, to include the addition of further deliverables. At a minimum the draft Deliverables Based Expenditure Report should include a brief description of each deliverable, and the estimated amount that will be expended annually per deliverable, with an expenditure justification. The total amount represented in the draft *Deliverable Based Budget Expenditure Report* should match or meaningfully approximate the total amount requested by the applicant, over the 5 years, to complete the evaluation work.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

The evaluation contractor will also be asked to submit a preliminary Data Collection and Data Analysis Plan, including a draft of the full set of proposed data collection instruments and data collection methodologies (e.g., surveys, observational measures, qualitative interviews, and administrative data) to First 5 LA by the **8th week** after the effective date of the contract.

Within the Data collection and Data Analysis plan, the evaluation contractor will outline and provide detailed justification for the specific set of recommendations or options for evaluating placed based activities, including advantages and disadvantages of each proposed measure or measures, as well as each of the relevant research questions that can be addressed by each measure. The evaluation contractor will attach an overview of each instrument, including a description of its psychometric properties; the populations on which it has been normed and used; its appropriateness for use in low-income and culturally and linguistically diverse populations; an assessment of its validity and reliability as well as its suitability for longitudinal data collection with the population under study; and its predictive validity and how it links with similar measures across various developmental periods; and any specific suggestions for revisions. The evaluation contractor will also document the methods used and the assumptions made to produce each of the recommendations, including references to the relevant findings from previous studies, as well as the specific psychometric information.

Prior to data collection, the evaluation contractor, after consultation with the data systems contractor, shall design, establish, and implement the procedures to either input data directly into the Best Start LA data system (if the system is operational) or to store the data into a computerized form that can be used by a variety of standard statistical software packages (e.g., SAS and SPSS for Windows) and can be imported in the Best Start LA Data System. After data collection begins, the evaluation contractor will edit the computerized data and correct all errors until the computer files contain only verified and accurate records. Final data deliverables shall consist of CD-ROMs with electronic codebooks that allow users to tag variables and create SAS and SPSS for Windows code files.

Within the preliminary Data Collection and Data analysis plan the contractor will be

expected to address a range of data analytic issues including, but not limited to the following: participant attrition, barriers to data collection, challenges in collecting community level data, issues in analyzing qualitative data, estimation of main impacts, and options for collecting and analyzing novel and traditional types of data across the Best Start outcome areas. This preliminary data analysis plan will be further refined after contract award, based on input from First 5 LA, other external contractors, as well as ongoing input from the RAC .

First 5 LA staff will provide written comments to the evaluation contractor on the Preliminary Research and Data Analysis Plan (including the proposed set of data collection instruments). First 5 LA reserves the right to alter the preliminary Data Collection and Data Analysis Plan as required to ensure the evaluation is structured in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Commission and of this RFP.

The evaluation contractor will then revise the Preliminary Research and Data Analysis Plan based on the comments by First 5 LA and will submit a final Research and Data Analysis Plan to First 5 LA for approval by the end of the **12th week** after the effective date of the contract.

Following the completion of discrete data collection activities (i.e. annual interviews with distinct birth cohorts), the contractor will be expected to begin conducting analyses of the data collected according to the methodology approved in the revised data analysis plan.

The evaluation contractor should anticipate close involvement of the First 5 LA staff during the data analysis phase. The evaluation contractor will be expected to submit all preliminary analyses to First 5 LA for review and, upon request by First 5 LA, will provide First 5 LA with access to output from data runs.

### **Data Dissemination Plan**

Applicants to this RFP will be expected to produce a draft Data Dissemination Plan which outlines the kinds of documents the contractor anticipates producing. For example, the evaluation contractor may wish to include in the data dissemination plan references to PowerPoint presentations, executive summary reports, technical reports and community friendly fact sheets and press releases.

Within the draft Data Dissemination Plan, the evaluation contractor will present a proposed timeline for data dissemination activities for the pilot community data that ensures the timely reporting of data, as well as appropriate dissemination materials.

To give applicants to this RFP some initial guidelines around expected dissemination activities the following section is included:

***Presentations:*** The Evaluation contractor will be expected to make at least **two** presentations per year related to the proposed study to a variety of audiences, including the Research Advisory Committee, the First 5 LA Commission, and national research conferences, among others. The specific identification and scheduling of such presentations will be done in advance, based on input and advance approval from First 5 LA. The evaluation contractor will be expected to submit any materials to be presented to First 5 LA for review and approval at least two weeks prior to giving the presentation.

First 5 LA is committed to the active dissemination of information derived from the work of this evaluation contract to a range of academic, programmatic and policy audiences. However, prior to the end of the contract, advanced, written approval of First 5 LA will be required for any and all publications, presentations or other use of the data set that are based on the data collected under this contract. Prior to engaging any activities associated with publications, presentations or other use of the data set that are based on the data collected under this contract, the evaluation contractor will provide to First 5 LA a written description of the proposed publication, presentation or other use of the data (included total projected hours and costs), a timeline for its completion, as well as a justification for how such work is consistent with the primary goals of the evaluation and will not contribute to any delays in the evaluation's progress. The intent is not to require the review and approval of the *specific content* of any approved publications and presentations, but rather to ensure the appropriate use of these public funds and ensure timely completion of the primary evaluation tasks. It is also expected that any such publications and presentations will include the appropriate acknowledgement of the sponsorship of the study by First 5 LA.

### **Facilitating continuation of the evaluation process**

The evaluation contractor will ensure that all materials, reports, questionnaires, data or other products developed through the Best Start LA evaluation will be available to any potential future evaluation contractor funded by First 5 LA who may be conducting evaluation work in subsequent demonstration communities and/or a larger and more comprehensive evaluation of the full set of First 5 LA funded programs.

### **Data Reports and Study Briefing Materials/Support Activities**

***Weekly Meetings:*** During all phases and data collection activities, the evaluation contractor will attend brief weekly meetings with Best Start team members and potentially other contractors to discuss data collection activities and issues. In addition to preparing a brief data collection summary for the meeting, the evaluator should forward in advance to the Best Start team an outline of any potential data collection issues so that an agenda can be prepared to direct the meeting.

***Progress Reports:*** During all phases of the data collection activities, the evaluation contractor will provide brief monthly progress reports to First 5 LA, which clearly indicate the contract tasks that were performed in the prior month, a description of the progress made in completing these tasks, problems encountered or remaining from the prior months, expected approaches in resolving problems from the prior month, tasks for the current month, and any budgeting implications or significant concerns to be addressed by First 5 LA. The progress report will provide a cumulative budget summary and expenditures for the current month, presented overall and separately by task.

***Annual Reports:*** The evaluation contractor will submit a draft outline for an Annual Report for each contract year to First 5 LA according to the schedule listed below. First 5 LA will have two weeks to review and approve the outline.

The reports will include the following elements:

- The results of data analyses from all data collected, based on the analysis plan and any subsequent modifications to that plan. At a minimum, descriptive analyses that are related to the stated evaluation questions and outcomes will be provided; and, event history analyses, which chronologically describe key events in the lives of children and families in the evaluation. Other analyses, addressing process and short term outcomes, as well as current policy and practice questions, will be undertaken following consultation with First 5 LA at the beginning of each data collection phase. The evaluation contractor will propose the types of analyses that will be undertaken following each wave of data collection. This element of the report should include methodology, findings, and recommendations. The evaluation contractor will include an executive summary, limited to 20 pages, which includes a statement of the research questions, objectives, methodology, major findings, and any recommendations.
- A technical discussion presenting an analysis of the tasks performed, resolution of problems encountered, and recommendations based upon the efforts to test the feasibility of various measures and methodologies, especially those most appropriate to the increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse populations served by the Best Start LA model.
- A section detailing the quality of data collection and other quality assurance procedures, as well as a report on attrition and efforts made to minimize attrition.
- A section detailing data dissemination activities conducted during the contract year and upcoming data dissemination activities

The draft Annual Report for each year based on the approved outline will be submitted to First 5 LA along a timeline yet to be determined.

The evaluation contractor should expect to make draft revisions at least twice based on comments from First 5 LA prior to submitting the final Annual Report for each year and a camera ready copy of the Report to First 5 LA during schedule noted above.

In addition to the printed copy required under this contract, the contents of the Annual Reports and Memos required by this contract will be delivered in a digital form that is reproducible on personal computers and office printers in current use at First 5 LA at the time of delivery. Similarly, Annual Reports and Memos required by this contract will be provided in a format that meets the requirements for posting on the First 5 LA websites, at the discretion of First 5 LA.

#### **IV. ELIGIBILITY & QUALIFICATIONS**

- A. **Eligibility:** Proposals will be considered from public and private entities and/or collaborations. The most highly qualified applicants will be invited for an interview with, and oral presentation to, First 5 LA staff and/or Commissioners.
1. Current/Former grantees and/or contractors must be in good standing and in compliance with all aspects of their contract with First 5 LA in order to be eligible to apply for the current Request for Proposals, Request for Qualifications, BIDS and Letters of Intent. 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 RFP/RFQ with 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 COMMISSION or any other public entity.

B. **Qualifications:** Applicants must have the experience, knowledge, and skill necessary to execute the evaluation of the Best Start LA pilot community. These qualities include:

#### Experience

Strong and successful history of innovative evaluation work with culturally diverse partnerships, networks or collaborative ventures to achieve a shared vision and outcomes; Strong history of working on large scale culturally diverse evaluations involving community and systems change efforts;

Experience and demonstrated knowledge and skills in developing, implementing, and monitoring evaluation plans of similar scope for agencies or collaborations, networks or partnerships of comparable size;

Experience in evaluation development, including the ability to assess evaluation challenges and facilitate dialogues and processes toward procedural recommendations, if necessary.

Experience in compliance related activities and developing standards of conduct and policies and procedures to promote compliance.

Experience with evaluation as it relates to direct services, capacity building and community development work

Experience in developing evaluation plans which involve data collection from diverse sources and in diverse formats within a longitudinal framework.

Experience using evidence-based approaches to data collection, to include the testing and vetting of measures

Experience conducting varied analysis of data and producing evaluation reports and briefing summaries and evaluation presentations with varying foci.

Experience developing innovative and effective data recovery plans

Demonstrated ability to work effectively in a collaborative, collegial team environment.

Established relationships and working history with proposed evaluation subcontractors;

Involvement in steering committees and/or expert advisory panels.

Experience in working with First 5 Commissions

Experience working in a collaborate manner with proposed sub contractors

#### Knowledge

Knowledge of issues facing young children and families in LA County, and specifically in the Pilot Community, especially specific to the health, early learning and safety of children and families with young children;

- Knowledge of and ability to document and compile literature on evaluation techniques, methods, indicators of success, and other evidence-based measures.
- Knowledge and understanding of general research and evaluation methodology, participatory techniques, and community-friendly approaches

- Have familiarity and an interest in cultural competency and community based collaborative research.
- Familiarity with and knowledge of recommending and using a variety of performance measures
- Knowledge of applying and measuring economic indicators and performing related economic analysis

### Skills

Expertise and experience with research and evaluation methodology, developing data collection and analysis protocols and theoretical models and approaches;

- Competency in both quantitative and qualitative research methods and analysis.
- Understanding and ability to plan work that takes into consideration diverse community profiles and community assets including cultural and linguistic sensitivities;
- Ability to communicate complex issues, stimulate creative thinking, negotiate differences and facilitate learning
- Ability to ensure data is collected in compliance with Institutional Review Board (IRB) regulations.
- Ability to ensure data is collected in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Expertise troubleshooting around data collection difficulties
- Ability to communicate with organizations who are conducting similar work
- Ability to bring in expertise needed to produce high quality deliverables;
- Ability to initiate and facilitate conversations with key informants, lead agencies and facilitate meetings, and forums around data collection;
- Strong written and oral communication skills;
- ability to synthesize information from multiple sources and form recommendations to report to the First 5 LA staff and Commission;
- Ability to be accessible and flexible in accordance with product timelines and activities;
- Strong management and team building skills.

C. AVAILABILITY: The timeline for this project will be intense. In order to be considered, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they can complete all deliverables within the Best Start LA project period (5 years total).

## **V. TERMS OF PROJECT**

### **A. Budget**

Applicants submitting proposals for Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant RFP must develop budgets that are in line with common business practices to ensure the success of the Best Start LA Pilot Community evaluation. Applicants must complete a Detailed Budget Summary for Year 1: August 15, 2009 to June 30, 2010 (*See Appendix F: Detailed Budget Summary Form*). The Program must also include a Budget Narrative for the Year 1 *Detailed Budget Summary Form* (*See Appendix F: Sample Budget Narrative*). The Budget Request Forms may be expanded to provide additional line items or space for clarification.

If applicable, use *Detailed Budget Summary Form* to create a separate budget for each subcontractor.

Additionally, Programs must complete a Projected Summary Budget Form (*See Appendix F: Projected Budget Summary Form*) for each of the five years of the evaluation. Please note, if selected, the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will be required to submit a Detailed Budget Summary Form as well as budget narratives for subsequent years, in addition to the Actuals and Projected Budget Form (All Years Combined) Form.

Applicants submitting a proposal for funding to conduct the Best Start LA Pilot Community evaluation can request up to \$3,700,000 over a five year period. Because of the scope and complexity of the work required, a consultant considering submitting a proposal may include other consultants as subcontractors who demonstrate experience, skills and knowledge in a particular target area outlined in Section II, Project Requirements and Deliverables.

Complete a *Budget Narrative* and include as *Appendix F: Budget Narrative* of the proposal. The *Budget Narrative* must include the name or description of the line item, the budgeted amount, a brief description of the purpose for the item in the evaluation, and a summary calculation for the line item. Also, include the evaluation financing and management cash flow. In the *Budget Narrative* also describe other resources, cash or in-kind, which have been secured or will be for this evaluation other than the funds requested in this proposal. Include the most recent copy of audited financial statements, including any management letters. The *Budget Request Forms* and *Budget Narrative* will not be included as part of the twenty-five (25) page proposal maximum.

A final Budget and a Scope of Work will be negotiated once the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant has been selected. *Funds will be granted through monthly invoices based on actual services rendered and incurred expenses as spelled out in the approved budget.*

As noted earlier applicants may in the future be given opportunities to expand their scope of work to include additional evaluation activities or broader commission related activities. In that instance, the funding available for the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant will be reviewed and the budget will be modified. However, applicants should note that any such expansion of role is not guaranteed and applicants responding to this RFP should understand that the initial amount of funding available will not exceed \$3,700,000.

### **B. Policy and Guidelines for Hiring Consultants**

Per First 5 LA's policy and guidelines for Hiring Consultants, the total composite rate 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. 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).

A final Budget and a Scope of Work will be negotiated once the Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant has been selected.

### **C. Contract Period**

The Year 1 contract period will be for twelve (12) months, contingent upon First 5 LA approval and submission of documents by the selected Contractor. This contract may be extended for up to four one-year periods, which will be completed through an annual contract renewal process, with the total cost not to exceed \$3,700,00 over a five year period contingent upon the availability of COMMISSION funding, satisfactory work performance based on activities outlined in Exhibit A, timely submission of progress reports, and continual compliance with contract provisions.

It is projected that the contract begins on August 15 2009.

The Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant shall not be authorized to deliver or commence performance of services as described in the application until written approval has been obtained from First 5 LA. Any performance of services commenced prior to obtaining all written approvals by First 5 LA shall be considered voluntary.

### **D. Contractual Obligations**

The selected Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant is required by law to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this document, including the First 5 LA Contract. (See Sample Contract, Appendix 8)

## **VI. SELECTION PROCESS AND REVIEW CRITERIA**

### **A. Review Process and Criteria (See Review Tools on website)**

First 5 LA will award a contract to applicant(s) that has the expertise and qualifications to successfully implement the Best Start LA Pilot Community evaluation requirements as outlined in this RFP.

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 disqualification.

The review team will consist of a multi-departmental team of First 5 LA staff as well as external reviewers. All decisions of First 5 LA are final. First 5 LA will provide applicants that are not selected with general feedback. An appeal process is not available.

The review process will consist of the review of the proposal and an interview, which will involve a presentation illustrating applicants' vision and capacity for implementation of the described scope of work.

The following represents the selection criteria that will be considered during the review process:

- The applicant's past experience in performing comparable evaluation work of broad scope;
- The applicant's history of innovative evaluation work with culturally diverse partnerships, networks or collaborative ventures;
- The applicant's demonstrated knowledge, experience, and skills in developing and implementing evaluation plans of similar scope for agencies of comparable size;
- The demonstrated experience of the applicant in assuming a leading role in evaluation projects , to include responsibility for providing technical assistance around data collection and providing oversight around data collection activities
- The demonstrated experience of the applicant in evaluation development, including the ability to assess evaluation challenges and facilitate dialogues and processes toward procedural recommendations, if necessary.
- The applicant's creativity and the quality of the portfolio of prior work;
- The applicant's work with previous evaluations that relate to direct services, capacity building and community development work
- The applicants experience with developing data collection and analysis protocols and theoretical models and approaches;
- The cost-effectiveness of applicant's proposal.
- Established relationships and working history with any evaluation subcontractors included in their proposal
- Involvement in steering committees and/or expert advisory panels.
- Experience in working with First 5 Commissions
- Experience working in a collaborate manner with proposed sub contractors

Statements of qualifications with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualification.

#### B. Review Tools

The application review tools used by the review committee include:

- Level 1 Review Tool – A checklist noting minimum documentation submitted as required;
- Level 2 Review Tool – Proposal Review regarding the Applicant's Capacity and Qualifications (Experience, Knowledge and Expertise, and Skills); and the proposed activities, timeline and staffing to meet the project requirements and deliverables;
- Level 3 Review Tool – Financial Review to assess financial soundness of the agency, identify any serious financial concerns, and determine if all budgeted items requested are in compliance with First 5 LA policies.

## VI. APPLICATION PROPOSAL

In response to this Request for Proposals, applicants are asked to submit a complete proposal **no later than 5:00 PM on May 11 2009**. Applicant must clearly illustrate the **experience, skills and knowledge** specified in the preceding section (see Eligibility and Qualifications). The inclusion of examples of relevant projects completed is encouraged. Postmarks, e-mails, and faxes are not accepted. Proposals must be sent to:

Evelyn V. Martinez, Executive Director

First 5 LA

750 N Alameda Street, Suite 300

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: Best Start LA Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant RFP

***NOTE: All materials submitted as part of an applicant's Statement of Qualifications become the property of the Commission. Materials will not be returned to applicants.***

The Commission takes no responsibility for the handling of any correspondence/Statement of Qualifications that is mailed and not delivered in person. These deadlines will be strictly adhered to and no exception will be granted. Any proposal that does not include all the information requested in this RFP will not be reviewed. Any materials exceeding the maximum page requirement or additional documents not requested as part of this application packet will not be reviewed. Application proposal packets received after 5:00 p.m. May 11, 2009, at the Commission's office will not be accepted. ***An appeal process will not be available.***

- A. Statement of Qualifications: Statement of Qualifications must contain all of the following items in order to qualify for review. Content is not to exceed twenty five (25) pages (excluding the cover letter, key personnel, references, and budget worksheets).
1. Cover Letter (two page maximum): The letter must include the organization's name, address, telephone, fax, and e-mail address; the primary contact person's name, title, and address, telephone, fax, and e-mail address (if different from organization's information). All members of an applicant team must list the same information for all participating agencies. The letter must be written on the agency's letterhead, signed by an authorized signatory, such as the organization president, chief executive officer or director.
  2. Description of Organization's Qualifications: Applicant must clearly illustrate experience, knowledge, and skills specified in Section II (see Eligibility and Qualifications). Include examples of relevant projects completed. List proposed key personnel who will actively participate in this contract and their relevant skills and experience.
  3. Describe the work processes (or methodology) your agency will utilize to accomplish First 5 LA Project Requirements and Deliverables described in this RFP. Content of this section is not to exceed **25** pages. Provide a comprehensive detailed list of the objectives, deliverables, and sequence of tasks and/or activities to be completed in a Program timeline within *Appendix E: Scope of Work*. Include all activities listed in

this RFP, such as timeline for hiring staff and subcontractors, and coordinating evaluation activities with First 5 LA evaluation staff, and other Best Start LA contractors i.e. lead entity contractor, home visitation contractor and the Community Based Action Research (CBAR) contractor.

4. References: Using the attached First 5 LA Client Reference Form, provide a total of three (3) letters of references from other relevant projects. Each completed reference form must not exceed two pages.

#### B: Scope of Work

Prepare the *Scope of Work* by contract fiscal years, one for the initial contract year and then for each annual renewal funding cycles as illustrated below:

- August 15, 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 June 30, 2015

Organize the *Scope of Work* to address all of the areas outlined in Section III, Project Requirements and Deliverables. If there are proposed objectives and activities that fall outside of the scope of the headings in this section, create an additional sub-heading for those objectives and activities. Organize the objectives and activities under each section of the *Scope of Work* based on its occurrence in the Timeline. The *Scope of Work* 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 proposal's *Scope of Work* and Budget.

#### C. Budget:

Evaluation consultants submitting proposals for Best Start LA Pilot Community Evaluation contract must develop budgets that are in line with common business practices to ensure the success of the Best Start LA Pilot Community evaluation. Consultants must complete the required line items in *Appendix F: Budget Request Forms*. Complete a budget for each of the five years of the evaluation. The Budget Request Forms may be expanded to provide additional line items or space for clarification. Use the *Budget Request Forms* to create a separate budget for each subcontractor, if any.

Organizations submitting a proposal for funding to implement the Best Start LA Pilot Community evaluation must submit a comprehensive proposed budget that includes all expenses that will be incurred over the five year period. Because of the scope and complexity of the work required, an organization considering submitting a proposal for funding may include other organizations as subcontractors who demonstrate experience, skills and knowledge in a particular target area outlined in Section II, Project Requirements and Deliverables.

Complete a *Budget Narrative* and include as *Appendix F: Budget Narrative* of the proposal. The *Budget Narrative* must include the name or description of the line item, the budgeted amount, a brief description of the purpose for the item in the evaluation, and a summary calculation for the line item. Also, include the evaluation financing and management cash flow. In the *Budget Narrative* also describe other resources, cash or in-kind, which have been secured or will be for this evaluation other than the funds requested in this proposal. Include the most recent copy of audited financial statements, including any management letters. The *Budget Request Forms* and *Budget Narrative* will not be included as part of the twenty (20) page proposal maximum.

## VIII. PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The costs of developing the proposal are entirely the responsibility of the applicant(s) submitting this application and can not 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.

### A. General Guidelines

**Applications must adhere to the following guidelines to be considered:**

- Use only 8 ½” by 11”, white paper;
- Times New Roman font, no less than 12-point;
- Single sided only;
- No less than 1-inch margins; No less than 1.5 line spacing;
- Clip all copies of the application. All pages and page numbers, excluding appendices, must be numbered sequentially with the name of the Lead agency at the top of each page;
- Provide a table of contents with page numbers for the application;
- The descriptive application content must not exceed twenty-five (25) pages total, not including appendices and required documents;
- The application materials must not be bound, although a heavy clasp or thick rubber band is acceptable. Expensive binding, colored displays, promotional materials, etc., are not necessary or desired. Do not use binders;
- **One (1) original plus eight (8) copies** of the full application (including all appendices) must be submitted; and
- All original forms and appendices that require **signatures must be signed in blue ink** for the original application package. Signature stamps are not acceptable. The eight additional copies may include photocopied signatures.

A complete application or application package will consist of the items identified below. Complete this checklist to confirm all the required items are included. For an application to be eligible for review, all required attachments must be submitted (See Checklist below).

### B. Proposal Package

A complete proposal package must consist of the items identified below. The proposal package should only consist of these items. For a proposal to be eligible for review, all required Appendices must be submitted by the stated deadline. Complete the *Appendix B:*

*Proposal Package Checklist* to confirm all the required items are included. The following must be included in the order listed below:

The following documents are required to be submitted with the proposal:

- Appendix A: Proposal Cover Sheet
- Appendix B: Proposal Package Checklist
- Table of Contents
- Content of the Narrative
- Organization Chart
- Resumes of principal staff, subcontractor(s) and consultant(s) as well as job qualifications and descriptions for new positions
- Appendix C: Memorandum(s) of Understanding
- Appendix D: Previous Client Form (limit of 3 previous clients)
- Appendix E: Scope of Work
- Appendix F: Budget Forms and Budget Narrative
- Appendix G: Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties
- Appendix H: Contractor Signature Authorization Form

***Additional required attachments not counted as part of application page limits***

- Current Audited Financials
- By-Laws<sup>2</sup>
- Articles of Incorporation<sup>3</sup> (if applicable)
- List of Governing Body Members

Submit one (1) original and eight (8) copies of the proposal, including all required attachments and appendices to:

***Evelyn V. Martinez, Executive Director***

**First 5 LA**

**750 North Alameda Street, Suite 300**

**Los Angeles, CA 90012**

**ATTN: Best Start LA Pilot Community Evaluation Consultant RFP**

All submissions must be received by **5:00 p.m., May 11, 2009**. Faxed or e-mailed submissions will not be accepted.

## **IX. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Specific contractual considerations, including but not limited to the following, apply to RFQ/RFP 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).

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<sup>2</sup> This is required in order to verify signature authority to submit application and to enter into legal agreement. If signature authority is not identified in the By-Laws, a Board Resolution or Partnership Agreement should be submitted, as applicable, that indicates signature authority.

<sup>3</sup> A business license from the jurisdiction where the organization operates should be submitted instead of Articles of Incorporation for Partnerships, Limited Liability Partnerships, and Sole Proprietorships.

### *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 Proposals (RFP) and Request for Qualifications (RFQ) /BIDS/LOI's. 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 RFP/RFQ with 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 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/ RFP. The Commission also reserves the right to cancel this RFQ/ RFP, 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/RFP. Any cover letters, résumés and/or curriculum vita, including attached materials, submitted in response to this RFQ/RFP 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 2007 or Fiscal Year June 30, 2007 or applicant's year end date, 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 subcontractors 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 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 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 (RFQ, RFP, etc.) 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)
  - Single Source Audit (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.

## **X. APPENDICES**

- Appendix A: Proposal Cover Sheet
- Appendix B: Proposal Package Checklist
- Appendix C: Memorandum(s) of Understanding
- Appendix D: Previous Client Form (limit of 3 previous clients)
- Appendix E: Scope of Work
- Appendix F: Budget Forms and Budget Narrative
- Appendix G: Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties
- Appendix H: Contractor Signature Authorization Form
- Appendix I: Sample Contract
- Appendix J: Best Start Outcomes Document
- Appendix K: Potential Data Collection Areas
- Appendix L: Working with Other Contractors and First 5 LA staff
- Appendix M: Best Start LA Fact Sheet

**All Appendices are included as separate attachments.**