



*Champions For Our Children*

**SCHOOL READINESS INITIATIVE -  
Fund Development Contractor  
Request for Qualifications (RFQ)**

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

**RELEASE DATE: June 4, 2010**



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

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFQ Released	<b>June 4, 2010</b>
Teleconference with applicants <sup>2</sup>	<b>June 17, 2010</b> (10 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
Final date to submit questions and requests for additional information	<b>June 25, 2010</b>
RFQ Due Date	<b>June 30, 2010</b>
Interviews with Qualified Applicants	<b>July 12 – 15, 2010</b>
Selected Contractor(s) Notified	<b>July 19, 2010</b>
<b>Contract Start Date<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>August 2, 2010</b>

All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFQ must be received in writing by First 5 LA via mail, fax, or email no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, June 25, 2010. First 5 LA reserves the sole right to determine the timing and content of the responses to all questions and requests for additional information.

Questions and information requests can be submitted to:

Marsha Ellis, Senior Program Officer  
First 5 LA  
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: 213.482.7547  
Fax: 213.482.5903  
E-mail: [mellis@first5la.org](mailto:mellis@first5la.org)

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<sup>1</sup> Note: While it is First 5 LA's desire to execute all contracts resulting from this RFQ for an **August 2, 2010** start date, all dates are subject to change at First 5 LA's sole discretion.

<sup>2</sup> Applicants must register for the teleconference with Marsha Ellis, Senior Program Officer, at [mellis@first5la.org](mailto:mellis@first5la.org), no later than Friday, June 11, 2010.

## II. BACKGROUND

### About First 5 LA

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

### The School Readiness Initiative

Launched in 2001, the School Readiness Initiative (SRI) is a joint funding partnership between First 5 California and the 58 County Commissions. SRI engages families, community members, and educators in the important work of preparing children, birth to age five, for kindergarten. First 5 LA currently funds 41 School Readiness (SR) Programs throughout Los Angeles County that are each comprised of a lead agency and multiple collaborative partners.

SR Programs work to achieve outcomes in the following four Result Areas:

1. Improved Family Functioning
  - Adult education, parenting classes, and job training conducted in partnership with adult schools and community colleges
2. Improved Child Development
  - Access to quality preschools, early care and education centers
  - Home visitation programs for children not enrolled in early education centers
3. Improved Health
  - Enrollment in free and low cost health insurance programs
  - Care/case management to ensure that children receive preventative health services
4. Improved Systems of Care
  - Facilitation of children's transition from home and preschool to kindergarten
  - Articulation of kindergarten standards between kindergarten teachers and early education providers
  - Funding streams that support school readiness efforts

In September of 2007, SRI launched the implementation of First 5 LA's Sustainability Project tailored specifically for SR Grantees to support their efforts of developing and implementing plans to sustain high-quality outcomes for children ages 0 to 5. Through a structured eight-month, team-based curriculum, Grantees were able to assess funding needs as well as develop comprehensive short- and long-term sustainability plans.

Through this RFQ First 5 LA will offer fund development resources to SR Grantees that do not have the internal capacity to implement the sustainability plans often due to staff being occupied with the day-to-day responsibilities of operating their programs.

### **III. CONTRACTOR DELIVERABLES**

First 5 LA is seeking one or more Contractors with expertise in non-profit and/or school funding to provide fund development and grant writing services to multiple School Readiness Programs. Under the direction of, and in coordination with First 5 LA staff, selected Contractors will provide one or more of the following services.<sup>3</sup>

1. Assessment of agency's 0 to 5 funding streams
  - Review agency's current funding streams across the four Result Areas (i.e., Improved Family Functioning, Improved Child Development, Improved Health and Improved Systems of Care).
2. Research funding opportunities to support 0 to 5 efforts
  - Research funding opportunities from city, county, state and federal departments, including ARRA funding.
3. Develop a schedule of future funding opportunities
  - Develop a funding calendar that will help position agencies to better mobilize the resources required to respond to opportunities when they arise. This is particularly important for agencies that do not have in-house fund development staff.
4. Grant Writing
  - Many agencies are unable to afford in-house fund development staff. Likewise, staff are often too busy with day-to-day program management to respond to funding opportunities. Contractors are expected to be able to do direct grant writing for agencies that do not have the capacity to do so.

### **IV. ELIGIBILITY**

Eligible applicants must have the qualifications, experience, competency, and ability to successfully carryout the fund development activities outlined above. Applications will be considered from individuals, non-profit or for-profit agencies, and/or public or private organizations. Applicants should have a presence in California, and the capacity to work throughout Los Angeles County.

The ideal applicant(s) will be familiar with the fields of early learning/childhood development, parent education, community engagement, health and social services, kindergarten readiness, as well as capacity building and sustainability, and will have extensive experience providing technical assistance to individuals, groups and/or non-profit agencies. Because all First 5 LA-funded SR Programs are either school-based or school-linked, knowledge of school systems including management and financing is also desired.

After an initial review, applicant's qualifications will be evaluated and scored by a panel of external reviewers. Applicants that receive the highest scores from the external reviewers will be invited for an in-person or phone interview with First 5 LA staff.

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<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that additional services may also be required based in individual Grantee needs.

## V. SUMMARY OF DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

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

- Knowledge of and familiarity with early care/education, and child development resources in Los Angeles County
- Knowledge of and familiarity with evidenced-based practices that result in positive outcomes for improved family functioning, child development, health, and systems of care for young children and their families
- Knowledge of and experience in building collaborative partnerships and capacity building in community agencies, including school districts
- Accessibility and flexibility with regard to product timelines and activities
- Ability to synthesize information from multiple sources and form recommendations for First 5 LA staff
- Strong time management skills
- Strong written and oral communication skills

## VI. TERMS OF PROJECT

### Available Funding

The proposed budget should not exceed \$553,347.00 and the timeframe is estimated to last no longer than eleven (11) months. Annual expenditures will be negotiated during the finalization of the contract's Scope of Work and Budget.

The Contractor is responsible for supplying all business related equipment required to implement the tasks outline in Section III of this RFQ. The Contractor will also be responsible for maintaining a daily log to capture time spent on activities. This will support First 5 LA's management of costs to ensure execution of all tasks related to this RFQ. Funds will be granted through monthly invoices based on services rendered and actual expenses.

### Contract Period

The contract period will be approximately eleven (11) months (estimated contract period — August 2, 2010 to June 30, 2011), contingent upon First 5 LA approval and submission of documents by the selected Contractor(s).

The selected Contractor(s) 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 the Fund Development Contractor obtaining all written approvals by First 5 LA shall be considered voluntary.

### Contractual Obligation

The selected Contractor(s) 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 G) Please note that applicant must be willing to accept all terms outlined in the contract.

## VII. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

1. Cover Letter (2-page maximum): A cover letter must be submitted, introducing the applicant(s) and clearly showing the applicant's name, address, telephone, fax, and e-mail address, stating that the application is in response to the School Readiness Initiative – Fund Development RFQ. Include the primary contact person's name, title, address, telephone, fax and email address, if different from applicant's information. For applications submitted by agencies, the letter must be written on the lead Contractor's letterhead, signed by the agency's president, chief executive officer or director, or other authorized signatory formally designated by the agency.
2. Writing Sample (8-page maximum): Applicants should submit an excerpt from a complete proposal, sustainability plan, or other materials that provide evidence of the applicant's writing abilities.
3. Applicant Reference Form (Appendix A): Submit 3 references from colleagues, current or former clients, or peers. Each reference should include name, company, address, phone number, email, length of time known, and a short statement about your relationship. In addition, written statements from each reference may be included. If at least two (2) references cannot be contacted within a timely manner (no more than three attempts, over a one week period), First 5 LA may deem the applicant ineligible for this opportunity.
4. Résumé(s) or Curriculum Vitae(s): Outlining all relevant work history, educational attainment, major fund development projects, etc. A resume or vitae is required for each person listed on Hourly Budget Summary (Appendix B).
5. Hourly Budget Summary (Appendix B): Hourly rates should be consistent with First 5 LA's Consultant/Contractor rate table. Please see Section IX, "Contractual Considerations," subsection C, "Contract Information," point 9, to review Commission policies and guidelines concerning rates. Applicants may also include sample budgets and budget narratives from previous projects that reflect the type of work they believe will be involved in the execution of their role as a selected Contractor.

### Additional Required Attachments:

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

## VIII. SELECTION PROCESS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

### Selection Process

1. First 5 LA staff will evaluate all applications for completeness and minimum qualifications. Basic requirements include: timely receipt of application, inclusion of all appropriate attachments, etc. Applications with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualification. Applicants may use the Application Checklist (Page 12) as an aid in preparing the application. Please note that the Application Checklist, Section X, is merely an aid.
2. After initial review, applicant's qualifications will be evaluated and scored by a panel of 3 external reviewers. (Please see Appendix F for Qualification Review Tool)
3. As a public entity, the Commission has a responsibility to the public to ensure that the organizations are financially stable to provide services. Further written materials regarding the financial stability of the agency may be requested by our finance department prior to the interview. (See examples of possible documentation Contractual Considerations, Section IX, parts 4 & 8)
4. Some or all of the applicants who have submitted complete and responsive applications may be interviewed. Interviews are scheduled to be held on dates shown in Section I, Timeline. These dates are subject to change at First 5 LA's sole discretion. All applicants must advise First 5 LA staff of their availability during these days. Interviews will be held either at First 5 LA or via phone. Further written materials regarding qualifications may be requested prior to the interview.
5. As part of this review process, the panel may contact an applicant's references.

### Selection Criteria

First 5 LA will award a Contract to one or more applicants with the expertise and qualifications outlined in this RFQ. Contractor(s) selections will be based on, but not limited to, evaluation of the following factors:

- ✓ Experience performing comparable work:
  - Fund Development and/or Grant Writing
  - Sustainability Plan Development
  - Resource Leveraging and/or Mobilization
  - Grants and/or Contracts Management
  - Consultation to Individuals, Agencies and/or Schools/Districts
- ✓ Experience with programming
  - Program Design
  - Program Implementation
  - Program Evaluation
- ✓ Knowledge and understanding of issues influencing young children and families
  - Child Development, and Early Care and Education
  - Child Health
  - Children's Policy Issues
  - Family Support and Functioning
  - Systems of Care

- ✓ Experience working with diverse communities
  - At-risk Children, Youth and Families
  - Children with Special Needs
  - Ethnically Diverse Communities
- ✓ Experience working with various groups and sectors
  - Non-profit and Community-Based Organizations
  - Schools and/or Districts
  - City, County, State and Federal Agencies

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

## IX. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

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

### A. *Conflict of Interest*

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

### B. *Compliance*

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

### *C. Contract Information*

1. The COMMISSION may, at its sole discretion, reject any or all submissions in response to this RFQ. The COMMISSION also reserves the right to cancel this RFQ, at its sole discretion, at any time before execution of a contract. The COMMISSION shall not be liable for any costs incurred in connection with the preparation of any submissions in response to this RFQ. Any cover letters, résumés and/or curriculum vitae, including attached materials, submitted in response to this RFQ shall become property of the COMMISSION and subject to public disclosure.
2. The agency/organization submitting an application agrees that by submitting an application it authorizes the COMMISSION to verify any or all information and/or references given in the application.
3. The COMMISSION reserves the right, after contract award, to amend the resulting contract, scope of work, and any other exhibits as needed throughout the term of the contract to best meet the needs of all parties.
4. The COMMISSION reserves the right to request additional financial information to verify applicant's past and current financial status. This information includes, but is not limited to: the most recent independent audit ending Calendar Year 2009 or Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2009; 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 Terms of Contract section, to assure the timely completion of the signature process by all parties. If the contract is not signed prior to the intended start date, the commencement of any activities will not begin until the contract execution date (the date all parties have signed the contract) and Contractor will not be eligible to obtain reimbursement for any costs incurred prior to the contract execution date, unless otherwise approved by the COMMISSION. If this Contract is not signed within the thirty-day (30) period from the intended start date, the COMMISSION has the right to withdraw the contract award. Any agreed upon changes to the intended start date must be confirmed in writing by both parties.

8. Unless otherwise submitted during the application process, the selected Contractor will be required to submit the required documentation listed on the Contractor Checklist, which includes, but not limited to, the following documents before the Contract can be fully executed:
  - Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties Form
  - By-laws (if applicable)
  - Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)
  - Board of Directors or List of Partners (if applicable)
  - Signature Authorization Form
  - Form RRF-1 (required and filed annually with the California Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts) and IRS Form 990 (if applicable)
  - Annual Independent Audit for prior fiscal year or calendar year (if applicable)
  - Appropriate business licenses (for vendors or private organizations)
  - IRS Letter of Determination (if applicable), or completed IRS Form W-9
  - Memorandums of Understanding (for any subcontractors, collaborators, and/or partners listed under Contracted Services and Evaluation sections of Budget Forms)
  - Certificates of Insurance for all insurance requirements outlined in the contract.
9. Per the COMMISSION's Policy and Guidelines for Hiring Contractors, the total composite rate for a Contractor 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 Contractor may bill 500 hours for Contractor A at \$200/hour, and 500 hours for Contractor 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 – Appendix G). 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. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Both electronic and paper original must be submitted to First 5 LA by the deadline outlined in Section I, Timeline. Failure to submit any required items may result in disqualification.

INCLUDED	N/A	REQUIRED DOCUMENT OR FORM
		Cover Letter (2-page maximum)
		Writing Sample (8-page maximum)
		Résumé or Curriculum Vitae for Key Staff and Subcontractor(s)
		Applicant Reference Form (3 required), Appendix A
		Hourly Budget Summary, Appendix B
		Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties, Appendix C (signed in <b>blue</b> ink)
		Signature Authorization Form, Appendix D (signed in <b>blue</b> ink)
		Board Resolution, <i>if applicable</i>
		Memorandum(s) of Understanding, <i>if applicable</i>
		Independent Financial Audit, <i>if applicable</i>
		One (1) complete application packet with original signatures

All applications must be received electronically **no later than 5:00 PM on Wednesday, June 30, 2010**, at [www.first5la.org/FundDevelopment\\_RFQ](http://www.first5la.org/FundDevelopment_RFQ). In addition, please submit one (1) complete application packet to:

Evelyn V. Martinez, Executive Director  
 First 5 LA  
 750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300  
 Los Angeles, CA 90012  
 Attention: SRI – Fund Development RFQ

## **XI. APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Applicant Reference Form

Appendix B: Hourly Budget Summary

Appendix C: Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties

Appendix D: Signature Authorization Form

Appendix E: List of School Readiness Programs

Appendix F: Qualification Review Tool

Appendix G: Sample Contract