Best Start LA
Sustainability
Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

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

RELEASE DATE: November 6, 2008
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### I. TIMELINE

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<td>RFQ Release</td>
<td>November 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Session</td>
<td>November 17, 2008 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>Deadline for Submitting Questions Regarding RFQ</td>
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<td><strong>Application Due:</strong> (1 original, 7 copies, and 1 CD with digital version of Application)</td>
<td><strong>December 18, 2008 by 5 p.m.</strong></td>
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<td>Interviews</td>
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<td>Applicants Notified</td>
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<td>Contract Negotiations Begin</td>
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All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFQ must be in writing by First 5 LA via email or phone **before 5 p.m. on Thursday, December 4, 2008.** 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:**

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

Phone: (213)482-7558  
Email: bslasustainability@first5la.org

¹ Note: While it is First 5 LA’s desire to execute the contract on, April 1, 2009, all dates are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion.
II. BACKGROUND

A. First 5 LA


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). To address the needs of underserved communities, the Commission adopted the next Five Strategic Plan (FY 2004-2009), focusing on the goal areas of Early Learning, Health and Safety.

First 5 LA’s vision and commitment is to create a future throughout Los Angeles’ diverse communities where all young children are born healthy and raised in a loving and nurturing environment so that they grow up healthy, are eager to learn and reach their full potential. 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 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 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 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. Members of a Best Start LA community will learn to trust each other, share ideas, and work cooperatively toward common goals and outcomes. Trust and mutual respect will develop by identifying the existing strengths and resources of a community and collaboratively building on those assets successfully. As people pool their talent, time, and resources to address tangible issues underlying community needs, they will 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” will provide 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 First 5 LA’s 2004-2009 strategic plan efforts and will continue into the next strategic planning period.

Best Start LA Outcomes
Because Best Start LA is a comprehensive place-based investment strategy, each component must work together to positively affect child, family, and community level outcomes. The following outcomes 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:

- 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 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
- Developed/improved policies that impact the Best Start LA population
- 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)
- 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
Implementation and Integration of Best Start LA Components

To realize the vision of this investment, the First 5 LA Commission is implementing a series of building blocks in five Best Start LA demonstration communities to support three major strategies:

- Family Engagement (also referred to as “Welcome, Baby!”),
- Community Mobilizing, and
- Place-Based Activities.

These three strategies form the foundation for all activities in the five Best Start LA demonstration communities.

The building blocks which support and enhance the development and implementation of the three strategies include: (1) Data Infrastructure; (2) Volunteer, Leadership and Organization Development; (3) Sustainability: Leveraging and Partnerships; (4) Building Public and Political Will; (5) Workforce Development; (6) Training and Technical Assistance; and (7) Policy Change and Development. The Commission recognizes that the opportunity to move all of its identified building blocks forward may not occur simultaneously.

The selected applicant will be required to strategize across all Best Start LA components, initially, and will coordinate with staff and strategic partners on the other components (e.g. family engagement, place-based activities) and building blocks as they are implemented. The Commission recognizes that the opportunity to move components forward may not occur simultaneously and therefore individual components may be expanded or implemented at different intervals. The following three Best Start LA activities and building blocks are underway:

- **Data.** The Best Start LA Program Management System is a comprehensive data system that will have the capacity to track child- and family-level data countywide, as well as 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 the built environment 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 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. The data infrastructure system is expected to accomplish three main goals.
  - Help inform ongoing development of the Best Start model via continual evaluation of strategies.
  - Support the identification, prioritization and advocacy of policy solutions through Community Based Participation Action Research.
  - Support data collection and evaluation of all aspects of Best Start LA.
• **Best Start LA Demonstration Communities.** In order to fully develop and illustrate the 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. 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 protocols and procedures for the direct service component (Welcome, Baby!) and developing lessons learned from which the other four demonstration communities will benefit. In addition, First 5 LA will provide a Community Based Action Research (CBAR) contractor to facilitate a community planning process that will define local issues and problems, 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.

• **Welcome, Baby!** As a way of introducing families to the wide range of services within a Best Start LA community, a nurse and new parent coach will conduct a series of prenatal, hospital and home visits to all parents through the Welcome, Baby! program. The purpose of Welcome, Baby! visits are to invite and welcome families into an array of services and support elements existing in their communities. 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 Welcome, Baby! the Commission will build upon its investment in the Healthy Births Initiative. It is expected that through the activities of the Welcome, Baby! program, families will be connected 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

• **Workforce Development (WFD)** enhances and/or establishes career pathways for the professions associated with Best Start LA Demonstration Communities 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. In addition, through the participation of professionals and paraprofessionals in the demonstration communities, WFD increases the ability of those communities to achieve the Best Start LA results effectively
and sustain Best Start LA efforts for the long-term. WFD is systemic and central to long term sustainability.

Best Start LA Geographic Area
The first of the Best Start LA Demonstration Communities will be known as the “Pilot Community.” It will encompass portions of what are commonly referred to as Pico-Union, Korea Town, and South Los Angeles. 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.

By building upon the existing work in this geographic area, Best Start LA can be coordinated with a safety net for those families that choose to participate in Best Start LA. The Commission will also be able to leverage the coordination, collaboration, and relationships already taking place in a community.

Best Start LA is intended to enhance informal supports within communities and transform environments where families reside. In order to engage all families and strengthen their bond to community networks and these informal supports, Best Start LA is a strengths-based model that relies on the capacity of communities and families. Ensuring families have a place where their emergent matters can be addressed will improve the ability of the Best Start LA’s investment to achieve its outcomes.

C. Sustainability
Throughout the development of Best Start LA, the Commission has acknowledged sustainability as core to the success of the Best Start LA model. The Commission understands the need to invest in a holistic approach to sustain its investments, spread effective strategic innovations across LA County, and leverage resources to ensure lasting improvements to systems of care and support that impact the health and well-being of young children and their families. Implementation of a sustainability strategy should begin during the earliest phases of program planning and continue to be deepened and refined throughout the duration of Best Start LA funding and beyond. A review of best practices highlights the positive impact sustainability planning can offer Best Start LA and partnering communities.

The benefits include:

Stronger Partnerships – Sustainability planning strengthens partnerships by creating greater clarity about the long-term results sought by Best Start LA and how the unique strengths of each partner could best be applied toward achieving and maintaining those long-term results. Additional resources for increasing the impact of First 5 LA investments will result from the Commission investing time in building quality relationships that promote and enable long-term collaboration and coordinated planning.

Better long-term impact from activities – A good sustainability plan allows activities like resource development and public relations to be carried out in a way that not only meets short-term needs but also positions Best Start LA for long-term success.
Diversification of funding\(^2\) – A sustainability plan is crucial to identifying and cultivating the best opportunities for new funding because First 5 LA funds are and will always be a small fraction of the funding needed to spread the Best Start LA approach. First 5 LA funds have dropped over the last few years and are projected to continue declining in the future. Thus, First 5 LA can not and should not sustain initiatives. Short- and long-term plans for diversification of funding are essential.

Greater certainty of serving children of this generation and beyond – Sustainability plans will serve as holistic blueprints for the many environments children and their families live in. These blueprints will illustrate the comprehensive set of Best Start LA strategies and activities that will be implemented and sustained across environments to serve children for many years beyond First 5 LA funding.

In September 2007 the Board approved the release of this Sustainability RFQ 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 approach; model 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.

Examples of potential long-term solutions include improving administrative and financial management systems; impacting policies around reimbursement and billing practices; changing reporting requirements for agencies funded by multiple sources; drawing down governmental funds; diversification of funding; and increasing support from policymakers, the public and other stakeholders. Additional long-term opportunities include expanding and/or building upon current First 5 LA involvement in other activities throughout the county including Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI), Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), Children’s Health Initiative (CHI), Public/Private Funders Partnership for Infants and Toddlers, and Medi-Cal Administrative Activities and Targeted Case Management (MAA-TCM).

The Commission acknowledges that the nature of sustainability will require the commitment of First 5 LA’s fiscal capital, as well as its social and intellectual capital to support grantees, and achieve desired social, fiscal, policy and organizational capacity outcomes. Further, it will require the utilization of innovative and flexible funding approaches, including the Commission’s participation in a rigorous development phase to be executed in partnership with the five demonstration sites and which will have a significant impact on the design of future funding approaches for Best Start LA.

Sustainability Goals
First 5 LA is specifically invested in creating lasting improvements in health and well-being for an extended period of time despite ongoing changes in funding

\(^2\) The use of the term funding refers not only to bringing in new sources of financial support but being more efficient and flexible with existing resources.
sources, program models, service providers, community demographics and other factors. The targeted goals of sustainability are to:

1. Identify and prioritize activities for leveraging fiscal and non-fiscal resources in support of Best Start LA objectives.
2. Build and nurture a shared, community-wide ownership of and participation in the Best Start LA sustainability vision, developing partnerships with individuals and entities working to achieve similar results.
3. Identify and implement strategies to build the capacity of grantee and non-grantee organizations, individuals and champions to participate in sustaining county-wide the Best Start LA investment.
4. In partnership with demonstration community staff, identify the feasibility of securing specific sources of new and increased fiscal (government, corporate, foundation, individual) support for Best Start LA priorities. These approaches will also identify ways that communities beyond the Best Start LA demonstration communities can be funded over the long-term.
5. Build upon and ensure the coordination of stakeholder engagement and leveraging strategies within Best Start LA including existing organizational efforts currently underway that support the sustainability of Best Start LA objectives such as First 5 LA capacity building activities, Policy Agenda, and place based evaluation efforts.

**Sustainability Budget**

Up to $750,000 has been allocated to fund a qualified sustainability consultant team over an 18-month period. The Best Start LA Sustainability consultant funding will be provided through a competitive RFQ process.

**D. Team Approach**

The September 2007 Board approval of this RFQ indicated that successful implementation of the sustainability plan would require a consultant team consisting of a team of experts to assist staff in identifying and recommending to the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners appropriate targets for sustainable and scalable implementation. Given the complex nature of this RFQ, a comprehensive team with experts who have demonstrated success in sustainability strategies, community development and leveraging as well as familiarity with various funding mechanisms, including demonstrated expertise drawing down governmental resources for projects and programs related to young children, is required. The selected team will work with First 5 LA staff from all departments to ensure coordination across the Best Start LA activities and build from existing organizational investments and projects already underway such as the Cross-Cutting Approaches allocation, First 5 LA Policy Agenda, the Sustainability Project, and placed-based evaluation efforts.

To reiterate, the overarching goal of this effort is to identify, prioritize and implement strategies that will ensure long-term solutions for improving the environments in which young children and their families live. The ideal consultant team should have experience in capacity building, systems collaboration, public/private sector relationship building, and utilizing an entrepreneurial approach with demonstrated success executing and facilitating stakeholder
involvement and synthesizing the involvement of corporate, foundation, government, legislative, political, agency, and other community wide champions into a cohesive plan. The consultant team will be expected to build upon and ensure the coordination of stakeholder engagement and leveraging strategies within Best Start LA including existing organizational efforts currently underway that support the sustainability of Best Start LA.

III. CONTRACT TIMELINE AND DELIVERABLES

The First 5 LA Commission is seeking a highly qualified consultant team to implement the Best Start LA Sustainability strategy as described above and carry out the specific requirements outlined below. The consultant team should have demonstrated success in developing a sustainability plan and implementing scalable and sustainable strategies.

The lead consultant must prepare an application that addresses each of the project requirements outlined below and how they will be performed if selected. Preference will be given to those applicants who possess the demonstrated qualifications to complete each task. Applicants may also propose additional tasks as long as they are justified as integral to the implementation of the Best Start LA program plan.

The consultant team will facilitate an 18-month high engagement effort to increase the participation and specific, strategic involvement of stakeholders who will be core and necessary participants in sustaining the Best Start LA objectives. Stakeholder engagement will include various stakeholders including Commissioners, representatives from community demonstration sites as well as representatives from other agencies throughout the county that provide services to very young children and their families, governmental officials and administrators, and a broad sector of potential champions.

Applicants to this Sustainability RFQ will be expected to coordinate with staff and strategic partners across all of Best Start LA activities including Demonstration Communities, Welcome Baby!, and other activities as they are adopted and implemented.

A. Sustainability Timeline

For the purposes of this RFQ, planning and implementation are parallel processes with activities that will coincide and in some instances overlap with one another. **Stakeholder Engagement, Revenue Enhancement & Leveraging Opportunities** (18 months) will encompass the entire sustainability planning and implementation process. This will be a high engagement effort to increase the participation and specific, strategic involvement of stakeholders who will be core and necessary participants in sustaining the Best Start LA objectives. Stakeholder engagement will include but are not limited to First 5 LA Commissioners, representatives from community demonstration sites, representatives from children and family serving agencies throughout the county, governmental officials and administrators, and a broad sector of potential champions. **Stakeholder**
Engagement, Revenue Enhancement & Leveraging Opportunities is an ongoing effort that will be lead by the consultant team and will occur simultaneously with the following major three phases of planning:

1. Assess Current Situation and Assets (2 months): The first phase of the sustainability planning process is to take an inventory of assets identifying available resources related to the sustainability of Best Start LA strategies at the demonstration community level as well as a universal level. In addition, this will include specific methods for accessing these resources, with strategies that are the most efficient approaches to leveraging and suggestions for the specific partnerships needed to obtain each of the funding approaches. Each Best Start LA component has already done some level of thinking about sustainability and may have important resources, lessons learned and other assets to bring to this process.

2. Development of Sustainability Plan (10 months): A Sustainability Plan, which explicitly addresses the initial components of Best Start LA (Demonstration Communities, Welcome, Baby!, and Workforce Development) will be built incrementally, through the following three phases which span 10 months but allow for information sharing by overlapping in their time span and development:

   a. Plan for Capacity and Community Support and Engaging Key Stakeholders: A Feasibility Study (4 months): The overall goal of this phase is to build and sustain strong and strategic relationships so that the necessary partnerships are developed and maintained over time. This phase includes testing basic planning assumptions with potential funders\(^3\) with an interest in meeting Best Start LA objectives, building ownership with other funders and stakeholders, ascertaining potential support, identifying volunteer leadership potential, determining fund development strategies and developing plans for soliciting funds.

   b. Communication and Messaging (4 months): This phase includes developing strategies for communicating effectively with key stakeholders within demonstration communities and countywide, including potential advocates and funders at the local, state and federal levels about key issues and/or opportunities. This will include identifying specific strategies for Best Start LA to address those issues and effective methods for demonstrating the benefits of becoming involved in a broad community-wide vision for the optimal development of infants and toddlers.

   c. Fund Development Staffing Framework (4 months): This phase will involve identifying the fiscal resources needed to support Best Start LA objectives. This includes determining need for sustainability staff internally at First 5 LA as well as, in the Best Start LA demonstration

\(^3\) Funders are defined broadly as private, philanthropic organizations as well as local, state and federal agencies.
communities. This phase also involves an analysis of costs associated with funding sustainability staff at demonstration sites for a discrete period of time until they are self-sustained and determining the support needed across the Best Start LA components.

3. Development and Testing of Implementation Plan (6 months): When we reach this final phase, the team will then create a detailed, long-term (2-3 year) implementation plan which will address integration across components and demonstration communities, show who is responsible for each step, estimate the expected timing and define accountability for ongoing use and revision of the plan as a management tool. This process will result in an overall plan that will detail the most promising methods for securing additional dollars (i.e. drawing down matching funds, bond funding, and corporate sponsorship) for each of the Best Start LA components. Testing of this plan should involve facilitation of a feedback loop in order to fine-tune strategies and objectives.

The entire 18 month process including both the three major phases mentioned above and Stakeholder Engagement, Revenue Enhancement & Leveraging Opportunities will result in a plan that will potentially include the most promising methods for diversifying funding including securing additional dollars (e.g. drawing down matching funds, bond funding, and corporate sponsorship).

Successful implementation of each of the sustainability deliverables requires the consultant team to identify and recommend to the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners appropriate targets, actions and goals for sustainability activities at the community level and county-wide. Consultants will work with a team of First 5 LA staff from all departments as well as, other Commission initiatives to ensure coordination of each of the Best Start LA components. Specifically, the consultant team will be required to utilize innovative approaches to achieve the deliverables outlined next in this RFQ (see B. Contract Deliverables).
A. Sustainability Plan and Implementation Timeline (April 1, 2009 to October 31, 2010)

4/1/09 – 10/31/10
Stakeholder Engagement, Revenue Enhancement and Leveraging Opportunities

7/1/09 - 4/1/10
Develop Sustainability Plan

7/1/09 - 10/30/09
Feasibility Study

10/1/09 - 1/31/10
Communication and Messaging

5/1/10 - 8/30/10
Develop Implementation Plan

2/1/10 - 5/31/10
Fund Development Staffing Framework

8/1/10 - 10/31/10
Test Implementation Plan

4/1/09 - 6/30/09
Assessment and Asset Mapping

April 1, 2009

October 31, 2010
B. Contract Deliverables

The selected consultant(s) is expected to conduct the following activities as part of its completion of Best Start LA Sustainability deliverables:

- **Interact regularly with First 5 LA Commission.** The consultant team is responsible for actively engaging the Commission in all activities to be delivered under this RFQ. In order to accomplish this, a consistent level of communication must take place among the consultant team and First 5 LA staff responsible for successful implementation of the contract, as well as other First 5 LA contractors as determined by staff. Throughout this project, the consultant team is expected to fully partner with the Commission in developing and researching strategies, convening networking meetings, convening collaborative meetings and planning efforts and advocacy efforts. The consultant team is expected to meet weekly with staff to discuss timelines and review products. They will also be expected to incorporate direction from First 5 LA staff into a work plan on an ongoing basis.

- **Value and engage numerous stakeholders.** The Commission is seeking a consultant team who is sensitive to the diversity of communities throughout Los Angeles County and can facilitate effective communication, problem solving and planning with various stakeholders within these communities. The consultant team is expected to convene meetings with the Commission, community members, field experts and service providers.

- **Develop and implement a product workplan and timeline, including milestones.** Complete comprehensive written updates for board, as specified by staff and/or the board, outlining progress of all deliverables on a regular basis.

- **Compliance with all laws and regulations regarding the activities of First 5 Commissions,** based on California’s Proposition 10, including the adherence to the next five year strategic plan and its outcome measures.

The selected consultant team will facilitate a process that will solidify targets, actions and goals for sustainability activities at the community level and countywide. This team will work with the First 5 LA Commission and staff from all departments to ensure coordination. In addition, the team will integrate the work of initial components of Best Start LA that to date have been operationalized and are in or reaching implementation – Best Start LA Demonstration Communities, Welcome, Baby!, and Workforce Development to establish a coordinated and long-term sustainability plan. The consultant team will be able to build from existing organizational investments and projects already underway such as the First 5 LA Cross-Cutting Approaches allocation, Policy Agenda, and placed-based evaluation efforts. Specifically, the consultant team will be required to utilize innovative approaches to achieve the following deliverables:

1. A Sustainability Asset Inventory document produced in phase one showing current assets related to sustainability for Best Start LA. This leveraging
asset inventory should include available resources related to the sustainability of Best Start LA strategies at the demonstration community level as well as a universal level. In addition, the report will include the specific methods for accessing these resources, with strategies that are the most efficient approaches to leveraging and suggestions for the specific partnership needed to obtain each of the funding approaches.

2. Research briefs and/or white papers produced during the Feasibility Study phase detailing discussions, meetings and conversations with potential funders and stakeholders.

3. A Communications Plan for information sharing amongst First 5 LA and other key stakeholders within the demonstration communities and countywide. For example, the development of materials that conveys a compelling case for becoming involved in a broad community-wide vision for the optimal development of infants and toddlers. This plan should also include research briefs or whitepapers highlighting communication strategies and best practices for developing and sustaining relationships with key champions, community support and strategic partnerships and contact reports for each group or individual discussion with fund administrators, champions and other stakeholders.

4. A Staffing Framework providing recommendations regarding how First 5 LA can most effectively and responsively roll-out and structure Best Start LA organizational capacity strengthening funds. This framework will also establish rationale which accompanies a recommended range of resources to be allocated toward strengthening organizational capacity.

5. A database of potential sources of future and continued funding including descriptions of suitable government (federal, state and local level), corporate, foundation, and individual funding sources.

6. A long-term (2-3 year) comprehensive, community owned and developed Implementation Plan for each of the Best Start LA components as well as a plan for integration across components and demonstration communities that shows who is responsible for each step and the expected timing, and defines accountability for ongoing use and revision of the implementation plan as a management tool.

7. A Sustainability Plan that explicitly addresses the initial components of Best Start LA – Best Start LA Demonstration Communities, Welcome, Baby!, and Workforce Development and incorporates the results of the detailed planning steps presented in this proposal.

8. A Project Knowledge Base with organized electronic copies of all materials developed during the project (planning tools, research materials, documents produced throughout the process and the final sustainability and implementation plans), serving as both a reference library for the
sustainability plans created during the project and a resource for future planning efforts.

9. Workplan outlining staff, stakeholder and consultant responsibilities and a timeline for completion of activities and subtasks.

This is not intended as a complete list as there may be other required products determined in contract negotiations that will be included in the final Scope of Work.

IV. ELIGIBILITY & QUALIFICATIONS

A. Eligibility
Applications will be considered from not-for-profit and for-profit agencies, public and private organizations and collaborative efforts. Collaborative applications must identify a primary applicant (lead consultant) responsible for the overall administration and coordination of the project, and for entering into contractual relationships with the Commission. Applicants should have established a staff presence and office in California with the capacity to work in Los Angeles County for the life of the contract and should be accessible to the Commission staff and grantees. The most highly qualified Applicants will be invited for an interview with First 5 LA staff and/or Commissioners.

B. Qualifications
Applicants must have the skills, experience and competency to successfully complete all requirements and deliverables outlined in this RFQ. The lead consultant is expected to convene a team with the following skills, experience and expertise:

- Knowledge of innovative early childhood supports and services for families, with particular attention to children from the prenatal stage through age three and their primary caregivers
- Strong history of working with large scale initiatives and projects related to positive results for children and families
- Experience and demonstrated success convening, facilitating and building consensus amongst an expansive and diverse array of stakeholders with sometimes competing interests
- The ability to bring in expertise needed to produce high quality deliverables in each of the component areas.
- Demonstrated expertise in both drawing down governmental funds and in helping organizations draws down these resources. This includes knowledge of and relationships with potential funding streams such as local, state and federal agencies as well private, philanthropic organizations
- Familiarity with strategies that allow funds and resources to be used in a more flexible and coordinated way
- Demonstrated success helping organizations develop plans for leveraging funds
V. APPLICATION PACKAGE

A. Statement of Qualifications (ten page maximum): Statement of Qualifications must contain all of the following items in order to qualify for review. Content is not to exceed ten (10) pages (excluding the cover letter, references, and budget worksheets).

1. **Cover Letter (two page maximum):** The letter must include the applicant’s name, address, telephone, fax, and e-mail address; the primary contact person’s name, title, and address, telephone, fax, e-mail address (if different from applicant’s information) and summary of qualifications. All members of an applicant team must list the same information for all participating agencies. The letter must be written on the lead consultant’s letterhead, signed by the organization president, chief executive officer or director, or other authorized signatory formally designated by the agency.

2. **Description of Lead Consultant Qualifications:** Applicant must clearly illustrate experience, knowledge, and skills specified in preceding section (see Section IV, B. Qualifications). Include examples of relevant projects completed. Describe administrative and fiscal experience that demonstrates the capacity to manage the Best Start LA Sustainability planning efforts and activities.

3. **Description of Consultant Team Members Qualifications:** List proposed consultant team members who will actively participate in this contract and their relevant skills and experience. Provide a brief overview of the role and expertise of each of the proposed team members. Describe any leadership roles in sustainability planning that they have played. Highlight experience on other relevant projects, similar to the ones described in this RFQ, including lessons learned. Include a list of professional staff, including subcontractors who will be involved with the project. Specify the role of each sub-contractor on the team as well as the anticipated level of commitment (% of time or number of days) of each team member. Describe your past
experience working together as a team. If applicant intends to hire new staff, include job qualifications and job description as an attachment. If there will be a sub-contractor, the applicant should attach a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU, Appendix C).

4. **References**: Applicants must provide a total of three (3) letters of references from other relevant projects using the attached First 5 LA, Previous Client Form (Appendix B).

**B. Management and Administration (three page maximum)**

Describe the work processes (or methodology) the consultant team will utilize to accomplish the Sustainability Plan (refer to Scope of Work, Appendix E) and Deliverables described in this RFQ, including coordinating work of staff, subcontractors and other team member consultants. Description of work processes should be made with specific consideration of the Scope of Work being proposed.

Prepare a Scope of Work (Appendix E) for the entire eighteen (18) month period of the contract. Organize the Scope of Work to address all of the areas outlined in Section III, Contract Timeline and Deliverables. Organize the objectives and activities under each section of the Scope of Work on its occurrence in the timeline. The applicant must provide a comprehensive detailed list of the objectives, sequence of tasks and/or activities, personnel responsible and deliverables to be completed. Applicants may propose a Scope of Work based on the attached Draft Scope of Work (Appendix D) provided. Changes can and should be made to the existing draft Scope of Work as appropriate.

Because of the scope and complexity of the work required, a consultant(s) considering responding may include other consultants as subcontractors who demonstrate experience, skills and knowledge as required by the RFQ. The Scope of Work will be the basis of contract negotiations if the applicant is successful. The Commission expressly reserves the right to negotiate changes to the applicant’s proposed Scope of Work and Budget.

**C. Budget**

Applicants must develop a budget that is in line with common business practices to ensure success. Using the attached budget worksheet (Appendix F), applicants must provide an itemized budget that details expenses for the proposed activities to complete the deliverables. Identify costs and number of hours for personnel that will be assigned to the project, including a brief description of the services, the rate of pay and the formula used to determine the total amount. Identify and provide general description of all other non-personnel costs (e.g. equipment, printing, copying, space, telephone, supplies, etc.) required to complete the deliverables, specifying the quantity, cost per unit, duration of use, and purpose of these items.

Consultant(s) responding to the Best Start LA Sustainability RFQ can request up to $750,000 over an 18 month period. Additionally, applicants must provide a Budget Narrative (see Sample Budget Narrative, Appendix G) justifying all included costs. The Budget narrative must include the name of the line item, the budgeted amount,
a brief description of the purpose for the item and a detailed and total calculation for the line item.

Because of the scope and complexity of the work required, a consultant(s) considering responding may include other consultants as subcontractors who demonstrate experience, skills and knowledge as required by the RFQ. The Scope of Work and Budget will be the basis of contract negotiations if the application is selected. The Commission expressly reserved the right to negotiate changes to the Applicant’s Scope of Work and Budget.

**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).

**D. Additional Requirements** *(not considered part of page limit)*

1. **Application Cover Sheet - Appendix A**
2. **Staff Resumes or Curriculum Vitae**
   Include the resumes of the consultants expected to work on this project.
3. **Previous Experience - Appendix B**
   Applicants must provide a total of three (3) letters of references from other relevant projects using the attached First 5 LA, *Previous Client Form* (Appendix B).
4. **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – Appendix C**
   If a subcontractor or un-paid collaborator will be used, the applicant must complete the MOU form provided as part of the attachments. Use as many MOU forms as is needed.
5. **Scope of Work – Appendix E**
   Please 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*. Applicants may refer to the *Draft Scope of Work* provided (Appendix D).
6. **Agency Involvement in Litigation and Contract Compliance Difficulties Form – Appendix I**
   Please read thoroughly the information on the required Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties form (Appendix F) and include a signed copy of the form in the application. **An unsigned form or the omission of the form will constitute an incomplete application and will be grounds for disqualification.**
7. **Signature Authorization Form – Appendix J**
VI. REVIEW PROCESS, CRITERIA & TOOLS

First 5 LA will award a contract to applicant(s) that has the expertise and qualifications to successfully implement the Best Start LA Sustainability efforts as outlined in the RFQ.

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.

A. Selection Process

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

First 5 LA will evaluate all applications for completeness and minimum qualifications. Basic requirements include: timely receipt of application, formatted as required, inclusion of all appropriate attachments, etc. Applications with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualification. Applicants may use the Application Checklist on page 21 as an aid in preparing the application. Please note that the Application Checklist is merely an aid. Each applicant is solely responsible for ensuring that all information requested in Section V (Application Package) and Section VII (Submission Requirements), is submitted even if it does not appear on the Application Checklist.

First 5 LA staff will contact references if the applicant is selected for an interview. First 5 LA must be able to contact at least two (2) of the three (3) references provided by the applicant. If two (2) references cannot be reached, First 5 LA may deem the applicant ineligible for this opportunity. All or some 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 for Selection Process). 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.

B. Selection Criteria

First 5 LA will award a Contract to one or more applicant(s) with the expertise and qualifications outlined in this RFQ. The following represents the selection criteria that will be considered during the evaluation process:

- The applicant’s past experience in performing comparable work;
- The applicant’s demonstrated knowledge, experience, and skills in developing strategic plans of similar scope for agencies of comparable size;
- The applicant’s creativity and the quality of the portfolio of prior work;
- The applicant’s work with previous clients;
- The applicant’s ability to be available for the necessary hours and the entire duration of the strategic planning process;
• The cost-effectiveness of applicant’s proposal.

First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted qualifications. Any application proposal that does not include all the information requested in this RFQ 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 packets received after 5:00 p.m. at the Commission’s office will not be accepted. An appeals process is not available.

C. 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 – Statement of Qualifications 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.

VII. SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Consultant teams interested in submitting an application for the Best Start LA RFQ can attend the First 5 LA Best Start LA Information Meeting. The meeting will provide information about the RFQ and the RFQ process and staff will be available to answer questions related to the Best Start LA model.

The costs of developing the proposal are entirely the responsibility of the consultant team 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 with no less than 1.5 line spacing
• All pages and page numbers must be numbered sequentially with the name of the applicant clearly indicated on each page. Materials must not be bound, although a heavy clasp or think rubber band is acceptable.
• **One (1) original plus seven (7) copies** of the full application (including all appendices/attachments) must be submitted; In addition, submit one (1) **digital version** of the full application including all appendices/attachments on a Compact Disc (CD)

• 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 seven (7) additional copies may include photocopied signatures.

**B. Application Checklist**

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.

A complete package must consist of the items identified below. For an application eligible for review, all required appendices must be submitted. The following documents are to be included in the order listed below:

- Appendix A: Application Cover Sheet
  - Statement of Qualifications
    - Cover Letter
    - Description of Lead Consultant Qualifications
    - Description of Consultant Team Member Qualifications
    - Staff Resumes or Curriculum Vitae
  - Appendix B: Previous Client Form (limit of 3 previous clients)
  - Appendix C: Memorandum(s) of Understanding (if applicable)
  - Management and Administration Narrative
  - Appendix E: Scope of Work
  - Appendix F: Budget Form
  - Budget Narrative
  - Appendix I: Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties Form
  - Appendix J: Signature Authorization Form

Submit one (1) original, seven (7) copies, and one (1) CD with digital version of Application, 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 Sustainability RFQ**

All submissions must be received by 5:00 pm on December 18, 2008. No faxed or e-mailed submissions will be accepted.
VIII. 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).

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 2007X Fiscal Year June 30, 2007, 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)
- 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 Appendix H 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.

IX. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Application Cover Sheet
Appendix B: Previous Client Form
Appendix C: Memorandum of Understanding
Appendix D: Draft Scope of Work
Appendix E: Scope of Work
Appendix F: Budget Form
Appendix G: Sample Budget Narrative
Appendix H:  Sample Contract
Appendix I:  Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Compliance Difficulties
Appendix J:  Authorized Signature Form

All Appendices are included as separate attachments