FIRST 5 LA
BEST START COMMUNITY-BASED ACTION RESEARCH (CBAR) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
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I) TIMELINE FOR SELECTION PROCESS

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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>RFQ Released</td>
<td>February 3, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Session</td>
<td>February 16, 2012</td>
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<td>Due date for questions, requests for additional information</td>
<td>March 1, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due Date for Qualifications:</td>
<td><strong>March 23, 2012</strong> at 5:00 PM</td>
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<td>• Online applications plus all required forms</td>
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<td>• One (1) original signed copy of the First 5 LA “Signature Authorization” and “Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties” forms mailed or delivered to First 5 LA</td>
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<td>Interviews</td>
<td>April 2 - 6, 2012</td>
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<td>Notification of Acceptance</td>
<td>April 11, 2012</td>
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All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFQ must be received by First 5 LA via email before 5 PM on Friday, March 1, 2012. First 5 LA reserves the sole right to determine the timing and content of the responses to all questions and requests for additional information.

Questions and information requests may be submitted to:

Lee Werbel, Senior Program Officer

E-mail: LWerbel@First5LA.org

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1 Note: All dates are subject to change at the sole discretion of First 5 LA.
II) Background
About First 5 LA
In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10, which levied a 50-cent per pack tax on all tobacco products. The resulting tax revenues were earmarked within each county in California to enhance the early growth experiences of children, enabling them to be more successful in school and ultimately to give them an equal opportunity to succeed in life. In Los Angeles County, First 5 LA (also known as the Proposition 10 Commission) was formed as a public entity to develop and oversee various early childhood initiatives and to administer and manage its share of the funding from Proposition 10. Since 1998, First 5 LA has invested over $871 million to champion health, education, and safety causes concerning children prenatal through five and their families. Additional information regarding First 5 LA may be found at http://www.first5la.org.

First 5 LA Fiscal Year 2009–2015 Strategic Plan
In June 2009, the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners adopted its FY 2009–2015 Strategic Plan entitled Strengthening Families and Communities in L.A. County. This Plan incorporates lessons learned from the first 10 years of First 5 LA’s grant making and research, which reveal not only the importance of supportive and informed parents and caregivers to a young child’s quality of life, but also the role of safe and supportive neighborhoods, or places, to that child’s development.

As a result, this new plan represents a major shift in First 5 LA’s grant making from an initiative-based to a place-based approach. This new approach will allow First 5 LA to focus on strengthening families while fostering the communities’ ability to create and sustain safe and nurturing places for children to grow and thrive.

In the Plan, the Commission established four specific outcomes that it seeks for young children in L.A. County. These outcomes are defined in the Plan as four long-term goals of ensuring that children:

- Are born healthy
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Are safe from abuse and neglect
- Are ready for Kindergarten

All of First 5 LA’s investments will be focused on changing outcomes in these areas.

First 5 LA’s place-based efforts, to be known as Best Start, will be implemented in the following target communities:

1. Central Long Beach
2. Compton, East Compton
3. East Los Angeles (includes City Terrace, Commerce and parts of Monterey Park)
4. El Monte, South El Monte
5. Lancaster
6. Metro LA
7. Pacoima
8. Palmdale
9. Panorama City
10. South Los Angeles/Broadway-Manchester
11. South Los Angeles/West Athens
12. Southeast L.A. County Cities (including Bell, Cudahy, Bell Gardens and Maywood)
13. Watts, Willowbrook
14. Wilmington
The Community-Based Action Research (CBAR) Technical Assistance contractor will work with nine selected communities representing diverse areas of Los Angeles County which are scheduled to be identified and launched throughout 2012. The CBAR budget represents support for nine selected Best Start communities.

For more information about the community selection process, visit the First 5 LA website at www.first5la.org/articles/strategic-plan-community-selection-principles.

First 5 LA has selected three types of implementation strategies to accomplish these goals:

1. **Family Strengthening**: Within each of the target communities, these direct services will impact children’s most essential influence — their family. Home visitation will be a central component of this strategy, along with other types of activities designed to assist caregivers in supporting a child’s development.

2. **Community Capacity Building**: Within the target communities, these strategies will focus on building capacity in the areas of community engagement², community leadership, community infrastructure, and community investment. They will be implemented through a collaborative process designed to strengthen and leverage existing local assets and family resources.

3. **Countywide Strategies**: Through policy, public education and systems change, these strategies are designed to create strong, coordinated and responsive systems that support and assist families with young children within the target communities and across L.A. County.

**Development of a Community Partnership**

In order to maximize the potential for success, First 5 LA’s place-based efforts will be driven and informed by the communities themselves. Community members will determine how best to achieve the four long-term goals for young children, and First 5 LA will work with them over a period of years to achieve these changes. Through this process, the communities will develop the capacity to continue making desired changes on their own well into the future.

This will require an initial and intensive community planning process. Each target community will select a fiscal agent and a community facilitator who will play a pivotal role in guiding the community through the planning process. This process will culminate with the community partnership submitting to First 5 LA a written proposal for a multi-year implementation plan. The proposal will include a detailed plan of action including scopes of work and budgets.

The planning process will include: regular collaborative meetings, community assessment, ongoing capacity building and training on effective collaboration, finalizing community boundaries, development of a community decision-making process and preparation for communities to engage in community-driven research. Although there will be adjustments

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² For further information, see the Community Capacity Building glossary in Appendix C.
for certain communities based on their readiness, First 5 LA will engage simultaneously in all of the target communities listed above.

Each Community Partnership will oversee the CBAR process in collaboration with First 5 LA staff.

**Best Start Overview**

Best Start is our place-based effort designed to strengthen families and increase neighborhood resources by addressing the development of a child in the context of the multiple environments in which they interact including pregnancy, parent/caregiver/family, and communities. Through Best Start we recognize that children don’t just interact with their immediate family. Their development is also influenced by their community and those with whom they regularly interact. When everyone in the community works together to support young children and families, then they have best start in order to thrive.

Best Start offers the opportunity for parents, business owners and other community leaders to ensure communities are places where young children can grow up safe, happy and healthy. Through Best Start, we will develop a broad-based partnership with families, community organizations, government agencies, funders, elected public officials, civic organizations, urban planning organizations, neighborhood associations and others who share our commitment to create neighborhoods and communities that are friendly to young children and their families. Best Start communities will positively contribute to the well-being of their members by emphasizing the role that places play in strengthening and linking existing community, organizational, and family assets, and in developing new assets to achieve Best Start outcomes.

**Best Start Values**

The underlying beliefs for Best Start meant to be reflected throughout this RFQ and the planning process outlined herein are as follows:

1. Communities are the best source for community-based solutions to local problems.
2. Each family has existing assets and resources which can be identified and connected to support optimal child development and well-being.
3. Each community has existing assets and resources which can be identified and connected to support partnership and collaboration.
4. All communities have deeper structures informed by culture that impact how people think and behave.
5. Local conditions impacting child development and well-being are often a result of changing material and social conditions, existing community relationships, cultural norms and institutional practices that perpetuate inequities.
6. A community with strong and effective leaders, organizations and networks is better able to mobilize and effectively serve and advocate for children and families.
7. The value of capacity building rests on the assumption that effective leaders, organizations and networks are generally better able to serve their constituencies and work together towards shared outcomes.
8. Creating opportunities to develop authentic relationships and to mutually learn at every stage of the process facilitates shared accountability for the results of our investments.
Best Start Outcomes
Because Best Start 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 communities selected to participate in Best Start and demonstrate how all three strategies of family engagement, place based activities and community mobilization will collectively result in the achievement of the outcomes:

- Strengthened ability of families to understand their child’s health, development, needs, and uniqueness’s
- Increased capacity of families to foster the intellectual development of their children so that they are ready to learn
- Strengthened attachment and bonding between families and children
- Strengthened personal and social relationships within and between families
- Community resources will be more accessible to families with children age prenatal-5
- Strengthened community self-efficacy
- Improvements to home and community environments that support optimal child development
- Developed/improved policies that impact the population in all Best Start communities
- Increase in 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 community planning and family access/support efforts

Best Start is intended to enhance informal supports within communities and transform environments where families can be found. Best Start is a strength-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 investment to achieve its outcomes.

III) CBAR Background
CBAR is a community mobilizing, capacity building, and empowering method for the community, which is organized around three key integrated elements: research, education, and action (Green, et al, 1995). Like other forms of research, CBAR is based on social science methods of systematic inquiry and data collection. It diverges from traditional research in its focus on education and action. CBAR does not end at the data collection phase, but includes the utilization of social data to educate those affected by the data and to mobilize individuals, communities and programs to action. The CBAR approach:

- Involves community residents in all stages of the research: the design, implementation, interpretation and dissemination of data;
- Takes place in communities;
- Studies problems identified by the community;
- Is disseminated widely in the community;
- Recognizes that there are multiple ways of knowing and acquiring knowledge;
- Acknowledges that community members are vital resources of knowledge about their community strengths, needs and conditions and;
- Includes the development of research products that are useful, timely and available to all stakeholders.
Data from CBAR will deepen First 5 LA's understanding of and ability to impact hard to reach communities: immigrant and refugee communities, communities with high rates of linguistically isolated households, low-income communities with limited access to policy makers, resources and services. This data and process gathered from CBAR will help First 5 LA learn of immerring community concerns and the ideas and innovations of local residents and organizations that are using research to create healthy neighborhoods.

IV) Purpose of Contract
The role of the CBAR Technical Assistance contractor is to help support communities in their implementation of a community planning process that builds knowledge that a community creates, owns and transforms into social capital for social change. The CBAR process builds an “inquiry” culture that is imbedded in existing patterns of interaction, which may include:

- Parents meeting each other at school via a variety of activities (i.e. PTA meetings, children’s programming, school events)
- Utilizing public venues (libraries, parks, recreational centers/areas, neighborhood councils, fairs, local market, and shopping areas)
- Child care settings
- Early intervention settings (clinics)

The primary goal of the Best Start CBAR Technical Assistance provider is to assist community in collecting and analyzing relevant data and information to answer the following questions for the Commission:

- What are the community needs identified?
- How has CBAR assisted families and the community in addressing primary needs and concerns?
- What are the changes needed to be implemented as demonstrated by the community that will appropriately address community needs and concerns?
- What community-level indicators and information have emerged from the research that would be relevant to the Best Start outcomes?

The contractor hired to conduct the CBAR process in the nine Best Start communities will be expected to coordinate with other data collection efforts in each of the communities as well as evaluation efforts conducted by First 5 LA.

V) Statement of Work
Objectives for a CBAR Technical Assistance Contractor are to assist communities in:

- Building their capacity to use research in order to create and implement sustainable, grassroots strategies to improve the lives of children 0-5, their families, and the communities that they live in
- Generating data from the target population in order to increase the Commissions’ understanding of the context, strengths and concerns of these communities and to help inform the implementation of Best Start and future initiatives

The CBAR Technical Assistance contractor’s primary tasks will be to:
• Provide technical assistance, including training, coaching and mentoring
• Document and disseminate the lessons learned from CBAR
• Prepare recommendations for the Best Start Community Partnership

The contractor will also be responsible for assisting the Community Partnership in facilitating a community planning process and engaging all relevant agencies, key champions, informal organizations, and community members in the CBAR process to:
• Define local issues, concerns and community-driven strategies, including defining what CBAR participants desire via an environmental scan
• Develop questions relevant to the issues and vision identified (i.e. What type of support systems do you have? How do you feel in your neighborhood? What do you think about the amount of green space in your neighborhood? What resources may be lacking? How do you feel about the amount of support you are receiving in clinic settings with other pregnant women?)
• Gather and analyze relevant data
• Create an annual plan to address research findings

The Community Partnership will be the primary contact for the CBAR contractor in the nine selected communities. The CBAR contractor will assist the Partnership in the performance of the CBAR process to assess local community needs and resources, and analyze strengths and problems to develop local strategies to achieve desired goals for pregnant women, children 0-5 and their families.

The Community Partnership also has the responsibility of overseeing the utilization of CBAR methods to develop a clearer understanding of the local community conditions and opportunities for pre-natal women and families with children 0-5 within each of the nine selected Best Start communities and of developing a community specific plan which details the implementation of the proposed strategies intended to achieve the Best Start outcomes. Using information provided by First 5 LA, the CBAR contractor will assist the Community Partnership in each of the nine Best Start communities in reviewing the community assessments conducted by the community assessment consultant(s) as planning continues.

**Initial Engagement Activities**
The CBAR contractor will work closely with and provide frequent visits to the Community Partnerships, meet research and program staff and learn as much as possible about their programs as an initial task for building relationships and understanding the designated entity’s goals and objectives. Follow up will be provided by a series of planning meetings to identify technical assistance and training needs and to develop logic models and work plans, as needed. Sufficient time will be devoted to review background materials to assess progress to date and to the identification of CBAR “best practices” and cultural models for adaptation of this process.

During this initial engagement period, a portion of the CBAR contractor’s time will be focused on discussing the best community-based practices for disseminating findings. A community action plan will be developed to address the most salient issues resulting from the research project.
Technical Assistance, Trainings, Learning Circles

Technical assistance activities will be tailored to the individual needs of each Best Start community. Initial steps in the implementation tasks include a series of meetings and communications to identify specific technical assistance and training needs. Once needs are identified, a technical assistance and training plan will be developed for the designated entity and each Best Start community, thereafter. Materials will be developed for each training activity and there will be follow up (via face to face, phone call interviews and/or email) of each training and technical assistance event.

Developing Outcomes

The activities related to this task are development of questions and methods for measuring process and outcome questions important to the First 5 LA staff, the Community Partnership and the community, and First 5 LA Commissioners. First steps include a series of meetings with staff and other interested staff from the partner organizations to develop process and outcome questions that will produce local level and culturally relevant indicators of process and outcomes measures. A data collection and analysis plan will be developed with the designated entity in each Best Start community.

Data Collection, Analysis, Synthesis and Dissemination

Different types of data will be collected, analyzed and synthesized during the extent of the project. Some data will be gathered from the designated entity partner documents, reports, and research findings. Data will be analyzed using the appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative analysis software. Opportunities will be provided for community residents and other constituents to get involved in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

Community Capacity Building

Since knowledge is generated from the ground up, and expertise is fostered and nurtured in local communities and neighborhoods, communities will have gained a local base of people with strategies and knowledge of how to use research from community mobilization and change, long after the research is done.

How the Work Will Be Accomplished

The CBAR contractor will be responsible for developing a scope of work that includes a timeline with benchmarks for completing all deliverables. This scope of work will be accomplished through regular communication and coordination with First 5 LA staff to discuss progress and incorporate direction from the Commission into the strategic plan. The contractor will also complete comprehensive written updates for the First 5 LA Commission outlining progress of all deliverables on a regular basis. This scope of work will also include supporting other activities which are responsive to the process, but not currently identified.

VI) Eligibility

Applicants must have the qualifications, experience and ability to successfully carry out the Community Based Action Research (CBAR) process from planning to preparation of reports. Applicants should have a presence in California, the capacity to work throughout Los Angeles County and familiarity with conducting similar community-level research projects and other related programs. At least one member of the applicant team must be located in Los Angeles County. The ideal applicant(s) will be familiar with and have extensive experience working with diverse communities and stakeholder groups.
Knowledge of organizations, programs, systems and services for children prenatal to 5 and their families is also important.

VII) Summary of Desired Qualifications
Applicants must have the experience, knowledge and skill necessary to successfully execute this magnitude of community and agency organization collaboration and implementation effort. These qualities include:

1. EXPERIENCE
   • Knowledge and experience with community-based research processes within a collaborative setting.
   • Knowledge and experience with data collection from diverse sources and in diverse formats within a longitudinal framework.
   • Understanding of and experience with community-based research processes focusing on diverse communities.
   • Knowledge of and experience with recommending and using performance measures for community-based research processes.
   • Track record of accomplishment of similar objectives and experience in providing input, critical thinking and concrete evaluation strategies.
   • Experience working within communities, agencies and informal groups to provide training, coaching, mentoring and technical assistance.
   • Experience facilitating and convening meetings for the purpose of knowledge sharing and learning with diverse community groups.
   • Experience communicating complex issues, stimulating creative thinking, negotiating differences and facilitating learning to a diverse group in a collaborative fashion.

2. KNOWLEDGE
   • Knowledge of and familiarity with community-based action research process, planning, implementation and evaluation.
   • Knowledge of and familiarity with research and evaluation methodology, participatory techniques and community friendly approaches.
   • Knowledge of and ability to engage the community, organizations and other key stakeholders throughout the community-based action research process.

3. SKILLS
   • Skills in working in an accessible and flexible manner in accordance with project timelines and activities.
   • Time management and team building skills.
   • Skills in synthesizing information from multiple sources and forming recommendations for others.

4. AVAILABILITY
   The timeline for this project will be based on the timeline of each of the nine selected Best Start communities. In order to be considered, applicants must be able to demonstrate flexibility in establishing timelines with each demonstration community. This is a 5-year contract.
**Additional Activities**
First 5 LA reserves the right to request the selected contractor to perform additional activities related to the work described above. These activities will be incorporated in a revised work plan, budget and scope of work as necessary. The contractor will furnish the necessary personnel, materials, services, and otherwise do all things required to perform the Community Assessments, unless otherwise stated in this document.

**VIII) TERMS OF PROJECT**

**Available Funding**
The contractor(s) will be compensated based upon the project budget developed during the contracting period for a total amount not to exceed $900,000, based on a per community cost of approximately $100,000 for a total of nine communities. Because each community is unique in size, geography and composition, the costs to conduct CBAR may not be uniform across the nine communities. As such, the contractor will have flexibility in per-community allocations. However, total cost for the project cannot exceed $900,000.

The contractor is responsible for all expenses related to any subcontracted services and for supplying all business equipment required to implement the tasks and scope of work (e.g., computer, printer, fax, internet access, telephone, etc.). The consultant will be responsible for maintaining a method to capture and document time spent on project activities, as a means to inform cost management by First 5 LA staff and ensure accomplishment of all project objectives. The contractor will also be responsible for purchasing any incentives to provide to each of the participants. The amount and kind of incentive should be proposed to First 5 LA and approved before they are purchased.

Final scope of work and budget will be determined during the contract development process. Funds will be disbursed through monthly invoices based on actual expenses and services rendered.

**Contract Period**
The Commission anticipates entering into a contract of approximately 60-months duration with the selected contractor(s) with an intended start date of June 1, 2011, to continue through June 30, 2016. The process will be initiated simultaneously in each of the nine selected Best Start communities; however, each Community Partnership may have unique operational timeframes.

If the Partnership Development phase, including successful completion of each community's proposal, is not completed by June 30, 2016, First 5 LA reserves that right to continue the contract with the selected contractor(s). First 5 LA reserves the right to extend the length of the contract and increase the budget for the selected contractor(s) to accommodate the completion of this phase of the place-based work.

The 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 obtaining all written approvals by First 5 LA shall be considered voluntary.
Contractual Obligation
The selected contractor is required by law to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this document, including the First 5 LA Contract. (See Sample Contract in Appendix D.)

IX) STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS
In order to respond to this RFQ, please complete and submit your qualifications and all required documents to First 5 LA as instructed no later than 5:00 PM on March 23, 2012. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

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

Craig A. Steele, Interim Chief Executive Officer
First 5 LA
750 N Alameda Street, Suite 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Best Start Community-Based Action Research (CBAR) Technical Assistance RFQ

Required Attachments:

1. Proposal Package Checklist (see Appendix A).

2. Cover Letter: Introduce the contractor(s) and/or firm, clearly providing the lead contractor’s name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, date and stating that the letter and materials provided are in response to the RFQ for the Best Start Community Partnership Development Support contractor(s).

3. Narrative (maximum 15 pages double spaced): Please provide a narrative outlining the contractor’s and/or consulting firm’s relevant qualifications and experience and plan for designing and delivering the training series and technical assistance support plan as described in Section V. Statement of Work. The proposal narrative should be as detailed as possible, including strategies and relevant experience. The applicant should describe the proposed process to complete each task listed above and whether there are any tasks that they would add or omit based upon their expertise. If the applicant would like to propose changes to tasks or assumptions put forth by First 5 LA, they may do so with explanation of the proposed changes. Please note that the project specified in this RFQ will involve substantial work, and a key consideration in reviewing proposals will be the applicant’s technical and workforce capacity. The applicant’s proposal will be reviewed according to the review criteria outlined in the Review Tool. (See Appendix E).

4. Résumé(s) or Curriculum Vitae(s): Include résumé(s) or Curriculum Vitae(s) for all staff who will be involved in the proposed project design and implementation, outlining relevant work and/or project history, education, publications, prior related projects, etc., including those that will be working on the project as
subcontractors, if possible and as appropriate. Please include information specific to work in Los Angeles County.

5. Proposed Budget: Please include all anticipated costs for planning and implementation not to exceed the amounts as described in the RFQ. Applicants must submit a form detailing their hourly rate and a brief narrative explaining the budget. 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 and will be paid based on actual hours worked. First 5 LA pays based on actual expenses. Payments will be granted based on monthly invoices submitted for actual hours worked on the project. See Appendix F for the sample budget form.

6. References (minimum of three, maximum of five): Use the Client Reference Form and Instructions (see Appendix G) to obtain references from three to five former clients for projects (in process or) completed within the past five years, including at least two who may be contacted as references. The applicant is responsible for submitting the completed Client Reference Forms as a required attachment. Each reference should include primary contact name, company, address, phone number, email, dates of project(s) or engagement(s) and brief descriptions of the nature of the project or engagement. First 5 LA must be able to contact at least two (2) of the references provided. If two (2) references cannot be reached within a timely manner, First 5 LA may deem the applicant ineligible for this opportunity.

Additional Required Attachments:

7. Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties: Please read the information on the required Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties form thoroughly. An unsigned form or omission will constitute an incomplete application and grounds for disqualification. (See Appendix I.)

8. Signature Authorization Form: This form is required in order to verify signature authority to enter into contractual agreement with First 5 LA. If not outlined in the By-laws, a Board Resolution, Partnership Agreement or Business License must be submitted, as applicable, that indicates signature authority. Applicants must submit one original form signed in blue ink. (See Appendix J.)

9. Evidence of Insurance Certificates: Commercial General Liability/Homeowner’s Insurance: Applicant must have a minimum of $1,000,000 per occurrence and $2,000,000 aggregate. Applicant must provide evidence of General Liability coverage prior to entering into a Contract with First 5 LA. Once contracted, applicant must name “Los Angeles County Children and Families First – Proposition 10 Commission” (or if abbreviated, “LA Cty Prop 10 Commn.”) as an additional insured on its General Liability Certificate. Business Auto Liability: Applicant must have a minimum of $1,000,000 per accident. Applicable if travel for First 5 LA related business is required.

10. Annual Independent Audit (if applicable)
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
• Federal “single-item” audit (if applicable)

11. By-laws (if applicable)

12. Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)

13. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): If a subcontractor or un-paid collaborator will be used to render any of the services under this application, the applicant must submit and MOU. MOUs may be also submitted after the Contract has been executed. (See sample MOU in Appendix K).

X) SELECTION PROCESS AND REVIEW CRITERIA

Selection Process
First 5 LA will award a contract to applicant(s) with the expertise, demonstrated experience and qualifications outlined in the RFQ.

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

Phase I:
• First 5 LA staff will check for application completeness and adherence to application requirements.

• A minimum of three (3) external reviewers with expertise in the field will be recruited to score applications. Review tools are strictly adhered to by all staff and external reviewers to mitigate the potential of bias. In accordance with First 5 LA policy, both external and internal reviewers sign a conflict-of-interest form.

Phase II:
• Review scores are tabulated and semi-finalists are invited to participate in an interview. Interviews are evaluated through scores provided by each member of the interview team using standardized review criteria.

Phase III:
• Reference checks will be completed as necessary for final applicants and are evaluated with a standardized review tool.

• Financial reviews consistent with the intent of the initiative or project will be conducted.
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.

**Review Criteria**
First 5 LA will award a contract to one or more consultants or a team of consultants with the expertise and qualifications outlined in the RFQ. The following represents the selection criteria that will be considered during the evaluation process:

- The contractor’s ability to effectively conduct community-level work and related activities and collaborate with diverse stakeholder groups;
- The contractor’s experience and demonstrated success in performing comparable work;
- Experience in program design, project budget management and implementation;
- The contractor’s capacity to manage the scope of the project;
- The contractor’s knowledge and understanding of LA County communities;
- The contractor’s knowledge and understanding of the issues influencing young children and families in LA County;
- Thoroughness, viability, and quality of the contractor’s proposal;
- The contractor’s abilities in project planning and management;
- Appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of the proposal budget.

Please see the Review Tool in Appendix E. First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted qualifications. An appeals process is not available; all decisions of First 5 LA are final.

**XI) 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 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 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 vita, 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 2010 Fiscal Year June 30, 2010, 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 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 process, the selected Contractor will be required to submit the required documentation listed on the following 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 D). 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.

Applications must be submitted online at [www.first5la.org/Funding-Center](http://www.first5la.org/Funding-Center)

Applicants must also submit one (1) original signed copy of the application cover letter, the First 5 LA “Signature Authorization,” and “Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties” forms to:

Craig A. Steele, Interim Chief Executive Officer
First 5 LA
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Best Start Community-Based Action Research (CBAR) Technical Assistance
RFQ