FEDERAL POLICY AND SUSTAINABILITY CONSULTANT REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

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

RELEASE DATE: May 3, 2013
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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>May 3, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Session</td>
<td>May 13, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final date to submit questions and requests for additional information</td>
<td>May 13, 2013 by 5:00 PM PST</td>
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<td>Posting of responses to questions</td>
<td>May 14, 2013</td>
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<td>Application Due</td>
<td>May 31, 2013 By 5:00 PM PST</td>
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<td>Contractor Selected</td>
<td>June, 2013</td>
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<td>Board of Commissioners Approval</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contract Start Date</strong> (^1)</td>
<td>July 15, 2013</td>
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All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFQ must be received in writing by First 5 LA via email before 5 p.m. on May 13, 2013. 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 can be submitted to:

Tessa Charnofsky, Government Affairs Manager  
First 5 LA  
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  

Phone: 213. 482. 7555  
E-mail: TCharnofsky@First5LA.org

\(^1\) Note: Dates are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion.
II. **BACKGROUND**

**First 5 LA — “Champions for Our Children”**

In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10, which levied a 50-cent per pack tax on all tobacco products. The resulting tax revenues were earmarked for the creation of a comprehensive system of information and services to advance early childhood development and school readiness within each county in California. In Los Angeles County, the First 5 LA Commission was formed as a public entity to develop and oversee various early childhood initiatives and to manage the funding from Proposition 10. Since 1998, First 5 LA has invested more than $1 billion to support programs, initiatives, research, partnerships, public education and other endeavors in all four of its goal areas:

- Children are born healthy
- Children maintain a healthy weight
- Children are safe from abuse and neglect
- Children are ready for kindergarten

**The First 5 LA FY 2009-2015 Strategic Plan**

In 2009, First 5 LA’s Board of Commissioners adopted a new strategic plan to guide its investments through June 2015. The plan, *Strengthening Families and Communities in L.A. County*, marked a significant evolution in First 5 LA’s approach to grantmaking. In addition to a countywide approach that focuses on policy change, public education, workforce development and other strategies, the strategic plan also commits a sizeable portion of funds to improve the well-being of children in specific geographic communities.

The Commission selected 14 *Best Start* communities based on lessons learned from First 5 LA’s first decade and research, which shows the influential role of safe and supportive neighborhoods in a young child’s quality of life.

This combined place-based and countywide approach is intended to concentrate First 5 LA’s limited resources in areas of high need and to support the sustainability of those efforts over time. The strategic plan will allow First 5 LA to continue focusing on strengthening families while deepening our commitment to fostering a community’s ability to create and sustain safe and nurturing places for children to grow.

**Figure 1: First 5 LA Prioritized Pathway**

The strategic plan identified a pathway for First 5 LA investments that leads to our desired outcomes for children, families and communities in our four goal areas.
The Place-Based Approach, *Best Start*

First 5 LA’s place-based approach focuses on the *places* where families live — combining strategies to strengthen families with those that build community capacity to create and sustain thriving and healthy environments for all children. The research and promising practices emerging from decades of place-based efforts make a strong case for First 5 LA’s shifting a significant amount of resources to this funding strategy. The place-based approach allows First 5 LA to focus on families most in need, creating a seamless pipeline to effectively serve families along the continuum of a child’s development. This approach also creates unique partnerships with families, community residents and other funders, resulting in a better measure of our impact.

Parents, civic and business leaders, members of the clergy, representatives from community-based organizations and others are working together to develop partnerships within each of the 14 communities. The expectation is that each community partnership will submit proposals to the First 5 LA commissioners for future investments that target community-identified priorities that will help advance *Best Start’s* primary goals that

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children in each community grow up safe, healthy and ready to learn.

To learn more about *Best Start*, visit [www.beststartla.org](http://www.beststartla.org).

**Countywide Approach**

The strategic plan recognizes the critical role of strong, coordinated and responsive systems in supporting families and improving outcomes for children prenatal through age 5. These systems include the actual structures through which health and human services are provided in L.A. County, as well as less formalized systems. By focusing on countywide systems improvement and change, countywide investments can have an impact beyond the children in the 14 Best Start communities. At the same time, this approach will help improve the sustainability of the place-based approach and outcomes. First 5 LA understands that enduring systems changes are most successful when they are informed by — and grow out of — community-based experience and concrete evidence regarding models that strengthen families and improve outcomes for children, such as those we will be supporting in the *Best Start* communities.

The countywide approach is a comprehensive effort through a variety of programs, strategies and initiatives. The strategic plan incorporates seven specific countywide strategies, including public policy, public education, resource mobilization, workforce development, data systems integration and health access. In addition, First 5 LA is supporting an array of countywide investments in areas such as universal screening and assessment of newborns, early care and education workforce development, nutrition and physical activity programs for families and in child care facilities, and parental support projects. In addition, among other strategies, First 5 LA continues to strive for increased access to health care and insurance for pregnant women, children and their families; provide telephonic or online and printed resource directories for families and support and enhance the impact of our investments with effective, strategic partnerships and leveraging social and financial capital via our newly-developed Community Investments Department.

### III. PROJECT OVERVIEW: FIRST 5 LA FEDERAL POLICY AND SUSTAINABILITY ADVOCATE RFQ

The First 5 LA Policy Department is seeking a consultant to support the agency’s priorities with regard to federal policies and regulations. This support may include a range of diverse tasks from relationship building with key decision-makers, policy strategy assistance, policy communications strategies and other relevant tasks. To that end, we are seeking a consultant with the experience, skills and content knowledge necessary to inform First 5 LA’s federal policy agenda and advocate effectively on behalf of First 5 LA. The consultant will be asked to support the Commission’s advocacy efforts on its 10 item Policy Agenda, with a priority focus on the two major investment areas described below.
A. First 5 LA Priority Issues and Investments

First 5 LA Policy Agenda
The First 5 LA 2009-15 Strategic Plan identifies key investments and priority issues that will further the four strategic goals identified in the plan, described in Section II above. First 5 LA has further defined a Policy Agenda which identifies 10 policy goals (Appendix A). These goals are intended to advance the four larger strategic goals and serve as a framework to organize and focus First 5 LA’s advocacy activities.

- Promote comprehensive, affordable health insurance for all
- Support integration and sharing of data
- Expand voluntary home visiting
- Increase supports for breastfeeding
- Promote reductions in drug, alcohol and tobacco use by parents/caregivers
- Expand early identification and intervention
- Promote family strengthening principles and prevention practices in the child welfare system
- Improve quality of early care and education programs
- Strengthen the prenatal to 5 workforce
- Increase access to healthy food options and physical activity

First 5 LA Major Investments
First 5 LA supports a wide array of activities to advance its goals that all children in LA County are born healthy, maintain a healthy weight, are physically and emotionally safe, and ready to learn. At the same time, the Commission has made major investments in a number of areas that reflect important First 5 LA priorities. Two examples are in the
“Strengthening Families” and “Supporting School Readiness” initiatives, which are described below.

1. **Strengthening Families**

The Strengthening Families initiatives are intended to provide varied levels of screening, assessment and support services for low income and at risk families in Los Angeles County. These programs include Welcome Baby and Select Home Visitation.

Ultimately, these programs are designed to reach over half of all babies born in Los Angeles County and are estimated to cost over $90 million per year when fully implemented. Given the cost as well as the value of these programs, First 5 LA is seeking assistance in development of a comprehensive strategy to sustain these family strengthening initiatives on a long term basis, including public policy, research, and advocacy activities.

**Welcome Baby/ Intensive Home Visitation**

The Welcome Baby program offers hospital and home-based services for pregnant women and mothers who have just given birth. The main goal of Welcome Baby is to work with families to enhance the parent-child relationship and the health, safety and security of the baby, and to make it easier for families to access support services when needed. The Welcome Baby program includes prenatal and postpartum home-based visits, as well as a hospital visit at the time of the child's birth. California Hospital Medical Center, in partnership with Maternal Child Health Access, began implementing the Welcome Baby Pilot in Best Start Metro LA in 2009.

First 5 LA has approved strategic partnerships with 24 targeted hospitals to expand Welcome Baby throughout L.A. County. These hospitals serve 80 percent of all families within Best Start Communities and more than half of births countywide.

The Welcome Baby program is a free and voluntary program offered to mothers who deliver, or plan to deliver, their infants at participating hospitals. The program is intended to be offered universally to all families regardless of income status, potential challenges or risk. Families in Best Start communities will be offered expanded home visits and support; the highest risk families will receive additional “Intensive Home Visitation” program services which span between three to five years of additional support.

2. **Supporting School Readiness**

The school readiness investments include support for communities, schools, administrators, teachers, families and children to provide the best environments and opportunities for children to be ready for school. Given the importance of these efforts to help children be ready for and successful in school, First 5 LA is interested in identifying and prioritizing opportunities to leverage its investments in partnership with other national funders and agencies in addition to advocate for policy change in support of school readiness. Below are two examples of First 5 LA’s school readiness investments.

**Los Angeles Universal Preschool**
Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) is an independent, nonprofit organization created by First 5 LA following the development of a Universal Preschool master plan that came about through research and community engagement. LAUP provides preschool services to Los Angeles County 4-year-olds through direct funding of preschool spaces in previously empty classrooms, as well as quality enhancement for many existing preschool sites. LAUP also developed a rating system for preschool providers and offers one-on-one coaching and mentoring to improve the quality of service. LAUP serves more than 10,000 children each year by supporting private, public, charter, faith-based and family child care preschool programs. All preschool services provided by LAUP target 4-year-olds in L.A. County.

**ECE Workforce, Quality Improvement, Career Development**

These investments aim to improve outcomes for children by enhancing the workforce that serves Los Angeles County children in Early Care and Education (ECE) settings. First 5 LA funds workforce development efforts that seek to improve the diversity, qualifications, quality of practice, retention and compensation of ECE providers. First 5 LA also funds systems and institutions that train ECE providers. Our investments target various segments of the ECE workforce, including those who work in licensed and license-exempt providers, as well as the current and prospective workforce, including high school and college students.

**Additional Federal Policy Priorities**

Several federal programs that support First 5 LA priority areas may be considered for reauthorization in the next year and First 5 LA is interested in tracking and identifying opportunities to affect outcomes. Programs of interest include the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program as part of the President’s early childhood initiative, renewal of the Title IV-E waiver program, the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) reauthorization, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) reauthorization within the “Farm Bill” and home visitation expansion within Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) reauthorization.

### IV. APPLICATION

**A. Required Documents:**

All required documents must be submitted through the online application which can be found at [www.first5la.org/Funding.Center](http://www.first5la.org/Funding.Center). Documents which require original signatures must be received by First 5 LA by **no later than May 31, 2013 5 p.m. PST**.

1. **Cover letter:** A cover letter introducing the applicant and clearly showing the applicant’s name and/or organization name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, the date, and a statement that the letter is in response to the RFQ for the First 5 LA Federal Policy and Sustainability Advocate. An original signed hard copy of the cover letter must be **received** at First 5 LA by the application deadline. Additionally, applicants will be required to upload a copy of the cover letter to the online application system.
2. **Narrative application** – Please provide the requested information in one separate document and attach with your online application. *There is a ten page maximum for this portion of your application.*

   a. For each of the two priority areas – Strengthening Families and Supporting School Readiness (described in Section III A): 1) Describe the policy opportunities and propose a strategy with specific policy activities that you recommend First 5 LA engage in over the next 12-24 months, given its role as a public entity, funder and early childhood leader in Los Angeles County, to support the sustainability of its investments; 2) describe what role you/your firm would play in executing that plan; 3) describe what outcomes you expect to achieve by implementing this plan. *(Three page maximum per priority area, or six total if you choose to combine into one overall plan).*

   b. Provide summaries of up to four previous projects the applicant feels best reflect their expertise and content knowledge most closely related to the two priority or secondary areas. The summaries should include a brief overview of the project, the project goals and ultimate outcomes. Specify the applicants’ specific role in the project and lead project manager *(1 page maximum per project).*

   c. Please indicate if applicant is a registered lobbyist and indicate if you are up-to-date on quarterly reporting filings, if applicable.

3. **Scope of work**
   Using Appendix B, Scope of Work, describe the objectives and related key activities based on your response in the Narrative Application section for an 11.5 month period beginning July 15, 2013. *This Scope of Work (SOW) is for application scoring purposes and may serve as the starting point for the final contract SOW. The final SOW will be negotiated with First 5 LA upon selection of the finalist.*

4. **Hourly Budget**
   Using Appendix C, Hourly Budget Forms, provide your hourly rate (not to exceed a composite rate of $150/hour, see section IX.C.9 for more information) and detail expenses for the proposed activities to complete the deliverables outlined in your Scope of Work.

5. **Budget Narrative** In the Budget Narrative, explain the included costs over a eleven and half (11.5) month period and number of hours personnel will be assigned to the Project, including a brief description of the individuals’ role/expertise/services, the rate of pay and the formula used to determine the total amount. Also identify and provide a general description of all other non-personnel costs (for example, equipment, printing, copying, space, telephone, supplies, etc.) required to complete the deliverables and assumptions used in estimating those costs. Specify the quantity, cost per unit, duration of use, and purpose of these items, where appropriate. The first contract will be for 11.5 months for up to $115,000.
6. **Resume:** Include the résumé of the applicant; if the application is for a firm, include resumes for key staff people who would lead or manage the projects with First 5 LA.

7. **Client references:** Names and contact information for at least three references from current and/or former clients. The applicant may not name a First 5 LA staff member as a reference. See Appendix D for an example of a client reference form.

8. **Work samples:** Two (2) samples of applicant’s completed work products that are most applicable to the work the consultant will be undertaking in this project, and that best demonstrates the applicants’ competency in their declared area of expertise or knowledge domain.

9. **Signature Authorization Form (one original SIGNED with BLUE INK):** This form is required in order to verify signature authority to enter into contractual agreement with First 5 LA. If not outlined in the Bylaws, a Board Resolution or Partnership Agreement must be submitted, as applicable, that indicates signature authority. Applicants must submit one original form signed in **BLUE** ink. See Appendix E. The original form must be received at First 5 LA by the RFQ deadline. An unsigned form or its omission will constitute an incomplete application and will be grounds for disqualification.

10. **Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties (one original SIGNED with BLUE INK):** Please read the information on the required Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties form thoroughly. Applicants must submit one original form signed in **BLUE** ink. The original form must be received at First 5 LA by the RFQ deadline. An unsigned form or its omission will constitute an incomplete application and will be grounds for disqualification (Appendix F).

11. **W-9 Form:** Applicants must submit a W-9 form directly to First 5 LA which can be scanned and uploaded with your online application (Appendix G).

All documents must be submitted through the online application system. In addition, as outlined above hard copies of the following 3 documents must be received by First 5 LA by **May 31, 2013 5 p.m. PST:** 1) Original and signed copy of the application cover letter, 2) First 5 LA’s “Signature Authorization Form,” and 3) Agency Involvement in Litigation Form. Submit these documents to:

**Kim Belshé, Executive Director**  
**c/o Tessa Charnofsky, Government Affairs Manager**  
**First 5 LA**  
**750 N Alameda Street, Suite 300**  
**Los Angeles, CA 90012**  
**Attention: First 5 LA Federal Policy and Sustainability Advocate RFQ**
V. **ELIGIBILITY**

A. **Location**
The applicant must be based in or near Washington, D.C.: applicants must be available to regularly attend meetings in D.C. The applicant must also have the technological capabilities for efficient phone and email communication to facilitate interaction with First 5 LA staff in the LA area.

B. **Independent Consultant or Consultant Firm with Registered Lobbyists**
The applicant must be an independent consultant or consultant firm with registered lobbyists on staff. The applicant must be able to represent First 5 LA independently and free from competing obligations or alliances/affiliations with other agencies or firms.

VI. **SUMMARY OF DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

A. **Areas of Expertise**

   1. **Table 1: Policy Strategy Skills & Expertise**

   - Ability to inform development and execution of a focused federal policy, research, and advocacy agenda
   - Ability to navigate legislative and administrative offices to effectively educate and communicate policy issues and positions
   - Expertise in executing legislative briefings and other events to raise awareness on priority issues
   - Clear understanding of young children’s policy landscape
   - Strong relationships with and strategic insight related to both major political parties
   - Experience with development and sponsorship of legislation, preferably on issues relevant to children prenatal through 5 and their families
   - Expertise in the federal budget process, preferably relevant to children prenatal through 5 and their families
   - Experience with key news outlets and journalists interested in Federal policy issues affecting children prenatal through 5 years of age
   - Ability to plan and execute policy focused press relations campaigns including (but not limited to) media events, press release and news conferences, and editorial board meetings

B. **Content Knowledge**

   2. **Table 2: First 5 LA Priority Issues and Investments**

PRIORITY ISSUE AREAS
   - Expand voluntary home visiting
   - Promote family strengthening principles and prevention practices in the child
welfare system
• Improve quality of, and increase access to, early care and education programs
• Strengthen the prenatal to 5 workforce

SECONDARY ISSUE AREAS
• Promote comprehensive, affordable health insurance for all
• Support integration and sharing of data
• Increase supports for breastfeeding
• Promote reductions in drug, alcohol and tobacco use by parents/caregivers
• Expand early identification and intervention
• Increase access to healthy food options and physical activity

VII. TERMS OF PROJECT

A. Available Funding
The Commission expects to enter into an eleven and a half (11.5) month contract with the selected consultant/organization. The contract may be eligible for renewal at the end of the contract period. The contract may potentially be renewed for 12-24 months. If the Commission decides to continue this project in subsequent years, the selected consultant may be asked to extend their contract for this project. The total contract amount for the first 11.5 months is not to exceed $115,000.

B. Contract Period
The contract period is expected to start on July 15, 2013 for 11.5 months.

VIII. SELECTION PROCESS AND REVIEW CRITERIA

A. General
In order for applications to be considered acceptable and eligible for award they must be prepared in accordance with the instructions given in this solicitation. Provided that the application was submitted on time with all required documents, qualifications will be evaluated from a technical standpoint based on the applicant’s proven ability in their area of expertise as described in the criteria defined below.

Qualifications will be scored by a team of external reviewers. Please see Appendix H for a copy of the review tool that will be used to guide the scoring of applicants by the external reviewers. Qualified consultants that pass external review will be interviewed by First 5 LA staff to further support the selection process.

The Commission reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted qualifications.
**B. Review Process**

**Level 1:** First 5 LA staff will review each application to ensure that basic requirements are met. Basic requirements include: timely receipt of application, format as required, inclusion of all appropriate attachments, etc. Proposals with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualification.

**Level 2:** Applications will be reviewed by a team of external reviewers using the Statement of Qualifications Review Tool posted with the RFQ (Appendix H). External reviewers are required to sign a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Statement.

**Level 3:** Finalists will be interviewed by a team of First 5 LA staff members and will be asked to submit financial documents (audit or equivalent) for Level 4 review.

**Level 4:** Financial review for finalist, conducted by First 5 LA finance staff.

**Level 5:** Finalist will be submitted to Commission for approval.

As a public entity, the Commission has a responsibility to the public to ensure that the contractors who receive our funds are financially stable to provide the contracted services. Further written materials regarding the financial stability of the agency may be requested by our finance department prior to the interview.

Award and declination notifications are anticipated to be sent out to consultants in June, 2013.3

**IX. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Specific contractual considerations, including but not limited to the following, apply to RFQ submission process and project implementation and to any contracts that result from the submission and implementation of the project/proposal. The contractor will need to comply 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

3 Note: All dates are subject to change at First 5 LA's sole discretion.
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 reserves the right to reject all bids and re-advertise for bids. Failure to comply with bid specification shall be grounds for disqualification of bids. Each bidder or proposer shall be required to honor the price and specifications quoted for a minimum of sixty (60) calendar days following submission of the bid. 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 the COMMISSION.

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, 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 sub contractors 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/Term of Grant 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 in writing 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. The COMMISSION reserves the right to revise the effective date prior to final execution of the contract.

The contractor shall not be authorized to deliver or commence performance of services as described in this RFQ until final execution of the contract (contract must be signed by both parties). Final execution of the contract is contingent on First 5 LA’s Board approval of the negotiated scope of work and budget. Any performance of services commenced prior to obtaining all written approvals by First 5 LA shall be considered voluntary.

8. Unless otherwise submitted during the application process, the selected Contractor will be required to submit the required documentation listed on the Contractor Checklist, which includes, but not limited to, the following documents before the Contract can be fully executed:

- Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties Form
- By-laws (if applicable)
- Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)
- Board of Directors or List of Partners (as applicable)
- Signature Authorization Form
- 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)
- 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, the total composite rate, which includes labor and other costs, for a Consultant may not exceed $150 an hour, depending on the type of expertise. 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 selected contractor/s will be required to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this document, including the First 5 LA Contract (See Appendix I, Sample Contract). The selected applicant shall be expected to execute the contract without substantive alteration. If applicant cannot accept the terms of the contract without substantive alterations, the applicant should refrain from applying. It is imperative that all applicants review the contract language in detail and fully understand contractual obligations should they be selected.

X. APPEALS POLICY

First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted applications. An Appeal shall be permitted only on the grounds that the decision violated applicable law, First 5 LA policies and procedures, or the terms of the bid, RFP or RFQ. Appeals challenging First 5 LA’s decision on the merits or qualifications of bidders or proposers or the scoring of proposals shall not be permitted. An appeal of a First 5 LA decision shall be in writing and filed with the office of the Executive Director or his/her designee within ten (10) business days following the date the notification of decision is made by First 5 LA. For more information, please refer to the Appeals Policy located at http://www.first5la.org/About-Us/Policies.

XI. APPENDICES

All Appendices are available on the RFQ website

- Appendix A. First 5 LA Policy Agenda
- Appendix B. Scope of Work Instructions/Template
- Appendix C. Hourly Budget Form
- Appendix D. Client Reference Form
- Appendix E. Signature Authorization Form
- Appendix F. Agency Involvement in Litigation Form
- Appendix G. W-9
- Appendix H. Review Tool
- Appendix I. Sample Contract

Federal Policy and Sustainability Advocate RFQ