Policy and Advocacy Fund (PAF) Request for Proposals
July 2012

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

RELEASE DATE: July 20, 2012
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All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFP must be received via email by **August 3, 2012 before 5p.m.** 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:

**Stacy Lee, Policy Manager**  
**First 5 LA**

**E-mail:** slee@first5la.org

\(^1\) Note: *First 5 LA reserves the right to modify the stated timeline at any time. All dates are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion. Please do not contact First 5 LA for an update on the status of your application.*
II. FIRST 5 LA 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 that the role of safe and supportive neighborhoods is just as important to a young child’s quality of life as supportive and informed parents and caregivers.

This combined place-based and countywide approach allows the Commission to concentrate its limited resources in areas of high need and to sustain 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**

In the Strategic Plan, the Commission identified a pathway for our investments that leads to our desired outcomes for children, families and communities in our four goal areas.
The Place-Based Approach, Best Start

The First 5 LA commissioners' place-based approach focuses on the places where families live — combining efforts 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

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within each of the 14 communities this fiscal year. Each community partnership will submit proposals to the First 5 LA commissioners for future investments.

To learn more about Best Start, visit www.beststartla.org.

**Countywide Approach**
The strategic plan also outlines 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, strategic plan investments can have a widespread impact on children across the county, while, at the same time, helping to 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 — close-to-the ground, culturally competent, community-based and resident-driven models for strengthening families, 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. For example, First 5 LA is launching nearly two dozen commissioner-developed investments in areas such as autism identification and service referrals; early child care and education workforce development; nutrition and physical activity programs for families and 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.

**A. Public Policy and Advocacy as a Countywide Strategy**
First 5 LA works proactively to advocate for public policy improvements to achieve large scale and lasting change in the lives of children 0-5 and their families. Public policy reform is an important component of First 5 LA’s investments.

As stated in the strategic plan, the Commission’s policy efforts will be pursued through the following activities:

- **Policy Development:** Our activities will include research and analysis of issues, proposals, and legislation; environmental assessments of the policy landscape; review of policy research; identification of barriers; and formulation of policy recommendations/positions. Convening and consulting experts and grantees, as well as engaging in coalitions and task forces will inform this work.

- **Issue Education:** Efforts to build public will among key stakeholders and the general public will include conducting issue education campaigns; sponsoring forums, trainings and policy conferences; publishing white papers, policy briefs and fact sheets; and collecting and sharing research to document the need for policy change.
• **Advocacy:** Our strategies will include convening and consulting stakeholders to collaborate on advocacy strategies; creating media visibility for policy positions; engaging grantees in issue education; communicating directly with policymakers; and promoting leadership development in advocacy in our targeted communities, as well as at the countywide levels.

• **Public Policy Grantmaking:** We will explore opportunities to fund others in support of First 5 LA’s policy goals, including funding for coalitions, projects to identify policy solutions, regional or local campaigns to build support for the Policy Agenda goals, professional advocates, leadership development in policy/advocacy, efforts to build media visibility on problems and potential solutions, and research to inform and create movement towards policy change related to the ten policy goals.

• **Collaboration:** First 5 LA recognizes the critical role partnerships and coalitions play in advancing our policy goals and improving systems. As such, First 5 LA will identify and actively participate in existing collaborations and seek out new and expanded partnerships and relationships with County agencies, other funders, nonprofits and community-based organizations.”

### III. POLICY ADVOCACY FUND

**Overview**
The Policy-Advocacy Fund (PAF) is designed to support a variety of strategies in the policy and advocacy arena that support the First 5 LA Policy Agenda (see appendix A & B). The Commission recognizes these strategies are key to sustaining the well-being of children 0-5 and their families beyond First 5 LA’s direct investments. The primary goal of the fund is to move the policy goals forward; a secondary goal is to strengthen the capacity of organizations to be effective policy advocacy leaders on behalf of young children in L.A. County.

The Commission approved the policy grant program in June 10, 2010 as part of the Strategic Plan Implementation Plan. Funds will not exceed $500,000 total per grantee for a period of up to 5 years. This RFP represents the second cycle of funding. We expect to award approximately 10 grants this cycle. Applicants from the following types of organizations or collaborations (inclusive of these types) are invited to submit proposals:

1) **Traditional Partners:** Agencies or collaboratives of agencies with experience working on policy and advocacy on behalf of 0-5 year olds and their families.

2) **Non-Traditional Partners:** Agencies or collaboratives of agencies that have a proven track record in policy and advocacy on similar or complementary issues, on behalf of a broader constituency than the First 5 LA target population. This is intended to broaden the base of support for 0-5 policy issues, expand the number and type of voices speaking on behalf of this population, and create stronger alliances. For purposes of this grant, “non-traditional” partners are defined as:
Organizations with proven policy and advocacy capacity, which have experience working on social policy but which have not specifically focused on issues of children 0-5 and their families. For more information, see pages 10-11 “Additional Preference.”

The total number of grants awarded and distribution of grants among traditional or non-traditional agencies will depend upon both the quality of the applications and the amounts requested. We anticipate awarding approximately ten grants under PAF.

First 5 LA requests proposals from agencies serving Los Angeles County for policy and advocacy projects that have the potential to benefit children countywide. This includes projects that target specific communities anywhere in the county, which may serve as models for future replication or expansion of the policy change effort. These organizations may be community-based, local, or statewide as long as they have or will institute an active and meaningful presence in Los Angeles County.

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) process is to select the most effective project plans and most qualified organizations to engage in and implement policy and advocacy efforts that will support one or more of First 5 LA’s 10 Policy Goals in the Policy Agenda. Applicants should demonstrate both a) their past experience/success and capacity in policy and advocacy and b) how their project will seek to significantly advance the identified goal.

It is preferred that this work be done in collaboration with other public or private organizations and community members affected by the policy initiative.

For the purposes of PAF, **policy** is defined as: rules, standards, guidelines or laws enacted by government, organizations or communities to influence the behavior of systems, communities or individuals and/or to direct resources.

For the purposes of PAF, **advocacy** is defined as: the effort to increase public or policymaker awareness in order to achieve one of the policy goals at the systems, community, city, county, state, or federal level.

Policy grantees may create collaborations, identify policy solutions, build media visibility for policy change, and/or conduct research to inform and create movement towards policy change. Applicants may choose to submit a joint application; however one agency must serve as the lead agency and fiscal sponsor for the project.

When designing a policy and/or advocacy project, it is necessary to consider the existing policy environment in which the activities take place. The selected policy issue(s) may be at the initial stages of building awareness, it may have strong support but be in need of policy language refinement or policy implementation plan development, or it may be somewhere in between. There are many different models describing the stages of policy change (see appendix C). While First 5 LA does not require that applicants utilize this model or these particular activities, we do ask that applicants consider this model and the existing policy environment specific to the issue being addressed when developing proposed strategies and activities.
All application materials are due by **5:00 pm PST on September 7-14, 2012**, through the online submission portal.

**Available Funding and Parameters**

Applicants may request up to $500,000 total for their project for a period up to five (5) years. The Grantee (the Lead Agency is considered the Grantee in the case of partnerships) 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 Grantee will be responsible for maintaining a method to capture and document time spent on project activities, as a means to support First 5 LA staff management of costs and to ensure accomplishment of all project objectives. The scope of work and budget will be finalized during the contract development and negotiation process.

**Expenses will be reimbursed through monthly invoices based on services rendered and actual expenses.**

**Contract Period**

The Commission expects to enter into contract with the selected Grantees by March 1, 2013 and may be eligible for renewal at the end of each contract year. Yearly contracts with First 5 LA will coincide with First 5 LA’s fiscal year, which ends on June 30th.

**Please note that First 5 LA contracts are executed annually, and at the end of each contract year the selected contractor will be required to submit a proposed scope of work and budget for the following year contingent upon Commission approval.**

**Technical Assistance Provided to Grantees**

In order to best support the PAF grantees and help ensure success of the projects, First 5 LA will select and provide a consultant or a team of consultants with expertise in policy and advocacy to provide support for grantees’ implementation of their projects. Consultant(s) will work with grantees to provide intermediary support in grantees’ project implementation. Assistance will be focused on supporting projects at various stages of the policy change process, with particular focus on evaluation, use of media, and other needs as identified.

**IV. PAF ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS**

**Eligibility Criteria**

In order to apply for a PAF grant, organizations and projects must meet the following criteria:

- Nonprofit organizations must have evidence of tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and deemed “not a private foundation” under
Section 509(a). Applicants or sponsored projects lacking 501(c)(3) status must have a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization serving as a fiscal sponsor.

- Public or governmental organizations are eligible to apply.

- Organizations may be community-based, local, or statewide but must have (or commit to having) an active and meaningful presence in LA County, as well as significant activities in LA County. Organizations do not have to offer direct services or have staff housed in Los Angeles County if they can show effective engagement in LA County through other means. Projects which serve a limited region within LA County must show how their work may serve as a model or potential for expansion to other regions.

- The organization may focus on 0-5 issues or those of a different population that can show a value and commitment to expanding into work on behalf of 0-5 year olds. (See below regarding Non-Traditional Partners.)

- Proposed project activities must benefit children 0-5.

- Proposed project activities are new or clearly expand upon existing or past work (no supplanting or replacement funding or extension of existing projects).

- Proposal must include 5% of overall budget for evaluation of the project.

**Restricted Activities**

- Funds may not be used for the lobbying of any policymaker, local, state, or federal legislative organization. While education regarding a policy issue is an eligible activity, funding may not support lobbying for specific policies or legislation.

- Funds may not be used to influence voters to support or oppose any candidate, specific legislation, or ballot measure.

- **Funds may not be used for any of these other restricted activities:**
  - Direct services
  - Voter registration drives
  - Capital improvements
  - Endowments
  - Fundraising events
  - Support solely for existing operations
  - Activities with religious purposes
  - Grants to individuals
  - Operating deficits or retirement of debt

[Please note that while First 5 LA monies may not be used for these purposes, organizations participating in these activities utilizing other sources of funding for these purposes remain eligible to apply.]
- Salary for new or existing staff to provide direct services
- Development of curricula to be used for direct services
- Organizational capacity building activities of public agencies or private foundations

Projects that duplicate current or past projects funded by First 5 LA will not be funded. However, projects that seek the same public policy goals as existing projects through a different strategy, which are at a different stage in policy development, or which clearly expand and further work funded in the past are welcome.

**Additional Preference**

Special consideration for grant awards will be given to projects that fall under one or more of the following categories:

1. **Non-Traditional Partners**: Additional preference will be given to qualified projects led by non-traditional partners from sectors not generally associated with policy work on 0-5 issues, including:
   - K-12 education advocates or entities
   - Associations (such as business, hospital, funder associations)
   - Faith-based organizations (not to be used for religious purposes)
   - Advocates for related issues (such as senior citizens, teen parents, law enforcement)
   - Voluntary associations (such as PTA, Kiwanis, Rotary Club)

   All of these partners must be either not-for-profit or public entities. They may utilize a fiscal sponsor or fiscal agent. **Non-traditional partners must specify a mentor agency, entity or consultant in the 0-5 policy field with whom they work.** The purpose of this mentor would be to provide background and information to support the policy project and to facilitate relationships and communication across sectors.

2. **Leveraging**: Additional preference will be given to proposals that specify a source and strategy for leveraging additional resources (fiscal or non-fiscal resources, such as facilities, equipment or commitment of staff) towards the chosen goal either during the project period or to extend the effort after the grant is completed. This could be match funding for the proposed project or complementary resources that support the agency’s efforts toward reaching the project goal(s). These funds or resources do not need to be directly received by the grantee to be considered as leverage toward the project goal.
Alignment with First 5 LA Public Policy Goals

Policy and advocacy activities conducted under PAF grants must support one of the First 5 LA Policy Agenda Goals listed below. These goals constitute the First 5 LA Policy Agenda for 2010-2015 (see appendix A and B). They support First 5 LA's four priority outcomes to strengthen families and communities, outlined in the strategic plan. Please note that numerous policy goals align with multiple strategic plan priority outcomes (see chart First 5 LA 10 Policy Goals on next page). Also note that these are not ranked in any priority order; the numbers are solely for reference purposes.

The Policy Agenda supports First 5 LA’s four priority outcomes outlined in the strategic plan to improve young children’s lives in LA County.

1. Promote comprehensive, affordable health insurance for all
2. Support integration and sharing of data
3. Expand voluntary home visiting
4. Increase supports for breastfeeding
5. Promote reductions in drug, alcohol and tobacco use by parents/caregivers
6. Expand early identification and intervention
7. Promote family strengthening principles and prevention practices in the child welfare system
8. Improve quality of early care and education programs
9. Strengthen the prenatal to 5 workforce
10. Increase access to healthy food options and physical activity
V. SUBMISSION GUIDELINES & PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

A. Proposal Submission Process: First 5 LA requires submission of your proposal using First 5 LA’s online system accessed from the PAF website www.first5la.org/PAF-Cycle-II. The online system allows upload of one document per category, so it is helpful to bundle documents such as resumes into one document. Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in a proposal workshop webinar before submitting a proposal. Information about how to use this system and proposal requirements will be reviewed at the webinar on July 31, 2012. Webinar information will be available on the PAF website www.first5la.org/PAF.

Please review carefully the following requirements for the content of the proposal:

B. Online Registration Form: This online form (available on the online portal) must be completed prior to the Project Narrative. Enter the contact information for the project director or manager, address and other requested information. Provide a Lead Organization contact person if different from the project director or manager. Complete all other required questions with respect to First 5 LA funding status, project eligibility, and organizational and project information.

C. Proposal Cover Letter: Please include a brief, one page cover letter from the Executive Director (or equivalent); the letter must be signed and dated. Please include the following in the cover letter:
   1. Briefly state how this project aligns with the overall mission of the agency, the amount requested and that they have read and understand all of the requirements outlined in this RFP
   2. Total Project Budget
   3. Total Amount Requested from First 5 LA
   4. Total Number of Years of Support Requested from First 5 LA

D. Project Narrative: The Project Narrative must be uploaded in a Word or PDF document using the online proposal system on the PAF website. No hard copies of the Proposal Narrative will be accepted. The narrative responses must have one-inch margins, may not be smaller than 11 point font and cannot exceed 10 pages (excluding appendices). Any content beyond 10 pages will not be considered part of the proposal. General space usage suggestions are made for each section of the narrative, but are intended as guidelines only. Variance from these suggested guidelines will not negatively impact your application assuming all relevant questions are adequately addressed. The narrative should include the following:

   1. **Project Brief Summary** (suggested length-1/4 page): Please provide a succinct description of your project, including main goals, activities and target audience/geographic focus (if applicable). This will be used for public announcements/descriptions of your project.

   2. **Project Overview** (suggested length- 1-1.5 pages):
a. Please describe the specific problem or issue you plan to address. This should include the extent or pervasiveness of the problem, who is most impacted by it, and implications of it for children 0-5 and their families. Specify which First 5 LA policy goal(s) the project will support selected from the Policy Agenda in appendix A and B. How was the goal(s) selected? How does the project support the goal(s)?

b. By the completion of your policy and/or advocacy project, what changes or outcomes do you expect to have accomplished? (Outcomes refer to the real-world change that will occur as a result of your project).

3. **Project Description** (suggested length – 3-5 pages)

What are the primary policy and/or advocacy activities you are proposing to implement with the project? (Activities refer to the actions and processes that your organization would implement to achieve results. For examples see appendix C). Please include the following details:

a. **Goals:** What policy goal(s) does your project hope to achieve? Please describe the level of government (local, county, state, federal) and what stage of development your project is addressing (i.e. problem ID/agenda setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, evaluation - see appendix C).

b. **Tools:** What policy and/or advocacy tools will the project utilize? (Common tools: research, coalition building, letter-writing, media, polling, advocacy training for community members, etc.).

c. **Targets:** Which decision-maker(s), system(s), organizations(s), or population(s) will you target with the project? Please explain how you plan to engage effectively with the target(s). What is your organization’s past history working with this/these entity/entities, if any? (Please remember that political campaigns, voter registration drives, and lobbying are restricted activities).

d. **Timeline:** Include a timeline for the expected execution and completion of the project’s main activities.

e. **Benchmarks:** What will be the key benchmarks you will track as you make progress in this policy and advocacy project? (Benchmarks, also referred to as milestones, are important activities or events that mark your progress on the way to achieving your outcomes).

4. **Project Rationale** (suggested length: 2 pages)

a. **Justification:** How did you select your proposed goal and how does that relate to the policy and advocacy activities described? Why are these
activities most likely to contribute to accomplishment of the policy goals and outcomes?

b. **Policy Context:** What is the current political/policy environment related to your identified issue, and how will it affect the success of your project? What challenges or barriers does it present to your proposed policy and advocacy efforts?

c. **Organization Capacity:** Describe your organization’s capacity and readiness to implement the proposed policy and advocacy project. Include examples of your past policy and advocacy experience and successes relevant to this proposal.

d. **Resources:** What resources does your organization bring to the project? (Resources here refer to the organization’s strengths, materials, or capacities such as staff, organizational experience, data, board, relationships with policy makers and policy influencers, media expertise, nontraditional allies, etc.)

e. **Geographic Reach:** How does your project directly affect children 0-5 and their families in Los Angeles County? If you are focusing on a smaller region within the County please explain how your work may serve as a model or expand to benefit more children in the County in the future.

f. **Leverage:** Will this grant allow you to secure additional funding or support to implement or continue the project activities, if needed?

f. **Outlook:** What length of time is appropriate for this project, and why? (Up to 5 years is allowed.)

5. **Collaboration** (suggested length: ½-1 page)

   a. **Who:** What (if any) organization(s) do you intend to collaborate with to implement the proposed policy and advocacy project?

   b. **Degree:** Describe the nature of the relationship(s) including the level of formality, past experience collaborating, accountability structure, etc.

   c. **Roles:** Identify the roles of different collaborators on the project. On which activities will they be expected to take the lead?

   d. **Non-traditional:** Are any of the collaborating organizations “non-traditional partners” new to working on behalf of 0-5 year olds? If yes, please explain.

   e. **Mentor:** If your organization’s central mission and experience is not focused particularly on 0-5 year olds, identify individuals or organization(s) you will work with to gain knowledge on this population and facilitate relationship building in this arena. Do you already have a relationship with them and, if
so, what is the nature of that relationship? How do you plan to work with them?

6. **Project Evaluation and Monitoring** (suggested length: ½-1 page)

   a. What data will you collect to ensure that you arrive at the benchmarks and achieve the policy goal outlined in Section 3 above?

   b. How will you utilize that data to improve your policy and advocacy work during the course of the project?

   c. Do you expect to utilize an outside evaluator or does your organization have sufficient internal expertise to evaluate the project?

**E. Required Attachments**

1. Resumes: Provide detailed professional resumes and job description(s) if applicable for the key staff expected to work on the project, outlining all relevant work history, education, etc.

2. Board of Directors: Provide the most recent member roster for the organization’s Board.

3. Letter(s) of Support (for Collaborative Projects ONLY): Provide Letter(s) of Support from each collaborative partner participating in the project.

4. Project Budget: Applicants must submit a project budget. The budget should reflect the total amount requested from First 5 LA, not just the first year requested. Refer to the instructions provided in appendix D to complete the Project Budget Worksheet provided in appendix E. Matching funds are not required; however, if secured, they should be included as directed. At least 5% should be allocated to project evaluation. Applicants may request no more than $500,000 total over a maximum grant period of five years. Requested amounts and lengths of grants must be appropriate for the proposed activities.

5. Budget Narrative: The Budget Narrative should be included in a separate document. The Budget Narrative should explain each of the line items contained in the project budget, relate expenses to specific activities, and indicate the project year associated with the cost.

6. Organizational Budget: Please include the organization’s operating budget for the past three years.

7. Proof of 501(c)(3) status: IRS Tax Status Determination Letter for nonprofit organizations only.
8. By-laws (if applicable)

9. Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)

10. Annual Independent Audit or 990 if audit is not available

   **a. Including the following, as appropriate:**
   1. Management Letter
   2. Auditor’s Report
   3. Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)
   4. Statement of Activities (P/L, Income and Expenses Report)
   5. Statement of Cash Flow
   6. Functional Expense Report
   7. Notes to Financial Statements
   8. Federal “single-item” audit (if applicable)

**F. First 5 LA Templates Required:**

1. **Signature Authorization Form (appendix F)** – 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.**

2. Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties (appendix G): 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. **Applicants must submit one original form signed in BLUE ink.**

**Hard copies with original signatures are required for these two (and only these two) documents.**

**G. Contractual Documents**

**This list of documents is for your information only and should not be submitted with the proposal.** Successful applicants will move into the contract negotiation phase which will entail the development of several contractual documents. Applicants should review these documents or requirements prior to proposal submission in order to be aware of the next steps. The sample documents are available in appendix H.

1. **Scope of Work:** Please review the attached Scope of Work. While it is not required to be completed for the proposal, it will be completed during contract negotiation for the organizations selected to receive funding.

2. **Logic Model:** Applicants are not required to submit the Logic Model as part of their proposal. However, successful grantees will be required to complete one during the scope of work negotiation process. The Logic Model is a tool to describe the flow or
processes of your project.

3. **Sample Grant Agreement:** It is highly recommended that applicants review the Sample Grant Agreement prior to submitting a proposal in order to be aware of what will be expected of selected grantees. Selected applicants must be willing and able to comply with all of the contract provisions.

4. **Memorandum of Understanding:** For collaborative grants, an MOU specifying understandings, agreements, resources and responsibilities of and between each of the partners will be required among collaborating partners after the proposal review process.

5. **Insurance Certificates:** Please see the Summary of Required Insurances that the organizations and/or collaborative must be able to provide should they be selected for funding.

**Proposal Assistance**

First 5 LA will host an Applicant Information Workshop on Tuesday, July 31st (check PAF website for exact time and registration information). **The Applicant Information Workshop will be held via webinar.** Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate to learn critical information about the PAF requirements and process and to receive hands-on instruction in developing a proposal using the online system, completing First 5 LA required budget forms, and planning for evaluation activities. The workshop will review the Proposal Narrative and other components, and highlight what to expect following the proposal submission, review, and selection process. Applicants may register online for up to two participants from each organization at the PAF website.

**Submission Guidelines**

All application materials must be submitted via the First 5 LA online application system. **Two documents are exceptions, for which original hard copies are also required.** The Proposal Checklist at the end of the RFP provides a complete list of the required proposal items. The Signature Authorization Form (appendix F) and Organization Litigation Form (appendix G) must be submitted in hard copy form with original signatures no later than the due date by mail or hand delivered to:

Craig A. Steele, Interim Chief Executive Officer  
First 5 LA  
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Attention: Stacy Lee Policy Manager  
Policy Advocacy Fund RFP

**All other proposal documents must be submitted electronically** and should be completed through the online application system by **5:00 pm September 7, 2012** to be eligible for review. Please register early online in order to become familiar with the system. **It is highly recommended that after submitting your proposal you print a “printer-friendly version” of the online proposal form and review it carefully prior to submission.** The printed version
should be kept for your records, and will include a list of the proposal components that were attached. If the attachment is not listed, it was not successfully submitted.

If you experience any technical difficulties with submission of the proposal, you should first check this page http://www.first5la.org/Online-Application-Help or email Online_Application@first5la.org if your issue is not resolved. First 5 LA is not responsible for delays due to computer malfunction, or if applicants have problems with the First 5 LA online system. Late proposals due to technical difficulties will be considered late and will be ineligible for review. Please allow additional time to account for unexpected delays.

VI. REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

First 5 LA will award grants to applicants that have the expertise and qualifications to successfully implement a policy and advocacy project in line with the PAF guidelines, requirements and criteria. Please keep in mind that this is a competitive proposal review process and only a limited number of organizations will be funded.

The review process is outlined below. First 5 LA reserves the right to modify the review process at any time if necessary. Proposals with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualification.

1. **Review for Completeness** – First 5 LA staff will ensure that all required components of the Proposal are included. Late or incomplete proposals will not be accepted.

2. **Programmatic Review** – 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. External reviewers will assess the programmatic strengths of each proposal. Please also refer to the Review Tool that the external reviewers will use to assess proposals in appendix I.

3. **Compliance and Duplication** – If the applicant has current or previous First 5 LA funding, compliance with and successful implementation of those prior and/or current grants will be considered. Applicants, regardless of past or current funding, cannot be funded for activities similar to those within the scope of work of an existing First 5 LA investment.

4. **Project Budget Review** – Project budgets will be reviewed for thoroughness and appropriateness based on the proposed activities and timeline.

5. **Financial Review** – As a public entity, the Commission has a responsibility to the public to ensure that the organizations selected are financially stable to provide services. Applicants will be reviewed to assess fiscal health in relationship to their capacity to implement the proposed project and manage the proposed budget.
Further written materials regarding the financial stability of the agency may be requested by our finance department prior to the site visit.

6. **Site Visit** – Staff will rank applicants based on the external review scores and conduct site visits for the top applications to gain additional knowledge regarding the applicant’s relationship to the community, its capacity to engage in the proposed project, its relationship with proposed collaborative partners, and/or to answer questions that may arise during programmatic or financial review. A site visit is not a guarantee of funding approval.

7. **Funding Announcement** – Selected and declined applicants will be notified in writing. Contract negotiations will be conducted with all approved awardees. Execution of the grant agreement will be based upon successful contract negotiation.

8. **Feedback Process** – Proposal applicants who are declined may receive feedback if requested. Further details regarding the feedback process will be provided in the declination letter.

VII. **PROPOSAL CHECKLIST**

Refer to Proposal Narrative and Submission Guidelines requirements for complete information about required application content and requirements. Electronic and hard copies must be submitted to First 5 LA by **5:00 pm on September 14, 2012**. Please note that incomplete proposals will be considered ineligible for review. ALL REQUIRED FORMS AND APPENDICES ARE AVAILABLE ON THE PAF WEBSITE (LINK HERE).

□ Online registration form (complete online)
□ Cover letter with Signature of authorized signatory
□ Proposal Narrative
□ Resumes of key staff
□ Board of Directors roster
□ Letter(s) of Support (for collaborative partners, if applicable)
□ Project Budget (appendix E) and Budget Narrative
□ Organizational budget for the last three years
□ Proof of 501 (3) (c) status/IRS Tax Status Determination Letter
□ By Laws (if applicable)
□ Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)
□ New Audited Financial Statement (or 990 if audit is unavailable)
□ Signed and dated Signature Authorization Form, appendix F (hard copy with original signature must be received)
□ Signed and dated Organization Litigation Form, appendix G (hard copy with original signature must be received)
VIII. 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 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 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/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 (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 selected contractor/s will be required to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this document, including the First 5 LA Contract (See 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.

IX. 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 CEO within ten (10) business days following the date the notification of decision is made by First 5 LA. For more information, please see First 5 LA’s Appeals Policy.
X. APPENDICES

All Appendices are available on the PAF website.

Appendix A. First 5 LA Public Policy Agenda - Brochure
Appendix B. First 5 LA Public Policy Agenda - Full
Appendix C. Policy Processes and Potential Strategies
Appendix D. Budget Instructions
Appendix E. Budget Worksheet
Appendix F. Signature Authorization Form
Appendix G. Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Difficulties form
Appendix H. Sample Grant Agreement, Logic Model and Scope of Work
Appendix I. Review Tool
Appendix J. Appeals Policy