Policy and Advocacy Fund (PAF) Request for Proposals August 2011
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I. TIMELINE

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<td>August 25, 2011</td>
<td>RFP Release Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 7, 2011</td>
<td>Applicant Information Workshop (webinar) Details posted on RFP website</td>
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<td>RSVP required by September 6, 2011.</td>
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<td>Proposals Due by 5:00pm PST</td>
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<td>October, 2011</td>
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<td>January 31, 2012</td>
<td>Anticipated Start Up of New Projects</td>
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All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFP must be received in writing by First 5 LA on Tuesday, September 6, 2011. 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:

Kate Sachnoff, Senior Policy Analyst  
First 5 LA  
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 200  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Phone: 213.482.7577  
Fax: 213.482.5903  
E-mail: paf@first5la.org

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. BACKGROUND

First 5 LA

First 5 LA is a unique child-advocacy organization created by California voters (Proposition 10) to invest tobacco tax revenues in programs that aim to improve the lives of children 0-5 and their families in Los Angeles County. 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.

First 5 LA’s vision and commitment is to create a future throughout Los Angeles’ diverse communities where all young children are born healthy and raised in a loving and nurturing environment so that they grow up healthy, eager to learn and reach their full potential. First 5 LA is to make significant and measurable progress towards increasing the number of children from the prenatal stage through age five who are physically and emotionally healthy, safe and ready to learn. Additional information regarding First 5 LA may be found at http://www.first5la.org.

First 5 LA 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 (http://www.first5la.org/Strategic-Plan). In the Plan, the Commission established four specific outcomes that it seeks for young children in L.A. County. These four long-term goals are to ensure that:

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

All of First 5 LA’s investments will be focused on changing outcomes related to these four long-term goals.

The Plan incorporates lessons learned from the first 10 years of First 5 LA’s grantmaking 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, the new strategic plan balances place-based with countywide strategies.
**Place-Based:**
First 5 LA’s place-based efforts, known as Best Start, are being implemented in 14 communities: First 5 LA Best Start is a community-driven effort that brings together parents and other community members to support young children and families. Best Start is working with parents, service providers and other stakeholders to make their neighborhoods places where young children are healthy, safe and ready to learn to help improve children’s lives. For more information: [http://beststartla.org/about-best-start/](http://beststartla.org/about-best-start/)

**Countywide:**
The implementation plan for the countywide approach represents a comprehensive effort to address systems improvement in LA County through the following strategies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Public Policy:</th>
<th>To define and pursue First 5 LA’s priorities for policy change that support families within the four priority goal areas.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Public Education:</td>
<td>To build public will and promote knowledge around issues facing children and families.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Resource Mobilization:</td>
<td>To support and enhance the impact of the total portfolio of First 5 LA investments through effective, strategic partnerships; and by leveraging social and financial capital.</td>
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<td>D. Workforce Development:</td>
<td>To improve the knowledge and skills of the countywide prenatal to five workforce to strengthen families and support children’s healthy development.</td>
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<td>E. Data Systems Integration:</td>
<td>To support improvement of the quality and usefulness of data collected about children and families throughout LA County and the programs, projects and services that support them.</td>
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<td>F. Health Access:</td>
<td>To increase access to health insurance for children 0-5 by assisting families in obtaining coverage, and potentially subsidizing insurance for children not covered by other insurance.</td>
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**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.”

First 5 LA has a history of supporting policy change through components in direct service grants as well as explicit policy grants. In previous policy grantmaking, First 5 LA has invested $13 million through the Community Opportunities Fund (COF). Please see appendix H for summaries of grants and list of grantees.
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 I & J). 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. We anticipate two cycles of funding, one represented in this RFP, and another in 2013. We expect to award approximately 10 grants per 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.
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 F). 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 October 7, 2011**, 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 January 31, 2012 which will 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.**

**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 8% of overall budget for self-evaluation of the project.

Restricted Activities:\(^2\)

➢ 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
  - 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.

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\(^2\) 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.
**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 I&J). 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 the chart from the 2010-2015 First 5 LA Public Policy Agenda (see below). 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

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. 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 September 7, 2011. 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:

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.

Proposal Cover Letter: Please include a brief, one page cover letter from the Executive Director (or equivalent) briefly stating 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. The letter must be signed and dated.

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). 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. Executive Summary (suggested length-½ page): Please summarize your project. Include the project’s main goals, activities and expected outcomes.

2. Project Description (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 I. 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 Activities** (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 Chart 1 in appendix F). Please include the following details:

a. **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.).

b. **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).

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

d. **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 policy and advocacy activities? Why are these activities most likely to contribute to accomplishment of the policy 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?
Required Attachments

A. **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.

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

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

D. **Project Budget:** Applicants must submit a project budget. Refer to the instructions provided in appendix C to complete the Project Budget Worksheet provided in appendix D. Matching funds are not required; however, if secured, they should be included as directed. At least 8% 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.

E. **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.

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

G. **Proof of 501(c)(3) status:** IRS Tax Status Determination Letter for nonprofit organizations only.

H. **By-laws (if applicable)**

I. **Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)**

J. **Annual Independent Audit or 990 if audit is not available** 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)
L. First 5 LA Templates Required:

1. **Signature Authorization Form (appendix A)** – 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: 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.*

**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 K.

A. **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.

B. **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.

C. **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.

D. **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.

E. **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, September 7 (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 required. The Proposal Checklist at the end of the RFP provides a complete list of the required proposal items. The Signature Authorization Form (appendix A) and Organization Litigation Form (appendix B) must be submitted in hard copy form with original signatures by mail or hand delivered to:

Evelyn V. Martinez, Chief Executive Officer
First 5 LA
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Policy Advocacy Fund

All other proposal documents must be submitted electronically and should be completed through the PAF online system by 5:00 pm October 7, 2011 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.

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.
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. The following assessment criteria will be used. Please also refer to the Review Tool that the external reviewers will use to assess proposals in appendix E.

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 conduct site visits for selected proposal applicants 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 – all applicants will be notified in writing of the status of their submitted proposal. 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. There will be no consideration of appeals. Further details regarding the feedback process will be provided following the proposal review.

The grantee(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.

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.

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 October 7, 2011. 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 Executive Director (or equivalent) Signature
- Proposal Narrative
- Resumes of key staff
- Board of Directors roster
- Letter(s) of Support (for collaborative projects)
- Project Budget (appendix D) 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 A (hard copy with original signature must be received)
- Signed and dated Organization Litigation Form, appendix B (hard copy with original signature must be received)
VIII. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Specific contractual considerations, including but not limited to the following, apply to Request for Proposals (RFP) submission process and project implementation and to any Grant Agreements that result from the submission and implementation of the project/proposal. The Grantee will need to comply with all of the provisions in the attached sample Grant Agreement (See Sample Grant Agreement).

A. Conflict of Interest

The selected Grantee will be required to comply with the COMMISSION’s Conflict of Interest provisions, as outlined in the grant agreement, and as applicable under California Law. Grantee acknowledges that he/she/it is acting as public official pursuant to the Grant Agreement 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. Grantee shall maintain the confidentiality of any confidential information obtained from the COMMISSION during the Grant Agreement period and shall not use such information for personal or commercial gain outside the Grant Agreement period. By agreeing to the Grant Agreement and accepting financial compensation for services rendered hereunder, Grantee 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 Grant Agreement and for one year thereafter, Grantee will not knowingly solicit or accept employment and/or compensation from any COMMISSION collaborator, Grantee 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 Grant Agreements or Contracts with the COMMISSION in order to be eligible to apply for the current RFP. 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 RFP 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. Grant Agreement Information

1. The COMMISSION may, at its sole discretion, reject any or all submissions in response to this RFP. The COMMISSION also reserves the right to cancel this RFP, at its sole discretion, at any time before execution of a Grant Agreement. The COMMISSION
shall not be liable for any costs incurred in connection with the preparation of any submissions in response to this RFP. Any cover letters, résumés and/or curriculum vita, including attached materials, submitted in response to this RFP shall become property of the COMMISSION and subject to public disclosure.

2. The agency/organization submitting an application agrees that by submitting an application it authorizes the COMMISSION to verify any or all information and/or references given in the application.

3. The COMMISSION reserves the right, after Grant Agreement award, to amend the resulting Grant Agreement, scope of work, and any other exhibits as needed throughout the term of the Grant Agreement 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 Grant Agreement by the COMMISSION to an individual/agency/organization that proposes to use sub-contractors for the performance of work under the Grant Agreement 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 Grantee will be required to sign the Grant Agreement at least two (2) weeks prior to the intended start date of the Grant Agreement, as outlined in Terms of Contract section, to assure the timely completion of the signature process by all parties. If the Grant Agreement 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 Grant Agreement execution date (the date all parties have signed the Grant Agreement) and Grantee will not be eligible to obtain reimbursement for any costs incurred prior to the Grant Agreement execution date, unless otherwise approved by the COMMISSION in writing. If this Grant Agreement is not signed within the thirty-day (30) period from the intended start date, the COMMISSION has the right to withdraw the Grant Agreement 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 Grantee will be required to submit the required documentation listed on the Grant Agreement Checklist, which includes, but not limited to, the following documents before the Grant Agreement can be fully executed:
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 Grant Agreement requirements are attached (See Sample Grant Agreement). If successful, the Grantee will be required to meet all of the terms and provisions set forth in these documents and within the timeframe identified.

IX. APPENDICES

All Appendices are available on the PAF website.