First 5 LA
Promotional Material Vendor Pool
Request for Qualifications

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

RELEASE DATE: July 10, 2012
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I. TIMELINE FOR SELECTION PROCESS

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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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<tr>
<td>RFQ Released</td>
<td>July 10, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final date to submit questions and requests for additional information</td>
<td>July 24, 2012 by 5 P.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Due:</td>
<td>July 31, 2012 by 5 P.M. PST NO EXCEPTIONS</td>
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<td>- Online applications plus all forms</td>
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<tr>
<td>- One (1) original and signed copy of First 5 LA’s “Signature Authorization” and “Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties” forms sent or delivered to First 5 LA and five hard copies of all samples</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal Review of Applications</td>
<td>August 1-8, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vendor Notification for Acceptance into Pool</td>
<td>August 13, 2012</td>
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This RFQ is for year two of the continuing Promotional Material Vendor pool to provide new vendors the opportunity to be part of the existing pool.

Contracts for projects are created on an “as need” basis and prior to the time a print job is requested. Any contract for over $25,000 will need to be presented to the commission for approval.

All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFQ must be received in writing by First 5 LA via mail, fax, or email before 5 p.m. on July 24, 2012. First 5 LA reserves the sole right to determine the timing and content of the responses to all questions and requests for additional information.

Questions and information requests can be submitted to:

Violet Gonzalez, Countywide Marketing Manager
First 5 LA
750 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: 213.482.7833
Fax: 213.482.5552
E-mail: vgonzalez@first5la.org
II. BACKGROUND

First 5 LA — “Champions for Our Children”

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

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

The First 5 LA FY 2009-2015 Strategic Plan

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

The Commission selected 14 *Best Start* communities based on lessons learned from First 5 LA’s first decade and research, which shows 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

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approach also creates unique partnerships with families, community residents and other funders, resulting in a better measure of our impact.

Parents, civic and business leaders, members of the clergy, representatives from community-based organizations and others are working together to develop partnerships within each of the 14 communities. By June, each community partnership will have submitted proposals to the First 5 LA commissioners for future investments. These can include building safe parks, providing early childhood education programs or supporting other strategies that achieve Best Start’s primary goals that children in each community grow up safe, healthy and ready to learn.

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.

III. ELIGIBILITY

The First 5 LA Public Affairs (PA) department is seeking applicants to be included in a pool of approved vendors which will be used to produce promotional items (books, tote bags, pens, pencils, pad folios, children’s water bottles, etc.) in a timely and budget conscious manner. To that end, we are seeking a diverse range of vendors to be represented in the pool.
This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will serve to identify vendors with the necessary resources to fulfill any or all of First 5 LA’s promotional items’ needs, including vendors that have a group of subcontractors that can provide specific products desired.

Applicants must have qualifications, experience and references to successfully execute the promotional items’ needs of First 5 LA.

IV. SUMMARY OF DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

An ideal vendor will have all or some of the following qualifications:

- Ability to evaluate product requests from First 5 LA and make product suggestions, keeping in mind budgetary needs and a timely delivery of products.
- Ability to customize promotional items in a manner that is consistent with First 5 LA’s look and feel.
- Consistent record of delivering high-quality materials on time and on budget.
- Currently provide promotional items for clients such as, but not limited to, tote bags, pencils, pens, water bottles, erasers, etc.
- Must be able to provide samples of materials (paper, fabric, etc.) or produced materials upon request.

V. TERMS OF PROJECT

Available Funding and Contract Period
Since the pool will be accessible to all First 5 LA staff and departments, funding for individual projects will be funded by the requesting department. Individual vendor agreements (contracts) will be put in place for fiscal year 2012-13 on a “projects need” basis.

Acceptance into the consultant pool is not a guarantee of work. For those who are accepted into the vendor pool, work will be solicited based on First 5 LA needs. First 5 LA staff will select a consultant from the pool based on qualifications and availability, and other criteria as specified at the time of the solicitation. The selected consultant and First 5 LA staff will negotiate a scope of work and final budget during the contracting process.

Funds will be disbursed through monthly invoices based on services rendered and actual expenses.

Selected Vendors

When vendors are selected for various projects, vendors shall not be authorized to deliver or commence performance of services as described until final execution of the vendor agreement (contract must be signed by both parties). Any performance of services commenced prior to obtaining all written approvals by First 5 LA shall be considered voluntary.
All contracts are contingent upon final approval by the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners, successful contract negotiations, and First 5 LA approval and submission of documents by the selected vendors in the pool.

VI. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

In order to respond to this RFQ, applicants are required to submit the following materials to First 5 LA no later than **5:00 P.M. on July 31, 2012.** Applications received after this deadline **will not** be considered.

A. **Cover Letter (maximum two pages):** Each applicant is required to include a cover letter on the organization’s letterhead addressed to Craig A. Steele, Interim Chief Executive Officer, First 5 LA, containing the following:
   - The date.
   - The applicant’s name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address.
   - The primary contact person’s name, title, and address, telephone, fax, and e-mail address (if different from organization’s information).
   - A statement indicating that the submission is in response to an RFQ for the non-exclusive premiums vendor.

The applicant’s cover letter **must** be signed by a person authorized to bind the applicant to the terms of the application.

B. **Expertise and Experience as a Vendor (maximum three pages):**
   - General qualifications, competency, experience, business integrity, and capacity to produce promotional materials.
   - Capacity to work, and having an established staff presence and office in Los Angeles County.
   - Select list of clients and list of any awards or accommodations the applicant has received.

C. **Samples of Promotional Items:**
   Include a wide range of promotional items samples including, but not limited to, canvas bags, pencils, pens, water bottles, children’s toothbrushes, books and any other item that will give a fair representation of the range of products available through your services. If available, include production quotes and schedules.

   **Please submit five (5) copies of all samples.**

D. **Sample Quotes:**
   Please include quotes and production schedules for the following materials.
   
i) **Tote Bags:** Provide a quote for 3,500 zippered nylon tote bags, made in the USA, imprinted on one side with a 2-color logo. (N/A for book vendors)
ii) **Children’s water bottles**: Provide a quote for 2,500 8-10 oz. children’s water bottles, imprinted on one side with a 2-color logo. *(N/A for book vendors)*

iii) **T-shirts**: Provide a quote for 100 cotton blend white T’s, imprinted on one side with a 1-color logo. *(N/A for book vendors)*

**Books (only applicable for book vendors)**: Provide a quote for books appropriate for children 0-5 years old. The book should be paperback and the quote should be for the following quantities: 500 - 999 and 1000- 1500.

E. **References (minimum of two)**: References should be from current or former clients. Each reference should include name, company, address, phone number, email, length of time known, and a short statement about your relationship. In addition, written statements from each reference may be included.

F. **Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties (Appendix D)**:
   Please read the information on the required Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties form thoroughly and include one (1) original SIGNED with BLUE INK copy by the application deadline. If you checked Yes to any of the questions on this form, please explain whether this will impact the project on this solicitation. Omission of the form will constitute an incomplete proposal and may be grounds for disqualification.

G. **Signature Authorization Form (Appendix E)**:
   This form is required in order to verify signature authority to enter into contractual agreement with First 5 LA. If not outlined in the Bylaws, a Board Resolution or Partnership Agreement must be submitted, as applicable, that indicates signature authority. Applicants must submit one original form signed in blue ink. Omission of the form will constitute an incomplete proposal and may be grounds for disqualification.

H. **Board Resolution (Appendix F)**: Include, if needed, to support the authority of persons listed on Signature Authorization Form.

I. **Applicant should include a completed W-9 (Appendix G)**.

J. **Copy of their business license**.

**VII. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

All applications must be submitted online at:

Applicants are required to submit their qualifications online at [http://www.first5la.org/PA+Vendor+Pool+RFQ+2012](http://www.first5la.org/PA+Vendor+Pool+RFQ+2012), as well as submit one (1) original and signed copy of the application cover letter, the First 5 LA’s “Signature Authorization,”
and the “Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties,” forms.

**In addition, each applicant must deliver five (5) hard copies of their samples.**

Written submissions must meet the following criteria:

- All forms that require signatures must be signed in **blue** ink. Signature stamps are **not** acceptable.

**VIII. SELECTION PROCESS AND REVIEW CRITERIA**

**Selection Process**

1. First 5 LA staff will evaluate all applications for completeness and minimum qualifications. Basic requirements include: timely receipt of application, inclusion of all appropriate attachments, etc. Applications with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualification. Applicants may use the Application Checklist (Page 16) as an aid in preparing the application. Please note that the Application Checklist is merely an aid.

2. After initial review, applicant’s qualifications will be evaluated and scored by a panel of internal reviewers. *(Please see Qualification Review Tool)* As part of this review process, the panel may contact an applicant’s references.

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

4. As part of this review process, the panel may contact an applicant’s references.

**Review Criteria**

First 5 LA will award contracts on an as needed basis to one or more applicants that will be selected in the pool with the expertise and qualifications outlined in the RFQ. Applicants will initially be evaluated by a panel of internal reviewers with expertise in the field. Following this outside evaluation, First 5 LA staff may conduct interviews (either in person or on the phone) with the applicants recommended by the internal reviewers. Contractor(s) selections will be based on, but not limited to, evaluation of the following factors:

- Quality and range of samples
- Breadth and experience as a Vendor
- Quotes submitted
- References from clients
- Interview answers (if applicable)

First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted qualifications. First 5 LA has an appeals policy posted on the First 5 LA website.
Please deliver original and signed materials and samples to:

Craig A. Steel, Interim Chief Executive Officer
First 5 LA
750 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Violet Gonzalez / Vendor Pool RFQ

Applicants must complete online application and deliver all materials to First 5 LA no later than July 31, 2012 at 5 p.m.
IX. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Specific contractual considerations, including but not limited to the following, apply to RFQ submission process and project implementation and to any contracts that result from the submission and implementation of the project/proposal. The contractor will need to comply will 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 sub-contractors for the performance of work under the contract resulting from this application process shall not be interpreted to limit the COMMISSION’s right to approve subcontractors, assemble teams and/or assign leads. Each applicant will be evaluated independently for added value to the overall team. A copy of executed subcontract(s) related to Program funding must be provided to the COMMISSION.

7. The selected Contractor will be required to sign the contract at least two (2) weeks prior to the intended start date of the contract, as outlined in Terms of Contract/Term of Grant section, to assure the timely completion of the signature process by all parties. If the contract is not signed prior to the intended start date, the commencement of any activities under the Exhibit A – Scope of Work will not begin until the contract execution date (the date all parties have signed the contract) and Contractor will not be eligible to obtain reimbursement for any costs incurred prior to the contract execution date, unless otherwise approved in writing by the COMMISSION. If this Contract is not signed within the thirty-day (30) period from the intended start date, the COMMISSION has the right to withdraw the contract award. The COMMISSION reserves the right to revise the effective date prior to final execution of the contract.

The contractor shall not be authorized to deliver or commence performance of services as described in this RFQ until final execution of the contract (contract must be signed by both parties). Final execution of the contract is contingent on First 5 LA’s Board approval of the negotiated scope of work and budget. Any performance of services commenced prior to obtaining all written approvals by First 5 LA shall be considered voluntary.
8. Unless otherwise submitted during the application process, the selected Contractor will be required to submit the required documentation listed on the Contractor Checklist, which includes, but not limited to, the following documents before the Contract can be fully executed:

- Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties Form
- By-laws (if applicable)
- Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)
- Board of Directors or List of Partners (as applicable)
- Signature Authorization Form
- Annual Independent Audit for prior fiscal year or calendar year (if applicable)
- Appropriate business licenses (for vendors or private organizations)
- IRS Letter of Determination (if applicable)
- Completed IRS Form W-9
- Memorandums of Understanding (for any sub-contractors, collaborators, and/or partners listed under Contracted Services and Evaluation sections of Exhibit B – Budget Forms)
- Certificates of Insurance for all insurance requirements outlined in the contract.

9. 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.

X. APPEALS POLICY

First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted applications. An Appeal shall be permitted only on the grounds that the decision violated applicable law, First 5 LA policies and procedures, or the terms of the bid, RFP or RFQ. Appeals challenging First 5 LA’s decision on the merits or qualifications of bidders or proposers or the scoring of proposals shall not be permitted. An appeal of a First 5 LA decision shall be in writing and filed with the office of the 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.

XI. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Applicants should refer to Section VI (Statement of Qualifications) and Section VII (Submission Requirements) for complete information about required application content and submission guidelines. Both online application and paper originals must be submitted to First 5 LA by the deadline outlined in Section I.

Failure to submit any required items will result in disqualification.
☐ Cover letter (2 pages maximum. 1 original, signed in blue ink)

☐ Expertise and experience as a Vendor (3 pages maximum)

☐ Samples of materials, including production schedules and budgets, if available. 
**NOTE:** applicants must submit five (5) hard copies of their samples.

☐ Sample quotes for annual report publication, greeting card and “buck slip” (details in section VI, “D” above)

☐ References (minimum of two):

☐ Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties *(Appendix D)* (1 original, signed in blue ink)

☐ Signature Authorization Form *(Appendix E)* (1 original, signed in blue ink)

☐ Board Resolution, if applicable *(Appendix F)*

☐ W-9 *(Appendix G)*

☐ Business License

**All applications must be submitted online at**
http://www.first5la.org/Vendor+Contractor+RFQ.

Applicants **must also** submit one (1) original and signed copy of the application cover letter, First 5 LA’s “Signature Authorization,” and “Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties” forms, as well as any supporting documentation or samples in print form you deem appropriate, to:

Craig A. Steele, Interim Chief Executive Officer
First 5 LA
750 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Violet Gonzalez / Promotional Material Vendor RFQ

**List of Appendices**

- Appendix D: [Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties](#) (pdf)
- Appendix E: [Contractor Signature Authorization Form](#) (pdf)
• Appendix F: Sample Board Resolution (if applicable) (pdf)
• Appendix G: W-9
• Appendix H: Qualification Review Tool
• Appendix J: Sample vendor agreement
• Appendix K: Appeals Policy