Reducing Early Childhood Obesity (RECO) Collective Impact Evaluation RFP: Information Session Q&A

1. **Who are the bidders?**
   
   You can find a list of Information Session Attendees [here](#).

2. **Will the evaluation contractor have the right to publish on this research in peer reviewed journals?**
   
   Yes, First 5 LA generally agrees to contract language around the right to publish on research conducted through evaluations pending review and approval by First 5 LA. However, it is important to keep in mind that any peer reviewed journal articles cannot be considered deliverables that can be included and therefore, First 5 LA will not pay for any work that goes into the development of a manuscript.

3. **Can you talk more about assembling multi-disciplinary teams as noted in the RFP? Would you prefer to have teams built across organizations?**
   
   The various tasks outlined in the RFP will require various skill sets that will likely come from a multi-disciplinary team of researchers. Whether applicants assemble a multi-disciplinary team within one organization or institution or build a team across organizations, First 5 LA is searching for applicants who will have all the skills required to complete the tasks outlined in the RFP.

4. **What data has/is being collected by the programs funded through RECO investments?**
   
   There are various levels of data being collected from process level data to detailed client level data through the investments. A summary of the existing evaluations can be found [here](#). The selected contractor for the RECO Collective Impact evaluation will have access to existing program data.

5. **Most of the RECO investments are already underway, so what is the expectation about measuring changes in behaviors since there is no opportunity to collect baseline data?**
   
   Although the limitations of program data may prevent a direct assessment of changes in
individual behaviors due to RECO investments, applicants should consider suggesting analyses of other data that could allow for these assessments. For example, before/after analysis of third-party geocoded data, comparing communities targeted by RECO programs vs. communities with no or low investments. In many instances, there are program data from before and after the investments were implemented which can enable assessments of outcomes that are geared towards detecting changes in organizational structure and behaviors – i.e., in addition to traditional measurements of obesity, diet and activity behaviors at the individual level, other potential intermediate measures at the structural level can be considered including changes in the ‘food environment’, in the number of policies passed, in the number of system-level modifications made, etc.

6. Is there preference for LA based organizations? If your main offices are elsewhere, but have a satellite office in the LA area, is that considered local?

While there is not a preference for Los Angeles based organizations, organizations that do have an LA presence will benefit from less budgetary travel expenses. Additionally, an organization is more likely to understand the dynamic of this work in Los Angeles County if that function in this environment regularly.

7. Can you give examples of the deliverables?

Examples of deliverables were included in the RFP and include a range of deliverables such as meeting agendas and notes, PowerPoint presentations, draft and final reports, data sets and codebooks, etc.

8. It is our understanding that First 5 LA has a master list of vendors to contract with for evaluation services - is there a reason that you have reached beyond your list of vendors for this solicitation?

Based on the particular project, the decision to reach beyond First 5 LA’s list of consultants is an internal decision influenced by a number of factors (i.e. size of evaluation, skills required, etc).

9. Have you required the grantee programs that are being evaluated to cooperate with the new overall evaluator?

Grantee programs are contractually obligated to cooperate with evaluators and we have not had a problem with our previous evaluators working with grantee programs in the past.

10. For recruiting and enrolling participants, can you confirm if by participants you mean children and
families benefiting from the program or if you mean program staff?

By participants we mean the target of the intervention. For some investments, that would be children and families and for others it could be businesses, such as child care settings.

11. The RFP says the applicant shall be expected to execute the contract without substantive alteration. Should offers include any exceptions to the terms in the draft contract in their proposal?

Yes. Applications should include any exceptions to the terms in the draft contract as that may help First 5 LA determine if your requests meet our needs.

12. If currently funded programs are not being evaluated, would the chosen contractor also be responsible for evaluating these?

The purpose of this evaluation is to evaluate the collective impact of all included investments related to nutrition and physical activity. While some investments have robust program evaluations, others may not. There may be a need to collect additional data from all or some investments, but only to inform the larger collective impact evaluation, with highlights of specific strategies.

13. Aside from working closely with First 5 LA staff and LA County DPH staff to plan the evaluation, are there other community or program stakeholders who First 5 LA would want to include in the evaluation planning process?

Just as the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health was identified as a key stakeholder and partner in this evaluation, the Public Health Foundation Enterprises Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (PHFE WIC) is another key stakeholder and partner that should be included in the evaluation planning process. PHFE WIC will not be providing Letters of Support or specific partnerships with chosen applicants, but rather will partner with the selected contractor to provide data for the evaluation.

14. Could you say more about what types of external reviewers will review the proposals?

First 5 LA releases a Call for Reviewers with the release of a solicitation. That search is currently underway and the reviewer qualifications include:

• Applicant should have previous research and evaluation experience, preferably engaged in
projects that are relevant to the work being undertaken by First 5 LA and that are aligned with the areas of expertise or content knowledge sought for the RFP.

- Applicant should have knowledge of shared measurement approaches to evaluation.

- Applicant should be familiar with nonprofit and/or government programs, preferably in Los Angeles County.

- Applicant is not involved in planning with any individual in regards to submitting an application for this RFP, and is not themselves submitting a statement of proposal for this RFP.

- Preferred applicants will be familiar with advanced statistical modeling or microsimulation modeling in health or the social sciences

15. **Could you elaborate on what is expected from Task G's simulation model deliverable?**

An evaluation using only data collected by RECO programs or by the selected applicant can only lead to estimates of short-term impacts on the individuals and institutions directly targeted by these programs. However, by developing a simulation model, the evaluator could combine this data with existing evidence from other studies to project long-term outcomes and for a wider group of affected agents. In addition, the model could generate projections of outcomes under a variety of scenarios; e.g., different combinations of interventions or targeting different populations. There are a number of simulation techniques that are now available to evaluators that can accomplish this task including the use of microsimulations, systems dynamic modeling, and complex systems science methods (e.g., agent-based modeling).

16. **Are objective measurements of obesity, diet and activity behaviors necessary for the evaluation or self-reported data are acceptable?**

While measurements of obesity, diet and activity behaviors are advisable, they do not need to be objectively measured, unless this is a feasible and important part of the proposed analysis. The broader goal of the RECO project is to examine the value of selected First 5 LA investments to date and the added value of forthcoming or future investments. To this end, it is expected that multiple sources of data whether they be objectively measured or by self-report will be required. First 5 LA encourages applicants to think innovatively about their proposals and how to achieve the broader goal of the evaluation.
17. And could you also elaborate on what you envision for the GIS/mapping component of the evaluation?

Mapping of geo-coded data (when this technique can add value to the project) may be needed throughout the multi-stage evaluation to aid strategic planning and inform decision makers about First 5 LA investments in the community. Again, First 5 LA encourages applicants to think innovatively about their proposals and how to achieve the broader goal of the evaluation. Applicants should feel free to be creative and tell us what they envision for the GIS component of the evaluation.

18. Can existing First 5 LA funded data sources on variables impacting nutritional indicators (not specified in the RFP) be considered during analysis?

Definitely. Applicants may find an excel spreadsheet that lists the various First 5 LA funded data sources and information related to those sources here.

19. Your presentation said Phase 1 is 5 months long, however the RFP says Phase 1 is 8 months long. Which is correct?

The first contract period is estimated to be 5 months long, with a start date of February 1st, 2015. The phases the RFP refers to are related to phases of the evaluation that may not align perfectly with contract periods but rather, specific tasks that happen during those phases.

20. The specifics of any evaluation plan we propose will be contingent on what data are already available from First 5 LA or LACDPH. Is there a contact person who can provide information on existing data sources and evaluations?

Applicants can find a summary of existing evaluations for RECO investments here. As mentioned in question 18, applicants can find an excel spreadsheet that lists the various First 5 LA data sources and information related to those sources here.

21. What role will First 5 LA play in the evaluation project especially during analysis?

Aside from playing the role of managing the contractual obligations between First 5 LA and the selected contractor, First 5 LA expects to be a thought partner in the planning, implementation and analysis phases of the evaluation. While the contractor may be doing the actual work, First 5 LA will be contributing to the thinking around each phase of the project.
22. Can you say more about what you mean by economic impact analysis?

In addition to estimating the impact of RECO investments on health outcomes and behaviors, we seek to better understand how these investments affect health care costs, productivity, and other economic outcomes in Los Angeles County. We expect the simulation model to play an important role in this analysis and recognize that return on investment and other cost analysis techniques may be used to enumerate the economic impact of First 5 LA investments, in the past, presently and in the future.

23. Are organizations currently involved in an evaluation of a First 5 LA funded investment eligible for this RFP?

Organizations currently involved in an evaluation of a different First 5 LA funded investment are eligible for the RECO Collective Impact Evaluation.

24. Is any information collected consistently across the 15 programs? (Any regular program reports?)

The regular program reports all 15 programs submit to First 5 LA are related to Getting Better Data (GBD). The GBD data components are included in the excel spreadsheet of data sources here.

25. Will you post the PPT on the web?

Yes. The PowerPoint presentation is posted on the RFP website here.

26. The RFP states: “The selected applicant shall be expected to execute the contract without substantive alteration.” Based on the scope of work, will First 5 LA be willing to negotiate with offerors on the following insurance requirement to:

   a. Name LA County Children and Families First-Proposition 10 Commission as an additional insured?

   Unfortunately, the additional insured requirement is non-negotiable. Please note that according to our insurance consultant, adding First 5 LA as an additional insured poses no additional cost to contractors.

   b. Requirement to purchase and maintain insurance coverage for 3 years after the completion of the contract?

   Based on the final scope of work, First 5 LA is open to negotiate this.
27. There are several items listed in Appendix J (application checklist), which do not appear on the application form in the list of documents to be uploaded, and there are no instructions on how to provide them to First 5 LA. These include the Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, Business License, List of Board Members, IRS Account Determination. Could you please clarify:

a. Whether these documents are required with the proposal submission:

   These documents are not required with the proposal submission, they have been removed from Appendix J.

b. Under what circumstances they are required:

   These documents are required for contracting and not for immediate response to the RFP.

c. How you with them to be provided:

   Please do not provide these documents, as they are not required in response to the RFP.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please note that the following documents do not need to be included as a response to this RFP: Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, Business License, List of Board Members and IRS Account Determination Letter. These documents are required after contract award.

28. Regarding the business license requirement, is a California Business License acceptable and sufficient?

   Yes.

29. Would a transmittal letter, cover, or title page if included in the proposal narrative attachment, count toward the 30 page limit?

   No.

30. Is the table of contents, appendices, and reference citations included in the page limit?

   No.

31. Is a PDF acceptable for e-mail submission?

   Yes.

32. What is the file size limitation for uploading attachments at the Funding Center?
The maximum size for all attachments combined is 100 MB.

33. **Could you please clarify whether applicants have to limit the focus of the evaluation to no more than four Supervisorial Districts, as suggested for the third field in the online application (under “Proposed Project Information”) or provide guidance on how applicants should address this question?**

This field on the online application is information we collect from all our grantees and contractors. For this project, applicants should “N/A.” Please do not limit the focus of the evaluation to four Supervisorial Districts.

34. **Could First 5 LA please provide clarification regarding the project timeline: On page 19 of the RFP, there is a timeline that adds up to 3 years and 8 months, but 25 it says that the evaluation will be carried out over 5 years?**

As of now, the anticipated contract start date is February 1st, 2015. The first contract will be a 5 month contract. There will be four additional 12 month contracts that will carry the project to end June 2019, meaning a 4 year and 5 month project length. On page 19 of the RFP, the phases and estimated timeframes are one suggested way of approaching the project that is suggested but applicants are encouraged to think innovatively about this work and their approach to phases.

35. **Could you please clarify whether the dates for the First 5 LA investments provided in the RFP are funding dates rather than service implementation dates? If so, could you please provide the service implementation dates?**

The dates for the First 5 LA investments provided in the RFP are funding dates. Service implementation dates differ across investments and it will be the task of the selected contractor to gather additional information around service implementation dates during the planning phase of the evaluation.

36. **Is there an expectation that some of the First 5 LA RECO investments that are scheduled to end in 2015 may be renewed? If not, is there a possibility that they maybe continued with other funding after the end of First 5 LA funding? If so, would their impacts still be within the scope of the evaluation?**

Without contracts in place, applicants should not make any assumptions about whether programs
would be allowed to share additional program data collected with the RECO Evaluator or to collect different types of data and share it. Also, program continuation does not fall under the purview of this evaluation.

37. Could you please provide information about the extent to which LA County IRBs or other IRBs overseeing ongoing RECO investment evaluation efforts will need to approve the proposed study?

Applicants must plan for receiving approval through their own IRB committee and any other institutions IRB that may be involved in conducting the work (i.e. in the case of multi-agency teams).

38. The RFP indicates that the evaluation team would work with LA County DPH. However, the cities of Pasadena and Long Beach have their own public health departments. Are these areas of Los Angeles County included in the service area for this impact evaluation? If so, are there existing relationships or expectations of collaboration that can be leveraged for this evaluation?

If, in the course of planning and learning about First 5 LA RECO investments, the selected contractor determines Pasadena and Long Beach Health Departments as agencies that need to be involved, that would be a decision made by the contractor. First 5 LA has not invested in any RECO programs through either one of those health departments but for reasons, included access to local data, the contractor may find the need to reach out to staff in those health departments.

39. Can applicants request and include letters of support from current grantee programs that are part of First 5 LA’s Reducing Early Childhood Obesity Investments?

If applicants request a letter of support, they may include letters from current grantee programs that are part of the RECO investment, as long as there is no other relationship that could cause a Conflict of Interest.

40. Can we subcontract for data collection, e.g. to Westat or another data collection firm? If yes, can we give a lump sum for the subcontract or do we need to do an hourly rate for the subcontract as well?

This is a decision each applicant can choose to make regarding subcontracting for data collection. If applicants choose to subcontract for this, they may approve payment in accordance with their subcontracting agreement.

41. The RFP mentions economic estimates of the investment, will First 5 LA provide data or should the contractor plan to collect their own data for such analyses?
First 5 LA collects investment amounts and has budgets for all investments that the selected contractor would have access to. If additional data collection is necessary outside of that data First 5 LA already has, the contractor should plan to do that work.

42. **For sample project descriptions, can we include both completed and current projects?**

   Yes.

43. **What is requested to be included in the Task B deliverable called the Investment Inventory Memo?**

   The Investment Inventory is a portfolio or inventory of First 5 LA’s programs, projects and other investments in the community as they relate to other funding agencies portfolios or inventories of investments in the same areas. The memo related to this task would accompany the inventory and summarize the findings. This is simply an example of what a deliverable could be for this work.

44. **What is the estimated funding range for this contract?**

   The total budget for this evaluation should not exceed $3,000,000.

45. **The section on Review Criteria in the RFP states that the budget should have “a composite hourly rate for all personnel that does not exceed $150/hour.” Does this mean that no individual person’s rate should exceed $150/hour or that the average rate across all proposed staff should not exceed this figure? What about rates for any proposed consultants?**

   The average rate across all proposed staff should not exceed $150 per hour. First 5 LA does not require rates for proposed consultants.