FIRST 5 LA
RESEARCH AND EVALUATION
CONSULTANT POOL
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)
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I. TIMELINE FOR SELECTION PROCESS

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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
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<td>RFQ Released</td>
<td>January 10, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Webinar</td>
<td>January 15, 2014</td>
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<td>Final date to submit questions and requests for additional</td>
<td>January 20, 2014</td>
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<td>Posting of responses to questions</td>
<td>January 21, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Due</td>
<td>January 24, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool Members Selected</td>
<td>February 7, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notification of acceptance or declination</td>
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<tr>
<td>First 5 LA reserves the sole right to determine the timing</td>
<td>February 28, 2014</td>
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<td>and content of the responses to all questions and requests</td>
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<td>for additional information.</td>
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All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFQ must be received in writing by First 5 LA via email before 5 p.m. on **January 20, 2014**. First 5 LA reserves the sole right to determine the timing and content of the responses to all questions and requests for additional information.

**Questions can be submitted to:**

Heather Breen, Research Assistant  
First 5 LA  
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  

Phone: 213.482.7827  
E-mail: hbreen@first5la.org

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1 Note: Dates are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion.
II. BACKGROUND

First 5 LA — “Champions for Our Children”

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

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

The First 5 LA FY 2009-2015 Strategic Plan

In 2009, First 5 LA’s Board of Commissioners adopted a new strategic plan (as amended) 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. It was later amended by the Commission to include additional countywide initiatives developed in 2010. In addition to a countywide approach that focuses on policy change, public education, workforce development and other strategies, the strategic plan (as amended) also commits a sizeable portion of funds to improve the well-being of children in specific geographic communities.

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

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

Figure 1: First 5 LA Prioritized Pathway

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

First 5 LA’s place-based approach focuses on the places where families live — combining strategies to strengthen families with those that build community capacity to create and sustain thriving and healthy environments for all children. Focused on 14 traditionally underserved communities in LA County, Best Start is an important part of First 5 LA’s Strategic Plan for 2009-15. Through Best Start, First 5 LA seeks to help improve the lives of young children and their families by positively impacting the systems they participate in and the environments in which they live, learn and play.

In late June of 2013, the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners endorsed the Building Stronger Families (BSF) framework to sharpen the focus of the work of Best Start as it moves forward. The BSF framework is strongly supported by research and promising practices and makes clear the results being sought and how to achieve those results through place-based work.
At the heart of the framework is the belief that if families are strong and communities are family-supporting, children will have better long-term outcomes.

"Strong families" are those that support and promote optimal child well-being. Research and evidence-based practices have identified key characteristics of a “strong family.” These characteristics, which relate to parents and expectant parents, are also known as family strengthening “protective factors”. Rooted in these protective factors, three core family results of the BSF framework are:

- Families demonstrate resilience, parental knowledge, and positive relationships that support their children’s social and emotional competence.
- Families participate in positive social networks that provide multiple opportunities for mutual support and leadership development.
- Families access concrete supports in times of need.

Strategies that promote strong families are those that build and support the ability of parents to effectively care for and promote the healthy development, school readiness and well-being of young children.

“Family-supporting communities” are communities that engage parents, residents, CBOs, businesses and other community partners to support families and optimal child development. The three core community results of the BSF framework are:

- Neighborhoods and communities establish a common vision and act collectively to:
  - Improve the policies, services and environments that build family protective factors.
  - Influence the availability and quality of concrete services.
- Neighborhoods and communities support and sustain environments that:
  - Promote positive, regular social interaction for families
  - Encourage social interaction and promote healthy living.
- Neighborhoods and communities develop and sustain services and supports that meet family needs.

In June of 2013, the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners approved criteria to guide the selection of activities to support community progress toward the BSF framework’s three core family and three core community results:

- Alignment with the current strategic plan’s defined investment areas
  - Direct Services (Family Strengthening)
  - Community Capacity Building
  - Systems Improvement
• Evidence-based or promising practices related to the Building Stronger Families framework core family and community results
• Outcomes of the activity are achievable in 5-10 years
• The activity offers the potential to mobilize resources and enhance sustainability.

The Best Start Community Partnerships represent an important First 5 LA-supported activity to promote relationship- and capacity-building among parents and diverse community stakeholders to improve outcomes for children in Best Start communities. These partnerships consist of parents, civic and business leaders, members of the clergy, representatives from community-based organizations and others working together in support of young children and families in each of the 14 Best Start Communities.

The Systems Connection

First 5 LA’s approach to building stronger families – grounded in evidence-based attributes known as the “protective factors” – represents a systematic way to impact large numbers of young children and their families. By working to incorporate these factors into existing programs and services – such as early childhood education - First 5 LA and its Best Start community partners can contribute to change in organizational policy and practice across different systems and settings community- and county-wide. By working collaboratively with both county agency and Best Start community partners, First 5 LA can help facilitate and promote learning and linkages across communities and systems and alignment of results for families.

Best Start communities exist in and are supported by a broader context of systems, policy and funding. This includes the mandates and structures through which health and human services are provided in LA County, as well as the economic, philanthropic, and policy environment and the public will around issues related to children and families. Strong, coordinated and responsive systems and investments are critical to responding to gaps in services and supports that meet family needs, including high quality services and opportunities for economic and educational success. Informed by the work of Best Start community partnerships, First 5 LA’s grantees and its governmental, philanthropic, business and other partners will work together to ensure that the systems, policy and funding context supports Best Start’s contributions and, together, “move the needle” to strengthen families and improve results for children.

Countywide Approach

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

The countywide approach is a comprehensive effort through a variety of programs, strategies and initiatives. The strategic plan (as amended) incorporates seven specific countywide strategies, including public policy, public education, resource mobilization, workforce development, data systems integration and health access. In addition, First 5 LA is supporting an array of countywide investments in areas such as universal screening and assessment of newborns, early care and education workforce development, nutrition and physical activity programs for families and in child care facilities, and parental support projects. Among other strategies, First 5 LA supports efforts to increase access to health care and insurance for pregnant women, children and their families; provide telephonic or online and printed resource directories for families; and enhance the impact of our investments with effective, strategic partnerships.

A. First 5 LA FY 2009-2015 Revised Accountability Framework

First 5 LA’s 2009-2015 Strategic Plan represents a comprehensive and far-reaching approach to achieving our goal of enhancing the lives of expectant parents, children prenatal through five, and the families of those young children. In its first twelve years of working in L.A. County, First 5 LA has funded a wide array of direct services programs and has supported efforts to build the capacity of our partners. Our intent has been not only to develop, implement and improve grant making programs, but also to sustain the positive changes our grantees are making in the lives of the children and families they serve.

First 5 LA’s approach to Accountability and Learning must be similarly thorough, far-reaching and comprehensive. We must have the data and analytical tools in place to know not only what works, but why it works and how it can be improved upon. The Revised Accountability and Learning Framework reflects our approach to evaluating the effectiveness of First 5 LA’s work and our objective of providing the most thorough, useful and relevant information to our many internal and external stakeholders.

Our work is structured around the following four broad categories:

I. Program evaluations
II. Data and research projects
III. Dissemination of findings
IV. Learning and improvement

The Research and Evaluation Department is responsible for carrying out this work. In addition, the Research and Evaluation department has a number of important and ongoing goals, including the development of data sources, building the evaluation capacity of our colleagues and partners, and promoting and highlighting the work of the Commission. Central to these goals are the following working objectives:

- **Evaluate**: design and conduct appropriately rigorous evaluations of all First 5 LA programs, investments and strategies.
- **Share**: provide high quality and timely findings to commissioners, grantees, staff and external audiences. Promote the use of findings for program planning and improvement, policy development and acquisition of content knowledge.
- **Build Capacity**: build the capacity of First 5 LA staff, commissioners, grantees, and research partners to understand, generate, and effectively use data.
- **Develop Data**: support and improve upon existing data infrastructures and data sources. Promote data sharing, and development of data sharing policies for population-based and administrative data relevant to the 0-5 population.
- **Develop Expertise**: conduct original research on commission relevant issues and regularly consult with experts in the field. Cultivate our own expertise on research findings and outcomes relevant to First 5 LA investments and the 0-5 population in L.A. County.

III. PROJECT OVERVIEW

**Research and Evaluation Consultant Pool RFQ**

The First 5 LA Research and Evaluation (R&E) department is seeking applicants to be included in a pool of approved consultants to support R&E’s work. This support may include a range of diverse tasks, from facilitating meetings and translation services, to supporting research and evaluation design and implementation tasks. To that end, we are seeking a diverse set of skills to be represented in the pool reflective of content knowledge, skills in data collection and analysis, dissemination and logistical support services that enhance research and evaluation activities.
Areas of Expertise
In order to ensure that we are able to properly review and assess each applicant’s skills and expertise we are asking applicants to select no more than five areas of expertise from Table 1. In addition, we ask that applicants rank the areas of expertise they select, selecting their highest level of expertise first and their lowest level of expertise last on the application. If an applicant selects fewer than five topic areas they should rank them in a similar fashion.

Applicants who select more than five areas of expertise will be subject to disqualification. Applicants who choose to select fewer than five areas of expertise will not be disadvantaged in the review process.

Table 1: Area of Expertise

Analysis/Data Skills

| Quantitative data collection: cross sectional and longitudinal design |
| Quantitative data collection: quasi experimental designs, multi-site designs |
| Quantitative data analysis: Descriptive Statistics, Significance Testing |
| Qualitative data collection: observations, interviews, focus group facilitation and transcription |
| Qualitative data analysis: using Atlas.ti, or involving non-text data, images, video, audio, maps, etc. |
| Econometric and statistical analyses, including hierarchical linear modeling evaluation design |
| Statistical weighting procedures |
| Psychometric analyses |
| Survey research, including statistical sampling methodologies |
| Multi-site evaluation design, and analysis |
| Knowledge of and experience with large public data sets |
| Developing logic models/theories of change |
| Policy analysis and evaluation |
| Data visualization, including use of data visualization software |
| Social network analysis |
| Demographic analysis and forecasting |
| Spatial statistical analysis |
| Spatial network analysis |
Logistics/Support Services *within a Research & Evaluation Context*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database management</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data entry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitation of meetings and other processes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting and logistics planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study recruitment and outreach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Translation from English into other languages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Web design and usability in the context of research and data presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature reviews</td>
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<td>Graphic design (products featuring research and data findings)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing, Editing and Copy Editing</td>
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<td>Report writing</td>
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<td>Data systems planning and development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proficiency with GIS, including map making in ArcGIS</td>
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**Content Knowledge**

In order to ensure that we are able to properly review and assess each applicant’s content knowledge, applicants should select **no more than five** areas of specific content knowledge from Table 2. Applicants are not required to rank these selections.

**Applicants who select more than five content knowledge domains will be subject to disqualification. Applicants who select fewer than five content knowledge domains will not be disadvantaged in the review process.**

Table 2: Content Knowledge

**Child and Family Related**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Social support</th>
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<td>Home visitation</td>
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<td>Child development</td>
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<td>Maternal health</td>
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<td>Pregnancy and birth outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preconception and interconception care</td>
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<td>Perinatal issues among African American women</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family strengthening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early childhood education/kindergarten readiness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child abuse and neglect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nutrition and child overweight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Identification and Intervention for Disabilities and Development Delays</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homelessness and housing stability</td>
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<td>Physical and mental health</td>
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Place Based Related

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<th>Comprehensive community investments</th>
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<td>Organizational capacity building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community capacity building</td>
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<td>Community based action research or participatory action research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community collaboration and networking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographic differences and characteristics of LA county neighborhoods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demographic/migration trends</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural/linguistic factors within community research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workforce development</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Admittance into the Pool will allow members to receive solicitations for contract opportunities with First 5 LA. First 5 LA will issue a solicitation to pool members on a project by project basis based on the areas of expertise. Pool members may respond to the solicitations that fit their areas of expertise and experience while considering availability and capacity to execute the project. Selected consultants may be required to submit additional documentation in order to complete the contracting process. If the contracting process takes more than ten business days, First 5 LA reserves the right to select another consultant from the pool. Please see Section VII - Terms of Participation & Section X Contractual Considerations for more details.

Please note that consultants will be accepted into the pool through Dec. 31, 2014. However, the consultant pool will be open for new applicants on an as needed basis, with applications accepted at additional times during the year, as determined by the Commission. Consultants will be offered the opportunity to renew their membership in the pool upon expiration at the sole discretion of the Commission. Consultants in the pool may exit at any time. A contract will not be issued with any member of the pool until work has been solicited.

Renewal of membership may require submitting a new set of application materials each year.

IV. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Required documents to respond to this RFQ:

The qualifications, including all required attachments, must be submitted online at www.first5la.org/Funding-Center no later than January 24, 2014 January 31, 2014, 5 p.m. PST.

1. **Cover letter:** A cover letter introducing the applicant and clearly showing the applicant’s name and/or organization name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, the date, and a statement that the letter is in response to the RFQ for the R&E consultant pool. An original signed copy of the cover letter must be received at First 5 LA by the application deadline. Additionally, applicants will be required to upload a copy of the cover letter to the online application system;
2. **Online application:** Complete the online application form available at [www.first5la.org](http://www.first5la.org). The online application form includes the following:
   a. The ranked list of the applicant’s areas of expertise relevant to First 5 LA R&E work (no more than 5 areas of expertise selected based on Table 1) A narrative description for each area of expertise justifying why the applicant is an expert in each area, and for what length of time they have worked in that area (200 words maximum per area of expertise which may also include a justification for the ranking assigned to each area of expertise);
   b. The unranked list of the applicant’s content knowledge relevant to First 5 LA R&E work (no more than 5 areas of content knowledge selected based on Table 2) A narrative description for each content knowledge domain selected justifying why the applicant is knowledgeable in each area, (200 words maximum per content knowledge domain);
   c. Summaries of up to four projects the applicant feels best reflect their expertise and content knowledge. The summaries should include a brief overview of the project and the applicants’ role (200 words maximum per project);
   d. A description of how their expertise and content knowledge may support the First 5 LA R&E department in its execution of the FY09-15 Strategic Plan Accountability Framework (200 words maximum);

3. **Résumé:** Include the résumé of the applicant.

4. **Hourly rate statement:** Applicants must submit a document detailing their hourly rate. 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. *Individual* applicants with an hourly rate greater than $150/hour will not be admitted into the pool.

5. **Work samples:** Two (2) samples of applicant’s work that is most applicable to the work that R&E will be undertaking in the course of the strategic plan described above, and that best demonstrates the applicants’ competency in their declared area of expertise or knowledge domain.

   Applicants whose work is not conducive to submitting work samples should include instead more detailed project summaries describing their role on the project, unexpected challenges and how they were overcome, and a description of the relevance of the project to First 5 LA’s Accountability Framework.

6. **W-9 Form** (SIGNED with BLUE INK).

   In addition to the requirements specified in the Statement of Qualifications the following documents must be included:

   - **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 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.

• **Signature Authorization Form (1 original SIGNED with BLUE INK):** This form is required in order to verify signature authority to enter into contractual agreement with First 5 LA. If not outlined in the Bylaws, a Board Resolution or Partnership Agreement must be submitted, as applicable, that indicates signature authority. Applicants must submit one original form signed in blue ink. Omission of the form will constitute an incomplete proposal and may be grounds for disqualification.

• The following documents should be submitted if applicable. If you are an individual applying who works for a larger organization, please submit the documents as they apply to your organization:
  
  - Annual Independent Audit (if applicable)
  - Bylaws (if applicable)
  - Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)
  - Business License (if applicable)
  - List of Board Members (if applicable)
  - IRS Account Determination Letter (if applicable)

Failure to submit all required attachments and original documents will constitute an incomplete proposal and may be grounds for disqualification. In order to respond to this RFQ, please complete and submit your application and all required documents to First 5 LA no later than **January 24, 2014** **January 31, 2014**. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

All documents must be submitted through the online application system. In addition, as outlined above hard copies of the following 3 documents must be received by First 5 LA by the deadline of **January 24, 2014** **January 31, 2014** before 5 p.m. PST. Original and signed copy of the application cover letter, First 5 LA’s Signature Authorization Form, Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties Form and W-9 form. Submit these documents to:

   **Heather Breen, Research Assistant**
   **First 5 LA**
   **750 N Alameda Street, Suite 300**
   **Los Angeles, CA 90012**
   **Attention: First 5 LA R&E Consultant Pool RFQ**
V. SELECTION PROCESS AND REVIEW CRITERIA

General

In order for applicants to be considered for the pool, they must be prepared in accordance with the instructions given in this solicitation. Provided that the application was submitted on time with all relevant materials, qualifications will be evaluated from a technical standpoint based on the applicant’s proven ability in their area of expertise as described in the criteria defined below.

Review Criteria

Qualifications will be evaluated by a team of external reviewers. Please see appendix E for a copy of the review tool that will be used to guide evaluation of applicants by First 5 LA staff. Qualified consultants that pass external review will be accepted into the consultant pool. The following are the selection criteria that will be used to evaluate applicants to the First 5 LA consultant pool:

Area of Expertise

1. Relevant Expertise
The applicant’s statement of qualifications should reflect skill in their declared area(s) of expertise. The combination of the applicant’s resume history, project history, and narrative explication of experience should convey a depth of understanding and/or skill of their identified areas of expertise. Furthermore, the area of expertise should be directly relevant to the work being undertaken by First 5 LA, and the applicant’s role on those projects should be in the capacity in which they might be employed by First 5 LA. This relevance should be reflected in the applicants’ online application.

Work experience
The applicant will be evaluated by the extent to which their qualifications demonstrate experience in the following areas:

1. Experience working on projects or programs that are relevant to the work being undertaken by First 5 LA and that are aligned with their declared area of expertise;
2. Experience in the role which First 5 LA would expect them to play should they be selected for project support work
3. Experience working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations;
4. Experience working in Los Angeles County;
5. Based upon the applicant’s declared area of expertise, there may be additional pertinent areas of work experience that First 5 LA would expect to see, and applications will be vetted for experience within those additional areas.
II. Quality of submitted work

The applicant’s role in producing that work, and the relevance of the work submitted to their declared area of expertise and First 5 LA R&E department’s Accountability Framework.

To that end, the work samples will be evaluated according to the following:

1. The quality of the work submitted: The work submitted demonstrates the applicant’s capacity to perform the duties that may be required of them, given their declared area of expertise. The work should also convey, if applicable, the applicant’s written communication skills;
2. The role of the applicant in producing the work: The applicant’s role in producing the submitted work should be clear, and should conform to the role which First 5 LA would expect them to play should they be selected for project support; The relevance of the submitted work: The work submitted should firstly be relevant to their declared area of expertise. More importantly, it should be directly relevant to the type of work which they will be performing for First 5 LA.

Applicants whose work is not conducive to submitting work samples should include instead more detailed project summaries describing their role on the project, unexpected challenges and how they were overcome, and a description of the relevance of the project to First 5 LA’s Accountability Framework. These project summaries will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

3. The role of the applicant in the project: The applicant’s role in the project should be clear, and should conform to the role which First 5 LA would expect them to play should they be necessary for project support;
4. The relevance of the project to the applicants’ declared area of expertise and to First 5 LA’s needs: The project summarized should firstly be relevant to their declared area of expertise. More importantly, it should be directly relevant to the type of work which they will be performing for First 5 LA.

Content Knowledge

III. Relevant Content knowledge

The applicant’s statement of qualifications should reflect content knowledge that matches their declared area(s) of specialization. The combination of the applicant’s resume history, project history, and narrative explication of content knowledge should convey a depth of understanding their identified knowledge domain. Furthermore, the knowledge domain should be directly relevant to the work being undertaken by First 5 LA, and the applicant’s role on those projects should be in the capacity in which they might be employed by First 5 LA. This relevance should be reflected in the applicants’ online application.
Work experience
The applicant will be evaluated by the extent to which their qualifications demonstrate experience in the following areas:

1. Experience working on projects or programs that are relevant to the work being undertaken by First 5 LA and that are aligned with their declared area of expertise;
2. Experience in the role which First 5 LA would expect them to play should they be selected for project support work
3. Experience working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations;
4. Experience working in Los Angeles County;
5. Based upon the applicant’s declared content knowledge domains, there may be additional pertinent areas of work experience that First 5 LA would expect to see, and applications will be vetted for experience within those additional areas.

IV. Quality of submitted work

The applicant’s role in producing that work, and the relevance of the work submitted to selected content areas and relevance to the First 5 LA R&E department’s Accountability Framework.

To that end, the work samples will be evaluated according to the following:

1. The quality of the work submitted: The work submitted demonstrates the applicant’s capacity to perform the duties that may be required of them, given their declared content knowledge domains. The work should also convey, if applicable, the applicant’s written communication skills
2. The role of the applicant in producing the work: The applicant’s role in producing the submitted work should be clear, and should conform to the role which First 5 LA would expect them to play should they be necessary for project support;
3. The relevance of the submitted work: The work submitted should firstly be relevant to their declared content knowledge domains. More importantly, it should be directly relevant to the type of work which they will be performing for First 5 LA.

Applicants whose work is not conducive to submitting work samples should include instead more detailed project summaries describing their role on the project, unexpected challenges and how they were overcome, and a description of the relevance of the project to First 5 LA’s Accountability Framework. These project summaries will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

4. The role of the applicant in the project: The applicant’s role in the project should be clear, and should conform to the role which First 5 LA would expect them to play should they be selected for project support;
5. The relevance of the project to the applicants’ declared content knowledge domains and to First 5 LA’s needs: The project summarized should firstly be
relevant to their declared content knowledge domains. More importantly, it should be directly relevant to the type of work which they will be performing for First 5 LA.

Statement of Qualifications Review Process

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

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

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

Acceptance notifications are anticipated to be sent out to consultants by **February 28, 2014**.

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2 Note: All dates are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion.
VI. TERMS OF PARTICIPATION & CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. Acceptance into the consultant pool does not guarantee a contract with First 5 LA. For those consultants who are accepted into the consultant pool, work will be solicited based on First 5 LA needs. Staff will select a consultant from the pool based on the criteria specified at the time of the solicitation. The selected consultant and staff will negotiate a scope of work and final budget during the contracting process.

B. The term of membership in this pool is through December 31, 2014. Consultants in the pool will be offered the opportunity to renew their membership upon expiration at the sole discretion of the Commission. Additionally, applications will be accepted for additional applicants to the pool on an as needed basis.

C. Consultants may exit the pool at any time by mailing a signed, original letter to First 5 LA. Accepted consultants are not bound to accept work solicited by First 5 LA. However, consultants in the pool will be required to abide by the contractual considerations in this RFQ.

D. The Commission reserves the right to amend the Pool as needed to best meet the needs of all parties. At the Commission’s discretion, consultants in the pool may be removed from the pool at any time.

E. All work solicited from the consultant, including any data collected, any analysis, and any reports collected by Contractor during the course of any project, in whatever form, shall be the sole property of the Commission. Contractor shall maintain said data and information on behalf of the Commission in form and substance consistent with accepted research practices throughout the course of Contracts processed through consultant pool.

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.

III. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Specific contractual considerations, including but not limited to the following, apply to RFQ submission process and project implementation and to any contracts that result from the submission and implementation of the project/proposal. The contractor will need to comply with all of the provisions in the attached sample contract (See appendix D: 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 reserves the right to reject all bids and re-advertise for bids. Failure to comply with bid specification shall be grounds for disqualification of bids. Each bidder or proposer shall be required to honor the price and specifications quoted for a minimum of sixty (60) calendar days following submission of the bid. The COMMISSION also reserves the right to cancel this RFQ, at its sole discretion, at any time before execution of a contract. The COMMISSION shall not be liable for any costs incurred in connection with the preparation of any submissions in response to this RFQ. Any cover letters, résumés and/or curriculum vita, including attached materials, submitted in response to this RFQ shall become property of the COMMISSION and subject to public disclosure.

2. The agency/organization submitting an application agrees that by submitting an application, it authorizes the COMMISSION to verify any or all information and/or references given in the application.
3. The COMMISSION reserves the right, after contract award, to amend the resulting contract, scope of work, and any other exhibits as needed throughout the term of the contract to best meet the needs of the COMMISSION.

4. The COMMISSION reserves the right to request additional financial information to verify applicant’s past and current financial status. This information includes, but is not limited to: the most recent independent audit, Cash Flow Statement, Statement of Activities (Income Statement), and Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet).

5. Consistent with the intent of Proposition 10: California Children and Families Act of 1998, no monies for this Project may be used to supplant Federal, State, County and/or other monies available to the organization for any purpose. Activities funded under this proposal must be new or enhancements to existing activities.

6. The award of a contract by the COMMISSION to an individual/agency/organization that proposes to use sub contractors for the performance of work under the contract resulting from this application process shall not be interpreted to limit the COMMISSION’s right to approve subcontractors, assemble teams and/or assign leads. Each applicant will be evaluated independently for added value to the overall team. A copy of executed subcontract(s) related to Program funding must be provided to the COMMISSION.

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

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

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

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

9. Per the COMMISSION’s Policy and Guidelines for Hiring Consultants, the total composite rate, which includes labor and other costs, for a Consultant may not exceed $150 an hour, depending on the type of expertise. A blended rate is allowable. For example, for a contract totaling $150,000, a consultant may bill 500 hours for Consultant A at $200/hour, and 500 hours for Consultant B at $100/hour, with a total composite rate of $150/hour (1,000 total hours divided by $150,000 in billable hours = $150/hour).

10. The selected contractor/s will be required to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this document, including the First 5 LA Contract (See Appendix D: 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.

IV. APPEALS POLICY

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

VII. APPENDICES

A. Signature Authorization Form
B. Agency Involvement in Litigation Form

R&E Consultant Pool RFQ
C. First 5 LA Quality Assurance Review and Conflict Resolution Process  
D. First 5 LA Sample Contract  
E. Statement of Qualifications Review Tool  
F. W-9