FIRST 5 LA
BIRTH OUTCOMES EVALUATION
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Los Angeles County Children and Families First – Proposition 10 Commission (aka First 5 LA)
RELEASE DATE: May 21, 2012
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I. PROPOSAL TIMELINE

Table 1: Proposal and Review Timeline

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP released</td>
<td>May 21, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final date to submit questions and requests</td>
<td>May 25, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>for additional information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Answers to all questions posted to website</td>
<td>May 29, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposals Due</td>
<td>June 4, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. PST</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NO EXCEPTIONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Award notification</td>
<td>July 12, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission approval</td>
<td>August 9, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract start date</td>
<td>September 1, 2012</td>
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</table>

**RFP Questions**

All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFQ must be submitted via email before 5 p.m. on May 25, 2012 to Christine Aque (caque@first5la.org). To ensure that all potential applicants receive the same information, questions and answers will be posted on the website by May 29, 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.

While it is First 5 LA’s desire to execute the Contract for a September 1, 2012 start date, all dates are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion. Please do not contact First 5 LA for status updates on your proposal.
II. PROJECT OVERVIEW

First 5 LA — “Champions for Our Children”

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

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

The First 5 LA FY 2009-2015 Strategic Plan

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

The Commission selected 14 *Best Start* communities based on lessons learned from First 5 LA’s first decade and research, which shows that the role of safe and supportive neighborhoods is just as important to a young child’s quality of life as supportive and informed parents and caregivers.

This combined place-based and countywide approach allows the Commission to concentrate its limited resources in areas of high need and to sustain those efforts over time. The strategic plan will allow First 5 LA to continue focusing on strengthening families while deepening our commitment to fostering a community’s ability to create and sustain safe and nurturing places for children to grow.
Figure 1: First 5 LA Prioritized Pathway

In the Strategic Plan, the Commission identified a pathway for our investments that leads to our desired outcomes for children, families and communities in our four goal areas.

The Place-Based Approach, Best Start

The First 5 LA commissioners’ place-based approach focuses on the places where families live — combining efforts to strengthen families with those that build community capacity to create and sustain thriving and healthy environments for all children. The research and promising practices emerging from decades of place-based efforts make a strong case for First 5 LA’s shifting a significant amount of resources to this funding strategy. The place-based approach allows First 5 LA to focus on families most in need, creating a seamless pipeline to effectively serve families along the continuum of a child’s development. This

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

Parents, civic and business leaders, members of the clergy, representatives from community-based organizations and others are working together to develop partnerships 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.

Overview of the Birth Outcomes Evaluation

Currently First 5 LA is funding two programs that address pregnancy and birth outcomes in Los Angeles County: the Healthy Births Best Babies Collaboratives and the Black Infant Health programs. There will be separate evaluations done for both programs.
Healthy Births
The Healthy Births Initiative (HBI) seeks to improve outcomes for pregnant women and their families, reduce subsequent poor birth outcomes in vulnerable populations and build sustainable networks to address the needs of pregnant women, infants and new families through community driven interventions. The main component of HBI is the Best Babies Collaboratives (BBCs), which implement comprehensive, integrated continuous care via case management and serve high-need areas of Los Angeles County, from Long Beach to Lancaster. Another component of the initiative is the Los Angeles Best Babies Network (The Network), which provides the infrastructure necessary for growth, integration and sustainability of the initiative. The Network supports HBI goals through technical assistance and central coordination of policy and advocacy activities. The BBCs provide clients with case management services, assessing them for needs, and providing and tracking referrals to community services. The BBCs also provide health education and social support, including breastfeeding education. Primarily, HBI aims to improve the following outcomes:

- Decreased infant mortality
- Decreased low birthweight
- Decreased preterm births
- Decrease repeat poor birth outcomes

Black Infant Health
The Black Infant Health (BIH) Program was created in 1989 in California to address the high infant mortality rates among African Americans. The program offers health education, health promotion, empowerment, social support, and referrals and tracking among pregnant and parenting African American women. It raises awareness among the clients about birth outcomes such as infant mortality, low birth weight, and preterm birth. It also promotes the understanding and management of stress and the importance of taking care of one’s health. The original BIH model was initially designed to be flexible enough to adapt to each community’s needs and capacities. It comprised six modules: 1) prenatal care outreach and care coordination, 2) comprehensive case management, 3) social support and empowerment, 4) the role of men, 5) health behavior modification, and 6) prevention, with the last two being discontinued due to lack of resources. All agencies were required to implement the prenatal care outreach and care coordination module. In 2010, however, the BIH Program was revised to be more standardized and to allow for tracking of child outcomes. This model includes two features: 1) group intervention emphasizing empowerment and social support, and 2) enhanced social service case management to follow through on clients who are referred for additional services. The program also aims to address intermediate outcomes such as increased health knowledge and healthy behaviors and decreased unplanned pregnancies.

The First 5 LA Birth Outcomes Evaluation
Since both Healthy Births and Black Infant Health programs focus on very similar pregnancy and birth outcomes, First 5 LA will be contracting with an evaluator that will have the capacity to do separate evaluations of each program, but will also have the
vision to take a comprehensive view of how these two programs are affecting pregnant and parenting families and how they address First 5 LA’s priority goals, such as “Children are Born Healthy.” The evaluation will also determine how these programs are influencing other indicators that inform the four priority goals under the Theory of Change Pathway in the FY 2009-2015 Strategic Plan (see Appendix A); for example, protective capacities against substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence, parental knowledge of child development and parenting, and quality preconception and interconception care. The findings for the evaluations will be shared with F5LA Staff and Commissioners and program providers for continued improvement and decision-making.

**Evaluation Framework**

The separate evaluations for the Healthy Births and Black Infant Health programs will address common research questions on implementation and outcomes and will engage multiple stakeholders, from current and former clients of the programs, clients who were lost to follow-up or dropped out of the program, program staff such as administrators and case managers, and other stakeholders such as formal and informal partners of the program providers.

**Main Evaluation Questions**

Some of the main questions that will be addressed for both evaluations include but are not limited to:

1) Did the programs improve birth outcomes such as low birth weight, preterm births, infant mortality and repeat poor birth outcomes?
2) Did the programs improve rates on prenatal care initiation, access to prenatal and interconception care, breastfeeding, and decrease repeat teen pregnancies?
3) Are the goals, objectives, and implementation of the programs clear and consistent across providers? If they vary, how so?
4) Describe the implementation process. What aspects have been successful and what aspects have been challenging?
5) What lessons can be learned from the implementation that can be applied to related efforts in the Best Start communities?
6) Did the programs meet their stated goals and objectives, particularly around performance measures and in improving birth outcomes?

The separate evaluations for both programs will consist of quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative component will utilize data from the Data Collection Analysis and Reporting (DCAR) for HBI data and the State Black Infant Health Management Information System (BIH MIS) for BIH data for comparison with other comparative samples, e.g., Los Angeles Mommy and Baby (LAMB) Survey; Women, Infants and Children (WIC) administrative and survey data; State of California Vital Statistics birth records, or other databases. The qualitative component will consist of 4 focus groups. Three of the focus groups, which will be conducted both in English and Spanish, will be
with current and former clients of the programs and, to the extent possible, clients who dropped out of the programs. There will also be 1 focus group conducted with program case managers, as well as interviews with program administrators and other stakeholders such as partner agencies of the program providers. In addition, to the extent possible, at least one observation will be conducted of case management or program staff meetings from each program to gain a better sense of the program dynamics.

For more information on the Healthy Births and Black Infant Health programs, please visit:

**Healthy Births:**

http://www.first5la.org/Programs/Healthy-Births

http://www.first5la.org/Community-Change/Program-Evaluations/Healthy-Births-Evaluation

**Black Infant Health:**

http://www.first5la.org/programs/black-infant-health

http://www.first5la.org/Community-Change/Program-Evaluations/Black-Infant-Health-Evaluation

**Timelines**

The timelines of the two programs are different, with Healthy Births expected to end on June 30, 2013, and Black Infant Health expected to end on June 30, 2014.

**Period of Performance**

Please note that the term of this contract is one year. The applicant is expected to submit a proposal for the full duration of the Birth Outcomes Evaluation, through June 30, 2013.

In order to successfully complete the Birth Outcomes evaluation, First 5 LA expects the contractor to complete major tasks outlined below. **Please keep in mind that these tasks will be done separately for HBI and BIH.** These tasks, as well as any additional tasks proposed by the applicant, are expected to be included in a scope of work. The deliverables for each task are outlined in the table below:
III. PURPOSE OF CONTRACT

The purpose of this contract is to engage a contractor who will generate research briefs and final reports that addresses all of the identified research questions. The final reports will help the First 5 LA Commission understand the overall work and effectiveness of the HBI and BIH programs in addressing its priority goals, as well as to gather lessons learned that will inform related work in the Best Start communities with respect to family strengthening strategies.

IV. STATEMENT OF WORK

Task 1: Review HBI and BIH programmatic and evaluation materials and meet with First 5 LA staff

The selected contractor will review programmatic materials and past evaluation reports. The contractor will meet with the First 5 LA staff within 10 days of the award of contract. The contractor will meet with staff from the Research and Evaluation (R&E) and Grants Management (GM) departments to gain a preliminary understanding of the programs, review the purpose of the project, identify possible additional research questions, review proposed methods to be employed and deliverables, and respond to contractor questions.

Task 2: Develop study design and analysis plan

Based on the review of programmatic materials and past evaluation reports, and meetings with R&E staff, the contractor will create a research design and analysis plan separately for HBI and BIH that is a revision of the plan as submitted in the contractor’s proposal. The design plan will state the assumptions underlying the evaluation framework. The plan will include a recruitment plan for the focus group participants, including English and Spanish speaking clients of both programs. This will also include creating protocols for the interviews and focus groups, each tailored to the different groups of participants: clients currently enrolled, completed, or dropped out; program administrative and case management staff; and provider partners. This also includes the observation protocol for the program staff meetings. The contractor should include adequate time (at least 3 weeks) for the provision and incorporation of feedback on the draft plans from the First 5 LA Quality Assurance team (see Appendix I).

Task 3: Gain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the evaluation

The selected contractor will prepare and submit an initial Institutional Review Board (IRB) IRB application through an established IRB, and the contractor is fully responsible for securing IRB approval prior to conducting data collection. Proposed budgets should include
any costs associated with the IRB application process. The contractor will also work with other provider agencies that may also have their own IRB requirements in order to collect data from their clients and staff. All quantitative analysis, interviews and focus groups must receive either an approval or a waiver.

The selected contractor will be expected to secure renewed approval of the study from an IRB as needed, and the contractor is fully responsible for securing IRB approval prior to conducting the evaluation. First 5 LA must review and approve all IRB materials prior to submission. This process will be done separately for HBI and BIH evaluations.

**Task 4: Conduct data collection**

The contractor will conduct interviews and focus groups as described above. The contractor will work with R&E staff and provider agencies to secure a facility space for the focus groups. Please plan to provide incentives, child care, food, and travel vouchers for program clients.

The contractor will coordinate with R&E staff to obtain relevant client data from the DCAR system and from the State BIH. The contractor will be responsible for cleaning the data and preparing a codebook. The database will be shared with First 5 LA in an acceptable format along with a codebook no more than 30 days following the conclusion of data collection.

The data codebook must have sufficient information such that someone outside of the project would understand and be able to use the data set. The elements of a First 5 LA codebook include:

- Variable names, labels, and definitions of each variable in the data set
- Any constructed variables are defined
- Indices are created where applicable such that separate data sets can be linked
- IRB submissions (consent forms, etcetera) are included as an appendix

The selected contractor and First 5 LA will abide by data sharing and intellectual property principles as outlined in the contract.

**Task 5: Write summary report**

The contractor will write a report addressing all the research questions. The report will include a background description of the programs and the perinatal context obtained from literature reviews which places the programs in context. The draft report will be submitted to the First 5 LA Quality Assurance team which will provide feedback that will then be incorporated into the final versions (See Appendix I). There will be separate reports for HBI and BIH.

**Task 6: Disseminate results**

The contractor will develop a dissemination plan to share findings with appropriate audiences, including grantees, F5LA staff and the Commission. One method of
dissemination includes the research brief, which the contractor will prepare of the major findings of the report. There will be a research brief developed separately on HBI and BIH, and an overall research brief looking collectively across both programs to show how First 5 LA contributed to common outcomes. The contractor will present the findings of the evaluations to First 5 LA. The contractor will also write an abstract of the reports for the Southern California Association for Learning and Results (SCALAR) data repository (SCALAR is a collaborative of Southern California First 5’s focused on sharing findings and coordinating messages).

**Task 7: Monthly progress report**

The contractor will provide brief written monthly progress reports to First 5 LA, which will describe the progress made of tasks that were performed in the prior month. This will be done separately for HBI and BIH.

**Task 8: Biweekly team meetings**

The contractor will meet biweekly with R&E staff in person or by telephone to discuss logistics of the evaluation and to provide an update of progress made.

**Overview and Timeline of Deliverables**

The table below provides a summary of tasks, deliverables and timeline for the project (subject to change). Please keep in mind that these will be done separately for HBI and BIH. Some of the deliverables (e.g., design and analysis plan, report) are subject to QA review (see Appendix I) and approval before processing of payment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task 1: Review HBI and BIH programmatic and evaluation materials and meet with First 5 LA staff</td>
<td>Included in monthly progress report</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2: Develop study design and analysis plan</td>
<td>Design and analysis plan</td>
<td>July - August</td>
</tr>
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| Task 3: Gain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the evaluation | • IRB application package submitted  
  • IRB letter of approval or waiver | September - October    |
| Task 4: Conduct data collection                                        | • Transcripts from interviews and focus groups  
  • Database                                                   | November - February |
### Tasks

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<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task 5: Write summary report</td>
<td>• Codebook&lt;br&gt;• Brief memo summarizing preliminary findings</td>
<td>March – April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 6: Disseminate results</td>
<td>• Draft report&lt;br&gt;• Final report&lt;br&gt;• Dissemination plan&lt;br&gt;• Research brief&lt;br&gt;• SCALAR abstract&lt;br&gt;• Draft presentation materials to F5LA staff and provider agencies&lt;br&gt;• Final presentation materials to F5LA staff and provider agencies</td>
<td>May - June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 7: Monthly progress report</td>
<td>Progress reports</td>
<td>July - June</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task 8: Biweekly team meetings</td>
<td>Included in monthly progress reports</td>
<td>July - June</td>
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### Additional activities

First 5 LA may require the selected contractor to perform additional activities related to the evaluation. These activities will be incorporated in a revised budget and scope of work as necessary. The contractor will furnish the necessary personnel, materials, services and other resources required to undertake the evaluation, unless otherwise stated in this document. First 5 LA also reserves the right to accept additional proposed activities and deliverables suggested by the contractor during the course of the contract.

### V. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must have the qualifications, experience, and ability to successfully carry out the Birth Outcomes evaluation from planning to preparation of reports and project management (See the list of qualifications in Section VII below). Applicants should have the capacity to work throughout LA County. The ideal applicant(s) will have knowledge of
perinatal issues and maternal-child health, be familiar with the population of high-risk women, adept at building connections across agencies and professions, and have extensive experience collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data.

VI. TERMS OF PROJECT

Available Funding

The contractor(s) will be compensated based on the project budget developed during the contracting period. Pending Commission approval of the Fiscal Year 2012-2013 programmatic budget, the amount allocated for the work described in this RFQ will be up to $290,000 ($155,000 for Healthy Births and $135,000 for Black Infant Health). The applicant will be expected to allocate funds within their budgets that allow for the completion of all described tasks over the course of the project and that collectively, the budgets do not exceed the amount of projected available funding at $290,000. It is expected that the applicants’ budgets will be clearly justified in the budget narratives and will be appropriate to the work proposed.

The contractor will be paid according to deliverables. That is, this project will be contracted on a fixed-price, deliverables-based basis. The selected contractor will be paid per deliverable, contingent on First 5 LA approval of the deliverable [see a description of the QA and QA dispute resolution processes in Appendix I of this document]. The contractor will assume any risk from contract or project delays. If any deliverable is only partially achieved, First 5 LA reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to prorate the contract price accordingly, but only to the extent such partial deliverable meets the approval of First 5 LA and is useful to First 5 LA.

The contractor is responsible for all expenses related to any subcontracted services. The contractor will also be responsible for purchasing any incentives to provide to participants. The amount and kind of incentive should be proposed to First 5 LA and approved before they are purchased.

Scope of Work and Budget will be determined during the contract development and negotiation process. Funds will be disbursed through invoices based on deliverables. The required budget forms are included in Appendix D of this document. Final approval of this contract is contingent upon Board Approval of the final scope of work and budget.

Contract Period

The First 5 LA Birth Outcomes Evaluation is a project that will last approximately 12 months. It will be a one-time contract to last the duration of the study.

The design and analysis plan and other deliverables as determined by First 5 LA staff will not be accepted until approved by the First 5 LA QA team according to the First 5 LA Research and Evaluation quality standards. (See Appendix I)

In order for applications to be considered acceptable and eligible for award all documents must be prepared in accordance with the instructions given in this solicitation.
Submissions will be evaluated from a technical standpoint based on the applicant’s technical qualifications, proven management skills, and budget, based upon the criteria defined below.

VII. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants should submit their qualifications including each of the following elements via the online application. Applications must adhere to the instructions and page limits outlined below. The applicant’s qualifications will be reviewed according to the review criteria enumerated at the end of this document.

• **Cover letter:** This one-page document introduces the contractor(s) and should clearly show the contractor’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 RFP for the Birth Outcomes Evaluation. One (1) original SIGNED with BLUE INK 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.

• **Statement of Qualifications:** A written statement of no more than eight pages outlining the contractor’s qualifications for the Birth Outcomes Evaluation based on the tasks listed in the Statement of Work. This document should also demonstrate how the contractor’s qualifications and experience will facilitate the completion of the tasks outlined above. Include any previous experience conducting similar projects, working with entities similar to First 5 LA and working with agencies working on perinatal issues. Outline any potential unintended consequences or challenges that may occur as a result of this evaluation. This requirement is intended to give First 5 LA a sense of the applicant’s qualifications for conducting the evaluation.

• **Résumé(s) or Curriculum Vitae(s):** Please submit one résumé or CV of no more than 5 pages for KEY members of the team outlining all relevant work history, educational attainment, publications, prior research projects, etc. All résumés and CVs should be combined into a single document when uploading the application. Do not submit résumés or CVs for all team members.

• **Proposed Scope of Work:** Please submit a scope of work that will incorporate the tasks and deliverables listed above, including any additional tasks that the contractor(s) would suggest to make the overall project more effective and efficient. **Applicants should create a Scope of Work for each evaluation (HBI and BIH).** (See Appendix L).

• **Proposed Budget:** This contract will be a fixed-price, deliverables-based contract. The selected contractor will be paid per deliverable, contingent on First 5 LA approval of the deliverable (see a description of the Quality Assurance (QA) and QA dispute resolution processes in Appendix I of this document). The contractor will
assume any risk from contract or project delays. If a deliverable is not achieved in full, First 5 LA reserves the right to prorate the payment accordingly.

**Applicants should create a detailed budget for each evaluation (HBI and BIH) organized by task.** Budgets may not exceed $135,000 for Black Infant Health and $155,000 for Healthy Births, although it is expected that proposed budgets will be substantially below that amount. Also include a budget narrative to accompany the budget forms describing what will be included in each deliverable.

The required budget forms include the following, and are included in Appendix D of this document:

i) Budget forms for each evaluation (HBI and BIH)
ii) Budget narrative

**Client References:** Please complete the information, outlined in the instructions for Appendix E, for at least three (3) and no more than five (5) references. References must be from organizations and/or individuals for whom the applicant has provided similar services, and must be able to provide information regarding the applicant’s skills and performance regarding the provision of such services. Please be sure to provide current contact information and permission for those clients who have agreed to serve as references for purposes of review and inclusion in the directory.

**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 (see Appendix G) thoroughly and include one (1) original SIGNED with BLUE INK copy by the application deadline. An unsigned form or 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 (see Appendix J) 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.

- Most recent Audit (if applicable)
- Bylaws (if applicable)
- Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)
- Business License (if applicable)
- List of Governing Body Members (if applicable)
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 June 4, 2012, 5 p.m. PST. In addition to the electronic documents, applicants must also submit signed copies of the application cover letter, First 5 LA’s “Signature Authorization Form” and “Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties” forms to:

Craig A. Steele, Interim Chief Executive Officer
First 5 LA
750 N Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Birth Outcomes Evaluation RFQ

VIII. REVIEW CRITERIA FOR AWARD

First 5 LA will award a contract to one applicant with the expertise and qualifications outlined in the RFQ. The following represents the selection criteria that will be considered during the evaluation process (See the review tools - Appendices B and C for further details):

The criteria identified below will serve as the standard against which the technical proposal will be evaluated and lists the significant factors which the applicant should address in the proposal. The evaluation will also be based upon the completeness and thoroughness of the proposal submitted. The applicant should demonstrate that the objectives of the project are understood and the proposal offers a logical approach for their achievement. The following criteria will be used to technically evaluate proposals and will be weighted as indicated in establishing a numerical rating (a maximum of 100 points obtainable) for all technical proposals submitted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Understanding of the Scope of Work</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Technical Approach</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Qualifications of Proposed Personnel</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Organizational Capacity</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Budget</td>
<td>10</td>
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100

The criteria are defined as follows:

1. **Understanding of the Scope of Work** 20 points

This criterion reflects the extent to which the applicant’s proposal demonstrates a solid understanding of the various conceptual, methodological, and logistical issues related to conducting the Birth Outcomes Evaluation. The Applicant must discuss the scope and complexity of the tasks, as well as the required skills, resources and strategies necessary
for addressing such issues.

2. **Technical Approach**

   The applicant will be evaluated by the extent to which the proposal meets all the requirements outlined in the RFP, including a detailed description of how each of the specific tasks in the RFP should be accomplished, strategies for working with program staff and establishing an appropriate partnership relationship, and proposed data analyses.

3. **Qualifications of Proposed Personnel**

   The applicant will be evaluated by the extent to which their staff qualifications demonstrate the relevant background, training and experience in the following areas:

   a. Background in perinatal and maternal-child health issues
   b. Experience working with culturally and linguistically diverse groups, in particular, parents of young children and community-based programs
   c. Experience developing qualitative data collection tools, conducting interviews and focus groups
   d. Experience collecting and processing quantitative data from a large number of sites.
   e. Experience analyzing and summarizing qualitative and quantitative data
   f. Inclusion of full résumés of proposed staff in the proposal which clearly reflect the range and depth of the requirements outlined above, including any publications in professional refereed journals.
   g. Experience and knowledge working in Southern California, preferably in Los Angeles County.
   h. Experience conducting presentations to various audiences

4. **Organizational Capacity**

   The applicant’s organizational experience as reflected in the proposal must demonstrate the following:

   a. Adequate computer/statistical resources and the institutional capability to process and analyze all data, both quantitative and qualitative;
b. Adequate financial capacity as determined by the applicant’s proposed budget, statement of financial position, and other relevant documents

5. **Budget**  
10 points

The applicant’s budget and budget narrative should reflect the following:

a. A reasonable price per task, based on the reviewers’ experience;

b. A composite hourly rate for all personnel that does not exceed $150/hour (see detail in Contracting Considerations section below);

c. Tasks assigned to appropriate personnel as to minimize the cost per deliverable while also maximizing the quality of the output;

d. An awareness of the realities of fixed-price budgeting reflected in an appropriate financial accommodation of risk, particularly related to protracted revisions and delayed start dates.

e. A budget that does not exceed $290,000 ($135,000 for Black Infant Health and $155,000 for Healthy Births). It is expected that applicants’ budgets will be significantly lower than this, however.

**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, formatted as required, and inclusion of all appropriate attachments. Proposals with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualification. Some or all of the applicants who have submitted complete and responsive applications may be contacted for more information on or before June 15, 2012. (See Appendix B)

2. **Level 2**: Applications will be reviewed by three (3) external reviewers using the Statement of Qualifications Review Tool Level 2 posted with the RFQ (Appendix C). 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.

3. **Level 3**: Applications will be reviewed by the First 5 LA Finance department to ensure financial capacity.

4. **Reference Check**: When necessary and applicable, reference checks are completed for the final applicants. Reference checks will be completed as necessary to complement rankings resulting from the external review process. First 5 LA must be able to contact all of the references provided by the applicant. If any reference cannot be reached, First 5 LA may deem this applicant ineligible for this opportunity.
5. Presentations/Interview: Some or all of the applicants who have submitted complete and responsive applications may be interviewed. Interviews are scheduled to be held on dates shown in Section I (Proposal Timeline). These dates are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion. Interviews will be held either at First 5 LA or via phone. Further written materials regarding qualifications may be requested prior to the interview.

As a public entity, the Commission has a responsibility to the public to ensure that the organizations that 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 the interview.

The award notification is anticipated to occur by July 12, 2012, with a final signed contract and projected contract start date of September 1, 2012.2

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 Appendix H).

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

2 Note: While it is First 5 LA’s desire to execute the Contract for a September 1, 2012 start date, all dates are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion.
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 all parties.

4. The COMMISSION reserves the right to request additional financial information to verify applicant’s past and current financial status. This information includes, but is not limited to: the most recent independent audit, 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 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 L – 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 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.

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 D – Budget Forms)
- Certificates of Insurance for all insurance requirements outlined in the contract.

9. Per the COMMISSION’s Policy and Guidelines for Hiring Consultants (Section 7), the total composite rate for a Consultant may not exceed $150 an hour. This means that the total cost of billable hours associated with a contract divided by the total number of hours billed must be equal to or less than $150. A blended rate is allowable. For example, for a contract totaling $150,000, a consultant may bill 500 hours for Consultant A at $200/hour, and 500 hours for Consultant B at $100/hour, with a total composite rate of $150/hour (1,000 total hours divided by $150,000 in billable hours = $150/hour).

10. The selected contractor/s will be required to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this document, including the First 5 LA Contract (See Sample Contract Appendix H). Please note: applicant must be willing to accept all terms outlined in the contract. It is imperative that all applicants review the contract language in detail and fully understand contractual obligations should they be selected.
XI. Appeals Policy
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. (See Appendix K)

IX. APPENDICES

Appendix A: First 5 LA FY 2009-15 Strategic Plan Theory of Change Pathway
Appendix B: Review Tool Level 1
Appendix C: Review Tool Level 2
Appendix D: Budget forms
Appendix E: Grantee/Contractor Maximum Consultant Composite Fee Schedule
Appendix F: Client Reference Form
Appendix G: Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Difficulties Form
Appendix H: First 5 LA Sample Contract
Appendix I: First 5 LA Quality Assurance Review and Conflict Resolution Process
Appendix J: Signature Authorization Form
Appendix K: First 5 LA’s Appeals Policy
Appendix L: Scope of Work