Dear Prospective Applicant:

First 5 LA is issuing this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to individuals and groups interested in working with our staff to develop and implement a Technical Assistance Plan for programs funded under the Commission's School Readiness Initiative (SRI). Our goal is to strengthen organizational capacity to build and maintain high quality and sustainable efforts for children ages 0 to 5 and their families. Applicants must have experience providing technical assistance to both schools and community-based agencies, and extensive knowledge of systems and programs serving young children.

In response to this RFQ, applicants are required to submit a complete application packet to First 5 LA no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, July 14, 2008. Following a review of all submitted materials, qualified applicants will be invited for an in-person or phone interview during the week of July 28th.

Please submit 1 original, three (3) copies and all materials on a CD to:

Evelyn V. Martinez, Executive Director
First 5 LA
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: School Readiness Initiative TA Provider

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5:00 PM, JULY 14, 2008. NO FAXED OR E-MAIL SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

For additional information or further questions, please contact Marsha Ellis, Program Officer, at 213.482.7547 or mellis@first5la.org.

Thank you for your dedication to children and families and for supporting the vision and mission of First 5 LA.

Sincerely,

Evelyn V. Martinez
Executive Director
SCHOOL READINESS INITIATIVE
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDER
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

Los Angeles County Children and Families First – Proposition 10 Commission (aka First 5 LA)
RELEASE DATE: June 16, 2008
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I. TIMELINE FOR SELECTION PROCESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFQ Released</td>
<td>June 16, 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final date to submit questions and requests for additional information</td>
<td>July 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Application Due:</strong></td>
<td>July 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; by 5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 1 original</td>
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<td>- 3 copies</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 1 CD containing all materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicants Notified</td>
<td>Week of July 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interviews with Final Applicants</td>
<td>Week of July 28&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contractor(s) Selected</td>
<td>Week of August 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Meeting with Contractor(s)</td>
<td>Week of August 11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contract Start Date&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</strong></td>
<td>September 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</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 mail, fax, or email before 5 p.m. on Monday, July 7, 2008. First 5 LA reserves the sole right to determine the timing and content of the responses to all questions and requests for additional information.

**Questions and information requests can be submitted to:**

Marsha Ellis, Program Officer  
First 5 LA  
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  

Phone: 213.482.7547  
Fax: 213.482.5903  
E-mail: mellis@first5la.org

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<sup>1</sup> Note: While it is First 5 LA's desire to execute the Technical Assistance Contract for a September 1, 2008 start date, all 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, First 5 LA was formed as a public entity to develop and oversee various early childhood initiatives and to manage the funding from Proposition 10. To address the needs of communities, in 2004 the Commission adopted The Next Five Strategic Plan (FY 2004-2009), focusing on the goal areas of Early Learning, Health and Safety. Since 1998, First 5 LA has invested over $800 million to support initiatives in these areas. Additional information regarding First 5 LA can be found at http://www.first5la.org/.

The School Readiness Initiative

Initiated in 2001, the School Readiness Initiative (SRI) is a joint funding partnership between First 5 California and the 58 County Commissions. SRI engages families, community members, and educators in the important work of preparing children, birth to age five, for elementary school. First 5 LA currently funds 42 School Readiness (SR) Programs throughout Los Angeles County that are each comprised of a lead agency and multiple collaborative partners.

SR Programs work to achieve outcomes in the following four Result Areas:

1. Improved Family Functioning
   - Adult education, parenting classes, and job training conducted in partnership with adult schools and community colleges

2. Improved Child Development
   - Access to quality preschools or early care and education centers
   - Home visitation programs for children not enrolled in early education centers

3. Improved Health
   - Enrollment in free and low cost health insurance programs
   - Care/case management to ensure that children receive preventative health services

4. Improved Systems of Care
   - Facilitation of children’s transition from home and preschool to kindergarten
   - Articulation of kindergarten standards between kindergarten teachers and early education providers
   - Funding streams that support school readiness efforts

In January 2008, First 5 LA Commissioners approved additional funding to support SR Programs through June 30, 2011, as well as funding to provide technical assistance to sustain their efforts. This RFQ is in response to that decision.
III. ELIGIBILITY

Applicants responding to this RFQ must have the qualifications, experience, competency, and ability to successfully provide technical assistance and related program support. Applications will be considered from not-for-profit and for-profit agencies, public and private organizations as well as collaborative groups. Applicants should have a presence in Southern California, the capacity to work throughout Los Angeles County and familiarity with conducting similar technical assistance and trainings.

An ideal applicant will be familiar with the fields of early learning/childhood development, parental education, community engagement, health and social services, Kindergarten readiness, as well as capacity building and sustainability. Because all First 5 LA-funded SR Programs are either school-based or school-linked, knowledge of school systems including management and financing is also required. Applicants that meet initial review criteria will be invited for an in-person or phone interview with First 5 LA staff.

Summary of Desired Qualifications

- Knowledge of and familiarity with early care/education, and child development resources in Los Angeles County
- Ability to work with individuals and teams with diverse strengths and perspectives around issues affecting school readiness and school success
- Knowledge of and familiarity with evidenced-based practices that result in positive outcomes for improved family functioning, child development, health, and systems of care for young children and families
- Proven experience working with communities to plan, implement, and evaluate programs with multiple delivery structures
- Knowledge of and experience in building collaborative partnerships and capacity building in communities, including school districts
- Ability to initiate and facilitate conversations with multiple stakeholders, as well as communicate complex issues, stimulate creative thinking, negotiate differences and facilitate conflict resolution
- Ability to be accessible and flexible in accordance with product timelines and activities
- Ability to synthesize information from multiple sources and form recommendations to report to First 5 LA staff and Commissioners
- Strong time management and team building skills
- Strong written and oral communication skills
IV. DELIVERABLES AND SCOPE OF WORK

First 5 LA is seeking one or more Technical Assistance (TA) Providers to facilitate collective learning among 42 School Readiness (SR) Programs and their collaborative partners, initiative evaluators and First 5 LA staff over the course of three years. The purpose of such TA component is to build a lasting infrastructure of learning exchange that promotes an accumulation of knowledge that can be utilized by all school readiness stakeholders.

Under the direction of, and in coordination with First 5 LA staff, the selected TA Provider(s) will be required to work across First 5 LA initiatives to ensure coordination with other Commission programs and projects. Below is a list of functions that the TA Provider(s) will be expected to provide. A formal Scope of Work (SOW) will be developed with First 5 LA staff once a TA Provider has been selected.

1. Technical Needs Assessment (15%)
   - Develop a mechanism including tools and measures to assess SR Program needs
   - Conduct a needs assessment with SR Programs via focus groups, surveys and/or one-on-one interviews assessing technical assistance needs

2. Best Practices (40%)
   - Conduct/facilitate trainings and workshops that are in alignment with TA needs identified through assessment(s)
   - Compile a repository of best practices related to the four Result Areas (i.e., Improved Family Functioning, Improved Child Development, Improved Health, and Improved Systems of Care)
   - Provide assistance to SR Programs related to successfully implementing school readiness services in the four Result Areas

3. Resource Leveraging (30%)
   - Provide general support associated with developing, maintaining and strengthening community collaboration, utilizing the collaborative partnership to leverage resources to sustain/expand existing programs and services
   - Work with SR Programs to identify and secure resources that will support and/or sustain efforts

4. Program Evaluation (15%)
   - Provide general support related to program-level evaluation, data collection and data management

The actual amount of time the TA Provider will spend working on each component will vary depending on the needs of the SR Programs.
V. TERMS OF PROJECT

Available Funding

The total amount of funding available for the TA Provider will not exceed $125,000 per year, with the possibility of refunding for two additional years. Available funds may be divided among one or more Contractors depending on the needs of the Initiative and the experience and expertise of the Contractor(s) to provide the desired services. A final budget will be negotiated once a TA Provider has been selected. Funds will be granted through monthly invoices based on services rendered and actual expenses.

Contract Period

The first contract period (Year 1) will be for ten (10) months (September 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009), contingent upon First 5 LA approval and submission of documents by the selected TA Provider. Each subsequent Contract (including Scope of Work, Budget and Budget Narrative), if awarded, will be renewed on an annual basis covering the periods of July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010 (Year 2), and July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011 (Year 3).

The TA Provider is not authorized to deliver or commence services as described in the application until written approval has been obtained from First 5 LA. Any performance of services commenced prior to the TA Provider obtaining an executed Contract from First 5 LA shall be considered voluntary.

Contractual Obligation

The selected TA Provider is required by law to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this document, including the First 5 LA Contract. (See Sample Contract, Appendix 8)
VI. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

In order to respond to this RFQ, applicants are required to submit the following documents to First 5 LA no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, July 14, 2008. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

1. Cover Letter (maximum 1 page): Each applicant is required to include a cover letter addressed to Evelyn Martinez, Executive Director of First 5 LA, specifying the following: introduction of the applicant, clearly showing the applicant’s name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, the date, stating that the letter is in response to an RFQ for the SRI Technical Assistance Provider. The applicant’s cover letter must be signed by a person authorized to bind the applicant to the terms of the application.

2. Technical Assistance Experience and Expertise (maximum 10 pages): Outline the applicant’s demonstrated ability, based on qualifications and experience, to accomplish the deliverables outlined in Section IV (Deliverables and Scope of Work). Applicants must provide narrative examples of at least three similar past or current projects, and identify their role in the development, implementation and/or evaluation of the technical assistance plan. Applicants must also identify the qualifications of all individuals and/or other organizations, if any, that will be included as subcontractors.

3. Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative (Appendix 1): The proposed 10-month Budget must include costs broken down by hourly rate for all staff and subcontractors. Provide a Budget Narrative justifying all included costs.

4. Résumé or Curriculum Vitae for Applicant: Provide a detailed professional résumé for key staff expected to work on the project, outlining all relevant work history, educational attainment, publications, prior research projects, etc. Include the résumé for subcontractors as well. All subcontractors must be clearly identified in the application and approved by First 5 LA prior to commencing work.

5. References Form (Appendix 2): Provide the names, titles, addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of at least three (3) 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.

6. Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix 3): If a subcontractor or un-paid collaborator will be used to render any of the services under this application, the applicant must submit an MOU. MOUs may also be submitted after the Contract for the TA Provider has been executed.

7. Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties (Appendix 4): Please read the information on the required Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties form thoroughly. An unsigned form or its omission will constitute an incomplete application and will be grounds for disqualification.

8. Signature Authorization Form (Appendix 5): This form is required in order to verify signature authority to enter into contractual agreement with First 5 LA. If not outlined
in the applicant’s Bylaws, a Board Resolution or Partnership Agreement must be submitted, as applicable, that indicates signature authority. Applicants must submit two original forms signed in blue ink.

9. **Board Resolution** (Appendix 6): Include, as needed, to support the authority of persons listed on the Signature Authorization Form (Appendix 5).

10. **Independent Financial Audit:** The applicant must include the most recent independent financial audit including the following:
   - Management Letter
   - Auditor’s Report
   - Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)
   - Statement of Activities (P/L, Income and Expenses Report)
   - Statement of Cash Flow
   - Functional Expense Report
   - Notes to Financial Statements
   - Federal “Single Audit” (if applicable)

11. **Optional:** Supplemental materials such as Tool Kits, reports, Video/DVD of a recent workshop, convening or training, may be helpful in evaluating the application and may be included as attachments. *If submitted, one copy is sufficient.* Please also note that First 5 LA will not return supplemental materials including videos/DVDs to the applicant.

12. By-laws (if applicable)

13. Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)

**VII. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants are required to submit an application that meets the following criteria:

- [ ] White, 8½” by 11”, paper only
- [ ] Times New Roman font, no less than 12-point
- [ ] Single-sided pages only
- [ ] No less than 1-inch margins, with no less than 1.5 line spacing
- [ ] All pages and page numbers must be numbered sequentially with the name of the applicant clearly indicated on each page. Materials must not be bound, although a heavy clasp or thick rubber band is acceptable.
- [ ] All forms that require a signature (i.e., Cover Letter, Signature Authorization Form, etc.) must be signed in blue ink. Signature stamps are not acceptable.
VIII. SELECTION PROCESS AND REVIEW CRITERIA

Selection Process

1. Applications will be evaluated by a panel to be determined by First 5 LA.
2. First 5 LA will evaluate all applications for completeness and minimum qualifications. Basic requirements include: timely receipt of application, formatted as required, inclusion of all appropriate attachments, etc. Applications with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualification. Applicants may use the Application Checklist on page 14 as an aid in preparing the application. Please note that the Application Checklist is merely an aid. Each applicant is solely responsible for ensuring that all information requested in Section VI (Statement of Qualifications) and Section VII (Submission Requirements), is submitted even if it does not appear on the Application Checklist.
3. First 5 LA staff will contact references. First 5 LA must be able to contact at least two (2) of the three (3) references provided by the applicant. If two (2) references cannot be reached, First 5 LA may deem the applicant ineligible for this opportunity.
4. All or some 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 (Timeline for Selection Process). These dates are subject to change at First 5 LA's sole discretion. All applicants must advise First 5 LA staff of their availability during these days. Interviews will be held either at First 5 LA or via phone. Further written materials regarding qualifications may be requested prior to the interview.

Selection Criteria

First 5 LA will award a Contract to one or more applicant(s) with the expertise and qualifications outlined in this RFQ. First 5 LA staff will select Contractor(s) based on, but not limited to, evaluation of the following factors:

- Experience performing comparable work
- Knowledge of and experience with program planning and implementation
- Knowledge of and experience with the early care/education and childhood development field
- Experience working with various groups and sectors of the public (e.g., schools/districts, county departments, and community agencies)
- Demonstrated work with diverse communities
- Demonstrated understanding of research and evaluation methodology, and theoretical models and approaches
- References from agencies for which the applicant has provided similar services
- Thoroughness, viability, and quality of the application
- Cost-effectiveness of proposed services

First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted qualifications. An appeals process is not available.
IX. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Specific contractual considerations, including but not limited to the following, apply to this 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 Appendix 8).

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 a 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. 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 are 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 status information to verify applicants past and current financial status. This information includes, but is not limited to: the most recent independent audit ending Calendar Year 2007 or Fiscal Year

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 subcontractors 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 Term of Contract section of Contract, 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 by the Commission. If this Contract is not signed within the thirty (30) days period from the intended start date, the Commission has the right to withdraw the Contract award. Any agreed upon changes to the intended start date must be confirmed in writing by both parties.

8. Unless otherwise submitted during the application (RFQ, RFP, etc.) process, the selected Contractor will be required to submit the required documentation listed on the Contractor Checklist (not to be confused with Section X, Application 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
- Signature Authorization Form (2 originals)
- By-laws (if applicable)
- Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)
- Board of Directors or List of Partners (as applicable)
- Form RRF-1 (required and filed annually with the California Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts) and IRS Form 990 (if applicable)
- Annual Independent Financial Audit for prior fiscal year or calendar year (if applicable)
- Appropriate business licenses (for vendors or private organizations)
- IRS Letter of Determination (if applicable) or 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
X. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Applicants should refer to Section VI (Statement of Qualifications) and Section VII (Submission Requirements) for complete information about required application content and submission guidelines. Failure to submit any required item will result in disqualification.

☐ Cover Letter (maximum 1 page)

☐ Technical Assistance Experience and Expertise (maximum 10 page)

☐ Budget and Budget Narrative, Appendix 1

☐ Résumé or Curriculum Vitae for Key Staff and Subcontractor(s)

☐ Applicant Reference Form, Appendix 2 (3 required)

☐ Memorandum(s) of Understanding, Appendix 3

☐ Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties, Appendix 4
   (1 original, signed in blue ink)

☐ Signature Authorization Form, Appendix 5 (2 originals, signed in blue ink)

☐ Board Resolution, Appendix 6, if applicable (1 original, signed in blue ink)

☐ Independent Financial Audit

☐ Tool Kit, samples of work, Video/DVD, etc. (Optional)

☐ Bylaws, if applicable

☐ Articles of Incorporation, if applicable

☐ Submit one (1) original and three (3) copies, as well as all materials on a CD to:

   Evelyn V. Martinez, Executive Director
   First 5 LA
   750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300
   Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: School Readiness Initiative TA Provider
XI. APPENDICES

All Appendices are included as separate attachments.