FIRST 5 LA
SOCIAL SUPPORT MEASUREMENT STUDY REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

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

RELEASE DATE: March 25, 2011
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I) RFQ Timeline

Proposal and Review Timeline¹

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<tr>
<td>RFQ released</td>
<td>March 25, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final date to submit questions and requests for additional information</td>
<td>April 4, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Answers to all additional questions posted to website</td>
<td>April 7, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due Date for Statement of Qualifications:</td>
<td>April 18, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. PST</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Online applications plus all forms</td>
<td>NO EXCEPTIONS</td>
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<td>• One (1) original and signed copy of First 5 LA’s “Signature Authorization” and “Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties” forms, along with all work samples, sent or delivered to First 5 LA</td>
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<td>Finalist notification</td>
<td>April 22, 2011</td>
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<td>Finalist presentations and interviews (if applicable)</td>
<td>April 27, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chosen Contractor Notified</td>
<td>April 29, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract Start Date</td>
<td>May 16, 2011</td>
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RFQ Questions

All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFQ must be submitted via email before 5 p.m. on April 4, 2011 to Artineh Samkian (asamkian@first5la.org). To ensure that all potential applicants receive the same information, questions and answers will be posted on the website by April 7, 2011. First 5 LA reserves the sole right to determine the timing and content of the responses to all questions and requests for additional information.

¹ Note: While it is First 5 LA’s desire to execute the Contract for a May 16, 2011 start date, all dates are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion.
II) Project Overview

Background

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 within each county in California to enhance the early growth experiences of children, enabling them to be more successful in school and ultimately to give them an equal opportunity to succeed in life. In Los Angeles County, First 5 LA (also known as the Proposition 10 Commission) was formed as a public entity to develop and oversee various early childhood initiatives and to administer and manage its share of the funding from Proposition 10. Since 1998, First 5 LA has invested more than $871 million to champion health, education, and safety causes concerning children prenatal through five and their families. Additional information regarding First 5 LA may be found at http://www.first5la.org.

First 5 LA Fiscal Year 2009–2015 Strategic Plan

In June 2009, the First 5 LA Board of Commissioners adopted its FY 2009–2015 Strategic Plan, Strengthening Families and Communities in L.A. County. This Plan incorporates lessons learned from the first ten years of First 5 LA's grantmaking and research, which reveal not only the importance of supportive and informed parents and caregivers to a young child's quality of life, but also the role of safe and supportive neighborhoods, or places, to that child's development.

As a result, this new plan represents a major shift in First 5 LA's grantmaking from an initiative-based to a place-based and county-wide approach. This new approach will allow First 5 LA to focus on strengthening families while fostering the communities’ ability to create and sustain safe and nurturing places for children to grow and thrive.

In the Plan, the Commission established four specific outcomes that it seeks for young children in L.A. County. These outcomes are defined in the Plan as four long-term goals of ensuring that children

- Are born healthy
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Are safe from abuse and neglect
- Are ready for Kindergarten

All of First 5 LA's investments will be focused on changing outcomes in these areas.

First 5 LA’s place-based efforts, known as Best Start, are being implemented in the following target communities:

1. Central Long Beach
2. Compton, East Compton
3. East Los Angeles (includes City Terrace, Commerce and parts of Monterey Park)
4. El Monte, South El Monte
5. Lancaster
6. Metro LA
7. Pacoima
8. Palmdale  
9. Panorama City  
10. South Los Angeles/Broadway-Manchester  
11. South Los Angeles/West Athens  
12. Southeast L.A. County Cities (including Bell, Cudahy, Bell Gardens and Maywood)  
13. Watts, Willowbrook  
14. Wilmington

For more information about the community selection process, visit the First 5 LA website at http://www.first5la.org/articles/strategic-plan-community-selection-principles.

In addition to its relevance to the Best Start communities, this RFQ is relevant and necessary for our countywide strategies as it may be used in data collection efforts in projects we undertake across the County.

First 5 LA has selected three types of implementation strategies to accomplish its four overarching goals:

1. **Family Strengthening**: Within each of the target communities, these direct services will impact children’s most essential influence — their family. Home visitation will be a central component of this strategy, along with other types of activities designed to assist caregivers in supporting a child’s development.

2. **Community Capacity Building**: Within the target communities, these strategies will focus on building capacity in the areas of community engagement, community leadership, community infrastructure, and community investment. They will be implemented through a collaborative process designed to strengthen and leverage existing local assets and family resources.

3. **Countywide Strategies**: Through policy, public education and systems change, these strategies are designed to create strong, coordinated and responsive systems that support and assist families with young children within the target communities and across L.A. County.

**Development of a Community Partnership**

In order to maximize the potential for success, First 5 LA’s place-based efforts will be driven and informed by the communities themselves. Community members will determine how best to achieve the four long-term goals for young children, and First 5 LA will work with them over a period of years to achieve these changes. Through this process, the communities will develop the capacity to continue making desired changes on their own well into the future.

This will require an initial and intensive community planning process. Each target community will select a fiscal agent and a community facilitator who will play a pivotal role in guiding the community through the planning process. This process will culminate with the community partnership submitting to First 5 LA a written proposal for a multi-year implementation plan. This community proposal will include a detailed plan of action including scopes of work and budgets.
The planning process will include: regular collaborative meetings, community assessment, ongoing capacity building and training on effective collaboration, finalizing community boundaries, development of a community decision-making process and preparation for communities to engage in community-driven research. Although there will be adjustments for certain communities based on their readiness, First 5 LA will engage simultaneously in all of the target communities listed above.

**First 5 LA FY 2009-2015 Accountability Framework**

The First 5 LA FY 09-15 Strategic Plan includes an innovative blend of place-based and countywide funding strategies designed to improve outcomes in our four goal areas. The Commission’s decision to move to a “place-based” and county-wide funding approach, as opposed to initiative-based funding, is an effort to focus more intentionally on impacting the well-being of families and children by improving the communities in which they live. Our FY 2009-2015 Accountability and Learning framework reflects this emphasis on place-based and county-wide evaluations as well as a strengthened emphasis on using results from our evaluations and research projects to learn and improve on an ongoing basis.

The goals of First 5 LA’s Accountability and Learning Framework for the FY 09-15 Strategic Plan include the following:

- Gather and disseminate timely information on implementation and outcomes to support and improve our work and the work of our grantees;
- Capture change over time in Best Start communities;
- Enable us to tell a coherent story of our investments to our stakeholders – most notably First 5 LA Commissioners and staff, our community partners and grantees and other external stakeholders.

The major types of research and evaluation activities in which First 5 LA will engage over the course of the strategic plan include the following:

- A longitudinal study which will track a cohort of families from our Best Start communities, and families from comparison communities, over time;
- An implementation evaluation that will document the process of implementing our new strategic plan while providing information needed to learn and improve our place-based work;
- Place-based and strategic evaluations, including evaluations of some of First 5 LA’s key strategies, as well as data collection within each of First 5 LA’s Best Start communities to monitor progress towards change;
- Research projects designed to be responsive to policy and programmatic issues arising out of our evaluation work;
- The convening of a Research Advisory Committee (RAC), which will provide technical input, guidance, and advice to support First 5 LA’s research activities as we embark on this new strategic plan and accountability framework;
- Dissemination activities, including the development of a Community Change dashboard where each target community will be able to monitor the change that is happening within its boundaries;
- A learning and improvement process in order to promote meaningful use of our findings.
- An annual research conference will be held for researchers and practitioners to share their measures and findings around particular topics of interest to the 0-5 population and elements of the strategic plan.
The goal of the project outlined in this RFQ is the development of a social support measure which will be used in our data collection efforts supporting the place-based and strategic evaluations referred to in the third bullet point above.

**The Social Support Measurement Study**

Keeping children safe from abuse and neglect is one of First 5 LA’s four priority goals for the strategic plan. A number of intermediate indicators have been incorporated into First 5 LA’s measurement activities to determine in an ongoing way whether we are making progress towards achieving this goal. The level of social supports, both formal and informal, utilized by parents of young children, has been shown to be strongly associated with child abuse and neglect outcomes. The following is one definition of social support: “social support consists of social relationships that provide (or can potentially provide) material and interpersonal resources that are of value to the recipient, such as counseling, access to information and services, sharing of tasks and responsibilities, and skill acquisition” (Thompson, 1995, p.43). Formal support may include mental health professionals, physicians, counselors, teachers, clergy members etc. while informal relationships often include family members, relatives, friends and neighbors. Interventions such as Nurse Family Partnership that incorporate social support strategies have been shown to be effective in reducing the instance of child abuse and neglect, and have also been shown in some cases to reduce the rate of low birth weight births. During the development of First 5 LA’s Accountability and Learning Framework, First 5 LA staff interviewed child maltreatment experts, who confirmed the importance of examining social supports in our effort to protect children. As such, measuring social support in our Best Start Communities and across the County is an important undertaking and First 5 LA plans to include this variable as an intermediate indicator of this priority goal area.

Despite the importance of social supports, there are very few measures of social supports developed for use with parents of young children, and no measure has been tested in or adapted for the highly diverse social, cultural and linguistic context of Los Angeles County. Because of this, and because of the importance of social support to the prevention of child maltreatment, we wish to create a measure or adapt and shorten one or more existing measures in a way that is relevant to our population and sensitive enough to show change.

**III) Purpose of Contract**

The purpose of this contract is to engage a contractor to create a social support measure or modify an existing measure in order to make it more relevant to parents of young children, with a specific emphasis on Los Angeles County’s unique multicultural context. The decision whether to modify an existing measure or to create a new one will be determined together with First 5 LA staff. Ultimately, First 5 LA would like to have two versions of a social support scale to use for our population: a long, more comprehensive version and a short version with just a few items. The developed measure and the short version will be used in First 5 LA’s Place-Based efforts to monitor change in our Best Start Communities and may also be used in various county-wide studies. The primary audience and stakeholder for this study is First 5 LA staff, specifically the Research and Evaluation

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2 Given that the scope of work may be different depending on whether a new measure is created or an existing one adapted, the applicant is encouraged to include in the budget narrative how the proposed budget may change depending on the scenario adopted.
Department. The R&E Department plans to use the developed measures in our data collection efforts in the Best Start Communities and across the County. The short version of the developed measure is planned for inclusion in the Family Survey, which will be a bi-annual, door-to-door survey on indicators of interest as defined in First 5 LA’s 2009-2015 Strategic Plan. The participants for this survey will be residents of Best Start Communities. The long version may be used for collection of data on a subset of these Best Start Community residents so as to gain a deeper understanding of the actual and perceived social supports available to them as well as in data collection efforts in our countywide strategies.

First 5 LA recently hired a consultant to conduct an initial review of available social support measures. The selected contractor will be required to review this report, expand on it if necessary, conduct expert interviews, and consult with the First 5 LA Research Advisory Committee (RAC) to develop drafts of a measure. The RAC is comprised of experts from all over the country whose primary role is to provide First 5 with technical input, guidance, and advice on early childhood research issues relevant to Los Angeles County and our strategic plan in particular.

The contractor’s design plan will likely include such tasks as conducting think alouds/cognitive interviews and focus groups to determine the cultural and linguistic relevancy of items and construct validity, administering drafts of the developed/adapted measure and conducting psychometric analyses to determine whether such a measure can be shortened or adapted, and potentially conducting analyses to determine the correlation of the social support measure with other risk and protective factors associated with child maltreatment. Thus, this contract will include primary data collection, both qualitative and quantitative, development or adaptation of scales, and psychometric analyses of these developed scales. The contractor can expect at least two iterations of think alouds, piloting the measure and psychometric tests. The following graphic represents the proposed plan:

Tasks will also include a presentation and discussion with the RAC and the First 5 LA research team. The following are preliminary thoughts on possible research questions:

- How should social support be measured? How do we define social support and what are the factors we wish to incorporate when measuring this phenomenon?
- Which existing scales are most relevant and can be adapted?
• How can items be worded to be culturally and linguistically relevant?
• Is the developed/adapted scale – the long and short versions – both reliable and valid?
• Is there a correlation between this measure and the protective factors associated with child maltreatment?

IV) Statement of Work

In order to successfully complete the Social Support Measurement Study, First 5 LA expects the contractor to complete, at a minimum, the tasks outlined below. These tasks, as well as any additional tasks proposed by the applicant, are expected to be included in a scope of work that will be developed during the contract negotiation process.

Task 1: Create interview protocol and interview experts on social support
In preparation for this project, First 5 LA staff and consultants have prepared a review of the existing literature on social support measures. The contractor will be expected to become familiar with this review and based on this review and any additional readings create a structured interview protocol to bring to experts in the social support field. This list of expert interviews will be shared with and approved by First 5 LA. The selected contractor will then be expected to interview no fewer than six experts in the field of social supports and/or child safety, analyze interview data, and complete a written report summarizing the main findings from the interviews. This first set of expert interviews will ensure there are no missing constructs as well as what challenges to anticipate.

Task 2: Complete a Draft Design and Analysis Plan
Using interview findings and the literature review, the contractor will then complete an initial design and analysis plan detailing the analytic strategy for this study, and any revisions to the statement of work as described in the RFQ. This plan will be subject to a Quality Assurance (QA) review (See appendix F for information on the QA policy). The initial work plan will be due May 31. It is expected that the selected contractor will work with First 5 LA Research and Evaluation Staff to develop this plan, and First 5 LA reserves the right to ultimately make the decision whether the plan will entail the development of a new scale or adaptation of existing measures. The measure developed will be in the public domain, per the contract language specified in Appendix E.

Task 3: Prepare materials to meet with First 5 LA Research Advisory Committee (RAC)
The RAC provides technical input, guidance, and advice to First 5 LA on early childhood research issues relevant to Los Angeles County and our strategic plan in particular. RAC members are accomplished professionals from a variety of disciplines who inform First 5 LA’s research and methodologies. The contractor will be expected to develop and deliver a PowerPoint presentation for a convening of the RAC to describe justification for the initial design and analysis plan and/or the development of the first draft of the scale (the topic will be dependent on the timing of the RAC meeting and progress made on this project to date). The contractor also will prepare and send reading materials to RAC members to review two

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3 It is expected that the exact number of expert interviews will depend on the point at which the contractor believes we have reached data saturation. Because we do not know this sample size ahead of time, the minimum number is provided for budgeting purposes.
weeks prior to the meeting. Reading materials could include the contractor's PowerPoint presentation as well as social support research literature.

**Task 4: Meet in person with RAC on June 21, 2011 to get input on design and analysis plan and/or initial draft of the scale**
The contractor will present the RAC with a plan to develop or adapt a social support scale and/or a first draft of the scale. RAC members will review the plan and/or the first draft and offer input to the contractor. Our expectation is that the selected contractor will engage in meaningful dialogue with the RAC, which will ultimately guide the process and assist in the development of subsequent drafts. After the RAC meeting the contractor will compose summary meeting minutes and revise the design and analysis plan and/or first draft as needed.

**Task 5: Develop or adapt social support scale and conduct a second round of expert interviews**
The contractor will create a draft version of the social support scale. Based on First 5 LA input and guidance from the RAC, the scale may be wholly created by the contractor or an existing scale, or adaptation of an existing scale(s). The contractor will then be expected to interview at least the same experts that were interviewed for Task 1 about the developed scale, analyze interview data, and complete a written report summarizing the main findings from the interviews. The contractor will utilize this expert input to revise the first draft, thus creating a second draft of the scale.

**Task 6: IRB application for measure piloting**
The contractor will prepare a draft IRB application and later revise it to incorporate First 5 LA comments. Next, the contractor will submit the IRB application and await its approval before starting Task 7.

**Task 7: Collect data to refine social support scale**
The contractor will choose a sample with whom to conduct think alouds/cognitive interviews and focus groups about this second draft of the scale. The sample will be determined by the contractor with approval from First 5 LA. The interviews and focus groups may be conducted in hard to access regions in no more than eight languages. As such, the contractor must be able to deploy staff who is conversant in different languages. The contractor will compose a technical memo summarizing the main findings from the think alouds/cognitive interviews and focus groups as well as how they informed any revisions of the developed scale. The contractor will use these findings to develop and submit a third draft of the social support scale. Additionally, the contractor will use results of the psychometric testing to develop and submit a short version of the scale to be included in the Family Survey. Think alouds/cognitive interviews and focus groups will be conducted at a second time point to develop the fourth and final versions of the measure.

**Task 8: Piloting of measure in communities**
The contractor will conduct pilot testing with the third draft of the long version. To do this, the contractor will administer the third draft of the scale to a large enough sample in order to conduct the proper psychometric analyses. It may be possible to coordinate the administration of this scale with the Family Survey, but will need to be coordinated with that team. The contractor will then conduct psychometric testing with this draft of the scale and then develop a short version. This process of administering the measure and
doing psychometric analyses will be repeated to develop the fourth and final versions of the measure.

The contractor will determine the sample size with approval from First 5 LA. The testing may be conducted in hard to access regions in no more than eight languages. The contractor will compose a technical memo summarizing the main findings from the pilot testing.

**Task 9: Complete final social support scale**
The contractor will use the findings from piloting the measure to develop and submit a fourth and final draft of the long version and second draft of the short version of the social support scale. The contractor will meet with relevant First 5 LA teams to discuss the study and how to incorporate social support measures into First 5 LA’s ongoing efforts.

The following is a summary of the tasks listed above along with the list of potential deliverables:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
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| 1. Create interview protocol and interview experts on social support | - Structured interview protocol  
- List of experts to interview  
- Notes/transcriptions from each interview  
- Analysis/Summary of expert interview data |
| 2. Complete a draft and final design and analysis plan | - Draft design and analysis plan subject to QA review |
| 3. Prepare materials to meet with First 5 LA Research Advisory Committee (RAC) | - PowerPoint presentation  
- Background reading materials for the RAC |
| 4. Meet with RAC to get input on design and analysis plan/first draft | - Memo summarizing the discussion/recommendations of the RAC  
- Revised plan/first draft if necessary |
| 5. Develop or adapt social support scale and conduct a second round of expert interviews | - Draft social support scale  
- Structured interview protocol  
- List of experts to interview  
- Analysis/Summary of expert interview data  
- Second draft of social support scale |
| 6. IRB application for measure piloting | - Draft IRB application before submitting to IRB including protocols for data collection for Task 7  
- Final IRB application with QA comments incorporated |
| 7. Collect data to refine social support scale | - Memo summarizing the main findings from the cognitive interviews and focus groups  
- Third draft of social support scale |
Additional activities
First 5 LA reserves the right to request the selected contractor to perform additional activities related to the Social Support Measurement Study. These activities will be incorporated in a revised work plan, 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

Applicants must have the qualifications, experience and ability to successfully carry out the Social Support Measurement Study from planning to preparation of reports to project management (See the list of qualifications in Section VIII below). Applicants should have the capacity to work throughout Los Angeles County. The ideal applicant(s) will be familiar with both the social support literature as well as scale development, piloting and measurement.

VI) Terms of Project

Available Funding
The Accountability and Learning framework was included as part of the Implementation Plan of the Strategic Plan FY 2009-2015 approved by the Commission on June 10, 2010. The Social Support Measurement Study is critical to the Family Survey which is one of the activities included in the Accountability and Learning Framework.
The contractor(s) will be compensated based on the project budget developed during the contracting period. Budgets for this project may not exceed $380,000 although it is expected that applicants’ budgets will be clearly justified in the budget narrative and will be appropriate to the work proposed.

The contractor is responsible for all expenses related to any subcontracted services and for supplying all business equipment required to implement the tasks and scope of work (e.g., computer, printer, fax, internet access, telephone, etc.). The contractor will be responsible for maintaining a method to capture and document time spent on project activities, as a means to support First 5 LA staff management of costs and ensure accomplishment of all project objectives. 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.

**Contract Period**
The Social Support Measurement Study will be a one-time contract to last the duration of the study. The contract will begin in May 2011 and will continue to April 2012.

First 5 LA reserves the right to extend the length of the contract and increase the budget for the selected contractor to accommodate the completion of this project.

The contractor shall not be authorized to deliver or commence performance of services as described in the application until written approval has been obtained from First 5 LA. Any performance of services commenced prior to obtaining all written approvals by First 5 LA shall be considered voluntary.

The data collection protocols, work plan and other deliverables, as determined by First 5 LA staff will not be accepted until approved by the First 5 LA Quality Assurance team according to the First 5 LA Research and Evaluation quality standards. (See Appendix F)

**Contractual Obligation**
The selected contractor is required by law to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this document, including the First 5 LA Contract. (See Sample Contract in Appendix E)

Applicants must review the First 5 LA Contract Boilerplate in Appendix E. It is imperative that all applicants review the contract language in detail and fully understand contractual obligations should they be selected as the contractor for this project. **Applicants will be required to accept the contract language as specified in this boilerplate at the time of their submission.**

In order for applications to be considered acceptable and eligible for award they 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 skill, and budget, based upon the criteria defined below.
VII) 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 April 18, 2011, 5 p.m. PST. In addition to the electronic versions, applicants must also submit a signed copy of the application cover letter, First 5 LA’s “Signature Authorization Form,” and “Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties” forms to:

Evelyn V. Martinez, Chief Executive Officer
First 5 LA
750 N Alameda Street, Suite 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: First 5 LA Social Support Measurement Study RFQ

- **Cover letter:** Introducing the contractor(s) and clearly showing 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 RFQ for the Social Support Measurement Study. 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 four pages outlining the contractor’s qualifications for the Social Support Measurement Study based on the tasks listed in the Statement of Work and any assumptions, as well as how the contractor’s demonstrated qualifications and experience will facilitate the completion of the activities outlined above. Include any previous experience in designing similar projects and with working with entities similar to First 5 LA. Outline any potential unintended consequences or challenges that may occur as a result of this study. This requirement is to give First 5 LA a sense of the applicant’s qualifications in conducting the Social Support Measurement Study.

- **Résumé(s) or Curriculum Vitae(s):** Outlining all relevant work history, educational attainment, publications, prior research projects, etc. Please submit one resume or CV for each key member of the team. These should be combined into a single document when uploading the application.

- **Proposed Budget:** Please include estimated costs by task as listed in Section IV above. Budget Forms and Instructions are available in Appendix A. Also include a budget narrative to accompany the budget forms describing what will be included in each deliverable. 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 F). The contractor will assume any risk from contract or project delays. If a deliverable is not achieved in full (for example, a sample size of 50 was included in the budget assumptions and the scope of work but the final sample was only 25), First 5 LA reserves the right to prorate the payment accordingly.
• **References:** Use the attached Reference Form and Instructions (see Appendix C) to provide contact information for three former clients. The applicant is responsible for submitting the completed Client Reference Form as a required attachment. First 5 LA may contact some or all of the references as part of its review process.

• **Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties:** Please read thoroughly the information on the required Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties form (see Appendix D) and include one (1) original SIGNED with BLUE INK copy by the application deadline. An unsigned form or the 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 G) 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.

• **Statement of Financial Position**

• **Bylaws (if applicable)**

• **Articles of Incorporation (if applicable)**

• **Business License (if applicable)**

• **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (if applicable):** If a subcontractor or collaborator will be used to render any of the services under this application, the applicant is responsible for submitting a MOU. MOUs may be also submitted after the Contract has been executed. (See sample MOU in Appendix B).

**VIII) Review Criteria and Selection Process**

**Review Criteria**

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 tool - Appendix H for further detail):

I. **Understanding of the Scope of Work**
   - The applicant’s proposal demonstrates an understanding of the scope, complexity, and challenges of the Social Support Measurement Study.

II. **Qualifications**
   - Experience developing and administering surveys and conducting psychometric tests;
   - Knowledge of the social support literature;
   - Experience working closely with clients;
   - Experience collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data to pilot
survey items and scales as well as to conduct think alouds/cognitive interviews. The applicant should demonstrate an understanding of qualitative and quantitative data analysis including organization and management of narrative text and distributing and analysis of survey data;

- Bilingual in Spanish and English;
- Inclusion of full résumés of proposed staff in the proposal which clearly reflect the range and depth of the requirements outlined above;
- Experience working with culturally, linguistically, and geographically diverse populations

Preferred qualifications:

- Experience working in Los Angeles County;
- Ability to communicate in multiple languages;

IV. Organizational Capacity

- Resources and support necessary to conduct this study including ability to recruit, train and manage a team of qualified field staff
- Adequate financial capacity as determined by the applicant’s proposed budget, statement of financial position, and other relevant documents.

V. Budget

- A reasonable price per task, based on the reviewers’ experience;
- A composite hourly rate for all costs that does not exceed $150/hour (see detail in Contracting Considerations, number 9);
- Tasks assigned to appropriate personnel as to minimize the cost per deliverable while also maximizing the quality of the output;
- 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;
- A total budget that does not exceed $380,000. It is expected that applicants’ budgets will be clearly justified in the budget narrative and will be appropriate to the work proposed.

First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted qualifications. An appeals process is not available; all decisions of First 5 LA are final.

Statement of Qualifications Review Process

Qualifications will be evaluated by a team of three (3) external reviewers. Please see Appendix H for a copy of the review tool that will be used to guide evaluation of applicants.

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 disqualification.

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4 Only relevant staff (whether the contractor or sub-contractors) who will be collecting data in the communities or translating data collection protocols etc. will be required to be bilingual.
2. **Level 2**: Applications will be reviewed by three (3) external reviewers using the Statement of Qualifications Review Tool posted with the RFQ (Appendix H). 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. Some or all of the applicants who have submitted complete and responsive applications may be contacted for more information on or before April 4, 2011.

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 references 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 (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.

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

The award notification is anticipated to occur by **April 29, 2011**, with a final signed contract and projected contract start date of **May 16, 2011**.5

**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). It is important to note that the developed measures – both the long and short versions – will be in the public domain.

**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

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5 Note: While it is First 5 LA’s desire to execute the Contract for a May 16, 2011 start date, all dates are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion.
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 RFP 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 RFP. The COMMISSION also reserves the right to cancel this RFP, 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 RFP. Any cover letters, résumés and/or curriculum vita, including attached materials, submitted in response to this RFP 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 ending Calendar Year 2009 Fiscal Year June 30, 2009, 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 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-day (30) 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 process, the selected Contractor will be required to submit the required documentation listed on the following 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
- 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 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.

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 sample contract and contracting requirements are attached (See Appendix E). If successful, the Contractor will be required to meet all of the terms and provisions set forth in these documents and within the timeframe identified.

X) Appendices

Appendix A: Budget forms and instructions
Appendix B: Memorandum of Understanding Form
Appendix C: Reference Form
Appendix D: Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Difficulties Form
Appendix E: First 5 LA Sample Contract
Appendix F: First 5 LA Quality Assurance Review and Conflict Resolution Process
Appendix G: Signature Authorization Form
Appendix H: RFQ Applicant Qualifications Review Tool