Healthy Food Access Initiative: Fruit and Veggie Voucher Program Request for Proposals (RFP)
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I. **TIMELINE**¹

All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFP must be received in writing by First 5 LA by **5:00 p.m. on Monday, February 4, 2013** 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:

Jessica Monge, Program Officer  
First 5 LA  
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Phone: 213.482.7839  
Fax: 213.482.5903  
E-mail: jmonge@first5la.org

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¹ First 5 LA reserves the right to modify the stated timeline at any time; all dates are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion
II. BACKGROUND

A. About 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 (http://www.first5la.org). First 5 LA champions health, education, and safety issues benefiting young children and families. Since 1998, First 5 LA has invested $800 million to support initiatives in all three of its goal areas.

B. First 5 LA’s Strategic Plan (2009–2015)

In June 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.

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](http://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 the Community Investments Department.

**C. Healthy Food Access Initiative**

The Healthy Food Access Initiative was approved by the Commission on November 18, 2010 with a total allocation of up to $7.5 million dollars over five years, as part of First 5 LA’s countywide investments. Of the total amount allocated, $5 million is for the construction of community gardens (which includes start-up costs and ongoing maintenance and operations) and $2.5 million is for the expansion of a “Fruit and Veggie Voucher” program.

The Healthy Food Access Initiative is intended to increase families’ access to fresh fruits and vegetables by:

- Providing contracts to non-profits, community-based and educational organizations to construct, operate and/or maintain local community gardens for low-income children and their families.
- Providing contracts to non-profit and community-based organizations that promote the purchase of healthy fruits and vegetables for low-income children through a “fruit and veggie voucher” subsidy;
The intent of the community gardens component of the Healthy Food Access Initiative is to provide communities with the opportunity to develop the infrastructure to grow and consume fruits and vegetables in an effort to support obesity prevention, increase food security, provide physical activity and support community cohesion. First 5 LA released a Request for Proposals (RFP) in August of 2011. The selection process is completed and the project is in implementation.

The focus of this RFP addresses the second part of the Healthy Food Access Initiative, the Fruit and Veggie Voucher program.

D. **Project Description: Fruit and Veggie Voucher Program**

Greater consumption of fruits and vegetables is associated with a reduced risk of some cancers, stroke, and possibly cardiovascular diseases and type 2 diabetes. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Service’s [Healthy People 2020](http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/objectiveslist.aspx?topicId=29) identified several objectives related to nutrition including two objectives specific to young children: 1) increase the contribution of fruits and 2) increase the variety and contribution of vegetables to the diets of the population aged 2 years and older.

There are a number of existing efforts in Los Angeles County which aim to increase fruit and vegetable intake among populations with lower consumption rates than the general population.

One example of an existing fruit and vegetable voucher program is the Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) which is distributed by the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). FMNP began in 1992 to provide fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC participants. In California, each eligible family receives $20 in vouchers to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, and cut herbs at WIC-approved Certified Farmer’s Markets in California during the designated season, from May through November.

Another example of an existing fruit and vegetable voucher program through WIC is the Fruit and Vegetable check program. In October 2009, the existing WIC Food Benefits were changed to include produce items by introducing a fruit and vegetable check, that can be utilized at selected Farmer’s Markets and other certified locations. Through this program, eligible families may receive between $6-10, per month, on a year-round basis.

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Findings from these types of programs have shown promising results. For example, an evaluation of the Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program in Washington State reported that WIC participants enhanced their knowledge and skills related to fruits and vegetables, as well as reported an increase in their intake of fruit and vegetables.\textsuperscript{5} In Los Angeles County, a 2006 study of WIC participants was conducted in which fruit and vegetable vouchers were offered for redemption at local supermarkets, farmer’s markets, as well as a control site. Of the 454 participants who completed the study, voucher redemption rates was approximately 90\% at the farmer’s markets and supermarkets.\textsuperscript{6}

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health through its Community Transformation Grant is currently working to increase acceptance of food assistance monies and vouchers at farmers’ markets and would encourage linkage to this effort.

The First 5 LA Fruit and Veggie Voucher Program is a $2.5 million, 5-year, Commission-allocated investment. The program aims to increase access to affordable fresh fruits and vegetables for families with children ages 0-5 and is associated with one of First 5 LA’s four goal areas, “Children maintain a healthy weight.”

The intent of the Fruit and Veggie Voucher Program is to increase the ability of families with young children to purchase and consume fruits and vegetables by providing a matching fiscal contribution to leverage existing fruit and vegetable voucher programs at farmer’s markets and other venues selling fresh produce. \textit{Therefore, all proposed projects must demonstrate that they provide a matching fiscal contribution to leverage existing fruit and vegetable voucher/subsidy programs.} In addition to meeting this requirement proposals will also be assessed on the degree to which they leverage other sources of fiscal and non-fiscal resources to meet project objectives.

\textbf{First 5 LA funds are not intended to create or start new programs.} In no event shall the selected applicant or its officers, employees, agents, subcontractors or assignees supplant state, county, local or other governmental General Fund money with Commission funds for any purpose.

The First 5 LA Fruit and Veggie Voucher Program RFP will provide funding to one lead agency that has the capacity to identify and work with the appropriate community partners to meet the following project objectives:

- Provide a matching fiscal contribution to an existing infrastructure and system for a fruit and vegetable voucher/subsidy program for children ages 0-5 and their families in Los Angeles County
- Employ strategies that most effectively reach the most number of children ages 0-5, and their families, county-wide
- Promote and increase the utilization of existing fruit and vegetable voucher/subsidy programs by families of children ages 0-5


• Increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables by families participating in the program
• Promote sustainable strategies beyond the project period
• Maximize the amount of funding available to families for fruit and vegetable purchase via matching fiscal contribution for vouchers/subsidy

III. TERMS OF THE PROJECT

Available Funding
First 5 LA expects to enter into a contract with the selected awardee which will be eligible for renewal at the end of each contract year contingent upon approval of First 5 LA’s Board of Commissioners. The total contract amount for the entirety of the project will not exceed $2,500,000 over five years to cover all phases of this project associated with program implementation, including the cost of the fruit and vegetable vouchers, evaluation, policy, outreach and education costs, in addition to any operational costs that the contractor might incur. Only one applicant will be selected. Staff anticipates that operational costs may include indirect administrative costs which are not allowed to exceed 10% of personnel costs as well as direct staff time to ensure full completion of this project (these costs are included in the $2,500,000 award).

Per Board recommendation, should the Commission choose to expand this project, and if the project demonstrates the potential to expand, additional funds may be provided to the selected contractor (based on performance) to expand the project.

First 5 LA strongly encourages proposed projects to include a diversity of partners to meet the multiple objectives of the program. The lead agency and/or proposed partners may include WIC agencies, farmer's markets and other certifiable locations that redeem fruit and vegetable vouchers, policy/advocacy organizations/coalitions, community based organizations, non-profit agencies, and any other applicable entities.

Final length of contract and available funding will be determined by the contract execution date. The annual Scope of Work and Budget will be negotiated once the applicant is selected. Yearly contracts with First 5 LA will coincide with First 5 LA’s fiscal year, which ends on June 30th. Payments are made based on monthly invoices for services rendered and actual expenses.

Contract Period
The first contract period will be approximately 12 months contingent upon successful contract negotiations. Each subsequent Contract (including Scope of Work, Budget and Budget Narrative), if awarded, will be renewed on a fiscal year basis covering the periods of July 1st - June 30th.

Contractor shall not be authorized to deliver or commence performance of services as described in the application until the final execution of the contract and written approval has been obtained from First 5 LA. Any performance of services commenced prior to the contractor obtaining such approval by First 5 LA shall be considered voluntary.
**Contractual Obligation**
The selected contractor(s) will be required to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this document, including the First 5 LA Contract (Appendix A) Please note: applicant must be willing to accept all terms outlined in the contract.

**IV. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS & SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

*All applications, including all required documents must be submitted online by 5:00 pm PST on Monday, February 4, 2013*

Applicants must have the qualifications, experience and competency, and ability to successfully serve as the lead agency. Proposals will be considered from applicants that are not-for-profit and/or public or private organizations. Applicants should strive to meet the following eligibility requirements and criteria for selection.

**A. Eligibility Criteria**

In order to be eligible to apply for the RFP, applicants must demonstrate that their proposed project will provide a matching fiscal contribution to leverage an existing fruit and vegetable voucher program, serve residents of Los Angeles County and benefit children ages prenatal to five years. Applicants must also submit all the required documents listed in the Section VI. Application Checklist (Appendix B).

**B. Proposal Content**

First 5 LA requires submission of proposals using First 5 LA's online system accessed from the [www.first5la.org/Funding-Center](http://www.first5la.org/Funding-Center). Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in the teleconference call/webinar before submitting a proposal where information about how to use this system and proposal requirements will be reviewed. Information about the teleconference call/webinar is listed in the next section. Please carefully review the following requirements for proposal content.

1. **Online Application Form:** This online form, accessible from the [www.first5la.org/Funding-Center](http://www.first5la.org/Funding-Center) must be completed prior to submitting the Proposal Narrative. Enter Executive Director’s name, address and other requested information. Complete all other required questions with respect to First 5 LA funding status, project eligibility, and organizational and project information.

2. **Application Checklist:** The application checklist (Appendix B) must be completed and signed by an authorized signatory.

3. **Proposal Narrative:** The Proposal Narrative must be uploaded in a Word or PDF document using the online application system on the Fruit and Veggie Voucher RFP website, [www.first5la.org/Funding-Center](http://www.first5la.org/Funding-Center). No hard copies of the Proposal Narrative will be accepted. Responses cannot exceed 10 pages double spaced. Any pages exceeding the 10-page limit will not be reviewed. The description must address the following:
• A brief description of the lead agency’s history, most recent accomplishments and experience working with proposed population.
• A brief statement of need focusing on the population your project intends to serve.
• Lead agency should demonstrate the capacity to organize, identify and work with appropriate partners to implement the project, as well as the capacity to oversee administrative activities related to sub-contracting work. If applicable, please include any previous experience and/or joint accomplishments working with the proposed partners.
• A description of all key staff and partners that will work on and/or participate in this project, including their titles, each person’s role, responsibilities, expertise and timeline for work, as it relates to this project. The person(s) who will have the primary responsibility of coordinating the project must be identified. If new staff will be hired for the project, include job qualifications, descriptions, and hiring timeline, as an appendix to the proposal.
• Demonstration of success via prior work and/or pilot projects
• A description of the proposed program and a clear articulation of how it will meet project objectives (including goals and short-term and long-term outcomes; planned activities, deliverables to demonstrate progress; as well as the target number of children ages 0-5 and families that will be reached countywide in each project year).
• Project objectives include:
  o Provide a matching fiscal contribution to leverage existing fruit and vegetable voucher/subsidy programs for children ages 0-5 and their families in Los Angeles County. The matching contribution to the voucher is an eligibility requirement for proposed projects. In addition to this, projects may also include other sources of fiscal and non-fiscal resources.
  o Employ strategies that most effectively reach the most number of children ages 0-5, and their families, county-wide (i.e. strategies may include increasing the value of an existing voucher, increasing the number of vouchers available but keeping the value of the voucher the same, etc.);
  o Promote and increase the utilization of existing fruit and vegetable voucher/subsidy programs by families with children ages 0-5 (i.e. strategies may include outreach, education, training, etc.);
  o Increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables by families participating in the program;
  o Promote sustainable strategies beyond the project period;
  o Maximize the amount of funding available to families for fruit and vegetable purchase. Projects will be assessed on the ratio of funds allocated to the vouchers proportional to other project costs such as evaluation, administrative costs, etc.
• The proposal must also clearly articulate the following:
  o Number of additional 0 to 5 children that will receive a voucher due to First 5 LA’s investment.
  o The total dollar amount of the veggie voucher each 0 to 5 child will receive (First 5 LA investment and matching fiscal contribution).
  o Portion of the project budget allocated to vouchers versus the program administration costs.
• Include a sustainability plan that demonstrates viability of the project objectives once First 5 LA funds are expended (i.e. increased awareness of the voucher programs by participants, increased awareness of the benefits of fruit and vegetable consumption, etc.).

• Include a description of how key indicators will be tracked to demonstrate the performance of the voucher program (e.g. number of families receiving vouchers, voucher redemption rates, identify where vouchers are redeemed) and describe the effect of the program on changing consumption of fruits and vegetables and knowledge of participants about healthy food access.

4. Project Budget Summary: Please complete a project budget summary (Appendix C) which covers the full contract period. Please reference the attached Budget Instructions (Appendix D) when completing the template.

5. Proposed 1st Year Budget (12 months): Applicants must submit a Year 1 project budget using the attached budget worksheet (Appendix E). Please reference the attached Budget Instructions (Appendix D) when completing the template.

6. Budget Narrative (12 months): The Budget Narrative should be included in a separate document. The Narrative should explain each of the line items contained in the project budget, relate expenses to specific activities, and indicate the project year associated with each cost. A sample budget narrative is included in Appendix F.

7. Scope of Work: Applicants must submit a Scope of Work using the attached sample Scope of Work template (Appendix G) for Year 1 of the project. Please reference the attached Scope of Work Instructions (Appendix H) when completing these templates.

8. Letter(s) of Intent: If the applicant will seek other partners to jointly carry out the proposed project, Letters of Intent will be required as a part of the application process, specifying understandings, agreements, resources and responsibilities of and between each of the partners. After the proposal review process, Memorandums of Understanding will be required.

9. Resumes: Provide detailed professional resumes and job description(s) for the key staff expected to work on the project, outlining all relevant work history, education, publications, prior research projects, etc. If applicable, provide resumes for any key staff from partner organizations (as listed in the Letters of Intent). Individual resumes cannot exceed 2 pages in length.

10. References (minimum of three, maximum of five. No more than six pages total): References may be from colleagues, current or former clients, or peers. Each reference should include name, company, address, phone number, email, length of time known, and a short statement about your relationship. In addition, written statements from each reference may be included. First 5 LA must be able to contact at least two (2) of the references provided by the applicant. If two (2) references cannot be reached within a timely manner (no more than three attempts, no longer than one week), First 5 LA may deem the applicant ineligible for this opportunity.
11. Board of Directors: Provide the most recent member roster for the organization’s Board.

12. Signature Authorization Form– See Appendix I on the Fruit and Veggie Voucher RFP website www.first5la.org/Funding-Center for the required form. Applicants must submit a hard copy form with original signatures in blue ink by mail or hand delivery.

13. Agency Involvement in Litigation and/or Contract Compliance Difficulties (Appendix J) – Please read the information on the required form thoroughly. Applicants must submit a hard copy form with original signatures in blue ink by mail or hand delivery. An unsigned form or its omission will constitute an incomplete application and will be grounds for disqualification.

14. Proof of 501(c)(3) status or business license: Please include the organization’s IRS Tax Status Determination Letter and or copy of business license.

15. Bylaws: Please include a copy of the organization’s Bylaws.

16. Articles of Incorporation: Please provide the organization’s Articles of Incorporation

17. IRS W-9 Form: Organizations need to fill out and submit a completed IRS W-9 Form. Please see Appendix J or use the following link to download the form: http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf.

18. Financial statements: Please include a copy of the organization’s most recent audited financial statements.

C. Proposal Assistance

First 5 LA will host a teleconference call/webinar on Wednesday, January 16, 2013 from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., PST. Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate to learn information about the Fruit and Veggie Voucher RFP requirements and process and to receive instruction in developing a proposal using the online system, and completing First 5 LA required budget forms. The workshop will review the Proposal Narrative and other components, and highlight what to expect following the proposal submission, review, and selection process. To register, email the name and title of each attendee as well as the organization’s name to Jessica Monge, Program Officer at jmonge@first5la.org no later than January 25, 2013.
D. Submission Guidelines

The proposal checklist (Appendix B) and listed in Section IV on p. 14 of this RFP provides a complete list of the required documents. The Signature Authorization Form (Appendix I) and the Agency Litigation Form (Appendix J) must be submitted in hard copy form with original signatures in blue ink by mail or hand delivered to:

Kim Belshé, Executive Director
First 5 LA
750 N. Alameda Street, Suite 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attn: Jessica Monge, Program Officer, Fruit and Veggie Voucher RFP

All other proposal documents must be submitted electronically and should be completed through the online system by 5:00 p.m. PST on Monday, February 4, 2013, to be eligible for review. Please register early online in order to become familiar with the system. It is highly recommended that after entering your proposal you print a “printer-friendly version” of the online proposal form and review it carefully prior to submission. The printed version should be kept for your records, and will include a list of the proposal components that were attached. If the attachment is not listed, it was not successfully submitted.

If you experience any technical difficulties with submission of the proposal, you may email jmonge@first5la.org or call (213) 482-7839 for support. First 5 LA is not responsible for delays due to computer malfunction. Late proposals due to technical difficulties will be considered late and will be ineligible for review. Please allow additional time to account for unexpected delays.

V. REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

Eligible projects must be in line with the guidelines, requirements and criteria for the Fruit and Veggie Voucher RFP. Please keep in mind that this is a competitive proposal review process and only one organization can be funded.

The review process is outlined below. First 5 LA reserves the right to modify the review process at any time if necessary. First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted proposals.

A. Level 1 Review
Review for Eligibility and Completeness, includes the following:

- All proposals will be reviewed for completeness, which includes: timely receipt of application, inclusion of all appropriate attachments, etc. Applications with omissions of any required documentation will be disqualified. Applicants must use the Application Checklist (Appendix B) as an aid in preparing the application. Please note that the Application Checklist is merely an aid. Late or incomplete proposals will not be accepted.

- Compliance and Duplication – If the applicant has current or previous First 5 LA funding, compliance with and successful implementation of those prior and/or current contracts will be considered. Applicants, regardless of past or current
funding, cannot be funded for activities similar to those within the scope of work of an existing First 5 LA investment.

Please refer to the Level 1 Internal Review Tool, which First 5 LA staff will use to evaluate proposals (see Appendix L).

B. Level 2 Review

Programmatic Review – After the review for eligibility and completeness, the applicant’s proposal will be evaluated and scored by a panel of three external reviewers. The external review tool includes the following criteria that will be used to assess the strength of the proposals:

- Demonstrate that the proposed project serves residents of Los Angeles County, and benefits children ages prenatal to five years.
- Degree to which the proposed project demonstrates providing a matching fiscal contribution to leverage existing fruit and vegetable voucher program(s);
- Degree to which proposed project leverages other, additional sources of funding to meet project objectives;
- Clarity of the proposed methodology in meeting project objectives (i.e. goals, activities, outcomes, deliverables; also, target number of children ages 0-5, families, farmers, etc., that will be reached in each project year);
- Degree to which the project most effectively targets the most number of children prenatal to five years of age and their families;
- Degree to which project demonstrates cost-effectiveness (ratio of proposed budget to number of children ages 0-5 served);
- Degree to which project demonstrates experience working with proposed population;
- Degree to which lead applicant demonstrates capacity to implement project, work with partners, oversee administrative activities related to sub-contracting work (i.e. skills, experience);
- Key project partners – demonstration of their ability to support and enhance implementation of the project;
- Degree to which project demonstrates geographic diversity
- Degree to which project builds on previous demonstrated success through prior work and/or pilot projects;
- Clarity of sustainability plan;
- Clarity of evaluation plan and plan for dissemination of findings;
- Budget forms – clarity, completeness and applicability to proposed project;
- Scope of Work - clarity, completeness and applicability to proposed project;
- Number of additional 0 to 5 children that will receive a voucher due to First 5 LA’s investment;
- The total dollar amount of the veggie voucher each 0 to 5 child will receive (First 5 LA investment and matching fiscal contribution);
- Portion of the project budget allocated to vouchers versus the program administration costs.

Please refer to the Level 2 Internal Review Tool, which First 5 LA staff will use to evaluate proposals (see Appendix M).
C. Level 3 Review:
Interview – Staff will conduct an interview with up to three of the highest scoring applicants to gain additional knowledge regarding questions that may arise during programmatic or financial review.

D. Level 4 Review:
Financial Review – The highest scoring applicant after the level 2 and 3 review processes will be reviewed to assess fiscal health in relationship to their capacity to implement the proposed project and manage the proposed budget.

Feedback Process – Declined applicants may receive feedback if requested within ten business days of declination notification. Further details regarding the feedback process will be provided following the proposal review.

Appeals Process - The Commission does have an appeals process. If you would like to appeal the decision, please visit our site for details on the process: http://www.first5la.org/About-Us/Policies

VI. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Specific contractual considerations, including but not limited to the following, apply to RFQ submission process and project implementation and to any contracts that result from the submission and implementation of the project/proposal. The contractor will need to comply with all of the provisions in the attached sample contract (See Sample Contract).

A. Conflict of Interest
The selected Contractor will be required to comply with the COMMISSION’s Conflict of Interest provisions, as outlined in the contract, and as applicable under California Law. Contractor acknowledges that he/she/it is acting as public official pursuant to the Contract and shall therefore avoid undertaking any activity or accepting any payment, employment or gift from any third party that could create a legal conflict of interest or the appearance of any such conflict. A conflict of interest exists when one has the opportunity to advance or protect one’s own interest or private interest of others, with whom one has a relationship, in a way that is detrimental to the interest, or potentially harmful for the integrity or fundamental mission of the COMMISSION. Contractor shall maintain the confidentiality of any confidential information obtained from the COMMISSION during the Contract and shall not use such information for personal or commercial gain outside the Contract. By agreeing to the Contract and accepting financial compensation for services rendered hereunder, Contractor agrees that he/she/it will not subsequently solicit or accept employment or compensation under any program, grant or service that results from or arises out of the funded project and related initiative(s). During the term of the Contract and for one year thereafter, Contractor will not knowingly solicit or accept employment and/or compensation from any COMMISSION collaborator or Contractor without the prior written consent of the COMMISSION.

B. Compliance
Current/Former grantees and/or Contractors must be in good standing and in compliance with all aspects of their contract with the COMMISSION in order to be eligible to apply for the current Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The COMMISSION may deem an applicant
ineligible if it finds in its reasonable discretion, that applicant has done any of the following, including but not limited to: (1) violated any significant terms or conditions of Grant Agreement/Contract; (2) committed any act or omission which negatively reflects on Applicant’s quality, fitness or capacity to perform services listed in RFQ with the COMMISSION or any other public entity, or engaged in a pattern or practice which negatively reflects on the same; (3) committed an act or offense which indicates a lack of business integrity or business dishonesty; or (4) made or submitted a false claim against the COMMISSION or any other public entity.

C. Contract Information

1. The COMMISSION 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 the COMMISSION.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

10. The selected contractor/s will be required to adhere to all contractual obligations as outlined in this document, including the First 5 LA Contract (See Appendix A for Sample Contract). The selected applicant shall be expected to execute the contract
without substantive alteration. If applicant cannot accept the terms of the contract without substantive alterations, the applicant should refrain from applying. It is imperative that all applicants review the contract language in detail and fully understand contractual obligations should they be selected.

VII. APPEALS POLICY

Unsuccessful bidders, proposers or applicants for First 5 LA contracts or grants shall have the ability to appeal an adverse decision of the Commission or staff on that matter subject to the limitations and procedures established in this policy. Such 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 decisions on the merits or qualifications of bidders or proposers, or the scoring of proposals shall not be permitted. Appeals regarding First 5 LA decisions on procedural or formatting errors, such as failure to include required documentation or failure to comply with page limits, shall not be permitted. This appeal policy does not apply to operational or monitoring decisions made during the course of awarded contracts and grants. For more information, please see First 5 LA’s Appeals Policy at http://www.first5la.org/About-Us/Policies.

VIII. APPENDICES

All Appendices are included as separate attachments, and are accessible via First 5 LA’s website at www.first5la.org/Funding-Center.

Appendix A  Sample Contract
Appendix B  Application Checklist
Appendix C  Project Budget Summary
Appendix D  Budget Instructions
Appendix E  Proposed Budget Worksheet
Appendix F  Sample Budget Narrative
Appendix G  Scope of Work Template
Appendix H  Scope of Work Instructions
Appendix I  Signature Authorization Form
Appendix J  Agency Involvement in Litigation Form
Appendix K  W-9 Form
Appendix L  Level 1 Review Tool
Appendix M  Level 2 Review Tool