

**L.A. Care - Help Me Grow LA Evaluation
Request for Proposals (RFP)
Questions and Answers
Date Posted: February 16, 2022**

Please note that:

- The final date to submit questions and requests for additional information was **5:00 p.m. PT on February 14, 2022**
- To respond to this RFP, please complete and submit your proposal and all required documents to First 5 LA no later than **5:00 p.m. PT on February 22, 2022**
- Please refer to the [Funding Center site](#) for additional details on this solicitation

Informational Webinar

1. Was the informational webinar recorded and is there somewhere we can find access to the recording and/or slides that were shared?

Response: No, the informational session webinar was not recorded. Refer to the [Funding Center site](#) for all details on this solicitation.

Eligibility - HIPAA Compliance

2. We do not have HIPAA certification from a 3rd party. We have worked with PHI/PII and HIPAA compliance was documented and reviewed/approved by one or more Institutional Review Board (IRBs), as well as the appropriate legal agreements (BAA or DUA) that stipulates how we will store/access/maintain this data. Could you please clarify if this type of HIPAA compliance would be considered for the minimum requirement for HIPAA compliance?

3. Can you tell me a little more about the requirement for HIPAA compliance? Is it something that we could easily obtain (in time for the proposal!) if we don't currently have certification?

4. Is the HIPAA Compliant Certification required for the contracted organization as a whole, or for an individual working as an evaluator? Can you explain the intended purpose of this requirement?

5. As there is no official HIPAA certification and many private organizations that provide trainings/certifications, are there any examples of certification organizations or characteristics that you can provide that would meet the RFP requirement?

6. Is the HIPAA certification noted as a requirement needed at the time of application or does being in the process of qualifying for certification with a completion date certain meet the requirement?

7. We are unable to present a HIPAA certification with a response to the RFP. However, we are able to comply with HIPAA security and reporting requirements, and regularly works with sensitive patient data from numerous federal, state, and local government clients. Does this satisfy the requirement?

8. If we do not have HIPAA Compliance as an entire agency, but we do have HIPAA Compliance Certificates for Box and Smartsheet, which is what we would be using for data sharing and storage, would we be eligible to apply?

Response: Per RFP page 13 in *Section V. Eligibility, HIPAA Compliant Certification*, certified by an independent organization is a requirement and proposers are required to include a copy of their *agency's* certification with their proposal. For this solicitation, any documentation that meets this requirement will be accepted. First 5 LA will also accept certification of HIPAA compliance, certified by an independent organization, for *individuals* identified by the proposer as key personnel who will perform major roles in carrying out the project. However, these identified individual(s) would be the sole person(s) that can receive or access de-identified data from First 5 LA. First 5 LA reserves the right to request a written statement from any potential contractors detailing that only certified HIPAA Compliant individuals will have access to de-identified data.

Other forms of certifications (e.g., project-specific, software) will not be accepted. First 5 LA does not prescribe an independent organization or certification type. HIPAA compliant certification must be certified by an independent organization. We cannot speak to the level of time, cost or effort to obtain a certification. Proposers are required to include a copy of any certifications with their proposal. Proposals with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualification.

Background - L.A. Care Health Plan Partnership

9. How many times has the evaluation project been awarded in the past 5 years? In other words, how many cycles of award have occurred for this evaluation scope or similar? Has the prior evaluation contractor been awarded with this evaluation project in the previous 2 award cycles?

Response: Our 4-year partnership with L.A. Care began in January 2021, please see *Section II Background, Subsection F. L.A. Care Health Plan Partnership* for additional information. This is the first time an evaluation solicitation has been issued for the L.A. Care partnership.

10. Can you provide a status update on the L.A. Care implementation?

Response: After a 6-month planning phase, the L.A. Care team began outreach to practices to gauge interest in receiving coaching to embed developmental screening and referral into clinic workflows. The first (of three) cohort of practices launched in January 2022; three practices comprising 16 sites are participating in cohort 1 and are in the process of compiling baseline data. Curriculum for community classes on child development has been drafted and is being rolled out through Community Resources Centers starting February 2022.

Scope of Work

11. Do you have a sense of the level of primary data collection anticipated for the evaluation? E.g., are you anticipating that surveys of Health systems providers, or parents/families be administered?

Response: Per *Project Assumptions* under *Section III. Project Overview*, “[t]he evaluation will primarily leverage data collected by L.A. Care and may supplement this data with primary data collection.” How this assumption will be addressed should be detailed in the Proposed Project Plan. Please refer to *Section IV. Scope of Work – Task 2: Draft Evaluation and Data Collection Plan Development*. We look to the selected evaluator to propose primary data collection needs, if any, as part of drafting the evaluation and data

collection plan with the final plan to be approved by First 5 LA. To provide some additional context on planned data collection, there are planned post surveys for the Community Resource Classes and Continuing Medical Education events although there may be an opportunity to add survey items. Additional data collection is not currently set for providers and families in participating practices.

12. Is there a list of anticipated program partners and/or categories (primary care, early ed, home visitation, etc.) who will be participating in this work?

Response: Anticipated partners include primary care consisting of L.A. Care Health Plan and high-volume pediatric practices, community-based organizations such as the Community Resource Centers, and the Help Me Grow LA team of First 5 LA and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

13. Can you provide more detail on the types of administrative data available for the evaluation?

Response: Please refer to *Appendix B – Data Variables List and Sample Data Structure* for a list of data variables, including administrative data, being considered for this evaluation. However, note that there may not be consistency across practices in what data variables are collected and how they handle data entry.

14. Is there a hope that results will be shared with families/communities? and how families will be included in decision making?

Response: The evaluation should be executed in accordance with First 5 LA's investment guidelines, which views incorporating the voice of families and communities as demonstrating equity in our work. We look to the selected evaluator to decide if and how family and community voice will be reflected in the scope of work. For instance, in the RFP *Section IV. Scope of Work*, as part of *Task 2: Draft Evaluation and Data Collection Plan Development*, it is expected that the selected evaluator will convene an advisory group to provide guidance and recommendations on plan development. And as part of *Task 4: Share Findings*, the selected evaluator is expected to engage in sensemaking and presentations with key stakeholders.

Note that evaluation findings will be disseminated widely through our First 5 LA website, Early Childhood Matters e-newsletter, and social media.

15. Can you specify the number/size of the clinic sites, in terms of the number of children expected to be seen, that are currently engaged in the L.A. Care Partnership?

Response: We aim to have ten practices total participate in this project over three cohorts. While all clinic practices have a high pediatric volume they serve, they vary in size and number served. For instance, of the three practices in cohort 1 they range from a sole site serving a little over 500 children ages 0-5 to a 10-clinic site practice serving over 1,800 children ages 0-5.

16. Is the evaluator required to provide an IRB connection, or will the partners (First 5 LA, LACDPH, L.A. Care) provide the IRB resource?

Response: If an IRB is deemed necessary to conduct the evaluation, it is the responsibility of the selected evaluator to determine how to proceed. The need for an IRB will be

determined with the selected evaluator as part of *Task 2: Draft Evaluation and Data Collection Plan Development*.

17. Will the evaluator be responsible for developing a data agreement or will First 5 LA develop a data agreement to be used for evaluation data collection?

Response: If a data agreement is deemed necessary to conduct the evaluation, First 5 LA will work with selected evaluator to develop an agreement. The need for a data agreement will be determined with the selected evaluator as part of *Task 2: Draft Evaluation and Data Collection Plan Development*.

18. Should we plan to attend/facilitate any in-person meetings?

Response: First 5 LA will adhere to Los Angeles County public health recommendations regarding holding in-person meetings. As detailed in *Section XI. Contractual Considerations*, the Contractor shall ensure that the Contractor, its employees and subcontractors, as well as the participants in any program or service conducted hereunder, comply with all applicable federal, State and local public health orders to protect against the spread of the COVID-19 virus or other public health threat, including, without limitation, maintaining social distancing requirements, avoiding unnecessary or non-essential gatherings, and providing or requiring personal protective devices such as face masks, gloves and cleaning supplies. It is not currently a requirement of the evaluator to attend/facilitate in-person meetings. Any anticipated travel costs should be detailed in the *Proposed Project Plan* and in the *Budget and Budget Narrative*.

19. Can you share more about the Health Provider training. How long is this training? Is it in person or virtual?

Response: L.A. Care is utilizing their existing Continuing Medical Education (CME) events platform to train health providers. This will be an annual event. The first event will be held virtually and is scheduled for May 2022 over a half-day. Format of future CME events have not been determined and may be in-person.

20. With which frequency do you prefer the regular virtual conference calls with the First 5 LA team occur?

Response: Check In meetings between First 5 LA and the selected evaluator should be held at a minimum on a monthly basis. Given the complexities of this project, check in meetings may need to happen more frequently, at least at the beginning of the project. In addition, the selected evaluator may be asked to join other planning meetings with the Help Me Grow LA team (First 5 LA and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health) and L.A. Care.

21. Is there a preferred system/platform for storing data that First 5 LA would like to use or is this up to the selected evaluator?

Response: First 5 LA does not have a preferred system or platform for storing data. The selected evaluator should set up data storage that is in alignment with HIPAA and other security and privacy regulations.

22. For subcontractors written in during this proposal stage is it necessary to link the subcontractor to a particular task (e.g., data collection vs data analysis, or both)?

Response: If subcontractors will be involved in this project, their role on the project, including tasks, should be outlined in the *Project Organizational Chart*. Please see *Section IX. Required Documents* for more information.

23. Toward the end of Section II, the expectations for the evaluation plan include "member health outcomes, including longitudinal studies." Should the design assume the maximum initial term of 30 months when thinking about longitudinal work, or can it consider outcomes beyond that time (which would require an extension)?

Response: The design should assume a 30-month timeline. Any anticipated contextual, logistical or methodological challenges should be described in the *Proposed Project Plan*.

Terms of the Contract

24. Could you please confirm the indirect cost rate?

Response: As detailed in *Appendix E: Sample Contract, Section V. Compensation and Method of Payment, Paragraph A. Compensation* – First 5 LA will pay the selected Contractor per approved Task Order. The total fee includes payment of all taxes and insurance, as well as indirect costs, overhead, materials and supplies.

Budget

25. The budget document instruction is for the "cost per task outlined in the Section IV. Scope of Work for the initial 14-months of the project" we would like to better understand how to complete the document. **(1)** Where and how should we note if tasks include activities that are proposed, but may occur after the initial 14 months? For example, in the project overview page 10 of the RFP "in the final year [the evaluation] should investigate effectiveness, as well as inform how the L.A. Care partnership complements core components of HMG LA", **(2)** Is there an estimate of the maximum budget per year (14 months)?

Response: As detailed in Section VII. Terms of the Project, First 5 LA expects to enter into an initial 14-month agreement with the selected proposer with an anticipated start date of May 16, 2022. The contract will renew at First 5 LA's sole discretion for a total project term of up to 30 months, through November 15, 2024, with an estimated total project cost not to exceed \$600,000.

(1) Per *Section IX. Required Documents*, the Proposed Project Plan should include a draft workplan and timeline for the **entire project, 30 months**. You may refer to this workplan and timeline in the Budget and Budget Narrative, or outline in the workplan and timeline what will be detailed in the *Budget and Budget Narrative*.

(2) First 5 LA has not set a maximum budget per year. The initial 14-month agreement amount will be negotiated with the selected proposer. As detailed in *Section IX. Required Documents: Budget and Budget Narrative* – Proposers are required to use Appendix G to detail the estimated cost per task outlined in *Section IV. Scope of Work* for the initial 14-months of the project.

Refer to Appendix C – Level 2 Review: Scoring Criteria for details on how the Budget and Budget Narrative will be scored.