

**CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND  
PROOFREADING  
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)**

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

RELEASE DATE: July 28, 2022

[ADDENDUM: August 5, 2022](#)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	TIMELINE FOR SELECTION PROCESS .....	3
II.	BACKGROUND .....	4
III.	PROJECT OVERVIEW .....	6
IV.	SCOPE OF WORK.....	8
V.	ELIGIBILITY .....	10
VI.	DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS .....	11
VII.	EVALUATION CRITERIA .....	11
VIII.	TERMS OF PROJECT .....	11
IX.	SELECTION PROCESS.....	12
X.	REQUIRED DOCUMENTS.....	13
XI.	TERMS OF THE RFQ .....	15
XII.	CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS .....	16
XIII.	APPEALS POLICY .....	18
XIV.	APPENDICES .....	18

**I. TIMELINE FOR SELECTION PROCESS<sup>1</sup>**

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFQ Released on First 5 LA's Funding Center Webpage	July 28, 2022
Informational Webinar	August 3, 2022 at 1:00pm
Final date to submit questions regarding the solicitation	August 3, 2022 by 5:00pm Pacific Time (PT)
Posting of responses to questions regarding the solicitation	August 4, 2022
<b>Proposal Submission Deadline</b>	<b>August 12, 2022 by 5:00pm PT</b>
Interviews	August 24-26, 2022
Contractor Selected	September 1, 2022
Projected Contract Start Date	Mid-September 2022

First 5 LA will accept proposals responding to this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from proposers through First 5 LA's online application system. First 5 LA will accept proposal submissions from the date of the release of this RFQ through **5:00pm PT on August 12, 2022. Proposals submit ted after 5:00pm PT will not be considered.** It is the proposer's responsibility to verify submission prior to the deadline. First 5 LA will not be responsible for any technical problems or submission failure. **Failure to submit ALL required documents as identified by Section IX. Required Documents by 5:00pm PT on August 12, 2022 may constitute an incomplete proposal and may be grounds for disqualification.**

Questions and requests for additional information must be submitted in writing to:

Christopher Stephens, Contract Officer  
 E-mail: [cstephens@first5la.org](mailto:cstephens@first5la.org)

All questions and requests for additional information regarding this RFQ must be received in writing by First 5 LA via email before **5:00pm PT on August 3, 2022**. First 5 LA reserves the sole right to determine the timing and content of the responses to all questions and requests for additional information, First 5 LA may respond to individual inquiries and then post replies to all questions on F5LA's website by the posting date.

**Informational Webinar**

Potential proposers are highly encouraged to participate in the Informational webinar on **August 3, 2022 at 1:00pm** to learn more about the RFQ requirements. Please register for the webinar at:

<sup>1</sup> Note: Dates are subject to change at First 5 LA's sole discretion.

**CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**

[https://first5la.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_2Vr8fzuBR3aq2nII0IF8Lw](https://first5la.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2Vr8fzuBR3aq2nII0IF8Lw). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

### **Updates and Addenda**

Please check the Funding Opportunities webpage regularly for updates and addenda. First 5 LA has the right to amend this solicitation by written addendum. First 5 LA is responsible only for that which is expressly stated in the solicitation document and any authorized written addenda thereto. Such addenda shall be made available via the online funding center. Failure to address the requirements of such addendum may result in the proposal not being considered, at the sole discretion of First 5 LA. Addenda to this solicitation, if any, will be posted on First 5 LA's website, which may be accessed by clicking the following link at: <https://www.first5la.org/news-resources/funding-center/>. It is the responsibility of proposers to ensure, prior to submission, that their application reflects the most recent information and RFQ requirements.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

### **First 5 LA — Giving Kids the Best Start**

In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10, which levied a 50-cent per pack tax on all tobacco products. The resulting tax revenues were earmarked for the creation of a comprehensive system of information and services to advance early childhood development and school readiness within each county in California. In Los Angeles County, the First 5 LA Commission was formed as a public entity to develop and oversee various early childhood initiatives and to manage the funding from Proposition 10.

### **The First 5 LA 2020-28 Strategic Plan**

In November 2019, First 5 LA's Board of Commissioners approved the 2020-28 Strategic Plan, which can be accessed at <https://www.first5la.org/2020-2028-strategic-plan/> that boldly articulates the goal of the organization's "North Star" – that by 2028, all children in Los Angeles County will enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life. The new plan will help guide and accelerate all First 5 LA does to make a tangible difference in the lives of children today and tomorrow.

### **A) First 5 LA's Values**

First 5 LA grounds its work in its **values**, that act as guiding principles for how it does its work, the culture it aims to promote, and as a benchmark to measure behaviors and performance:

- **Collaboration**: We promote a collaborative culture and strategies in all that we do.
- **Integrity**: We act in ways that reflect our Values and hold ourselves accountable for our behaviors and the outcomes of our work.
- **Learning**: We integrate learning into all aspects of our decision-making, commit to continuous improvement and share what we have learned.
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**: We embrace the diversity of L.A. County, advocate for fairness and promote systems that advance the full participation of young children and their families.

## **CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**

## B) First 5 LA’s Investment Guidelines

First 5 LA’s Investment Guidelines serve as criteria for decision-making for all major components of the strategic planning process and as ongoing policy guidance for Board and staff during implementation. Together, the Investment Guidelines represent a “six-part identity statement for First 5 LA that explicitly prioritizes adopting an equity lens through our work and addressing the critical challenge of declining First 5 revenue:

- **Equity:** Prioritize children, families and communities in our target population that our work has the greatest potential to impact and advance our North Star.
  - Use data to elevate disparities and achieve equitable outcomes
  - Strengthen existing public systems to be child and family-centered
  - Incorporate the voice of families and communities in systems change
- **Sustainability:** Embed sustainability strategies within all of our work
  - Plan and operate within our fiscal reality
  - Create new revenue and fund leveraging strategies
  - Co-invest with partners
- **Partnership:** Engage partners throughout planning, development, and execution of our work
  - Demonstrate how committed partnerships are engaged and fundamental to our work
- **Prevention:** Focus on early intervention and prevention
  - Invest in early intervention and prevention as the primary focus of our work
  - Link downstream investments to prevention
- **System Change:** Focus on systems change and implementation to impact the most children and families.
  - Focus on strengthening existing systems; rather than creating new systems
  - Consider direct services only when there is significant potential to demonstrate models for scalability and sustainability
- **Evidence and Innovation:** Prioritize scaling up evidence-based practices, balanced with investments in innovative and promising approaches to address community needs
  - Pursue and test innovative and promising approaches, as necessary, to respond to community needs and achieve scale.

## C) What’s Needed to Make First 5 LA’s North Star a Reality?

To reach its North Star, First 5 LA wants systems to work better for all families in L.A. County by making them more family-centered and child-focused with a focus on four results areas that include:

1. Families have the resources, opportunities, relationships and environments to optimize their child’s development.
2. Children enter kindergarten without any previously unidentified developmental delays and connected to developmentally appropriate services and supports.
3. Children are safe from abuse, neglect, and other trauma.
4. Children have high quality early care and education (ECE) experiences prior to kindergarten entry.

## CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ

First 5 LA will seek these results through policy change, practice change and public-will building. It will do so with diverse partners who share First 5 LA's aspirations for children and bring an intentional focus on equity for children and families facing disparities in outcomes and opportunities.

### III. PROJECT OVERVIEW

First 5 LA's Office of Communications develops and executes communications strategies and tactics aligned with First 5 LA's strategic plan goals that require subject matter expertise to support organizational priorities, including:

- Managing First 5 LA's organization-wide communications contracted resources
- Managing communications outlets (website, social media accounts, internal and external newsletters)
- Developing internal and external messaging products requiring specific subject matter expertise – e.g., press releases, public statements, organization operations and priorities
- Managing relationships with media outlets, serving as a primary liaison with partner communications leads
- Providing technical assistance for First 5 LA's organization-wide communications needs
- Developing organization-wide communications materials like templates and brand materials
- Managing Public Records Act (PRA) requests
- Curating, in partnership with staff organization-wide, a consistent set of internal- and external-facing documents, key messages, issue-driven campaigns, and other strategic efforts to develop consistent and effective communications products aligned with the strategic plan

The Office is comprised of a nine-member team, consisting of:

- **Chief Communications Officer** – As the principal communications and marketing strategist for First 5 LA, the CCO is responsible for leading and managing First 5 LA's overall brand, and developing and executing a communications and marketing strategy to support successful implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- **Communications Manager, Strategic Initiatives** – Responsible for developing and executing communications strategies across varied media channels to advance First 5 LA's programmatic and policy goals, serves as a spokesperson, building relationships with media, along with a broad base of advocates, supporters and organizations aligned with First 5 LA's.
- **Communications Manager, Marketing Strategies** – Responsible for the creation of digital and visual content and its distribution through a variety of channels and platforms to connect stakeholders to First 5 LA's mission and advance its programmatic and policy goals to develop and execute communications projects, including directing the creation of public awareness, public education and public will building campaigns.
- **Communications Manager, Internal Communications** – Responsible for producing high-quality internal communications materials and products, leading the coordination, integration, and alignment of internal and external communications strategies implemented by the Office of Communications, and collaborating with Teams and Offices across the organization to align and coordinate internal communications efforts.

### CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ

- **Communications Specialist** – Responsible for helping to implement and support comprehensive, strategic communications activities that advance First 5 LA’s programmatic and policy goals and helps develop and execute communications strategies across various media channels.
- **Writer/Editor** – Responsible for developing and creating written content for use in a variety of communications channels to advance First 5 LA’s programmatic and policy goals, including research, writing and editing of core content such as newsletter and website articles, blogs and other public-facing communications.
- **Graphic Designer** – Responsible for the design and production of complex print and digital communications projects using emerging and traditional design methods, manages projects through concept, production, and delivery phases, and assists staff in understanding and incorporating the First 5 LA brand and visual identity into their communications.
- **Digital Content Specialist** – Responsible for developing, managing distributing content for First 5 LA’s digital properties including websites, social media, internal collaboration platforms, internal and external communications and electronic newsletters to fulfill a variety of content development needs and conduct analysis to ensure continued growth across our digital platforms.
- **Administrative Coordinator** – Responsible for facilitating the efficient operations of the Office of Communications by performing day-to-day administrative functions in a highly organized manner with great attention to detail, and by working in collaboration with executive assistants and administrative coordinators across the organization to coordinate and share best practices that promote operational excellence within and across teams.

First 5 LA recognizes that every mode, medium and method in which it communicates – on its own or in partnership with external groups – is an opportunity to amplify our Values (Collaboration, Learning, Integrity, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion); advance programmatic and policy goals of the 2020-2028 Strategic Plan, and to help achieve these results for children and families. The Office of Communications views this RFQ as needed to help achieve its goals of using communications to build First 5 LA’s brand, advance the organization’s commitment to incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion in all that we do, engage decision makers, elevate awareness, create urgency, and support employee knowledge and engagement through internal communications.

There is an ongoing need for writing, editing and proofreading services that exceeds the Office of Communications’ in-house bandwidth – to support various Centers, Offices, teams, and agency-wide efforts. As identified in First 5 LA’s strategic plan, effective communications are critical for driving change among systems, communities and families; developing and reflecting an equity voice for families; clearly communicating our goals; and raising parent/caregiver awareness and knowledge of child health and development. The contracted services will additionally support programmatic and operational objectives to support First 5 LA’s goals of all employees being engaged, well-informed, and able to articulate our Strategic Plan and brand through priorities essential to achieving our North Star.

First 5 LA is seeking a qualified contractor (firm or individual) that can provide the organization with content writing, editing and proofreading services. Specifically, First 5 LA seeks an experienced writer with the skills and capabilities to translate complex, research-based, technical information into readable, easy-to-comprehend narratives that are easily understood by a broad array of audiences; and apply proofreading and content editing expertise to achieve clearly positioned, well-structured, accurate and

## CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ

high-quality content for diverse audiences reflective of First 5 LA and Associated Press (AP) writing and editing style guidelines.

#### **IV. SCOPE OF WORK**

First 5 LA is seeking proposals from qualified individuals and firms (with or without subcontractors) to serve as a contracted content writer, editor and proofreader.

In keeping with its role to execute communications tactics aligned with the 2020-2028 Strategic Plan goals that require subject matter expertise to support organizational priorities, the Office of Communications seeks a writer to increase coverage of First 5 LA's priorities for integrated editorial planning to reach colleagues, stakeholders and decision-makers. To improve and manage content, style, quality and brand consistency across written products, the office seeks a proofreader and editor who through exposure to and application of our strategy, priorities and style guides, becomes familiar and follows practices that support organization-wide message alignment and conveys First 5 LA's attention to detail across written products.

The successful contractor will provide writing, editing and proofreading services that include, but are not limited to, creating written content for articles, blogs, broadcast emails and electronic newsletter, along with making structural changes to research-based content to help the narrative flow and emphasize crucial points; checking that research is well-substantiated and clearly delineated; and writing text that has the appropriate level of detail and clarity for audiences that may include elected officials, policy and decision makers, stakeholders, parents, the general public, and First 5 LA employees.

These projects support the Office of Communications' goal of demonstrating First 5 LA's knowledge and expertise on issues that affect early childhood development, other factors affecting children prenatal to age 5 and their families, and the organization's strategic, programmatic and operational news.

The selected contractor shall provide writing, editing and proofreading on a range of writing projects requiring different techniques and writing styles to suit the medium and the audience. The selected writer shall translate complex ideas and findings into accurate yet easy-to-understand language, write for the intended audience, process and apply feedback provided by the Office of Communications and members of the First 5 LA staff. The editor and proofreader will follow styles articulated in First 5 LA's Writing Style Guide and the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook. For content writing purposes, the selected contractor will attend the office's regularly scheduled editorial meetings to remain aware of and participate in content planning. The selected contractor, covering content writing, editing and proofreading, will attend an initial onboarding session, monthly check-ins and other meetings, as necessary.

The objective, timeline and deliverable for each writing, editing and proofreading project will vary in frequency and length.

Projects will be related to early childhood development issues, specifically:

- Policy and advocacy related to early childhood development
- Early learning experiences including child care, preschool, and kindergarten with a preference for Early Childhood Education (ECE) issues

#### **CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**



- Health care systems, developmental and intervention access and services, including how traditional and home-based systems affect young children and families
- Community and grantee partner initiatives that reflect system and environment impacts on young children, parents and families; lived experience storytelling; community and provider needs and priorities.
- Current events that affect young children such as but not limited to prenatal care, nutrition, wellness, physical activity, child development, parent resiliency, and family strengthening
- Organization priorities that align to the 2020-2028 Strategic Plan (see Section II. Background)

Projects will include, but not be limited to:

- Creating and editing copy for articles and blog posts intended for publication on First 5 LA digital properties, other external websites, such as news outlets or partner organizations and internal communications vehicles such as the employee e-newsletter and other standard and electronic internal communications platforms
- Creating copy for external stakeholder and internal communications campaigns, including broadcast emails
- Covering events, conducting interviews and research, and writing opinion editorials, short- and long-form blog posts and website articles
- Writing press releases, and other official public statements
- Writing executive summaries of reports and studies
- Editing of studies, whitepapers, reports, articles and blogs
- Proofreading a variety of written content, including articles, blogs posts, op-ed and other copy

Other projects may include summaries of past and current research on topics of interest to First 5 LA, such as articles, briefings and reports, and other disparate sources of information to create compelling original research and articles.

### **Measurement**

The successful execution of projects will be measured by insightful utilization and audience-targeted components of the strategic plan and First 5 LA priorities. Clarity of content is expected to sharpen exponentially in accordance with project volume and time as the selected contractor's knowledge of the organization grows, and as opportunities to communicate will-building are incorporated to further advance understanding of the strategic plan. OOC will measure quality content by aligning projects to the organization's Values, priorities, goals, impact of data, and policy and advocacy agenda. The alignments should make evident the contractor's understanding of the organization's priorities, emphasis on partnership and goal-advancing work by First 5 LA's Centers, Offices and teams. Content quality will be further measured by attention to accuracy, fact-checking, style consistency and error-free deliverables. Administratively, successful execution of projects will be measured by meeting deadlines and adhering to project parameters (e.g., task order details, project scope, target audience), and timely and detailed invoicing. First 5 LA welcomes proposers to propose additional measurable performance indicators to further determine successfully executed projects.

### **Subcontractors**

The selected proposer will be required to provide content writing, editing, and proofreading services. Proposer may only propose a subcontractor for up to one of the three services. Additionally, Proposer must utilize the same subcontractor for the initial 12-month agreement. The preference for no more than one subcontractor is based on the efficiency benefits First 5 LA will gain over time as the

## **CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**

subcontractor ~~writer~~ builds knowledge on early childhood development and understanding of how First 5 LA's strategic work intersects across Centers, Offices and teams.

### **Technical and Functional Requirements**

Technical skills expected of the selected contractor include early childhood development and public policy content writing; understanding of systems change initiatives; technical skills and resources to support online content management (MS Word, file transfer capabilities, video-conference software programs - Zoom and/or Teams), understanding/experience in digital marketing and SEO, access to current Associated Press (AP) Stylebook and supplements.

Functional requirements of the selected contractor include strong research skills; fact-checking; community coverage and interview skills; ability to meet deadlines; strong project management and prioritization skills; expert-level proofreading skills – spelling, punctuation and grammar; expert-level editing skills – excellent writing skills; attention to detail; reading level; strong focus on consistency; quick adoption of client style guides; strong knowledge of Associated Press (AP) Stylebook.

## **V. ELIGIBILITY**

To meet project requirements and desired experience levels, proposers must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Minimum of 3 years in operation as a legal entity.
- No conflict of interest.
- A minimum of three (3) years of experience producing written content for decision makers and elected officials, such as executive summaries or reports and studies, and blogs to demonstrate thought leadership
- A minimum of three (3) years of experience producing written content for media and news outlets, such as op-eds and blog posts
- A minimum of three (3) years of experience in editing and proofreading complex content, such as articles, blogs and reports, that required following organization and Associated Press (AP) style guidelines

Eligibility requirements are the minimum requirements to apply. If your entity is required to register with the California Secretary of State's website, First 5 LA will verify an "active" status via California Secretary of State's website: <https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/>.

Proposers that do not meet the requirements above or do not have an "active" status via California Secretary of State's website (if applicable) will not pass the first level of review (*see Section IX. Selection Process*).

## **CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**

## **VI. DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

The following qualifications are desired:

- Experience in interpreting and translating complex topics, such as California budget proposals, policy briefs and research findings into easy-to-understand language that appeals to a wide audience
- Familiarity with early childhood development issues, specifically:
  - Government and Legislative policy and advocacy (regional/L.A. County, statewide and federal)
  - Early learning experiences including child care, preschool, and kindergarten with a preference for Early Childhood Education (ECE) issues
  - Health care systems, with a preference for how these systems affect young children
  - Current events that affect young children such as but not limited to environmental context, budget and funding, prenatal care, nutrition, wellness, physical activity, child development, and family strengthening (protective factors)
- Experience in producing a variety of written content under aggressive timelines
- Backgrounds in journalism and writing for executives or elected officials are preferred
- Ability to attend meetings virtually, as needed

## **VII. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Proposals will be reviewed based on the following evaluation criteria.

- **Writing & Journalism Experience Narrative** – 25 maximum points possible
- **Specific Content Writing & Proofreading Exercise** – 30 maximum points possible
- **Editing** – 25 maximum points possible
- **Writing for Media Experience Work Sample** – 5 maximum points possible
- **Experience in Interpreting and Translating Complex Topics Work Sample<sup>2</sup>** – 5 maximum points possible
- **Proposed Hourly Rates** – 10 maximum points possible
  - **Total possible points - 100**

## **VIII. TERMS OF PROJECT**

First 5 LA expects to enter into a 10-month initial agreement with the selected contractor for a not-to-exceed amount of \$59,583, with an anticipated start date September 1, 2022, subject to approval by First 5 LA's Executive Director. The contract will renew annually at First 5 LA's sole discretion for a total project term 2 years and for a total estimated project cost of \$130,000. Contract renewal will be based on contractor. First 5 LA reserves the right to terminate the contract if the quality of services is not to First 5 LA's satisfaction.

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<sup>2</sup> See Section VI for more information on Desired Qualifications

### **CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**

A schedule of regular reports will be jointly determined by First 5 LA and the selected proposer. Additional contract management requirements and/or reports will be determined by First 5 LA and selected proposer during negotiations. The selected proposer shall have technological capabilities for efficient phone and email communication to facilitate interaction with First 5 LA staff and other partners as necessary.

This will be a Task Order contract. See **Appendix D: Sample Task Order Contract** for more information.

Task Orders will be issued for specific activities/deliverables on an as-needed basis throughout the duration of the contract. First 5 LA will work with the individual or Project Team to determine tasks and corresponding deliverables for each Task Order. Task Orders will be negotiated with the Lead Contractor. Task Orders must be submitted by the Lead Contractor to First 5 LA for approval prior to starting any of the work identified by the Task Orders. First 5 LA and the Lead Contractor will negotiate dollar amounts for Task Orders as they are identified and approved. Payments will be based on the negotiated task order. The Contractor shall only perform work under Task Orders when authorized in writing by the designated First 5 LA staff.

## **IX. SELECTION PROCESS**

First 5 LA will review proposals based on the multi-stage review process detailed below. Reviewers will be assessed for conflicts of interest with proposers and sign a Conflict-of-Interest form to certify that there are no conflicts of interest.

### **Level 1 Internal Review**

First 5 LA will evaluate all proposals for completeness and minimum requirements. Basic requirements include timely receipt of proposal, submission of all required documents sought in Section IX. Required Documents, and adherence to eligibility requirements described in Section V. Eligibility. Proposals with omissions of any required documentation are subject to disqualification.

First 5 LA will also conduct a due diligence review which includes a review of the Litigation and Contract Compliance form (**Appendix E: Litigation & Contract Compliance Form**), a review of whether proposer (that are current and former contractors, grantees and vendors) currently remain placed in non-compliant status by First 5 LA under any existing and past agreement with First 5 LA and verify an “active” status via California Secretary of State (if applicable). First 5 LA reserves the right to request additional information, if needed, to validate eligibility and/or and minimum requirements.

Additionally, First 5 LA will conduct a conflict of interest review for proposers including subcontractors.

### **Level 2 Proposal Review**

Reviewers will score proposers using a Level 2 the evaluation criteria set forth in Section X. Proposers must score a minimum of 70% or higher to continue past Level 2. Reviewers may participate in a calibration session prior to finalizing scores.

### **Level 3 Interview**

Only key personnel included in the proposal can participate in the interview. Tentative interview dates are included in Section I: Timeline for Selection Process and are subject to change at First 5 LA’s sole discretion. Interviews will be held either at First 5 LA or via telephone or a virtual platform (e.g. Zoom or Microsoft Teams). Reviewers may participate in a calibration session prior to finalizing scores.

## **CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**

Further written materials may be requested prior to or after the interview. First 5 LA reserves the right to schedule additional interviews/meetings. The highest scoring proposer from the interviews will move on to reference checks.

#### Reference Checks

Reference checks will be conducted after the Level 3 Interview. Information obtained through reference checks will complement the results of Level 3 review. First 5 LA must be able to contact at least 2 references provided by the proposer. If 2 references cannot be reached, First 5 LA may deem the proposer ineligible for this opportunity. Please use **Appendix F: Reference Check Template** with your submission.

#### Award of Contract

The highest scoring proposer from the Level 3 Interviews, in combination with information obtained through reference checks if conducted, will be recommended to First 5 LA's Executive Director for award of the contract. First 5 LA reserves the right to select the next highest scoring proposer if the highest scoring proposer does not pass reference checks.

### **X. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

The documents listed in this section are required in proposer's response to this RFQ to be considered a responsive proposal. **Appendix A – Proposal Checklist** is available to assist in application completion. Omission of any document/form will constitute an incomplete proposal and may be grounds for disqualification. Proposals that exceed First 5 LA's page limitation requirements will be adjusted by the removal of page(s) from the application. Pages will be removed before the Level 2: Proposal Review. The removed page(s) will not be made available to reviewers.

Unless explicitly requested below, do not embed hyperlinks in your proposal documents. Any hyperlink included in proposal documents will be deactivated before the Level 2: Proposal Review and will not be made available to reviewers.

- **Online Application:** In order to respond to this RFQ, proposers must complete an online application form and submit all required documents specified below through the online application system. *If applying with a Fiscal Sponsor, all information requested in the on-line application for the proposer organization must be that of the Fiscal Sponsor.* Proposers must set-up an online account in order to access the application form. Instructions on setting up the account and access the online application may be found at LINK

To access the online application: [https://www.grantrequest.com/SID\\_725?SA=SNA&FID=35363](https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_725?SA=SNA&FID=35363)

- **Writing & Journalism Experience Narrative (Maximum 5 pages, single-spaced, 11-point Arial or Times New Roman font with 1" margins):** Provide a description of how the proposed individual or project team's qualifications and experience aligns with the qualifications outlined in Section VI. Desired Qualifications and how these qualifications will contribute to accomplishing the work described in the Section IV. Scope of Work. In addition, provide a list of two (2) types of similar projects that were successfully concluded, including short descriptions of the work and any proposed personnel who were involved in those projects.

## **CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**

- **Resumes or Curricula Vitae (Maximum of 3 pages per team member):** Include resumes or curricula vitae for key personnel including proposed subcontractors, if applicable, who will exercise a major policy, administrative, or consultative role in carrying out the work described in Section IV. Scope of Work. Do not embed hyperlinks in resumes.
- **Writing Sample:** Proposer must submit a writing sample as a part of their proposal. The submitted writing Sample should be between 400-700 words, use the First 5 LA Writing Guide and secondarily Associated Press style, and should be submitted as an attachment in Microsoft Word. Use single-spaced Arial 10.5 font for all text and 1” margins. Authors are responsible for clearly expressed content, proofreading, and verifying all facts, including dates, titles, and correct spelling of names and organizations. Please refer to **Appendix B: Writing Sample Instructions** and **Appendix C: First 5 LA Writing Style Guide** for more information.
- **Proposed Hourly Rates:** Clearly indicate the proposed hourly rates for services described in Section IV. Scope of Work for all proposed personnel. Please use **Appendix G: Proposed Hourly Rates Template** with your submission.
- **One (1) Experience in Interpreting and Translating Complex Topics Work Sample (Maximum four (4) pages not including the work sample cover page, 8.5” x 11” page size, single-spaced, 11-point Arial or Times New Roman font with 1” margins):** First 5 LA is requesting one (1) work sample from proposers that demonstrates experience interpreting and translating complex topics. Proposer must provide a sample of similar/comparable articles, which demonstrate proposer’s skills as a writer, editor and proofreader, and relevant experience and expertise. Samples related to early childhood development issues as outlined in Section IV. Scope of Work preferred, but not required. Proposer may submit up to two (2) relevant articles (no more and no less than two) as long as the page number is no more than four (4) pages. Please use **Appendix H: Work Sample Cover Page** with your work sample submission.
- **One (1) Media Work Sample (Maximum two (2) pages not including the work sample cover page, 8.5” x 11” page size, single-spaced, 11-point Arial or Times New Roman font with 1” margins):** First 5 LA is requesting one (1) work sample demonstrating media experience. The Proposer must choose from the two bulleted options below and submit only one work sample reflecting experience in writing for media. Please use **Appendix H: Work Sample Cover Page** with your work sample submission.

Please choose only one (1) of the following options below:

- **Option #1:** An opinion editorial submitted to a single print or online news outlet with a clear point of view that can help inform or influence general public readers.
- **Option #2:** A press release written and pitched to a print or broadcast media outlet that provides newsworthy information about a company-community collaborative.
- **References:** Please submit at least three references for which the proposer has performed similar work as described by the RFQ. Please use **Appendix F: Reference Check Template** with your submission.
- **Litigation and Contract Compliance Form (Appendix E):** Please read the information on the required Litigation and Contract Compliance form thoroughly and include a signed copy by the

## CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ

proposal deadline. If you checked “Yes” to any of the questions on this form, please explain whether this will impact the project on this solicitation.

- **Business License, if applicable** (e.g., Business license, if required by the City or County in which your organization operates)

**Failure to submit all required attachments may constitute an incomplete proposal and may be grounds for disqualification.** Proposers are responsible for any errors and omissions in their proposals and applications. In order to respond to this RFQ, please complete and submit your proposal and all required documents to First 5 LA via online portal no later than **August 12, 2022 at 5:00PM.** **Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered and will be automatically disqualified.**

It is the responsibility of the proposer to ensure, prior to submission, that its proposal reflects the requirements of this solicitation, including any addenda First 5 LA may have issued. Proposers should not wait to submit documents through the online application system minutes before the submission deadline. First 5 LA will not be responsible for any delays proposers may encounter with the online application system.

#### **XI. TERMS OF THE RFQ**

First 5 LA has the right to amend this solicitation by written addendum. First 5 LA is responsible only for that which is expressly stated in the solicitation document and any authorized written addenda thereto. Such addenda shall be made available via the online funding center. Failure to address the requirements of an addendum may result in the proposal not being considered, at the sole discretion of First 5 LA. It is the responsibility of proposers to ensure, prior to submission, that their application reflects the most recent addenda information and RFQ requirements. Addenda to this solicitation, if any, will be posted on First 5 LA’s website at <https://www.first5la.org/news-resources/funding-center/>

First 5 LA reserves the right to reject all bids and re-advertise for bids, and that failure to comply with bid specification may be grounds for disqualification of bids. Each bidder or proposer shall be required to honor the price and specifications quoted for a minimum of ninety (90) calendar days following submission of the bid unless otherwise approved by First 5 LA. First 5 LA may waive any irregularity in bids or proposals if the irregularity does not provide an unfair competitive advantage over other bidders or proposers. First 5 LA also reserves the right to cancel this RFQ, in its sole discretion, at any time before execution of a contract.

The Fiscal Sponsor is considered the Contractor/Grantee and therefore it is responsible for all legal aspects of the contract/grant. As the Contractor/Grantee, the Fiscal Sponsor agrees to be accountable to First 5 LA for the programmatic and financial outcomes of the contract/grant. All information requested in the on-line application for the proposer organization is that of the Fiscal Sponsor.

First 5 LA shall not be liable for any costs incurred in connection with a proposer’s preparation of a proposal in response to this RFQ. Any cover letters, résumés and curriculum vita, including attached materials, submitted in response to this RFQ shall become First 5 LA’s property and subject to public disclosure.

Each proposal shall be retained for official files and will become public record upon submittal unless the proposal or specific parts of the proposal can be shown to be exempt from disclosure by law. The

#### **CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**

budget, scope of work and other contractual information may be included in board materials which are made public if the contract requires board approval. Each proposer may clearly label parts of a proposal as “CONFIDENTIAL” if the proposer thereby agrees to indemnify and defend First 5 LA for honoring such a designation. The failure to so label any information that is released by First 5 LA shall constitute a complete waiver of all claims for damages caused by any release of the information. If a public records request for information labeled confidential is received by First 5 LA, First 5 LA will notify the proposer of the request. Within seven (7) calendar days after First 5 LA’s notification to the proposer, it will be the proposer’s duty to act in protection of the labeled information. The proposer’s failure to so act shall constitute a complete waiver.

The proposer agrees that, by submitting application proposal, the proposer authorizes First 5 LA to verify any or all information and/or references submitted in the proposal.

False, misleading, statements in connection with a proposal shall be sufficient cause for rejection of the proposal at any time. The evaluation and determination in this area shall be at First 5 LA’s sole judgment.

First 5 LA may waive any irregularity in bids or proposals if the irregularity does not provide an unfair competitive advantage over other bidders or proposers.

## **XII. CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The successful proposer must sign and adhere to the provisions of the First 5 LA Contract (see **Sample Task Order Contract - Appendix D**). The successful proposer must execute the Contract without substantive alteration. All proposers must review the sample Contract in detail and fully understand the contractual obligations described in the Contract, including all insurance requirements. If a satisfactory agreement cannot be negotiated within 30 days of award, First 5 LA may, at its sole discretion, begin negotiations with the next qualified proposer, as determined by First 5 LA. First 5 LA may, after contract award, amend the awarded contract, scope of work and any other exhibits in accordance with the terms of the contract and as needed throughout the contract term to best meet the needs of First 5 LA.

First 5 LA may, at its discretion, request that the Contractor undertake additional, unanticipated, activities that are aligned to the project objectives of this RFQ and incorporate such activities into the final Scope of Work/Performance Matrix and Budget, if applicable.

Current and former First 5 LA grantees, contractors and vendors must be in good standing and compliant with all aspects of current and former agreements with First 5 LA in order to be eligible to respond to this RFQ. First 5 LA may deem a proposer ineligible to respond to this RFQ if it finds, in its sole discretion, that the proposer has done any of the following: (1) violated any term or condition of a First 5 LA agreement; (2) committed any act or omission, or engaged in a pattern or practice, that negatively reflects on the proposer’s quality, fitness or capacity to perform services listed in this RFQ; (3) committed an act or offense that indicates a lack of business integrity or business dishonesty; or (4) made or submitted a false claim to First 5 LA or any other public entity.

As stewards of public funds First 5 LA’s Funding Guidelines (<https://www.first5la.org/article/funding-guidelines/>) are intended to provide information about the restrictions on the use of First 5 LA funds. Although these Funding Guidelines are applicable generally, the terms of individual funding agreements will always take precedence over these guidelines.

## **CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**



The award of a contract by First 5 LA to an individual/agency/organization that proposes to use subcontractors for the performance of work under the contract resulting from this RFQ process shall not limit First 5 LA's right to approve subcontractors, assemble teams and/or assign leads. Each proposer 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 First 5 LA.

The commencement of any activities under the contract's Scope of Work/Performance Matrix (Exhibit A) will not begin until the contract execution date (the date all parties have signed and delivered the contract) and the successful proposer will not be eligible to obtain reimbursement for any costs incurred prior to the contract execution date, unless otherwise approved in writing by First 5 LA. If the awarded contract is not signed by the successful proposer within thirty (30) calendar days from the proposed intended start date, First 5 LA may withdraw the contract award. First 5 LA may revise the proposed effective date prior to final execution of the awarded contract.

If the value of the contract is \$150,000 or more in the aggregate in any fiscal year, the award and execution of the contract is subject to First 5 LA's Board approval. Any performance of services commenced prior to obtaining all written approvals by First 5 LA shall be considered voluntary prior to final execution of the contract.

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.

Unless otherwise submitted during the RFQ process, the successful proposer will be required to submit additional required documentation including, but not limited to, the following documents before the awarded contract can be fully executed:

- Litigation and Contract Compliance Form
- Signature Authorization Form and supporting documents as described in form

*If Applicable:*

- By-laws
- Articles of Incorporation
- Board of Directors or List of Partners
- Annual Independent Audit for prior fiscal year or calendar year
- Appropriate business licenses
- IRS Determination Letter for non-profit status
- Completed IRS Form W-9
- Memorandums of Understanding and Subcontracts (for any sub-contractors, collaborators, and/or partners)

It is First 5 LA's intent to contract with independent contractors as defined under California's AB 5 and not to create an employer/employee relationship.

## **CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**

### **XIII. APPEALS POLICY**

First 5 LA reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all submitted proposals. 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 solicitation. 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's decisions on procedural or formatting errors, such as failure to include required documentation or failure to comply with page limits, shall not be permitted. An appeal of a First 5 LA decision shall be in writing and filed within ten (10) business days following the date the notification of decision is made by First 5 LA. The appeal must be filed by email to the designated contact person on the solicitation or other method described in the solicitation. An appeal shall be deemed filed on the date it is received by First 5 LA. Any appeal received by First 5 LA after the close of business on the tenth (10th) business day following the date the notification of decision is issued shall be rejected. Please be advised that your agency has the right to appeal the decision. First 5 LA's Appeals Policy can be found at <https://www.first5la.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Procurement-Policy-2021.pdf> (see Section XI. Appeals for more information).

### **XIV. APPENDICES**

#### **For Informative Purposes:**

- **Appendix A** – Proposal Checklist
- **Appendix B** – Writing Sample Instructions
- **Appendix C** – First 5 LA Writing Guide
- **Appendix D** – Sample Task Order Contract

#### **For Submission:**

- **Appendix E** - Litigation and Contract Compliance Form
- **Appendix F** – Reference Check Template
- **Appendix G** – Proposed Hourly Rates Template
- **Appendix H** – Work Sample Cover Page

## **CONTENT WRITING, EDITING AND PROOFREADING RFQ**