



2021

First 5 Thrive!

Request for Proposals

LETTER OF INTENT DUE: AUGUST 23, 2021

PROPOSAL DUE: SEPTEMBER 10, 2021

Amended: 8/03/21

First 5 San Luis Obispo County
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A. Introduction

First 5 San Luis Obispo County

First 5 San Luis Obispo (SLO) County originated as the Children and Families Commission of San Luis Obispo County (Commission) in 1998 as part of California’s statewide voter Proposition 10. The intent of the Children and Families Act (Act) is to provide a comprehensive and integrated system of prevention and early intervention services for children prenatal to five years and their families in order to help young children grow and develop to their maximum potential. These services are paid for by a tobacco tax authorized by the Act. Eighty percent of the revenues collected goes to the 58 County Commissions to fund local programs. Annual tobacco tax revenues are distributed to County Commissions based upon county birth rates. The remaining twenty percent is used by the State Commission to implement statewide strategies.

A nine-person Commission appointed by the SLO County Board of Supervisors oversees and sets direction for First 5 SLO County. Commissioner backgrounds span the range of children’s services, including education, healthcare, social services, child care, public and private service organizations, and local government.

First 5 SLO County Mission and Vision

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to allocate funds and advocate for quality programs and services, supporting children, prenatal to age 5, to ensure that every child is healthy, developing to optimal potential, and ready to learn in school.

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to ensure children thrive in nurturing respectful environments and enter school healthy and ready to learn.

Sustained Community Support for Early Childhood

First 5 SLO County believes in shared investment to support our young children and their families during a critical and vulnerable stage of life – for two reasons. First, state tobacco tax revenues that support First 5 statewide are diminishing over time with the welcome decrease in smoking rates. Second, building lasting supports for young children and families into the fabric of our community is a wise choice, both morally and economically. To that end, First 5 funding is intended to support and expand services where resources are otherwise limited.

Strategic Plan

In June 2020 the Commissioners approved the [First 5 San Luis Obispo County Strategic Plan for FY 2020-2024](#). The Plan identifies the following three Focus Areas that inform First 5 program investments and advocacy to address core community needs in early childhood:

1. *Child Health and Development*: Promoting young children’s wellness and access to quality care.
2. *Early Learning*: Ensuring that from birth, children have rich and varied opportunities to develop their minds.
3. *Resilient Families*: Supporting parents and families to build stable, nurturing and enriching home environments for young children.

B. First 5 Thrive Funding Opportunity

As our community continues to build strength during these uncertain times, First 5 SLO County stands united with children and their families and with the organizations who serve them. To that end, First 5 has allocated up to \$900,000 through June 2024 toward one or more “big idea” proposals that create or expand significant value to the local system of helping young children and their families thrive.

First 5 is inviting child and family centered service providers to submit proposals that seek to create or increase support for children prenatal to age 5 and their families in one or more of the three focus areas of its FY 20-24 strategic plan: *Child Health & Development, Early Learning, Resilient Families*.

Proposals may:

1. Expand capacity of existing services.
2. Enhance or improve existing services.
3. Expand and enhance existing services.
4. Create new or innovative approaches to address existing needs.

C. What are the expected services to be delivered?

The purpose of this funding is for the Commission to address ongoing needs, challenges and concerns faced by children prenatal to age 5 and their families in San Luis Obispo County. The Commission desires to fund one to two proposals that will have the potential for significant positive impact.

Specific Requirements

1. Program/services must address the needs of children prenatal to age 5 and their families.
2. Program must address one or more of the following focus areas:
 - a. *Child Health and Development*: Promoting young children’s wellness and access to quality care.
 - b. *Early Learning*: Ensuring that from birth, children have rich and varied opportunities to develop their minds.
 - c. *Resilient Families*: Supporting parents and families to build stable, nurturing and enriching home environments for young children.
3. Solutions must be offered and delivered in a fair and equitable manner such that all families - particularly those in isolated, marginalized and otherwise vulnerable communities – understand that these services are available and are given ample opportunity for access.
4. Proposed activities must adhere to the latest local and state guidelines and safety measures as they relate to the prevention of and spread of Covid-19.

D. What is the goal of the First 5 Thrive program?

1. To address one or more concrete needs of children prenatal to age 5 and their families in the areas of: Child Health & Development, Early Learning or Resilient Families.
2. To fill gaps in support and service through leveraged funding and community partnerships.

E. Available Funds

- Total of up to \$900,000 is available through June 30, 2024 (Actual award amount may be lower if more than one proposal is funded).
- Expected Contract Duration: November 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024.

- Shared Investment: First 5 Thrive funds are intended to build on existing systems and infrastructure, to support organizations that have a demonstrated history of successfully providing services to benefit children from prenatal to five years and their families. A successful applicant will have an established infrastructure and capacity to address the challenges stated. To that end, First 5 funding must account for no more than 75% of the total proposed program budget. In the budget section described below, applicants must show at least a 25% cash or in-kind match for funding requested.

F. Who May Submit

- Non-profit organizations with 501(c)(3) status
- City/County Governments
- School/School Districts
- Community Based Private Entities

G. Letter of Intent

Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent as the first step before submitting a full proposal. Submitting a Letter of Intent to apply does not bind applicants to complete the application process but it is a required step in the application process. The Letter of Intent shall be no more than one page in length, and include the following:

- Agency Name, Primary Contact, Phone & Email
- Area/s of Focus: 1. *Child Health and Development* 2. *Early Learning* 3. *Resilient Families*
- Child/Family Need/s to be Addressed
- Brief Summary of Planned Services to Address Need
- Expected Impact/s
- Estimated Total Funding Request Amount
- Letter of Intent Due Monday August 23, 2021
- Email: jwells@first5slo.org

H. What to Include in the Proposal

The Proposal should include the following:

1. **Title Page:** Organization's name, contact person, address, telephone, e-mail address
2. **Proposal Narrative** (Not to exceed 4 pages):
 - History of providing supports that benefit young children prenatal to aged 5 and their families.
 - Chosen Areas of Focus?
 - Description of the proposed plan to expand, enhance and/or create services/programs.
 - Number of families and unique children you anticipate will benefit?
 - If you are requesting funding to increase capacity for existing services, please include your current capacity/numbers served annually in the past 2 years and the annual increase in capacity you expect to gain.
 - How will you ensure equitable and fair access to services and distribution of resources?
 - Who will supervise and train staff?
 - How will you provide services to non-English speaking families?
 - What other community organizations or groups will you partner with/involve?

3. **Budget and Budget Narrative** (Not to exceed 4 pages): 32-month budget including the requested and total project amount. First 5 funding must account for no more than 75% of the total proposed program budget. Please describe at least a 25% cash or in-kind match, or other program partner contribution.
4. **Scalability** (1 page): Describe how you would adapt or scale down the program if your request is not fully funded.

I. Proposal Restrictions

- A. Applicants should be aware that these funds must be used toward services to benefit families that include at least one child prenatal to age 5.
- B. No funding will be provided for existing services currently funded through another source (i.e., no funding may be used to supplant local, state, or federal funds for any purpose).
- C. Funds that are requested by the applicant must be used exclusively for the operation and administration of the proposed activities outlined in the applicant's proposal.

J. Proposal Deadline

Friday September 10, 2021 at 5:00 pm.

K. Submission

Provide one (1) copy of the proposal in a single PDF file by email to Jason Wells at jwells@first5slo.org.

L. Award Process

Proposal Review

A panel will review submitted proposals. Proposals will be ranked according to merit of the proposal as it relates to the need, and the applicant's demonstrated capacity to implement and manage the requirements of this request. Applicants may be interviewed for further program vetting and questions.

Notification of Intent to Award

By September 17, 2021, notification of the funding recommendations will be e-mailed to all applicants.

Commission Vote on Recommendations

The Commission will vote on proposal(s) award recommendations on September 23, 2021, at its regularly scheduled meeting.

Contract Approval

The Commission is expected to vote on contract approval October 28, 2021.

Sole Discretion

Final proposal selection is at the sole discretion of the Commission, which reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to fund one or more proposals, to negotiate programmatic or budgetary changes with applicants or to make no selection based on proposals. There is no appeal to this process.

M. Application Timeline

The following timetable indicates dates of major significance to this project:

Release of Request for Proposal	August 3, 2021
Letter of Intent Due	August 23, 2021
Proposal Due	September 10, 2021
Intent to Award Funding Announced	September 17, 2021
Proposal Award Recommendation to Commission	September 23, 2021
Contract Approval	October 28, 2021
Expected Contract Start Date	November 1, 2021

For questions, interpretations, or clarifications of this Request for Proposal please contact Jason Wells-jjwells@first5slo.org or Wendy Wendt-wwendt@first5slo.org at First 5 San Luis Obispo County 805.781.4058.

N. General Terms and Conditions

1. Proposers wishing to submit proposals in response to this request do so entirely at their own expense, and submission of a proposal indicates the proposer's willingness to conform to the conditions contained in this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS unless clearly and specifically noted otherwise.
2. First 5, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to determine whether any proposer meets the minimum eligibility standards, to determine whether a proposal is responsive, and to select a proposal(s) that best serves its objectives. First 5 reserves the right to make an award in part or in full to the proposer of its choice, based on the proposer's evaluation of the separate project components. First 5 reserves the right to modify the information required for each phase of the selection process.
3. Notwithstanding any other provision of this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS, proposers are hereby advised that this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS is a solicitation of proposals only and is not to be construed as an offer to enter into any contract or agreement. First 5 shall have the unconditional and unqualified right to withdraw, cancel, or amend this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS at any time.
4. Responses to this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS should be made according to the instructions contained herein. Failure to adhere to REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS instructions may be cause for rejection of the proposal. A proposal which contains conditions or limitations set up by the proposer may be deemed irregular and subsequently rejected by First 5.
5. First 5 reserve the right, at its sole discretion, to waive variances in proposals provided such action is in the best interest of First 5. Where First 5 waives minor variances in proposals, such waiver does not modify the REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS requirements or excuse the proposer from full compliance with the REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS. Notwithstanding any minor variance, First 5 may hold any proposer to strict compliance with the REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS.

- 6.** False, incomplete, or unresponsive statements in the proposal response may be cause for its rejection. The evaluation and determination of the fulfillment of the REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS requirements will be First 5's responsibility and its judgment shall be final.
- 7.** First 5 reserves the right to interpret or change any provision of this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS at any time prior to the proposal submission date. Such interpretation or change shall be in the form of a written addendum to this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS. Such addendum will become part of this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS and any resultant contract. Such addendum shall be made available to each firm which has received a REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS. Should such addendum require additional information not previously requested, a proposer's failure to address the requirements of such addendum in the final proposal response may result in the proposal not be considered.
- 8.** First 5 has, at its sole discretion, the unconditional and unqualified right to determine whether a time extension is required for submission of proposals, in which case, a written REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS addendum issued by First 5 shall indicate the new submission date for proposals. Prior to the final submission date, proposers may retrieve their proposals to make additions or alterations. Such retrieval, however, shall not extend the final submission date.
- 9.** Proposers should carefully review this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS and all attachments for comments, questions, defects, objections or any other matter requiring clarification or correction (collectively "Comments.") All Comments concerning the REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS must be sent to Jason Wells jwells@first5slo.org by the deadline included in the timeline above.
- 10.** This REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS does not represent an offer or commitment by FIRST 5 to enter into an agreement with a proposer or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request. The responses and any information made as part of the responses will not be returned to proposers. This REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS and the selected proposer's response to this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS, may, by reference, become a part of any formal agreement between the proposer and First 5 resulting from this solicitation.
- 11.** The proposer shall not collude in any manner or engage in any practices with any other proposer(s) that may restrict or eliminate competition or otherwise restrain trade. Violation of this instruction will cause the proposer's submittal to be rejected by First 5. The prohibition is not intended to preclude joint ventures or subcontracts that are identified in the proposal. All proposals submitted must be the original work product of the proposer. The copying, paraphrasing, or otherwise using of substantial portions of the work product of another proposer is not permitted. Failure to adhere to this instruction will cause the proposal to be rejected.
- 12.** No person will offer, give or agree to give any First 5 employee or its representatives any gratuity or offer of employment in connection with this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS or the award of a subsequent contract by First 5. No First 5 employee or its representatives will solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from any other person a gratuity or offer of employment in connection with this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS or a subsequent First 5 contract.
- 13.** To withdraw a proposal, the proposer must submit a written request, signed by an authorized representative, to the REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS Coordinator. After withdrawing a previously submitted proposal, the proposer may submit another proposal at any time up to the deadline for submitting proposals. Proposers are liable for all errors or omissions contained in their proposals. Proposers will not be allowed to alter proposal documents after the deadline for submitting proposals.

First 5 will not accept any amendments, revisions or alterations to proposals after the deadline for proposal submittal unless such is formally requested, in writing, by First 5.

14. All proposals and other materials submitted in response to this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS become the property of First 5. Selection or rejection of a proposal does not affect this right. All proposal information, including detailed price and cost information, will be held in confidence during the evaluation process. Upon the completion of the evaluation of proposals, the proposals and associated materials will be open for review by the public to the extent allowed by the California Public Records Act, (Government Code Section 6250-6270 and 6275-6276.48). By submitting a proposal, the proposer acknowledges and accepts that the contents of the proposal and associated documents will become open to public inspection.

15. The California Public Records Act limits First 5's ability to withhold trade secrets or related records, the disclosure of which may be exempt or prohibited pursuant to federal or state law. If a submittal contains any trade secrets that a proposer does not want disclosed to the public or used by First 5 for any purpose other than evaluation of the proposer's eligibility, each sheet of such information must be marked with the designation "Confidential." First 5 will notify the submitter of data so classified of any request to inspect such data so that the submitter will have an opportunity to establish that such information is exempt from inspection in any proceeding to compel inspection.

16. After review of the proposals, First 5 intends to enter into contract negotiations with the selected proposer. These negotiations could include all aspects of services and fees, or only a select few. If a contract is not finalized in a reasonable period of time, First 5 will open negotiations with other proposers.

17. If any provision of this REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS is declared by a court to be illegal or in conflict with any law, the validity of the remaining terms and provisions will not be affected; and, the rights and obligations of First 5 and proposers will be construed and enforced as if the REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS did not contain the particular provision held to be invalid.

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