



## EARLY LEARNING COMMUNITIES NETWORK



**Application Deadline: 5:00 PM, November 8, 2019**

### Early Learning Communities Network Request for Proposal (RFP)

#### APPLICATION INFORMATION:

1. All sections of the application must be completed.
2. Completed applications must be emailed to:

**Page Tomblin**  
**Senior Administrator, Policy**  
[page.tomblin@first5alameda.org](mailto:page.tomblin@first5alameda.org)

3. Applications must be received by **November 8, 2019**  
**WE WILL NOT ACCEPT FAXED COPIES.**
4. All applicants will be notified by of the selection choice in a timely manner

If you have any questions, please contact Page Tomblin at 510-227-6982 or via email at [page.tomblin@first5alameda.org](mailto:page.tomblin@first5alameda.org).

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

First 5 Alameda County (First 5) is a public entity created by the passage of California's proposition 10 (Prop 10) in 1998. Prop 10 added fifty cents per pack of cigarettes to help fund early childhood education and development related services for children ages birth to five. First 5's commission oversees the distribution of that funding in Alameda County, making it the largest county funder of birth to 5 programming. First 5 is also the leading public system policy voice focused solely on young children and the environments that promote their growth: familial, social, economic, and physical.

First 5 approved a Strategic Plan for a comprehensive system of early intervention services for children birth to 5 years of age and families in Alameda County. A key component of the First 5 Strategic Plan is the Policy and Evaluation Strategy, which provides focuses on local policy and systems change in order to bring proven programs and practices to scale. It also supports an early childhood system of care that is coordinated and responsive (2017-2021 Strategic Plan, page 28).

First 5 is seeking qualified agencies that are part of the Alameda County Early Learning Communities Network (ELCN) to implement components of the Early Learning Action Plans developed by city teams participating in the ELCN. Please review the application materials for scope of work, application instructions and the criteria for selection.

## SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

### EARLY LEARNING COMMUNITIES NETWORK OVERVIEW

The Early Learning Communities concept is the result of a collaborative effort of 16 cities and communities from across the country, including Alameda County, convened by the Center for the Study of Social Policy and the National League of Cities in 2016. First 5 participated in the development of this national model because it fits perfectly with our plans to expand our partnerships locally. Based off this model, the Alameda County Early Learning Communities Network consists of five cities who are participating in five learning community sessions in 2019. The goal is for each city to create an Early Learning Plan which will allow them to be eligible to apply for a First 5 grant through this Request for Proposals process.

### IMPACT: WHY EARLY CHILDHOOD?

We know that city leaders are on the front lines of improving lives for young children and their families at a time when the Bay Area is one of the most expensive places to live. But here's what we know about the importance of early childhood:

- 90% of a child's brain develops in the first five years of life, making this work critical to achieving equitable, thriving communities.
- Children with high quality early childhood experiences are more likely to perform to grade level standards, graduate high school, be employed, and less likely to be arrested
- Studies indicate that every \$1 invested in early childhood eventually pays off eightfold.
- Advocates and researchers recognize that effective early childhood development policy efforts must be expansive and include family supports like employment, quality child care, and basic needs.

### WHAT IS AN EARLY LEARNING COMMUNITY?

An Early Learning Community elevates the importance of “place” in shaping healthy, happy, productive lives. Early learning cities put policies and practices into place ensuring parents and care givers have all the opportunities and support they need to nurture and promote their children’s early learning and healthy development.

The Center for the Study of Social Policy and the National League of Cities convened local and city leaders to “put all the pieces together” to develop and strengthen these early childhood systems to help young children thrive. They created a framework and action guide called *Early Learning Communities: Building Blocks for Success*. It centers on four building blocks that promote early childhood development and family well-being:

1. **Commitment:** Community leadership, commitment, and public will to make early childhood a priority
2. **Services:** Quality services that work for all young children and their families
3. **Neighborhoods:** Neighborhoods where families can thrive
4. **Policy:** Policies that support and are responsive to families

### OPPORTUNITY: ALAMEDA COUNTY CITIES

Alameda County’s early childhood system is complex and fragmented. It is a large, diverse county featuring some groundbreaking and effective supports for families, but also persistent inequality and inequity exacerbated by disparate early circumstances. What is more, the expense of quality child care has an even bigger impact in a county with relatively high cost of living.

- A family of two adults, one infant, and one preschooler must make roughly \$117,000 annually to meet their basic needs
- One in ten Alameda County children live below the federal poverty level
- The cost of full-time childcare for one infant has grown 80% over the past 20 years to more than \$21,000 annually

Research shows that place matters. Where a child grows up has a deep impact on long term health and economic outcomes. That is why partnering with cities is so important. Cities and municipalities are crucial hubs through which an early childhood system can be rapidly improved. However, strategically planning to better serve families with young children is not a typical focus of city policy making.

## SECTION 3: SCOPE OF WORK AND REQUIREMENTS

### OBJECTIVE

First 5 Alameda County invited city and unincorporated area leaders in Alameda County to join a network focused on early childhood in January of 2019. Five cities actively participate: Alameda, Emeryville, Hayward, Newark and Oakland and are now eligible to apply for this funding opportunity. The objective is for these city teams to use First 5 funding to finalize and implement components of their Early Learning Action plan.

## ACTIVITIES

The members of the ELCN engage in the following:

- 1) **Participate and complete initial five ELCN Sessions in 2019:** These sessions emphasized the four building blocks and connect local leaders with the individuals and organizations influencing early childhood services, programs, and advocacy in Alameda County communities.
- 2) **Develop Early Learning Action Plans:** Over the last several months, city teams have been developing their Early Learning Action Plans by working through the Progress Rating Tools distributed at each ELCN meeting. Final plans should be comprehensive in nature, addressing all the Building Blocks and Target Areas. While some of the work will take new resources and commitments, there are other areas that require less of a financial commitment but are more related to coordinating and taking advantage of technical assistance that can be provided by First 5.
- 3) **Implement Early Learning Action Plans:** Through this funding opportunity, cities and communities can apply for grant funds from First 5 Alameda County to implement pieces of their plans.

ELCN grantees should expect the following:

- 1) **Participate in ELCN Meetings:** The city teams will continue to attend ELCN learning community meetings, supported by First 5, to engage in peer support, networking and continuous learning related to implementing their Early Learning Action Plans. This will include occasional meetings during the grant period of January 2020 – June 2021.
- 2) **Integrate with First 5 Programs and Investments:** First 5 will work with applicants to integrate First 5 strategies based on neighborhood need, such as Quality Early Care and Education, Early Identification, Fatherhood, Training, and Parent Engagement and Support. Examples of integration strategies might include:
  - a. Providing professional development and resources for family child care and family, friend, and neighbor providers in the neighborhood
  - b. Developing a plan to promote child development information and implement early identification strategies such as developmental screenings
  - c. Piloting a fatherhood support group or class
  - d. Host trainings for providers, parents, caregivers, and community members on topics relevant to children and families
  - e. For more on First 5 Alameda County, please read our strategic plan [http://www.first5alameda.org/files/strategic/F5AC\\_StrategicPlanDesign\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.first5alameda.org/files/strategic/F5AC_StrategicPlanDesign_FINAL.pdf)
- 3) **Incorporate Results Based Accountability (RBA), Data Reporting and Evaluation:** Grantees commit to participating in training, data reporting, and RBA “Turn the Curve” sessions to support continuous performance improvement. First 5 will provide technical assistance to support compliance.
- 4) **Develop Sustainability Plans:** The city teams will develop a sustainability plan for components of their Early Learning Action Plan by the end of the grant term (June 30, 2021).

## REPORTING AND EVALUATION

Grantees and any subcontractors are expected to participate in all data collection and evaluation efforts including:

- 1) First 5 will work with grantees on RBA capacity building and performance reporting, including performance measure targets, specific data collection, and reporting expectations.
- 2) First 5 is committed to tracking individual and demographic data for children, parents and providers in whom we invest in order to understand if/how our investments contribute to the outcomes we hope to support. Grantees will be expected to comply with First 5's individual and demographic data collection guidelines.
- 3) Applicants should have the ability to collect, track, and report data, including individual level and demographic data, and work with both community and external evaluators.
- 4) Grantees must obtain appropriate consents.
- 5) Grantees must use the HIGH5 (Salesforce) system to report on family participation in programs, demographics, and referrals to services.

## SECTION 4: TIMELINE, FUNDING AND DELIVERABLES

### TIMELINE

This RFP closes on November 8, 2019 with proposals due by 5:00 p.m. In November, complete proposal packets will be reviewed and initial funding decisions will be announced, pending First 5 Commission approval. In December, First 5's recommended award recipients are reviewed and approved by First 5's Commission. If Commission approved, award recipients negotiate and finalize with First 5 staff scope of work and budgets. The term of the contract is scheduled to be from January 2019 through June 2021.

### EARLY LEARNING COMMUNITIES NETWORK FUNDING

- 1) First 5 will award up to five (5) grants of up to \$135,000 for each participating ELCN city team. This proposal is for an 18- month program grant for each city team. Proposals that exceed \$135,000 for this RFP will not be considered.
- 2) Grantee payments will be made based satisfactory work performance of identified deliverables.
- 3) The program funding is intended to be used to implement an Early Learning Action Plan that focuses on families with children birth to five. Twenty -five percent (25%) of funding may also be used toward planning for implementation of components of the Early Learning Action Plan.
- 4) First 5 is making a commitment to fund successful grantees through June 30, 2021 for the funding made available in this RFP.
- 5) A facilities funding opportunity will be available to all awarded ELCN city teams for an amount not to exceed \$45,000 (in addition to the \$135,000 available through this funding opportunity). Information about this funding request will be made available in winter 2019.

## SECTION 5: ELIGIBILITY & APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

### REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

1. This request for proposals is available only to cities that participated in the Alameda County Early Learning Communities Network by forming a team representing the city and representatives attended four of the ELCN meetings in 2019.

2. There must be one (1) lead agency, a 501 (c) 3 or public agency applying for these funds to implement a component of the Early Learning Action Plan. They will be responsible for ensuring the component funded is implemented, ensure that the ELCN collaborative table or group monitoring the implementation of the Early Learning Action Plan meets, and manages any subcontractors included in the budget.
3. The lead agency must have demonstrated capacity to implement the goals and meet the administrative and reporting requirements outlined in this RFP.

**DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

Desired applicant attributes include but are not limited to:

- Ability to track and report on performance for continuous improvement and evaluation.
- Use First 5’s data management system, HIGH5, to submit semi-annual invoices and reports.
- Experience managing sub-contractors and working with partners.

**APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Proposals should be submitted in the following format:

- Editable PDF or Microsoft Word format (with Excel used for budget—template found in Appendix A)
- Single line spacing
- 12 point font
- 1-inch margins

A complete proposal should include the components below:

**1. Narrative**

Please respond with a Narrative Section intended to give context to the Early Learning Action Plan. The Narrative Section should not be more than three to six pages (3-6) and should address the questions:

- 1) Describe the city team participating in ELCN, how they helped craft the Early Learning Action Plan, and describe how this team will move this plan forward. Note: a more detailed list of organizations will be listed below under component #3: ELCN City Team Partnership.
- 2) Outline the overall goal(s) of your Early Learning Action Plan.
- 3) Complete a timeline for implementation. Sample is here:

Activity	Dates

- 4) Describe how you will engage parents, families and community members in further developing and implementing the Early Learning Action Plan for your city.
- 5) The intention of the ELCN effort is to spark long-term systems and policy changes improving opportunities and support for young families at a local level. Provide detail of the efforts your team will engage in to ensure the Early Learning Action Plan will be sustained over time.
- 6) Describe the program or element(s) of the Early Learning Plan that you will support with this funding. Detail the following:
  - a. Brief background on the organizations carrying out the plan component and why they are the appropriate organization for this role.
  - b. First 5 holds equity as a core value, which in part means First 5 seeks to disseminate the greatest resources to those communities furthest from opportunity. Describe the population in your city that you intend to serve and/or engage with this funding. If it is a program that will be implemented, include the anticipated number of children and families to be served, and likely demographics (i.e. languages spoken, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic, gender, etc).
  - c. Background on the staff or staff positions that will be funded through First 5.

**2. Early Learning Action Plans**

Please submit with your application packet your final Early Learning Action Plan as formatted in Appendix A.

**3. ELCN City Team Partnerships**

Please provide, in detail, the role each member of your ELCN city team will play. See template in Appendix B.

**4. Project Budget**

See below Section 6: Project Budget for details and template in Appendix C.

**SECTION 6: PROJECT BUDGET**

**PROJECT BUDGET**

Please provide a budget that represents the total investment of lead and participating subcontractors/organizations showing additional resources that will go toward implementing the Early Learning Action plan.

Please see the Excel template found in Appendix C to detail your budget for the term (January 2019 – June 2021). By law, First 5 funding may not be used to supplant other funds. First 5 funding may only be used to expand or enhance existing programs or to initiate new services or programs benefiting children prenatal to age five.

- **Personnel Line Items:** List only positions directly involved with supporting the expansion or enhancement activities in your proposed program. Each position should be listed as a separate line item. Cost of benefits should be combined as a single “Personnel Benefits” line item.
- **Administrative/Indirect Costs:** Up to 15% of total direct costs may be included. Budgets in excess of \$150,000 must identify the specific administrative line-items that will be charged to the award for approval by First 5. Examples of expenses that are eligible line items include: audit, bookkeeping/payroll/finance, computer information technology services, facilities/maintenance, insurance, utilities and personnel costs, including staff time who works minimally at 5% FTE or less. An approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement may be submitted in lieu of itemization of administrative/indirect costs. **Administrative/Indirect Costs cannot exceed 15% of direct costs.**
- **Planning:** Up to 25% of the funding request may be used toward planning, which might include but not be limited to engaging the community in identifying assets and needs or designing a facility that serves families of young children.
- **Equipment Costs:** Itemize individual piece(s) of equipment that cost \$1,000 or more.
- **Facilities:** The facilities request for the ELCN city teams will be released at a later date. Please do not add facilities request to the budget for this RFP.
- **In-Kind Contribution:** If funds from other sources are supplementing this grant (such as through supporting FTE, program materials, etc.), please add them to the “In-Kind” table of the budget. In-kind contributions are not required but help promote sustainability.

**Please Note:** Budgets are subject to negotiation and final approval by First 5 Alameda County, if funding is awarded.

## SECTION 7: SELECTION CRITERIA & SELECTION PROCESS

### SCREENING CRITERIA

Applications must meet the following criteria:

1. Be complete and comply with RFP guidelines.
2. Be electronically submitted by the deadline, including all additional documents. No late submissions will be accepted.
3. No ongoing, unresolved reporting, programmatic, and/or fiscal issues from previous First 5 grants or contracts.
4. Demonstrate that the proposed activities support funding priorities and desired outcomes of the First 5 Alameda County Strategic Plan as described in these Application Guidelines.
5. Have a physical location in the neighborhood identified by the applicant in the city for which they are applying.

### SELECTION PROCESS

Prior to evaluating submitted applications, a review committee will be formed, and the decision-making process will unfold as follows:

1. A review panel will review all proposals. This panel will be composed of First 5 staff and individual(s) from key stakeholder groups that may include: community based organizations,

including parent advocacy agencies, First 5 staff from other counties, representatives from the philanthropic community, and public agency staff.

2. The review panel will make a funding recommendation to First 5 leadership who will provide a final recommendation to the First 5 Alameda County Commission. Grant awards are **not final** until approved by the Commission.

## SECTION 8: OTHER INFORMATION

1. No response will be considered for award unless submitted in full, delivered on or before the date specified in this RFP.
2. Specifications are carefully prepared describing the services desired. An addendum will be issued to all applicants, if necessary, stating revisions, deletions, or additions to be made to the specifications.
3. Solicitation of qualifications in no way obligates First 5 to purchase any or all of the described goods or services prior to bid award by the First 5 Commission.
4. First 5 shall require indemnification on behalf of itself and Alameda County entities with any agencies or individuals into which it enters into agreements. In addition, First 5 requires all agencies to provide evidence of both workers compensation and general liability insurance, with First 5 listed as additional insured.

## APPENDIX A

### EARLY LEARNING ACTION PLAN

Target	Existing Programs and Resources Contributing to this Target	Short Term Action	Long Term Action	Person/ Organizations Responsible (indicate lead)	Indicators of Success
<b><i>Building Block #1: Community Leadership, Commitment and Public Will to Make Early Childhood a Priority</i></b>					
<b><i>Objectives and Background on Building Block 1:</i></b>					
<b>1. Local leaders work together across systems with a focus on early childhood.</b>					
<b>2. Community members support and understand the importance of early childhood health, learning and well-being.</b>					
<b>3. Families have access to high quality, basic services that proactively promote and support health, learning and families strengths</b>					

<b>4. A rich network of informal supports is available for all families.</b>					
<b>5. Community resources for children are well known, accessible and easy to use.</b>					

<b><i>Building Block #2: Quality Services that Work for All Young Children and their Families</i></b>					
<b><i>Objectives and Background on Building Block 2:</i></b>					
<b>1. Children and families at risk and those with identified needs have timely access to more intensive services</b>					
<b>2. Families and Parents are Actively Engaged as Partners</b>					
<b>3. Supports are in place for service providers</b>					

**Building Blocks #3 and #4: Neighborhoods Where Families Can Thrive and Policies that are Responsive to Families**

**1. Economic and employment opportunities are available to all parents/caregivers.**

**Objectives and background on Building Blocks 3 and 4:**

Parents and caregivers have access to supports (including child care) that allow them to be economically stable and meet their family’s basic needs.					
--	--	--	--	--	--

**2. City policies are designed with consideration for how they impact young children and families.**

Child Care					
Transportation					
Housing and Economic Development					

## APPENDIX B

### EARLY LEARNING COMMUNITIES CITY TEAM PARTNERSHIPS

<b>Early Learning Communities Network City Team Partnerships</b>		
Please provide, in detail, the role of the members of your ELCN city team will play. <i>Bulleted lists and brevity encouraged.</i>		
City Team Member (name of agency or organization)	Role	Staff Person(s)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		



**APPENDIX C  
PROPOSED BUDGET**

BUDGET LINE ITEMS	Total Proposed Budget		Justification of Expense
	FY2019-20	FY2020-21	
<b>PERSONNEL EXPENSES</b> * for positions greater than 5% FTE			
<i>List position, FTE % on project, rate</i>			<i>Brief description of job responsibilities</i>
<b>Total Salaries</b>			
Personnel Benefits			
<b>PERSONNEL EXPENSES SUBTOTAL</b>			
Training			
Program Materials			
Printing			
Office Supplies			
Staff Travel			
Consulting Services			
<i>List hourly unit cost, # of hours, term</i>			
Evaluation			
Miscellaneous			
<b>GENERAL EXPENSES SUBTOTAL</b>			
<b>EQUIPMENT</b> <i>Itemize equipment costs more than \$2,000</i>			
<b>EQUIPMENT SUBTOTAL</b>			

<b>SUBCONTRACTORS</b> Requires First 5 prior approval; List separately, if more than one subcontractor, and submit subcontractor's project budget			
<b>SUBCONTRACTORS SUBTOTAL</b>			
<b>OTHER EXPENSES</b> Additional line Items exceeding \$5,000			
<b>OTHER EXPENSES SUBTOTAL</b>			
<b>SUBTOTAL OF DIRECT EXPENSES</b> Sum of totals for Personnel, General, Equipment, Subcontractors and Other			
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE/INDIRECT COSTS</b> Maximum 15% of Direct Costs			
<b>TOTAL BUDGET per Term</b>			
<b>TOTAL CONTRACT Amount</b>			<i>Sum of total budgets for two terms.</i>

**IN-KIND SUPPORT**

**City Team:**

*Please provide details of the In-Kind support you plan use to help promote sustainability.*

Source (Agency name, Partner, etc)	In-Kind Amount	In-Kind Details (type of In-Kind support, etc.)
<b>Total In-Kind Support</b>	\$ -	