

FIRST 5



2013-2015 COMMUNITY GRANTS INITIATIVE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

ELIGIBILITY

- 1. Our organization works in various cities in Alameda County, but our central office is located outside the county. Can we still apply?**

Yes. You are eligible to apply as long as your services are provided in Alameda County and benefit children ages 0 to 5 and their families who live in the county.

- 2. Can our agency be a partner in one project and apply as a lead agency for another?**

Yes. You can be a lead agency on one application and a collaborating partner on a separate application. You may not, however, be a lead agency on two different grant applications.

- 3. Please clarify who we may serve with First 5 Alameda County (F5AC) funding, specifically the age children should be in order to make a family eligible.**

F5AC funding for the Community Grants Initiative is intended to be used for services to families from pregnancy until children turn 5 years of age.

- 4. I am a for-profit business and I want to provide goods or services to families in my community. Can I apply?**

For-profit businesses may not apply. However, a for-profit may collaborate with a 501(c) 3 who can apply as the lead partner.

- 5. Can an individual apply for a Community Grant? I'm a consultant who works with children ages 0 to 5.**

Eligible applicants are public agencies or 501(c)3 community agencies. If you are neither of these, you must partner with an eligible agency who will be the applicant.

- 6. Does the requirement for two years of experience serving families with children ages 0 to 5 mean two years from the time we received our 501(c)3 status?**

Eligibility does not depend on when your 501(c)3 status began. Eligible applicant organizations for the Targeted grant category must have had a specific programmatic focus on serving families with children ages 0 to 5 for a minimum of two years as of the March 1, 2013 grant application deadline.

FUNDING REQUESTS

1. Can we apply for more than one grant?

No. Only one proposal per agency is permitted. Alameda County government entities, cities in Alameda County, and Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland are limited to one proposal per fiscally independent department.

2. My agency has multiple divisions. Can we submit multiple applications?

Each agency may submit only one application. The exceptions are Alameda County government entities, cities in Alameda County, and Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland which may submit one application per fiscally independent department.

3. Do you have a specific proportion of public to non-profit proposals that you intend to fund?

No, there is no ratio of public to non-profit agencies that may be funded. Historically, the majority of agencies funded have been community-based, 501(c)3 non-profit agencies.

4. We are a current F5AC grantee. Can we apply for funding to continue our current program or do we have to propose something different?

Yes, you can apply for funding to continue a program currently funded by the Community Grants Initiative; it is not supplantation to do so. There is no requirement or preference for a current grantee to propose a new or different activity in a subsequent funding request. You may, of course, choose to propose a new program or new activities if you wish.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROGRAM QUALIFICATIONS

1. Can my agency and program serve clients other than children ages 0 to 5?

Although your agency may serve adults, youth, and families with children 5 years and older, funding from First 5 Alameda County may only be used to provide services for pregnant women, infants, and children under age 5 and their families in Alameda County. If a child is 4 at the time the family begins to receive services and turns 5 during the grant year, the child can continue to receive services until the end of the grant year (June 30th). A child is not eligible for services if the child is already 5 at the time the family is enrolled for services.

2. Are there licensure restrictions or requirements for staff qualifications?

First 5 Alameda County does not have any general requirements regarding qualifications or licensing. We encourage agencies to use best practices. The qualifications and licensure of staff should be in alignment with practice standards for the proposed service.

3. Is a 501(c)3 considered a public organization?

No.

4. Must we submit proof of 501(c)3 status as part of the application?

No, that is not necessary at the time of application. We may ask funded agencies for proof of 501(c)3 status when we execute a grant agreement.

5. If we are an all volunteer organization, do we have to carry worker's compensation and general liability insurance in order to be eligible for F5AC funding?

An all volunteer agency will not be required to carry worker's compensation, but will be required to carry general liability insurance for a minimum of \$300,000.

CLIENTS SERVED

1. We serve clients from all of Alameda County. How do we respond to the questions in the application about where clients live if our clients are transient or if we do not track this information?

If you cannot estimate where clients live by geographic region, break them down evenly (33%, 33%, 34%) across all the regions.

2. What is First 5 Alameda County's definition of "special needs"?

Children who have "disabilities and other special needs" refers to children who:

1. Are protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*
2. Have, or are at-risk for a developmental disability as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* Part C (Early Start 0-3 years old)
3. Or have a specific diagnosis as defined by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B (3 years and above)
4. Or, who do not fit 1, 2 or 3 above, but whose mental health, behavior, development, and/or health as defined by a licensed provider ** requires services above and beyond those required by children generally. This includes conditions lasting 6 months or more that have been identified by the licensed provider**.

Adult family members, teen parents or providers who have "disabilities and other special needs" refers to an adult family member/provider who:

1. Is protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
2. Is receiving SSI benefits
3. Has a mental health diagnosis
4. Or, who does not fit 1, 2 or 3 above, but whose mental health, behavior, development, and/or health as defined by a licensed provider, requires services above and beyond those required by adults generally. This

includes conditions lasting 6 months or more that have been identified by the licensed provider**.

* Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Public Law 101-336. The ADA's protection applies primarily, but not exclusively, to individuals with disabilities. Early Intervention Disabilities Act: Children birth to 3 years with disabilities or who are at risk for a disability as defined by California Early Start Program eligibility.

** Licensed provider refers to a professional such as: physician, nurse, psychologist, licensed social worker, MFT, child development specialist.

For more information about grant requirements for tracking clients with special needs go to: http://www.first5alameda.org/files/Special_Needs_Reporting_Tool.pdf

LETTERS OF COMMITMENT

1. When do I need a letter of commitment from a partnering organization?

If the work outlined in your proposal *is dependent on another organization for implementation or operation*, we require a letter of commitment from your partnering organization. For example, we need a letter of commitment when:

- You have a “significant working relationship” (i.e., the other organization helps you develop, plan, execute, track or evaluate the work outlined in your proposal)
- You offer any services at a site not owned or operated by your organization
- Your services are permanently or regularly infused with those of another organization
- You are offering ongoing services at a school district site. In this circumstance, the letter of commitment must be signed by both the site director and a district representative.

You do not need a letter of commitment if the other organization provides referrals to your program, unless you depend solely on that organization for your client base.

2. Is there specific language I need to include in the letter of commitment? Is there a format to follow?

You may simply submit a one page letter (or less) on the partnering organization's letterhead which outlines the support and resources your partner will provide to your F5AC-funded program. A letter of commitment must be submitted and signed by a key staff person for each partnering organization. Letters indicating ongoing commitment to host services at a school district site must be signed by both the site director and a district representative.

- 3. If we're working in multiple sites at a school district can we submit one letter signed by multiple centers with one signature from the district?**

Yes.

- 4. Do I submit letters of commitment electronically with my online application?**

No. Supporting documents (letters of commitment and/or proof of fiscal sponsorship) must be received via mail or hand delivery or sent by email. Support documents must be received in our office by 5:00 pm on March 1, 2013. Letters of commitment received by fax will not be accepted. Please note: supporting documents received after 5:00 pm on March 1, 2013 will be discarded and your application will be considered incomplete and may be disqualified. Email submissions to Kevin.Bremond@first5ecc.org with the name of the applicant and the words "Letter of Commitment" in the email header.

- 5. If we are renting a space that will be a site of services do we need a letter of commitment from the landlord?**

If you are providing services at a site that your agency neither owns nor operates, please provide a letter of commitment from the agency that owns or operates the space.

CURRENT REVENUE SOURCES & PROPOSED PROJECT BUDGETS

- 1. Do we have to show matching funds?**

No. However, if you have matching funds, you may wish to describe them in your budget narrative to strengthen your application.

- 2. Is it OK if the budget request for the first year is different than the request for the second year?**

Yes, the proposed amounts for each fiscal year of the project may differ as long as the combined total for both years does not exceed the maximum grant amount for your grant category.

- 3. There is a 15 percent cap on Administrative/Indirect costs. How is that calculated?**

You may allocate up to 15 percent of your total direct program costs (i.e., total Personnel Costs plus total General Expenses) for administrative and indirect costs. Please consult the application guidelines for a description of allowable costs in the administrative/indirect line.

- 4. Do you have a dollar amount you look for in terms of per-child costs?**

No. We expect costs to be reasonable. What is reasonable will depend upon the service model proposed.

5. Where in the budget should I show workers receiving a stipend or hourly staff who are not regular employees, consultants, or subcontractors?

You can choose where in the budget such staffing appears. The budget justification narrative is your opportunity to explain costs in each line item.

6. We are a current grantee. If we have an employee whose position is currently funded by First 5 Alameda County and we apply to continue the project and position, is that supplantation?

Continuing to fund projects and positions funded by F5AC is not supplantation.

7. We have a pilot program operating with funds from a foundation. They are only supporting the program for a limited time. If we apply for funding to continue the project is that supplantation?

If you can demonstrate that funding for an existing program is being discontinued, then using F5AC funds for the continuation of that program is not supplantation.

8. Can we apply to other sources of funding in addition to F5AC to support our program?

Yes.

9. What if the Executive Director (ED) of an agency will be? doing work directly on the funded program; can she be included in the personnel budget?

In order for any staff to be included in the budget you must demonstrate that they will be doing work directly related to the funded project. If an ED will be doing work directly related to the funded project and is therefore included in the budget, you must provide a supplantation statement showing that either the ED was not full time prior to F5AC funding, or that a portion of the ED's time will be freed up to conduct the funded project because some of the ED's previous responsibilities are being discontinued or delegated to another person.

10. How do we use existing staff and not run into supplantation problems?

If staff positions that you are including in your budget were funded by F5AC in the 2011-2013 grant cycle, then continuing those positions is not considered supplantation. If proposed positions are being filled by staff who are currently employed by your agency you must show that:

- They were not previously full time and their time is being increased or,
- A proportion of their previous responsibilities equal to the time being funded by F5AC has been discontinued or delegated to another staff person

11. How do 2011-2013 grantees who are applying to continue their work fill out the supplantation assessment?

The supplantation assessment will ask whether you are a current 2011-2013 grantee and if you are applying for funds to continue the services funded by your 2011-2013 grant. Answer "yes" to both questions.

12. We use a nationally recognized curriculum. Can we use First 5 funds to train or certify staff to use it?

Yes. Funds can be used to train or certify staff to provide the funded services.

13. Can we use First 5 funds to purchase a curriculum and training materials such as DVDs?

Yes. Funds can be used for training materials that are relevant to the funded program.

14. What kinds of parent incentives can we offer?

Agencies may offer parents/caregivers incentives (e.g. food, transportation assistance, child care, age-appropriate children's books, materials for take-home activities, gift certificates, etc.) to remove barriers to participation and encourage regular attendance. Incentives which do not support families in meeting basic needs or that do not have a clear link to child development may not be offered with First 5 funds. Cash incentives are not allowed.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

1. Does a program have to be new to apply in the Community Support category?

No. Although Community Support grants can be used to seed new projects, family service programs that may not have traditionally worked with young children and want to expand or strengthen their focus on the 0 to 5 population are also encouraged to apply.

TARGETED GRANTS

1. Is F5AC looking for applicants in the Targeted Grants category to serve a specific number of clients each year?

No, there is no minimum number of children, families, or providers that must be served by successful applicants in the Targeted Grants category. Reviewers will be evaluating each application to determine if the funding request seems reasonable given the number of clients served and the service model proposed. A "reasonable" number of clients served will vary by service model. For example, an intensive therapeutic intervention program may serve fewer clients than a program offering drop-in parenting classes for the same request amount and both may be reasonable.

2. Can you choose both Targeted Grants funding priorities?

No, you must select the one funding priority that best fits your proposed strategies and activities. You may propose up to two project specific outcomes.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIP GRANTS

1. Who can apply for a Neighborhood Partnership grant?

Only public libraries and park and recreation departments in Alameda County which have not previously received Neighborhood Partnership funding are eligible to apply.

2. Must libraries and park and recreation departments apply in the Neighborhood Partnership grant category? Or are the Community Support and Targeted grant categories also open to us?

Public libraries and park and recreation departments in Alameda County are eligible to apply in any of the three grant categories. Each organization may submit only one grant application, however.

3. If I am a previous Neighborhood Partnership grantee, can I apply for a Community Support or Targeted grant in the 2013-2015 grant period?

Yes.

FUNDING DECISIONS

1. The Application Guidelines say F5AC will seek to distribute funding among North, South, and East County areas. What does this mean?

The Commission and review panel have no specific formula to determine the number of agencies that will receive funding in a particular area of the county. Instead, we will seek to provide a general balance of funding based on population size, the needs of the geographical area, and the quality of proposals received.

2. If reviewers like our program but see that our scope of work and/or budget needs adjustment, will there be an opportunity to modify our application?

No. It will not be possible to modify scopes of work, accountability plans, or budgets during the review process. Proposals are scored by reviewers as submitted. If funded, F5AC may require modifications in budgets, scopes of work, and accountability plans.

3. Will continuing grantees have priority in the funding process?

No. All proposals will be evaluated on the same basis. Past performance will be taken into consideration for returning grantees.

SUBMITTING THE GRANT PROPOSAL

1. Do we have to submit proof of insurance with our proposal?

No. Proof of insurance will be required if your application is funded.

2. Where do I send letters of commitment and proof of fiscal sponsorship?

Supporting documents (letters of commitment and/or proof of fiscal sponsorship) must be received via mail, hand delivery, or email in our office by 5:00 pm on March 1, 2013. Supporting documents received by fax will not be accepted. Please note: supporting documents received after 5:00 pm on March 1, 2013 will be discarded and your application will be considered incomplete and may be disqualified. Email submissions to Kevin.Bremond@first5ecc.org with the name of the applicant and the words "Letter of Commitment" in the email header.

3. Should I submit a paper copy of my application in addition to the online application?

No, please do not submit paper copies of your application. Submitting online is all that is necessary with the exception of letters of commitment and proof of fiscal sponsorship. If you need assistance submitting an application online please call the ECC Helpdesk or make a computer lab appointment by calling Kevin Bremond at 510.875.2409.

4. If we have a fiscal sponsor, whose name should be on the grant as the applicant?

The applicant should be the agency who will be responsible for management and implementation of the grant. There is a space on the application to identify a fiscal sponsor. The fiscal sponsor does not need to be the formal applicant.

5. Can we submit an application in a language other than English?

Applicants in the Community Support category who are not able to submit an application in English may submit an application in a language other than English only with prior approval. Contact Janice Edwards, Community Grants Administrator at 510.875.2441.

ECC ONLINE

1. Why can't we use Macintosh computers for the online application?

The First 5 Alameda County ECC Online system is designed to work with PCs running Windows XP or higher and Internet Explorer 6+ so that we can support the greatest number of applicants with the most efficient use of resources. If you are a Macintosh computer user and/or do not have access to a PC running Windows XP or higher and Internet Explorer 6+, please contact Kevin Bremond (Kevin.Bremond@first5ecc.org) to make an appointment to use our computer lab.

2. Does the online application require certification or authentication? Does the application need to be submitted by the agency's Executive Director?

Certification or authentication is required before submitting the online application. The final screen of the online application asks you to check a box that serves as an electronic "signature". The application will be submitted by the person in your agency whose name is linked to your ECC Online application account. That person does not have to be the Executive Director.

3. Can multiple users work on the online application?

Yes. However, in order to work on the same application, each user must log in with the same username and password.

4. Is the submission of the application all at once or in stages?

An application is submitted all at once. The system will not allow you to submit your application if any required sections are incomplete. You may save your draft and continue working at a later time. Once you submit your completed application, you will *not* be able to make any further changes.

5. What if I hit the submit button by mistake while I am working on my application?

If you press the “Submit” button by accident or you have second thoughts about a submitted response, you may call the ECC Online Help Desk at 510.875.2453. The Help Desk can re-establish access to your application provided that your request is received before 5:00 pm on March 1, 2013. Remember that it may be difficult to process requests to re-open submitted applications on the deadline date.

6. Can I save my application as an MS Word document?

To save your application on your computer or to print it, click the “print preview” button at the bottom of each screen at any time. Highlight and copy the sections you wish to save and paste into a Word document. You may also save your application as a PDF if your computer has this capability.

7. Is there a MS Word version of the application?

No. All applications must be submitted online.

8. If I’m still in the system from a previous grant, do I log-in as new?

If you are assigned as the primary contact for an existing or previous grant, you do not have to create a new account to apply for the 2013-2015 grant period. Use your existing login and password to enter ECC Online and then click the “Apply for a Community Grant” link.

9. I think our agency has a user name and password from a previous grant application but I have forgotten what it is. What should I do?

Please contact the ECC Helpdesk at 510.875.2453 for assistance.

10. If the application logs off (“times out”) because I have not been active in it for 60 minutes, will it save my work?

Yes. Before your work session times out, all data that you entered on the page will be saved. For security and confidentiality, if you do not move from one screen to another or click a button in the application within a 60 minute period, you will be logged out of the application after it saves your work. It is a good idea to click on the save button frequently.

11. Can I save an electronic copy after the grant has been submitted?

You may copy the text in the print-preview format and save it as a Word document. You may also save your application as a PDF if your computer has this capability. Note: after you submit your application and/or after the deadline, your application is “read only” and you cannot edit or change any of the submitted information. You can view your submitted application at any time in ECC Online.

12. What if the system crashes and everything is gone?

There are redundancies and back-ups in the system. Nevertheless, we recommend that you draft your application responses in your word processing program first and save in that format before copying it into the ECC Online application. This will give you your own back up copy.

13. Will the online application hold formatting such as footnotes?

No. Footnotes will not transfer into the online application. You can enter references in parentheses after the relevant section or statement. When you copy and paste text into the text boxes, it will standardize formatting. In order to see how any formatting (i.e. italics, numbering, spacing etc.) carries into the application, view the print preview format of your application.

14. Can I upload attachments to my online application?

No. Please mail, email, or hand deliver any required documents. The only required supporting documents are letters of commitment from collaborating partners and proof of fiscal sponsorship. Other documents such as letters of support or work samples should not be included and will be discarded if submitted.

15. Do I have to move through the online application screens in sequence?

After completing the “Getting Started” screen to confirm you meet the eligibility guidelines, you may work on the application in any order.

ACCOUNTABILITY

1. If we will need to develop evaluation forms and client surveys, will you provide technical assistance?

Yes. First 5 Alameda County is committed to supporting applicants and grantees with technical assistance for accountability, including consultation on using or developing evaluation tools.

2. Do we need to specify the data collection, evaluation, and client survey tools we plan to use? Will First 5 Alameda County require certain measures or tools after award?

Each funding priority has a few required reporting measures. You may also propose additional data elements. Please describe the data collection methods and reporting measures that make the most sense for your program in your application. Upon award, we will work with funded partners to finalize accountability requirements. In some cases specific tools may be required.

3. How do the accountability requirements for Community Support grant applicants differ from the requirements for Targeted and Partnership grant applicants?

Community Support grant applicants do not need to complete an Accountability Plan. Instead, they complete a Scope of Work. The Scope of Work asks for strategies, activities, person responsible for each activity, and target date of completion. If funded, F5AC will work with Community Support grantees to identify a few measures of impact or effect, as appropriate for their projects.

4. When I list my performance targets, how do I know what targets to set? Should I set targets that represent my best hopes (e.g., 100% of families will complete the program)?

Be realistic when you set your performance targets. If you are funded and you exceed your targets, that's great.

5. Are performance targets in the application for the entire 24 month grant term?

Scopes of Work (Community Support grant category) and Accountability Plans (Targeted and Partnership grant categories) must describe 12 month performance targets for each fiscal year of the grant period (i.e., FY 2013-2014 and FY 2014-2015).

OTHER

1. If we don't know where our service locations will be because part of the work will be to develop them, what do we put in the application?

In your application, please describe how you will be developing service locations as part of your work plan. If you are funded to provide direct services and do not identify at least one secured service site, it is likely to raise questions with reviewers about your capacity to perform the proposed work.

2. A scoring criterion for the Management and Staffing section is "clinical supervision available for professional staff". What does this mean?

If staff are included in your proposal whose professional standards of practice typically require clinical supervision (e.g. mental health clinicians, early interventionists etc.) providing such supervision is rewarded in scoring.

3. Where can I find out more information about which neighborhoods in Alameda County have schools with low API scores?

Visit the California Department of Education web site for more information: www.cde.ca.gov.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Who can I email or call to ask questions?

FOR QUESTIONS OR ASSISTANCE ABOUT:	CONTACT NAME	CONTACT INFORMATION
Accountability/Scope of Work All Grant Categories Eligibility Neighborhood Partnership	Janice Edwards Community Grants Administrator	510.875.2441 Janice.Edwards@first5ecc.org
All Grant Categories Workshop Registration	Kevin Bremond Community Grants Program Officer	510.875.2409 Kevin.Bremond@first5ecc.org
All Grant Categories	Karyn Barnes Community Grants Program Officer	510.875.2489 Karyn.Barnes@first5ecc.org
Computer/Technical Issues	ECC Helpdesk	Monday – Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm 510.875.2453 ecchelp@first5ecc.org