



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

Research on Equity Beliefs in Early Childhood Education

Release Date: December 3, 2021

Due Date: January 10, 2022 by 12:00 noon

Proposed Funding Amount: Up to \$20,000.00

For more information, please contact:

**Lisa R. Johnson
Grants and Contracts Manager
First 5 Contra Costa
grantsandcontracts@first5coco.org**

Due to COVID-19 First 5 Offices are closed and staff are working remotely. If you have any questions or need additional information, please use email.

The Commission may, at its sole discretion, reject any or all applications submitted in response to this document. The Commission also reserves the right to cancel this offer at its sole discretion at any time before execution of a Contract Agreement. Any applications, including attached materials, submitted in response to this document shall become property of the Commission.

RESEARCH ON EQUITY BELIEFS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

First 5 Contra Costa Children and Families Commission (hereafter “the Commission” or “First 5 Contra Costa”), is seeking a researcher or research team to better understand early childhood stakeholder’s current mindsets about and orientation to the racial disparities in school readiness in East County.

Up to \$20,000, including expenses, for a 4-month period has been allocated for this project. Costs should be reasonable and well justified.

First 5 is seeking diverse individuals, consultant teams and firms to apply. Please review the following materials for scope of work, submission instructions and the criteria for selection.

All questions about the RFQ must be directed to: grantsandcontracts@first5coco.org with the subject line “RFQ Ready Kids East County Early Care Research Question”. All questions need to be submitted no later than December 13, 2021 by 12:00 p.m. noon. A response will be given on or before December 15, 2021.

DO NOT contact any other person from First 5 for information about this RFQ.

RFQ responses are due no later than **January 10, 2022 by 12:00 p.m. noon**. Complete applications must be signed by an authority able to legally bind the organization. Due to COVID-19, First 5 Contra Costa is accepting only email submissions. Please email your complete RFQ packet to: grantsandcontracts@first5coco.org.

RFQ submissions received (email timestamp) after the 12:00 p.m. noon deadline will NOT be accepted or considered for selection.

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

First 5 Contra Costa allocates Contra Costa County’s share of the Proposition 10 tobacco tax to fund programs for children ages 0 to 5. First 5 Contra Costa is governed by an eighteen-member Commission appointed by the county Board of Supervisors. The vision of the organization is that Contra Costa’s young children will be healthy, ready to learn, and supported in safe, nurturing families and communities. Since its inception, First 5 Contra Costa has invested over \$120 million in local programs and activities.

To learn more about First 5 Contra Costa, visit www.first5coco.org

The Ready Kids East County Initiative aims to address the structural root causes that underpin the opportunity gap for Black and African American children when it comes to being ready for kindergarten.

For more information regarding First 5 Contra Costa's Ready Kids East County Initiative, please refer to the following link on First 5 Contra Costa's website: <http://www.first5coco.org/ready-kids-east-county/>.

SECTION 3: SCOPE OF WORK

In order to support our strategy of building a collective vision for change, First 5 Contra Costa seeks for its Ready Kids East County a researcher or research team to better understand early childhood stakeholder's current mindsets about and orientation to the racial disparities in school readiness in East County. This research would serve several purposes:

1. **Programming:** As part of our work plan for this initiative, we intend to host a series of cohort-based trainings and other capacity-building offerings for early childhood providers, preschool and kindergarten teachers, and other professionals in the East County early childhood space to build their skills in creating inclusive, anti-racist environments where children of all races feel celebrated--especially Black children. Stakeholders in the early childhood system will also have opportunities to discuss translation of beliefs to strategies and practice in the early childhood system. In order to plan relevant content and approaches to capacity building, we need to better understand where providers currently are in their anti-racist work.
2. **Communications:** Similarly, we intend to develop a communications strategy that inspires everyone in the East County early childhood community--and especially policymakers, school and community leaders--to see their role in supporting young Black children, particularly in getting ready for school. Like the trainings, we want to better understand the current beliefs they hold in order to best tailor our communications strategy.
3. **Evaluation:** We hope for this research to also serve as a baseline measure for the beliefs of the East County early childhood community when it comes to racial disparities in school readiness. This research will enable us to revisit these questions in several years in order to measure our impact and determine whether our strategies are working.

4. **Budget:** The budget for this project is \$20,000, covering the following:

- Planning meetings to share interview planning and protocol
- Develop semi-structured interview protocol for stakeholders in East County early childhood (children ages 0-5) ecosystem (e.g., school district leaders, preschool through third grade teachers, other early childhood education service providers)
 - Interview questions focused on current beliefs around addressing disparities in school readiness by race/ethnicity
 - Interview questions focused on reactions to data on disparities in school readiness by race/ethnicity, assumptions around root causes of disparities, interpretations of solutions to addressing racial/ethnic disparities
- Recruit participants
- Conduct 10-15 semi-structured interviews (1 hour)
 - Interview incentives
- Transcription of interviews
- Analysis and coding of interview transcripts
- Report of findings and recommendations for communication strategy and messaging

SECTION 4: QUALIFICATIONS & PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Required Qualifications

First 5 seeks a researcher or team of researchers with:

- Experience and/or degrees in early care and education, public policy, human services, social work, or a closely related field.
- Experience conducting research around issues of racial equity, social justice, public opinion, and/or understanding mindsets.
- Familiarity with administering semi-structured interviews.
- Demonstrable qualitative data analysis and synthesis, including published reports of findings.
- Strong writing and communication skills.

I. Staff Qualifications

All responses must include names and titles of each individual who will be part of the team, as well as written descriptions of the individual's experience. All responses must identify the individual(s) who will have primary responsibility for contact and communications with the Commission and/or its committee.

II. Approach and Timeline

All responses should include a work plan and timeline for performing the services required.

III. Budget (ATTACHMENT B)

All responses must include a budget/fee schedule including expected expenses. Please complete the attached budget form and explain your proposed budget in a brief narrative including estimated amounts of time to carry out contract activities. Specifically detail staff to be assigned to project and respective hourly rates. It is assumed that the costs will include the salary for dedicated staff and benefits and related expenses. Costs should be reasonable and well justified. (**The use of the included format is not required, but all information must be included, if a different format is used.**)

IV. References (ATTACHMENT C)

All responses must include references from at least three clients.

SECTION 5: CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

A review panel comprised of First 5 staff will evaluate qualifications/proposal. The criteria by which each response will be evaluated are as follows:

1. **Applicable experience:** The extent to which applicants demonstrate experience and expertise related to the scope of work as outlined in the RFQ.
2. **Demonstration of understanding:** The extent to which the applicant communicates an understanding of the needs described here with documented samples of success.
3. **Demonstration of capacity:** The proposal will be evaluated for feasibility, completeness and capacity to address the scope of work as outlined in this RFQ.
4. **Cost/Budget:** The extent to which the costs are reasonable and well justified.

Selection Process

All applications will be reviewed using a ranking tool. Applicants selected for the second phase of the process may be invited for an oral interview.

First 5 Contra Costa reserves the right to approve and verify the qualifications and experience of all staff working under the contract.

SECTION 6: APPEALS

Only respondents who have submitted a response in accordance with this RFQ process may appeal the RFQ process and must be submitted **within five (5) business days after the “Notice of Intent to Fund” has been posted on First 5 Contra Costa’s website at <http://www.first5coco.org/about-us/apply-for-funding/>.** Grounds for appeals are limited to the following:

- The RFQ evaluation and eligibility criteria were not appropriately applied to the proposal; and/or
- The Commission failed to follow the RFQ process/procedures.

Appeals must be in writing and specifically state the grounds on which the appeal is based. Oral appeals will not be accepted. Letters of appeal must be submitted electronically to: grantsandcontracts@first5coco.org and addressed to Ruth Fernandez, Executive Director with a subject line: APPEAL- Research on Equity Beliefs in Early Childhood Education RFQ.

The Commission’s Executive Committee will handle all appeals. At this time, all decisions by the Executive Committee will be final and cannot be appealed further. Notification of the final decision on the appeal shall be made in writing to the applicant.

Appeals will only be considered if received by the appeal deadline.

SECTION 7: OTHER REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

To be eligible to apply for funding under this RFQ the applicant must meet the following criteria:

1. Be in compliance and good standing with all local, county, state, and federal government entities including but not limited to the IRS, California Secretary of State-Business Programs and the Franchise Tax Board;
2. Satisfactory performance on any contract(s) previously awarded by the Commission.

If selected for funding, Contractor will also be required to:

- Show proof of general liability and worker’s compensation insurance (if applicant has employees).
- Indemnify First 5 Contra Costa Children and Families Commission.
- If using a Federal Tax ID Number Contractor will need to submit a copy of Employer Identification Number letter from the IRS.

- If Contractor's status is a sole proprietor Contractor will need to submit a copy of Driver's License and if using a social security number Contractor will need to submit a copy of social security card.

SECTION 8: RFQ SCHEDULE

Task	Date (Time)
Application Released	December 3, 2021
Deadline for RFQ to be Submitted	January 10, 2022
Review Period	January 10 - January 17, 2022
Appeal Deadline Note: All respondents will be notified of the Commission's Intent to Fund	TBD within 5 business days after Respondents are notified and the Notice of Intent to Fund has been posted.
Contract begins	On or before February 1, 2022

COVER SHEET /CHECKLIST (ATTACHMENT A)

ORGANIZATION/ LEGAL NAME:					
CONTACT PERSON:					
ADDRESS:					
CITY:			State:		Zip Code:
PHONE:		Fax:		Email:	
Proposed Budget Amount:	\$				
Federal Tax Identification Number:					

A complete qualification/proposal has no more than **10 single-sided pages with 1.5 line spacing, 12pt font, and 8.5 x 11 inch paper with 1-inch margins plus any required Attachments** (Resumes, references and budget do not count toward the page count limitations) and additional information as listed below:

- A. Cover Letter/Checklist (**ATTACHMENT A**) – The cover letter must be signed by an individual authorized to bind the proposing organization.
 - B. Budget (**ATTACHMENT B**)
 - C. References (**ATTACHMENT C**)
 - D. I have a minimum of three years' experience
-

Name:

Title:

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE:

Date:



BUDGET (ATTACHMENT B)

The use of this format is not required, but all information must be included, if a different format is used.

The proposed budget should not exceed \$20,000. All costs should be reasonable and justified.

Task		Person or persons conducting this task	Est. number of hours	Month of completion
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				

Hourly Rates:

Name	Hourly Loaded Rate

Other Expenses (please explain)	

Total proposed budget	
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REFERENCES (ATTACHMENT C)

ORGANIZATION/ LEGAL NAME: _____

Please list three references for contracts your agency was awarded to implement similar type of services within the last three years. The references listed below may be contacted by the Commission to substantiate your agency's experience in the identified area of service delivery.

REFERENCE					
ORGANIZATION:					
CONTACT PERSON:					
ADDRESS:					
CITY:			STATE:		
PHONE:		AMOUNT:	\$	EMAIL:	

Brief Description of Services Provided:

REFERENCE					
ORGANIZATION:					
CONTACT PERSON:					
ADDRESS:					
CITY:			STATE:		
PHONE:		AMOUNT:	\$	EMAIL:	

Brief Description of Services Provided:

REFERENCE

ORGANIZATION:				
CONTACT PERSON:				
ADDRESS:				
CITY:		STATE:		ZIP CODE:
PHONE:	AMOUNT:	\$	EMAIL:	
Brief Description of Services Provided:				