

## First 5 Association of California

### Request for Proposals: Race, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Consultant

#### Background on First 5

In November 1998, the voters of California passed Proposition 10, the “Children and Families Act of 1998” initiative, also known as First 5, that levies a tax on cigarettes and other tobacco products to provide funding for early childhood development programs. Proposition 10 provides funding for a First 5 state commission and 58 county commissions. The First 5 Association is a member organization that supports the 58 county commissions and works with our members, First 5 California, and many external partners and experts to advance programs, systems and policies to improve early childhood outcomes in California. As a voice for the state’s youngest kids, First 5s bring together partners and leverage funding sources to strengthen early childhood systems of care that intersect in the lives of young children and their families to ensure every child in California is safe, healthy, and ready to succeed in school and life.

In 2018, the First 5 Network - comprised of the 58 local First 5 Commissions, First 5 California, and the First 5 Association - was formed to lead efforts together that would strengthen the early childhood development field. The goal of this First 5 Network is to serve as a unified force for early childhood, acknowledged leaders in early childhood systems building, and credible partners in policy and funding efforts to increase resources for children 0-5 in California. The work of the Network is guided by four principles: whole child, whole family approach; equity; systems coordination; and prevention.

#### Context

Since our inception, First 5 has had a long-standing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Most recently, the First 5 Network has embarked on a journey to more directly center race, equity, diversity, and inclusion (REDI) in our work. REDI represents an organizational focus that is fundamental to First 5’s mission and vision for California’s young children and their families, especially knowing that nearly every indicator across key early childhood development areas shows an outcome gap, particularly by race and ethnicity. Increasingly we are utilizing the framework of targeted universalism to anchor our work in universal goals for all children, and the recognition of the need for targeted strategies that focus on children, families and communities that face the most systemic barriers.

## Our Goal for this RFP

The First 5 Association requests proposals for an outstanding Race, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) Consultant(s) to help devise and implement a framework to increase the capacity of the First 5 Network to advance work addressing structural, policy, and systems-level inequities affecting young children, their families, and our communities. The Consultant and framework that emerges from this engagement should create a safe and brave space that supports the challenge and discomfort of REDI work while maintaining a commitment and practice of deep inclusivity.

The outcomes of this consultancy will be that First 5 Network members understand REDI concepts and constructs, increase their capacity to engage in REDI dialogues, have access and capability to use tools and supports to participate in REDI work in their local environments, and be prepared to engage in and lead work addressing systems-level inequities working with external partners. A community of Network support will develop through ongoing learning from/with experts, peers, and partners. Continuing engagement in REDI work during and beyond this planned two-year project will increase Network members' capability to build on effective efforts, learn from challenges, and continue REDI work internal to their organizations, with fellow Network members, and with external partners. Local and state level REDI work will bi-directionally inform each other and help shape the Network's state and federal policy goals and agenda.

## Required Qualifications

- Minimum of five years demonstrated experience working with organizations to advance REDI.
- Demonstrated capability to create a safe and brave space that supports the challenge and discomfort of REDI work while maintaining a commitment and practice of deep inclusivity.
- Demonstrated experience working with managers at all levels, executive leaders, and governing bodies to implement new practices, policies, and approaches.
- Demonstrated hands-on experience guiding non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations and government agencies through the planning, implementation and successful completion of organization-wide REDI learning and transformation.
- Demonstrated capacity to work with individuals and organizations at a range of starting points as well as in a range of local contexts.
- A diverse staff/project team with experience working with various cultures reflective of California's population and knowledge of California's diverse communities.

## Project Overview

The First 5 Association, on behalf of the First 5 Network, is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to provide professional consulting services in the areas of race, equity, diversity and inclusion. The Consultant will help create, facilitate and serve as the lead thought partner on a Race, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (REDI) initiative for the First 5 Network. The project is

planned for two years, with an initial one-year contract that we anticipate extending for a second year based on the success of the engagement and budget. Participants include executive leaders, staff at multiple levels, and governing bodies in local First 5 agencies, First 5 Association, and First 5 California.

The project includes an assessment of the current state of REDI work and capacity across the components and regions of the First 5 Network, development of a First 5 REDI Framework, and implementation of the REDI Framework. A multi-component, tiered, and phased approach that allows participants to engage in various ways is anticipated, though any approach you think best for the project may be proposed.

### How to Apply

Please send RFP responses to [applications@first5association.org](mailto:applications@first5association.org) with the subject line “REDI RFP Response”. Responses due November 6, 2020 at 5 pm. Questions about the RFP may be directed to [applications@first5association.org](mailto:applications@first5association.org) with the subject line “REDI RFP Question” through October 16th COB; we then will produce and share a Frequently Asked Questions document in response. The review and selection process will occur in November and December with an intended contract start date of January 1, 2021.

### Response Requirements:

1. Cover sheet: Cover sheet containing key contact information. An official authorized to bind the firm to the terms of the application must sign the cover sheet.
2. Narrative: Please submit a written narrative of the overall proposal, including your company’s general philosophy and approach to the project (maximum of 5 pages).
3. Proposed Work Plan: Overall plan with time estimates for completion for all work including the following (maximum of 10 pages):
  - a. Describe your approach, components, tools, and strategies to carry out the project;
  - b. Provide a project timeline with deliverables that is both rigorous and realistic; and
  - c. Focus especially on details of the first 6 months of the engagement, with higher level plans for the remainder of year-one and year-two that incorporate results of the initial assessment and build upon/reflect the Network’s participation and experiences in this project.
4. Qualifications and Staffing: Provide a brief description of your firm, including but not limited to the following (maximum of 10 pages):
  - a. Firm’s history and type of services provided, including number of years providing organization-wide DEI assessment, planning and implementation efforts, and experience with non-profit and government agencies;

- b. Describe project roles and responsibilities for each identified professional, areas of expertise, and how you will provide a consulting team that reflects the diversity of California;
  - c. Describe your experience in developing, facilitating and supporting implementation of organizational culture-change initiatives;
  - d. Provide examples of DEI assessments, training, and/or work plans your firm has developed and utilized; and
  - e. Provide resumes and qualifications for all proposed project personnel. (Does not count toward page limit).
5. Budget: The budget for the project is \$200,000 in year-one, with an additional \$200,000 planned for year-two. Please provide a cost proposal for providing the scope of work over the two years. The cost proposal should include (maximum of 3 pages):
- a. Cost of proposed services;
  - b. Detailed information on costs by component, fee structure, and all expenses, including for key personnel and overhead costs. Please specify year 1 and year 2 costs, along with how costs relate to the components of the proposal; and
  - c. Subcontracts may be included as part of the budget. Subcontractors generally should meet the required qualifications. All subcontracts must be approved by the First 5 Association.
6. References: Provide three references for past clients for whom you have conducted similar services and highlight key successes.