



RFP for Strategic Plan 2021-2025 FAQ

Q 1. Will you share a link to the Strategic Plan?

Yes. Here is a link to the [Strategic Plan](#). It can also be found on our website: <https://first5sonomacounty.org>

Q 2. Will a copy of the webinar presentation be available after today's webinar?

Yes, we will send out the slides as a PDF to everyone who participated in the webinar.

Q 3. Did collaborating organizations need to be on the webinar to be considered as a collaborator?

The lead organization on the proposal that would be contracting with First 5 must have been represented on the webinar, either by an employee of the organization or a consultant on the organization's behalf. If an organization or consultant will be subcontracted out of the grant, that organization is not required to have attended the webinar.

Q 4. What is the range of grants provided?

The RFP does not set a range for awards. The maximum amount per fiscal year would be the annual allocation, but we leave it to the proposers to consider that every goal area includes multiple priorities and desired outcomes that the Commission hopes to achieve through the funding allocation. The amount of funds requested is a strategic decision on the part of the proposer.

Q 5. Are we able to apply for one to four years of funding RFPS?

The RFP does not state a preference, although it is implicit that the RFPS are multi-year funding opportunities since the priority outcomes are not goals that could necessarily be achieved in one year. The Commission intends to award multi-year contracts, primarily three to four-year terms.

Q 6. Are you intending this funding to support one or more awardees?

The Commission reserves the right to make one, multiple or no awards. The number of awards is largely dependent on the quality, breadth and merit of the proposals that the Commission receives and the amount of those requests.

Q 7. Are government agencies allowed to apply?

Yes.

Q 8. Are public school programs eligible to apply for this? Or is this just for programs that are funded through First 5?

Yes, a public school district is a public agency and can apply for any of the RFPs, as long as the district is represented on the webinar and submits an LOI.

Q 9. Is funding available to for-profit organizations and/or can a for-profit partner with a non-profit to act as a fiscal agent?

Eligible agencies are non-profits and public agencies, but a for-profit organization may be a sub-contractor for the eligible lead agency.

Q 10. Can organizations apply for more than one RFP?

Yes, but please submit separate Letters of Intent.

Q 11. I am wondering if I need to submit two separate Letters of Intent if I intend to submit two separate proposals for completely different scopes of work?

Please submit two separate LOIs, even if proposals are for separate proposals, as the LOIs will be linked to the proposals in the web-based system, Foundant, and are required of each proposal.

Q 12. Do we need to do two Letters of Intent if applying for an individual agency as well as a collaborative proposal within the same goal area?

Yes. We would like proposers to submit a separate LOI for each proposal even if they are in the same area so that First 5 staff is able to track specific proposal requirements in Foundant.

Q 13. Would it be preferable for applicants to address all the strategies, or would 2-3 strategies be an attractive proposal?

It is not a requirement to implement all priority strategies in a given goal area. However, combining multiple strategies in a proposal may be an optimal approach when you're designing an approach to deliver programs/services through the whole-child whole family lens. The number of strategies does not equate to a specific number of points or priority in the scoring scheme.

Q 14. Are applicants prioritized if they coordinate efforts between multiple organizations?

Applicants are strongly encouraged to coordinate and collaborate for the purpose of more integrated systems and services, reduced barriers for families, as well as other direct benefits of collaboration. With regard to prioritization or higher points in the review process of a proposal that includes collaboration, the proposal could receive more points if that collaboration is intended to address systems integration. It is about the intent and the outcomes of the collaboration that will be assigned a value, not the collaboration in itself.

Q 15. Will applicants be given more priority if they propose working with more than one site or geographic area?

Not necessarily, what matters is that the programs and services be positioned geographically to impact the families and children that will most benefit. So, it depends on the geographic area, the number of children and families the program can reach and how easily accessed, etc. It's up to the proposer to make the case, given the information provided.

- Q 16. Can funding be used to supplement services which are partly covered by government funds? I just want to be certain of the distinction around the non-supplantation requirement**

Yes, supplementing, braiding and leveraging funding streams to maximize resources and increase access is strongly encouraged. However, the Commission cannot supplant funding, e.g., fund a service or a program that another government funding stream is intended to cover for the same eligible population.

- Q 17. If we would like to include a collaborative with other agencies that are also applying, would we need to write a separate proposal or the collaborative or could we include it in the lead agency's proposal and get MOU's from other would-be participants?**

Either approach is acceptable, but a single proposal is typically more cost effective and may lend itself to more authentic collaboration. There are pros and cons for the model of a fiscal lead with subcontracting partners, both for the grantee and for First 5. Whichever approach is taken, you may want to provide your reasoning for doing so, particularly if it is related to efficacy of the collaboration, fiscal sustainability or other factors that are important to the Commission based on the RFP and the strategic plan.

- Q 18. Given the unknown of COVID and delivery of services through July 2021, will there be flexibility/understanding for the successful applicants with the proposed budget if travel/in-person not possible so projected dollars could be relocated to other needs?**

Yes, absolutely. Over the last year, First 5 has been working with contractors to pivot their existing contracts and budgets in order to adapt around COVID restrictions. There are some questions in the RFP about how you will adapt give the current restrictions, but we know the future is somewhat unpredictable and we don't know when we will be delivering services in a typical way so there must be flexibility for adapting programs on the part of both the contractor and First 5.

- Q 19. Would we, as the applicant, be made aware of the amounts allocated for these small grants for providers as well as the amount of the funds already committed to the DLL Pilot project? It seems it would impact how one would budget for the services included in the RFP.**

The allocated amounts noted in the RFPs, are the amounts that are available to apply for at this time. If First 5 were to execute contracts prior to February 16, 2021 that would impact the amounts in the RFPs, we will notify all proposers that have submitted an LOI.

- Q 20. For applicants who serve children that attend a multitude of schools/districts across the County, how do you suggest we meet the *READY* requirement under the "Neighborhood based services" RFP? The children we serve have the option to attend their school of choice anywhere in the County, so would we need a letter of commitment from all the Sonoma County elementary schools? Also, is there a list of schools that already participate in *READY*?**

Yes, there is a list of schools currently participating in READY, you can find it on the [READY website](#). For this question and anything else about the requirement for school participation in READY, please reach out to Norine Doherty who is the READY Program Manager at the Human Services Department, our partnering agency on the READY kindergarten readiness assessment project. Her email address is ndoherty@schsd.org, Norine is First 5's designated resource to proposers concerning this specific requirement and can help figure out this special situation.

Q 21. Regarding the Quality and Equity in Learning RFP - is funding available for new and proposed ECE programs or only available to support or enhance existing programs?

We invite any and all eligible proposers that meet the requirements to apply for First 5 funding across any or all of the three RFPs; none of these funding opportunities is limited to existing grantees or contractors. That stated, the Quality & Equity in Early Learning RFP is largely focused on building capacity: coaching, training, and professional development, not necessarily direct services funding. Direct services could potentially be funded through the QEEL RFP if the proposal meets the other goals of the RFP, but proposers are encouraged to read the RFPs carefully so that you are clear about the intent of the funding.

Q 22. Our goal with this RFA would be to apply for funding to continue AVANCE. Would the Neighborhood-Based Services, Goal Priority 2B be the best fit for that?

Yes.