



Recruitment Announcement -
Key Leadership Position:

Chief Executive Officer

Vision

Children in Sonoma County, from the prenatal stage to age five, will develop to their fullest potential.

Mission

To maximize the healthy development of every child in Sonoma County from the prenatal stage through age five by providing equitable support, education, and advocacy.

First 5 Sonoma County's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Belonging and Anti-Racism

F5SC envisions & contributes to a community & society where everyone can fully & safely participate and be included, regardless of race, zip code, immigration status, economic status, or any other defining characteristic.

We will actively work to dismantle white supremacy within our own organization and prioritize partnerships with community organizations with a demonstrated commitment to anti-racism.



Job Description

Summary

Working closely with the First 5 Sonoma County Commission and leading a talented staff of professionals, the Chief Executive Officer (CEOD) will lead efforts to align the organization's grantmaking, resources, and advocacy with shifting community needs while advancing racial justice and social equity.

The Chief Executive Officer will uplift staff expertise and collaborate with a wide range of external constituents, including community members, parents, elected officials, policymakers, and local funders.

This position directly supervises the Deputy Director, Operations & Finance Director, HR Manager, and an Executive Assistant.



What You Bring to the Table

Strategy

- Provide strategic vision to ensure the agency's leadership team effectively drives all aspects of the implementation of First 5 Sonoma County's Strategic Plan and Multi-Year Investment Strategy, including community engagement, program and initiative design, procurement, financial and contract management and impact evaluation.
- Provide executive leadership and strategic thought partnership to guide the collaborative development of First 5 Sonoma County's Strategic Plan and Multi-Year Investment Strategy every five years.
- Stay abreast of current and emerging research trends in early care and education, maternal and child health, parenting, and early child development, and disseminate information to staff and the Commission
- Actively engage in local cross-sector collaborations and initiatives that support accessible and equitable housing, education and economic conditions that impact families and children
- Working in collaboration with Commissioners, staff, First 5 families, and community partners, the ED will take a comprehensive view of First 5's strengths, challenges, and opportunities for evolution and lead others to realize a shared vision for the future of the organization and the well-being of all Sonoma County children, birth to five years old.

Operations/Programs

- Ensure cohesion and mission-focus across the organization's programmatic, financial, and operations functions.
- Work with external consultants and legal advisors to oversee internal HR staff and function to ensure all aspects of recruiting, hiring and performance management of First 5 Sonoma County personnel promote a culture of excellence, belonging and collaboration.
- Ensure that a robust impact evaluation plan is developed and implemented to measure effectiveness, improve quality and communicate results to the community.
- Travel extensively within Sonoma County and some travel throughout California, to attend various meetings, conferences, etc.

Governance

- Model and promote cross-system governance and cross-sector decision-making for issues affecting children and families.
- Strategic and responsive engagement of the First 5 Sonoma County Commission, from meeting agenda development to Commissioner recruitment and committee development.
- Monitor and actively ensure First 5 Sonoma's grantmaking is compliant with statutory requirements for the use of funds received under the Children and Families Act of 1998 (Prop. 10) and Measure I (Sonoma County Child Care and Children's Health Ordinance).
- Strong understanding of policies and practices related to the operations of a Board-appointed Commission (e.g. Brown Act).

Leadership & Staffing

- Support the Commission and Measure I Community Advisory Council Chairs and Vice Chairs to convene public meetings and engage the community.
- Represent First 5 Sonoma County to the Board of Supervisors, the public, and the First 5 statewide network, including First 5 California.
- Lead change management efforts internally so that all staff reach their full potential with full support and celebration by organizational leadership.
- Lead staff and ensure the necessary resources for implementation of practices that foster an inclusive, equitable culture and an environment that supports the individual and collective success of a diverse team.
- Ensure that staff members have the resources and support needed to succeed within their roles and engage across areas of difference both with internal and external constituents.
- Build and model strong practices for effective and transparent communication, decision-making, and conflict resolution.

Community

- Work with internal Communications staff and external consultants to facilitate effective and strategic communication with the community at-large on behalf of the Commission through press releases, radio interviews and other media channels.
- Build on First 5's relationships with external supporters and champions, including representing the organization with community funding partners (philanthropy), County leaders, policymakers, and nonprofit partners.
- Maintain high visibility in the community and develop collaborative relationships with fellow community leaders across public and private sectors
- Employ a broad set of strategies, political acumen and messaging to engage and communicate effectively with a diverse array of constituents with varying interests in First 5 Sonoma County's work and impact, including families with young children, providers, taxpayers, elected officials and others.

Budgetary

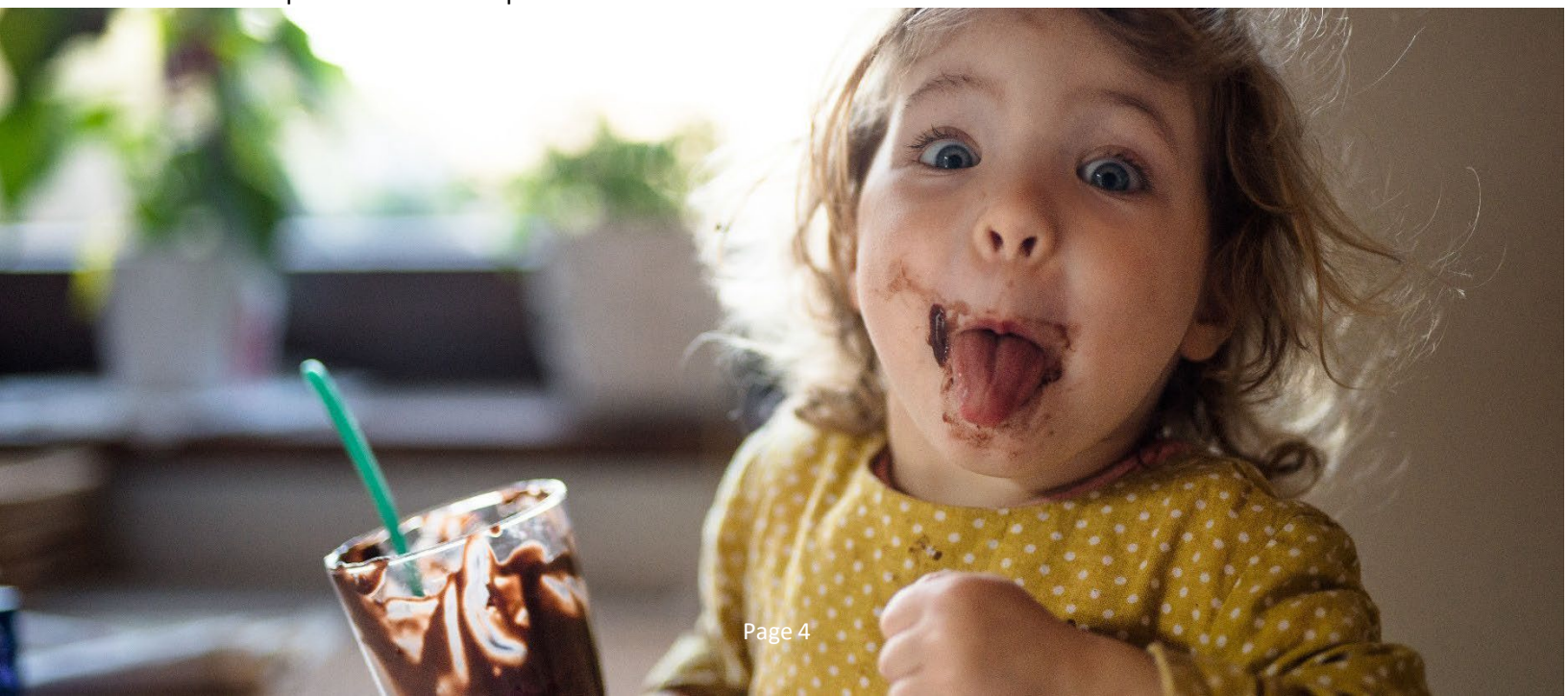
- Responsible for developing, presenting to the Commission for approval and monitoring the annual budget of approximately \$35m, in collaboration with Commission's Executive Committee and the agency's leadership team. Must be able to analyze expenditure patterns, anticipate fiscal needs, maintain cost-effectiveness in operations and program administration, identify potential deficits and the need for operational and mid-year budget adjustments and articulately present on the agency's financial matters in public meetings.
- Oversee and collaborate with the leadership team of a Deputy Director, Operations and Finance Director and Program Directors to effectively procure, negotiate, execute and manage over 100 contracts annually.
- Monitor and regularly update the organization's long term financial model to support strategic financial decision-making, manage financial reserves and plan for compliant use of public funding streams.

Other

- Other duties as assigned

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Responsible for supervision of direct reports including the Deputy Director, Operations & Finance Director, HR Manager, and Executive Assistant.
- Supportively manage and mentor staff, delegate tasks and monitor performance following agency policy and applicable Federal, State, and local applicable laws while utilizing approaches that promote a trauma-informed and healing centric culture.
- Responsibilities include interviewing, hiring, training and development, and terminating employees.
- Plan, assign, and direct work.
- Appraise performance, reward, and discipline employees.
- Address complaints and resolve problems.



Skills and Abilities

- Ability to think strategically and creatively, utilize critical thinking and analysis skills, and demonstrate the ability to transform new ideas into executable and successful programs.
- Utilize technology, media and other communications channels to educate, inform and advocate for improvements in child health and wellbeing.
- An understanding of the unique dynamics of working in and with local government.
- Knowledge of California public policy and advocacy environments, especially as they relate to children and families.
- A proven track record of convening diverse groups to identify, pursue, and achieve shared missions and goals is critical.
- Strong ability to manage and facilitate major change, manage and mitigate conflict and build consensus.
- Understanding of principles of and practices of supervision and employee development.
- Knowledge of leading practices in organizational leadership and operations, including fiscal and personnel management.
- Proven ability to engage staff from diverse backgrounds and at all levels of professional experience in a deep, authentic way that empowers individuals and teams to be simultaneously collaborative and honest.
- Ability to adeptly communicate, interact, and facilitate conversations with institutional leaders, policy leaders, and community members alike, especially those from differing backgrounds.
- A sophisticated understanding of how to build relationships across different sectors, fields, and geographies in order to identify and advance common visions of success.
- Understanding of principles of community organizing, legislative advocacy, community engagement, and political processes.
- Proven ability to build and maintain cross-sector collaborative partnerships.
- Deep understanding of social justice and how race and bias impact what we believe, how we think, and how we behave, from the personal to the institutional level.
- Ability to solicit input from multiple stakeholders, identify immediate and longer-term needs, balance internal and external factors, implement best practices that are culturally responsive.
- Expertise in designing and developing community programs/projects.
- Understanding of resource development and grant administration practices.
- Knowledge of public funding streams that serve families and children across sectors





Qualifications

- The First 5 Sonoma County Commission recognizes that academic credentials alone are not indicative of leadership experience and potential; a mix of professional background and lived experience will be strongly considered in place of formal degrees. A Bachelor's degree in early childhood, social science, education, health, public policy, public administration or related discipline, preferred. A Master's degree or equivalent, desirable.
- A background in early childhood development, policy, education, or health is ideal, but a strong passion for young children and families and a commitment to social, racial, and health equity is more important.
- A minimum of ten (10) years in a leadership role, working in a complex environment advancing community-focused and community-centered change, progressively responsible professional experience in a public health, public policy, or social services or child development organization.
- Experience managing a complex program and organizational budget.
- Proven capacity to develop strategic and responsive financial and administrative planning processes that are inclusive and adaptive to changing priorities.
- Experience working in and with governmental budget processes, especially at county and state level in California, is highly desirable.
- Experience working with boards or commissions of complex organizations.
- Strategic thinker
- Entrepreneurial and innovative
- Proactive and accountable
- Grace under pressure
- Politically astute
- Genuine, personable and approachable
- Possess a high level of integrity and judgement regarding confidential and sensitive matters.
- A personal and professional commitment to equity and inclusiveness and social and economic justice is critical.
- Excellent organizational and interpersonal skills are necessary, including curiosity and open-mindedness to work with diverse communities and promote new ideas, skillfully employ a positive viewpoint and sense of humor to develop and sustain relationships.
- Maturity to successfully navigate and collaborate with community leaders from a broad set of organizations across sectors, missions and values.
- The capacity to absorb criticism and self-reflect on shifting responsibilities of a leader maturely and responsively.

Compensation and Benefits

The starting salary range for the Chief Executive Officer is \$150,000-\$240,000 and will be dependent on the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate. F5SC provides comprehensive benefits including, but not limited to:

- **Medical, Dental, Vision:** F5SC pays 100% employee premiums & 50% dependent premiums
- **Annual Time Off:** Vacation Leave and 2 weeks Sick Leave, 15 Paid Holidays, Paid days during Agency Closure between Christmas and New Years Day
- **Insurance:** Short- & Long-Term Disability plans
- **Retirement:** 401k with a generous employer contribution & match
- **Flexible Scheduling,** including a hybrid remote work option



How to Apply:

To be considered, submit a detailed résumé and cover letter by June 1, 2026, to:

Jen Chelini
Executive Search Consultant
Leap Solutions
recruit@leapsolutions.com

- Potential candidates will receive a full job description and benefit information, as well as a questionnaire that must be completed in order to be considered.
- Initial virtual screening interviews will be conducted upon completion of the questionnaire with qualified applicants.

First 5 Sonoma is an Equal Opportunity Employer and considers all qualified applicants regardless of race, gender, color, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, veteran status, or other classification protected by law.

For more information about First 5 Sonoma County visit www.first5sonomacounty.org.