



# Request for Qualifications Evaluation Services

*Develop and implement a range of family and community-centered evaluation activities aligned with the Commission's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan*

**Deadline to submit via email:  
Wednesday, April 9, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.**

First 5 Fresno County  
2405 Tulare Street, Suite 200  
Fresno, CA 93721  
559-558-4900  
[www.first5fresno.org](http://www.first5fresno.org)

## Overview of Funding Opportunity

First 5 Fresno County seeks to partner with a qualified evaluator to develop and implement a range of family and community-centered evaluation activities aligned with the Commission's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.

Annual Funding	Contract Period
<b>The total funding available under this RFQ is no more than \$300,000 for one year</b>	<b>July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026</b> <i>option to renew annually through June 30, 2030</i>

## Eligibility

Submissions will be considered from public and private entities.

## Timeline

Date	Action
February 26, 2025	Release of Request for Qualifications
April 2, 2025	Deadline to submit questions
March 6, 13, 20, 27 April 3	Days when a response to submitted questions will be posted on the First 5 Fresno website
<b>April 9, 2025</b>	<b>Submission deadline</b>
Week of April 21, 2025	Virtual Presentations to Review Committee
May 2, 2025	Notification to applicant(s)
May & June	Scope of work and budget development
June 11, 2025	Recommended agency presented to Commission for approval
July 1, 2025	Contract start date

# Evaluation Services - Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

## ABOUT FIRST 5 FRESNO COUNTY

At First 5 Fresno County (First 5 Fresno), we know that children thrive when their families thrive. We envision a future where young children and their families are healthy, loved, and nurtured. We run after this vision by partnering with, advocating for and investing in our community to create a seamless system of quality, accessible services that support the well-being of every child and family. In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10, increasing the state's tax on tobacco products and creating an initiative called "The Children and Families Act." The legislation established the California Children and Families Commission (First 5), and it was charged with implementing an integrated system of services to support the optimal development of children from the prenatal stage to age five, so they are ready to succeed in school and life. Each California county formed a First 5 – and so was born First 5 Fresno.

For over two decades, First 5 Fresno has invested more than \$548 million to fill gaps in our local service system so that families raising young children have access to the supports they deserve. As stewards of public funding, we operate primarily "behind-the-scenes", working directly with the people, programs, policies, and places representing the many agencies, organizations, and businesses that, in turn, directly support families. Our investments range from program-level (e.g. home visitation programs) to multi-partner collective-impact work (e.g. serving as the backbone of a prenatal to five investment plan) as we partner with our community to leverage funding, raise the needs of families with young children, and improve community outcomes through intentional collaboration.

As a First 5 Commission we are responsible for developing a strategic plan and evaluation activities to guide local funding decisions that are consistent with the purpose of Proposition 10. Development of our 2025-2030 Strategic Plan is anticipated to be completed in June of 2025. A copy of our current strategic plan and recent Commission Meeting agendas with strategic plan updates can be found on our website at <https://first5fresno.org/about/#board-tools> under *Our Identity*.

## RFQ INTENT

The California Children and Families Act requires outcome-based accountability and evaluation from local First 5 county commissions. As such, First 5 Fresno seeks to partner with a qualified evaluator to develop and implement a range of family and community-centered evaluation activities aligned with the Commission's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, once adopted, to inform decision-making about improvements and resource allocation.

We believe families and communities are the ultimate experts on their needs and are committed to building intentional, respectful and equitable partnerships in every aspect of our work. As such, we are seeking an evaluation partner to work alongside our staff, community and partners to develop equitable, research and community-informed evaluation activities with participant experience at the center.

## FUNDING AND CONTRACT PERIOD

The total funding available under this RFQ is up to \$300,000 for one year with the option by First 5 Fresno to renew on an annual basis through June 30, 2030, based on performance and availability of funds, to align with the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, once adopted. Please note, the Commission reserves the right to negotiate any proposed activities and/or budgets.

## ELIGIBILITY

Submissions will be considered from public and private entities, including partnerships between multiple entities. If the entity is a past or current First 5 Fresno funded partner, their contract(s) must be in good standing. The ideal individual or firm will have the following experience and familiarity with:

- Issues impacting young children and their families including early childhood development, policy, and research
- The early childhood service system in California and Fresno County
- Designing and implementing equitable, community-informed, research-based, family and community-centered evaluation frameworks and activities
- Working alongside culturally and linguistically diverse groups, including parents of young children and community-based programs and organizations
- Evaluating system, policy or advocacy change initiatives, including experience identifying appropriate indicators to measure, track and report progress on collective-impact-type initiatives
- Developing qualitative data collection tools and conducting interviews, focus groups and document review
- Supporting as a thought-partner, adapting and iterating as context and needs change
- Reporting analysis supported by data in digestible, visual ways to various partners and interested parties

## SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected firm will work closely with First 5 Fresno staff to develop a **five-year evaluation framework** for the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan and **implement a range of equitable, family and community-centered evaluation activities** related to strategic plan focus areas, funded programs and initiatives. As applicable, we encourage firms **to partner (formally or informally)** with outside individuals/entities with unique experience/expertise related to one or more focus areas or evaluation activities. **Specific external partners do not need to be identified at the time of RFQ submission** and, as applicable, may be identified in partnership with First 5 Fresno staff based on the finalized strategic plan focus areas.

Interested entities should be able to administer a wide range of equitable, research and community-informed evaluation methodologies and assess impacts of funded activities, factors contributing to/impeding success and develop recommendations for improvement based on data analysis. It is crucial that the evaluation design and activities **honor and value the expertise, experience and benefit of those participating** in the evaluation process. We are committed to engaging in evaluation activities where we can learn from and **with** our community.

Example activities include, but are not limited to:

- **Evaluation Framework**
  - o Facilitate meetings and discussions (virtually and/or in-person) with First 5 Fresno staff and community members to develop an evaluation framework for the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan
  - o Through the development of the framework, identify with First 5 Fresno if implementation of each evaluation area will be led or supported by the selected firm, or where external partnerships with individuals/firms with unique expertise/experience is necessary
  - o Finalize a five-year evaluation framework to guide subsequent evaluation activities for each investment/focus area of the strategic plan
  
- **Evaluation Activities**
  - o Key informant interviews (individuals and groups)
  - o Academic literature review
  - o Creation of theories of change and logic models
  - o Identifying research questions and measurable outcomes
  - o Support First 5 Fresno staff with the completion of the annual evaluation narrative for First 5 California
  
- **Data collection and analysis**
  - o Design and implement data collection tools and protocols (e.g. questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, needs assessments)
  - o Collect, extract, validate, merge and analyze quantitative and qualitative data, including recommendations for investments/activities in partnership with First 5 Fresno and community members
  - o Technical assistance to First 5 Fresno staff and partners to implement evaluation activities
  
- **Meeting Facilitation**
  - o Agenda design and facilitation support
  - o Build consensus among a diverse array of community members
  - o Support First 5 Fresno staff to develop and enhance meeting goals/strategies
  
- **General Project Management**
  - o Collaboration and coordination with First 5 Fresno staff on activity planning and implementation
  - o Report writing and presentation of data and recommendations to the First 5 Fresno County Commission and partners
  - o Meeting facilitation (agenda design, participation techniques, guiding productive discussion, consensus-making)
  - o Other relevant projects that relate to the evaluation and reporting of First 5 Fresno that emerge

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Submission Deadline**

Completed applications must be **emailed** to **[funding@first5fresno.org](mailto:funding@first5fresno.org)** by **5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 9, 2025**. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that submissions are received on time. Late applications will not be accepted. We strongly encourage you to submit your application before April 9<sup>th</sup> to ensure your submission is received by the deadline.

As an exception, if an email submission is not possible, applications may be hand-delivered to the First 5 Fresno office by the above deadline, at 2405 Tulare Street, Fresno, CA 93721 Suite 200.

### How to Submit

Please note, after emailing the submission to [funding@first5fresno.org](mailto:funding@first5fresno.org), applicants will receive an email from [funding@first5fresno.org](mailto:funding@first5fresno.org) as proof of submission. Please verify all required documents were submitted. If the applicant identifies an error they may resubmit using the same process before the deadline. Only the most recent submission will be accepted. Note: Hand-delivered submissions will also receive a printed, time-stamped proof of submission.

### What to Submit

Below is a list of the forms and documents required for each submission. All forms referenced below are included at the end of this RFQ with additional instructions on how to complete each form.

**A. Narrative (60 total points) – FORM A**

**B. Scope of Work and Budget (30 total points) – FORM B**

**C. Attachments (10 total points) *\*not a part of the narrative page limit***

- a. Agency Organizational Chart  
can be in any format as long as it shows the positions referenced in the narrative
- b. Statement of Financial Standing  
signed statement, from an individual with signing authority (i.e. executive director, chief executive officer, board chair, business director, etc.), certifying that the organization is in good financial standing

*Note: if selected for funding, the applicant may be asked to submit audited financials or similar documentation, but these are not required for the RFQ submission.*

- c. A completed W-9 Form (template linked [here](#))
  - a. Up to three (3) relevant work samples  
from a previous evaluation project, such as evaluation plans or evaluation reports written by the agency
  - b. Provide names, titles, addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of at least three (3) references. References should be organizations or individuals for whom the applicant has provided evaluation services cited as related/similar experience.

### **REVIEW PROCESS AND NOTIFICATION**

Each submission will be initially reviewed to ensure all required forms/documents are included. If a required form/document is missing or incomplete, our staff will make a reasonable effort to contact the applicant and provide an opportunity to submit the missing form/document within **two business days**.

A Community Review Committee will evaluate and score each submission that complies with the purpose and requirements of this RFQ. **If requested, applicants should be prepared to elaborate on their application to the Review Committee, which is anticipated to meet the week of April 21, 2025.**

Submissions may receive a maximum of 100 points.

Scoring **will be based** on:

- Overall alignment with the intent of this RFQ and vision/mission of First 5 Fresno
- Capacity of the applicant to carry out the proposed activities and RFQ requirements
- Appropriateness/feasibility of the proposed budget and activities
- How well the application reflects and honors the cultures, languages, abilities, expertise, experience, and overall diversity of the Fresno County community

While scoring **will not be based** on the formatting or grammar of the submission, all applicants will ensure that their submission is clear and accurately conveys the applicant's intent.

The contact person for each submission will be notified via email of First 5 Fresno's decision. All submitters, including the agency selected as a finalist, will be notified by **May 2, 2025** of the status of their submission. Following the review process, First 5 Fresno will work with the recommended agency to develop and finalize a contract agreement, including scope of work and budget, that is expected to be presented on June 11, 2025 to the First 5 Fresno Commission for consideration for funding.

## QUESTIONS

Any questions about this RFQ must be submitted via email to **fundings@first5fresno.org** with the subject line: **"Question RFQ – Evaluation Services"**. Questions will be accepted until **Wednesday, April 2, 2025**. If questions are received, responses will be posted on the funding page (<https://first5fresno.org/what-we-do/#funding-opportunities>) of the First 5 Fresno website every Thursday beginning March 6, 2025, through April 3, 2025. Note: if questions are received after April 2<sup>nd</sup>, we cannot guarantee a response.

## FUNDED PARTNER REQUIREMENTS

All agencies funded by First 5 Fresno must abide by all the policies and guidelines stipulated in the Funded Partner Manual – Programmatic Services, as appropriate. The Funded Partner Manual is updated annually and can be found here: <https://first5fresno.org/what-we-do/#funded-partners>.

### Financial Reporting Requirements

In most cases, payments are made electronically through a reimbursement request process. From time-to-time, advance payments may be considered and approved. All expenses must be supported by backup documentation (i.e. general ledger, receipts, invoices, etc.). Invoices are typically due on a quarterly basis.

See page 15 of the Funded Partner Manual for more information on invoicing and payments (<https://first5fresno.org/what-we-do/#funded-partners>). You can also find a list of disallowed costs and

budget line-item definitions under the Fiscal section of this same webpage (<https://first5fresno.org/what-we-do/#funded-partners>).

## **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

### **Protest Process**

Upon notice by First 5 Fresno staff of a proposed award, any applicant may file a formal written protest regarding a potential award by the Commission. The protest shall be filed with the First 5 Fresno Executive Director no less than forty-eight (48) hours before the day of the meeting at which the Commission is scheduled to award the subject contract. The protest shall be in writing addressed to the Executive Director and contain the exact basis for the protest, and proof that the protestor is a viable and responsible provider of the services sought. The protest should provide evidence that the proposed award violated First 5 Fresno's procurement procedures or State law. Mere disagreement with the decision to award to another provider shall not be the basis for a successful protest.

### **Confidentiality of Responses**

First 5 Fresno cannot guarantee the confidentiality of information submitted by the applicant. In the event that First 5 Fresno receives a public request for records or court order that First 5 Fresno reasonably determines compels its disclosure of the submission, First 5 Fresno shall provide those records that it deems responsive to the request. All materials submitted as part of a response to this RFQ become the property of First 5 Fresno.

### **Communication**

As of the issue date of this RFQ and continuing through the public notification of the award, individuals/entities submitting applications are specifically directed not to hold any meetings, conferences, or technical discussions regarding this RFQ with First 5 Fresno staff, Commissioners or any members of the Community Review Committee unless expressly authorized by this RFQ. "Off the record" contacts can potentially taint the Commission's decision-making process. Interested applicants may only submit inquiries through the [funding@first5fresno.org](mailto:funding@first5fresno.org) email address in response to any matter pertaining to the RFQ. Any prohibited contact may result in disqualification of the potential contractor's submission.

### **Contracts**

Issuance of this RFQ does not constitute a commitment by the Commission to award a contract. The Commission reserves the right to reject any or all submissions received in response to this RFQ, or to cancel this RFQ if the Commission deems that it is in the best interest of the Commission to do so. In addition, First 5 Fresno staff reserves the right, after contract award, to amend the resulting contract as needed throughout the term of the contract to best meet the needs of all parties.

Any contract awarded by the Commission will contain various material terms and conditions that will not be negotiable, including, but not limited to, applicant's obligation to indemnify, defend, and hold the Commission harmless from and against applicant's and its subcontractors' negligence and willful



actions, insurance requirements as determined by the Commission, and compliance with various Commission policies.

### **Supplanting**

No Commission funds shall be used to supplant (i.e., take the place of or replace) state or local General Fund money for any purpose. This prohibition does not apply to federally funded or privately funded programs.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Applicants must adhere to the Commission's Conflicts of Interest Policy and Conflicts of Interest Code, as amended, as applicable. No Commissioner or designated staff may make, participate in making, or use their official position to influence the making of any governmental decision, which may have a direct or indirect foreseeable material financial effect on the Commissioner or designated staff person. Therefore, no entity in which a Commissioner or designated staff person has a material financial interest may submit an application to the Commission. Additionally, under no circumstances, may a financial dependent of a First 5 Fresno Commissioner or staff respond to this RFQ. Relatives (which shall include, but not be limited to, adult children, siblings, aunts and uncles) of First 5 Fresno Commissioners or staff who are not dependents are discouraged from submitting.

## FORM A - NARRATIVE

### Evaluation Services RFQ

Please provide a brief narrative for the following questions and, to the extent possible, organize using headers. No specific format is required, you can answer the questions in any order that makes sense to you. You may include tables, infographics, images etc. to support your response to any of the questions below. Please keep your response to no more than **15 one-sided pages**. Please do not use a font size smaller than **11-point size** for legibility.

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1. Share about your (firm's) mission and how it relates to the **mission** and **vision** of First 5 Fresno County. What are your **guiding principles** to evaluation design and implementation?
2. Describe your **initial ideas**/approach to design and implement an equitable evaluation framework and evaluation activities related to First 5 Fresno's vision, mission and future strategic plan.
  - i. Include how your firm would:
    - a. Work alongside First 5 Fresno staff and community members to develop **research and community-informed** evaluation activities with participant experience and benefit at the center
    - b. Build **intentional, respectful** and **equitable** partnerships throughout the evaluation process
3. The current draft of our 2025-2030 strategic plan includes potential focus areas related to Maternal, Child and Family Health, Thriving Families and Early Learning. **How do you envision partnering** (formally or informally) with external individuals/firms with unique experience/expertise with these or other focus areas?
4. Describe your firm's **qualifications** as they relate to the **Eligibility and Scope of Services** sections on page 4 of the RFQ. Include the number of years of experience your firm has in designing and implementing effective and innovative performance measurement, applied research or evaluation projects with agencies similar to First 5 Fresno County.
  - i. Please reference the experience and roles of the personnel included in FORM B the Scope of Work and Budget.
5. First 5 Fresno serves as the co-lead, and future backbone agency of an early childhood **collective impact** initiative and investment plan. Describe your firm's approach and experience related to evaluating collective-impact type efforts.
6. List specific **examples of past projects** your firm has completed related to the intent of this RFQ (see Intent and Scope of Services on pages 3 and 4) and your firm's specific role in each project including the methods of data collection analysis applied. Please provide links to these projects being referenced if available.
7. Include a projected timeline for planning and implementation.

## FORM B - SCOPE OF WORK AND BUDGET

### Evaluation Services RFQ

Complete the following two tables with anticipated activities and expenses for one year. Please note, the below information is an estimate only. Multiple rows for activities were included, but applicants may leave rows blank if there are no more activities to list or duplicate this page to add rows. *Alternatively, you may submit your own scope of work and/or budget template instead of using the tables below. If you do so, please be sure the primary information below is still included.*

A final scope of work and budget will be developed between First 5 Fresno and the identified contractor upon recommendation for funding. For budget line item definitions visit the “Funded Partner Manual – Fiscal ” on the First 5 Fresno website (<https://first5fresno.org/what-we-do/#funded-partners>).

Table 1 - Annual Activities		
Activity Name	Brief Description of the Activity	Anticipated Timeline/Frequency

## Annual Project Budget

Category	First 5 Fresno Budget Request
<b>Personnel</b> <i>Salaries, benefits, taxes</i>	\$
	<i>Brief narrative to describe costs:</i>
<b>Operating Expenses</b> <i>Facilities costs, operational/supplies, training/travel</i>	\$
	<i>Brief narrative to describe costs:</i>
<b>Program Expenses</b> <i>Materials and supplies (including stipends/incentives for participants/community engagement)</i>	\$
	<i>Brief narrative to describe costs:</i>
<b>Professional Services/Expenses</b> <i>Consultants/external partnerships</i>	\$
	<i>Brief narrative to describe costs:</i>
<b>Other</b>	\$
	<i>Brief narrative to describe costs:</i>
<b>Indirect</b> <i>Not to exceed 15%</i>	\$
<b>Total Project Budget</b>	<b>\$</b>