**Family Resource Center (FRC) Initiative Evaluation Contractor Request for Qualifications (RFQ): Questions Received via Email with Answers Announced at Bidder's Conference, November 10th, 2009**

1. **Question:** Is the total amount of contract funds available $50,000 (as indicated on page 2) or $70,000 (as indicated on pages 2 and 6)?

   **Answer:** The total amount of contract funds available is $70,000. This clarification has also been posted to our web site.

2. **Question:** Would you accept a proposal from an organization/contractor from out-of-state?

   **Answer:** There are no specific eligibility requirements specifying that the organization/contractor must be local to the California Bay Area. If an out-of-state entity feels that they can effectively meet the deliverables without exceeding the available funding amount there is nothing precluding that entity from submitting an application.

3. **Question:** In Minimum Eligibility Requirements described on pages 10-11, the second requirement reads: "Services must be provided to residents of the City and County of San Francisco." The Sacramento County Office of Education does not provide services to residents of the City or County of San Francisco. Does that make us ineligible to apply as evaluation contractor?

   **Answer:** This Minimum Eligibility Requirement refers to the requirement that services proposed to be provided through this RFQ funding must be provided to residents of the City and County of San Francisco. This is requirement does not preclude an entity from applying if that entity has not previously served residents of the City and County of San Francisco.

4. **Question:** Allowable grant costs are discussed on page 13. The third bullet reads: "The funds shall only be used for services to children 0-5 years old . . ." On page 3, however, it states that the FRC "funded agencies provide resources and activities to families of children 0-18 years old . . ." I assume that the evaluation will be based on the resources and activities provided to families of children 0-18 years old. Is this correct?

   **Answer:** This is correct, the evaluation will be based on the resources and activities provided to families of children 0-18 years old as the initiative is jointly funded by three City Departments.

5. **Question:** In looking over the RFQ for the First 5 Evaluation, I noted that the budget is set up like a standard grant contract vs. a consulting contract. In other contracts we have with the City we provide a scope of work with number of hours by task/deliverable at our standard hourly rates. The format provided in the RFQ would appear not to allow that method of budgeting. Is it acceptable to provide a scope that uses an hourly rate tied to a deliverables vs. a line item budget model?

**Answer:** Applicants should use the budget template provided as this is standard to First 5 San Francisco and our process for obtaining Commissioner approval for our grants and contracts. If an applicant would like to provide additional detail about staff time and hourly rates in relation to project deliverables they may do so in the budget narrative that should be submitted along with the budget form per instructions on Form E page 1. This should not be a reconfiguration of the budget but could be a further breakdown of the personnel section (for example, of the XXX amount requested for a Project Associate, XX amount and time would be spent on deliverable 1, XX amount and time would be spent on deliverable 2, etc.)

6. **Question:** As a for-profit organization should we include our most recent tax filing in lieu of a Form 990?

   **Answer:** Yes, if you are a for-profit organization, please provide your most recent tax filing in lieu of the Form 990.

7. **Question:** With respect to the most recent financial statement (audited, if available) attachment, does this refer year end financial statement from December 2008, or year-to-date?

   **Answer:** Please attach your most recent full-year financial statement, in other words please attach year-end for December 2008, even if you have a year-to-date available.

## FRC Initiative Evaluation Contractor RFQ: Questions and Answers from Bidder's Conference, November 10th, 2009

1) **Question:** Are the suggested child and parent surveys listed in the draft evaluation plan appropriate for ages 0-18?

   **Answer:** We identified surveys that would be appropriate for a wider age group; however, the selected surveys are not as appropriate for parents of infants and toddlers and parents of older youth. We aimed for the middle age groups and identified instruments that would be relevant for the largest group of FRCs and that staff at those FRCs would feel were the most appropriate to administer and those are the surveys that have been selected to date.

2) **Question:** On page 5 of RFQ you list data types/requirements for FRCs and in Evaluation Plan at the end you say that measures are "being considered". Have specific measurement tools/data collection process been defined yet? Do you anticipate all FRCs using the same tools for the same types of service?

   **Answer:** Yes, as part of the aligned FRC initiative the intent was that we would identify a basic set of data collection tools that would be standard across all FRCs for specific services. In other words if an FRC was implementing an evidence-based parent education curriculum we would like all FRCs to use the same set of instruments for that parent education curriculum.

Yes, we have identified some measures. It is not the full set of measures as the evaluation plan is a working plan so we may add additional measures where there is room for that type of standardization and where it fits a specific service that the majority of FRCs are providing and so is relevant across the large group of FRCs. We may also decide after using a particular instrument for a year that it is not effective, is not useful, and/or our FRCs have not had a good experience. In those cases we are open to reconsidering instruments and our FRCs know that; however we also felt strongly that we had to start somewhere.

To date the instrument that is the most solidified and will be rolled out in the next month is the Parenting Scale. It is a pre/post measure that has been used with the Triple P Parenting Curriculum and it measures parenting skills and discipline styles. We are also committed to doing a measurement this year of parental stress. We have narrowed it down to two instruments and are piloting those with the Triple P pilot group – a separate initiative sponsored by the San Francisco Parent Training Institute with participating FRCs that overlap with our initiative.

The agencies that are using the Family Development Matrix (FDM) is also and evaluation piece that is set. Those agencies have been using the FDM assessment for several years and will continue to do so as part of their case management work. When the FRC Initiative Evaluation Workgroup first convened that was part of the non-negotiable items that were presented to them in terms of what we had to accomplish - a)  We have to use CMS (Contract Management System) in order to generate participant and demographic data to send to the state; b) We have to have a working evaluation plan that we feel confident presenting to the public to guide some standardization of our evaluation work; and c) we have to have approximately a half year of outcome data, in other words have at least one pre-post measure identified that we are using in this first year.

**Follow-up Question:** So do you already have that system identified for tracking participant data?

**Answer:** Yes, that is our CMS – Contract Management System – and there are some questions about that system that we will address momentarily.

3) **Related Data Collection Questions: a)** Have all pre/post surveys to measure outcomes all been determined? Are the grantee FRCs already using them? Will the contractor be involved in helping select any surveys or tools? **and b)** Where are the 23 FRCs in their process of collecting and submitting data? Have they begun? How much hands-on will the contractor have in monitoring data collection?

**Answer:** Yes, some outcome measures have been determined ***(see above response for details)***. Agencies will be using the ones that have been identified next month and there is room for contractor to be involved to help select additional tools as needed.

4) **Related Data Collection Question:** Will contractor be responsible for monitoring data flow or data collection or is this responsibility of First 5?

**Answer:** It really is the primary responsibility of First 5 San Francisco staff. Input from the evaluation contractor is always welcome, but the Evaluation and Family Support Program Officers will be overseeing data collection.

5) **Question:** Is the Family Development Matrix an instrument specific to this project or is it available elsewhere?

**Answer:** The Family Development Matrix (FDM) is actually a flexible tool that can be customized. It was developed by Strategies and CSU Monterey and part of the work that they do with agencies that sign up to use it, is to help select various outcomes and indicators that can be tracked over time. The specific matrix tool that is being used in San Francisco is aligned with 12 other counties since San Francisco recently entered a second phase of matrix administration in which the same 20 core indicators are being tracked across 13 participating counties. In other words the FDM used in San Francisco is a standard instrument available to and being utilized by 12 other counties. San Francisco has added 4 additional indicators which participating counties have the option to do. It is also a web-based data collection system.

**Follow-up Question:** Did you say that the agencies will begin data collection next month so you are still in the process of rolling out their contracts?

**Answer:** Yes, agencies will begin data collection next month. If you have a question about what stage their contract negotiations are in that is a separate question.

**Follow-up Question:** They will all begin the same data collection next month? You mentioned different sources so are they collecting the same data starting next month?

**Answer:** It was a very intentional decision, in order to make data collection and evaluation feasible to FRCs, that data sources be attached to specific activities. So we are not doing a whole lot of global measurements as part of this evaluation. We were very explicit in our goal to have a few standard data sources attached to specific activities and services so that FRCs would know clearly who would receive measurements and when to administer them.

The case management piece measured through the Family Development Matrix (FDM) is up and running in terms of outcomes measurement for the subset of FRCs providing case management services in coordination with San Francisco Human Services Agency (HSA). As families come in and do an intake for case management FRCs are also administering the matrix with that family.

In regard to the pre/post measure for curriculum-based parent education, FRCs are all using the same pre/post measurement (The Parenting Scale), but administration depends on the timeline for when the classes start up. So although FRCs are all doing those classes they are beginning them on different schedules. The measure is available next month and as FRCs have groups starting up the instruction is that they hand out the pre measurement at the start of their next group which will result in about a half of year's worth of data across all FRCs.

6) **Question:** Should the data analysis techniques be feasible (replicable) for individual FRCs? Is a high level analysis more/less important than building skills of FRCs to use data? **Question Clarification:** In the RFQ it talks about data analysis for the purpose of reporting but then it also says that data will be given back to FRCs for further drilling down and their own use so wondering in data analysis plan do we want to target that as something that is sustainable across time for the individual

FRCs to find information for program planning or do we want to do something more targeted at an annual report level?

**Answer:** We can answer a piece of that today, but some of that question is up to how you want to design your proposal and your expertise in creating data analysis plans. The minimum expectation in the RFQ in terms of giving data back to grantees is that they will get a data analysis book of the data that they turn in. FRC grantees can generate several types of data reports around participant data from the web based contract monitoring system so the concern is more around the surveys that they administer and submit. We would like them to get a basic frequency/number report back on those surveys that they can then use in their own marketing, sharing their story, and in other funding proposals. That is the minimum expectation. We are really starting at a baseline here and so at this point having grantees get survey data back that they have never had before and getting them to use a couple of surveys in standard with other FRCs is the main objective. As to the extent that you want to weigh the pros and cons of high level vs. low level data analysis and sustainability for grantees in your overall data analysis plan, we would leave that to your judgment.

7) **Question:** Can you clarify the first source hiring program an its associated reporting requirements?

**Bidder's Conference Answer:** The First Source Hiring Program is a city-wide program/policy to advance the employment of low-income wage-earners. It does come with some specifics that we will have to investigate further and we will post the information on our web next week with the other questions and answers from this conference.

**Revised Answer Following Additional Investigation:** The First Source Hiring Program requirements apply to this RFQ. The project connects low-income San Francisco residents to entry-level jobs. Entry-level jobs are defined as those non-managerial positions that require either no education above a high school diploma (or equivalency) **OR** no more than 2 years of specific training or work experience. First 5 San Francisco staff will review your proposed staffing model / budget for positions that could be eligible for the program and will refer a successful applicant to information to comply with the program for any eligible positions.

8) **Question:** What is the preferred deliverable date for the annual report and accompanying data books?

**Answer:** We don't have a specific due date at this point, but according to the anticipated timeline in the RFQ, we expect that work will begin around early Feb. 2010, then there would be a 3 month or so ramping up process and then the full implementation of the scope would end around take us through the following Feb. 2011. So the due date for reports would be around the end of that first implementation year (Jan/Feb timeframe).

**Follow-up Question:** Says granting period ends Jan. 2011 so from that we could gather the reports would probably be due Jan.?

**Answer:** Yes that would be the anticipated timeline and that also coincides with our First 5 Annual reports.

9) **Question:** Can you clarify the likely identifiers available to match data? i.e. are client names and addresses recorded? SSNs? Other common identifiers?

**Answer:** In our CMS (Contract Management System) database we require grantees to collect first name, last name, street address - not social security number - and for children birth date is also required so surveys could be matched through those CMS identifiers. CMS also generates a unique client ID code.

There is also potential to match to the Family Development Matrix web-based system and the school district (i.e. fields have been built into CMS to record these additional ID numbers), but at this point these pieces are not required of grantees in their data entry so matching of this kind would be saved for later evaluation phases and would not be among the matching/data analysis expectations.

There is a process in place for matching with the HSA Child Welfare Client ID. That field is in CMS, agencies have been instructed about specifically which number to enter in that field, and they have related paperwork with the numbers from HSA.

**Follow-up Question:** Are there discussions about actually being able to include the data from CWS database?

**Answer:** Yes. Cityspan manages our CMS database and we can get several different kinds of "data dumps" from Cityspan. We as staff are limited in the extent that we can view and sort through individual client records in CMS, but it is part of our contract with Cityspan to get various different types of data extracts in addition to the reports we can generate that are pre-set in the system.

We also do not have free range of access to the CWS database, but we have a close working relationship with HSA staff, a few of whom are on our FRC Initiative Evaluation Workgroup, so it will be a process of seeing the data extracts that they can get and the data extracts that we can get and then working to match those up. We anticipate there will be some data analysis that HSA will want to do on their own and some data analysis that we will do jointly with matched files.

10) **Related HSA Data Matching Question:** What level of access (aggregate, individual client records) are you anticipating for child welfare database?(CMS/CWS) In other words will we be able to match for children and youth in CMS/CWS?

**Answer:** See above responses.

11) **Question:** What data system is being used to capture the implementation, contract monitoring, and service delivery data? Is it the Mayor's office data system?

**Answer:** The primary data system is our CMS (Contract Management System) and all funded agencies, contracts, grants are on that system.

12) **Question:** Does the CMS house participant level data?

**Answer:** Yes, CMS houses two types of participant data. We divided activity types up into direct service activities and indirect service activities. Most of the services that agencies use to enter their contract service data are direct service activities. This means that they enter individual participant level data into the system and they match it, through attendance records, to the activities that those participants attend.

Indirect services are things like large community events, outreach types of activities, and basic street information and referral for which FRCs don't collect individual level data. In those cases we provided FRCs the option of giving us aggregate level data and we treat that data very differently. Essentially, it just gives us a sense of how many folks they are touching, but it is not very accurate in many cases and it could be duplicative data. Indirect activities comprises only about 10% of FRC service deliverables.

13) **Question:** Given that services and evaluation are for age group 0-18, what are approximate average numbers of clients to be served? On page 3 of RFQ it says 1800 children 0-5 and 2800 parents, what about children 6-18?

**Answer:** These are numbers that were pulled from First 5 San Francisco files in past fiscal years funding these agencies and while they do not give us a completely accurate count of the service numbers that will result through the aligned initiative with the three other departments they do give us a pretty good gauge. The agencies funded through the initiative are a lot of the same agencies that First 5 has worked with in the past so that does give us a fairly good starting gauge and those are the numbers we quoted in the RFQ - 1800 children and 2800 parents.

Agencies are expanding and serving ages 6- 18 but those age groups still comprise a relatively small sample of their participant pool.

**Follow-up Question:** So you think there are fewer 6-18 year-olds than there are 0-5 year-olds?

**Answer:** Yes, we can say that with confidence. So in essence the numbers given in the RFQ are the best numbers we have and we are not expecting to exceed that by a large amount particularly not in the first year.

**Expanded Answer Following Additional Staff Discussion:** The FRCs do serve youth and did in the past through HSA and DCYF so when we say that we don't anticipate that agencies will serve large numbers of youth 6-18 that is from what we can gauge from the activities that have been put in our CMS and the corresponding projections for youth served entered into CMS. Those in our CMS system would be the focus of the evaluation.

**Follow-up Question:** So you are not going to be adding more in CMS on additional activities on older kids for example?

**Answer:** Many services are geared toward families and although those family activities indirectly serve and impact the entire family, including older youth, we are not requiring agencies to capture all data on older youth and other family members who may be indirectly impacted.

So again the outcome data that we are collecting as part of this evaluation is attached to specific services, those service primarily target parents/caregivers, children 0-5, and a few youth 6-18. Although in time direct services to older youth will expand, currently the direct services to parents/caregivers and young children are the activities that are the focus of the outcomes piece of the evaluation. We recognize this excludes older youth that may be indirectly impacted, but indirect impacts are not a focal point of the evaluation.

14) **Question:** Since evaluators will not have supervisory or disciplinary authority over minors, is criminal screening required?

**Answer:** No, criminal screening is not required for the evaluation contractor.

15) **Question:** In the participant outcome measures section, you mentioned some outcomes are not tracked for this measure. Does this mean these outcomes do not need to be tracked or the measures of the outcomes will be decided later on?

**Answer:** This relates back to the fact that although agencies are providing several different types of core services, we selected only a few services that would be the focus of an outcomes evaluation. So those activities that say "do not need to be tracked" will not be tracked through an outcomes evaluation, rather they will be tracked through output measures (numbers reached, frequency of service, contacts, etc.) but will not be assessed for participants' pre/post level of change or other outcomes.

16) **Question:** The RFQ says that the consultant will help to review/finalize evaluation questions during the first three months. Are the current/draft evaluation questions available?

**Answer:** At this point the evaluation questions have not been identified. It is a piece of work that the FRC Initiative Evaluation Workgroup wanted to initiate. We are going to be starting that soon – was on the agenda last month, but was not covered – so will begin at the Nov. workgroup meeting and at the time the contractor starts up there will be a draft of those questions available with potential to revise and refine in the contractor's project planning and ramp-up phase.

**Follow-up question:** Will the work be used to answer the questions that are developed in Nov.?

**Answer:** Yes, the evaluation plan presented in the RFQ should guide the writing of your proposal and during the project ramp-up that is where we will focus in with the evaluation workgroup on the structure of the annual report, the audience, and the specific report content that is of interest to stakeholders. These discussions will be guided by the evaluation questions that the workgroup has identified, but in identifying questions the workgroup will be working off the same evaluation plan you have in your proposals so the questions will not veer off in a completely different direction; in other words the focus is on the evaluation plan and the questions that are inherent in the evaluation plan.

17) **Related Question on Development of Evaluation Questions:** Will evaluation questions be developed during the project planning and ramp-up piece of the work?

**Answer:** See above responses.

18) **Question:** Would you please explain more specifically about the two time per year for fiscal site visits?

**Answer:** Our basic monitoring requirements are that we do a least one fiscal visit and programmatic visit - that is the minimum expectation. So those requirements allude to the fact that agencies receiving First 5 San Francisco funds should be available for more visits should we need to do a follow-up fiscal visit, but the minimum that we do is one fiscal visit and a program visit.

**Expanded Post-Bidder's Conference Answer:** Typically the protocol for evaluation and other contractors performing work directly for First 5 San Francisco is that we would have a meeting at your agency that would combine fiscal and scope of work related reviews, but there could be additional visits depending on need.

19) **Question:** Attachment – "Current Agency Budget" – for profit agencies, will 2008 Audited Financials meet this requirement?

**Answer:** Yes, for those attachments we want the most recent, full year available.

20) **Question:** The required tables on page 17 and 18 of RFQ do they count within the 18 page narrative or are they in addition to the required sections within page limits?

**Answer:** The one on page 17 - the Performance Monitoring Table – that is within the required page limit and has a two page maximum. The one on page 18 – Project Management Table - is an additional form that is not within a required page limit (i.e. it is an additional form above and beyond the page limit).

21) **Question:** Can prospective bidders see lists of data fields in identified databases (CMS/HSA)?

**Answer:** No, there is just no way logistically, particularly with HSA, to do that and get it posted in time.

22) **Question:** What Institutional Review Board(IRB) process if any, do you anticipate for this project? Specifically concerned regarding accessing child welfare data?

**Answer:** Although there are some First 5's that have gone through an IRB process it is not a blanket requirement of First 5's and it is not a requirement of First 5 San Francisco; however what two workgroups are working on - starting with the San Francisco Family Support Network and then feeding up to our FRC Initiative Evaluation Workgroup - is a standardized confidentiality and consent protocol. Funded agencies have very different procedures for this and in discussing it inter-departmentally with the joint funders, none of the funders have clear consent and confidentiality protocols for a coordinated FRC evaluation as it has not been done in the past. So we do not yet have a finalized consent process, but it is something we will be putting in place. This is why currently we have limited access to individual participant level data in CMS and to CWS and will have to rely on data extracts that are stripped of uniquely identifiable data fields.

23) **Question:** May applicants attach examples of past work to their proposals?
**Answer:** No, we are going to keep allowable attachments limited to the ones that are listed in the RFQ. You can list references and so references can speak to past work.

24) **Question:** To what extent should the evaluation address grantees' progress toward contracted activities?

**Answer:** There is a quality section of the evaluation plan. The two instruments mentioned in this section are the San Francisco Family Support Network quality standards from which a participant satisfaction survey and a standards self-assessment have been developed. The plan is to also create and adapt a funder assessment from these quality standards. Grantees submit performance measures as part of their contracts, but those measures are more of an internal monitoring tool. In summary, the quality section will rely on the San Francisco Family Support Network standards tools and the performance measures will be an internal process that we use to gauge progress toward contract deliverables.

25) **Question:** Is it true that this year's analysis and annual report will only include those tools/surveys in the evaluation plan in RFQ? The new evaluation consultant is not responsible for further refining the evaluation plan or developing additional measures?

**Answer:** Correct, at this point those are the measures that we have identified and prioritized and the annual report can only include those measures that FRCs use this year, so, no, we do not anticipate additional ones this year.

26) **Question:** Is evaluation consultant responsible for data entry for client surveys or other paper-based measures?

**Answer:** We are avoiding that as much as possible. As part of the instructions and survey packets that grantees receive they are also getting excel spreadsheets and specific instructions for data entry into those sheets. There may be a few cases where data entry is not possible for an FRC, but we will make every effort to ensure that it happens in order to limit to a great extent the data entry that this evaluation consultant would have to do.