

RFQ

Request for Qualifications
Evaluation Services



816 W Acequia Avenue,
Visalia Ca 93291

Deadline: ***August 16, 2024, 12 p.m.***

RFQ Overview

First 5 Tulare is seeking a qualified firm to provide evaluation services for its programs and initiatives. First 5 Tulare is a local initiative funded by Proposition 10 to support early childhood development and health in Tulare County, California. The selected vendor will be responsible for conducting comprehensive evaluations of First 5 Tulare's programs, including data collection, analysis, and reporting.

The selected firm is expected to provide evaluation services using a variety of evaluation methods and data collected from funded programs and initiatives to assess program performance, community-level impact of initiatives, and the impact of First 5 Tulare's overall investments for young children.

The evaluation services contract may be awarded for three (3) years (October 2024 - October, 2027). Contracts may be extended for three (3) additional years, FY2027-28 – FY2029-30, depending on the success of the firm providing the services, demonstrated need in the community, and availability of funds. The project cost is not to exceed \$70,000 annually.

About First 5 Tulare

First 5 Tulare County is an independent public entity governed by a seven-member commission and operating under the provisions of the Children and Families Act of 1998 (Health and Safety Code §130100 et seq.). The First 5 Tulare County Commission receives tobacco tax revenues and is charged to invest funds in services and supports to enhance early childhood development in Tulare County. For more information, including the Commission's current strategic plan, please visit www.first5tc.org.

For the 2024-2027 funding term, First 5 Tulare County funds approximately 14 health and education programs. Nearly all these programs have been operating for several years. The Commission contracts with Persimmony for its data collection system.

First 5 staff are responsible for preparing annual report information to submit to the First 5 Tulare County Commission and First 5 California.

INTENT

In June 2023, the First 5 Tulare Commission adopted a new Strategic Plan to guide its investments through June 2028. A copy of the Plan is available at <https://www.first5tc.org/>

The Strategic Plan has four focus areas:

- **HEALTH:** Children grow up physically and mentally healthy
- **EARLY CARE AND DEVELOPMENT:** Children enter school ready to learn – cognitively, social-emotionally and physically.
- **STRONG FAMILIES:** Parents and other caregivers have the knowledge and resources they need to provide a nurturing environment.
- **INTEGRATIVE AND COLLABORATIVE SERVICES:** Communities are engaged in supporting and prioritizing children.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is an important component of the Strategic Plan and our Proposition 10 implementation process. The evaluation process is designed to provide critical information to help continually improve the Proposition 10 implementation process, as well as measure our progress in improving the well-being of children ages 0 through 5 and their families in Tulare County. The Commission uses this information to determine future funding. A copy of the most recent Evaluation Report is available at <https://www.first5tc.org/>

Timeline	
Date	Action
June 18, 2024	Release of the RFQ online at https://www.first5tc.org/
July 12, 2024	Due date for vendor questions – Please email to info@first5tc.org
July 19, 2024	Responses to vendor questions at https://www.first5tc.org/
August 16, 2024 – 12:00 p.m.	RFQ Submission Deadline
September 6, 2024	Notification to respondents
October 15, 2024	Contract start date

Note: Any date in this document may be changed at the discretion of First 5 Tulare. This RFQ and any addenda that may be issued will be available on the First 5 Tulare County website <https://www.first5tc.org/>

ELIGIBILITY

This RFQ invites applications from experienced qualified, independent consultants, that are interested in assisting First 5 Tulare County in effectively evaluating all Proposition 10 funded programs.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal vendor should have the following qualifications:

Research Experience including, but not limited to:

- Experience designing and developing data collection tools
- Experience using online survey platforms
- Experience with quantitative and qualitative data methods and analysis
- Experience collaborating on the conceptualization and design of research and research products

Research Reporting and Dissemination including, but not limited to:

- Experience producing findings, research briefs, and other research products for a variety of audiences (technical and non-technical)
- Experience producing findings, research briefs, and other research products to promote use of data

CONTRACT PERIOD

The evaluation services contract may be awarded for three (3) years (October 15, 2024 - October 30, 2027). Contracts may be extended for three (3) additional years, FY2027-28 – FY2028-29, FY 2029-30 depending on the success of the firm providing the services, demonstrated need of the Commission and availability of funds. The project cost is not to exceed \$70,000 annually.

Scope of Services

First 5 Tulare seeks to document the impact of funded programs, services and system change efforts in Tulare County. The purpose of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to select a qualified consultant or firm to ensure a responsive and comprehensive, integrated research, data collection, analysis and reporting for First 5 Tulare. The primary objectives and activities of the evaluation services sought in this RFQ are as below. Services by the selected applicant may include, but may not be limited to:

GENERAL EVALUATION SERVICES

- Review, analyze and report the impact of First 5 Tulare programs for children ages prenatal through 5 and their families, caregivers and community providers served.
- Utilize a variety of data collection methods, including, but not limited to key informant interviews, literature reviews, focus groups, surveys/questionnaires, and observations.
- Analyze quantitative and qualitative data.
- Review assessment tools to determine program appropriateness; research and make recommendations regarding alternative tools.
- Design surveys and evaluation tools.
- Perform specific analyses of collected data.
- Assist First 5 staff to identify meaningful data for collection and reporting.

CONTRACTOR PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

- Telephone and email inquiries will be acknowledged within 24 hours.
- Agreed upon timelines for requested services will be met.
- All work will be produced in a thorough and accurate manner.
- Invoices will be submitted on a timely basis.

REPORTING

- Design, prepare and present an annual local outcome evaluation report that is in compliance with California First 5 requirements.
- Provide onsite presentations to the Commission approximately 1 time per year.

DEVELOP RESEARCH PRODUCTS

- Develop research products and visualizations (e.g., reports, data briefs, findings memos, maps, graphs, etc.) based on state reporting requirements and First 5 Tulare's data needs.
- Develop accessible and engaging research products and collateral materials for the appropriate audiences.

METHOD AND BASIS FOR COMPENSATION

- First 5 Tulare County is not responsible for expenses incurred in preparing and submitting the proposal.
- Comprehensive hourly rate for professional services.
- Separate hourly rate for travel when requested to come to Tulare County.
- Appropriate travel expenses will be reimbursed.
- **Complete the "rate sheet" supplied on page 9**

Target Deliverable Timeline

Specific deliverables are expected and include, but may not be limited to, the following work items:

2024-25 EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

1. In coordination with First 5 Tulare evaluation staff, conduct a comprehensive review of program assessments and data collection efforts, and subsequently, refine these as needed throughout the 2024-2025 funding cycle.
2. Review the design of the evaluation framework for the funding cycle (FY2024-2025).
3. Review existing data collection efforts, provide feedback, support regarding data collection efforts. Prepare a Local Evaluation Report due on September 15, 2025. Present Local Evaluation Report to Commission in October 2025.

FISCAL YEARS 2025-26 AND 2026-27 EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

1. Collaborate with First 5 Tulare to collect data from funded programs.
2. Review and analyze data critically and provide recommendations based on the findings.
3. Submit the Evaluation Report to First 5 staff by September 15th each year and present the Evaluation Report to the First 5 Commission in October 2026 and 2027.

Submission Requirements

All RFQ's must be submitted to First 5 Tulare County by 12:00 p.m. PST on **Friday, August 16, 2024**. Submissions will be accepted via email at info@first5tc.org or mail submissions to 816 W Acequia Avenue, Visalia, Ca 93291. Respondents are solely responsible for ensuring their submissions are received on time. Late submissions will not be accepted. All documents must be submitted in PDF form. Below are the required components and their assigned maximum scoring value.

In order to simplify the review process and to obtain the maximum degree of comparability, please organize your proposal in the manner specified below.

Title Page – Show the proposal subject, the name, address, telephone number, name of contact person, and the date.

Letter of Transmittal – Limit to no more than two pages, single spaced, 1-inch margins. Briefly state your understanding of the work to be done and discuss how you will ensure the work is completed to the satisfaction of the Commission.

Summary of Qualifications – Please provide a brief narrative response to items 1 through 4, using headers. Limit to no more than 8 pages, single spaced, 1-inch margins with a font size no smaller than 11-point for this section.

1. Describe specific experience and expertise in research methods particularly in regard to program evaluation. Include experience developing data collection tools and applying quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze data.
2. Describe experience conducting evaluation focusing on results-based accountability. Include your knowledge of Tulare County, and your familiarity with First 5 and proposition 10 or early childhood systems of care.
3. Describe experience evaluating social service or early-childhood education programs serving rural communities, low-income clients, and communities of color.

4. Include name and contact information for a minimum of three organizations with whom you have worked.
5. Include a related work sample and product as an appendix to your proposal.
6. Include as an appendix a brief resume/CV of the main individuals likely to work on this project.

Evaluation and Submissions

The following factors will be considered in the Commission's selection of the evaluation contractor.

Responsiveness of the proposal in understanding of the work to be performed. Technical expertise, relevant experience, and cultural competence. Cost of the work to be performed.

Proposals submitted will be reviewed by Commission staff and the Commission's Evaluation Committee. The selection process will be directed primarily at those capabilities and advantages which are clearly shown in the written submission. It is anticipated that a decision will be made no later than September 6, 2024.

QUESTIONS

Any questions about this RFQ must be submitted via email to info@first5tc.org with the subject line: "Question RFQ – Evaluation Services." Questions will be accepted until Thursday, July 12, 2024. First 5 Tulare will post answers to all questions received on our website at www.first5tc.org on Friday, July 19, 2024.

RFQ REVIEW AND PROCESS

The Commission shall be the sole judge of the submissions, and particularly, which one best meets the needs of the Commission. The Commission reserves the right to accept the lowest-priced application, which is responsive to, and which substantially meets the Commission's requirements, and to negotiate with the Applicant if it is in the best interest to do so. The Commission reserves the right to reject any and all applications and to request additional information from Applicants. There is no appeals process. Applicants who meet the minimum qualifications set out in this RFQ may be asked to interview with the First 5 Staff/Evaluation Committee. The interview will enable First 5 Tulare to gather further information on any aspect of the application.

Following the review process, First 5 Tulare will work with the recommended applicant to develop and finalize a contract agreement that will be presented to the First 5 Tulare Commission for consideration and ultimate approval.

The contact person for each submission will be notified in writing of First 5 Tulare's decision. All applicants, including those that are selected as a finalist, will be notified by September 6, 2024, of the status of their submission.

If you wish to obtain additional information or visit the Commission, please contact Michele Eaton, Executive Director, at (559) 622-8650. An electronic version of this RFQ may be obtained on the First 5 Tulare County web site at www.first5tc.org.

Reservations

- First 5 Tulare is not responsible for any expenses incurred by an applicant in developing an application.
- First 5 Tulare reserves the right to reduce, amend, and/or rescind this RFQ at any time prior to final execution of the contract.
- First 5 Tulare is under no obligation to award a contract to the applicant that presents the lowest cost or highest yield. The selected applicant will be made based on a comprehensive evaluation of all the submitted proposals and the best interests of First 5 Tulare as determined by the reviewers and the Executive Director.
- First 5 Tulare reserves the right to request additional information and/or clarification from any or all applicants.
- All applications become the property of First 5 Tulare.
- First 5 Tulare reserves the right to accept all or a portion of any application.
- All applications will remain confidential until a contract is negotiated and signed. However, since First 5 Tulare is a public entity, all applications can become public, with written request, after all successful contract negotiations.
- There is no appeals process.

First 5 Tulare County
Evaluation Consulting Services
Proposed Rates for Initial Contract Period

Proposer's Name: _____

Position/Title/Name	Base Rate	Travel Rate

Note: The fee quotation submitted along with the proposed approach will be used as a basis for any contract negotiations. The actual scope of services and fees included in the contract may be negotiated and may vary to satisfy the Commission's needs.