

First 5 Commission of San Diego

Subject: **Policy for Innovative Grant Funds**

Policy Number: F5C-010

Effective Date: June 29, 2009

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Purpose

To establish the policy of the First 5 Commission of San Diego (“Commission”) for the award of Innovative Grant Funds.

Background

The Commission funds programs and services for children ages zero to five and their families to ensure that every child in San Diego County will enter school ready to learn. The Commission’s mandate is set forth in Health and Safety Code sections 130100 *et seq.*, San Diego County Administrative Code, Article IIP, sections 84.100 *et seq.*, and the Commission’s Strategic Plan.

The Commission’s funding decisions are guided by its Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is a five-year plan that is reviewed annually. The Strategic Plan sets forth the Commission’s goals and general areas in which it will provide funding. The Strategic Plan is supported by a 5-Year Allocation Plan, which is also reviewed annually. The 5-Year Allocation Plan identifies on a yearly basis specific areas in which the Commission will fund programs and the amount of funds that will be committed to each area. The 5-Year Allocation Plan operationalizes the Strategic Plan by allocating funds received by the Commission and specifically identifies an established annual amount to award to the community in Innovative Grants. Innovative grants provide the opportunity to support innovative projects for children 0-5 and their families in our community.

Definition of Innovative Project.

The intent of the Innovative Grant funds is to encourage the development and application of new direct service approaches or techniques that assist the physical, social, emotional, and/or cognitive development of children ages 0 to 5 and their families. The opportunity to innovate can occur in several ways --- by testing a new method, replicating a best practice approach not yet offered in San Diego, and/or to targeting a unique population of children not yet addressed by other efforts. An innovative project can be a new component of an existing program, but cannot be a duplication or expansion of a project or service already offered in San Diego.

Policy

Projects receiving Commission Innovative Grant funds must be consistent with F5C Policy #009: *Supplantation*. All projects and services considered for Innovative Grant funding by the Commission must comply with this policy.

Funding Allocation. On an annual basis the Commission will allocate Commission funds for Innovative Grants. Once the approved allocation has been expended, proposals for Innovative

Grants will not be accepted until the following fiscal year, unless additional funds are identified and approved by the Commission.

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Maximum Funding. Up to \$75,000 of Innovative Grant funds may be awarded to a single entity in any fiscal year. No organization shall receive more than \$75,000 in any fiscal year. The grant period for Innovative Grants is one year.

- An organization may request and receive Innovative Grant funds for more than one project in the same fiscal year. The maximum allowable total award to one organization is \$75,000 in any fiscal year.
- An organization may request funding in subsequent years for different projects.
- Once a project receives Innovative Grant funds, the project will be ineligible to receive any Innovative Grant funds from the Commission for the same project in future years.

Procedures

- A. *Approval.* Up to \$5,000 may be approved by the Executive Director in accordance with F5C Policy #008: *Executive Director Signatory Authority*. All requests over \$5,000 for projects or activities not specified in the annual fiscal year budget will require Commission approval.
- B. *Ineligible Applicants or Projects.* The following applicants or projects are ineligible for an Innovative Grant award:
- Grantees who have received \$75,000 in Innovative Grant Funds in the current fiscal year;
 - For profit organizations;
 - Research or planning projects;
 - Capital expenses, such as new facilities or building renovation;
 - Requests for single fixed assets valued over \$5,000;
 - Projects that have previously received Innovative Grant Funds.
 - Organizations in which staff members, paid members of the organization's board of directors or sub-contractors who are members of a Commission advisory committee may not apply for a Commission Innovative Grant during the time that the individual serves on the committee and for one-year after his or her committee term ends.
- C. *Requirements for Funding.* All organizations requesting Innovative Grant funds must meet all the following requirements to be considered for funding:
- 1) The organization must be a non-profit 501(c)(3), a public agency, or must have a fiscal agent that is a public entity or has a 501(c)(3) status that will assume all contractual requirements and liabilities.
 - 2) An organization that does not have 501(c)(3) status may apply for up to \$5,000 but must identify a fiscal agent that is a public entity or a 501(c)(3) to receive the funding on the applicant's behalf.
 - 3) The organization can receive innovative grant awards for different projects, but cannot receive innovative funds totaling in excess of \$75,000 in any fiscal year.

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- 4) The applicant's project must serve children prenatal to 5 years old (or a subset of this age group) and their families.
- 5) The applicant's project must support the vision, mission, values and operating guidelines of the Commission.
- 6) Applicant met contract requirements on other prior/current Commission's contracts (if applicable).

D. *Application Evaluation Criteria.* Each Innovative Grant application will be evaluated using the following criteria. Applicants are required to address all the criteria to be considered for funding.

- 1) How well the project supports the vision, mission, values and operating guidelines of the Commission. (This is both a requirement for funding, per #4 above and an evaluation criterion.)
- 2) How well the application demonstrates the potential success for meeting the project's stated objectives.
- 3) How well the project addresses one or more of the Commission's desired results.
- 4) How well the project documents and addresses an unmet need or needs in the community.
- 5) How well the application demonstrates an innovative approach or technique that addresses an unmet need as cited in Item 4 above.
- 6) How the project will improve outcomes and /or services for children 0-5 after the termination of innovative funds (i.e. sustainability).
- 7) How much the project leverages additional resources or is able to provide matching funds.
 - ◆ Leveraged or matched resources include other funding or in kind support such as equipment, supplies, or volunteer services provided by the organization.
- 8) How well the application demonstrates partnerships and/or linkages with other community organizations that provide services to children and their families.
- 9) How well the project will be able to document the positive impacts and results of its project, (ie. measurable outcomes).
- 10) How the application supports reasonable projects costs.

Submittal and Review of Innovative Grants. All parties interested in applying for Innovative Grant funds may access this policy and the application via the First 5 Commission of San Diego

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website, www.first5sandiego.org. If electronic means are not available, the applicant may contact the Commission office and a grant policy and grant application will be mailed to them.

Applications will be reviewed by an evaluation committee that may be comprised of Commission staff, community members, and professionals in the area of service. No member of the Commission, or advisory committees to the Commission, may be a member of an SSC. At a minimum, the evaluation of Innovative Grant applications will be conducted on a quarterly basis. To the extent possible, recommendations for awards above \$5,000 will be submitted for Commission approval on the month following the quarterly review. The Commission reserves the right to negotiate grant agreements with successful applicants.

Sunset Review: August 2012

Approved:

<u>August 4, 2003</u>	<u>8</u>
Date	Commission Item No.

<u>June 20, 2005</u>	<u>9</u>
Date	Commission Item No.

<u>December 3, 2007</u>	<u>7</u>
Date	Commission Item No.

<u>October 6, 2008</u>	<u>7</u>
	Commission Item No.

<u>June 29, 2009</u>	<u>2</u>
	Commission Item No.

<u>August 17, 2009</u>	<u>3</u>
	Commission Item No.