

# First 5 Commission of San Diego

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Subject: **Policy for Innovative Grant Funds**

Policy Number: F5C-010

Effective Date: December 3, 2007

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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 IIIP, 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

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

*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 CFC Policy #008: *Executive Director Signatory Authority*, approved May 1, 2006. 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.
- 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. (Attachment 1 provides a summary of these items.)

D. *Application Evaluation Criteria.* Each Innovative Grant application will be evaluated using the following criteria. Applicants are not required to meet 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 criteria.)
- 2) How well the proposal 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. (Attachment 2 provides a listing of all approved Commission desired results.)
- 4) How well the project documents and addresses an unmet need or needs in the community.
- 5) How well the proposal demonstrates an innovative approach or technique that addresses an unmet need as cited in Item 4 above.
- 6) How much the project leverages additional resources or is able to provide matching funds.
- 7) 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 applicant demonstrates linkages with other community organizations that provide services to children and their families.
- 9) How well the applicant will be able to document the positive impacts and results of its project.

E. *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 website, [www.first5sandiego.org](http://www.first5sandiego.org). If electronic means are not

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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 members, Commission staff and/or community experts. 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: December 2011

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.

## **Attachment 1**

# **Summary of Strategic Plan 2004-2009 Vision, Mission, Values, Operating Guidelines**

A growing body of research has demonstrated that the period from the prenatal stage to age five is a critical time for children's brain development. The care and support children receive during this time can have a profound impact on their success in school and throughout their lives. To bring more focus and resources to this crucial time of development, the California Children and Families Act (Proposition 10) was passed by California voters in November 1998. The passage of Prop 10 provides an unprecedented opportunity to develop comprehensive, integrated systems that promote children's early development from the prenatal period to age five. Eighty percent of the revenue generated by Prop10 tobacco taxes is distributed to 58 county commissions for local initiatives; the other 20% is used by the State Commission for statewide initiatives, research, public education campaigns, and advocacy. The promise of this initiative (now known as First 5 to emphasize the importance of children's first 5 years) is for all children to be healthy, to be cared for in strong and supportive environments, and to enter school ready to learn.

In December 1998, the First 5 Commission of San Diego County, previously known as the San Diego County Children and Families Commission, was established to implement the Act on a local level. The Commission consists of five members appointed by the County Board of Supervisors: a member of the Board of Supervisors, the Director of the Health and Human Services Agency, an officer of an appropriate County function, and two members-at-large. Working closely with advisory committees and the community, the Commission adopts a strategic plan, selects strategies for improving the lives of children and families, and oversees the implementation of the strategic plan, including funding activities.

The Commission is advised by a 15-member Technical and Professional Advisory Committee (TPAC) comprised of individuals representing many diverse segments of the local community, including parents, health care providers, child development specialists, community-based service providers, and educators. Their role is to inform the Commission about community needs, existing resources, research and best practices, and to advise the Commission concerning the strategic plan.

Leadership teams also support the work of the Commission with special community expertise concerning large and long-term initiatives. The leadership teams, made up of 10 to 15 individuals, advise the executive director and help design, guide and evaluate the implementation of the initiatives. Currently there are four leadership teams, supporting community engagement, literacy, school readiness and evaluation.

In 2002, the California Children and Families Commission adopted the name "First 5 California." The purpose for this change was to communicate that the State Commission is dedicated to improving the lives of California's children in their first five years of life. In

October 2002, the San Diego Children and Families Commission adopted the new name “First 5 Commission of San Diego” to better reflect its focus.

The Commission produced its first strategic plan in 2000. The current revised plan for fiscal years 2004/5 to 2008/9 reflects the growth and progress achieved through four years of work, commitment, and shared experience aimed at improving the lives of children and families. The plan is the result of extensive dialogue among Commissioners, TPAC members, community members, content experts, and public and private agencies. A committee of Commissioners, TPAC members, leadership team members and staff compiled the plan. This committee reviewed the most recent strategic plan and modified information as needed to clearly present the strategic initiatives for the next five years.

The committee’s recommendations were then reviewed by TPAC and approved by the Commission at public meetings.

### **VISION**

Every child in San Diego County will enter school ready to learn.

### **MISSION**

The First 5 Commission of San Diego County provides proactive leadership to achieve this vision by:

- Funding services to achieve desired results
- Advocating for policy change at the local, state and national level
- Acting as a catalyst and leader for coordinating and integrating existing resources
- Building community capacity and infrastructure to support families

### **VALUES**

As it makes decisions and determines directions, the Commission holds to these values:

- Readiness to learn includes physical, mental, social, emotional, and developmental well-being;
- We are committed to the success of all of our children;
- We support the role of parents as the child’s first and best teachers;
- We embrace the diversity of San Diego’s communities;
- Our communities possess our greatest assets and their participation is essential to our success;
- The Commission and the community are mutually accountable to our children.

## **OPERATING GUIDELINES**

The work of the Commission, in all of its roles, is shaped by the following guidelines, developed with the participation of the community:

- Open and inclusive processes
- Seamless, family-focused systems
- Responsiveness to the needs of all children, including children with disabilities and other special needs
- Culturally competent approaches
- Prevention and early intervention
- Partnership and collaboration
- Support of innovative programs and promising practices
- Prioritization, allocation and leveraging of resources for maximum results
- Promotion of no-cost and low-cost solutions
- Community and intergenerational solutions
- Promotion of evidence-based practices that improve service quality
- Measurable and sustainable results.

## Attachment 2

### First 5 Commission of San Diego Approved Priority Results for 2004-09 Strategic Plan

#### Children's Health

##### Desired Results

- Children are born and stay healthy
- Children have access to preventive and comprehensive health care services
- Families have the knowledge, skills and resources they need to promote their children's optimal physical health

#### Children's Learning and Social-Emotional Health

##### Desired Results

- Children have access to quality services that promote their early learning.
- Children are socially and emotionally healthy.
- Children are cognitively developing appropriately.
- Families have the knowledge and skills they need to support their children's learning and social-emotional health

#### Parent and Family Development and Resources

##### Desired Results

- Families have the skills, comprehensive support and resources they need to promote their children's optimal development and school readiness.

#### Systems Improvement and Community Change

##### Desired Results

- Communities have adequate service capacity that is effective, coordinated, integrated and sustainable.
- Families have access to culturally and linguistically responsive services.
- Policymakers and the public understand the importance of children's early years and support efforts to promote school readiness.
- The work of the Commission and First 5 funded programs is enhanced by community-driven solutions to issues that affect children and families.