



2008-2009
General
Mini-Grant
Guidelines and
Application

Released July 2008

676 Loughborough Drive
Merced, CA 95348
Phone: 385-7337
Fax: 725-3778
www.First5MercedCounty.Org

GENERAL MINI-GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. Timeline	1
II. Introduction and Overview	2
III. Mini-Grant Eligibility and Application Guidelines	
A. Application Eligibility Criteria	2
B. Availability of Funds	3
C. Contact Information	4
D. Application Process	4
E. Application Review & Selection	4
F. Notification	5
G. Appeals Process	5
IV. Expectations for Successful Applications	
A. Award of Contract	6
B. Funding Restrictions	6
C. Notice Regarding Merced County Contract Requirements	6-9
Attachments – Application Packet	
A. Forms:	
• Application Cover Sheet (Form A)	
• Project Narrative (Form B)	
• Proposed Project Budget (Form C)	
• Sample Budget Form	
• Agreements and Certifications (Form D)	
• Policy on Tobacco Free Environment	

I. TIMELINE

Due Dates of Application	
Activities	Dates
<p style="text-align: center;"> Application are Due at 4:00pm at First 5 Office Late application will not be accepted </p>	<p> Round 1: August 22, 2008 Approval at September Commission Meeting </p> <p> Round 2: January 19, 2009 Approval at February Commission Meeting </p>

Questions and Answers Session Dates	
Activities	Dates
<p> General Mini-grant questions and answers session </p> <p> Place: First 5 Merced County 676 Loughborough Drive Merced, CA 95348 Phone: 385-7337 </p> <p> Time: 2:00 – 3:00pm </p>	<p> Tuesday, August 12, 2008 </p> <p> January 6, 2009 </p>

* Workshop attendees MUST call the First 5 Merced County office at 385-7337 or email to srivas@co.merced.ca.us to sign up prior to the workshop. Maximum number per workshop: 20 (first call, first serve basis). Additional workshops may be provided to accommodate a larger number of applicants.

II. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

It is the intent of the General Mini-Grants to provide Proposition 10 funding through an Application process to fund **one-time** grants and encourage community participation and development of projects that address First 5 Merced's four desired result areas for children ages 0-5 and their families. Awards start at a minimum of \$250.00 up to \$2,000 that will improve the lives of children ages 0-5 in Merced County. The primary goal for Fiscal Year 2008/2009 is to fund community agencies/members for local, community-driven projects or events that benefit children ages 0-5 and their families in Merced County. The Commission established objectives and funding priorities in its 2006 Strategic Plan that specifically relate to children 0-5 in Merced County. This Application process is designed to encourage and involve members of the community to build upon existing community resources that are consistent with the goals and strategies articulated in the Strategic Plan, and serve to enhance, not supplant, current sources of funding. The four focus areas are as followed: Healthy Children, Children Ready to Learn, Strong Families and Healthy Community Systems. For a copy of the Commissions 2006 Strategic Plan's and the four broad strategic result areas for optimal early childhood development please contact First 5 Merced County at 209.385.7337 or www.first5mercedcounty.org.

III. MINI-GRANT ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Application Eligibility Criteria

First 5 Merced County will consider programs and/or services proposed by any organization or entity that is registered as a non-profit agency, a government unit, or a for-profit business or licensee that provides or intends to provide services to the target population. The target population is defined as children from the prenatal stage through age five and their parents and caregivers. Proposed projects must relate to one of the four strategic result areas adopted in the Commission's 2006 Strategic Plan. It is highly recommended that each applicant demonstrate how the proposed project will align with one of the following four strategic result areas:

- Healthy Children
- Children Ready to Learn
- Strong Families
- Healthy Community Systems

Applications will be accepted and evaluated twice a year. One time funds are designed to support a one time event/project. Organizations and individual community members are eligible under this category. Examples include: professional development trainings, workshops, health fairs, etc.

Examples of potential Mini-Grants include, but are not limited to:

- One-time events for children and families

- Development of training programs and/or enrollment in appropriate training opportunities
- Technical assistance and/or workshops
- Community fairs and neighborhood outreach to increase access to resources available for young children and their families
- Development of cross-system policies and procedures to improve service delivery

Examples that **DO NOT** fit under this funding mechanism

The following ideas are good ones that do benefit children 0-5 and their families.

However, for Fiscal Year 08/09 the Commission will be highly focusing on sponsorship and/or supporting existing projects within the community.

- Purchasing equipment or upgrading preschool playground;
- Giving away free groceries to needy families;
- Funding a field trip to an out of county location;
- Teaching a new prenatal classes to first-time mom (consideration will be taken if applicants are asking for funds to enhance a class that is in place class or have other funding sources for a new class);
- Fund Raising;
- Starting a new preschool.

Mini-Grant funding may NOT be used for capital projects or improvements. Capital projects and improvements are defined as any improvements to one's property such as construction, additions, alterations and/or modifications that may increase the value of that property.

Mini-Grant funding is intended for one-time initiatives, rather than on-going activities. Therefore it may not be used for operational expenses such as consumable items and salaries or benefits.

B. Availability of Funds

The Mini-Grant Program will provide one-time grants for a minimum of \$250.00 up to \$2,000.00 depending upon the scope of the proposed project. The Commission plans to award approximately \$30,000.00 for fiscal year 2008-2009 to be distributed among funded general Mini-Grant Projects. Applicants may only be awarded on grant per fiscal year, and only one grant award may be open with any recipient at any given time. No single program or service provider may receive more than \$2,000 in total funding from the Mini-Grant Projects in any one fiscal year.

Mini-Grant funding is intended for one-time initiatives, rather than on-going activities. It may not be used to supplant state or local money or to fund existing levels of service. Funding is to be used in fiscal year 2006-2007.

C. Contact Information

All questions concerning the General Mini-Grant Projects of First 5 Merced County are to be directed to the official contact person:

Sol Rivas
First 5 Merced County
676 Loughborough Drive
Merced, CA 95348
Phone: (209) 385-7337
Email – srivas@co.merced.ca.us

D. Application Process

To apply for a General Mini-Grant, review the attached application and attend (if needed) a Q&A session. The application maybe typed or neatly handwritten in either English or Spanish. An electronic version of the application can be accessed on our website: www.first5mercedcounty.org.

1. A complete application must include the following:
 - The Application Cover Sheet (Form A)
 - Project Narrative (Form B):
 - Proposed Project Budget (Form C)
 - Community Group Partnership Agreement (Form D)
 - Signed copy of Agreements and Certifications (From E)
 - Policy on Tobacco Free Environment
2. A complete application must arrive by mail or be hand delivered before 4:00 pm on August, 22 2008 for (Round 1 Applications) and January 19, 2009 for (Round 2 Applications). Applications, regardless of postmark or circumstance, received after the application submission deadline will not be considered. Emailed or faxed applications will not be accepted.
3. Submit an original and six copies of the complete application to:
First 5 Merced County
ATTN: General Mini-Grant Project
676 Loughborough Drive
Merced, CA 95348

E. Application Review and Selection

All submitted applications will be evaluated and rated by First 5 Merced County staff then forwarded to the First 5 Merced County Commission for final consideration. A total of 100 points may be awarded, according to the following criteria:

Applications narratives will be reviewed on a 100-point scale based on the following information:

- **First Time Applicant** - Applicant has not been funded within 24 month of release of 08/09 application. (15 points)
- **Benefiting Kids Directly** - The overall need of the county and the First 3 Result Areas (Healthy Children, Children Ready to Learn and Strong Families). (15 points)
- **Project Conception** - Proposal is clear and comprehensible with a realistic timeline; project activities are well defined and technically feasible, and/or within the funding categories described in the application. (30 points)
- **Outcomes/Impact** - Objectives are clearly stated, specific, realistic, *measurable*, and are consistent with First 4 Result Areas. The extent of contribution to promoting the development and support of young children and their families in Merced County this project holds. (20 points)
- **Organizational Capacity** – Applicant are qualified to implement project and achieve stated objectives. Applicant is qualified to increase knowledge, education or awareness through personal development and implement within field. (10 points)
- **Financial Viability** - Applicant demonstrates other sources of funding, and clearly states how Commission funding is supporting not completely funding the proposed project/event. (10 points)

The Commission may request additional information from an applicant in the event that information in the application needs clarification. The commission may waive any immaterial deviation or defect in an application. Any waiver of an immaterial deviation or defect by the Commission shall in no way modify this RFA or relieve the successful applicant from full compliance with the grant terms and Project Agreement if a grant is awarded.

Applications may be recommended for full or partial funding.

F. Notification

Applicants will be notified within 10 business days of the Commission's decision. The Commission reserves the right to reject any and all applications and to waive informalities and irregularities.

G. Appeals Process

Applicants that are not accepted for funding may appeal the Commission's decision in writing. The Executive Director must receive written appeals within 30 days from the date of the Commission's vote. Appeals will only be accepted based on a violation of law, rule, regulation, or terms of this RFA. Mere disagreement with the decision of the Commission is not grounds for appeal. The Commission is the sole and final authority regarding the approval or disapproval of applications and the conditions under which

they are funded. The Commission will review accepted appeals at the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting.

All appeals must be made in writing, dated, signed by the applicant or an individual authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the protesting applicant, and contain a statement of the reason(s) for protest; citing the law(s), rule(s), and regulation(s) on which the protest is based. Such appeals may be sent either by U.S. mail, postage paid, or hand delivered to:

First 5 Merced County
ATTN: Executive Director
3327 M Street, Suite C
Merced, CA 95348

IV. Expectations for Successful Applications

A. Award of Contract

Upon approval of a project for funding by the Commission, the successful applicant organization or entity will be required to enter into a performance based Project Agreement with First 5 Merced County.

Successful projects will be required to participate in the Commission's evaluation program, providing pre- and post-project information as detailed in their Project Agreement. Additional evaluation opportunities may be available to successful applicants on a voluntary basis to build their program evaluation capacity and participate in further evaluation.

Projects will be required to submit receipts for all expenses as submitted in their project budget. A copy of a financial audit or CPA review of the funded project may be requested within the Project Agreement, to be determined on an individual project basis.

B. Funding Restrictions

Funds will be disbursed to successful applicants in the manner specified in their Project Agreement. Approved funds must be used in the current contract year.

C. Notice Regarding Merced County Contract Requirements

The First 5 Merced County utilizes the administrative structure, policies and procedures of the County to distribute Proposition 10 funds in Merced County. Successful applicants will be required to enter into a performance based contract agreement with Merced County on behalf of First 5 Merced County.

The contract agreement will incorporate the applicant's proposal and will include, but is not limited to, the following sections:

➤ **Independent Contractor:**

It is mutually understood and agreed that Contractor is an independent contractor in the performance of the work duties and obligations devolving upon him under

this agreement. County and/or Commission shall neither have, nor exercise any control or direction over the methods by which Contractor shall perform his professional work and functions. The sole interest and responsibility of the County and the Commission is to assure that the services covered by this agreement shall be performed and rendered in a competent, efficient and satisfactory manner.

It is mutually understood and agreed that no employer-employee relationship is created and Contractor shall hold County and Commission harmless and be solely responsible for withholding, reporting and payment of any federal, state or local taxes, contributions or premiums imposed or required by workers compensation, unemployment insurance, social security, income tax, other statutes or codes applying to Contractor, or its sub-contractors and employees, if any.

It is mutually agreed and understood that Contractor, its sub-contractors and employees, if any, shall have no claim under this agreement or otherwise against the County or the Commission for vacation pay, sick leave, retirement or social security benefits, occupational or non-occupational injury, disability or illness, or loss of life or income, by whatever cause.

➤ **Conflict of Interest:**

Applicant shall be required to comply with the Conflict of Interest Principles and Practices adopted by the Commission. Contractor warrants and covenants that no official or employee of the County, or the Commission nor any business entity in which an official of the County or the Commission has an interest has been employed or retained to solicit or aid in the procurement of funding, nor that any such person will be employed in the performance of such agreement without immediate divulgence of such fact to the Commission.

➤ **Condition Subsequent/Non-Appropriation Of Funding:**

The compensation paid to the Contractor is based on the Commission's continued receipt of state and/or federal funding for this purpose and in the event that funding is terminated, for any reason, the agreement and all obligations of the Commission arising from this agreement shall be immediately discharged on the occurrence of that event. The Commission agrees to inform Contractor no later than three days of receiving notification that the state and/or federal funding will be terminated and Commission will inform Contractor of the final date for which funding will be available. Under these circumstances, all billing or other claims for compensation or reimbursement by Contractor arising out of performance of this agreement must be submitted to the Commission prior to the final date for which funding is available.

➤ **Indemnification:**

County shall not be liable for, and Contractor shall defend and indemnify County and its officers, agents, employees and volunteers (collectively "County Parties"), against any and all claims, deductibles, self-insured retentions, demands, liability judgments, awards, fines, mechanics' liens or other liens, labor disputes, losses, damages, expenses, charges of costs of any kind or character, including attorneys' fees and court costs (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Claims"), which arise out of or are in any way connected to the work covered by this

Contract arising either directly or indirectly from any act, error, omission or negligence of Contractor or its officers, employees, agents, contractors, licensees or servants, including, without limitation, Claims caused by the concurrent negligent act, error or omission, whether active or passive, of County Parties. Contractor shall have no obligation, however, to defend or indemnify County Parties from a Claim if it is determined by a court of competent jurisdiction that such Claim was caused by the sole negligence or willful misconduct of County Parties.

➤ **Applicable Law:**

All parties agree that the Contract Agreement and all documents issued or executed pursuant hereto and the rights and obligations of the parties to this agreement are subject to and governed by the laws of the State of California in all respects as to interpretation, construction, operation, effect and performance.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this agreement, any dispute concerning any question of fact or law arising under this agreement, which is not disposed of by agreement between the parties shall be decided by a Court of competent jurisdiction of the State of California.

Applicant shall comply with all federal, state and local laws relating to:

- Discrimination
- Civil rights
- Secular activities
- OSHA and workplace safety
- Drug free workplace
- Environmental protection

➤ **Federal, State and Local Taxes, Debts:**

The applicant shall pay all taxes lawfully imposed upon it and debts, incurred by it with respect to this proposal or any product delivered with respect to the contract agreement. The Commission and Merced County makes no representation whatsoever as to the exemption from liability to any tax imposed by any government entity on the applicant.

➤ **Insurance:**

The successful applicant shall obtain, be financially responsible for, and maintain in full force and effect throughout the term of the Contract, such insurances and Workers Compensation Insurance as set forth herein. Successful applicants shall assume financial responsibility for its personnel, including all deductions of Social Security and withholding taxes and required contributions to state and federal unemployment compensation funds. The successful applicant shall include all Subcontractors as insured under its policies or shall furnish separate certificates or endorsements for each Subcontractor.

The successful applicant shall maintain the following type of insurance for minimum limits indicated during the term of the agreement and provide Certificates of Insurance evidencing such coverage to the Merced County Children & Families Commission, Attn: Program Administrator, 3327 M Street, Suite C, Merced, California 95348.

1. Comprehensive General Broad Form or Commercial General Liability: \$1,000,000 combined single limits per occurrence and \$3,000,000 annual aggregate covering bodily injury, personal injury and property damage.
The County and its officers, employees and agents and the Commission shall be endorsed to above policies as Additional Insured for such liability as may be incurred in the performance of this agreement.
2. Workers Compensation: Statutory coverage, if and as required according to the California Labor Code, including Employers Liability limits of \$1,000,000 per accident. The policy shall be endorsed to waive the insurers subrogation rights against the County and the Commission.
3. Professional Liability: \$1,000,000 limit per occurrence and \$3,000,000 annual aggregate limit covering Contractor's wrongful acts, errors and omissions.

Insurance Conditions

1. Insurance is to be placed with admitted insurers rated by A.M. Best Co. As A:VII or higher. Lower rated, or approved but not admitted insurers, may be accepted if prior approval is given by the County Risk Manager.
2. Each of the above required policies shall be endorsed to provide the County and the Commission with 30 days prior written notice of cancellation. Neither the County nor the Commission is liable for the payment of premiums or assessments on the policy. No cancellation provisions in the insurance policy shall be construed in derogation of the continuing duty of Contractor to furnish insurance during the term of this agreement.
3. These requirements assume that standard insurance policy forms, terms, and conditions will apply to cover the expected risk exposures for the intended "Scope of Work". Additional qualifying conditions or special endorsements may be specified in the Contract depending on the final "Scope of Work" agreed upon by the Commission and the selected applicant. Insurance questions may be directed to the Executive Director for response from the County's Risk Manager.

If you would like further information regarding the contract agreement process, a Sample Contract Agreement is available by calling 209-385-7337

Mini-Grant RFA Overview – Questions and Answers

Interested parties may attend one of two meetings for questions and answers on the General Mini-Grant process as detailed in the timeline on page 1.