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## FIRST 5 COMMISSION OF SAN DIEGO INNOVATIVE GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION

### **Background and Overview**

In August 2003, the First 5 Commission of San Diego approved the Innovative Grant Policy. The policy has been revised several times since 2003.

Purpose and Definition of Innovative Grant Funding. The Innovative Grant funds are available to encourage the development and application of unique direct services that further the vision of the Commission. Opportunities could include piloting a new method, replicating a best practice approach not offered in San Diego County, or providing services to a new target group of children prenatal to five years old and their families. An innovative project could also be a new component of an existing program, but cannot duplicate, expand, or supplant a project/service already offered in San Diego.

Innovative Grants and the Commission Vision. The First 5 Commission promotes the health and well-being of children during their most critical years of development – from the prenatal stage through age 5. The goal of the Commission’s work is that all children will enter school prepared to succeed, thrive, and reach their highest potential. The Commission’s vision is that: *Every child in San Diego County will enter school ready to learn.* A multi-year Strategic Plan guides funding decisions. Prior to funding an Innovative Grant, the Commission must first determine that an application submitted for consideration is consistent with its Vision, Strategic Plan, and that funding is available in the current fiscal year.

Available Funding. The amount of funding available to any one organization is limited to up to \$75,000 in a fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) and excludes for-profit organizations, funding for research, planning, and capital expenses. The spirit of the Innovative Grant program is to fund unique services; this funding is not intended to be an alternative funding mechanism.

Review and Approval of Innovative Grant Requests. Innovative Grant applications are reviewed by an evaluation team using the criteria listed in the Innovative Grant Policy, and then forwarded to the Executive Director of the Commission. The Executive Director has approval authority for requests up to \$5,000; the Commission has final approval for requests from \$5,001 up to \$75,000. Awarded Innovative Grants shall not supplant Commission, Federal, State, local or any other general fund monies. All awards are subject to negotiation.

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## **Application Instructions**

Application Due Dates. Innovative Grant applications are unique in the fact that the funding cycle is open-ended. What this means is that there is not a set due date for Innovative Grant applications. Applications are reviewed by an evaluation committee quarterly.

Application Steps. The following steps should be considered for all Innovative Grant applicants:

1. Before completing the application and making a decision to apply for innovative funds, read the Policy for Innovative Grant Funds (CFC-010) and the Innovative Grant Fund Application completely. Make sure that the applicant organization and proposed project meet all the eligibility criteria set forth in the Policy.
2. Complete the application.
3. Check the application to be sure that: the application is signed and dated, all components are addressed, and needed attachments are included.
4. Make three copies of the application and attachments, and place the original and three copies in a sealed envelope.
5. Deliver or mail the application package to the First 5 Commission of San Diego at the address noted on the application.

All Innovative Grant applicants will receive a letter confirming receipt of their Innovative Grant application within one week of receipt at the Commission office.

**Questions.** For questions on the Innovative Grants application process and approximate review dates (for timely submission) contact Tess Perez, Grants & Contracts Coordinator at 619.230.6475 or marites.perez@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Thank you for your interest in supporting our young children and their families in San Diego County.