



Participatory Grant Making Initiative

2023 Request for Proposals (RFP)

Proposal submission deadline: **Friday, Oct 27, 2023, 4:00PM PST**

Updated: 09/22/2023



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ABOUT BEST START REGION 2

Since 1998, First 5 LA has played a critical role in partnering with others to strengthen families, communities, and systems of services and support so all children in Los Angeles County reach their full developmental potential throughout the critical years of prenatal to age 5 (First 5 LA's North Star). First 5 LA began Best Start in 2010 to advance and build on community experience. Since then, First 5 LA has invested in 14 geographic areas throughout LA County to create a platform for lifting the voices of local community leaders and parents. Today, Best Start is First 5 LA's primary investment for engaging communities in a common vision and intention for children and families to thrive, working to strengthen community leadership and collaboration across sectors. More importantly, Best Start is a promise that every child in LA County enters kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life.

Progress toward this North Star, however, requires more than publicly funded, professionally delivered services. An overwhelming body of evidence supports the idea that children thrive, and families flourish in strong, safe, healthy, and engaged communities where people develop strong and lasting relationships, support each other, and act together to give children the best start possible. Through Best Start, First 5 LA invests in 14 geographic areas/communities (organized into 5 Regions) that have faced historic disenfranchisement and oppression through political, economic, social, and environmental factors that aggravate chronic family stressors such as violence and poverty.

Best Start Region 2, a partnership funded by First 5 LA and stewarded by RC along with the Regional Task Force (RTF), a board of twelve elected Region 2 residents, is committed to advancing the practices of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion to achieve sustainable policy and systems-change across the South Los Angeles region. The RTF elevates local issues affecting Region 2 by developing recommendations to increase systems-change impact and stewarding participatory grant making. The RTF members are elected by residents of Best Start Region 2 who attend Best Start Local Delegate Council meetings in West Athens, Compton/E. Compton, Broadway Manchester and Watts/Willowbrook.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is a call for project proposals, specifically targeting the area known as Best Start Region 2. This region includes four communities in South Los Angeles. (map below):

- Best Start Broadway / Manchester (BSBWM)
- Best Start Compton / East Compton (BSCEC)
- Best Start Watts and Willowbrook (BSWW)
- Best Start West Athens (BSWA)



(RTF). SLAD PGMI grants support infrastructure and programmatic development for less resourced but highly active CBOs based in South LA. In addition to grant funding, RC provides critically needed financial and program management support to awardees. Since 2021, thirteen small local nonprofits have received a combined \$2.8M in 2 rounds of the SLAD PGMI process. This RFP initiates RC's third round of funding of an additional \$1.2M for distribution to South LA CBOs that serve the Best Start Region 2 communities.

ABOUT RISING COMMUNITIES (RC)

Rising Communities (RC) is a policy and systems change organization with the mission to “Collectively Build Equitable Systems” towards our vision of *better communities for all people*. Rising Communities was established in 1992 in response to the deepening health crisis in South Los Angeles (SLA) to support planning, resource development and policy education for residents of this historically disinvested region. Specifically, RC was created as a recommendation to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors by the Task Force on Health Care Access. The Task Force recommendations came on the heels of the 1992 civil unrest and were developed through a series of community forums conducted throughout Los Angeles County. Thirty years later, RC is still a vital partner and asset manager to LA County, the City of Los Angeles, and other community centered organizations.

The framework we utilize in all our programs stems from the Social Determinants of Health as conceived by the World Health Organization, where our programs focus on job security & economic development, building knowledge & skills, food security, access to primary & ancillary health services, research, and policy. Ultimately our programs aim to strengthen BIPOC communities' power to be change agents for equitable public policies and economic investment that can transform their neighborhoods into healthier environments.

SLAD PGMI GRANT DESCRIPTION

Statement of Intent

Potential proposers are highly encouraged to submit a [Statement of Intent](#) if they plan to apply for SLAD PGMI funding by **September 8, 2023**.

This funding will support the planning and implementation of projects focused on identifying and taking strategic actions to create policy solutions and/or improve systems of services around distinct priority areas (defined below) to improve the lives of children, prenatal to age 5, and their families. Please note that this solicitation will award grants at a Regional level (meaning the project is intended to have impact across a minimum of two communities in Region 2) and at the Local level for individual communities (meaning the project will impact the community in which is it being conducted).



Regional Grants:

If your organization is applying for a Regional grant, the work of the project must be conducted in a minimum of two communities (preferably across all 4 communities). In the proposal narrative, indicate the Best Start communities your project will serve, and the priority area your project will address (see Regional Priorities column in the table below for a list of priorities).

E.g., This Regional project will address Affordable, Quality, Healthy Food Options in Broadway-Manchester, Compton / East Compton and West Athens.

Local Grants:

Local Grants must address one community (if applying to conduct a project in more than one Best Start community, a separate and complete proposal is required for each chosen Best Start community), and one priority area (see Local Priorities column in the table below) within the chosen community. In the proposal narrative, indicate the Best Start community the project will serve, and the priority area your project will address.

E.g., Our project will create access to Affordable & Safe Housing in West Athens.

Priorities Table

Regional Priorities	Local Priorities
Note: Organizations applying for a Regional Project must conduct their work in a minimum of two communities.	Note: Organizations applying for a Local Project will work in the individual community selected.
Priorities for Regional Projects A. Access to Affordable, Quality, Healthy Food Options B. Access to Affordable & Safe Housing C. Access to Community Education and Youth Development Programs	Priorities for Broadway-Manchester (BSBWM) A. Access to Affordable, Quality, Healthy Food Options B. Access Affordable & Safe Housing
	Priorities for Compton / East Compton (BSCEC) A. Access Affordable & Safe Housing B. Access to Culturally Responsive Mental Health and Prevention Programs
	Priorities for Watts and Willowbrook (BSWW) A. Access Affordable & Safe Housing B. Affordable, Quality, Healthy Food Options
	Priorities for West Athens (BSWA) A. Access Affordable & Safe Housing B. Affordable, Quality, Healthy Food Options

Policy & Systems Change

All applicants must incorporate a policy and systems change approach to the program/project being applied for. Policy and Systems Change describes advocacy/actions that aim to transform systems and institutional structures in order address the root causes of community issues. Systems may refer to

established dynamics like governmental bodies but can also include systems of values and mindsets. It is encouraged to consider how your work might facilitate better policies for the community at large.

Below are examples of different types of policy and systems change projects:

- Working with LA City and other community-based organizations to pass and implement a funding mechanism for affordable housing and tenant support. Example: Measure ULA and advocacy work to get Measure passed. (Policy / Systems Change)
- Creating new agreements and processes between local clinics or multiple health programs to provide enhanced services for pregnant mothers. (Systems Change)
- Working with the City Council or County to establish informational resources that help individuals navigate the affordable housing system. (Systems Change)
- Working with school districts to ensure every child receives school lunch regardless of ability to pay. (Policy Change)
- Working with City Council to pass policies that reduce the unemployment rate for young men 18-30yo. (Policy Change)
- Working with telecommunication providers to make Internet connectivity more affordable or free for families. (System Change)
- Engage community members in advocating for two systems-change legislations to aid in reducing barriers to employment and other quality of life enhancing opportunities for formerly incarcerated communities. The legislations are: 1) Prop 47's good cause application that reduces and expunges certain criminal offenses, and 2) SB 731 implementation to seal records of qualified re-entry persons (Policy Change).
- Working with local restaurants to offer healthier, yet affordable food on their menus. (Systems Change)

To learn more about [policy](#) and [systems change](#), please review the linked videos and visit the Best Start Region 2 Website.

AWARD AMOUNT AND DURATION

Applications must describe how the grant funded projects will take place in one or more of the 4 Best Start Region 2 communities listed above.

A total of up to \$1,200,000 will be awarded by the Best Start Regional Task Force from the SLAD PGMI Community Change Fund Initiative. Awards will be made for a 12-month period of January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024.

The total funding pool has been allocated as follows:

- Up to \$800,000 will be awarded in Regional Community Grants
 - A maximum of 4 Regional Projects will be funded for an amount of up to \$200,000 each.



- Up to \$400,000 will be awarded in Local Community Grants
 - Two Local Projects for each of the 4 Best Start, Region 2 communities will be awarded up to \$50,000 each (totaling \$100,000 per community).

RC encourages applications from a spectrum of organizations, community groups and/or coalitions serving Region 2 communities.

Funds awarded are intended to support work on priority issues that benefit residents and stakeholders of Best Start Region 2 and are not for individual or personal use. Funds from the Community Change Fund Initiative cannot be used to fund capital projects or capital improvement projects.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Eligible proposed projects must include or benefit a minimum of:

- 2 of the 4 Best Start, Region 2 communities for all Regional Grant applications or
- 1 of the 4 Best Start, Region 2 communities for all Local Grant applications.

Eligible applicants for both award categories must meet the following criteria:

1. **Be a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.**
 - a. Organizations that are fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) are eligible.
 - b. Coalitions are eligible if the lead applicant organization meets all other eligibility criteria.
2. Organizations that are not eligible:
 - a. Organizations classified as private foundations under Section 509(a).
 - b. Government agencies.
 - c. Universities or academic institutions, however, may serve as a coalition partner to the lead applicant.
3. Show a proven track record of providing services in one or more of the Best Start Region 2 communities.
- Have an office or be headquartered within the South Los Angeles geographic area and Compton (*the South Los Angeles region is defined by the geographical boundaries of both Los Angeles County and the City of Los Angeles*). The South LA address must be provided in the proposal.
4. The South LA address must be provided in the proposal.
5. Be an equal opportunity employer with all-inclusive membership that does not discriminate based on gender, race/ethnicity, color, sex, sexual orientation, country of national origin or nationality, age, religion intellectual or physical disabilities and military or veteran status in its activities or operations.

Failure to meet all eligibility criteria will render a proposal ineligible.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Any questions about project guidelines and grant requirements should be submitted by email to beststart_grantees@risingcommunities.org no later than Friday, October 20 by 4:00pm PST. They will be



answered by RC staff members and uploaded anonymously onto beststartsouthla.com/slad-pgmi using a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) format every Friday through October 20, 2023.

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES:

September 1, 2023, at 9:00AM	Request for Proposals (RFP’s) for community identified priorities released.
September 1, 2023, through October 20, 2023, 4:00PM	Questions and Requests for Additional Information Due
September 1, 2023, through September 8, 2023	Letter of Intent
September 7, 2023, 12:00PM	Information Session (1 of 2)
September 11, 2023, 11:00AM	Information Session (2 of 2)
September 12, 2023, 1:00PM to 2:00PM	Incubator Session: SMART goals and Scope of Work
September 26, 2023, 11:00am to 1:00PM	Incubator Session: Budget Planning
October 10, 2023, 1:00PM to 3:00PM	Incubator Session: Evaluation Planning
October 27, 2023, 4:00PM	Full Proposals Due
October 29, 2023 – December 18, 2023	Regional Task Force will review proposals
December 22, 2023, 5:00PM	Final Funding Decisions Announced

REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITY AREAS FOR FUNDING:

1. Access To Affordable, Quality, Healthy Food Options: Many residents of South LA must travel beyond their communities to access fresh fruits and vegetables, and struggle to maintain a healthy diet for their families, impacting their overall health.¹
 - o *Example Proposals: increasing access to affordable and healthy food; provide opportunities to create local food economies; create networks to ensure fresh produce can be accessed by all Region 2 residents, etc.*
2. Access To Affordable & Safe Housing: Housing is essential to the health and wellbeing of families and individuals. Yet, according to the Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority (LAHSA) in 2022 there were about 69,144 people experiencing homelessness on any given night in LA County. Housing in LA County is out of reach for many residents, in particular low-income renters are more likely to spend over 50% of their income on housing. Increasing rent prices in conjunction with economic

¹ Los Angeles Food Policy Council

challenges, such as job loss because of the COVID-19 pandemic, have caused many families to fall behind on rent or been forced to live in multifamily households.²

- *Examples: homelessness prevention programs/services; access to counsel for tenants; pathways to homeownership, support for individuals that are at-risk of Homelessness, resources to navigate affordable housing system etc.*
3. Access To Community Education and Youth Development Programs: Communities benefit from skills training and programs, fostering stronger ties among members. Parent education programs aid individuals in handling the challenges of parenting through positive discipline techniques, child development skills, and accessing community services. School-age children and young people benefit from diverse programs outside of school, promoting their potential, from academics to sports and workforce preparation. Youth Development Programs support children from challenging homes or limited resources, nurturing social and cognitive skills while reducing risky behaviors.³
- *Examples: college fair; after-school programs; sports camp; parenting classes; skill building classes (typing, computer, finance, etc.), etc.*
4. Many people who need mental health services do not receive the resources and treatment that they need due to the lack of access, high costs and insufficient insurance coverage, and stigma. The COVID-19 pandemic increased the need for mental health programs for children, youth, and adults who reported having symptoms of anxiety, depression, or isolation. In California, over 284,000 youth experience major depression and 66% of kids with depression do not receive treatment. Unfortunately, the number of deaths due to substance abuse and suicide have also increased, disproportionately impacting people of color. There is a need to shift from criminalizing mental health and focusing on providing more mental health and prevention programs.⁴
- *Example proposals: Increase access to culturally competent mental health providers, and connect residents to resources for coping skills, stress management, and ways to improve mental health.*

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this grant opportunity, all applicants must prepare a written application to submit via email to beststart_grantees@risingcommunities.org.

Applicants are encouraged to participate in an informational webinar on [Thursday, September 7 at 12:00PM PST](#) or [Monday, September 11 at 11:00AM](#) to learn more about this RFP. After registering, you will receive an email confirmation with information on how to join the webinar. A recording of the webinar will be made available on the [Best Start webpage](#) on Friday, September 8, 2023, and an updated Frequently Asked Questions document will be posted weekly by EOD every Friday.

As part of our commitment to provide technical assistance to all applicants on their grant proposals, we strongly encourage applicants to attend the following Incubator Sessions:

1. Incubator Session: [SMART Goals and Scope of Work](#)

² [LAHSA, 2022 Housing Affordability Report](#)

³ [Youth.gov](#)

⁴ [Governor Newsom's Master Plan for Kids' Mental Health](#)



Request For Proposals

- Tuesday, September 12 at 1:00PM
- 2. Incubator Session: [Budget](#)
 - Tuesday, September 26 at 11:00AM
- 3. Incubator Session: [Evaluation Planning](#)
 - Tuesday, October 10 at 1:00PM

By attending these sessions and subsequent office hours, your application will be ready for submission by October 27th and contracting if awarded.

WRITTEN APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Written applications may be submitted in any language.

Typed applications should include:

A. A cover page (one-page maximum) listing the following information:

- Name of applicant organization/group
- Mailing address, phone number, email address, and website of applicant organization/group
- Social media handles: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter
- Name, title, and contact information of organization/group President/Director/Chief Executive Officer
- Name, title, and contact information of project lead/point of contact
- The grant category for which the applicant is applying [Regional OR Local]
- The Best Start Region 2 communities your project will service (check all that apply)
- Project Title
- Amount Requested \$_____

B. Application Questions Narrative

- The narrative should be no more than 5 pages in total, NOT including attachments.
- The narrative must be:
 - Double-spaced,
 - Font: 11pt Times New Roman, black
 - Include page numbers
 - 1-Inch margins (normal)
- Responses should be submitted in Microsoft Word ONLY (no PDFs, PowerPoint, or other format)
- Please include the following section headers throughout your narrative response (description of content to include in headers is provided below):
 - Project Title
 - Grant Level (Regional or Local), Community and Priority Area
 - Project Summary
 - About Our Organization
 - Our Experience in the Priority Area
 - Our Project Aims & Goals
 - Our Measurable Outcomes
 - Our Evaluation Plan
 - Our Budget
 - Our Video YouTube link (optional)

APPLICATION QUESTIONS NARRATIVE

PROJECT TITLE (10 words max)

Provide the title of your project. Choose a name that easily identifies your initiative that highlights its unique characteristics.

GRANT LEVEL (REGIONAL OR LOCAL), COMMUNITY AND PRORITY AREA (20 words max)

Please note if applicant will apply for Regional Grant (meaning the project is intended to have impact across at least two communities in Region 2) or at the Local level for individual communities (meaning the project will impact the community in which is it being conducted).

For Regional Grants:

If your organization is applying for a Regional grant, the work of the project must be conducted in a minimum of two communities (preferably across all 4 communities). In the proposal narrative, indicate the Best Start communities your project will serve, and the priority area your project will address (see Regional Priorities column in the table below for a list of priorities).

E.g., This Regional project will address Food Access in Broadway-Manchester and Compton / East Compton

For Local Projects:

Local Grants must address one community (if applying to conduct a project in more than one Best Start community, a separate and complete proposal is required for each chosen Best Start community), and one priority area (see Local Priorities column in the table below) within the chosen community. In the proposal narrative, indicate the Best Start community the project will serve, and the priority area your project will address.

E.g., Our project will address Parks and Green Spaces in West Athens

Regional Priorities	Local Priorities
Note: Organizations applying for a Regional Project must conduct their work in a minimum of two communities.	Note: Organizations applying for a Local Project will work in the individual community selected.
Priorities for Regional Projects D. Access to Affordable, Quality, Healthy Food Options E. Access to Affordable & Safe Housing F. Access to Community Education and Youth Development Programs	Priorities for Broadway-Manchester (BSBWM) C. Access to Affordable, Quality, Healthy Food Options D. Access Affordable & Safe Housing Priorities for Compton / East Compton (BSCEC) C. Access Affordable & Safe Housing D. Access to Culturally Responsive Mental Health and Prevention Programs



	Priorities for Watts and Willowbrook (BSWW) C. Access Affordable & Safe Housing D. Affordable, Quality, Healthy Food Options
	Priorities for West Athens (BSWA) C. Access Affordable & Safe Housing D. Affordable, Quality, Healthy Food Options

PROJECT SUMMARY: (150 words max)

Outline organization’s reason for the communities and priorities chosen. Write a one-paragraph overview of your project that answers the following three questions:

- What is a brief description of the issue you are trying to address?
- How will you address the issue, and who will benefit within Region 2?
- What are your anticipated results?

Your summary should be a stand-alone statement of the problem and solution. It should not require any other information to clearly understand what you are seeking to accomplish.

ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION:

In this section, please provide detailed information about the applicant.

Name, mission, and vision statement for your organization.

Applicant Tax Identification Number - Please provide any identification number provided by the Applicant’s taxing authority (e.g., the Internal Revenue Service). *Organizations applying with a Fiscal Sponsor, may use their EIN.*

Project Staffing - Please include the name, title, a brief bio, and brief description of duties for all staff that will work on this project.

Organizational Demographics - We are interested in learning more about the diversity of the leadership, staff, and board of the lead organization of your project. Please enter the total number of individuals within your organization for each race/ethnicity, using the category that best describes them.

Position	Latino	Black	Asian and/or Pacific Islander	White	Other (e.g., mixed 2 or more races)	Gender: #Man, #Woman # Non-binary
Board of Directors						
Leadership/ Management Staff						



Staff					
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ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE:

Knowledge of Community Issues - Describe your organization’s experience working with the Best Start Region 2 community and/or knowledge of the identified community issues. (200 words max)

Experience with Diverse Communities - Describe your organization’s familiarity working with diverse communities in South LA. Describe the ways that your organization has performed outreach and engagement activities to ensure inclusivity in your activities. (200 words max)

Policy and Systems Change Experience and Success - Explain how your organization has advanced policy and/or systems change? If you do not have examples, how do you plan to advance policy and/or systems change to address the community priority you are applying for? Provide specific examples/ supporting evidence (e.g., reports, news articles, actual text of policies, etc.). (200 words max)

YOUR PROJECT:

Project Outcomes- Describe the policy and/or systems change outcomes your project will have for communities in South LA. (500 words max)

Project Partners - Describe what community partners this project will have, if any, and what they will work on as part of this project. (150 words max)

Community Involvement - Describe how you will involve community input during project implementation. (200 words max)

Community Input in Project Design - Describe how community input was involved in the design of your project and/or creation of this application/proposal. (150 words max)

Combatting Anti-Blackness and Racism - Describe how you will integrate methods to combat anti-blackness and promote anti-racism through throughout your work on this project. (150 words max)

YOUR MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

Clear and Achievable Outcomes - Provide a timeline with specific, measurable outcomes for your project. You can access the "Scope of Work Template" [here](#). Organize and outline the tasks and responsibilities associated with your project on the template provided.

Measurable outcomes should describe in concrete words what you hope to achieve by the end of the project. These outcomes should directly reflect the community priority your project addresses and



should be described in SMART goal format. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-based. (400 words max)

YOUR EVALUATION PLAN:

Metrics – Describe the key metrics you will track to evaluate the success of your project. These metrics should directly reflect your measurable outcomes and the project activities.

Data Collection Methods – Describe the methods you will use to track key metrics and who will be responsible for managing data collection. Please be specific and include details of the frequency of data collection. In addition, please describe any adaptation of traditional data collection methods to accommodate COVID-19 public health orders and ensure safety of community, partners, and participants.

Analysis & Reporting - Describe your approach to analyzing and reporting results of data collection, and who will be leading the analysis process. Please include details about the frequency of reporting and how you will approach language justice and transparency around evaluation results.

Community Participation - Describe how you will involve Best Start communities in the evaluation process and provide opportunities for training and community input and partnership for data collection, analysis, and reporting.

BUDGET REQUEST:

Applicants must submit a line-item budget that outlines your anticipated project costs (e.g., staff salaries, printing and supplies, translation, and interpretation services, etc.). Please use the [provided budget template](#) and within the template you will be asked to submit a Budget Narrative that provides a description of each line item and a breakdown of the calculations (where appropriate you must utilize formulas to support your cost in the Totals Column of the budget template).

Please specify the general amount of funding your organization is requesting to conduct this project:
\$ _____

YOUR VIDEO YOUTUBE LINK: (American Disabilities Act accommodation):

If you have elected to create and submit a video proposal, please provide the link to the online location of your video here: _____

ATTACHMENTS

In addition, applicants must prepare and submit each of the following:

- Three references who can attest to your group/organization’s ability to fulfill the proposed outcomes.



- Letters of Support from proposed project partner(s).

HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

Responses must be submitted via email in Word Document format to beststart_grantees@risingcommunities.org:

1. All required documentation will need to be included for you to successfully apply.
2. For questions or assistance troubleshooting please contact beststart_grantees@risingcommunities.org.

FOR VIDEO SUBMISSIONS (American Disabilities Act accommodation):

[Upload your video to YouTube](#). Set the Privacy Settings on your video to Public or Unlisted – do not set them as private.

Ensure your video addresses the Application Narrative Questions referenced above. In addition, compose an email with the following information in the body of the email, and send to beststart_grantees@risingcommunities.org by October 27, 2023.

- Name of applicant organization/group:
- Mailing address, phone number and email address, and website of applicant organization/group:
- Organization’s social media handles: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter
- Name, title and contact information of organization President/Director/Chief Executive Officer:
- Name, title and contact information of project lead:
- The grant category for which the applicant is applying: _____
- Project Title:
- Amount Requested: \$_____
- Direct link to YouTube video: