

FORM 1. HUB APPLICATION

Disclaimer: First 5 California has created this SAMPLE Hub application to support Lead Agencies in the development of their regional applications. The sample responses provided in red throughout the document are purely for example purposes and are not indicative of all the models a Hub could choose to implement.

1. Summarize the Hub's guiding vision and goals.

SAMPLE 1:

All consortia are supported in their efforts to increase and sustain quality in their counties through the development of strong local systems aligned with the CA-QRIS.

- We will promote capacity building and regional efficiencies through the sharing of resources and best practices and by avoiding duplication of efforts.*
- We will ensure consistent quality ratings across the region by supporting a regional assessor management system and employing a regional approach to coaching and training.*

All families with young children in our region have access to the highest quality care and education to support the best possible outcomes for children – success in school and life.

- We will use evidence-based models/frameworks to ensure the highest likelihood of measurable improvement in key child and family indicators.*
- We will develop a regional messaging campaign to help parents understand the value of quality early learning and to recognize key indicators of program quality.*

We are currently developing a process to assess the specific strengths and resources that each consortium brings to our region, as well as their needs and challenges. We will be developing our goals and timelines for implementing our vision when representatives from each consortium convene in April 2016.

SAMPLE 2:

Our region's vision is to be innovators in quality improvement and early childhood systems building based on the strengths and uniqueness of each consortium in the region. We believe we can and should help one another to strengthen the capacity and create efficiencies within every consortium in the region. We will co-develop our structure and dedicate our resources to sharing best practices and reducing duplication of efforts. We will accomplish this vision through a fully inclusive decision-making process. Every consortium has committed to the following three goals:

1. *Increase early learning quality by implementing an efficient regional coaching and training system with a focus on adult-child interactions, developmental screening, and child assessment.*
2. *Ensure consistent quality ratings across the region by supporting a regional assessor management system.*
3. *Implement a messaging campaign that includes regional QRIS branding and a focus on family engagement.*

The first major role of Hubs is basic coordination, project management, and systems-building activities for consortia participating in the Hub.

2. Describe how the Hub will facilitate regional coordination and decision making. Please answer each of the following four questions:

a. *What is the composition of Hub representatives from consortia in the region (decision-makers) and how were they selected?*

SAMPLE:

The Lead Agencies for the local First 5 IMPACT consortia met and set up the following guidelines in order to ensure an integrated system across funding streams that will maximize the leveraging of existing and new funding opportunities.

Because we are a large Hub region with multiple counties, we want to ensure efficient decision making and equal representation. To achieve this, every consortium in this region will designate two representatives from different agencies to participate in Hub oversight:

- *In counties where there is a different Lead Agency for First 5 IMPACT and CSPP QRIS Block Grant, one representative will come from each Lead Agency.*
- *In counties where the same Lead Agency oversees both QRIS efforts, one representative will be from the local First 5 IMPACT Lead Agency and the second may come from any other consortia partner agency (e.g., Higher Education, Local Planning Council, etc.). The decision process for this scenario is at the discretion of the local consortia.*

b. *How will you ensure full participation by all consortia in the region (include meeting frequency, how meetings will be held, etc.)?*

SAMPLE:

Consortia in our region held weekly check-ins during our application writing process — we alternated between in-person meetings and conference calls. Once the

application has been submitted, we will reduce that to twice per month, meeting in person on the third Thursday of each month and holding a conference call on the first Thursday of each month. Keeping a regular schedule will ensure full and consistent participation by each representative on the Hub decision-making team (representatives from every consortium). This schedule will be in place through December 2016, at which point we will revisit the schedule and make changes, as needed.

In addition, a portion of Hub funds will be set aside to reimburse travel to regional and statewide meetings. This will increase participation of the three consortia in our region that indicated they didn't have local funds to pay for travel to meetings. We plan to alternate meeting locations around the region so the same consortia don't have to travel every month.

c. How will you organize the Hub to ensure all the needs of all consortia in the region are met?

SAMPLE 1:

This region has many consortia with a variety of background with QRIS. In addition, our region is geographically large, and traveling from one end to the other takes a great deal of time. In order to maximize efficiencies and fully support all consortia, we decided to divide the region in half (two sub-regions). The Lead Agency will serve as lead for three consortia (representing four counties) on its immediate borders and the county office of education (COE) in X county will oversee the three consortia closest to them. Both the Lead Agency and COE have a long history of implementing QRIS through RTT-ELC while the other consortia in the region were either RTT-ELC mentee counties or are just starting out.

At first, all consortia in the region will meet together to prioritize the needs of the region (see Question 3.d.) and determine how to budget the Hub funds. The Lead Agency will subcontract with X county to carry out the work that best meets the needs of those consortia. The main purpose of the sub-hub is to provide specific regional support on assessments. Sub-hub funds will support an Anchor who will provide reliability training and drift checks across the sub-hub region. Representatives from each sub region will meet monthly, and representatives from all consortia in the region will meet quarterly to share and consider regional strategies that apply to both sub-regions.

SAMPLE 2:

In this region, we will hire a contractor to facilitate the initial Hub processes. The facilitator will assist in co-developing the meeting agendas, facilitate regional decision making, and lead the process to develop a governance structure. The contractor will assist in clarifying the Hub vision, articulating priorities, and support

implementation. Because the consortia in our region have not worked together in this capacity before, we feel it is important to have an impartial facilitator walk us through this process. This will help ensure that all consortia needs are met. This process and the final decisions will be well-documented and submitted to First 5 California by July 1, 2016.

d. How were individual consortium's strengths and needs considered in decision making about the Hub priorities? If priorities have not yet been decided, what are your plans for this?

SAMPLE:

During the Hub application writing, the Hub Fiscal Lead Agency developed a survey for all consortia in the region to complete. We also shared our local First 5 IMPACT High-Quality Action Plans (HQAPs) with each other to begin to identify themes and needs. During our first meeting to develop this application, we reviewed the survey results and discussed our HQAPs. We narrowed down our priorities to funding a regional CLASS trainer, using a common data system, and hiring a Hub coordinator who will also facilitate throughout the process. Based on this, we developed our application and budget.

During this process, we found several clear strengths of several consortia and a few areas where several consortia requested specialized support. Those with strengths agreed to provide regional or one-on-one support to other consortia. For example, X and Y county consortia both have DRDP-certified trainers. They will provide regional trainings in-kind because the other five consortia do not have anyone who can provide this training.

We will hire a facilitator to help us look more closely at our HQAPs and find themes. These will be brought back to our regional Hub representatives for further discussion. Between decisions, we will make sure consortia in the region have time to take back the ideas to their local consortia for discussion and input.

3. Describe how the region will select a data system and manage data. Please answer each of the following four questions

a. Is the Hub requesting data system reimbursement funds? Note: One or a combination of boxes may be checked in this section. Hub funds may fully or partially support a Regional Data System Coordinator.

Yes. The data system reimbursement funds will be used for the following activities (*Check all that apply*):

- Data system(s)
- Workforce Registry (with approved data system(s) in place)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entirely for a Regional Data System Coordinator (with approved data system(s) in place) <input type="checkbox"/> No. The Hub is not requesting data system reimbursement funds. (<i>Explain below.</i>)
<i>If you answered "no" to question 3.a. (not requesting data system reimbursement funds), please explain how the Hub will fulfill the data reporting requirements.</i>
<i>Not applicable.</i>
<i>b. What QOS/QRIS data system(s) will the Hub use? (check all that apply)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> iPinwheel <input type="checkbox"/> Persimmony <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Q-Star <input type="checkbox"/> TCC Software Solutions <input type="checkbox"/> Vertical Change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Web-based Early Learning System (WELS) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify below.)
<i>If you checked "Other", identify data system and describe this vendor's history with QRIS data collection.</i>
<i>Not applicable.</i>
<i>c. How was the data system(s) selected?</i>
<p>SAMPLE:</p> <p><i>The five consortia members in our Hub region attended data system vendor webinars organized by First 5 California. Members of the region then invited several vendors to provide personalized webinars and explain pricing plans. By unanimous vote, the three consortia that are newly adopting a QRIS data system decided on Q-Star because of its user-friendliness and reasonable pricing. Two consortia members in this region were already using WELS and will continue to do so. Because the data system(s) cost less than \$150 per site, the remaining funds will be used to offset the salary of a Data System Coordinator.</i></p>
<i>d. If applicable, why is the Hub supporting more than one data system?</i>
<p>SAMPLE:</p> <p><i>In this region, two consortia participated in RTT-ELC prior to First 5 IMPACT and have invested a significant amount of RTT-ELC funds in collecting and reporting</i></p>

data with WELS. In 2018, consortia members of the Hub region will review the relative merits of Q-Star and WELS and may choose to adopt only one data system for the region.

e. How will the Hub manage data requirements, including communication with vendors, data collection, data entry, and upload to F5CA? Describe the role and activities of the Regional Data System Coordinator, if applicable.

SAMPLE:

- *Communication with vendors: The Regional Data System Coordinator (RDSC) will work with vendors to bring forward consortia concerns and issues about data system functionality to vendors. The RDSC will monitor contracts with vendors.*
- *Data collection and entry: The RDSC will coordinate with consortia evaluators to monitor the annual data collection schedule. Data are expected to be entered locally by each consortium’s staff. The RDSC also is the point person for coordinating regionally with the Workforce Registry about collection of individual teacher professional development data and enabling data sharing between the Registry, Pinwheel, and Persimmony.*
- *Data upload to F5CA: The RDSC also will work with consortia evaluators and data system vendors to enable preparation of the annual Common Data Fields file for First 5 California.*
- *Role and activities of the RDSC: The RDSC will serve as the point person for contracting with vendors and proposing system change requests to both vendors (Pinwheel and Persimmony). Hub funds will be used to support the RDSC as a .5 FTE position, physically located at the offices of the Hub Lead Agency. (The same person also will share a .5 FTE position as program evaluator for the Lead Agency. Each consortium will identify a point person to collaborate with the RDSC. The RDSC will hold monthly regional calls with evaluators and system users and will convene in-person meetings of Hub members twice annually, or as needed.*

f. Will the Hub be requesting funds for the Early Learning Needs Assessment Tool (ELNAT)?

Yes (Explain below.) No

If you answered “Yes” to question 3.f., describe how the subscription will be shared to support consortia or regional data planning.

SAMPLE:

Consortia in this region are fortunate to have a one-stop database for local and regional data. We will inform our county office of education and First 5 partners about this opportunity – both entities in each county have expressed interest in

accessing the data contained in the ELNAT (as described during the 3/11/16 webinar). The RDSC will work with these entities to ensure access and/or provide the data requested by the agencies, if they do not have staff to access the data themselves.

The second major role of Hubs is to provide specialized support for consortia participating in the Hub for at least one additional activity or element from the CA-QRIS and/or function of the local First 5 IMPACT systems.

4. Describe the Hub’s role in supporting the ERS Anchor and assessor management needs of the region.

a. How will the Hub fill the role of Regional ERS Anchor(s) and contribute to regional efficiencies?

SAMPLE:

The Lead Agency’s county consortium has a certified Anchor on all three Environment Rating Scale (ERS) tools. We will work with F5CA to certify two more Regional Anchors who will come from two other consortia in the region, geographically placed to minimize travel costs as much as possible. We will subcontract with these two Lead Agencies, and Hub funds will be used to support .25 FTE of each of their salaries plus a stipend for travel reimbursement in the region to carry out these activities. The Hub will pay for any Regional Anchor travel for related activities, such as training and/or workgroups conducted by F5CA Anchors, as required.

b. How will the Hub and/or ERS Anchor(s):

- *Build consortia capacity to carry out local assessments’*
- *Support local consortia to meet the assessor re-certification and inter-rater-reliability requirements and assessment standards in the Implementation Guide*

SAMPLE 1:

The Regional ERS Anchors will ensure every consortium has enough assessors to carry out their ERS assessments (abiding by the frequency and quantity outlined in the CA-QRIS Implementation Guide). Each Regional ERS Anchor will be assigned to support one-third of the assessors, including but not limited to:

- *Reviewing ERS Summary Reports to ensure accuracy, high-quality writing, and concrete examples to support scores*
- *Conducting inter-rater reliability with assessors every six months*
- *Answering questions as they arise*

- *Providing additional training, as needed*

They also will recertify assessors annually. They will work together to hold a regional meeting with all assessors twice each year to discuss challenges and provide additional training to increase capacity. They will be the point persons to discuss challenges and questions with F5CA Master Anchors and relay information to assessors from the State.

SAMPLE 2:

Region 13 consists mainly of small counties. As such, our need for assessors is smaller than in many other regions. Based on our current needs for ERS assessments, we plan to hire one Anchor for the region who is reliable on all three tools. This Regional ERS Anchor will initially complete all of the ERS assessments for the first round of rating. As we bring more sites on board and transition sites from Step 2 to Step 3, the Anchor will train additional assessors to reliability, conduct regular drift checks per the Implementation Guide, supervise the work of contracted assessors, and hold regular job-alikes to discuss challenges and issues.

5. Describe how the Hub will support activities that improve effective adult-child interactions within consortia in the region. (Note: Refer to Appendix J for additional information)

a. *Please include all of the following in your response:*

- *What activities will be implemented by the Hub to support effective teacher-child interactions in local consortia?*
- *How will they be implemented to build local/consortia capacity and create regional efficiencies?*

SAMPLE 1:

We plan to focus on use of the CLASS tools to address adult-child interactions. Our Hub plans to take full advantage of First 5 California’s contract with Teachstone for regional training. In FY 2016-17, we will ask Teachstone to provide three Train the Trainer sessions – one for each of the three CLASS tools. Each of the five consortia in our region will send two individuals to the training. If a consortium doesn’t have a qualified individual (e.g., observer status with at least six months of experience observing using the tool), we will help them identify an individual to attend and help them reach observer status. Three consortia in this region already have a trainer-certified individual on at least one of the tools.

Our goal is to build trainer capacity across the region by making sure every consortium has trainer-certified individuals. We will create regional efficiencies by releasing a position announcement for a Regional Professional Development

Specialist in January 2017. One of the individuals with CLASS trainer certification and/or a former CARES Plus MTP (MyTeachingPartner) coach will be encouraged to apply for this position, which will be funded by the Hub to oversee the professional development supports for CLASS trainers and manage the training requests in the region. Our priorities include:

- Training faculty in our institutions of higher education to incorporate CLASS into their coursework; each faculty member will become a certified observer on the CLASS tool to ensure they have deep knowledge of effective interactions.*
- A small pilot group of 10 instructors will be invited to participate in Making the Most of Classroom Interactions (MMCI) Instructor Certification Training.*
- Training site directors on CLASS so they can help foster a “culture of CLASS” in their sites; providing access to myTeachstone for these sites.*
- Creating a learning community among coaches and assessors to ensure transfer of knowledge from observation to coaching, and addressing observation challenges. All coaches will be CLASS-certified on all three age levels.*

In the following year, we will re-evaluate our training and support needs for the region and look into expanding myTeachstone and/or focus on Making the Most of Classroom Interactions (MMCI) Instructor certification. We hope to be able to use the F5CA allocation of Teachstone funds for all of our training needs. However, if that is insufficient, consortia in this region agreed to review their budgets and we will reassess the Hub budget to contribute to overall training costs.

SAMPLE 2:

Our Hub will focus primarily on the use of use coaching to support improved teacher-child interactions. We plan to maintain and expand upon our current coaching model, which supports teachers’ professional development by providing a coach who has specialized learning knowledge and skills, and who builds teachers’ capacity through a process of reflection, goal-setting, and achievement. Coaching is one critical piece of our quality rating and improvement system (QRIS), and serves as the main mechanism for focusing more deeply on teacher-child interactions.

We will continue to employ multiple master coaches to supervise and guide the work of our site-level coaches. These master coaches ensure that coaching practices are effective and consistent across counties and sites. We also will continue to utilize coaching collaboratives that bring coaches and master coaches together on a regular basis to share and adopt best practices.

Additionally, we will continue our practice of mapping coaching efforts across sites and counties in order to identify efficiencies in distributing and sequencing different

coaching resources. Data will play a role in maximizing coaching resources by identifying sites' and individuals' coaching needs.

b. How will the Hub monitor effectiveness of this support and use that information to improve implementation?

SAMPLE:

We will carry out several monitoring activities:

- Conduct surveys with participants who attend training to better understand the value of the training to their work and the effectiveness of the trainer to improve delivery.*
- Conduct surveys with coaches and directors about the myTeachstone subscriptions to improve access and usefulness of the service – we will reevaluate use of myTeachstone in the second year based on first-year results.*
- Have conference calls with faculty using the CLASS in coursework to better understand how it is implemented and how it aligns with and supports the coursework and instruction. From this, we will be able to understand the additional supports faculty need, expand the reach of training to additional faculty members, and recruit more faculty to participate in these opportunities.*
- We will finalize a shared data system that can provide insight into the types and dosages of coaching having the most impact on quality improvement across the counties to be better able to determine effective coaching types and dosages.*

6. Describe how the Hub will support family engagement and strengthening efforts in licensed, FFN, and alternative settings, as applicable.

a. Please include all of the following in your response:

- What activities will be implemented by the Hub to support family engagement and strengthening efforts in local consortia?*
- How will they be implemented to build local/consortia capacity and create regional efficiencies?*

SAMPLE:

Every consortium in this region is interested in building capacity using the Strengthening Families™ Five Protective Factors Framework. While writing this application, representatives in the region met to discuss priorities and found out that two of the consortia already have trainers certified to provide training since those consortia are embedding Strengthening Families (SF) in their Home Visiting

programs. These two consortia agreed to have their trainers conduct regional training for agency staff supporting FFN caregivers and alternative settings in the other four consortia in this region.

Hub funds will be used to reimburse the trainers for materials and their travel for regional SF training. The consortia with the trainers have agreed to contribute 10 hours per month (in-kind) of their trainers' time to meet the regional training needs on SF and facilitate learning communities (in person or by conference call/webinar) to support implementation in FFN and alternative settings.

In the next several months, Hub representatives will discuss additional audiences that may benefit from the training and will determine a regional training schedule that does not overburden the generosity of our consortia partners with Strengthening Families trainers. The Hub's Coordinator will work with the two trainers to develop a plan to ensure training needs across the region are met. The plan will be brought to Hub representatives for approval. Each consortium will be responsible for making sure their local consortia partner agency staff (working with FFN and alternative settings) attend the training and fully participate.

b. How will the Hub monitor effectiveness of its support for family engagement and strengthening, and use that information to improve implementation?

SAMPLE:

Each training participant will complete the Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality Measure before they attend the training, and then at six month intervals. There are measures for the provider/teacher, family services staff, and parents in each of these settings, available at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/development-of-a-measure-of-family-and-provider-teacher-relationship-quality-fptrq>. Hub representatives, along with the two SF trainers, will review and select the appropriate measure for the setting (FFN or alternative setting).

After completing the measure as directed by the tools, the SF trainer will meet with the participants to review the results and discuss a plan to help them in their work. In addition, the SF trainers will check in periodically with each participant (schedule to be determined) to answer questions and provide technical assistance.

7. If applicable, describe other type(s) of specialized support this Hub will provide and how they will be implemented to create regional efficiencies and build local capacity.

For each additional type of specialized support identified by the Hub (other than

those described in questions 4–6), please describe:

- How does this support meet the needs of consortia in the region?
- How does this support build local/consortia capacity and create regional efficiencies?
- How will the Hub monitor effectiveness of this support and use that information to improve implementation?

SAMPLE 1:

*Our Hub region consists primarily of counties participating in Step 3. As such, during a recent meeting, the participating Hub counties decided to focus on the 7th system function, **Outreach and Communication**. Our region would like to develop consistent messaging and a package of communication materials that can be customized for individual counties. We propose to hire a part-time communications consultant to design templates for orientation forms and packets, flyers for sites and parents, lawn signs, decals, certificates of excellence, and other related materials. In addition, the consultant would work to develop messaging materials, including talking points and fact sheets. These would be customized for a variety of audiences including providers, families, and the public, with specific materials for policy makers, the business community, and philanthropy. Having templates and messaging that can be tailored to our region and then further refined to meet local needs will create efficiencies and cost savings in developing this system function.*

SAMPLE 2:

*Through an online survey and two preliminary Hub meetings, we have determined that the specialized topic of most interest to participating counties is **developmental screening**. In order to maximize efficiencies in this area and build capacity, we will coordinate a training system for topics related to screening. Rather than have training developed and provided at the individual county level, we will design a set of options and allow participating counties to select from a training menu. While we are still working out the details, in particular with training related to proprietary tools, we hope to implement train-the-trainer models for most of our topics in order to build capacity. These trainers will then be able to provide assistance at the site level within their own county or sub-region (for small counties). Although all of the details will be worked out over the next three months, as a Hub region we have identified the following topics as highest need:*

- *Using ASQ and ASQ:SE*
- *Communicating with and supporting families*
- *Making referrals and providing follow-up*
- *Adapting curriculum for children with identified needs*