**ELIGIBILITY:**

**Q: Does our organization have to be based in Los Angeles County to apply?**

A: We will consider statewide organizations that can demonstrate strong impact in Los Angeles County and meet other criteria of the Reimagining Systems Fund, such as involvement in leadership and decision-making by community members negatively impacted by the systems they are advocating to reimagine.

**Q: May small organizations apply for large grants? Will we be competing directly with much larger organizations?**

A: We welcome applications from organizations of any size. Applicants will be considered in comparison with organizations of similar budget size.

**Q: We are an all-volunteer group that is not a 501(c)(3) or fiscally sponsored project. Can we apply?**

A: The Reimagining Systems Fund is limited to 501(c)(3) and fiscally sponsored organizations. However, all-volunteer groups may apply to the Community Opportunities Flexible Fund, which will be accepting proposals on a rolling basis starting July 1, 2023.

**Q: Can a 501(c)(6) non-profit association apply for funds?**

A: The Reimagining Systems Fund is limited to 501(c)(3) and fiscally sponsored projects. However, the Community Opportunities Flexible Fund, opening in July 2023, will accept proposals from a wide range of applicants, including 501(c)(6) organizations, volunteer groups, and others.

**Q: Are there any limitations regarding California-wide work (that includes an LA focus) versus LA county-only specific work?**

A: No. We will consider proposals for both statewide work with demonstrated LA County impact and LA County-specific work.

**Q: Is the size of the population served prioritized (e.g. countywide vs. a subpopulation with demonstrated need)?**

A: Size is not prioritized; we invite you to tell us about your community and what systems you are working with them to change.

**APPLICATION:**

**Q: Can you please define community? What constitutes a community member to be eligible to apply?**

A: Generally, we are referring to the people your systems change work intends to serve, and the application questions invite you to share what that means for your organization. Individual community members or volunteer groups are not eligible to apply for the Reimagining Systems Fund, but will be able to apply to the Community Opportunities Flexible Fund which will start accepting applications July 1, 2023.

**Q: How deep into the historical context of the community do you want us to dive into?**

A: Each narrative question has a recommended word count, which gives you a sense of the general length we’re inviting (e.g., 300 words, which is about half a page). Every community is different and we invite you to share some of the historical and cultural context about yours that helps us understand what systems are important to you to change and what underlies your approach to doing so.

**Q: Are organizations allowed to apply for both the Reimagining Systems Fund and the Community Opportunities Flexible Fund?**

A: You may apply to both, and if you are not funded by the Reimagining Systems Fund, we encourage you to apply to the Community Opportunities Flexible Fund if you meet the application criteria. Due to the anticipated volume of applications, our current expectation is that organizations that receive a Reimagining Systems Fund grant will be ineligible to apply for the Community Opportunities Flexible Fund. This is because we are trying to prioritize groups and initiatives that have had fewer opportunities to access grant funding, including those who have never before received a grant.

**Q: What if my organization serves multiple Service Planning Areas (SPAs)?**

A: You should be able to either select multiple SPAs on the application form in Submittable or select Countywide. We understand that the short-answer questions may not exactly fit your organization, so we provide additional space in the narrative questions to explain if needed.

**Q: We were finalizing our budget and realized that there is no place for a budget narrative. Is a budget narrative required?  If so, where would you like it?  Should we just make a new column in the Excel template to explain costs?**

A:A budget narrative is not required. If you would like us to have more information about line items, please feel free to add a column or add a little detail in Column A.

**USE OF FUNDS:**

**Q: Must a Reimagining Systems Fund grant be used for a stand-alone project, or can it be used to expand an ongoing, already-funded effort?**

A: You do not have to create a new project for this funding. Reimagining Systems Fund grants may be used to expand ongoing, already-funded efforts.

**Q: Are these general support grants?**

A: No, but they are highly flexible funds to support a wide variety of direct and indirect expenses and activities related to your organization’s efforts to change systems affecting children prenatal to 5 and their families. More information about what funds can be used for can be found in the Reimagining Systems Fund section of the website, and on the first tab of the budget template.

**Q: May grant funds be used for programs offering Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) payments?**

A: First 5 LA restrictions mean that funds may not be used directly for GBI payments. However, grant funds could be used for operating expenses of organizations advocating for or administering GBI programs that meet all other Reimagining Systems Fund guidelines.

**Q: Can the funds be used to build a new pilot program that services families with children 0-5?**

A: Yes, a pilot project can be considered if it clearly demonstrates how it will impact at least one of First 5 LA’s long-term systems outcome areas (Equitable, Power Sharing, Financing, or Accessible).

**Q: Is it okay if our organization does grassroots lobbying activities, such as Town Halls, as long as we don’t use First 5 LA grant funds?**

A: Yes. Your organization may absolutely use other funding sources, such as unrestricted individual donations and/or foundation grants, membership dues, special event revenues, etc. to conduct [grassroots lobbying](https://bolderadvocacy.org/2021/02/10/lobbying-series-part-3-grassroots-lobbying%E2%80%AF/) activities. (Grassroots lobbying is urging the general public to communicate the organization’s position on legislation to legislators). Reimagining Systems Fund grants may not be used for this purpose.

**REVIEW CRITERIA:**

**Q: Are we more likely to get funded if we ask for less money?**

A: We want you to ask for what you need! If we are not able to fund the full amount requested, we may circle back to see if you are interested in submitting a revised budget and project description for a smaller amount.

**Q: Are there any additional/special considerations for organizations that were funded in previous Policy Advocacy Funds, such as the Early Care & Education Policy Advocacy Fund or the Built Environment Policy Advocacy Fund?**

A: There are no additional or special considerations for organizations previously funded by First 5 LA. However, First 5 LA may not fund the full amount of your request if you are currently receiving funding through other First 5 LA grantmaking programs simultaneously.

**Q: Are collaborative grants given priority?**

A: No, they are treated equally. We expect to make grants both to individual organizations and to collaborations. The strongest proposals will meet all of the evaluation criteria (systems impact, equitable/meaningful involvement, actionable) at a high level. So if your organization is very strong in one area but less strong in another, a partnership might make sense so that you can best meet all three criteria and have a stronger overall proposal.

**Q: How many Reimagining Systems Fund grants do you expect to make?**

A: We expect to make 11-15 grants of $250,000-$350,000, renewable for three additional years. The annual budget for this grantmaking pool is $4 million.

**GRANTEE EXPECTATIONS:**

**Q: What are the reporting requirements if my organization is awarded?**

A: There is an evaluation and learning team for the project and there will be a combination of written reports, brief surveys and/or interviews at the 6-month and year-end of the project. There will also be a year-end financial report.

**Q: If we are selected, are there creative ways to share back evidence of the work that is happening, in a non-traditional way, which better demonstrate the lived experience of our communities?**

A: Yes. Our evaluation will have space for creative elements (something we are looking forward to), although there will still be some written reporting required, given that these are public funds.

**Q: Are Reimagining Systems Fund grants renewable?**

A: Yes. Organizations receiving funding may be eligible for renewal, subject to fund availability and grantee progress and circumstances, for up to three additional years.

**Q: So, if an organization receives between $250,000-$350,000 grant, would this be considered a 1-year grant? And if eligible for renewal, throughout the three additional years would they receive that same amount per year?**  
A: Yes, that is correct – the grant is $250-350 in year one, then can be renewed at the same level for three additional years.

**Q: Will there be EC PAF cohort/grantee meetings throughout the grant period? Something like a community of practice would be great.**

A: Grantees will be required to attend at most one convening per year. In our interviews with stakeholders, we heard a lot of interest in working across silos and partnering with and learning from peers and other organizations. At the same time, we did not hear any interest in having funders be the leads to convene folks. Our team will be thinking through and listening for how we might provide support for collaboration in the field in ways that support your goals, without putting ourselves at the center.