Built Environment Policy Advocacy Fund (BEPAF)

Program Overview

With funding from First 5 LA, a leading public grantmaking and child advocacy organization, Prevention Institute will award one-year (May 2020 – May 2021) grants ranging from $25,000 – $100,000 to community-based organizations, policy advocacy networks, and emerging coalitions advocating for high-quality parks, open space, and recreation facilities; safe and reliable transportation/opportunities for mobility; and/or food security in First 5 LA’s Best Start geographies. This is a unique opportunity to improve the built environment, with a goal of promoting healthy early childhood development. Grantees will participate in a kickoff convening, learning sessions, and a closing convening; grantees will also receive site visits and tailored technical assistance. Grantees will participate in a program evaluation led by Ersoylu Consulting, a leading research and evaluation firm.

Background and Goals: The BEPAF comes at an exciting time in Los Angeles (LA) County. For years, local groups have been advocating alongside residents to improve access to quality parks and open space, safe streets and sidewalks, and healthy food. Between 2016 – 2018, in an unprecedented show of public will and investment, LA voters approved over $1 billion in taxpayer dollars to finance public infrastructure for parks and open space, transportation, and stormwater improvements. During this same period, several landmark policies were enacted to address food insecurity in the region. The BEPAF represents a critical opportunity to support early childhood development by investing in the capacity of resident leaders and organizations to improve built environment conditions in the region’s most under-resourced and disinvested communities. The BEPAF goals include:

1. Expanding and sustaining the ecosystem of built environment policy- and systems-change advocacy advocates in the Best Start geographies by:
   a. Strengthening the organizational capacity of nonprofits, networks, and coalitions working on built environment policy- and systems-change advocacy to benefit children prenatal to age five.
   b. Building the capacity of parents and community residents in Best Start geographies to engage in built environment policy-change advocacy work.

2. Influence policy- and systems-changes that will ensure more equitable built environment conditions for children prenatal to age five and their families in the Best Start geographies by:
   a. Supporting policy- and systems-change advocacy to advance equitable outcomes in three focus areas of the built environment: parks and open space, transportation/mobility, and food security.
   b. Influencing systems—such as institutional practices, procedures, and resource allocations—to ensure more equitable policy implementation.
   c. Evaluating learnings and outcomes to inform future philanthropic investments in the built environment.

Program Management: The BEPAF is a program funded by First 5 LA, managed by Prevention Institute (PI). PI will select grantees and administer grants, convene grantees in a learning community, provide technical assistance, build grantee capacity, and oversee learning and evaluation activities, to be implemented by Ersoylu Consulting. Since 2014, PI has convened the Healthy Equitable Active Land Use (HEALU) Network, a multi-sector collaborative that works to improve health equity through land use/built environment policy and systems change in LA County. Ersoylu Consulting will lead the BEPAF learning and evaluation activities. Since 2007, Ersoylu has provided strategy, evaluation, policy analysis, and systems consultation to strengthen systems and empower communities in the social justice space.

Letters of Interest (LOIs) must be submitted by 5:00pm on January 31, 2020. For more information, visit www.preventioninstitute.org/projects/bepaf or contact BEPAF@preventioninstitute.org.