

UFIRST

Faculty Quick Start Guide

New Faculty Orientation • College of Design, Construction and Planning

PURPOSE (Slide 1)

This guide focuses on the faculty/PI steps needed to initiate a proposal in UFIRST. It is designed to support—not replace—the DCP Pre-Award Quick Guide, which contains the proposal timeline, internal deadlines, certifications and other planning expectations.

1. What is UFIRST? (Slide 2)

UFIRST is the University of Florida proposal and award management system. UF Research states that UFIRST is mandatory for the entry and routing of proposals and agreements managed by the Division of Sponsored Programs (DSP). It supports tracking across the sponsored-project lifecycle, from proposal development and submission through award negotiation, setup and management.

- Collects institutional proposal and award data.
- Routes proposals for institutional review before sponsor submission.
- Supports sponsored and research-related agreement tracking.
- Hosts Notices of Award and tracks award-management requests.

FACULTY QUICK START

For most new faculty, the key first step is: create the proposal in UFIRST → obtain the proposal number → send the proposal number to your assigned unit RA / Proposal & Financial Advisor.

UFIRST: <https://research.ufl.edu/ufirst>

2. Before You Start (Slide 3)

Have the basic opportunity information available before opening the UFIRST SmartForm. This will make the initial setup and handoff to your RA easier.

- Sponsor name and funding opportunity/solicitation.
- Sponsor deadline and anticipated project start date, if known.
- Basic project title and project type/application type information.
- Initial project team information.
- Sponsor guidelines or opportunity link to share with your RA.

Check special routing situations

Some pre-proposals, letters of intent (LOIs) and white papers must be routed through UFIRST. Check UF Research guidance before submitting a pre-proposal directly to a sponsor. If an opportunity is a limited submission, UF may also require an internal selection process before the sponsor application proceeds.

DCP PLANNING TOOLS

Review the DCP Proposal Process Diagram, Review & Approval Workflow and Deadline Calculator early. The separate DCP Pre-Award Quick Guide contains the full proposal timeline and internal deadlines.

Link: [Administrative Policies – MyDCP|Faculty and Staff](#)

3. Start a New Proposal in UFIRST (Slide 4)

Log in to UFIRST and begin the proposal SmartForm. From the UFIRST workspace, open the proposal area and select the option to create a new proposal.

The screenshot shows the UFIRST workspace. On the left is a sidebar with a 'NavBar: Menu' and a 'Recently Visited' section. The main area is titled 'Proposals' and contains a table of proposals. A red box highlights the 'New Proposal' button in the 'Create...' section. Below the button, a red callout box says 'Click the New Proposal button.'

ID	Name	Smart Form	Date Modified	State	PI	Sponsor
PRO00023733	My fellowship	SmartForm 1:33 PM	10/10/2019	Draft	Lester	NATL II
PRO00025826	TEST	SmartForm 8:36 AM	10/10/2019	Draft	Matchie	TBD - 5 SYSTE
PRO00025827	Humana Test Budget Year 2	SmartForm 8:29 AM	10/10/2019	Draft	Tucker	HUMAN
PRO00025709	DTRA test	SmartForm AM	10/8/2019 9:19	Draft	Johnson	NATL II
PRO00025826	Test Proposal	SmartForm PM	10/7/2019 2:54	Draft	Irvin	NATL II SCIEN
PRO00025817	TBD	SmartForm PM	10/3/2019 4:14	Draft	DELIZ QUINONEZ	US EN
PRO00025824	Hurricane low-pressure effect on roof structures	SmartForm PM	10/2/2019 4:20	Draft	Mellow	WATER

TIP

The simulation is a safe way to practice the workflow before working in a live proposal.

4. Complete the Initial SmartForm (Slide 5)

Work through the opening SmartForm questions. Use the sponsor opportunity and project information to answer the questions as accurately as possible. The exact screens you see may vary based on your responses.

Creating New: Funding Proposal

1.0 General Information

Use "%" as wild card search.

1.0 * Principal Investigator / Program Director / Fellow:

Kella Silva

Identify the Mentor / Responsible Faculty Member:

...

2.0 * Submitting Department:

DCP-DEAN'S OFFICE

Submitting Department ID:

15010000

3.0 Primary Unit Administrative Contact:

...

4.0 Submission Deadline:

...

No Deadline: ☐

* Is this a Published/Hard Deadline or a Target Deadline?

☐ Published/Hard Deadline

☐ Target Deadline

[Clear](#)

5.0 * Short Title of Proposal:

...

6.0 Full Title of Proposal:

...

7.0 * Sponsor:

...

If Sponsor does not appear in list, enter name:

...

If flow through, select Originating/Prime Sponsor:

[No Title] ...

8.0 * Is this a Federal Grant?

☐ Yes ☐ No [Clear](#)

9.0 * Proposed Start Date:

...

10.0 Type of Application:

☒ New

☐ Resubmission

☐ Renewal

☐ Continuation

☐ Revision (including supplements)

☐ Pre-proposal

[Clear](#)

11.0 Identify Subrecipient Organizations:

...

Organization

There are no items to display

If Subrecipient does not appear in list, enter name(s):

...

12.0 Identify any third party organizations (unpaid collaborators, provider of third party cost sharing, or other materials) involved in the project:

...

Organization

There are no items to display

If third party does not appear in list, enter name(s):

...

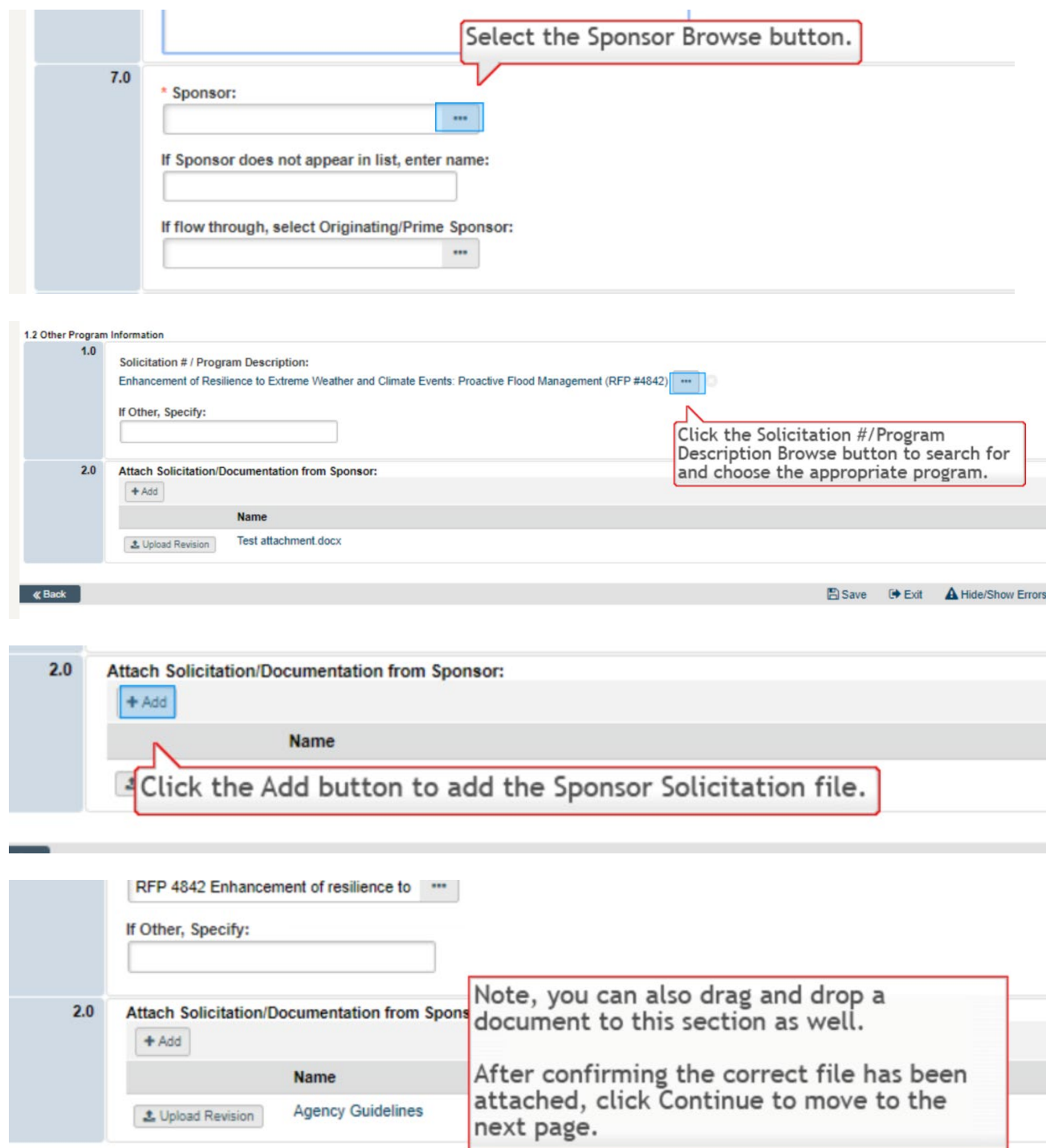
13.0 Provide any additional information that would be useful for this review (e.g., deadline time):

...

Continue through the SmartForm, selecting the applicable project and application information. Use the lookup/search buttons when UFIRST requires you to select a value from an institutional list.

5. Sponsor & Opportunity Information (Slide 6)

Search for and select the sponsor. When applicable, identify the funding opportunity or sponsor solicitation associated with the proposal. If you cannot locate the correct sponsor or opportunity, contact your RA rather than selecting an unrelated option.



7.0

*** Sponsor:**

If Sponsor does not appear in list, enter name:

If flow through, select Originating/Prime Sponsor:

1.2 Other Program Information

1.0

Solicitation # / Program Description:

Enhancement of Resilience to Extreme Weather and Climate Events: Proactive Flood Management (RFP #4842) ***

If Other, Specify:

2.0

Attach Solicitation/Documentation from Sponsor:

+ Add

Name
Test attachment.docx

Upload Revision

← Back Save Exit Hide/Show Errors

2.0

Attach Solicitation/Documentation from Sponsor:

+ Add

Name

Click the Add button to add the Sponsor Solicitation file.

RFP 4842 Enhancement of resilience to ***

If Other, Specify:

2.0

Attach Solicitation/Documentation from Sponsor:

+ Add

Name
Agency Guidelines

Upload Revision

Note, you can also drag and drop a document to this section as well.

After confirming the correct file has been attached, click Continue to move to the next page.

6. Proposal Team & Project Details (Slide 7)

Add the PI/project team information requested by the SmartForm and complete the remaining initial project questions. Some responses may trigger additional questions or requirements.

1.0
Select UF Personnel:

+ Add

Name	Key / Other Significant
Click the Add button to add key personnel.	yes

2.0
Identify all non-UF Key Personnel:

+ Add

Name	Organization
Click the Add button to add non-UF Personnel.	ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

3.0
In addition to key personnel, select individuals who can EDIT this proposal:

3.0 Proposal Descriptors

1.0
Indicate if each of the following is involved in this project:

* Human subjects including human data or tissue or collection of data through surveys:
☐ Yes ☒ No [Clear](#)

Not Yet Applied For: ☒

* Is this work an NIH-defined clinical trial or prospective observational clinical research?
☐ Yes ☒ No [Clear](#)

* Live Vertebrate Animals:
☐ Yes ☒ No [Clear](#)

* Does the proposed research fall within the scope of, or is it impacted by, current U.S. government policies, regulations, and laws on dual-use research of concern, gain-of-function research, or research involving pathogens with enhanced pandemic potential?
☐ Yes ☒ No [Clear](#)

2.0
Is this proposal being considered for funding through a peer reviewed process?
☒ Yes ☐ No [Clear](#)

3.0
Do you plan to do any of the following?

* A. Travel or send anyone working on this project to a location outside the US for more than 2 weeks in any one visit or more than 1 month over a 12 month period?
☐ Yes ☒ No [Clear](#)

* B. Establish any relationships with foreign entities, individuals, or consultants; or have any of the work executed by a foreign entity, individual or consultant?
☐ Yes ☒ No [Clear](#)

* C. Pay non-UF personnel salaries, wages, or any other compensation (including goods) for any work performed or engagement in activities outside the US? This includes field workers, research assistants, government representatives, participant payments, translators, drivers, or any other laborers.
☐ Yes ☒ No [Clear](#)

* D. Transfer, ship, or pack in personal luggage for transfer out of the US any data, items, supplies, equipment, or materials purchased by UF or sponsored projects' funds?
☐ Yes ☒ No [Clear](#)

* E. Perform any other activities not identified above outside the US or engage with any other entity, individual, or consultant outside the US? This does NOT include conference attendance.
☐ Yes ☒ No [Clear](#)

2.0
Budget Periods

Customize Period End Dates ☐

Date Project Starts: 6/1/2020

Date Project Ends: 5/31/2025

Project Length (Years): 5

UFIRST automatically populates to a 5-year budget. Years can be adjusted if needed.

Click to Continue

row	Period Number	Period Name	Duration (Months)	Start	End	
1	1	Period 1	12	6/1/2020	5/31/2021	
2	2	Period 2	12	6/1/2021	5/31/2022	
3	3	Period 3	12	6/1/2022	5/31/2023	
4	4	Period 4	12	6/1/2023	5/31/2024	
5	5	Period 5	12	6/1/2024	5/31/2025	Remove

TIP: COMPLETE THE INFORMATION YOU KNOW

Your RA can assist with questions or corrections after the proposal is created. You do not need to become a UFIRST expert to get started.

7. Save, Finish & Find the Proposal Number (Slide 8)

Once the proposal number is created, you and your RA can begin working together to develop the proposal.

Further instructions:

Click "Finish" to return to the proposal workspace. Click the "Access Budget Workspace" button to enter budget information.

« Back Save Exit Hide/Show Errors Print Jump To ▼ Finish

When finished with the proposal, click the Finish button.

NEXT STEP

Once the proposal is created, UFIRST assigns a proposal number.

Send your UFIRST proposal number to your assigned RA & Financial Advisor so they can begin reviewing and assisting with the proposal.

8. Working With Your RA (Slide 9)

Your RA becomes your primary administrative partner for proposal development. You and your RA will work together to develop and complete the proposal for institutional review and sponsor submission.

YOUR RA CAN HELP WITH	THE PI REMAINS RESPONSIBLE FOR
Budget development, sponsor requirements, and completing required templates and forms.	Scientific/project content and final review of proposal information.
Coordinating and collecting required proposal documents from the PI, project team, subaward institutions, and other external collaborators.	Timely responses to questions and requests for information.
Reviewing proposal information and assisting with sponsor and UF requirements.	Required certifications, disclosures, and training.
Routing the proposal, obtaining required approvals, and coordinating with the appropriate department, college, and central offices.	Providing required project information and documentation by applicable deadlines and completing any required ad hoc approval templates.

The PI is responsible for providing requested project information and documents and for helping ensure project team members and collaborators provide required information when needed. The RA can assist with coordinating requests and follow-up.

9. Special Situations (Slide 10)

PRE-PROPOSAL / LOI GUIDANCE

Some letters of intent (LOIs), white papers, and pre-proposals require UFIRST routing. **Check UF Research guidance before submitting anything directly to a sponsor.** The guidance will help determine whether the submission must be routed through UFIRST or whether it may be submitted directly to the sponsor

LINK: [Pre-Proposals, Letters of Intent & White Papers - UF Research](#)

LIMITED SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

A limited submission is a funding opportunity in which the sponsor limits the number of applications an institution may submit. These opportunities may require an **internal UF selection process before the sponsor proposal can be submitted.** Check the guidance before submitting directly to a sponsor.

Link: [Limited Submission Programs - UF Research](#)

When in doubt, contact your assigned RA / Proposal & Financial Advisor before submitting anything directly to a sponsor.

10. Practice & Resources (Slide 11)

Use these resources when starting a proposal or when you need a refresher:

UF Integrated Research Support Tool (UFIRST): [UF | Research UFIRST](#)

UFIRST PRACTICE OPTIONS:

There are two ways to practice using UFIRST without working in the live system:

[UFIRST Proposal Simulation](#) – Guided Practice

Use the guided simulation to practice creating a proposal step-by-step. The simulation prompts you to enter specific practice information as you move through the proposal process.

[UFIRST Training Environment \(QAT\)](#) – Open Practice

Use the QAT training environment to explore UFIRST and practice with your own test information without working in the live system. QAT can be used to create test proposals, budgets, agreements, awards, and subawards.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Use these resources when starting or developing a proposal.

- [Pre-Proposal / LOI Guidance](#)
- [Limited Submission Guidance](#)
- [DCP Research Pre-Award Quick Guide](#)
- [Frequently Used Facts | UF Research](#)
- [DCP Tools Website](#)
 - [Deadline Calculator](#)
 - [Proposal Process Diagram](#)
 - [Review & Approval Workflow](#)
 - [Level 1 & Level 2 Approvers](#)
 - [DCP Templates & Cheat Sheets](#) *(available on the DCP Tools Website)*

IMPORTANT: Don't wait until you're ready to submit to create the UFIRST proposal. You do not need a completed proposal to start UFIRST. Create the UFIRST record early so your RA can begin assisting with the budget, requirements, ad hoc approvals, proposal preparation.

QUESTIONS?

Start with your assigned RA / Proposal & Financial Advisor. Your RA is your primary unit administrative contact and will coordinate with the appropriate central office when needed.

Quick Reference: Faculty UFIRST Workflow

1. Identify the opportunity and have the sponsor guidelines/deadline available.	6. Send the UFIRST proposal number and sponsor guidelines to your assigned RA & Financial Advisor and complete any certifications/disclosures/training.
2. Check whether pre-proposal/LOI or limited-submission requirements apply.	7. Work with your RA to develop and finalize the proposal, including the budget, required documents, sponsor requirements, and other proposal components.

3. Start a new proposal in UFIRST and complete the initial SmartForm information	8. Confirm with your RA whether any additional internal ad hoc approvals are required. Complete the applicable ad hoc templates so required approvals can be obtained before submitting the proposal in UFIRST.
4. Add sponsor/opportunity, proposal team, and initial project details.	9. Once the proposal is finalized and required ad hoc approvals are obtained, submit the proposal in UFIRST. Your RA will assist with routing and obtaining the required department and college approvals before the proposal moves to DSP.
5. Save/finish the initial setup and locate the UFIRST proposal number.	10. DSP completes the institutional review and approval. Once approved, DSP or the PI submits the proposal to the sponsor, as applicable

Remember: the PI remains responsible for scientific/project content, timely responses and providing required information & documentation to the RA and final review of their proposal information.