

FIRST Membership Process for Individual Members

Version 2.1, July 2026



1. Overview

The following is a detailed process of becoming a FIRST Individual Member (individuals only).

As part of acquiring individual membership, one Sponsor team is needed to support the Individual Member candidate seeking to join FIRST. This document describes the application and sponsoring process. The end goal of this process is to become a member and walk the candidate through the process.

2. Application and Sponsoring Process

The process is composed of 10 steps with a global estimated duration of 2 months but may be shorter.

Please note that:

- Individual Member is an individual membership and access/benefits only apply to that individual.
- An Individual Member can change companies/hosts and the membership remains with the individual.
- Throughout the process, the Sponsor is strongly advised to interact with the Candidate as needed and provide support.
- If additional guidance or technical support with the FIRST portal is needed, the Sponsor can contact the FIRST Secretariat, for further advice.
- A Candidate can change Sponsors at any time.

Step 1: An individual wishes to become a FIRST Individual Member and requests a full (team) member submit a nomination form and letter of support.

It is the Individual Member's responsibility to find a sponsoring team. The Candidate may review the list of current teams to find a sponsor. It is recommended that Candidate reach out to teams they have worked with or who are in their industry/region. The sponsor may be a former team if the Candidate has moved on from that company. If a Candidate needs a sponsor – they may consider attending a FIRST event or joining a FIRST SIG to network and meet potential sponsors.

Step 2: Sponsor fills out the Individual Member Nomination Form

The sponsor will start the online process by completing the Individual Member Nomination Form which includes their letter of support (on [FIRST Portal > Membership Application](#)). Sponsors have the option to highlight any potentially questionable issues.

Once the sponsor nomination is accepted, the Sponsor and the Individual Member Candidate will receive an e-mail with instructions for the next step. The Candidate will be requested to create a profile for FIRST Portal.

Step 3: The Individual Member Candidates complete and submits the Application Form

All required fields of the Member Application Form should be completed. The application statement in the form replaces the need for a separate application letter from the candidate. The statement should include the reasons they want to join FIRST and the benefits they intend to bring to the FIRST community. They share this with their sponsor team.

Information provided in the application form will be used to update the Individual Member profile in the FIRST Portal. By applying to FIRST, the candidate agrees to review this information annually for accuracy and provide regular updates.

Step 4: All materials are submitted for review

Candidate confirms the letter is uploaded on the FIRST portal and then submits the Application Form. This is the final step from the Candidate and the Sponsor.

Step 5: Candidacy compliance check by the FIRST Secretariat

The Secretariat checks the submitted Application Form monthly on completeness and validity of the Application package. If necessary, interaction with Candidate and Sponsor is activated. Once all is in order, the application is passed on to the Membership Committee for review.

Step 6: Membership Committee review

The MC reviews the application. Once the MC is confident to move forward, it recommends the FIRST Secretariat to accept the application. In case of issues with any component of the Application, the MC provides detailed feedback. In case of an issue, go to step 8.

Step 7: Review by Membership and Board

The FIRST Secretariat submits the application (including the MC recommendation) to the FIRST teams mailing list. If no issue is raised, FIRST Secretariat submits the application to the Board. In case of an issue, go to step 8.

Step 8: Application feedback and reapplication (if needed)

If any issues or objections are identified during the application process, the FIRST Secretariat takes this back to the Candidate and the Sponsor for resolution. In case Candidate and Sponsors fail to solve issues/objections, the application gets rejected, and Candidate and Sponsor are formally informed thereof. Rejected applicants have the right to re-apply, after they can convincingly explain to the FIRST Secretariat, together with their Sponsor, that the situation has changed enough to warrant a new application. If needed, the Secretariat will consult with the FIRST Membership Committee.

Step 9: FIRST Board votes on application

Once everything has been successfully validated, the Board votes on approval of the Candidate's application, and this is duly noted in the minutes. If approved, proceed to step 10.

Step 10: Notification

FIRST Secretariat notifies the Candidate and the Sponsor of the approval and sends the "Welcome Package" to the new member. All members are notified of the success of the Application. The new member is invoiced for annual dues at the start of the following month.