



# Empowering Young Innovators

FIRST® SUPPORTER GUIDEBOOK





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# Introduction

## Purpose, Vision, and Mission

Our organizational statements are more than words on a page; they encapsulate our promise to build a thriving global robotics community and to remain at the very forefront of STEM education.

### PURPOSE

*FIRST*® exists to prepare the young people of today for the world of tomorrow.

### VISION

To transform our culture by creating a world where science and technology are celebrated and where young people dream of becoming science and technology leaders.

### MISSION

The mission of *FIRST* is to provide life-changing robotics programs that give young people the skills, confidence, and resilience to build a better world.

## *FIRST*® Is More Than Robots®

Together, we inspire young people to be science and technology leaders and innovators, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering, and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership.

## History

Founded in 1989 by inventor Dean Kamen, *FIRST* (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) is a global nonprofit (501(c)(3)) organization that prepares young people for the future through a suite of inclusive, team-based robotics programs for ages 5-18 (K-12). Our programs are suitable for schools or structured after-school activities and receive support from a vast network of volunteers, educators, and sponsor/donors, including over 200 *Fortune* 500 companies.

*“FIRST® is More Than Robots. The robots are a vehicle for students to learn important life skills. Kids often come in not knowing what to expect – of the program nor of themselves. They leave, even after the FIRST season, with a vision, with confidence, and with a sense that they can create their own future.”* – Dean Kamen

# A *FIRST* Supporter Is...

A *FIRST* Supporter is an organization who helps *FIRST* achieve our strategic priorities. *FIRST* Supporters come in many forms: corporate sponsors, non-profits with complimentary missions, universities making available scholarships to *FIRST* participants, and more. *FIRST* Supporters provide resources, opportunities, and access that support our mission. This guidebook has been created to help you identify ways to engage and support *FIRST* in ways that benefit us and you.

As a *FIRST* Supporter, you aim to increase the visibility of *FIRST* and provide valuable resources. You have a significant impact on the community by creating more teams, engaging more mentors, and reaching out to more students.

## *FIRST* Supporters help:

- Expand participation by engaging your current and future workforce.
- Support and promote *FIRST* alumni activities.
- Invest in and give back to communities worldwide.
- Grow awareness of the *FIRST* worldwide community (brand recognition piece).
- Provide volunteers, coaches, and mentors.
- Provide *FIRST* Scholarships, fundraise, or become sustaining donors.

This guidebook provides resources and strategies for *FIRST* Supporters to engage with *FIRST* and receive the benefits that you need to continue supporting *FIRST* for years to come.

## As *FIRST* Supporter, you:

- Gain access to bright, innovative students and opportunities for workforce development and recruitment.
- Are provided with exhibit opportunities at *FIRST* events worldwide.
- Gain access to *FIRST* communities and networks across the globe.
- Can receive recognition in *FIRST* media outlets (newsletter, blog, social media).
- Receive assistance in creating grants or scholarships exclusive to *FIRST* participants and alumni.

*FIRST* is actively engaged in working with our supporters to develop strategies, collaborations, grants, scholarships, and initiatives that remove barriers and ensure greater access to STEM for all youth.

“Qualcomm has supported *FIRST* for the last two decades because we know passion for invention starts at a young age, and today we have many *FIRST* alumni driving innovation at our company. We have been excited to see the creative ways students design and build robots to solve the season challenges, and we are proud to support them.”

– Angela Baker, vice president and chief sustainability officer, Qualcomm Incorporated





# Engaging Your Current and Future Workforce

## Connect with the *FIRST* Community

### ASK ABOUT *FIRST* PARTICIPATION ON INTERNSHIP AND JOB APPLICATIONS

- The easiest way to understand who is at the cross-section of your organization and *FIRST* is by asking about *FIRST* involvement on job applications.

### ATTEND *FIRST* EVENTS

- Participate in exhibitor opportunities within *FIRST* events, and gear exhibits toward pipeline development; have high school students fill out pre-interest cards with university talent management and connect alumni, volunteers and others directly with talent acquisition. This allows the company to meet students in person, share information about job opportunities, and collect resumes.

### HOST INFORMATION SESSIONS AND WORKSHOPS

- Develop in-person or virtual sessions to present the company's culture, career paths, and open positions. Offering workshops on resume writing or interview preparation can also help build a relationship with students.

### OFFER *FIRST* SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- Establish a scholarship program. This can increase brand recognition and attract students who are aware of the company's support for the institution, and as a *FIRST* Scholarship Provider, you'll gain access to valuable benefits and opportunities.

### OFFER INTERNSHIPS OR CO-OP PROGRAMS

- Create internships, co-op programs, or project-based learning opportunities specifically for students from *FIRST*. This helps build a talent pipeline and provides students with firsthand experience in the company.

### ENGAGE WITH *FIRST* ALUMNI GROUPS

- Offer opportunities and events to engage *FIRST* Alumni Groups. This can increase visibility among students in relevant fields.

### ALUMNI AMBASSADORS

- Involve alumni who work at the organization in recruitment efforts. They can participate in networking events, speak at panels, or serve as mentors, which helps students see a clear pathway from college to the company.

## Show Up, Stand Out, and Spark Interest

The best way to connect with your future workforce is to get in front of them. What better way than to support a local event? Whether you are an exhibitor, volunteer, spectator, or mentor at a *FIRST* event, here are some tips to engage high school students in learning more about your organization.

### CONNECT LOCALLY

- Provide pamphlets and giveaway items.
- Work with Program Delivery Partners to request a table at [local events](#).

### PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

- Offer giveaways such as buttons and pens. Consider posting informational flyers about your organization around the event venue – and this is a really good opportunity to talk with parents and students about your scholarship!

### PROMOTE ACTIVITY

- Promote *FIRST* alumni engagement via media outlets, newsletters, blogs. Engage *FIRST* in the development for strategic co-branding opportunities and tag *FIRST* accounts in promotions on social media.

### GET NOTICED

- Be sure to wear branded apparel and pins/buttons. This way *FIRST* participants can easily discover you (TIP: it makes for a good, branded photo opportunity)!

*"FIRST provided me with a robust foundation I have relied on throughout my career across the private and public sectors. The foundation of invaluable skills includes teamwork, leadership, public speaking, stakeholder management, and more."*

– Shrey Majmudar, *FIRST* Alum





## Engaging with *FIRST* Alumni

*FIRST* alumni are professionals and emerging leaders who have participated in *FIRST* programs and have graduated from high school. They're known for their hands-on technical skills, problem-solving mindset, and strong teamwork and leadership experience. These individuals leave *FIRST* with real-world experience in engineering, coding, project management, and communication - making them workforce-ready and deeply aligned with innovation-driven industries. Organizations that engage *FIRST* alumni tap into a passionate, purpose-driven talent pool that's already trained to think creatively, collaborate effectively, and tackle big challenges.

### CONNECT LOCALLY

- Reach out to local *FIRST* alumni group. These groups consist of *FIRST* alumni and other young folks who are engaged with and committed to the mission of *FIRST*.

### UTILIZE ALLIANCES

- Collaborate with *FIRST* alliances within your region.

### PROMOTE THE MISSION

- Work with other collegiate groups and organizations to promote the mission of *FIRST*.

### SHARE EXPERIENCES

- Alumni can promote their presence on campuses and within your organizations by attending career fairs, giving presentations, and sharing their positive experiences.







# Invest In and Give Back to Communities Worldwide

Giving to *FIRST* is an investment in our future innovators and leaders. An extensive network of *Fortune* 500 corporations, educational and professional institutions, foundations, and individuals support *FIRST*. Through the resources they provide, our supporters are helping *FIRST* inspire young people to become the next generation of science, technology, engineering, and math professionals.

## Sponsoring

### OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE

- Financial sponsorship of programs and strategic initiatives.
- In-kind donations of parts, equipment, and facilities.
- *FIRST* Team participation grants.
- Cause marketing.

*FIRST* Corporate Sponsors come from industries of all shapes and sizes. All of our sponsors are critical to building our programs, and we are grateful to each one for their unique contributions. Visit the [Ways To Help](#) page on our website for more information.

“Our longstanding partnership with *FIRST* reflects our commitment to fostering the next generation of our industry’s dreamers, planners, and doers. Through *FIRST*, these students are gaining the essential experiences and skills to solve our world’s biggest challenges and create a better tomorrow.”

– Tom Arseneault, president and CEO, BAE Systems, Inc.

## Volunteering

Volunteering with *FIRST* is a great learning experience for all! The *FIRST* experience increases your skills in both technical and non-technical fields and can help expand your professional and social network. You may even meet your future workforce!

### MENTORING A *FIRST* TEAM

- As a mentor or coach for a local *FIRST* team, you are helping to build the next generation of leaders. Time commitment varies from team to team, but you would be working with *FIRST* participants to build both technical and non-technical skills and, more importantly, their sense of belonging and self-confidence. You will also build your network by working with other industry mentors, college mentors, and teachers.
- Review the [FIRST Contacts](#) section of this guidebook to learn how to connect with a local team and begin your mentorship journey!
- [Learn more about mentorship roles on the FIRST website.](#)

### VOLUNTEER AT *FIRST* EVENTS

- Every *FIRST* event is made possible through the support of event volunteers. There are various technical and non-technical event volunteer roles available for every level of *FIRST*, regardless of event status of being in-person, hybrid, or remote. Volunteers will work alongside people who are passionate about the mission of *FIRST*.



## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN *FIRST* PROGRAMS

- [\*FIRST\*® LEGO® League](#) introduces STEM through fun, exciting hands-on learning. Participants gain real-world problem-solving experiences through a guided, global robotics program using LEGO® technology, helping today's students, families, and educators build a better future together. *FIRST* LEGO League inspires youth to experiment and grow their critical thinking, coding, and design skills and showcase what they learned.
- [\*FIRST\*® Tech Challenge](#) students work together with their mentors to design and build robots to compete in a dynamic and exciting challenge released every September. Teams program classroom-scale robots to follow autonomous commands before student drivers take control in two-on-two matches. On and off the field, students develop STEM skills, engage in community outreach, practice engineering innovation, and build confidence to help them succeed.
- [\*FIRST\* Robotics Competition](#) welcomes all skill levels, technical or non-technical. *FIRST* Robotics Competition gives high school students and their adult mentors the opportunity to work and create together to solve a common problem, supported by the global *FIRST* community. They compete on a themed field as part of a three-team alliance in the spirit of *Coopertition*®. In 360-degree learning guided by adult mentors, each *FIRST* Robotics Competition team also creates a team identity, raises funds to meet its goals, and advances appreciation for STEM in its community.

## VOLUNTEER RESOURCES

- [\*FIRST\* Volunteer Registration User Guide](#) – This provides step-by-step instructions on finding and registering to volunteer at a *FIRST* event.
- Reach out to [volunteer@firstinspires.org](mailto:volunteer@firstinspires.org) for more information.

## Post-Secondary Scholarships

Creating post-secondary scholarship opportunities specifically for *FIRST* participants and alumni is a great way to engage the pipeline of young talent who *FIRST* cultivates.

### PROMOTE VIRTUALLY

- Ensure your organization's [\*FIRST\* scholarship](#) is listed on *FIRST* scholarship opportunities.
- As applicable, coordinate within your network to share information about the scholarship your organization is offering.

### PROMOTE LOCALLY

- Work with local [\*FIRST\* Senior Mentors](#) (FSMs), [\*Regional Directors\*](#) (RDs), and [\*Program Delivery Partners\*](#) (PDPs) to share your scholarship with nearby teams.
- Share the scholarship opportunity via email and approved media channels to encourage team applications.

### PROMOTE IN-PERSON

- Partner with your [\*local FIRST alumni groups\*](#) to advertise the scholarship.
- Work with a [\*local Program Delivery Partner\*](#) (PDP) to acquire a table at a *FIRST* event.
- Plan visits to [\*local team locations\*](#) and discuss your involvement with *FIRST* and your organization's scholarship opportunity.

“My mentors are my heroes. I did not know it then, but I definitely know it now. I know the world to be a challenging place, and I’m glad my mentors took the time to teach me how to fish, instead of fishing for me.” – Connor Tinker, *FIRST* alum, volunteer, and mentor



## Fundraising for *FIRST*

Your organization's monetary and in-kind support helps *FIRST* empower more kids to be young leaders and innovators and will help make hands-on STEM programs more widely available to underserved students locally, nationally, and even around the world!

If your organization is hosting a philanthropic event specifically for *FIRST*, all proceeds should go towards local *FIRST* partners if possible. Consider the following avenues to channel your monetary proceeds:

### LOCAL *FIRST* ALUMNI COLLEGIATE GROUP

- These structured groups consist of [\*FIRST\* alum](#) who remain engaged with and committed to the mission of *FIRST*.

### *FIRST* TEAM AND EVENT SEARCH

- Consider channeling your funds to a [local \*FIRST\* team](#), which effectively will make your organization a sponsor of that team.

### REGIONAL OR DISTRICT PARTNER

- Connect with [your region's program delivery partners](#) (PDPs) and [regional directors](#) (RDs) to channel funds toward the regional organization.

### INCREASE YOUR IMPACT WITH MATCHING GIFTS

- Many employers will match your volunteer hours and/or monetary donations with double or even triple cash contributions to eligible nonprofit organizations like *FIRST*. Check to see if your employer has a [matching gift program](#) and how you can direct those funds to support the *FIRST* mission.

## Join our Community of Sustaining Donors

Supporters like you are the secret sauce helping to make *FIRST* programs more widely accessible. Together, we are inspiring more students to gain hands-on STEM experiences and reach their full potential.

Did you know that you can inspire a generation of innovators as a monthly donor? Your support will make a big impact in helping students access resources, mentorship, and opportunities to learn and build esteem with STEM skills. Become a monthly donor and we will send you exclusive *FIRST* swag to wear with pride.

[Join the movement today.](#)







# Brand Recognition

## Resources to Amplify your Support of *FIRST*

### SEASONAL SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

Download the [seasonal social media toolkit](#) as well as seasonal assets.

### TRADEMARKS AND COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

Members of the *FIRST* community must use the *FIRST* name, program names, and logo artwork provided by *FIRST*, without modification, and only in accordance with the “[Policy on the Use of \*FIRST\* Trademarks and Copyrighted Materials \(including \*FIRST\* and the LEGO Group Intellectual Property\)](#).”

Commercial entities that support *FIRST* or its teams may use the logos to accurately identify themselves as sponsors; however, the logos may not be used to promote or sell goods or services. All logo use must include appropriate sponsor attribution and the required trademark and copyright statements. See the example below for how to include proper attribution.

#### EXAMPLE

*FIRST*® and the *FIRST* logo® are registered trademarks of For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (*FIRST*®). LEGO® is a trademark of the LEGO Group. ©2025 <\*\*\* Insert Commercial Name \*\*\*>.

### BRANDING & DESIGN STANDARDS

You can find the [FIRST logos](#) in multiple formats, [FIRST Branding & Design Standards](#), as well as the full Policy detailing permissions for teams and other user groups on our website. Also refer to any agreement you have with *FIRST* to determine your approved use of *FIRST* Intellectual Property.

#### Members of the *FIRST* community may not:

- Use *FIRST* or LEGO Intellectual Property unless specifically permitted under these Guidelines or other applicable guidelines.
- Alter, animate, or distort the trademarks or combine them with any other symbols, words, images, or designs.
- Use *FIRST* or LEGO trademarks on promotional merchandise that they are selling (such as t-shirts, magnets, etc.) except as allowed per the “Policy on the Use of *FIRST* Trademarks and Copyrighted Materials (including *FIRST* and the LEGO Group Intellectual Property).”
- Use the trademarks in any way that is contrary to these Guidelines.

#### FIRST LOGO CORRECT USAGE



**DO** utilize the full-color version of the *FIRST* logos when possible.



**DO** utilize the full-color reverse version of the *FIRST* logos on black or dark backgrounds.



**DO** utilize the one-color reverse version of the *FIRST* logos on the *FIRST* background colors or on a dark background when a one-color reverse version is necessary.

#### INCORRECT USAGE



**DO NOT** alter the logo in any way – including the icon and font. Logo files must be used as is.



**DO NOT** create your own logo or add anything to the logo, such as your organization's name, or any graphic elements.



**DO NOT** distort or skew the logo by adjusting the x or y axis independently. Always scale the logo proportionally.





# Contacts

It is important to build and sustain relationships with local, regional, and national contacts to aid in your engagement with *FIRST* and expand participation. This section provides a variety of ways to connect with regional partners, global supporters, *FIRST* staff, and teams.

- **Program Delivery Partners (PDPs) and Program Delivery Organizations (PDOs)**
  - These individuals are affiliated with a specific geographic area and work to create and maintain volunteer-driven, self-sustaining, and growing *FIRST* programs. In most areas, there is a Program Delivery Partner (PDP) for every level of *FIRST*. Working with local Program Delivery Partners will allow your organization to locate and connect with other *FIRST* teams, participating area schools, and local *FIRST*-friendly businesses.
- **FIRST Senior Mentors**
  - These individuals form a group of skilled technical and non-technical individuals who focus on recruiting, supporting, and expanding *FIRST* programs. Most *FIRST* Senior Mentors have a long-standing relationship with *FIRST* as team mentors, coaches or event volunteers and are recruited through a nomination process.
- **FIRST Alumni Groups**
  - These structured groups consist of *FIRST* alumni who remain engaged with and committed to the mission of *FIRST*. *FIRST* Alumni groups exist within *FIRST* Regions as well as on college campuses as student groups.
- **FIRST Alliances**
  - *FIRST* Alliances are not-for-profit partners who can help *FIRST* achieve our strategic priorities in unique people-powered ways. They provide resources, opportunities, and access that support our mission. *FIRST* Alliance Partners can provide support in a variety of ways.
- **FIRST Scholarship Providers**
  - *FIRST* Scholarship Providers are organizations that make scholarships available to *FIRST* participants and alumni.
- **FIRST Sponsors**
  - Companies around the world provide generous financial support, donate thousands of employee volunteer hours and significant in-kind donations to make *FIRST* programs possible.
- **FIRST Headquarters Contacts**
  - Vice President of Alumni Relations, Alliances, Development, and Events: Mark Giordono, [mgiordono@firstinspires.org](mailto:mgiordono@firstinspires.org)
  - Manager, Corporation, Foundation & Alliance Relations: Jacquelyn Higgins, [jhiggins@firstinspires.org](mailto:jhiggins@firstinspires.org)
  - Director of Alumni Relations: Michelle Long, [mlong@firstinspires.org](mailto:mlong@firstinspires.org)
- **FIRST Team and Event Search**
  - Utilize the official team and event search tool from *FIRST* to connect with local teams and find virtual and in-person events.
- **FIRST Map**
  - An interactive map of *FIRST* Robotics Competition teams and events can be found on this website created by a member of the *FIRST* community. Click the “?” button on the top right corner to view help and the map legend.
- **FIRST Community Blog**
  - This blog is your source for inspiration and updates about *FIRST* programs and our global robotics community.





200 Bedford Street, Manchester, NH 03101 | 800.871.8326 | [www.firstinspires.org](http://www.firstinspires.org)

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