

## **UFIRST: University of Florida Integrated Research Tool Executive Summary**

The Office of Research is leading a major project to review and significantly improve the way this office and other central university resources perform and support the business of sponsored research administration across the entire campus. The vision behind this effort is to provide faculty and staff with coordinated and enhanced support in the business of securing and managing sponsored projects. This effort seeks to identify and replace business practices that are inefficient and ineffective. The objective will be to improve systems and processes, as well as assign resources to important and supportive functions.

The ultimate goal is to create a new integrated system, designated as the University of Florida Integrated Research Support Tool (UFIRST), that will redefine research administration processes throughout the proposal and award lifecycle at the University of Florida to efficiently and compliantly route proposals and related documents, collect information, present information to stakeholders for approval, and provide user-friendly systems for tracking and reporting pertinent information.

To fulfill this goal, we have enlisted the assistance of 15 research administrative staff from throughout campus to serve as representatives of and liaisons to their units. Their input and feedback will support us in developing process improvements and system requirements that meet the business needs of units both large and small. By the end of the summer, this team will have laid the groundwork for the Office of Research to begin to identify systems or tools that will best facilitate this strategic vision.

### ***Project Objectives***

The overall business review and subsequent technology necessary to implement must ultimately result in:

- Identification and application of best practices through stakeholder engagement to facilitate time savings and create capacity for growth.
- Intuitive web-based self-service application that is configured to facilitate best practices. Like Amazon.com, a broader user base need not be trained to be effective in using intuitive technology.
- Business intelligence tools to facilitate dashboard and point in time access to critical information. Additional reporting needs facilitated through user friendly reporting, extraction and analysis tools.
- Improved integration and interfaces with other systems, specifically compliance systems
- Optimized use of advanced technology with the understanding that meeting needs years in to the future must be considered now.

### ***Timeline***

Demonstrations of peer processes have already begun. The requirements collection and business process redefinition sessions with the core team will stretch from mid-July through mid-August. Faculty forums and larger town hall sessions will be held in August with a proposed set of redefined processes available

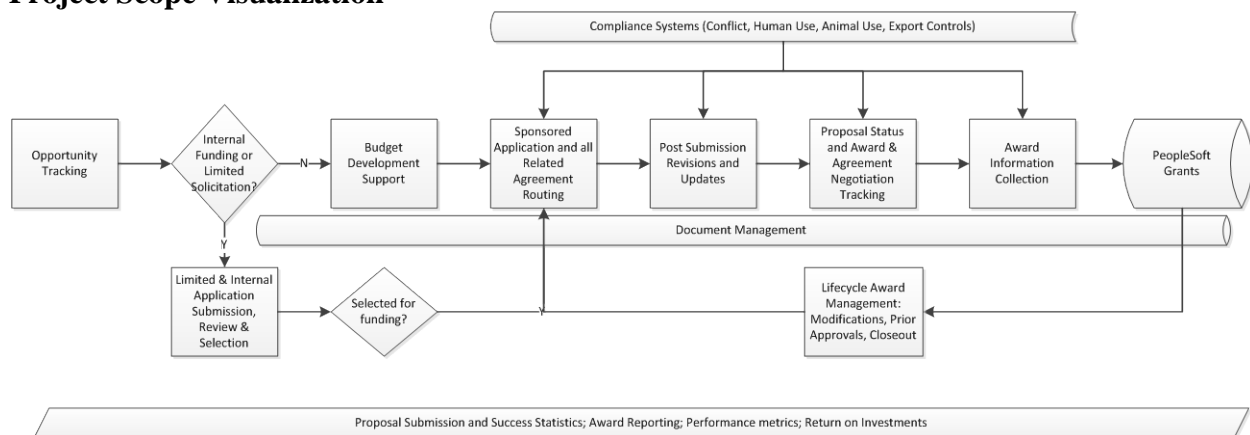
for approval by the Executive Sponsors mid-September. A review of current systems capability to meet those requirements is scheduled to be completed mid-October.

## Scope

The scope of the process review and requirements gathering will be broader than any undertaken at the University. The end-to-end needs of the research enterprise will be considered. Those include:

- Development of sponsored program budgets
- Routing of internal & limited applications as well as applications and agreements for external support
- Collection of post-submission documentation, revisions, and updates such as National Institutes of Health Just-In-Time requests and National Science Foundation revised budgets
- Tracking of proposal status and agreement or award negotiations
- Collection of award information (including obligated funding, effort commitments and award conditions)
- Document management, sharing and security requirements
- Integration of award and project data into PeopleSoft Financials
- Interfaces with compliance data systems
- Reporting requirements
- Security requirements

## Project Scope Visualization



A website with project details, timeline and access to all project documents is available at: [http://www.research.ufl.edu/faculty\\_and\\_staff/initiatives/ufirst.html](http://www.research.ufl.edu/faculty_and_staff/initiatives/ufirst.html). If you have any questions or concerns, please email [UFIRST@research.ufl.edu](mailto:UFIRST@research.ufl.edu).