

ATTACHMENT B: SERVICE FIRST FUND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

SERVICE FIRST BACKGROUND

Service First authority provides the legal authority for all offices and bureaus in both the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to collaborate to improve mission and drive key priorities through better customer service, improved natural resource stewardship, and incentives for improved program delivery and cost avoidance, and to address administrative barriers to accomplishing these objectives.

The overall goal of Service First is to enable DOI bureaus working together and/or with USDA to pool resources to design, develop, and implement joint projects that will provide a greater benefit to citizens and resources than any individual bureau could achieve. Specific goals of Service First, as articulated by the Service First Leadership Team in 2010, include.

1. To enhance each bureau's ability to meet its mission.
2. To increase our collective capacity to manage Federal resources on a landscape basis.
3. To overcome institutional barriers that hinder interagency programs and initiatives.
4. To improve constituent and customer service and resource management through streamlined processes, increased efficiencies, and use of emerging technologies.

The Service First statute authorizes DOI and USDA to form and promote partnerships across boundaries to develop joint solutions to common problems and to address Federal issues in an integrated way. Service First authority allows all Interior bureaus and offices and USDA agencies and offices to conduct projects, planning, permitting, leasing, contracting and other activities, either jointly or on behalf of one another; co-locate in Federal offices and facilities leased by an agency of either Department; and promulgate special rules to test the feasibility of issuing unified permits, applications and leases.

Additional information about Service First, including project examples and details on the legal authority and governing documents, is available at <http://www.fs.fed.us/servicefirst/>.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE FIRST FUND

The Department of the Interior is providing funding, through a competitive process, to DOI bureaus and offices for projects that demonstrate the value of investments in Service First and support the Secretary's policy and management goals. The Service First Fund will provide seed funding up to \$500,000 to bureaus and offices to help plan and launch projects that achieve Service First objectives. We hope both field offices and Washington, D.C., offices will take advantage of this funding opportunity to advance collaboration at the local and national level. Projects supported by the Service First Fund will use funding to maximize sharing of resources

across bureaus and offices to leverage partnerships to improve operational effectiveness and efficiency, invest in opportunities to achieve current or future savings while maintaining a high level of mission delivery, and support colocation to integrate operations. Following are the specific objectives of the Service First Fund.

1. **Improve Customer Service Delivery.** Invest in multi-bureau projects, planning, permitting, leasing, contracting and other activities to improve delivery of service to the public and/or improved stewardship of the land. This may include consolidation of functions or standardized processes for improved service delivery, including interagency visitor services, standardized customer transactions and others.
2. **Enhance Mission Delivery through Interagency Collaboration.** Support promulgation of special rules as needed to test the feasibility of issuing unified permits, applications and leases.
3. **Improve Operational Efficiency.** Invest in shared services, cross-servicing and centers of excellence to improve efficiency and effectiveness of government operations. May include consolidation of like functions in centers of excellence, for example acquisition, planning and design, consolidation of the permanent-change-of-station/relocation function, creating cross-servicing agreements among bureaus, and developing consistent business practices that support more efficient and effective operations. Includes potential utilization of remote technologies that free up the need for certain services to be provided in a limited geographic area.
4. **Co-Locate for Savings and Service.** Support geographic co-location of Interior and/or USDA offices and bureau components (to include co-location of space and/or associated sharing of services such as fleet, mail, delivery and acquisition services). Includes expansion of co-location or shared services in existing Service First offices.

ALIGNMENT WITH DOI STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In addition to these overarching objectives, the Service First Fund will support projects that advance the Secretary's strategic priorities, as articulated in the DOI Strategic Plan FY 2014 to FY 2018 (<http://www.doi.gov/bpp/upload/DOI-Strategic-Plan-for-FY-2014-2018-POSTED-ON-WEBSITE.pdf>). Service First projects may support the achievement of goals under any of the Mission Areas identified in the Strategic Plan.

TIMELINE

Call for proposals:	August 28, 2015
Proposals due:	October 16, 2015

ELIGIBILITY

The Technical Review Committee will consider proposals for both administrative-oriented (e.g. co-location, finance, procurement, human resources, asset management) and mission-oriented (e.g. improved stewardship of the land, unified permits, applications, leases, customer service) opportunities.

Additionally, proposed projects must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Proposals may not request more than \$500,000 from the Service First Fund.
2. Funding awarded through this competition should be obligated by July 1, 2016.
3. Funding requested must be adequate to complete a project in its entirety or to serve as seed funding for a longer-term effort for which funding is available from other sources.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Technical Review Team will evaluate projects using criteria described below.

- **Contribution to DOI Service First Fund Objectives.** Objectives of the Service First Fund are: 1) Improve Customer Service Delivery; 2) Enhance Mission Delivery through Interagency Collaboration; 3) Improve Operational Efficiency; and 4) Co-Locate for Savings and Service.
- **Significance.** Significant projects impact a large percentage of the public (where “public” includes visitors, customers and other consumers of agency services); have broad geographic or organizational impact; are easily replicable and/or an essential foundation for other projects or initiatives; and/or set precedent or redefine best practices by applying innovative solutions or technology to improve delivery of services.
- **Leverage.** Leveraged projects increase or amplify the benefits of other DOI programs or completed or proposed Service First projects, and/or accelerate the adoption of tools or practices that will meet Service First objectives in other locations and/or contexts.
- **Speed to Functionality.** Speed to functionality is the amount of time necessary for a project to achieve some sustained and measurable benefits. It is *not* indicated by the speed of distributing funds, contracting, or initiating work, nor is it a measure of time to full project completion.
- **Sustained Benefits.** Sustained benefits are substantial and measurable over a long period of time; require minimal re-investment and/or operational costs after project completion; and account for projected changes in the management environment, e.g. budget fluctuations, or staffing turnover.
- **Alignment with Strategic Plan Goals.** A project that is well aligned with the Strategic Plan helps achieve a goal or goals identified in the DOI Strategic Plan FY 2014 to FY 2018.

- **Project Plan.** A project plan includes: 1) a clear statement of reasonable project goals, 2) a proposed timeline for completing milestones, 3) a definition of project success and evaluation plan for measuring success, and 4) a description of the project team, including the team's qualifications and institutional capacity (e.g., administrative, infrastructure, equipment, labor, legal, and acquisition capacities) to effectively manage the project.

HOW TO APPLY

Agency staff may submit applications for funding by completing the online form at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/servicefirstfund>. In addition to a completed online form, applicants should also submit a letter(s) of commitment for each proposed project to ServiceFirst@ios.doi.gov. Letters of commitment confirm that participating bureaus/offices are willing to commit resources (e.g., direct, in-kind services, labor, etc.) to Service First. Each letter should include the component name or agency letterhead and the minimum signatory level is at an individual with the authority to commit the resources (staff time, funds, etc) necessary to execute the proposed project. Address letters to: Service First Fund Technical Review Team.

The deadline to complete the application form and submit accompanying letters of commitment is October 16, 2015.