

First IMPRESSIONS

JOHN C. STENNIS INSTITUTE

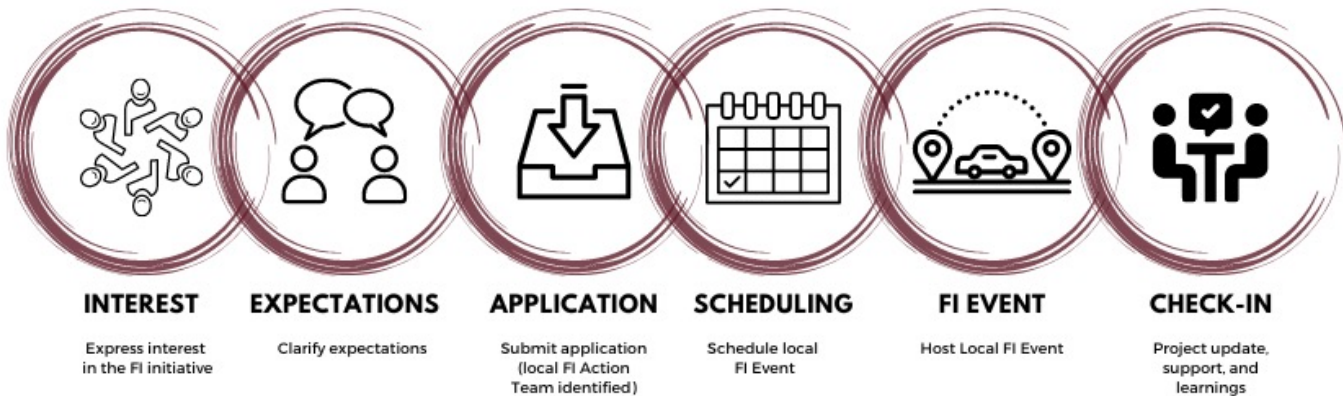
APPLICATION PACKET

The Stennis Institute (SI) at Mississippi State University (MSU) appreciates your community's interest in applying for the First Impressions initiative (FI). The following application packet will provide insight into the program and outline the basic requirements needed to be successful as a host community.

FI Overview:

FI is based on the belief that a community's appearance and "friendliness" has a direct impact on its economic well-being. The program allows a community to see itself through the eyes of a first-time visitor and provides the structure and opportunity for community residents to make a visual impact on their community's appearance, improve the overall quality of life, and lead to greater economic vitality. As part of this effort, a team of volunteer visitors will explore various areas of your community and evaluate appearances, access to services, friendliness, and other community attributes. Results of the visit will be summarized and presented during a community presentation. Following the presentation, a local action team will design and implement a community improvement project that enhances the community's appearance and overall quality of life.

FI Process and Timeline:



Once a community has expressed an interest in participating in the FI program, SI staff will discuss the program and clarify any expectations. SI staff will also discuss the FI application and the need to form a local action team as part of the program. Once an application is received, SI staff will work with the applicant and the local action team to schedule the FI Event. The FI Event is typically a 2–3-day event that includes the following:

- FI team visit/tour Day 1
- Debrief session with local action team Day 1 (following tour)
- Community presentation Day 2
- Project Mapping workshop Day 3

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Community Expectations:

As part of the FI program, local communities will:

- Identify a sponsoring group and lead contact person for your community.
- Form a local action team representing a cross-section of the community.
- Participate in a preliminary meeting to outline the program and various responsibilities.
- The local action team will participate in a debrief meeting with the visiting team on the day of the community visit.
- The local action team will help prepare for a community meeting to share the results of the visiting team, including arranging all logistics, inviting residents to participate in the community meeting, and ensuring room set up.
- The local action team will participate in a half-day project mapping workshop where team members will identify and design a local improvement project to be implemented within the community.

Program Costs and Deliverables:

- All communities will receive a summary report that highlights:
 - The general impressions and observations noted by the visiting team.
 - A summary of the debrief session between the FI visiting team and the local action team.
 - A pdf copy of the community presentation.
 - A Project Mapping summary that outlines the local improvement project identified and short-term implementation steps developed.
 - An electronic copy of all photos taken during the team visit.
- The costs associated with the delivery of the FI program vary, depending on the size of the community and how the community chooses to schedule the FI Event. For additional information regarding current FI fees, please contact the Stennis Institute.

Contact Information:

If your community is interested in participating in the FI initiative, please contact the Stennis Institute for further information.

Stennis Institute
662-325-3328

www.sig.msstate.edu

Email: comms@sig.msstate.edu

Completed First Impressions applications can be submitted to comms@sig.msstate.edu.



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Name of Community:

Date:

Primary Contact:

Telephone:

Email:

Organization:

Please answer the following questions:

How did you hear about the First Impressions Program?

To help us to understand your community better, please describe any specific issues or challenges your community wishes to address through the First Impressions initiative.



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First Impressions Action Team Members:

Participating communities are asked to identify local community members to serve as part of a local action team. The local action team will assist with logistics during the FI Event, conduct outreach to community leaders and/or residents, communicate across diverse partners and audiences, and will use the information during the FI Event to design and implement a community improvement project. The improvement project identified by the local action team will help enhance the impression of the local community and/or improve the quality of life.

Please list at least five individuals who will serve on the local action team.

Potential team members to consider include:

- Chamber/CVB representative*
- Locally elected official(s)*
- City staff representative*
- Community volunteer*

- Youth representative*
- Local business owner*
- Arts organization representative*
- Faith-based organization representative*

Name	Organization	Email	Phone (Optional)

Submission of the FI application indicates that the applicant understands the FI process and has read the information within the FI Application Packet.

Please complete and email applications to comms@sig.msstate.edu.

