

# Call for Participation – PDO Decision

May 5, 2023

**FIRST** in Upper Midwest is considering becoming the Program Delivery Organization for *FIRST* Robotics Competition in our region. This decision will impact how the *FIRST* Robotics Competition program operates in our region. We are forming a committee of people involved in the program to examine the issue and make recommendations to the FUM Board of Directors for a final decision.

## About *FIRST* in Upper Midwest

**FIRST** in Upper Midwest (FUM) is the local FRC-supporting nonprofit serving Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

### Vision

Nurture a growing and thriving ecosystem of **FIRST** Robotics Competition teams, where every student has access to a transformational experience that provides a foundation for a lifetime of impact and success.

### Mission

We catalyze the growth and success of **FIRST** Robotics Competition teams and students in the Upper Midwest by providing resources and knowledge, connecting existing efforts, enhancing community, and facilitating events.

## What is a Program Delivery Organization?

One way to think of a **FIRST** Program Delivery Organization (PDO) is that they are the local franchisee for the FRC program. The PDO handles all aspects of the program in its geographic area, including but not limited to:

- Hiring and overseeing staff
- Collaboration with PDOs handling other *FIRST* programs in their region
- In collaboration with *FIRST*, determine business model to cover the costs of competition events
- Fundraising, both for competition events and other activities of the PDO
- Organizing and presenting competition events, including:
  - AV production and video streaming
  - Catering, EMS, and other services.
  - Competition model selection (district or regional events)
  - Event equipment acquisition, storage and management
  - Event management
  - Venue contracting
  - Volunteer recruitment, in collaboration with event volunteer coordinator
- Program development, including;
  - Team development and retention
  - Development of resource and knowledge sharing opportunities

Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota currently operate under the “regional” competition model. Becoming a PDO does not require that a region transition to the district model for events, but is a prerequisite for doing so. You can read more about the differences between the two competition models at <https://www.firstinspires.org/resource-library/frc/district-regional-teams>.

## Committee

The committee will have a total of 9 members, chaired by a member of the FUM Board of Directors.

Committee members will be drawn from a broad representation of FRC community members, including specifically:

- One high school student who has participated in a FRC team for at least one year
- Two additional FUM board members, one of whom lives in North or South Dakota
- A member of the Minnesota Robotics Coaches Association, upon recommendation from their governing board

To the extent possible, committee membership will include representatives from:

- Rural, suburban, and urban teams
- Regional planning committees
- Key event volunteers

Committee members are appointed by the FUM board and serve at the pleasure of the board.

## Charge

The committee will make a recommendation to the FUM Board of Directors that answers these questions:

1. What are the benefits and challenges of FUM becoming the PDO for FRC in our region? Based on this assessment, provide a recommendation about whether FUM should become the PDO for FRC in our region.
2. What geography makes the most sense for the PDO? In answering this question, consider both the current regional competition model and a hypothetical future move to a district competition model.
3. What activities will the PDO be responsible for, and what staff would be required for those activities?
4. What is a rough annual budget for the PDO, assuming the current regional competition model?
5. What are the one-time expenses involved in converting to a PDO?

The committee should consider these questions in the context of FUM's vision and mission. Specifically, it should prioritize student experience, considering both the quality of team member experience and the number of students impacted, both now and in the future. The committee should not consider whether the competition model should change from the current regional model, but should consider the impact of both a regional and district competition model in answering questions 1 and 2.

The committee will adopt and submit one report answering the questions listed. It should work toward consensus as a group, ensuring that the report represents major points of view on the questions submitted. The report should discuss in detail both the answers adopted by the committee and points of view that were considered but not adopted. A final decision on whether or not FUM becomes a PDO will ultimately reside with the FUM Board of Directors, but the board is seeking a comprehensive assessment from this committee to inform that decision.

## Draft meeting schedule

Items marked as preliminary in this schedule are subject to change by the committee members. Meetings will be held via videoconference and no in-person attendance is required.

Dates	Activity
<b>5/5 - 5/19</b>	Applications open
<b>5/22</b>	Appointments announced
<b>First week of June (preliminary)</b>	Organizational meeting – set committee meeting cadence and expectations
<b>June – August (preliminary)</b>	Meetings as determined by committee, likely weekly or every other week
<b>August 21 (preliminary)</b>	Final written report submitted to FUM board
<b>September/October</b>	Committee presentation to Board

## Committee Resources

FUM will support the committee by providing a number of resources to the committee. In addition to the board members who are members of the committee, all board members will be available to the committee to answer questions around current FUM and regional event operations. FUM will also be available to assist with making connections with other organizations (such as other PDOs) and key individuals such as Regional Directors and Senior Mentors as necessary to help the committee create an informed proposal.

## Expectations of committee members

- Members are expected to attend at least 80% of the meetings.
- Be willing to reach a consensus on an approach
- Ensure that all points of view are considered and represented in the final report
- Listen actively to others
- Demonstrate gracious professionalism at all times
- Avoid 1:1 or side conversations during meetings
- Avoid interrupting other participants
- Treat conversations as confidential
- Once consensus is reached, actively support the work of the group

## How to apply

Applications are accepted online at <https://forms.office.com/r/BE9nHuMkfH>.