JHSPH IRB’s PHIRST SYSTEM
/Public Health Institutional Review System Tracking/

Completing Study Shells
For Investigators, Students, Study Team Members

developed by
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office
615 N. Wolfe Street
Suite E1100
Baltimore, Maryland 21205
410-955-3193
JHSPH.irboffice@jhu.edu
JHSPH.phirsthelp@jhu.edu
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Log in to PHIRST

PHIRST is available at https://phirst.jhsphs.edu. This address brings you to the PHIRST log in page. Click on the blue button “Log in with JHED”, using your JHED ID and JHED password. If you need to refer to your study in the old PHIRST system, click on the gray “Log into old PHIRST” button. Your user name is now your JHED ID, but your password remains what it has always been for PHIRST.
Your PHIRST Homepage – My Inbox

When you log in to PHIRST; you will arrive at your PHIRST Homepage called My Inbox. All active studies on which you are listed as PI in the IRB will be listed under the blue New Application banner. Note that they are all in the “Pre-Submission” state. Be assured that they are all approved studies and they will not have to go through the IRB review process again; we are simply moving them operationally from paper to fully electronic. They must be submitted by you so the IRB can activate them in the updated PHIRST system.

Click on the study title to go to the study Application Workspace.
The Application Workspace

Many application shells will be pre-populated with the following documents:

- Current approved research plan for the study
- Current approved consent/assent/parental permission form(s) if you have them for your study
- Several other documents may also be included depending on your study

The documents will be found on the relevant application pages, i.e., consent documents will be on the “Informed Consent for Adults” page, assent documents on the “Assent for Minors” page, and so on. You must complete the application questions in order to submit the application to the IRB so that the study can be transitioned into the approved active state.

Click on “Edit Application” to go to the application questions.

Application Questions

The first page of the application will have the study name, short description and PI already filled in. You, as PI, may add co-investigators, student investigators, other study team members and study contact names. If they aren’t readily available in the drop-down list, don’t worry; the IRB has the paper file of all the people you have added to your study to date. You can reconcile your list of study investigators and personnel at a later time.

Your answers to PHIRST questions should reflect the current state of your study as of the last approval. Do not include information that has not yet been reviewed; THIS IS NOT AN OPPORTUNITY TO UPDATE OR MODIFY YOUR STUDY. You may later amend your study through the PHIRST system once your study is active. You may upload any study document (instruments, permissions, etc.) that has already been approved by the IRB. (Instructions for uploading documents can be found in the PHIRST User Guide)
Who completes the application – PI or study team member?

Although all application questions must be completed in order to submit, only the first page must be completed by the PI. Other study team members, once added to the first page, may complete the rest of the application.

1. On the first page of the application, Study Team and Study Description, the PI adds current, approved study team members to either question 5.0 (co-investigator), question 7.0 (student investigator) or question 8.0 (study contact).
2. The PI completes the required questions on the first page (marked with a red * asterisk).
3. The PI clicks “Continue” or “Save” at the top or bottom of the page.
4. The added study team members can now log in to their PHIRST accounts and will see the application listed on their My Inbox homepage under the Action Required tab.
5. They complete the remaining pages of the application (and upload any additional documents) and alert the PI when finished.
6. Only the PI can submit the application, either from the last page of the application (see below) or using the “Submit to IRB” activity on the left side of the application workspace.
Transitioning to Active – what now?

The IRB staff will review your submitted application to ensure that it is consistent with the approved study file. They will then transition the application to “Active”. Once active, you will be able to submit amendments, continuing reviews, and all other submissions related to your study. All study submissions, including related documents, will be available in PHIRST.

For complete instructions on using PHIRST, you may refer to the PHIRST User Guide, available at the IRB Office website. For questions specific to PHIRST, email the IRB PHIRST Help Desk at JHSPH.phirsthelp@jhu.edu. For other IRB questions, call the IRB Office at 410-955-3193, or email at JHSPH.irboffice@jhu.edu.