

Doing Business with DARPA

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Discover DSO Day

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- Doing Business with DARPA
 - Understanding Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs)
 - Communicating your ideas
- Doing Business with DSO
 - Understanding what DSO wants
 - Proposing to a DSO BAA
 - Important take-aways





Doing Business with DARPA: Understanding Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs)

- BAAs are used when
 - Soliciting research and development proposals directed toward advancing the state-of-the-art
 - Describing a problem or general research area(s) of interest rather than providing a common work statement
 - Anticipating varying scientific/technical approaches
- DARPA BAAs are evaluated
 - Through scientific/technical review
 - On their own merits





How does DARPA use BAAs?



DARPA issues two types of BAAs

1. Program-specific BAAs
2. Office-wide BAAs

Find current DARPA BAAs at:

<http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/opportunities>

<http://www.FBO.gov>

<http://www.grants.gov>

Proposers Days are advertised at FBO.gov

DSO's current BAAs:

Office-wide	Topological Excitations in Electronics
Ground Truth	Lagrange



DARPA is interested in revolutionary ideas that advance DoD's mission



Doing Business with DARPA: Communicating Your Ideas



- Any time prior to submission of a proposal
- Via E-mails, phone calls, or face-to-face meetings
- Find DSO PM bios, program information, and contact PMs at <https://www.darpa.mil/about-us/offices/dso>
- If you have a question related to a specific BAA, contact the PM via the email address listed in that BAA



Program Managers recommend all research awarded by DARPA

1. What are you trying to do? Articulate your objectives using absolutely no jargon.
2. How is it done today, and what are the limits of current practice?
3. What's new in your approach, and why do you think it will be successful?
4. Who cares? If you're successful, what difference will it make?
5. What are the risks and the payoffs?
6. How much will it cost? How long will it take?
7. What are the midterm and final "exams" to check for success?



Also, be prepared to answer –
Why DARPA?
Why DSO?
Why now?



Doing Business with DSO: Understanding what DSO wants



DSO Investment Strategy

New Foundations

Uncovering the Unknown

Complexity Engineering

Understanding the principles of organization and control, transforming or harnessing complexity

Noosphere

Foundational questions regarding humans, human-machine interactions and society

Fundamental Limits

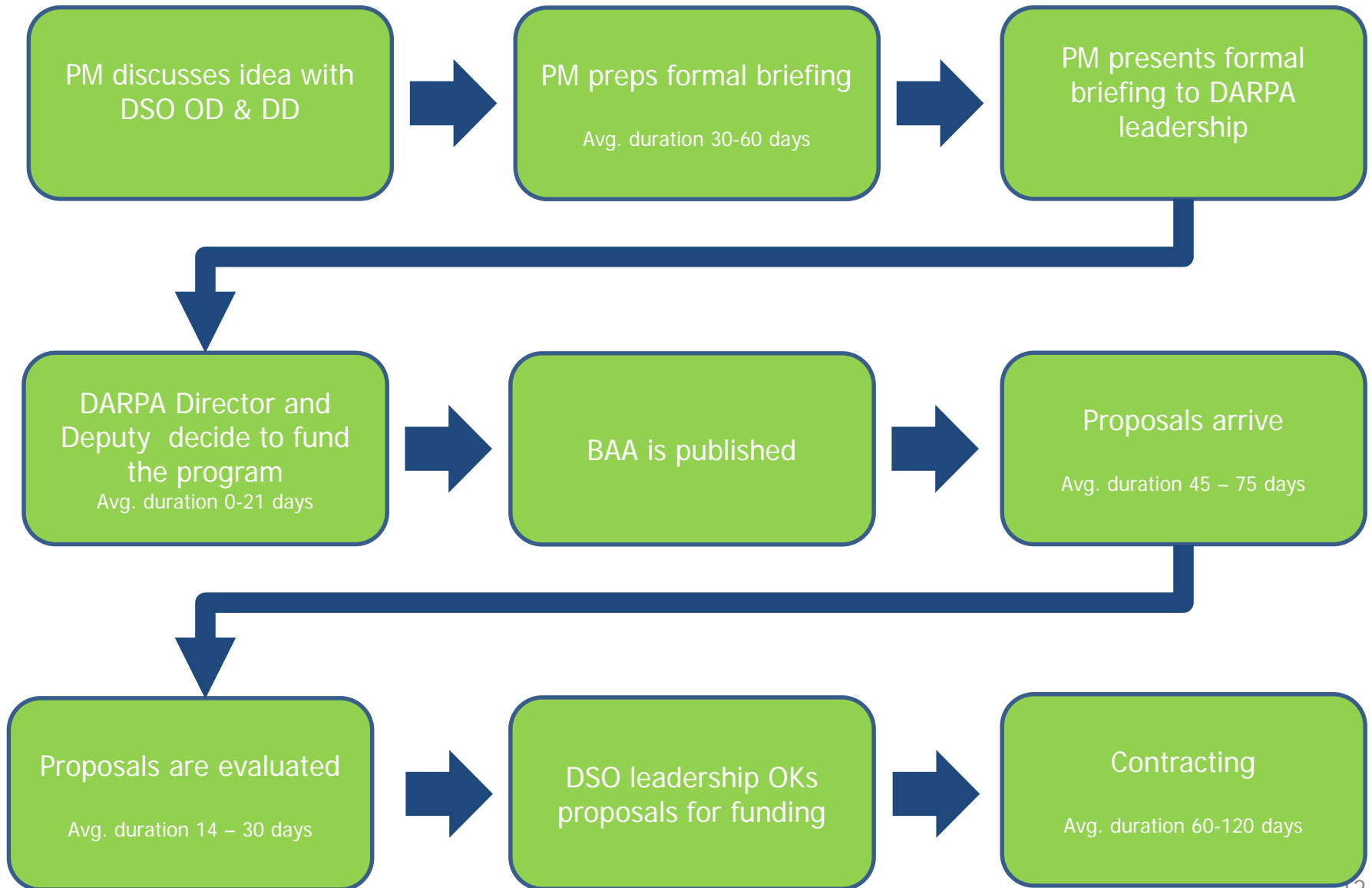
Creating, measuring, and modeling the boundaries of current scientific understanding

Science of Design

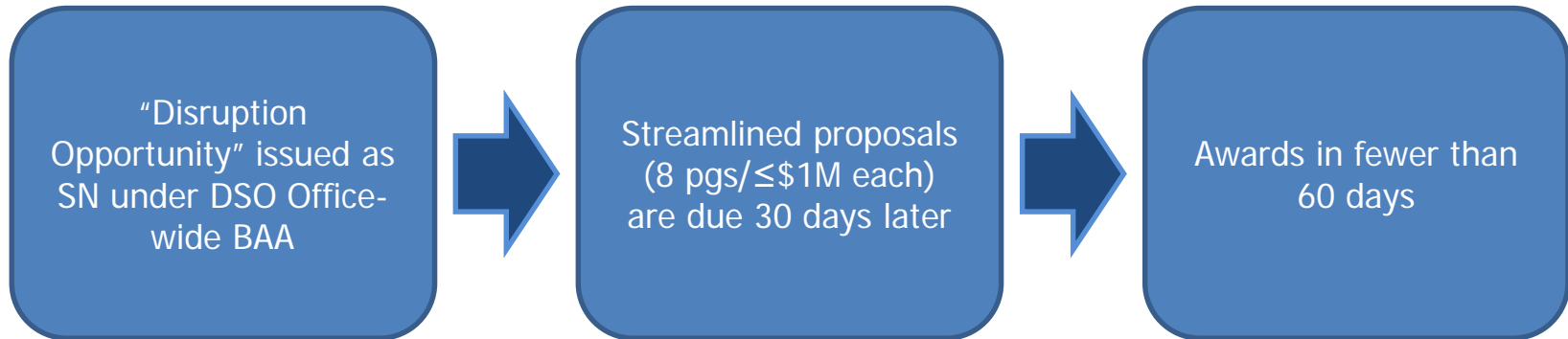
Transforming a given state of the world to a better one using tools and technologies

- All program ideas originate with a Program Manager
 - PMs identify opportunity to make a difference
- DARPA PMs typically serve 2 – 4 year terms
 - This means approximately 25% turnover annually
- New PMs mean new ideas and potentially investments in different research areas





Efforts \leq \$5M - from idea to award in < 90 days



Award information

- 2 potential phases – 6 and 12 months
- May award both phases or only Phase 1
- Phase 1 limit \$150K
- Phase 2 limit contracts \$550K/other \$850K
- Streamlined templates and instructions

Anticipated benefits

- Risk reduction – Targeted investments prove feasibility
- Increased innovation tempo – More research faster



Doing Business with DSO: Proposing to a DSO BAA



What is an Executive Summary? What is an Abstract?



- An executive summary is a brief (1 page + cover) outline of the proposed research idea
- An abstract is a slightly more detailed (5 page) synopsis of the proposed research idea



- Submission of executive summaries and abstracts allows proposers to –
 - Quickly ascertain whether the proposed concept is of interest to DSO
 - Save bid and proposal costs

If your proposal was not encouraged, it is less likely to receive funding

- Follow ALL directions in the BAA
 - Each DARPA BAA has content/formatting/submission requirements specific to that BAA
 - Non-conforming proposals will not be reviewed and will not be eligible for award
- Include a straightforward, concise description of the technical solution and a fully supported cost proposal
- Ensure your proposal responds to the Heilmeier Questions



- Evaluation criteria are listed in descending order of importance
- Usual criteria include:
 - Overall Scientific and Technical Merit
 - Potential Contribution and Relevance to the DARPA Mission
 - Cost Realism
- Cost or price is rarely, if ever, the deciding selection factor
- Proposals contain unique solutions - they are not compared one to another



- Unclassified submission portals
 - Contracts and Other Transaction proposals: <https://baa.darpa.mil>
 - Grants or Cooperative Agreements proposals: www.grants.gov
 - All executive summaries and abstracts: <https://baa.darpa.mil>
 - Mail/Hand-carry submission: See instructions in the BAA





How can I get Answers to Questions about the BAA?



- Send all questions (technical, contractual, administrative) about the BAA to the email listed in the BAA
- FAQs will be posted under the BAA at <http://www.darpa.mil/work-with-us/opportunities> (filter by "Defense Sciences Office")



Once proposal evaluations are complete, proposers will be notified whether or not their proposal was selected for award negotiation

- Successful proposers will be contacted by a contracting officer to begin negotiations
- You may request informal feedback from the PM regarding your proposal
- Proposals may be selected for partial funding
- Types of awards may include grants, cooperative agreements, contracts or other transactions
- Award is subject to successful negotiation and availability of funds





Concluding Remarks

- Read the BAA and follow the instructions
- Communicate with a PM
- Answer the Heilmeyer Questions
- Start with an Executive Summary or Abstract
- Ensure proposal is “conforming”
- Be concise, but detailed
- Ask questions if you don’t understand





www.darpa.mil