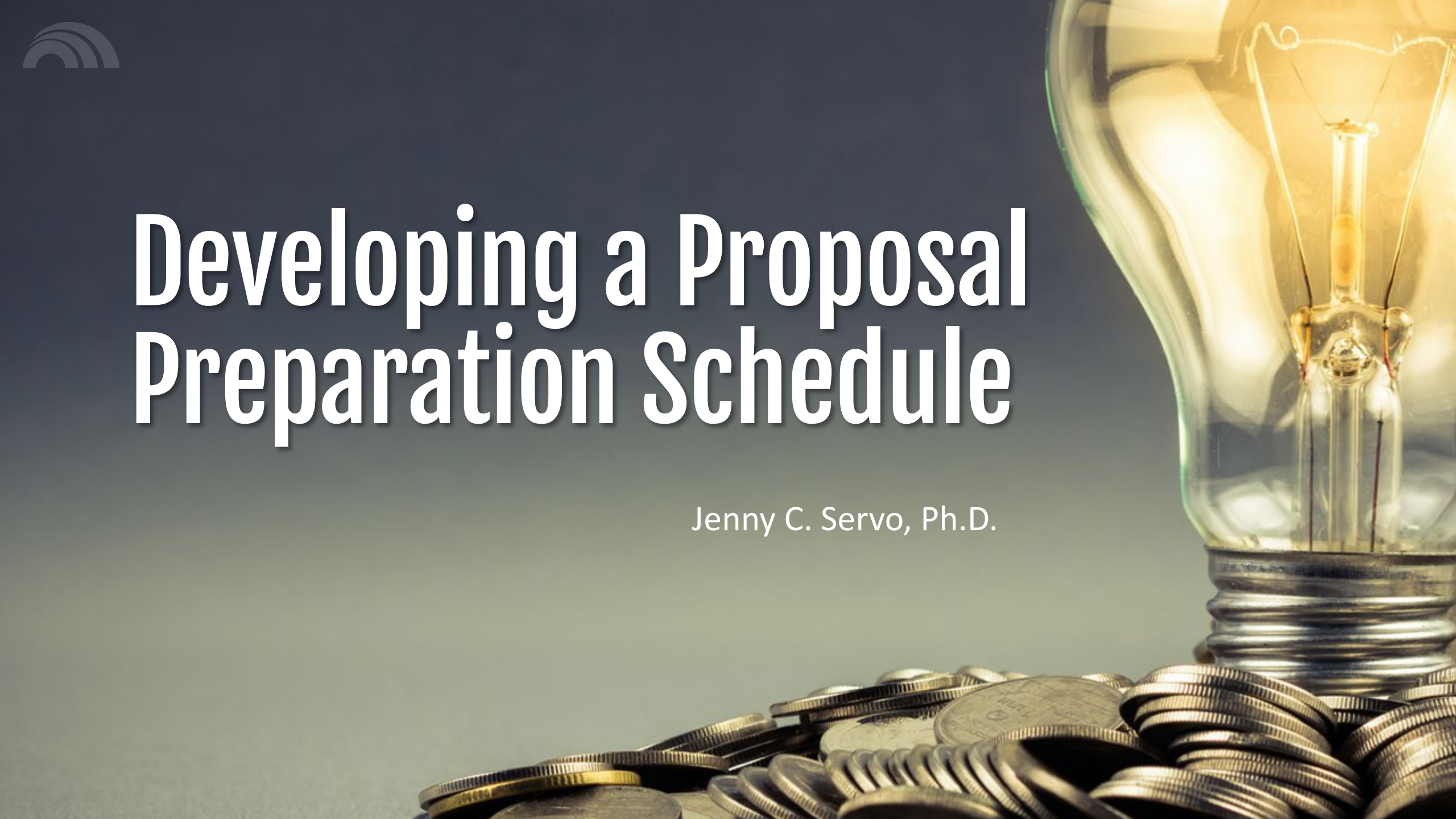
Developing a Proposal Preparation Schedule

Jenny C. Servo, Ph.D.



Why is it important to develop a schedule?

- **A winning proposal takes a lot of time to prepare**
  - Between 100 and 150 hours
- **You need to allow sufficient time to feel good about the process**
  - Assess your personal obligations
  - Talk to family and friends and let them know you will be less available
- Balance tedious and difficult tasks with creative activities

Why don't proposers develop a schedule?

- **New proposal writers often don't understand :**

1. What needs to be delivered
2. How proposals (the application package) will be evaluated
3. If there is a logical sequence that should be followed

   - How difficult some of the tasks will be
   - If some tasks will involve others
   - Hurdles that they may encounter

Let talk about each of these items

How big is the application package?

Item	Project Narrative	Commercialization Plan	Budget justification	Biographical sketches	Project Abstract
Page numbers	7,500 words	4 pages	Not specified	Use template	1 page
Other	Follow guidelines in DOE Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)	Follow Guidelines under Applicant Resources	Stay within budget. Use Budget Justification form	Follow guidelines in Instructions for Completing a DOE SBIR/STTR Phase I Grant Application	PDF format
					No proprietary info

How will the application be evaluated?

1st: Strength of the Scientific/Technical Approach as evidenced by

- The innovativeness of the idea or approach
- The significance of the scientific or technical challenge, and
- The thoroughness of the presentation

How will the application be evaluated?

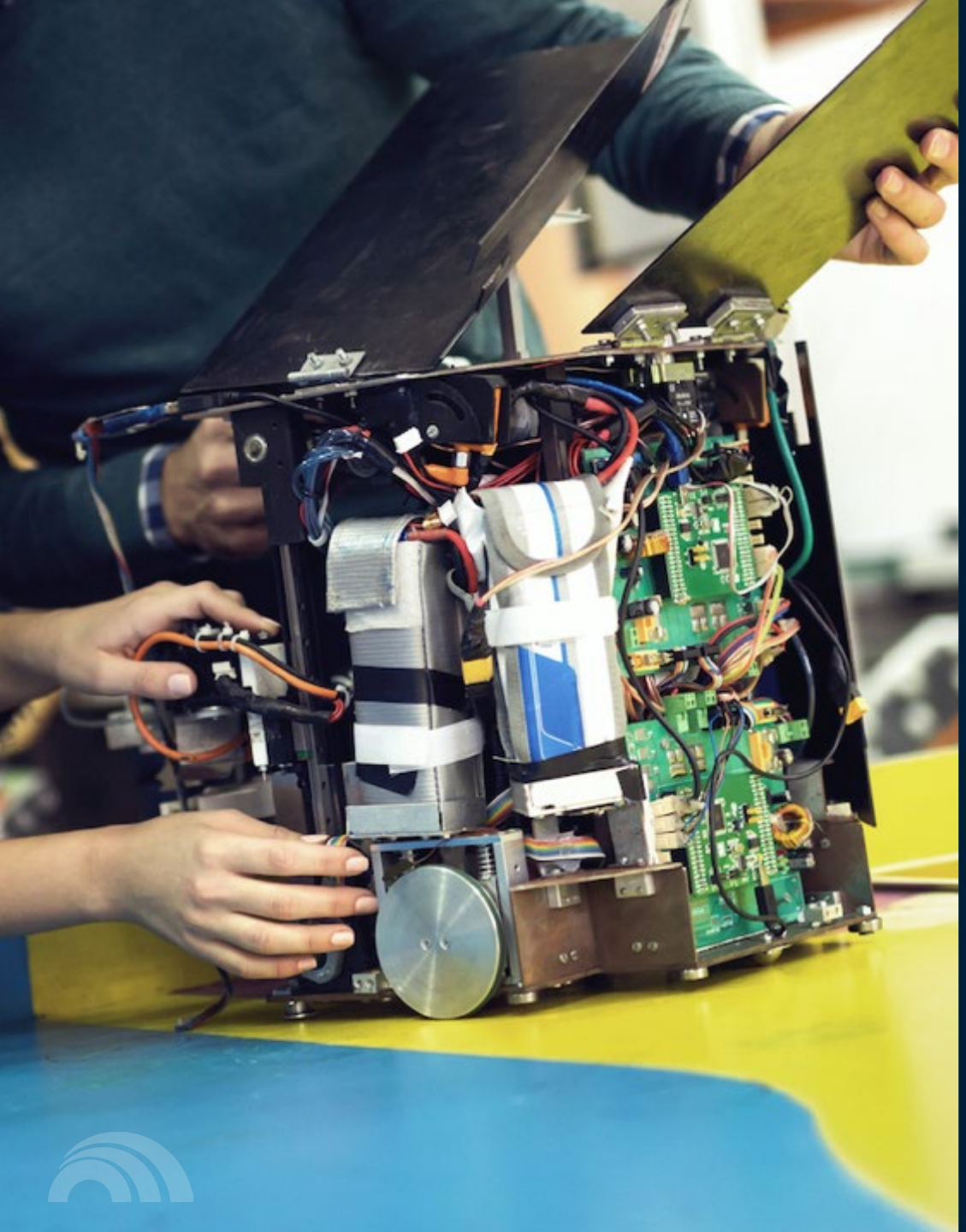
2nd: The ability to competently carry out the project as evidenced by

- The qualifications of the principal investigator (PI), other key staff, subcontractors and consultants, if any, and the level of adequacy of equipment and facilities
- The soundness and level of adequacy of the work plan to show progress toward proving the feasibility of the concept, and
- The degree to which the DOE investment in the project would be justified by the level of proposed research effort

How will the application be evaluated?

3rd: Impact as evidenced by:

- The significance of the technical or economic benefits of the proposed work, if successful,
- The likelihood that the proposed work would lead to a marketable product or process,
- The likelihood that the project could attract further development funding after the SBIR or STTR project ends, and
- The appropriateness of the data management plan for the proposed work

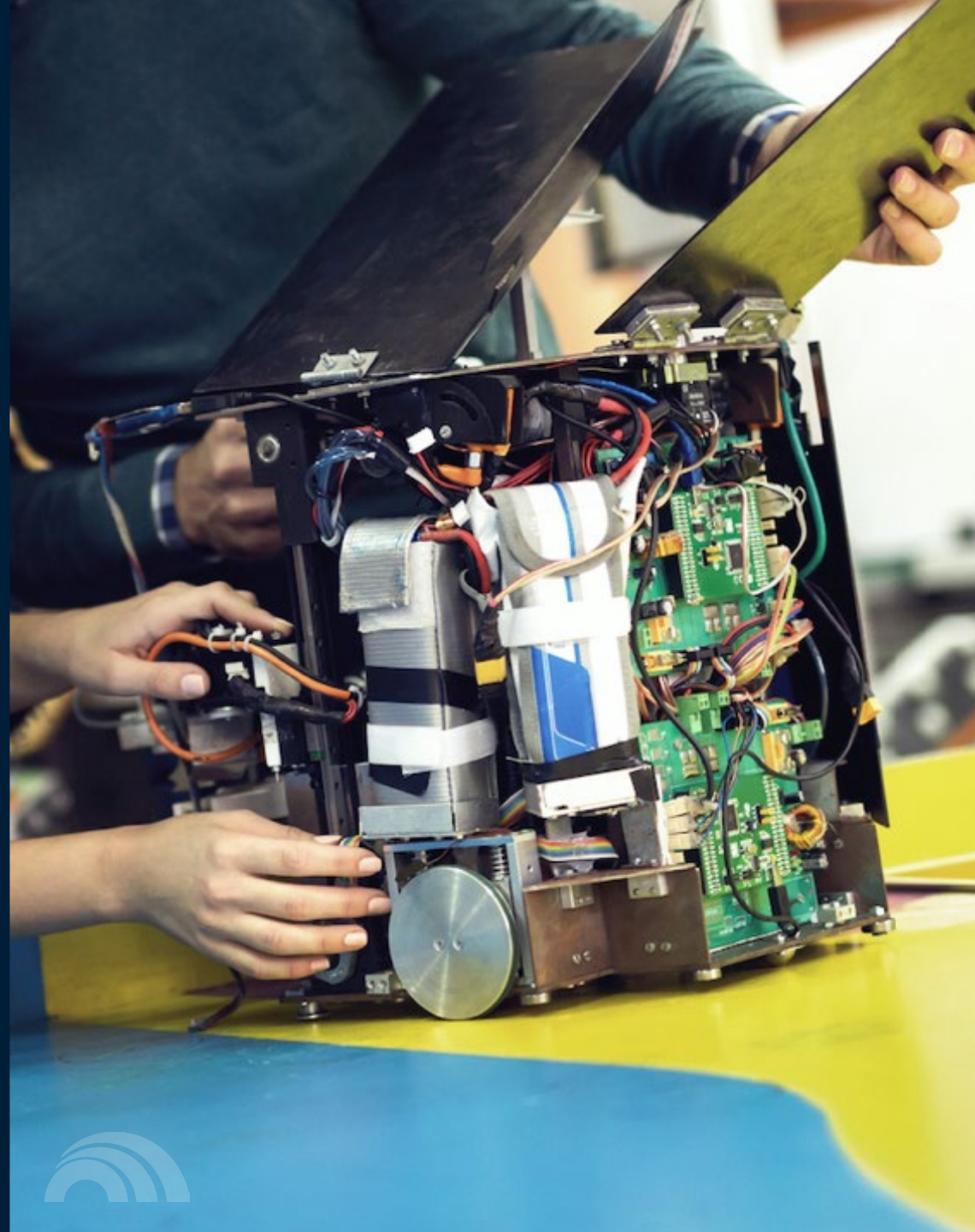


What do we now know are important factors?

- Innovation
- Scientific challenge
- Personnel
- Work plan
- Economic impact
- Likelihood of marketable product
- Thoroughness of presentation

Is there anything else?

- **Important dates**
  - Letter of Intent is due August 29, 2022
    - Submit through PAMS
  - Can only submit a proposal if you submit a Letter of Intent (LOI)
  - Full Application is due on Tuesday October 11th
    - Other registrations
    - System for Awards Management (SAM)
    - Grants.gov
    - SBA registry
    - Others



What do we know from the Topics document?

- Applications must address the need that DOE has expressed in the Topic and Subtopic to which the proposer will respond
- Proposers must not exceed the budget
- Proposers will need to decide if they are submitting an SBIR or STTR application

How much time do I have?

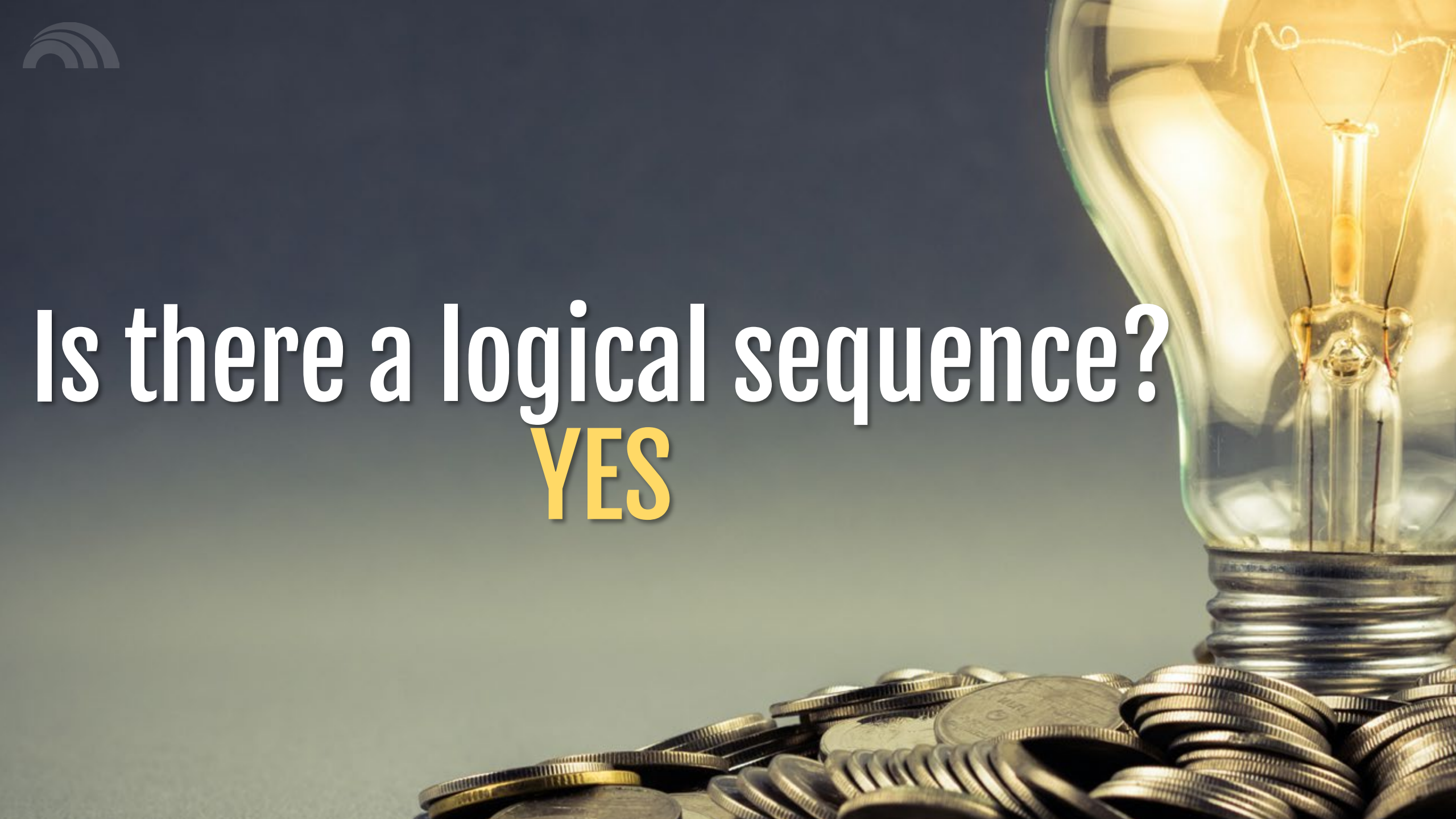
Nine weeks

You have nine weeks

WEEKS	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8/8-8/14			TODAY				
8/15-8/21							
8/22-8/28							
8/29-9/4	LOI due						
9/5-9/11	Labor day						
9/12-9/18							
9/19-9/25							
9/26-10/2							
10/3-10/9							
10/10	Columbus	Application Due date					

Is there a logical sequence?

YES



Logical Sequence?

Sequence	Explanation
PAMS registration	You cannot submit your LOI if you have not registered with the Portfolio Analysis and Management System (PAMS) – this is quick
Look for support	Contact local Small Business Development Centers, Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC) and DOE Phase 0, as appropriate to garner assistance
LOI due date – Monday August 29	You cannot submit an application package to DOE if you have not submitted an LOI on a topic/subtopic. While preparing the LOI reach out as appropriate to topic author. Work on this while starting the Project Narrative
SAM registration	This process takes a long time – visit local PTAC for free help
Project Narrative	This is the heart of the proposal – work on this weekly. As you develop the workplan think about staffing, budgets and facilities – stay within budget
Determine staff needed	Line up staff, consultants and/or subcontractors – allow time for commitment letters and negotiations. Think budget – use Bureau of Labor Statistics
Budget Justification	Iterate back and forth on budget justification – make sure you include fee
Commercialization Plan	Seek assistance with gathering market information and prepare 4 page commercialization plan

Logical Sequence

Sequence	Explanation
Commitments	You will need letters from consultants, subcontractors, universities if STTR. Also seek letters of support. You will need bio sketches in requested format for key personnel
Grants.gov registration	Applications are submitted through Grants.gov and it takes time to become comfortable with this system. Allow time to become comfortable with this. Check to assure all other required registrations are complete
Editing	You will need to edit everything very carefully assuring that you have marked proprietary items appropriately
Other forms	There are other forms in Grants.gov that you need to complete

You have nine weeks

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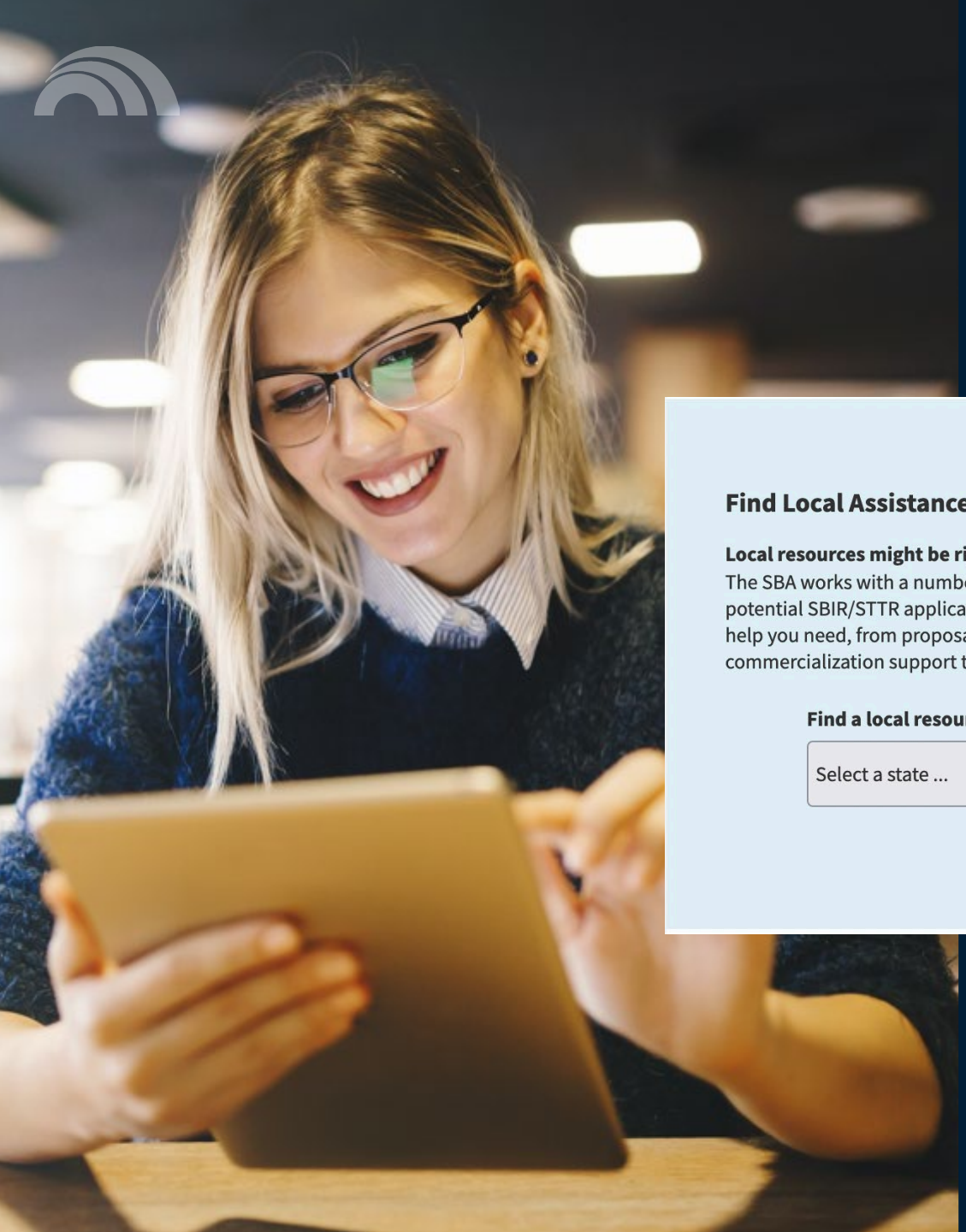
Best practices?

- **Line up support right away. It is invaluable to know who you can turn to as you navigate this process**
  - SBDC
  - SBTDC
  - PTAC
  - SCORE
  - Phase 0
  - Seek help with financials, market research, editing



Useful Tool – SBIR.gov

Find Local Assistance

Local resources might be right around the corner
The SBA works with a number of local partners to train and support potential SBIR/STTR applicants around the country. Check now to find the help you need, from proposal assistance to SAM registration, commercialization support to industry connections.

Find a local resource near you:

Select a state ...

Useful Tool – ASBDC

AMERICA'S SBDC

Home | Find Your SBDC | Blog | Resources | Events | News | About Us | Members

Find Your SBDC

Find your nearest Small Business Development Center

Get free business consulting and at-cost training

Search by ...

ZIP Code State

GO

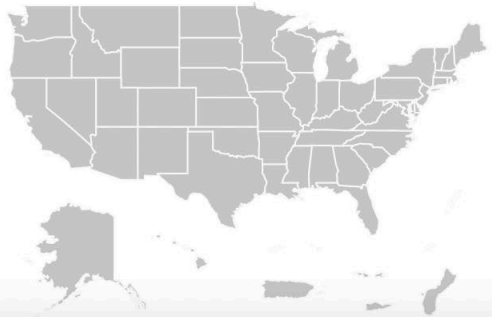
Useful tool APTAC

aptac Association of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers

HOME | ABOUT US | GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING ASSISTANCE | APTAC PARTNERS | PTAC LOGIN

Find a PTAC Select a State

Find a Procurement Technical Assistance Center
Click on the map below or select your state above to find the Procurement Technical Assistance Center nearest you.
Find American Indian PTACs »



HELP FOR GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING

Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs)

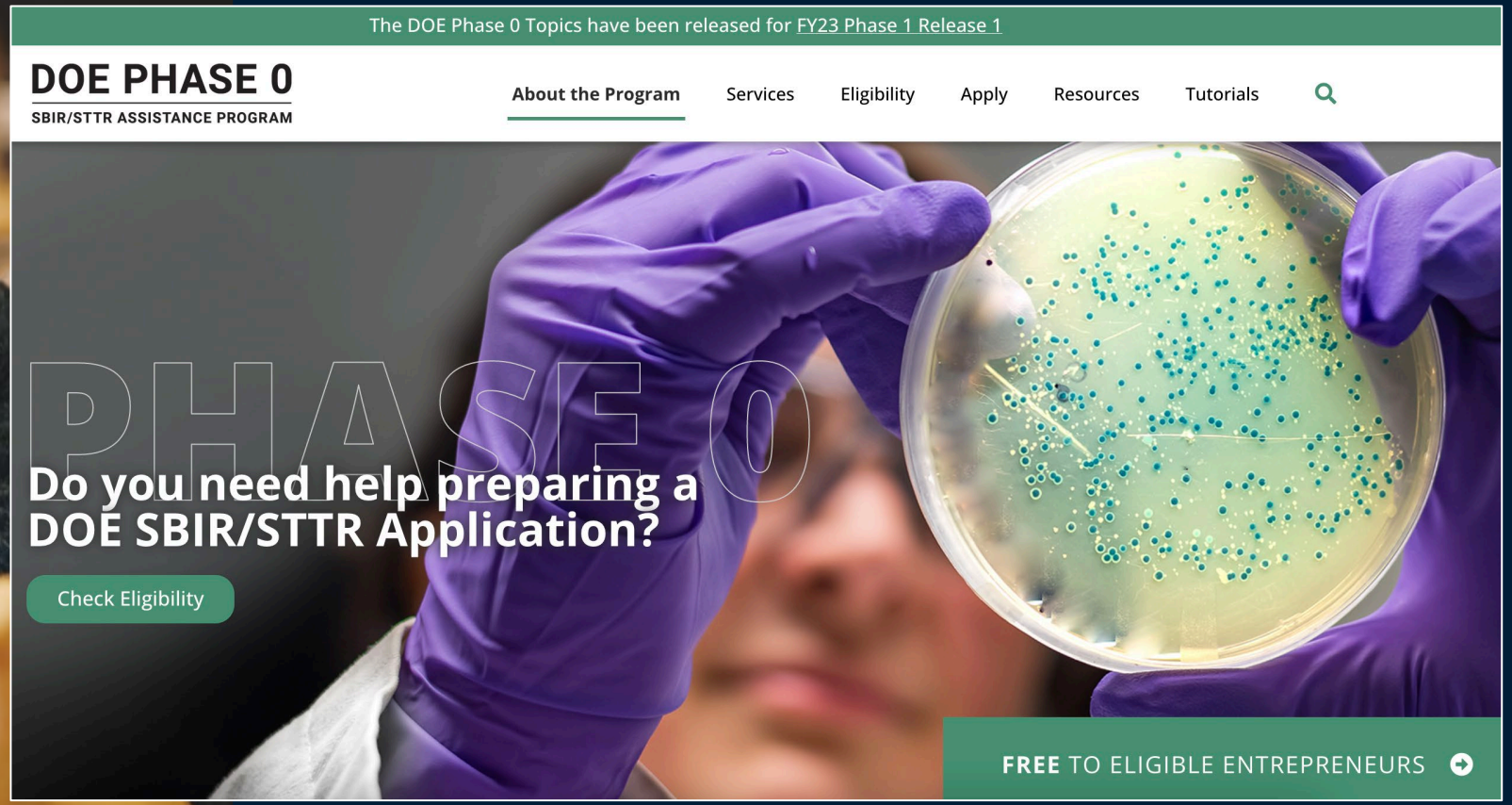
Free Help with SAM Registration – and other government contracting issues.

System for Award Management (SAM) registration ***is FREE***, and your PTAC can help you with this *and everything else you need* to sell to federal, state and local government agencies at little or no charge

- **Workshops and Matchmaking Events** teach you what you need to know and connect you with other businesses and agency buyers.
- **One-on-One Counseling** tailored to your specific needs – ***always free*** of charge!

Find your PTAC now! »

DOE Phase 0



DAWNBREAKER®

Sample email to Topic Manager

Dear [Insert Topic Manager Name]

By way of introduction my name is [insert name] and I am [describe affiliation]. I have reviewed the current Funding Opportunity Announcement [FOA] and am interested in Topic#, Subtopic Y. After reviewing the topic and subtopic carefully, as well as the links and references, I have a few lingering questions that I would like to discuss with you. Would you have time in the next couple of days for a brief, 10-15 minutes phone call? A brief conversation with you will help me determine if I can submit a responsive proposal. Please recommend a time when I may call you.

My questions relate to: [insert 1 or 2 of your key questions – the following is an example - *technology approaches - are there certain approaches which are of no interest to DOE? what are the performance expectations in Phase I as opposed to Phase II?*]

Thanks for your consideration of my request.

Set up weekly calls to secure feedback

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What is a Letter of Intent (LOI)?

- **A Letter of Intent (LOI) is NOT a letter**
  - It is a brief description of what you intend to propose. Guidelines are provided by DOE
  - There is a set format and length
- **To prepare this well, you should study the topic, listen to the topic webinar, ask the Topic author questions and follow the instructions that DOE provides**

U.S. Department of Energy

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and
Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Program

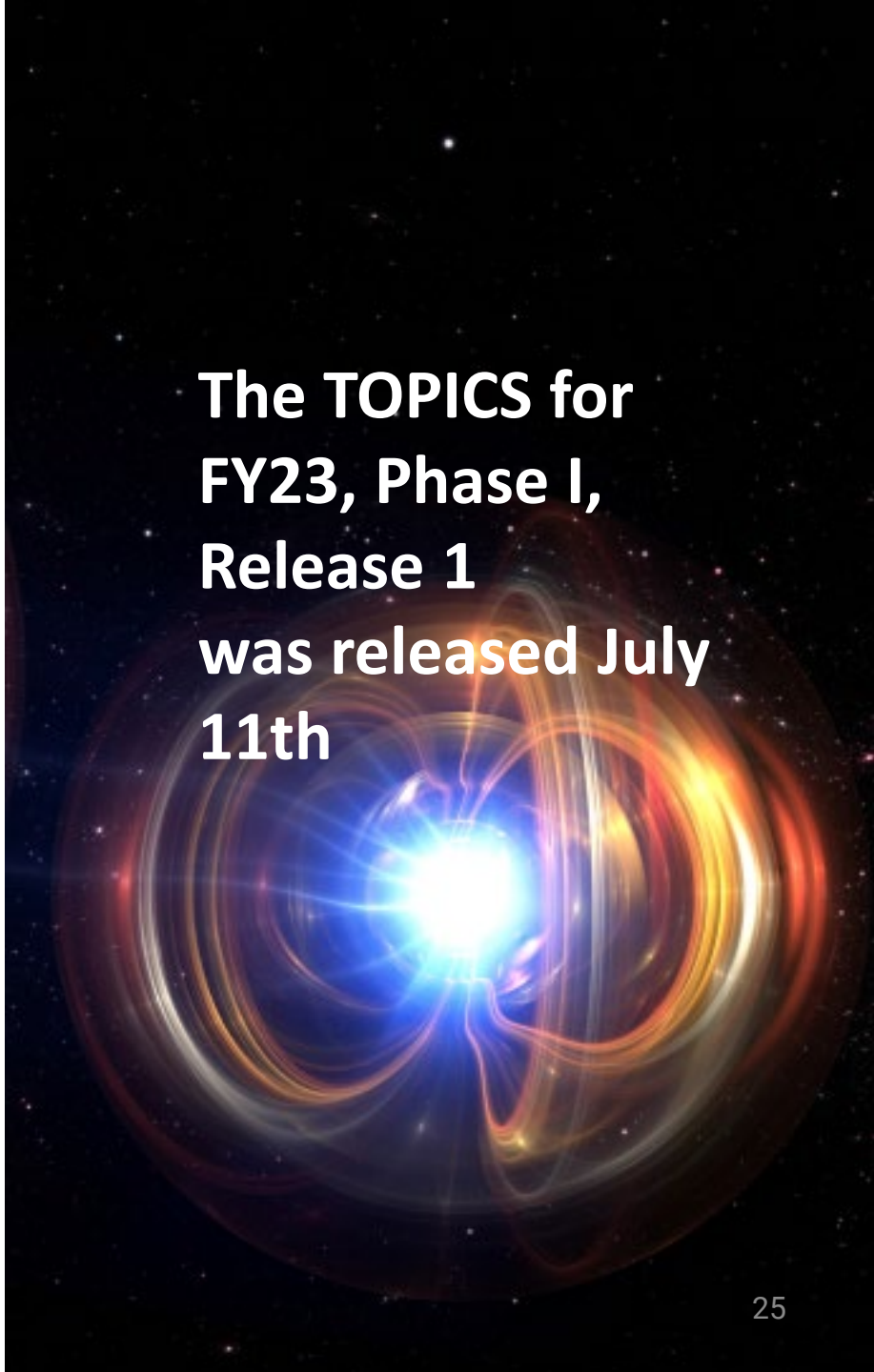
Topics
FY 2023
Phase I
Release 1

Version 2, July, 15, 2022

- Office of Advanced Scientific Computing Research
- Office of Basic Energy Sciences
- Office of Biological and Environmental Research
- Office of Nuclear Physics

Download the topics today!

The TOPICS for FY23, Phase I, Release 1 was released July 11th



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The Project narrative is the heart of the proposal

Cover Page

Proprietary Data Legend

1.0 Identification and Significance of the Problem or Opportunity, and Technical Approach

2.0 Anticipated Public Benefits

3.0 Technical Objectives

4.0 Work Plan

5.0 Performance Schedule

6.0 Facilities/Equipment

7.0 Research Institution

8.0 Other Consultants and Subcontractors

9.0 Bibliography and References Cited

From FOA

- **Identification and Significance of the Problem or Opportunity, and Technical Approach – Define the specific technical problem or opportunity addressed by your application. Provide enough background information so that the importance of the problem/opportunity is clear. Indicate the overall technical approach to the problem/opportunity and the part that the proposed research plays in providing needed results.**

- **Anticipated Public Benefits – Discuss the technical, economic, social, and other benefits to the public as a whole anticipated if the project is successful and is carried over into Phases II and III. Identify specific groups in the commercial sector as well as the Federal Government that would benefit from the projected results. Describe the resultant product or process, the likelihood that it could lead to a marketable product, and the significance of the market.**

Letter of Intent

- **A Technical Abstract in .PDF format must be uploaded to PAMS, must not exceed 500 words and two pages, and it must provide sufficient technical description of the proposed technology and application to allow DOE to assign technical reviewers to the full grant proposal. The technical abstract may include photos and/or tables, and captions are not included in word count. However, please note that a technical abstract must not contain any proprietary information."**

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Thinking Within Constraints

Work Plan

Skills needed?

Time

6, 9, 12 months

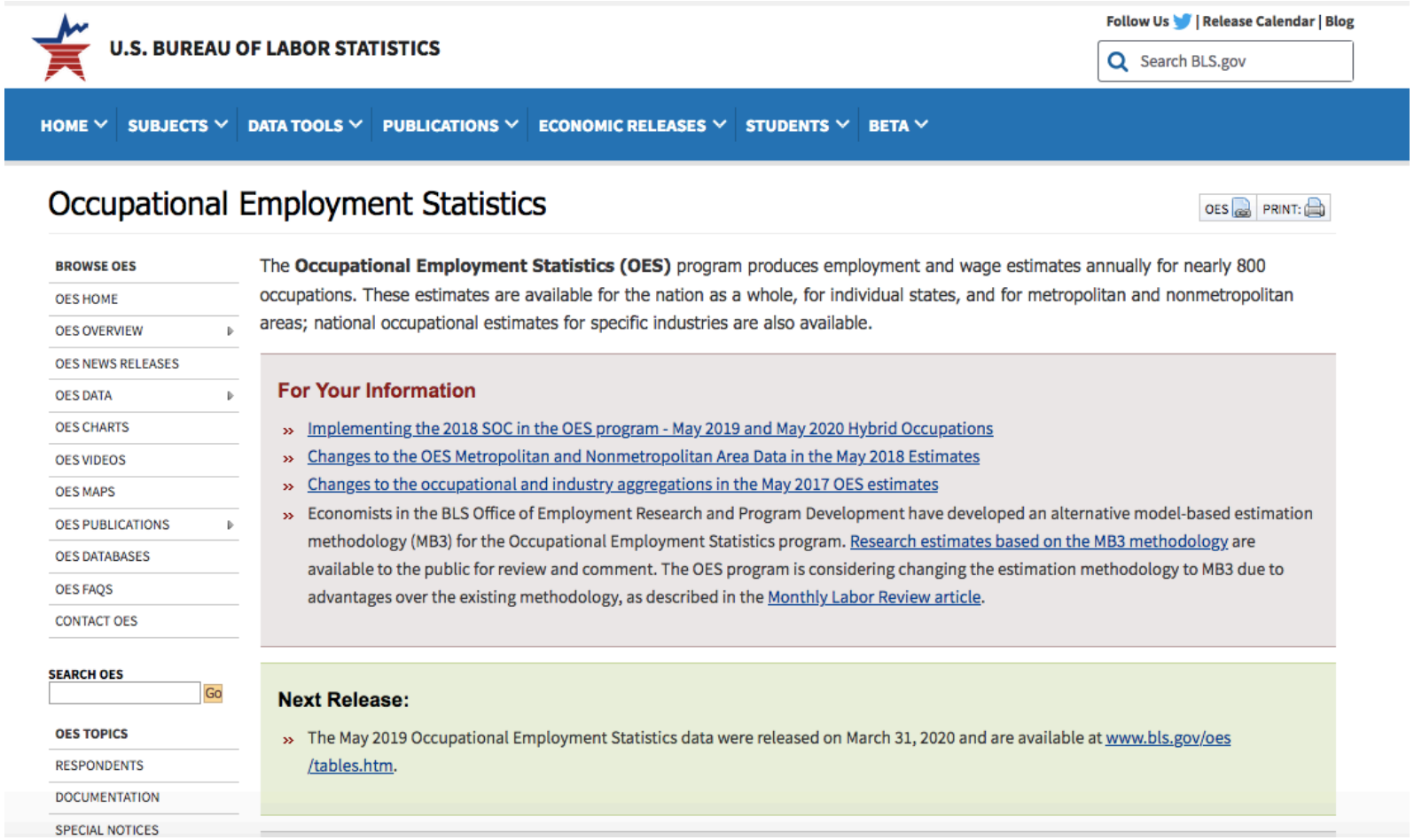
$

Reasonable wage?

What additional staff do I need?
What can I afford?
How do I find them?
What paperwork do I need?

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Search by state and profession



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9/5-9/11	Labor day	Start assessing Work plan, staff and budget trade-offs, request market research					
9/12-9/18	Continue refining Project Narrative, focus on staffing, letters, review commercialization plan						
9/19-9/25	Check on SAM status , Grants.gov registration, refine budget, complete project narrative						
9/26-10/2	Review Grants.gov form, secure bio sketches, add markings to project narrative, edit						
10/3-10/9	Continue to work with all threads						
10/10	Columbus	Application Due date					

Thank-you for Joining us today!

Jenny C. Servo, Ph.D.