

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE



# Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA)



## Overview to NDIA S&ET Division Executive Breakfast

L E A D I N G I N T E L L I G E N C E I N T E G R A T I O N

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# Overview

IARPA's mission is to invest in **high-risk/high-payoff** research programs that have the potential to provide the U.S. with an overwhelming intelligence advantage over our **future** adversaries

- **CAVEAT: HIGH-RISK/HIGH-PAYOFF IS NOT A FREE PASS FOR STUPIDITY.**
- **Bring the best minds to bear on our problems.**
  - World-class Program Managers (PMs).
    - IARPA will not start a program without a good idea and an exceptional person to lead its execution.
  - Full and open competition to the greatest possible extent.
- **Cross-community focus.**
  - Address cross-community challenges & leverage community expertise
  - Work transition strategies and plans



# The “Heilmeier Questions”

1. What are you trying to do?
2. How does this get done at present? Who does it? What are the limitations of the present approaches?
  - Are you aware of the state-of-the-art and have you thoroughly thought through all the options?
3. What is new about your approach? Why do you think you can be successful at this time?
  - Given that you’ve provided clear answers to 1 & 2, have you created a compelling option?
  - What does first-order analysis of your approach reveal?
4. If you succeed, what difference will it make?
  - Why should we care?
5. How long will it take? How much will it cost? What are your mid-term and final exams?
  - What is your program plan? How will you measure progress? What are your milestones/metrics? What is your transition strategy?



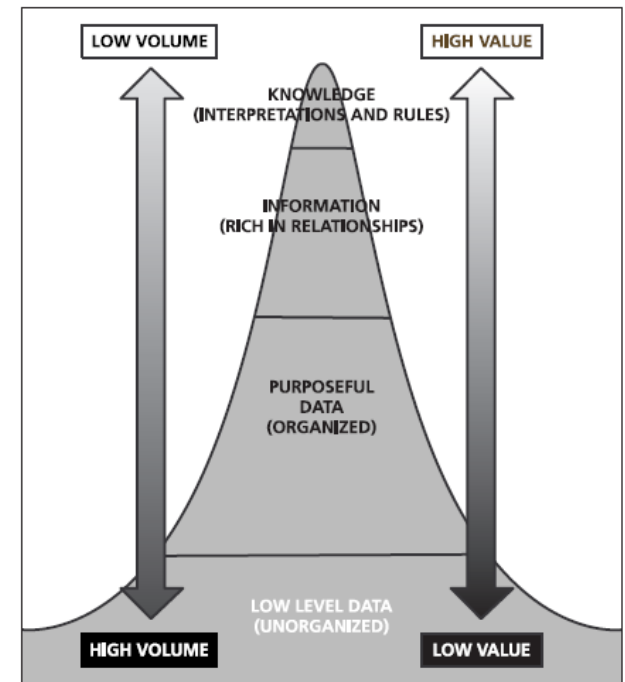
## The “P” in IARPA is very important

- Technical and programmatic excellence are required
- Each Program will have a clearly defined and measurable end-goal, typically 3-5 years out.
  - Intermediate milestones to measure progress are also required
  - Every Program has a beginning and an end
  - A new program may be started that builds upon what has been accomplished in a previous program, but that new program must compete against all other new programs
- This approach, coupled with rotational PM positions, ensures that...
  - IARPA does not “institutionalize” programs
  - Fresh ideas and perspectives are always coming in
  - Status quo is always questioned
  - Only the best ideas are pursued, and only the best performers are funded.



## The Three Strategic Thrusts (Offices)

- **Smart Collection:** dramatically improve the value of collected data
  - Innovative modeling and analysis approaches to identify where to look and what to collect.
  - Novel approaches to access.
  - Innovative methods to ensure the veracity of data collected from a variety of sources.
- **Incisive Analysis:** maximizing insight from the information we collect, in a timely fashion
  - Advanced tools and techniques that will enable effective use of massive volumes of multiple and disparate sources of information.
  - Innovative approaches that dramatically enhance the analytic process.
- **Safe and Secure Operations:** countering new capabilities of our adversaries that could threaten our ability to operate effectively in a networked world
  - “Cybersecurity”
  - Quantum information science & technology





## How to engage with IARPA

- **Website:** [www.iarpa.gov](http://www.iarpa.gov)
  - Reach out to a PM or an Office Director (OD). Contact information is on the website.
  - Schedule a visit if you are in the DC area, or invite us to visit you.
- **Opportunities to Engage:**
  - Program BAAs.
    - Proposers Days are a great opportunity to learn in advance what is coming, and to influence the BAA.
    - Proposals are typically due 45-60 days after the BAA is published in order to be considered for the first round of evaluation, but most are open for a year.
    - Read carefully. Follow instructions. Read posted Q&As and send Qs if you don't understand something. Watch for amendments.
  - Office-Wide BAAs for “Seedlings”
    - “Seedlings” are typically 9-12 months in duration. Intended to flesh out an idea to determine if a full program is warranted.
    - Each Office has one. Open year round. New topics get added periodically.
    - Contact a PM or OD before submitting an abstract or proposal.
  - Requests for Information (RFIs)
    - Often lead to workshops and ultimately programs; opportunity to provide input as a PM is thinking about a new program.



## Concluding Thoughts

- Our problems are complex and truly multidisciplinary.
- Technical Excellence & Technical Truth
  - Scientific Method
  - Peer/independent review
  - Full and open competition
- We are looking for outstanding PMs.
- How to find out more about IARPA:

[www.iarpa.gov](http://www.iarpa.gov)