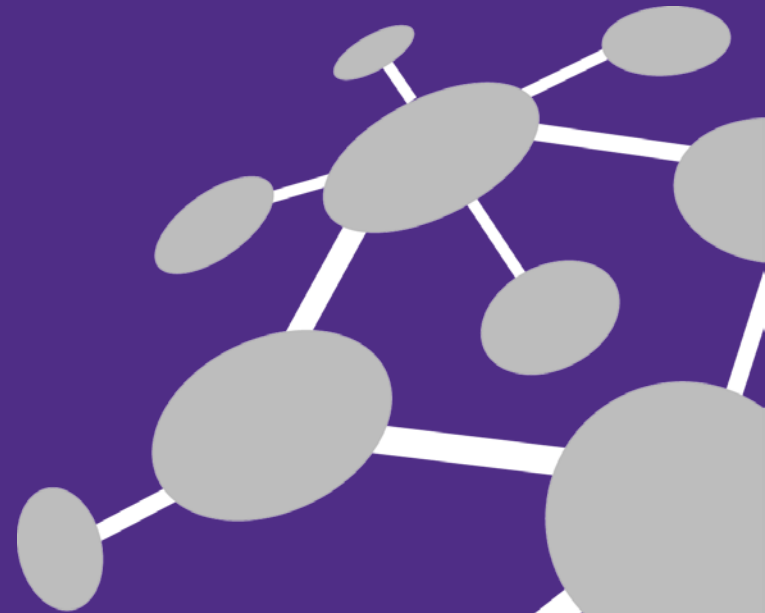# OTAs – Role of the Consortium Management Firm and Lessons Learned

Presented to Chemical Biological Defense Acquisition Initiatives Forum

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Advanced Technology International (ATI)

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History of ATI

- Non-profit, professional consortium management firm

- ATI lessens the burden of government by coordinating and executing our nation's most innovative research initiatives

- Current R&D portfolio:
  - Prototype OTA Consortia
    - National Armaments Consortium/DoD Ordnance Tech Consortium
    - National Spectrum Consortium
    - Medical CBRN Defense Consortium
    - Vertical Lift Consortium
    - Medical Technology Enterprise Consortium
    - Border Security Technology Consortium
    - Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Consortium
    - Space Enterprise Consortium
  - National Shipbuilding Research Program (Research OTA)
  - Shipbuilding and Composites ManTech Centers
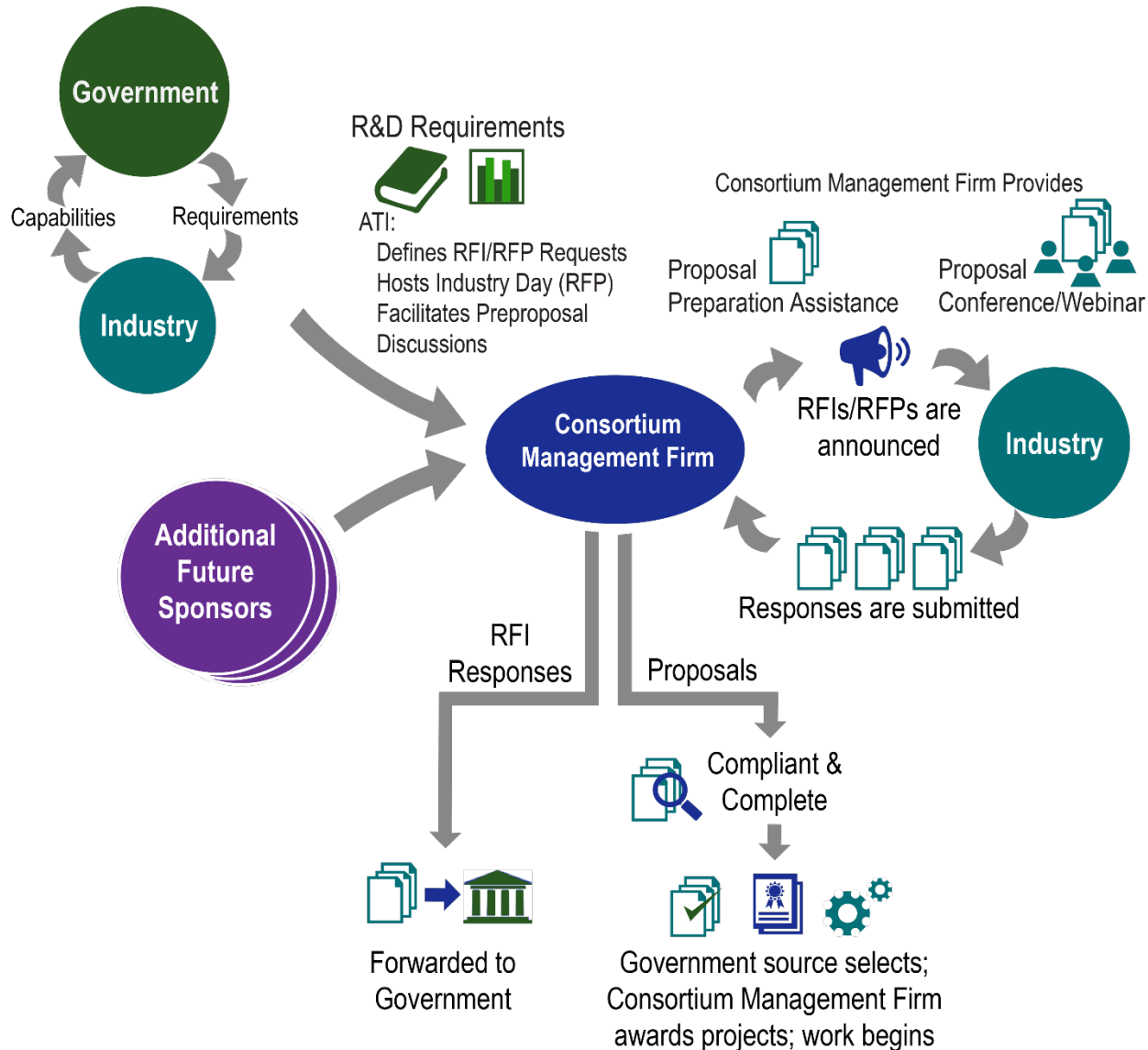
Introduction

The Consortium Management Firm (CMF) is a critical pivot point between Government and Industry
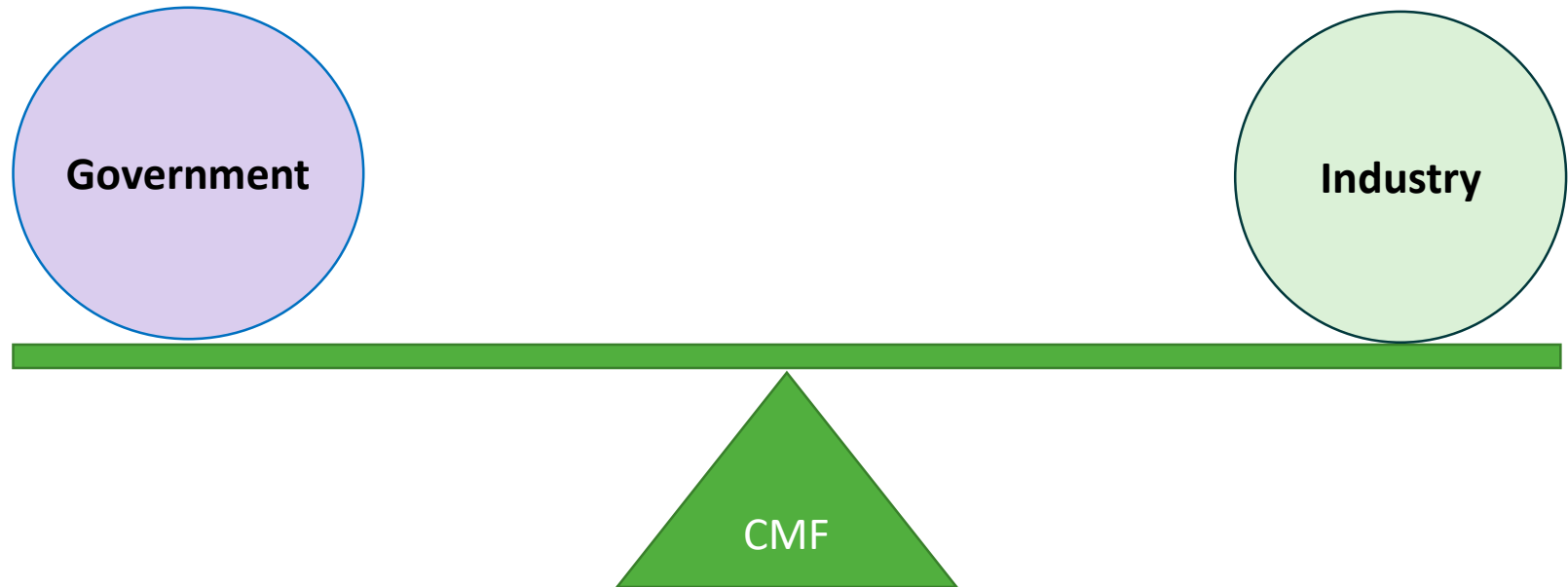
The CMF ensures the needs of both are balanced and met in an efficient and expeditious manner

Single Point Contracting

General Division of CMF Responsibilities

In support of the Government
(funded by Gov customers)

- Solicitation Preparation/Webinars
- Submission Portals
- Whitepaper & Proposal – Receipt/Compliance Review
- Award Processing/Cost Analyses
- Agreement Negotiation/ Award/Admin/Closeout
- Milestone/Deliverable Tracking & Gov't Approvals
- Invoice Receipt/Payment
- Technical and Financial Reporting
- Nontraditional Tracking/ Reporting

In support of Industry
(funded by dues/assessments)

- Consortium Leadership Support
- Meeting Facilitation
- Member Application Processing
- Member Database (DD2345, "good standing" tracking, etc.)
- Dues/Assessment Invoicing & Collection
- Program Status & Financial Reporting
- Conferences/Booth
- Website
- Other Support Services

Establishing a Consortium

- Desired End State: a robust number of qualified providers in each technology area that will be the subject of future research announcements (akin to Broad Agency Announcements)
  - Provides multiple inputs for Government planning
  - Preserves competition at the project level

- Several ways to coalesce the industry-academia consortium
  - Government identifies "must have" industry champion (person or organization); champion assembles core group (including Consortium Manager) that will develop consortium governance
  - Government issues solicitation for a Consortium Manager to build the consortium and present it to the Government
  - Government convenes an "industry day" to encourage industry to self-form the consortium, hire a Consortium Manager and present itself to the Government

Formation and Management

RAPID FORMATION

Rapidly Form Consortium

- Recruit diverse team on dedicated website
- Seat formation committee; approve governance documents
- Use existing network and collect Letters of Intent and capabilities survey
- Identify Executive Director with deep industry knowledge

Ensure Robust Competition

- Post training videos, membership documents and requirements, etc. to teach nontradistionals how to work with government
- Conduct 'How to Join' and 'Upcoming Opportunities' webinars
- Conduct research to ID companies whose capabilities map to requirements

EFFECTIVE EXECUTION

Establish Strong Project Teams

- "Speed Networking" webinars to introduce members to one another
- One-on-one project team meetings
- Meetings with industry experts in specific technology committees
- Government/industry webinars discussing industry state-of-the-art and relevant IRAD within member companies

Grow and Sustain Consortium

- Post and email project opportunities
- Events to stimulate innovation and technical interchange (membership meetings, proposers conferences, industry days)
- Outreach to potential new members
- "How to work with the consortium" webinars for additional sponsors

Build, Grow, Evolve

Contractual Structure/ Relationships

ATI — Advanced Technology International®

Customers
Coordinated by Lead Sponsor and Program Director

CONTROL

FUNDING

Government:

- Selects projects and approves their costs/milestones, etc.
- Approves and modify the SOW
- Provides technical oversight
- Approves deliverables prior to payment
- Redirects or cancels any project not meeting expectation / requirements
- Conducts project / program reviews
- Stage-gates decisions
- Sets terms and conditions
- Delegates subcontracting / payment process execution

Acquisition Agent

Other Transactions Agreement
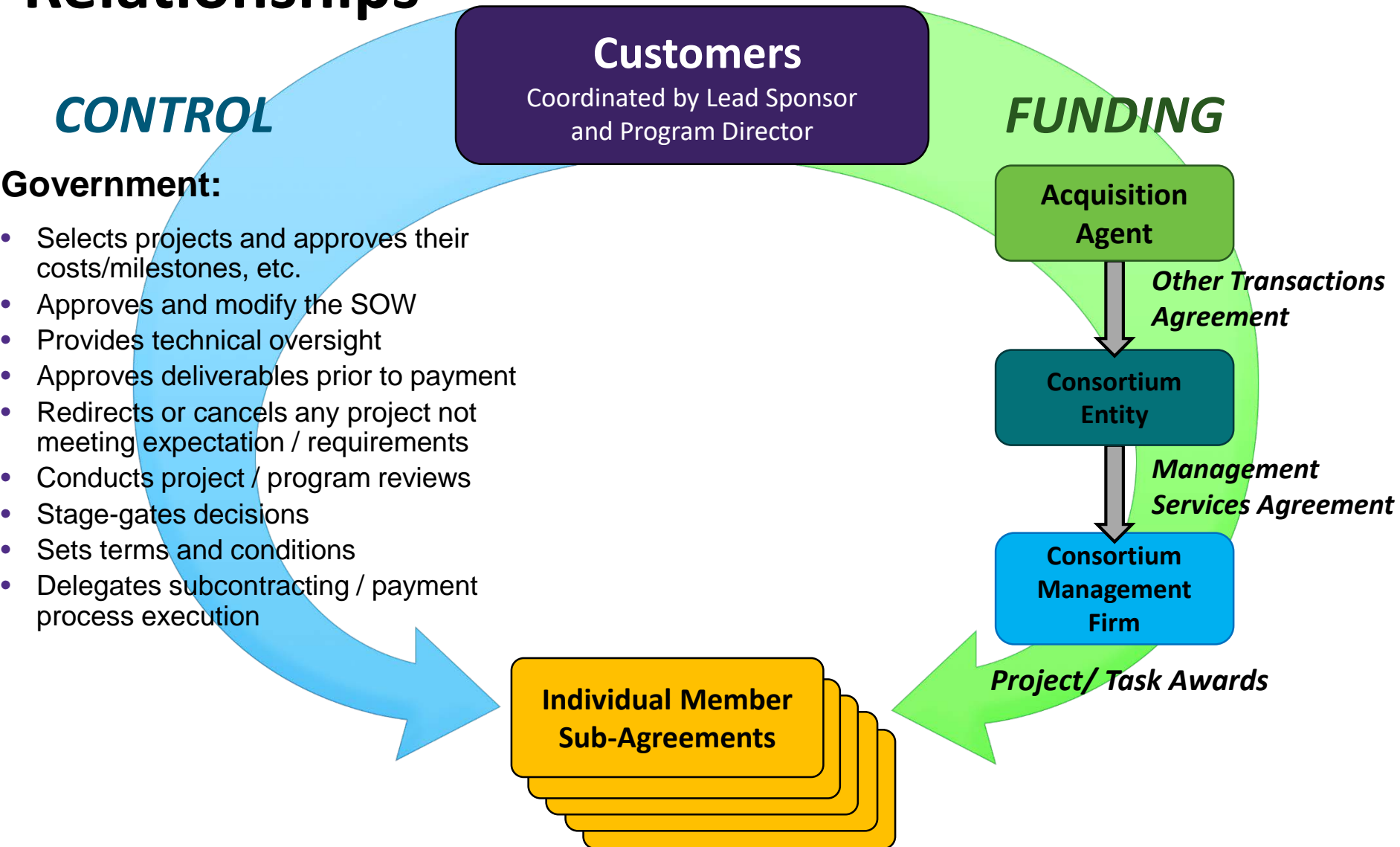
Consortium Entity

Management Services Agreement

Consortium Management Firm

Project/ Task Awards

Individual Member Sub-Agreements

Benefits of the Consortium Construct

- Access to **Innovation**
  - **Single entry point** to hundreds of innovative organizations, many that traditionally do not do business with the Government
  - Consortia average **60-65% nontraditionals**

- **Collaboration** among Government and members
  - Facilitated, active member engagement/teambuilding
  - Better defined requirements
  - More aligned Gov't & industry investment streams
  - Better buying power, fewer redundant investments
  - Cost-efficient enterprise learning curve
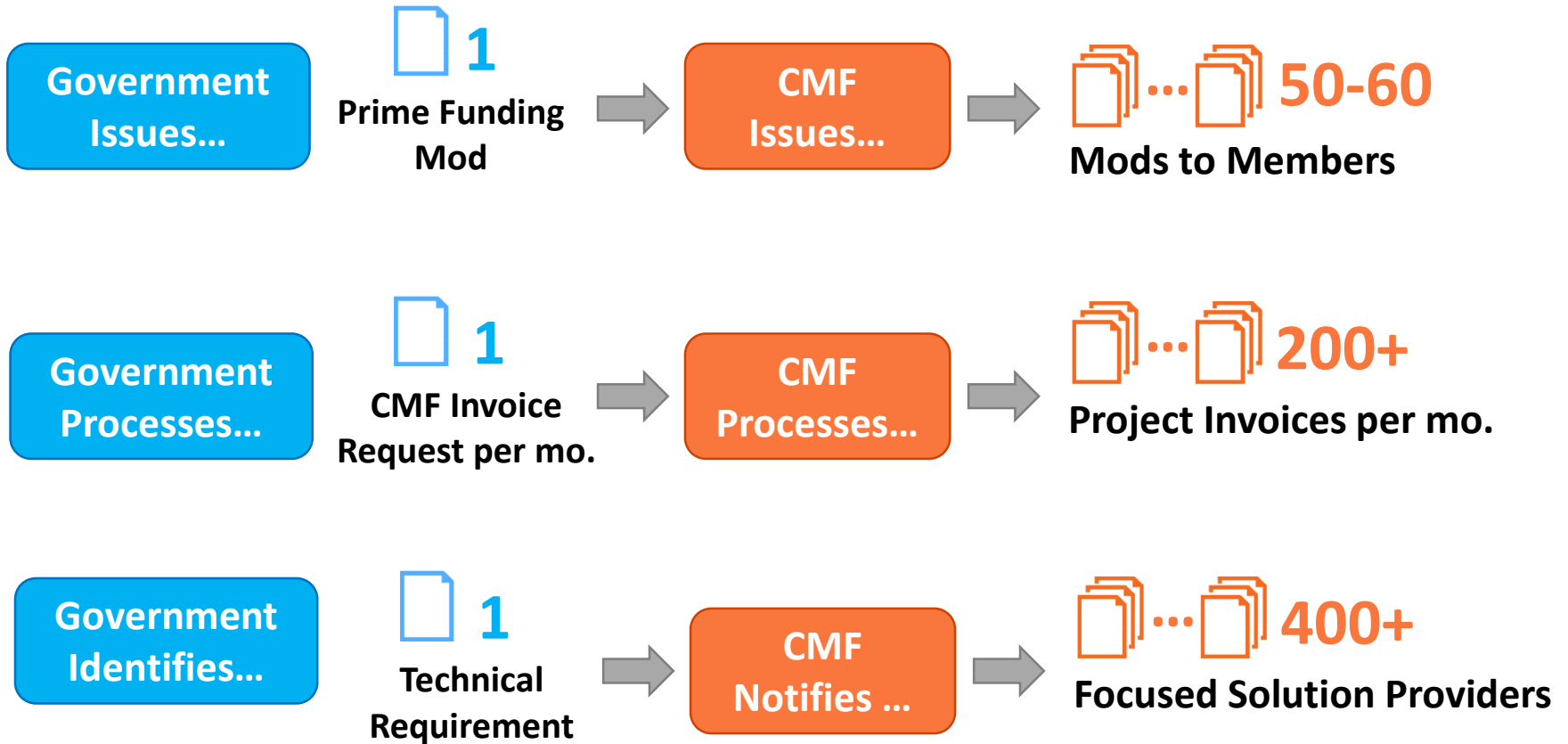
Supporting Competition

- Notices on FBO so non-members are aware of solicitation opportunities (join for details)
- The CMF helps "level the playing field" by offering:
  - Training of new members to indoctrinate them on process
  - Proposers Conferences and webinars, where instructions and templates are explained in detailed
  - Dedicated, on-call support for proposal development
- Offer tools to encourage teambuilding
  - Facilitate in-person collaboration events
  - Networking webinars
  - Online, searchable databases to find teaming partners

Metrics/Statistics

The CMF **alleviates administrative burden** from the Government

| Government Issues… | 📄 **1** Prime Funding Mod | → | CMF Issues… | → | 📑⋯📑 **50-60** Mods to Members |

| Government Processes… | 📄 **1** CMF Invoice Request per mo. | → | CMF Processes… | → | 📑⋯📑 **200+** Project Invoices per mo. |

| Government Identifies… | 📄 **1** Technical Requirement | → | CMF Notifies … | → | 📑⋯📑 **400+** Focused Solution Providers |

Metrics/Statistics

The CMF offers **surge capacity** for peak workloads

| CMF Screened... | 1400 whitepapers | < 1 day | Government |

| CMF Screened... | 600 proposals | < 2 days | Government |

| CMF Processed... | 300 project status reports | < 1 month | Government |

Consortia Lessons Learned / Best Practices

- Must start with a commitment to doing business better by all stakeholders
  - Industry and Academia - Consortium members, Government Program Office, Acquisition and Legal, Consortium Manager
- Non-traditional contractor participation critical to success AND innovation
  - Cost-Share requirement strongly incentivizes meaningful participation
- Low barriers to entry to join consortium - do not want to create a "members only" club mentality
- Continuous Process Improvement
  - Ensure all stakeholders have a say
  - Create win/win
  - Maximize outcomes
  - Avoid "FAR-minus" thinking
  - Combat process creep, strive for efficiency

Consortia Lessons Learned / Best Practices (continued)

- Remain Flexible:
  - One size does not fit all
  - Allow for deviations to occur, especially for larger projects or those of special interest/priority
- Remove Communication Barriers
  - Increased understanding of Requirement and
  - Increased understanding of the art of the possible (market solutions)
- Plan ahead for growth, leading indicators
- Offer superior customer service

Questions