National Science Foundation

THE NSF 2026 IDEA MACHINE

- **Entrants suggest "grand challenge" questions for future research**
- **Video pitches & public comments**
- **A blue-ribbon panel advises NSF**
- **Best ideas receive public recognition, cash prizes**
- **Launches around August 31, 2018**
- **http://bit.ly/NSF_IDEA_MACHINE**

Identifying new directions for research.

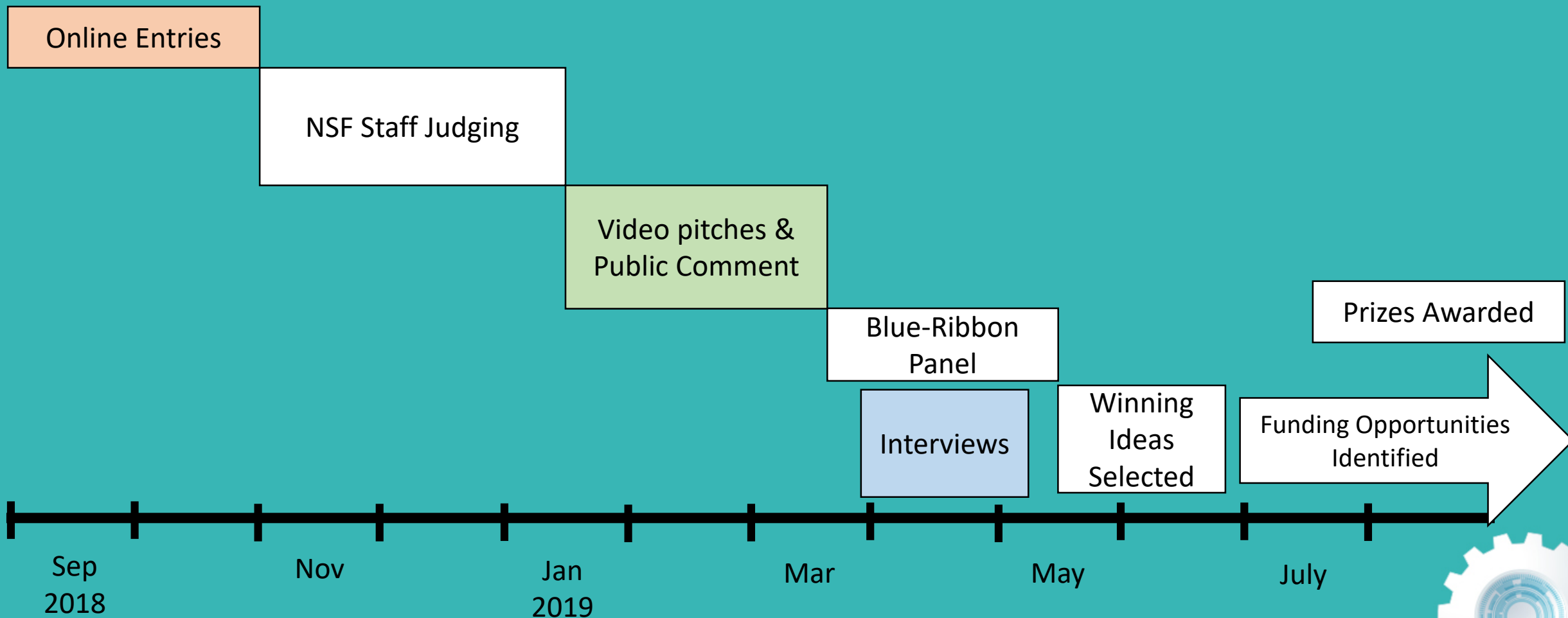| STEP 01	STEP 02	STEP 03	STEP 04	STEP 05	STEP 06	STEP 07	STEP 08	STEP 09	STEP 10
Competition opens/ entries accepted	NSF staff selects 30 representative entries	Videos invited & posted online	Public comments collected; NSF analysis added	Blue-Ribbon Panel picks 12 entries for remote interviews	Blue-Ribbon Panel recommends 6 entries	NSF staff adds analysis	NSF Leadership selects 2-4 winning entries	Prizes awarded for winning ideas	Funding opportunities

"If you want to have good ideas, you must have many ideas; ... and what you have to learn is which ones to throw away." – Linus Pauling

What makes a good Big Idea?	How will we recognize one?
• Has a worthwhile objective(s) • Ambitious & challenging; may require a paradigm shift in our thinking • Progress would have significant impact • Requires the talents of the research community • Will attract creative contributions from many researchers • Will benefit many stakeholders, both inside and outside of the research community	2000 >> 30 • Does the same theme emerge in multiple entries? • Is NSF staff exceptionally enthused? • Has this idea already generated excitement among researchers and the public? 30 >> 4 • Did it resonate in the public comments? • Is the Blue-Ribbon panel excited? • Does it make sense for NSF?

National Science Foundation