

# Best Practices for 'Internal Competition' Management



## 8th Annual NORDP Research Development Conference

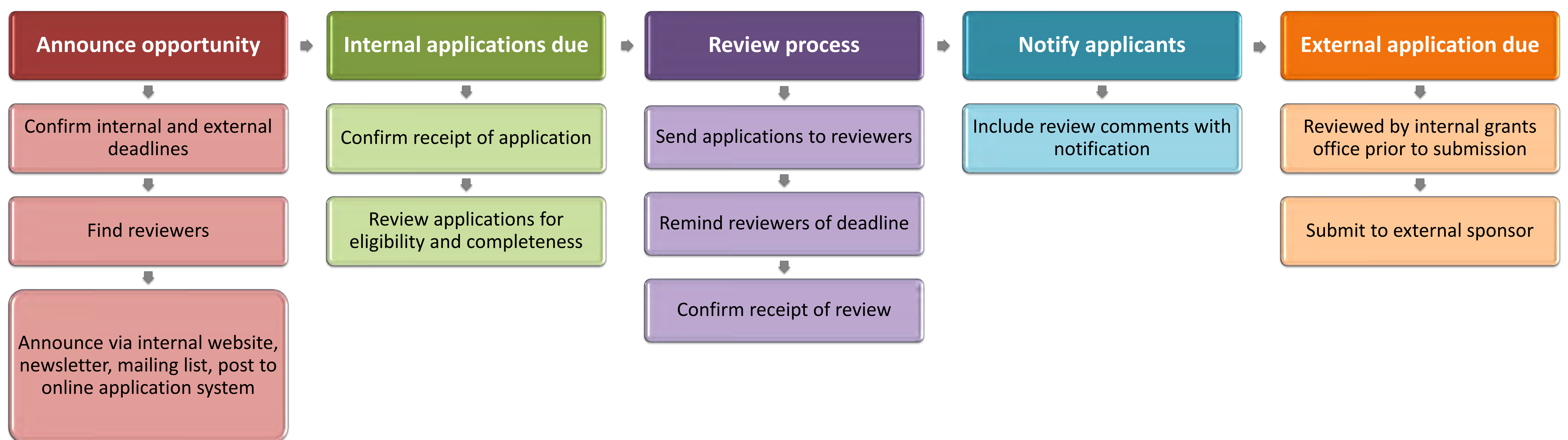
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### Abstract

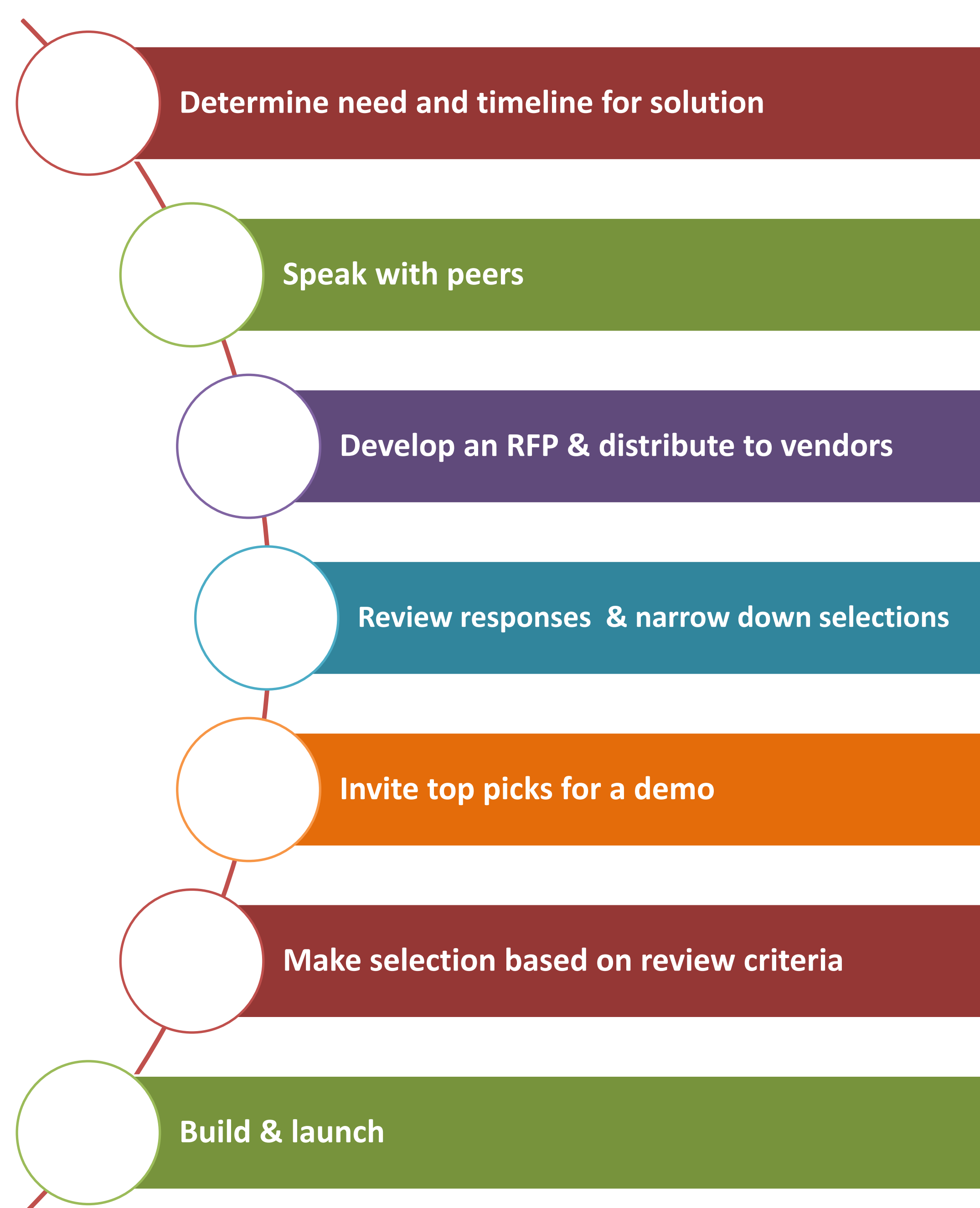
Within Research Development, the emerging area of 'internal competition' is receiving more attention as a way to carefully manage applications for institutional funds, external limited submission opportunities, laboratory bridging support, seed/pilot grants, and other scholarly support programs. Strong internal competition business practices put forward the most competitive applications for external funding and organize institutional funds behind projects in line with the institution's strategic objectives, such as bridging projects most likely to return to being financially self-sustaining or seeding early stage high risk/high reward investigations.

Haphazard internal competition is giving way to organized management. The recent arrival of vendor-based solutions for internal competition tracking further reinforces the degree to which business process was lacking even in large research institutions. These solutions streamline the process of finding and applying for funding opportunities. A lack of centralized internal competition management will no longer be competitive, as Research Development professionals develop and implement better business practices to manage internal competition by carefully allocating resources and attention. Key challenges include: training dozens of administrators and hundreds of reviewers, assuring compliance among thousands of users, and working with the vendor to add functionality to cover gaps discovered in the field.

### Internal competition workflow



### Evaluating a system / RFP process



### Lessons learned

**Involve IT** throughout the whole process

**People will oppose change**, so it's important that tool is intuitive and easy to use.

**Training is extremely important** – during the University of Michigan Medical School rollout, we had success with an hour-long training session for all administrators

**Leadership must support the related business policy** - the University of Michigan Medical School developed a "Centralized Pilot Programs Policy" which describes the review process and reporting requirements for pilot/seed programs administered within the school; with leadership support, high 90's percentage compliance was attained

**Make sure the system accommodates multiple needs** – consider: awards, bridging support, external limited submissions, pilot grants

**Needs are always changing**, so it's important to work with a vendor that provides a solution where you can provide feedback that will be incorporated

### Conclusions

Centralized internal competition management is here to stay and will differentiate competitive research institutions. The extremely rapid adoption of internal competition management tools and rapid evolutionary software improvements reveal a dynamic area of research development.

