Structural Options for America’s DataHub Consortium

Keith Boyea, Chief, Contracts Branch
January 21, 2022

Office of Budget Finance and Award Management
National Science Foundation
Outline

• Background
• Vision statement
• Key characteristics
• Structural options
• Solution
Background

• The team
• The problem
• The vision
America’s DataHub will coalesce the statistical community and involve the collection, interpretation, analysis, and dissemination of data on science, engineering, technology, and research and development, including innovative services that involve data access and linkage and that address security and privacy concerns.
Key Characteristics

• **Attract and engage broadest set of organizations**

  *Who:* For-profit, non-profit, education, non-traditional contractors, state and local governments, affiliated organizations

  *Why:* Expertise, perspectives, approaches, participation

• **Flexibility**

  *Execution:* Shift and morph

  *Procedures:* Manage uncertainty through relational contracting

  *Terms and conditions:* Attract non-traditional contractors
Structural Options

- Traditional contract
- Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC)
- Financial assistance agreement
- NSF “Other Arrangement” authority
FFRDC: Pros and Cons

**Pros**
- Flexibility in length
- Collaborative planning
- Joint budget management
- Prestige and credibility

**Cons**
- Did not meet relational contracting goals
- Price and quality tradeoffs
- No competency-based assessments
- Barriers to coalescing community
- Better for conducting research rather than coordinating
- Limitations in scope and scaling
Structural Options

- Traditional contract
- Federally Funded Research and Development Center
- Financial assistance agreement
- NSF “Other Arrangement” authority
The Solution

Other Arrangement Authority

42 USC 1862(a)(1) and 42 USC 1870(c)

- Longstanding model
- Flexible formation
- Flexible execution
- Ability to coalesce stakeholders
- Relational contracting
Questions?