



Department  
for Business  
Innovation & Skills



## Grant Funding Programme

# ROCG

May10th 2016

Gerald Owenson, Product Owner

Create digital services that support the entire grant funding process, from idea generation to impact reporting, that enables the best possible funding of research excellence

We have until March 2017

- Build the foundation for what grant funding could/should be like in 5 years' time (35-45% of the way towards the vision)
- Build digital capability in the Research Councils and across BIS (skills transfer)
- Replace the current grants management system with a cost effective, flexible, and inter-operable platform
- Allow RCs to spend less time in grant management through the use of digital solutions to improve efficiency
- Create an improved experience for staff, applicants, peer reviewers and panel members
- Reduce the costs of giving out grants to contribute to Research Council's overall operational cost reduction targets
- Ensure that we have the data and MI to make smart decisions for the future.

# Grants Programme Progress

Spring  
Summer  
Autumn  
2015

Winter  
2015/16

Late Spring  
Summer  
Autumn  
2016

- A **Broad Discovery** across all the BIS Grant Givers identified 4 steps all competition grants follow. This led to a **Focussed Discovery** across Research Councils with deep dive into BBSRC, ESRC, and EPSRC.
- Migration into **Alpha**
  - Creating designs and concepts
  - Continued user research into specific process areas
  - Discovery on IT architecture and security issues
  - Recruited team members from BIS and Research Councils
- Building prototypes, creating clickable slides. **Alpha Assessment**.
- Migration into **Private Beta**
  - Further prototyping and user testing
  - Bringing in current OOS areas
  - Preparing for live and future handover to Councils

# The Grants Programme is AGILE

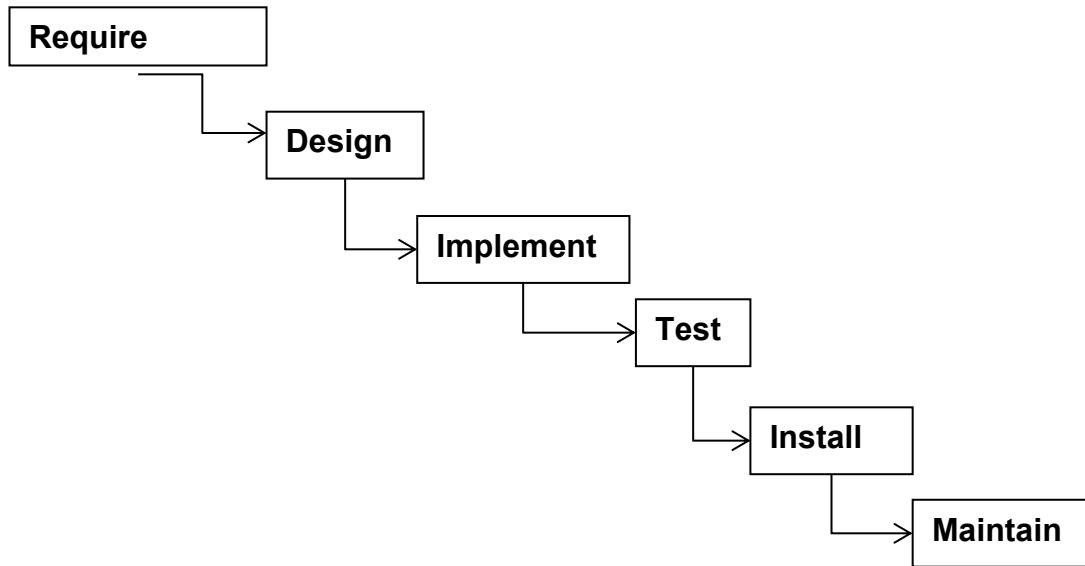
“An agile project is about creating fast iterations of products based on the feedback of real users.

It means regularly releasing small pieces of functionality; constant communication between team members, and using equipment that displays progress being made by your team”

*GDS Service Manual*



# Waterfall v Agile



## Agile Myths:

Anti Documentation, Anti-Planning, Undisciplined

Everything we do is predicated round  
detailed and extensive **USER RESEARCH**

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This enables us to move to effective  
**SERVICE DESIGN**

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Through this we are developing and testing  
iterative **PROTOTYPES**

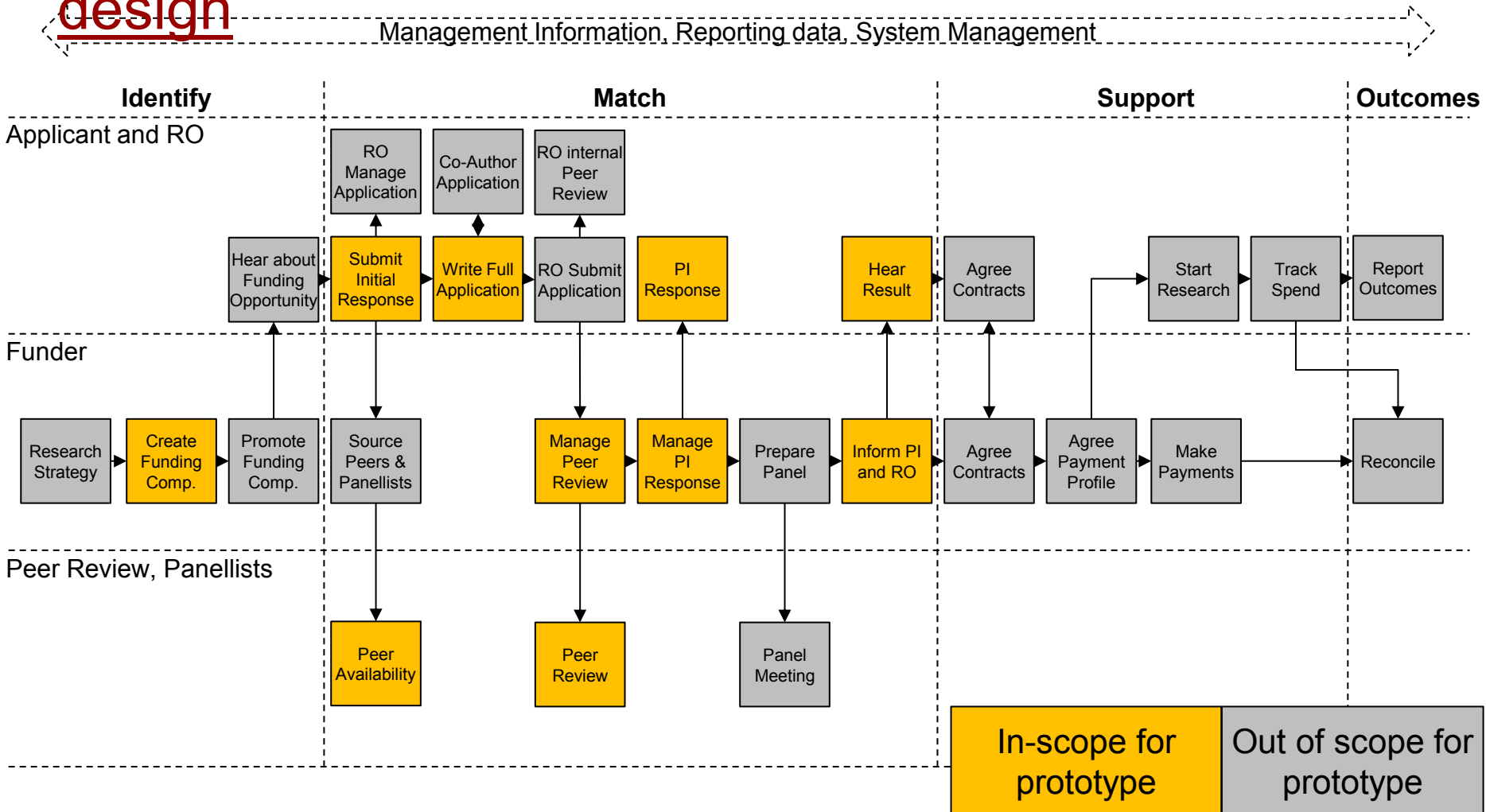
# Focus on the Research Councils

“The effort required for small grants is disproportionate. It’s a bit like the civil service writing a paragraph to justify trident, but then if you want £50k you have to write 20 pages.”

“Oh, research funding can take a year. A year! It’s a good thing that higher education works at the pace of a snail. Because so do all the funding streams.”

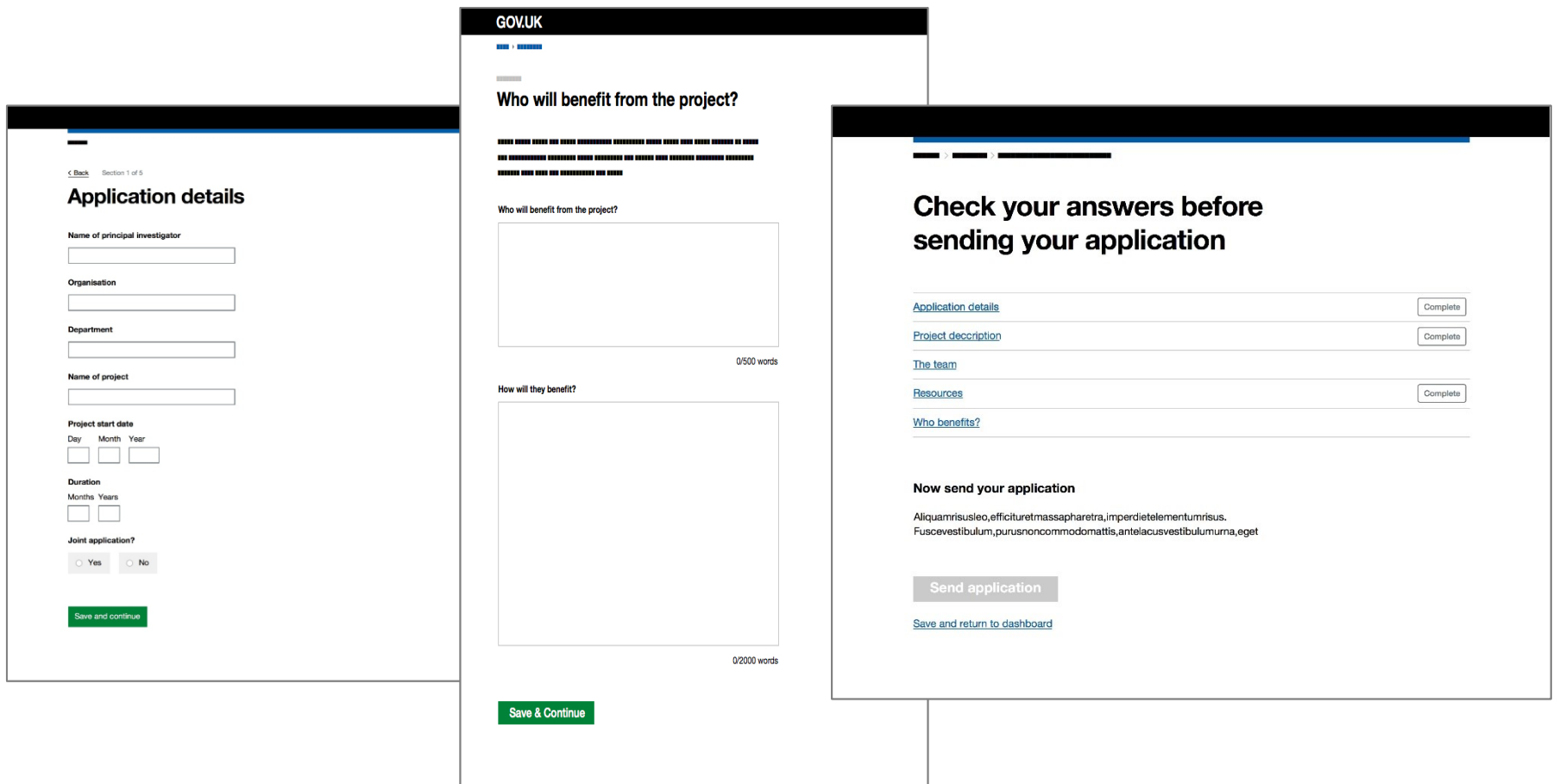
Research Councils have an outdated service and expensive technical estate  
The current service is poor for users, both internal and external.

# Alpha 'build' focused on a sub-set of steps: Both new process and improved design



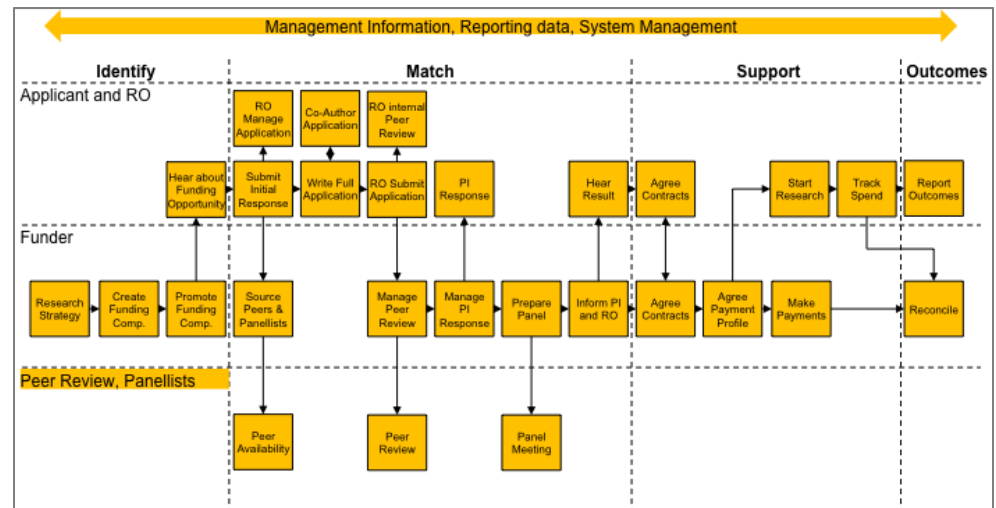


# We have started drafting new screens which will be tested and iterated



# The next stage – Private Beta – will cover all stages

- Research into post-decision has started to inform design
- Concepts proposed at alpha will be tested through screens in beta
- Further testing with a wider set of stakeholders



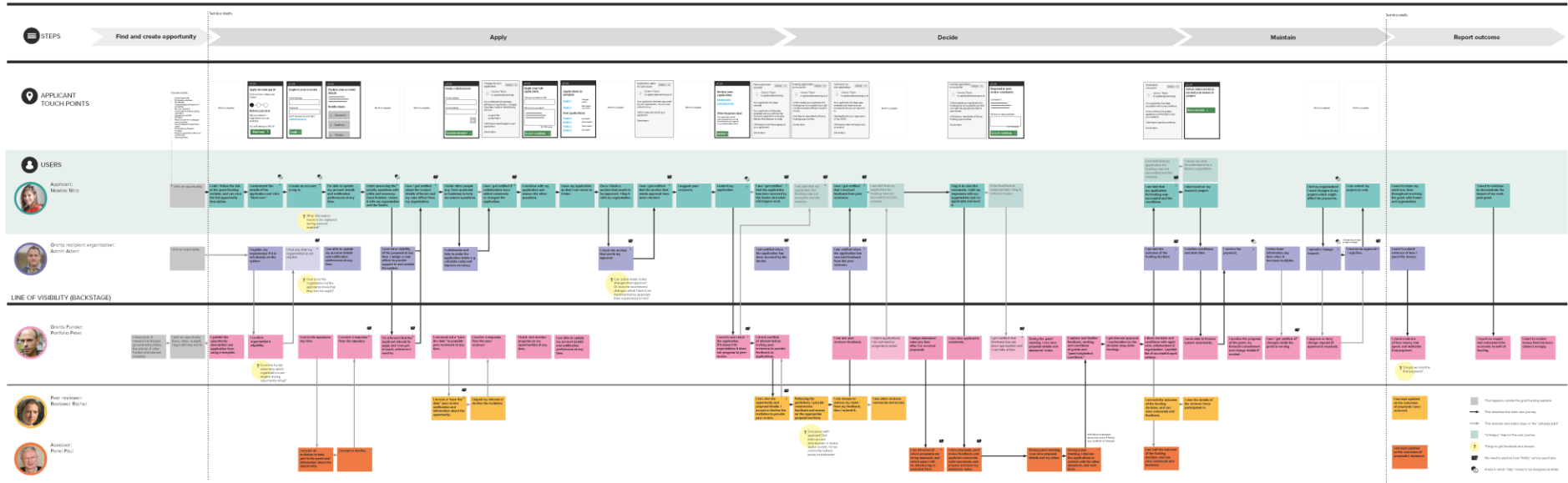
# Managing Complexity

- One Grant Funding Platform with multiple organisations as potential customers
  - Clarity about what we mean by “platform”
  - Technically all possible but implications for Target Operating Model
  - Not starting from scratch, understanding if there are reusable components
- Governance from the Grants Funding Delivery Board, with membership from the programme, from the Councils, from UK SBS and from Innovate UK.

# Service Design

“GETTING A GRANT” SERVICE

Journey Blue Print V2



# Service Design



USERS



Applicant:  
Newble Nina



Grants recipient organisation:  
Admin Adam



Grants Funder:  
Portfolio Peter



Peer reviewer:  
Reviewer Rachel



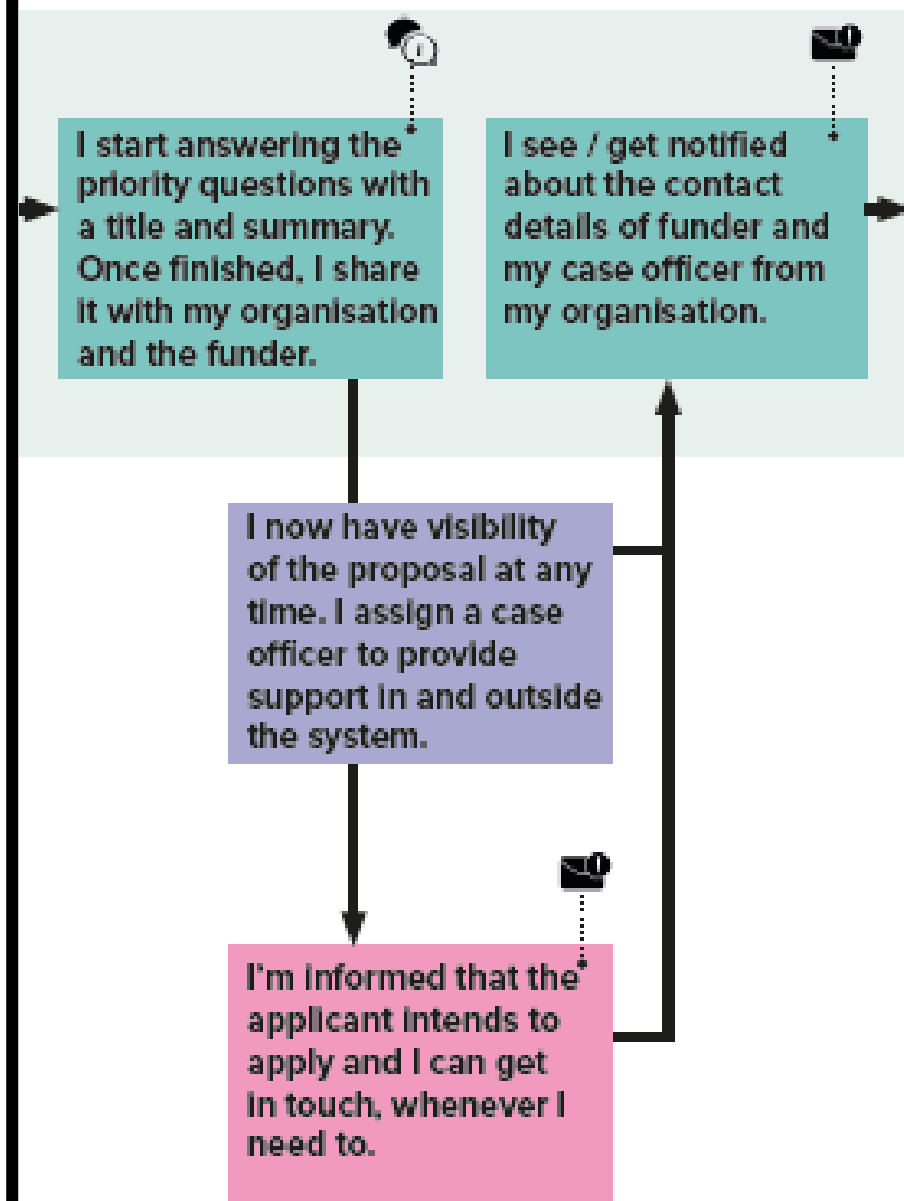
Assessor:  
Panel Paul

# Service Design

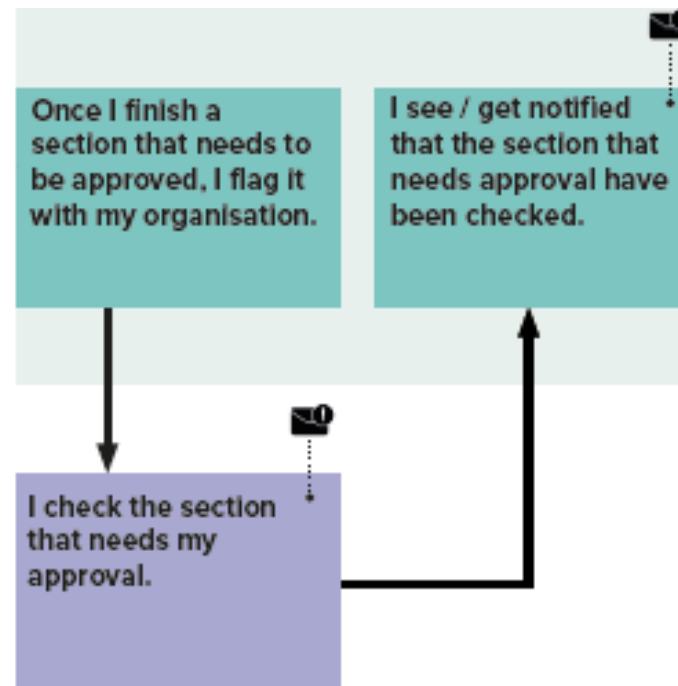
I publish the opportunity description and application form using a template.

I confirm organisation's eligibility.

? Does the funder determine which organisations are eligible during opportunity setup?

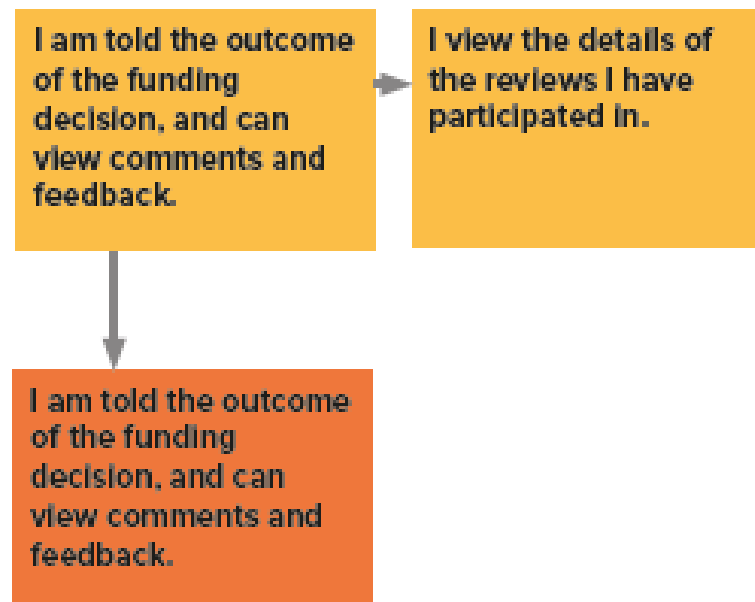
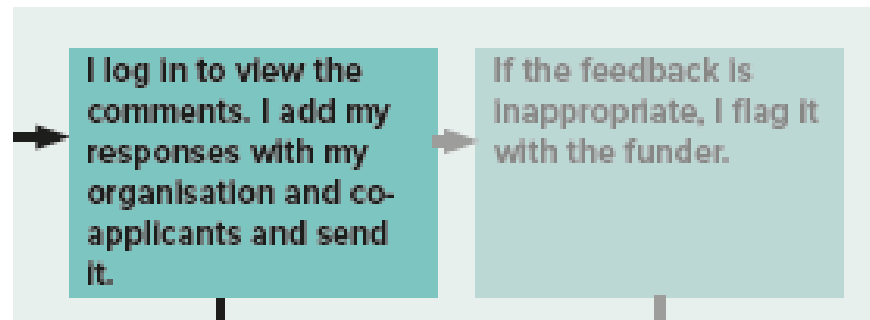


# Service Design



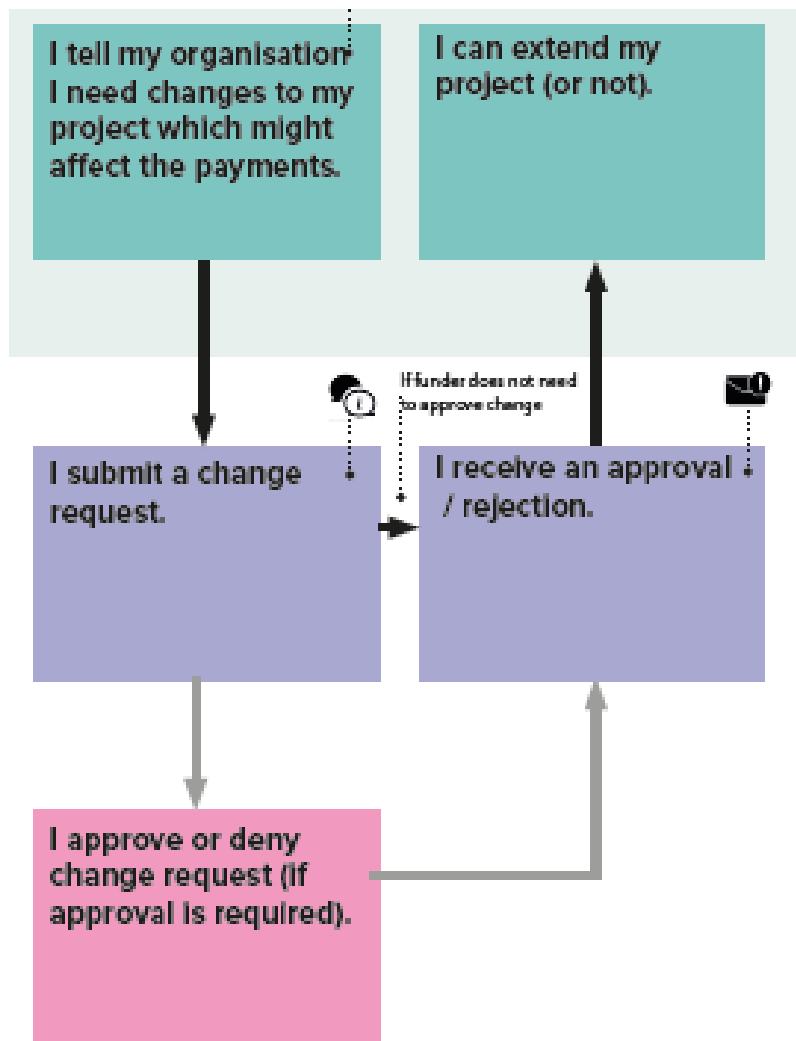
? Can admin Adam make changes then approve?  
Or does he recommend changes, which have to be implemented by applicant, then resubmitted to him?

# Service Design





# Service Design



I need to share my work over time throughout receiving the grant with funder and organisation.

I need to submit evidence of how I spent the money.

I check evidence of how money was spent, and authorise final payment.

I am kept updated on the outcomes of proposals I peer reviewed.

I am kept updated on the outcomes of proposals I assessed.