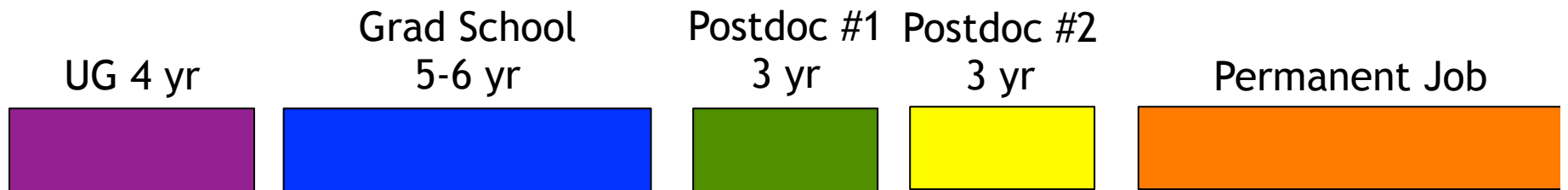
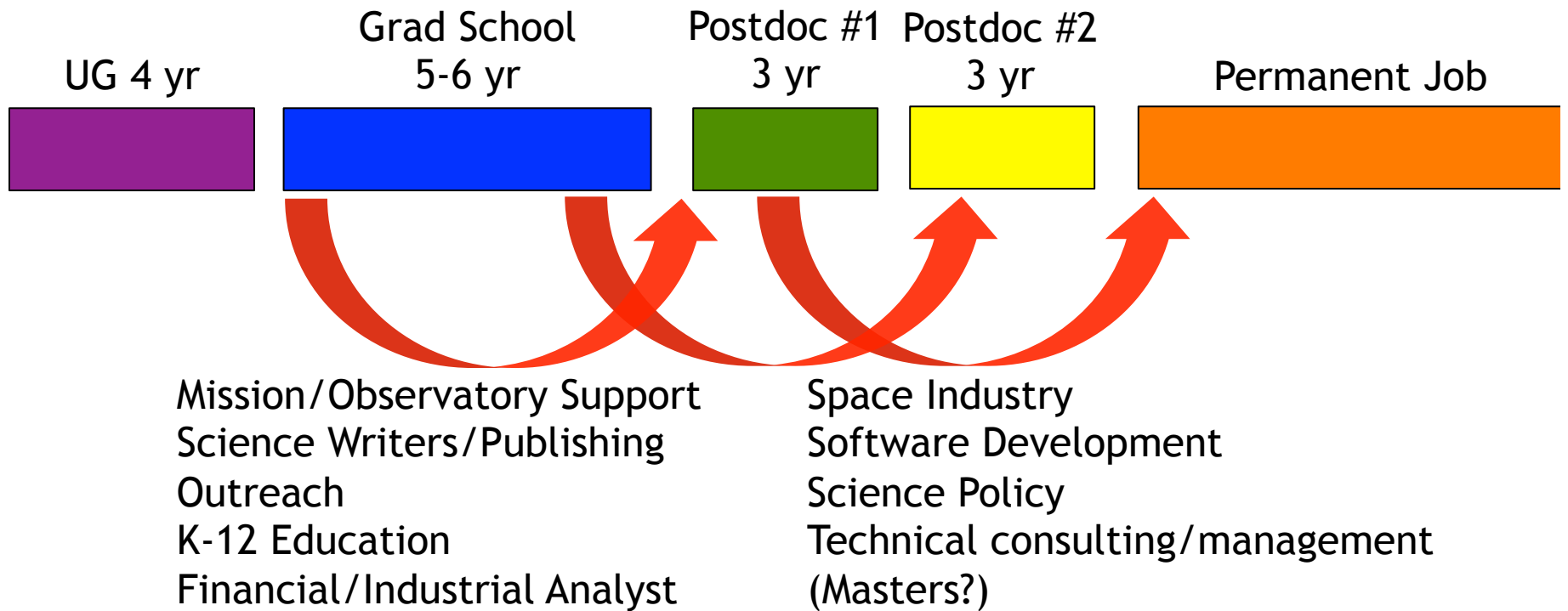


# How to Get Into Grad School and What to Expect the 1<sup>st</sup> Year

# “The Path”



# ~~“The Path”~~



# Basics

- 100-200 applicants, accept 10-20%
- ~60 institutions that grant PhD in Astronomy, but majority of PhDs come from ~15-20 institutions
- Tuition is paid and given a stipend (~\$25,000/yr)
- Being a TA is common, particularly in early years
- Average length is 5-6 years
- Out of PhD 77% accepted a postdoctoral position with a median salary of \$54,000

# Advice (getting in)

- Talk to grad students, postdocs, faculty
- Where? size, research, location, community, “success” rate
- Physics GRE is flawed but important: study, perhaps take twice
- Personal essay should not be major focus: explain your experiences/skills and why this particular institution is a great match for you
- Letters are important: Give writers 1 month warning

# Advice (once there)

- Grad school is significantly different from undergrad
- The 1<sup>st</sup> year is tough. Periodic feelings of doubt, being an imposter, alone are normal. Try to ride it out.
- Build your cohort
- Seek support from older graduate students and postdocs, the Graduate Office, campus mental health office, campus Title IX or anonymous resources, former mentors, national message boards/blogs/forums
- Trust your instincts and be proactive
- Seek out mentors, ultimately your PhD advisor

# Resources

- American Astronomical Society ([aas.org](http://aas.org)) general career advice, list of schools
- Astrobites ([astrobites.org](http://astrobites.org)) timeline for application process, European PhD, deferring, advice once in grad school
- Astrobetter ([astrobetter.com](http://astrobetter.com)) an excellent repository of resources
- American Institute of Physics ([aip.org](http://aip.org)) statistics; ([gradschoolshopper.com](http://gradschoolshopper.com)) filterable search engine for grad schools
- PhDcomics ([phdcomics.com](http://phdcomics.com))