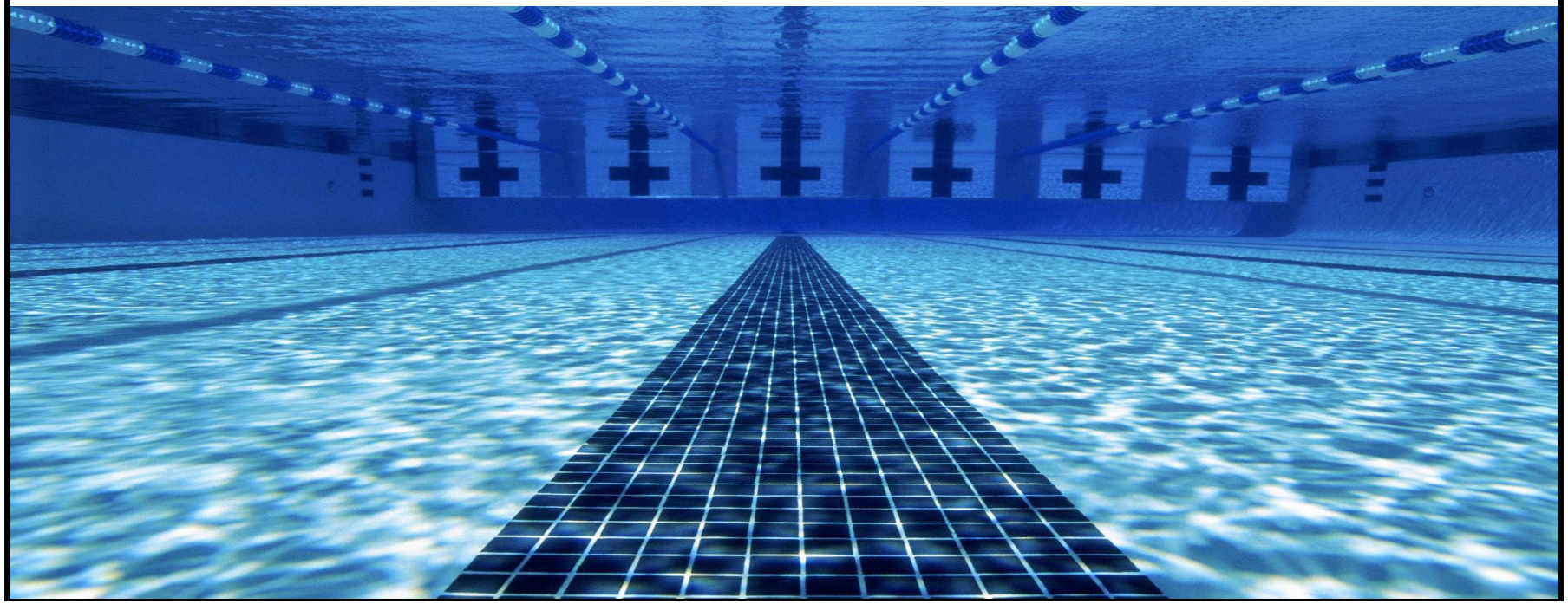
INTRODUCTION TO EVIDENCE FOR NEW, EMERGING AND NON-EVALUATORS

CHARLIE TULLOCH, DIRECTOR, POLICY PERFORMANCE

HALL 2, DARWIN CONVENTION CENTRE (GARRAMILLA)



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I’m really glad to be here!





Keep in mind…

THE LARRAKIA PROTOCOLS

1. Larrakia are the Aboriginal owners of all the land and waters of the greater Darwin and rural area, including identified Aboriginal living areas.
2. Aboriginal law requires respect for the cultural authority of the Aboriginal owners.
3. We speak for our country and we have an obligation, along with our neighbours, to care for our country.
4. Visitors should respect that we retain traditional knowledge, such as stories about significant sites.
5. All visitors are responsible for their behaviour and should respect the guidance of Larrakia.
6. Learning about country is everybody's obligation including visitors, residents, NGOs and government.
7. Inappropriate behaviour reflects badly on Larrakia people and we do not accept it.

Larrakia Protocols - Larrakia Nation

I founded Policy Performance in 2018



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PUBLIC SECTOR EXCELLENCE

FROM STRATEGY TO IMPACT

Our services

Business cases and planning

Policy and business case design to secure funding and use it well

Capability building

Training, mentoring and support to enhance staff skills and confidence

Monitoring and evaluation

Making sense of evidence to understand change over time

Data analytics and visual reporting

Providing compelling answers to critical questions.

We use: SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics, MySQL, R, STATA, SPSS, NVivo, Power BI, Google Analytics, Excel and Canva

Our values

We are an agile team of consultants who live our values. We are:

CURIOUS	*About you, your work and your desired impact*
THOROUGH	*We work logically, rigorously and creatively*
DIVERSE	*We navigate different perspectives and experiences*
PERSONABLE	*We engage genuinely and collaboratively*
THANKFUL	*To work with and for inspiring people*

How we help

We help public sector clients to plan, meaningfully measure and effectively evaluate their priorities. We also train policy and evaluation leaders.

We draw on our multi-disciplinary skills to support a diverse range of sectors. We aim to maximise the public good resulting from government services, to benefit people and habitats in need of support.

Learn more here

We will do three things today…

EXPLAIN CORE CONCEPTS

We will chat about…

- Language and some key terms
- A few different evaluation approaches and methods
- Where and how to develop your evaluation skills further

= Slides, content and thought-provoking discussion

NETWORK AND CONNECT

You will…

- Have a chance to meet at least one other conference attendee

= Introductions and further thought-provoking discussion

NAVIGATE AES26

My thoughts on…

- Self-management

= Helping you maximise your time here

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Evaluators love questions… So please ask me anything…



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Let's start with navigating AES26…

- If this is your first conference, you're at a good one!
  - warmest destination by far
  - a rare conference for the AES (last one here was in 2014)
  - good but not overwhelming number of attendees
  - new conference venue, on the water
  - diverse attendees from governments, non-profits, other countries, academia, philanthropy, consultancy and the AES itself
  - many many speakers to choose from
  - seafront location for the Gala Dinner
  - numerous trade booths with info and giveaways
  - a community of friendly, social and interesting people
  - lots and lots of catering
  - and a diverse array of sessions for new and non-evaluators… !

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Darwin 2014 evaluation – a few findings from last time!

- The Darwin 2014 conference was considered a success by attendees, with improved post-event satisfaction ratings compared to Brisbane 2013, Adelaide 2012 and Sydney 2011.
- Participants were keen to pursue professional learning opportunities, to network with others in the evaluation field and to exchange knowledge.
- The majority of attendees were satisfied with the Venue, citing its relaxed, outdoor environment as a contributor to the overall success of the conference.
- There were a large number of concurrent sessions and short durations of many of these, causing difficulty in selecting and navigating sessions.
- Variable levels of prior evaluation experience impacts on participants' abilities to engage in sessions.



Source: 2014_conference_evaluation.pdf

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This year’s conference – it’s all about self management

- The conference runs from 9am till late each day… and covers a huge amount of content.
  - Sitting down and listening for too long can be tiring
  - Networking/chatting for too long can also be tiring
  - Some of the conference events offer drinks and late nights
- Basically, you will be shattered by the end of day 3 or 2 or 1… !
- Take on the conference in whatever way works for you: mentally, physically, professionally, personally…
- It’s okay to skip a session just to have some time our, or to chat with a connection. You’re already missing more than half of the concurrent sessions, right?

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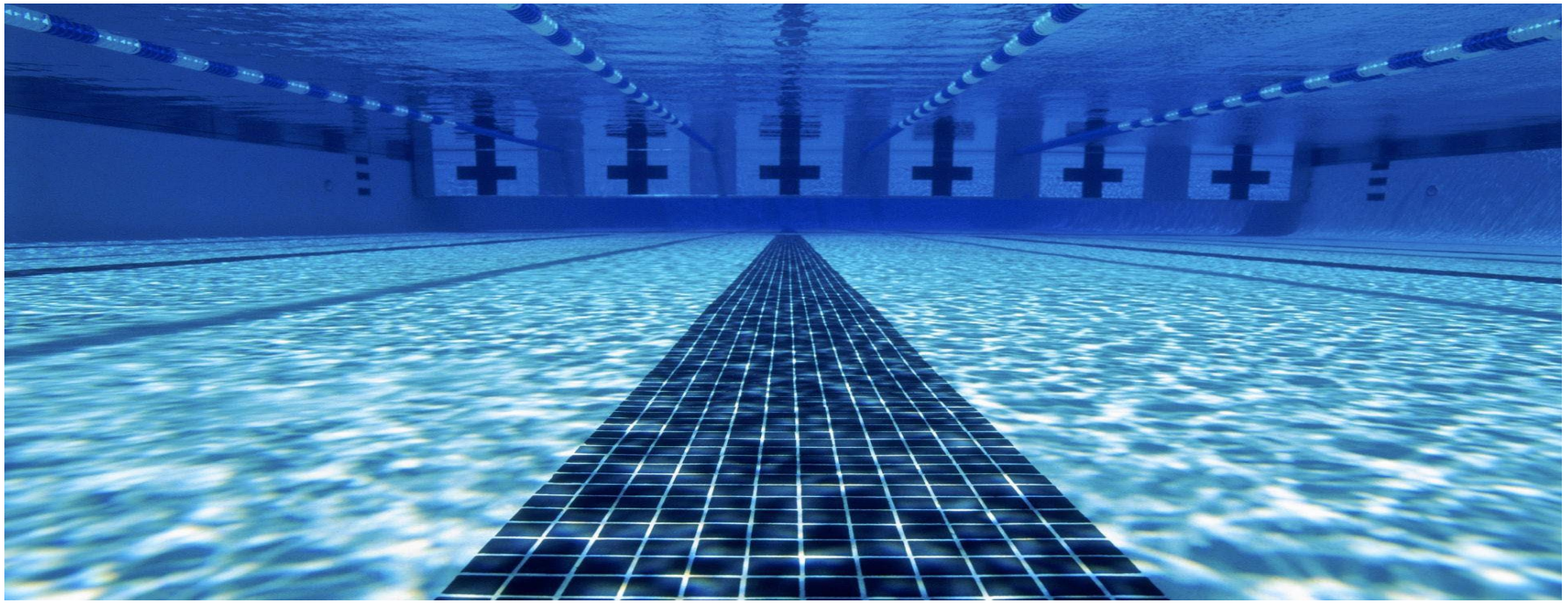
Navigating session choices…

- Unfortunately, some TOUGH decisions will always need to be made, and you will have FOMO… !
- As learners, you really can't go wrong, no matter which sessions you choose
- Use the AES26 app to find your way
- Try every room/space once?
- If you're not sure, follow the biggest crowds
- And consider they types of sessions that you think will work best for you… ignites, 30-min, 60-min, interactive

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CORE CONCEPTS – KEY TERMS

#1 VALUES



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Your values…

Who are you?
Perspective
History
Background
Cultural norms
Religious or other beliefs
Political persuasion
Gender and sexual preference
Interests
Lived experiences

= Biases/attitudes/beliefs

This may influence:
WHAT you evaluate
HOW you evaluate
WHEN/WHERE you evaluate
WHAT you ask/hear/remember and emphasis
WHY you want to evaluate in the first place

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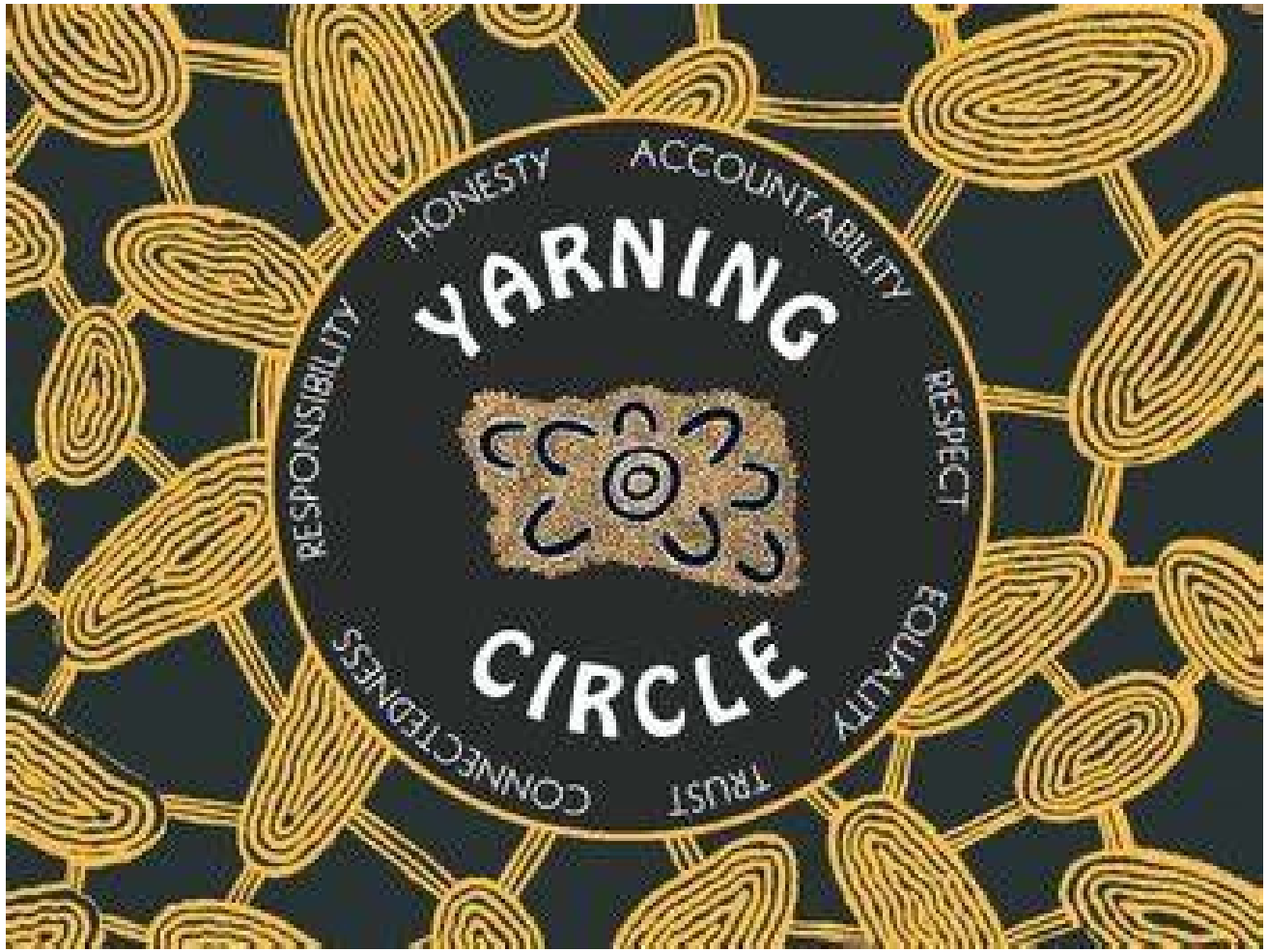
Other people's values…

Who are they?
Perspectives
History
Backgrounds
Cultural norms
Religious or other beliefs
Political persuasions
Gender and sexual preferences
Interests
Lived experiences

This may influence:
WHETHER they seek to be involved
HOW they may view you as an evaluator
WHAT they may wish to discuss
HOW they communicate with you
WHEN/WHERE they are comfortable and open
WHAT they may tell you

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Time to meet someone, to better understand their background, perspectives, values and histories



A few prompts, if you need:

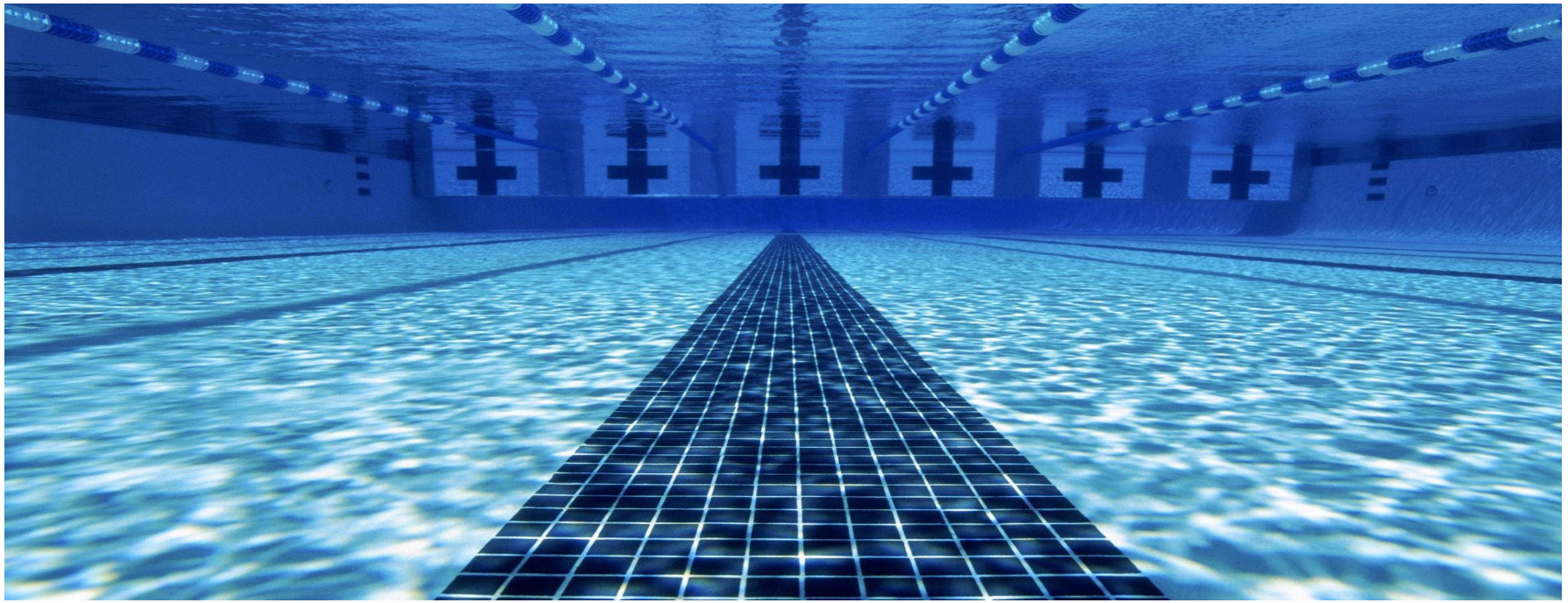
- Why did you decide to attend AES26?
- Do you see yourself as an ‘evaluator’?
- Have you been to AES conferences in the past?
- What are you most looking forward to at this conference?

10 mins

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CORE CONCEPTS – KEY TERMS

#2 MONITORING



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Monitoring

Monitoring

Monitoring is the routine process of progress tracking, with data typically used to understand aspects of program implementation/ delivery and progress against key indicators, in order to support management oversight and real-time decision-making.

It often summarises implementation data, risks and can include emerging findings.

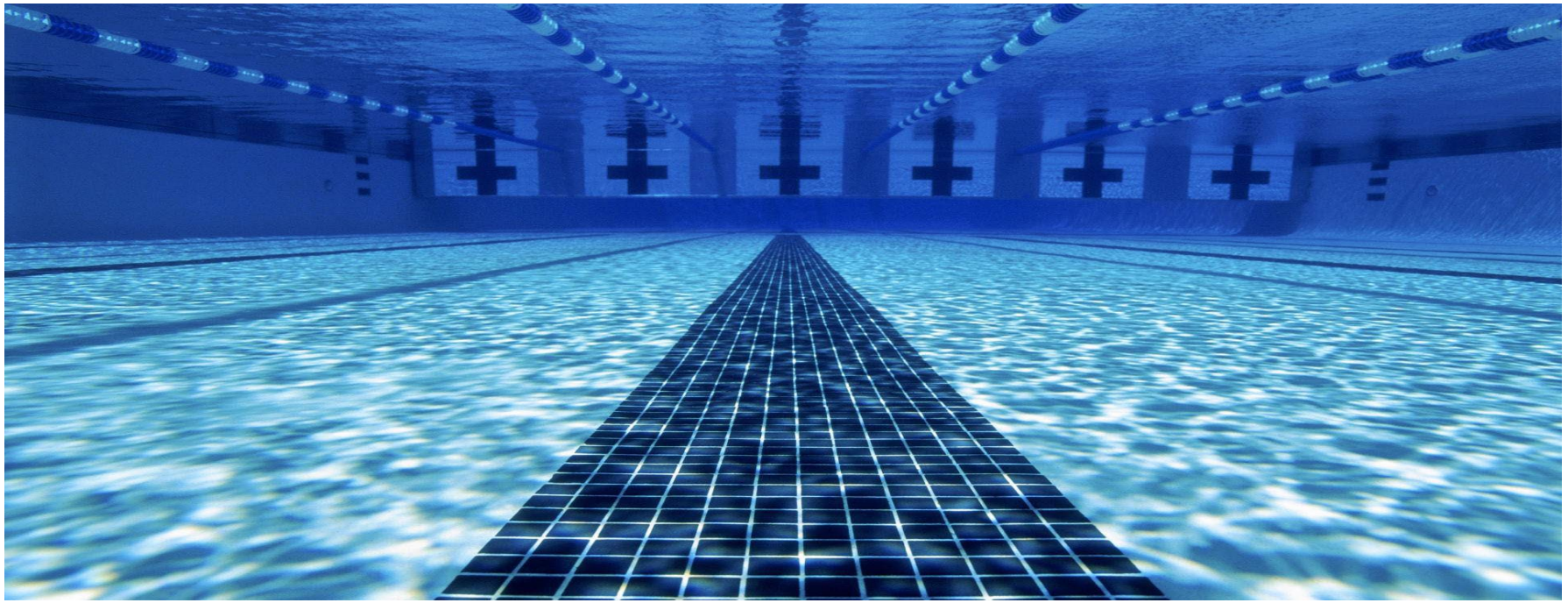
Monitoring can reflect on results for program beneficiaries, if evidence has been collected

A **monitoring plan/framework** can makes explicit: objectives/goals, data points (KPIs, measures/metrics), data sources, collection frequency, responsibilities, etc.

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CORE CONCEPTS – KEY TERMS

#3 EVALUATION



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Evaluation

Evaluation

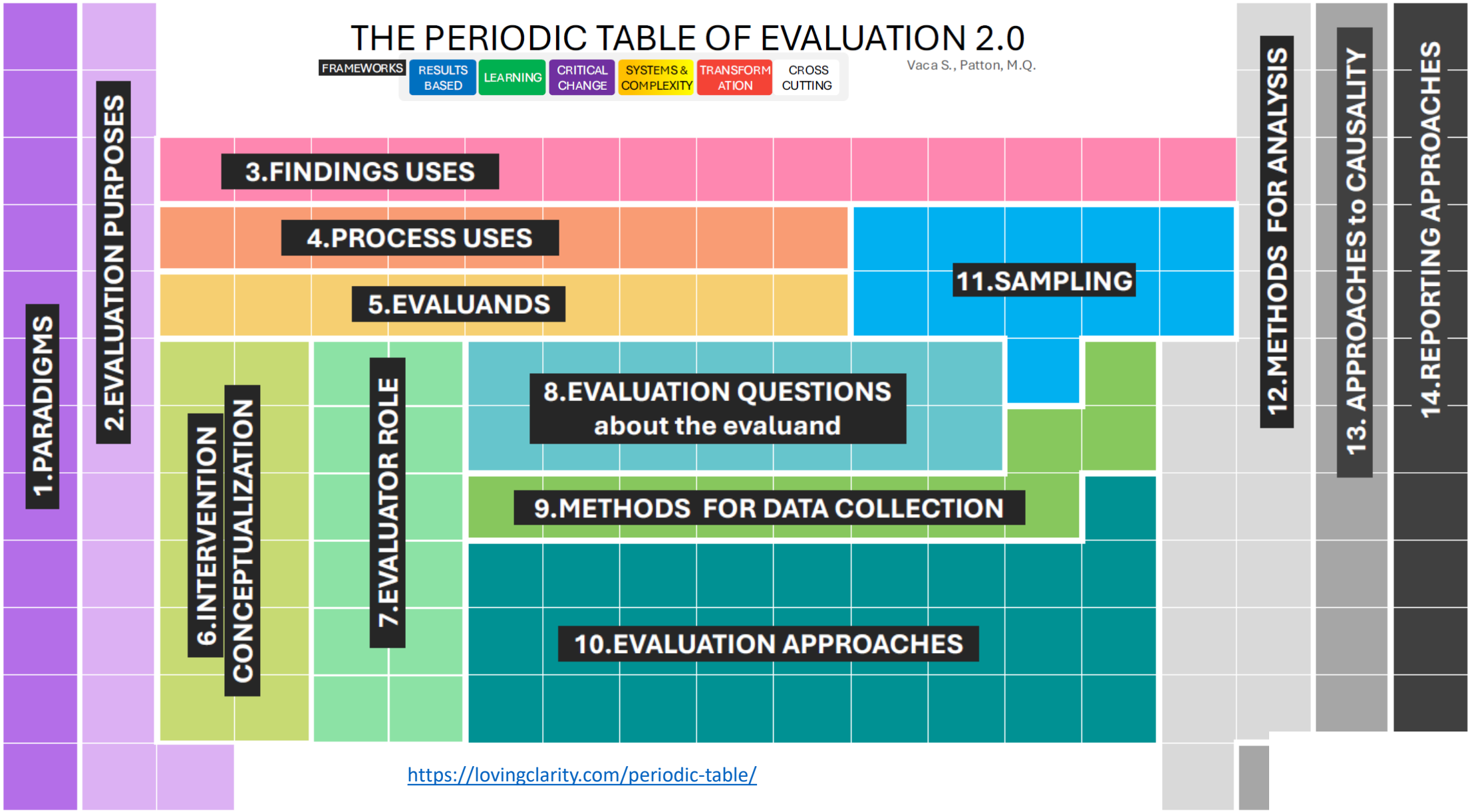
Often based on a set of key questions, evaluation is a process of defining, systematically collecting and analysing information (quantitative and/or qualitative) and presenting findings, often with recommendations for future improvement.

Evaluation questions depend on the topic, but tend to focus on appropriateness (program design), implementation and outcomes achieved (intended/unintended, positive/negative).

An **evaluation plan/framework** outlines the process to be followed to answer key questions, including data collection approaches, timing, milestones, reports and judgement methods.

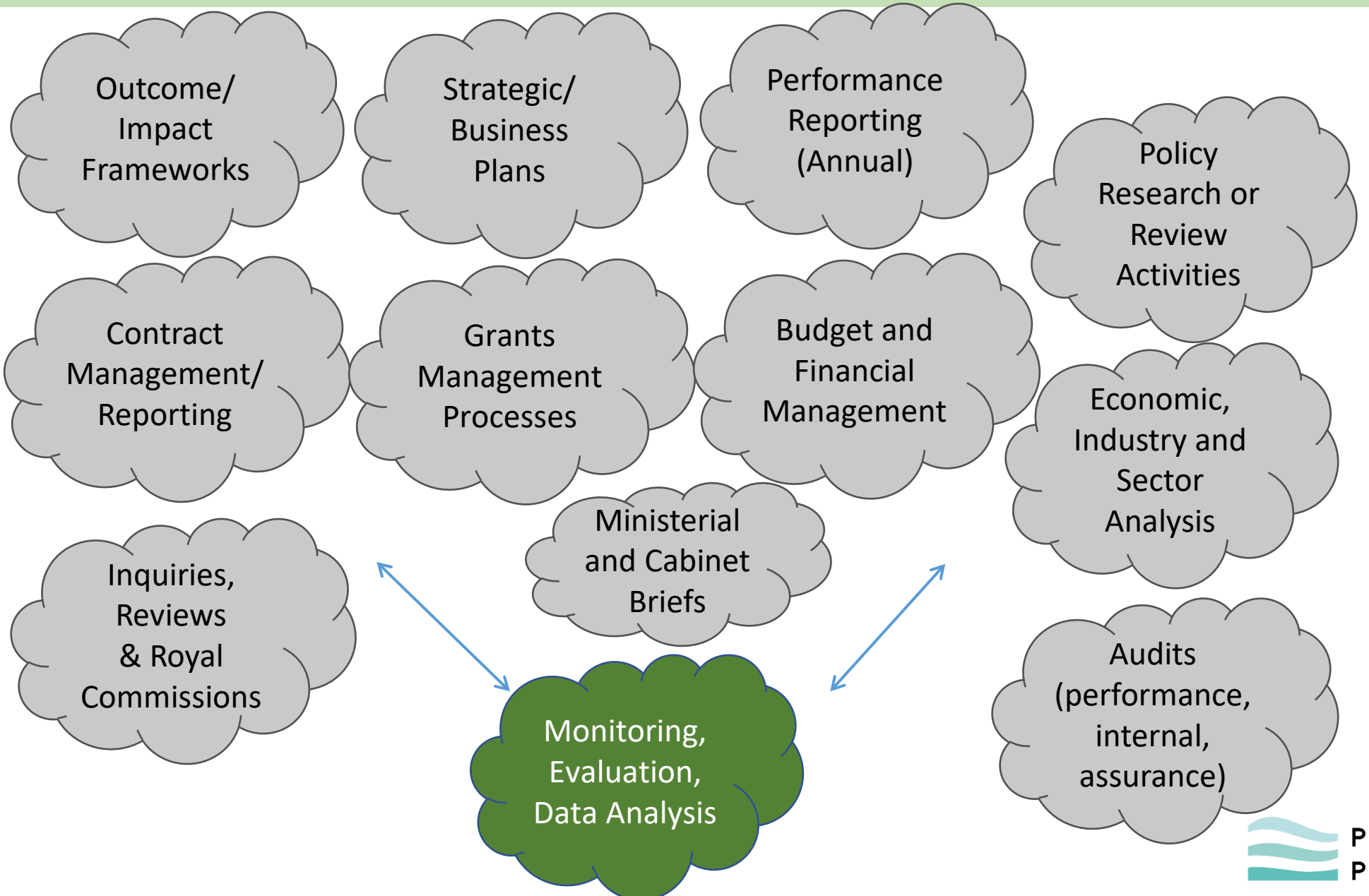
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A snapshot of the entire field on a page



https://lovingclarity.com/periodic-table/

M&E and its friends in the data world!



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What is the evaluator's position

7	**EVALUATOR ROLE**
7.1	External / Internal
7.2	Dependent / Independent / Interdependent
7.3	Individual / Team
7.4	Specialised / Generalist
7.5	Partner / Judge
7.6	Decision-maker / Facilitator
7.7	Designer / Co-creator
7.8	Expert / Capacity builder
7.9	Donor-driven / Participants-driven
7.10	Quantitative / qualitative expertise
7.11	Methodologist / Advocate
7.12	Neutral / Skin-in-the-game

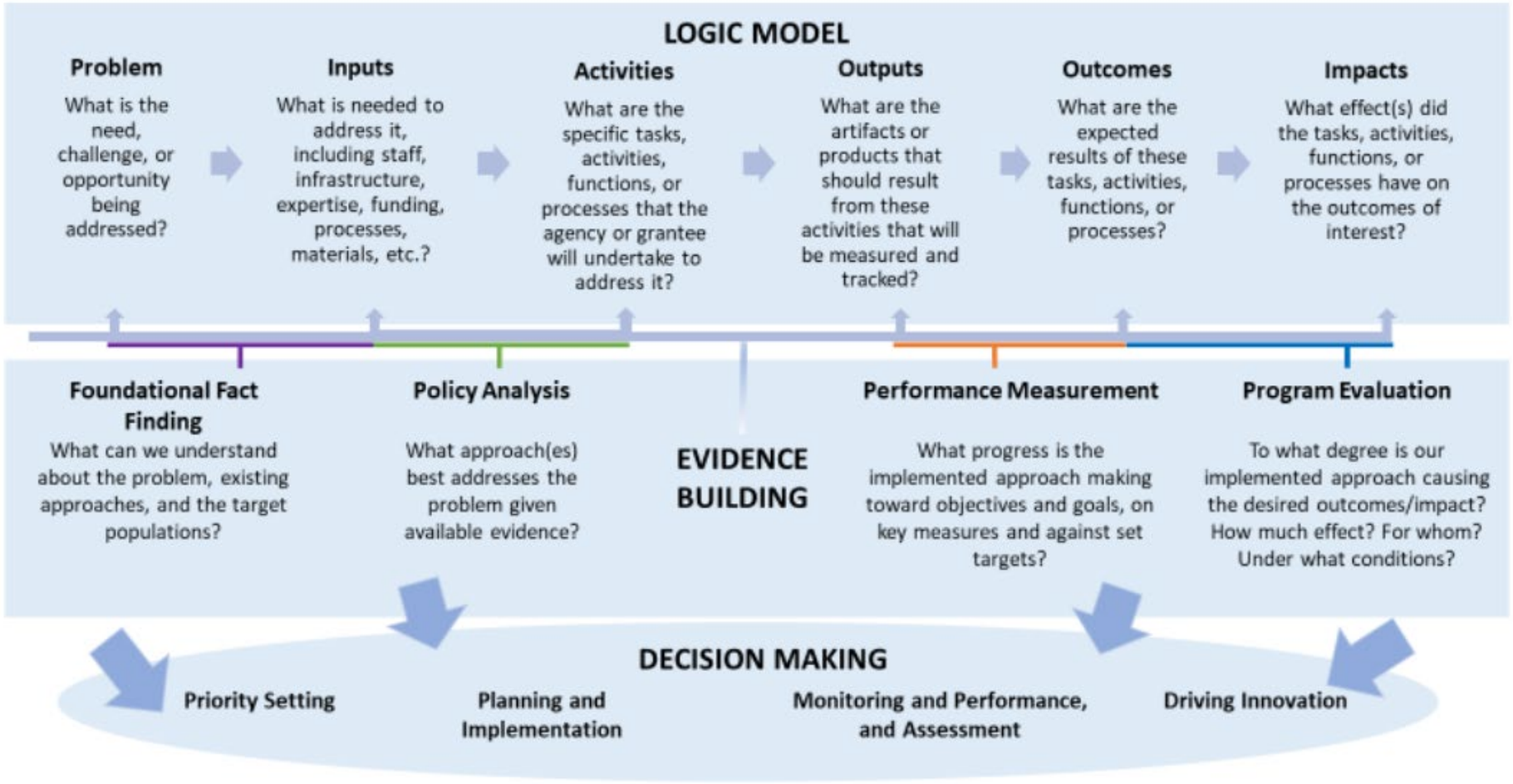
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What evaluators often do

Evaluators primarily support the following types of activities:

- **M&E Planning:** Defining measures, systems, phasing and approaches for program monitoring and evaluation
- **Evaluation readiness review:** Projects to review available evidence and determine what can feasibly be evaluated, including when and how
- **Capability building:** Supporting organisations and individuals to build their evaluation skillsets and experiences
- **Early phase reviews:** Supporting early phase implementation via reflective practices
- **Mid-phase reviews:** Looking at implementation and emerging outcomes
- **Lapsing program evaluations:** Reviewing implementation and achievements toward the conclusion of the funded period with a view to adaptation, enhancement and re-funding
- **Post-implementation review:** Beyond the completion of a response, seeking to better understand the longer-term outcomes and impacts

Program logic, evidence and how to influence decisions



https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/M-21-27.pdf p.5

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If you are doing an evaluation, scope it carefully

Audience
Who is the evaluation report intended to inform? Consider primary intended users or the findings and other audiences.

Governance
What are the sign-off processes and timelines for the evaluation work?

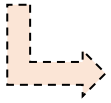
Key questions
What will the evaluation try to find out?

Needs	Assessment of the **need** for the program (e.g. among target population(s), in various locations)
Appropriate-ness	Assessment of program **design and theory** (in meeting needs of target population, may be compared to other alternatives)
Efficiency	Assessment of program **processes and implementation** (analysis of program delivery processes, achievements and reflections)
Effectiveness	Assessment of program **outcome/impact** (testing achievements/changes)
Cost-benefit	Assessment of **program cost and efficiency** (e.g. financial analysis, (social) return on investment, cost-benefit)

Stakeholders
Who needs to be involved in the evaluation? What is the best way to involve different stakeholders? When is the best time to engage each group? Any ethical considerations?

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Select an evaluation approach

Needs analysis	Undertaking preliminary research to define needs among the target population
Co-design	Working closely with program designers and beneficiaries on the design of effective policies
Monitoring and evaluation (and learning) or outcomes framework	Defining measures, indicators, targets, data collection approaches for a program
Developmental evaluation (or real-time evaluation)	Hands-on approaches to help evaluate programs that are changing over time, with the evaluator playing the role of 'critical friend' as programs are shaped and re-shaped
Implementation or process evaluation	With limited focus on outcomes, analysing the implementation of a given program
Theory-based evaluation	Assessing the extent to which a program was implemented as intended and achieved its objectives
 Realist evaluation	Considering what works, for whom, in what circumstances and why (or why not)

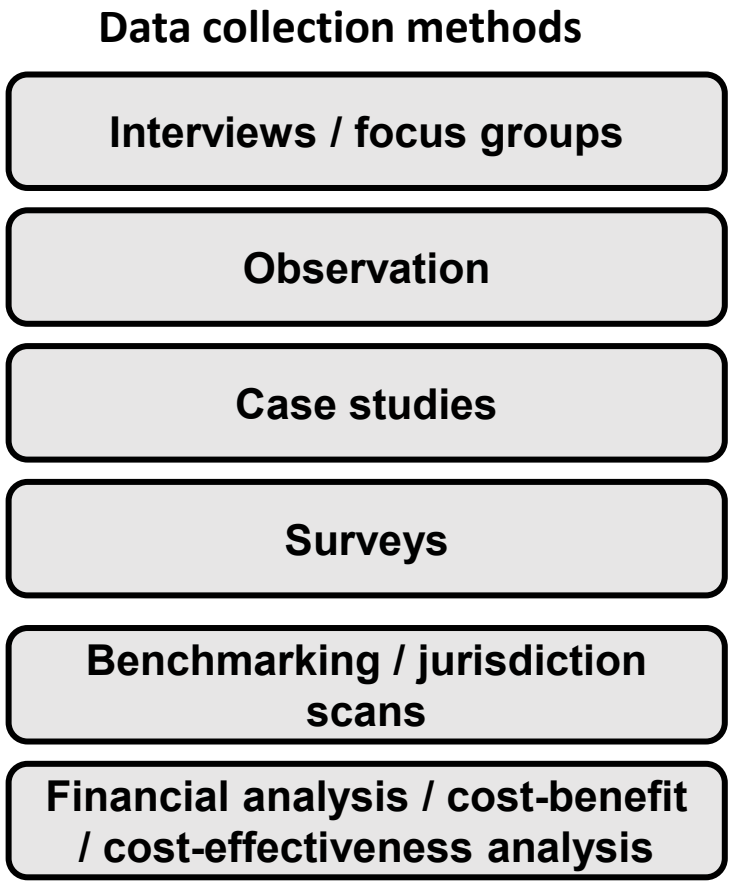
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Select an evaluation approach

Process-outcomes evaluation	Looking at implementation activities and associated outcomes achieved
Randomised control trials (RCT) or experimental approaches	Treatment and control groups, selected randomly, to promote counter-factual analysis
Non-equivalent group designs (aka quasi-experimental designs)	As above, but with groups not selected randomly

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Link this with methods for data collection



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Let’s network further: Reflect on M&E in your setting

X Do you think monitoring is generally done (well)?

X Do you think evaluation is generally done (well)?

X How could these things be further improved?

10 minutes, chat with somebody new…

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SOME EXCELLENT AES RESOURCES

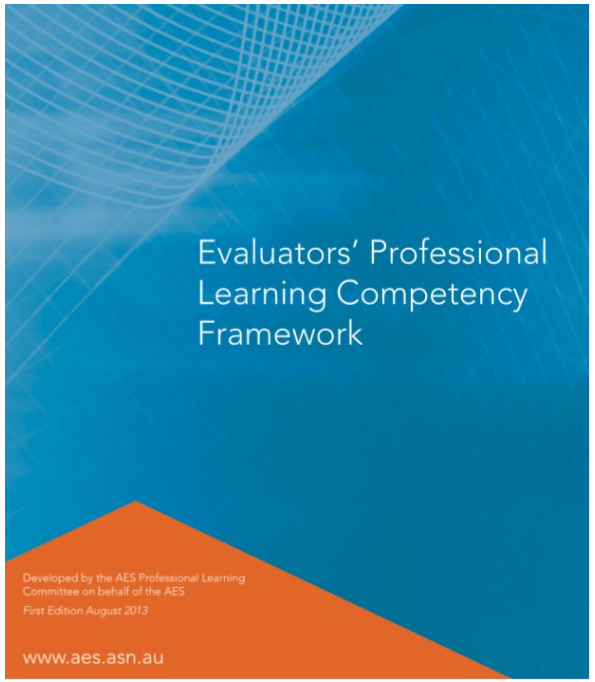


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AES guidance: competencies

AES Professional Learning Competency Framework

- Evaluative attitude and professional practice
- Evaluation theory
- Culture, stakeholders and context
- Research methods and systematic inquiry
- Project management
- Interpersonal skills
- Evaluation activities



https://www.aes.asn.au/evaluator-competencies

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AES guidance: ethical conduct

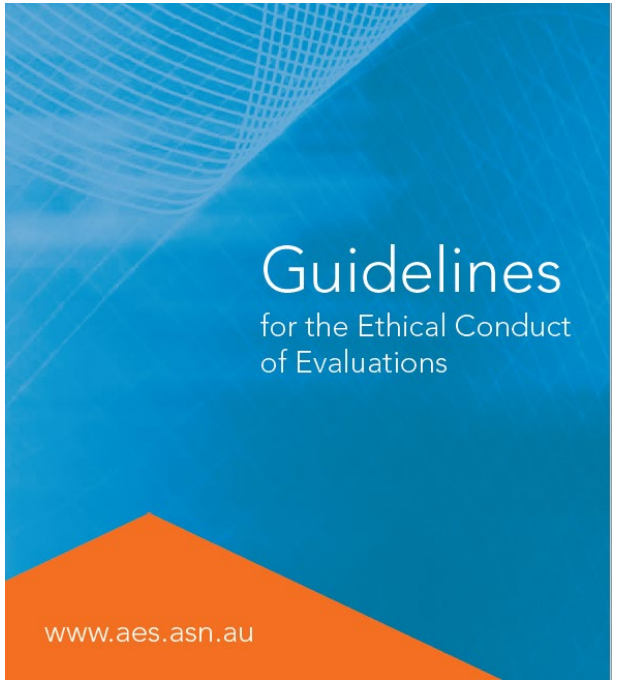
AES guidelines for the ethical conduct of evaluations

- Commissioning and preparing for an evaluation
- Conducting an evaluation
- Reporting the results of an evaluation

AES code of ethics

See also:

- AIATSIS Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies
- NHMRC - Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders 2018



Source: AES (2018), Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations: https://www.aes.asn.au/ethical-guidelines

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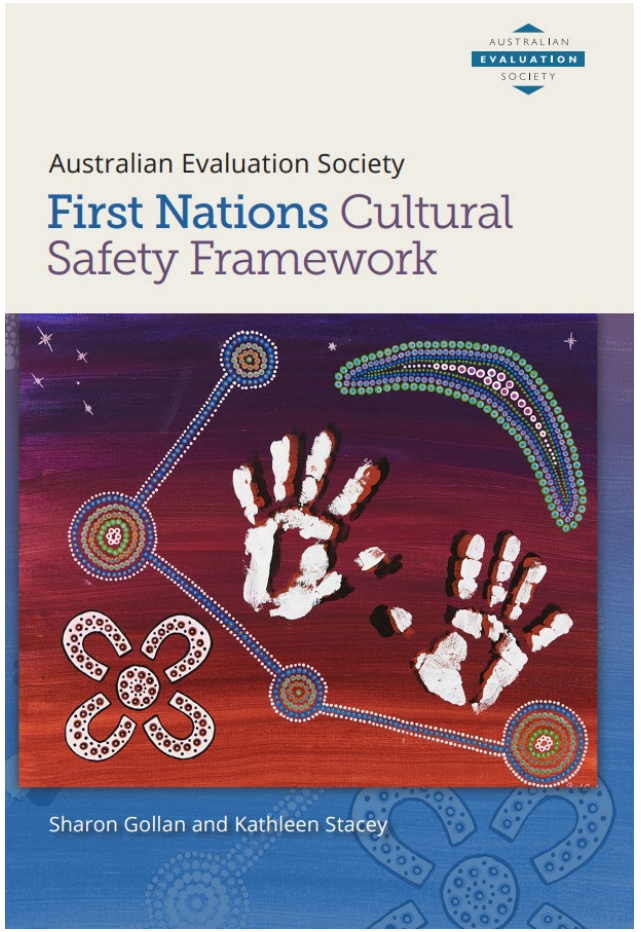
AES guidance: cultural safety

AES First Nations Cultural Safety Framework

An important resource for culturally safe evaluation theory, practice and use.

Resource covers:

- The principles of culturally safe evaluations
- Practical guidance on the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the evaluation process
- Practical guidance on achieving culturally safe evaluation in all phases of the process
- Outcomes that can be achieved through full and consistent implementation of the Framework.



Source: AES (2021), First Nations Cultural Safety Framework: https://www.aes.asn.au/images/AES_FirstNations_Cultural_Framework_finalWEB_final.pdf?type=file

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Plus, a few other leading information sources

Some useful international evaluation resources:

- Better evaluation (www.betterevaluation.org)
- Magenta Book - UK Treasury guidance on evaluation (2026 update) (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-magenta-book)
- Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation, UK Evaluation Society: (https://www.evaluation.org.uk/app/uploads/2019/04/UK-Evaluation-Society- Guidelines-for-Good-Practice-in-Evaluation.pdf)
- Research methods knowledge base - Trochim (www.socialresearchmethods.net)
- World Bank: Independent evaluation group (https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/)

And government evaluation resources:

- NSW Evaluation Guidelines: here
- WA Program Evaluation Guide: evaluation-guide.pdf
- Australian Centre for Evaluation: Australian Centre for Evaluation | evaluation.treasury.gov.au
- NT Government: https://treasury.nt.gov.au/dtf/financial-management-group/program-evaluation-unit

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TIME FOR A COCKTAIL QUESTION?



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FROM STRATEGY TO IMPACT

Enjoy AES26 – come say hi

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