

Enhancing the evaluation ethos in Government Departments







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ECol – a brief history

Late 1990's - DPI Evaluation Support Unit established

Evaluation capacity building of staff vs capacity building of evaluation staff

Foster knowledge between Victorian Government Departments

The early ECol

Quarterly events, full days

Guest speakers

Topics of interest

Host Departments

Held on outskirts of Melbourne

The ECol now

ECoI held in Melbourne CBD – increased attendance

Nearly 200 members

15 Departments and Authorities represented

(DPC, DEECD, DHS, DIIRD, DoJ, DPCD, DPI, DSE, DoT, DTF, SSA, CFA, Police, EPA, VicRoads)



How is the ECol different to other evaluation forums?

Based on Communities of Practice theoretical framework.

Chose to be a CoI rather than a CoP to include evaluation practitioners as well as interested staff.

"I became involved as a funder of community programs that would like to support them [community project teams] in their planning and evaluation processes"

Why is it only VPS staff?

Involvement is limited to public sector staff for 4 key reasons:

- 1. To enhance rather than compete against the AES regional activities.
- 2. Opportunity to share ideas from within the various departments, learn how others manage government challenges, and to promote collaboration between agencies.
- Open environment promoting discussions without fear or conflict or confidentiality issues.
- 4. Networking for staff not able to participate in other evaluation forums.

What do our members say?

Key reasons for participation:

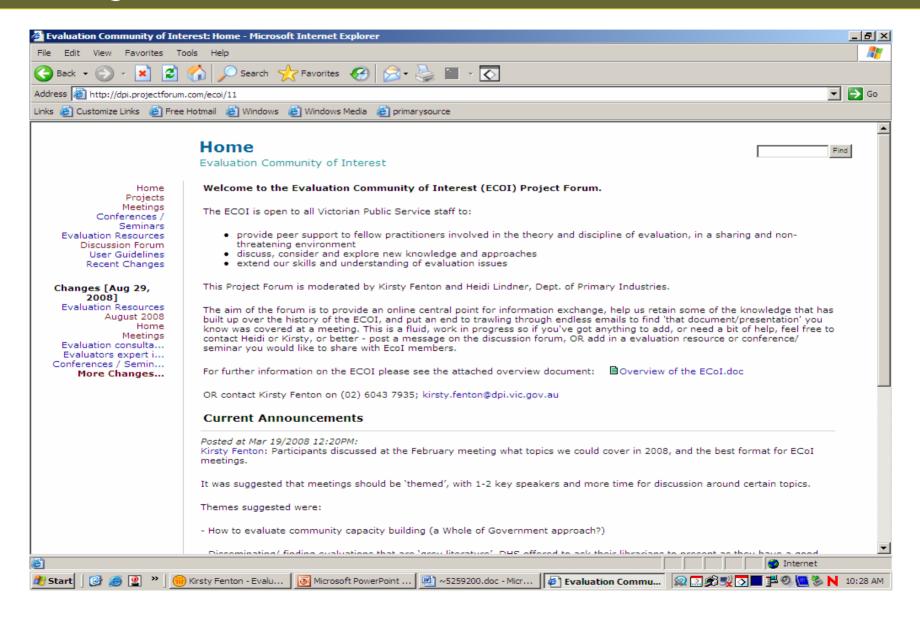
- Exchange ideas formally and informally
- Networking, contacts and peer support
- Exposure to evaluation theories and methods
- Understand challenges in Govt. evaluation
- Build a culture within departments and across the VPS.

ECol – valuable for new staff

"Just wanted to say thanks very much for an enjoyable and informative evaluation community of interest session last week. I am a new member and have found it to be a great resource already"

"For me, the ECoI has a training aspect as I am new to evaluation and still learning. I really like hearing people from other departments present - what they are doing that is great(e.g. the presentation by DPCD last time about their website) or lessons learnt & sharing that experience."

Project Forum



Tips for establishing a successful Col

Have a clear purpose

Secure a sponsor

Central coordination

Mix of topics and presentation methods

Allow time for reflection

Evaluate!