

# Evaluation and the Indigenous voice: Core values for legitimising ethical conduct

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**ACCOUNTABILITY NOTIONS**

# Yirrkala - Remote Aboriginal Community in East Arnhem Land in the NT



- Strong Leaders
- Traditional law & cultural practices
- Existing systems of ethics & protocol



# Whose ethics are we talking about?

- Was ethics considered prior to evaluation or research
- What process was used to negotiate ethics?  
*Institutional or Community-based process?*
- Was the community ethics process considered?
- How best can evaluators learn about this process?

# Clouds

**Tell us how we can live together in peace and harmony,**

**Draw us all together, restoring our spirit for sharing and relating with each other**

**Showing us the right way and the right people from that country**



# **Under Traditional Yolŋu Rom (Law)**

**In the Yolŋu world - under our law system, if you don't follow proper code of ethics you will be punished or suspended from your role of leadership or you could be killed.**

**Our leaders are there to make sure that processes are carried out according to Madayin Rom. Projects and programs may impact us and our connection to the land, water and sea.**

**We need to explore the real story so we can determine how we fit into the environment from our spirituality and identity – around the campfire or under a tree**



# **In Yolŋu way everything is negotiated from the ground-up**

**Many programs and projects that have been delivered did not meet the expectations or goals of our community**

**Program evaluations have not been conducted appropriately or inclusively**

**Government and other institutions use process that are in conflict with our processes**

**The top down approach is commonly used and disempowers us**



# **The Clouds rising from the bottom of the ocean**

- **The clouds represent people coming to our country – welcoming them and bringing hope and new knowledge**
- **Different seasons bring different cloud formations that depict different stories about your identity**
- **They symbolise our feelings, our songs and stories that are part of our life and our saltwater country that bring the clouds**
- **Representing the people and connecting to the environment and nature and they remind us of our responsibility and welcome us**



# **The clouds remind us about the process we need to follow**

- **The clouds give us a warm feeling, a warm welcome and bring about connection and unity**
- **Bringing people together so they can share the feeling about the importance of the land, sea, water, clouds of this country**
- **This is how evaluation needs to work in our community – we need to know what is good and what is bad so we can think about it to have a positive journey**



# Evaluators and Researchers to Consider

- **Aboriginal Representation and inclusion at a high level (not cursory) is critical – who will be impacted?**
- **At conferences, co-presenting with the key Aboriginal people involved in the project - whose story is it? who is best to tell the story? how was it derived?**
- **Take care to protect the Intellectual property of Aboriginal people. 40,000 to 60,000 years of Indigenous knowledges can not belong to government, university or other institutions**



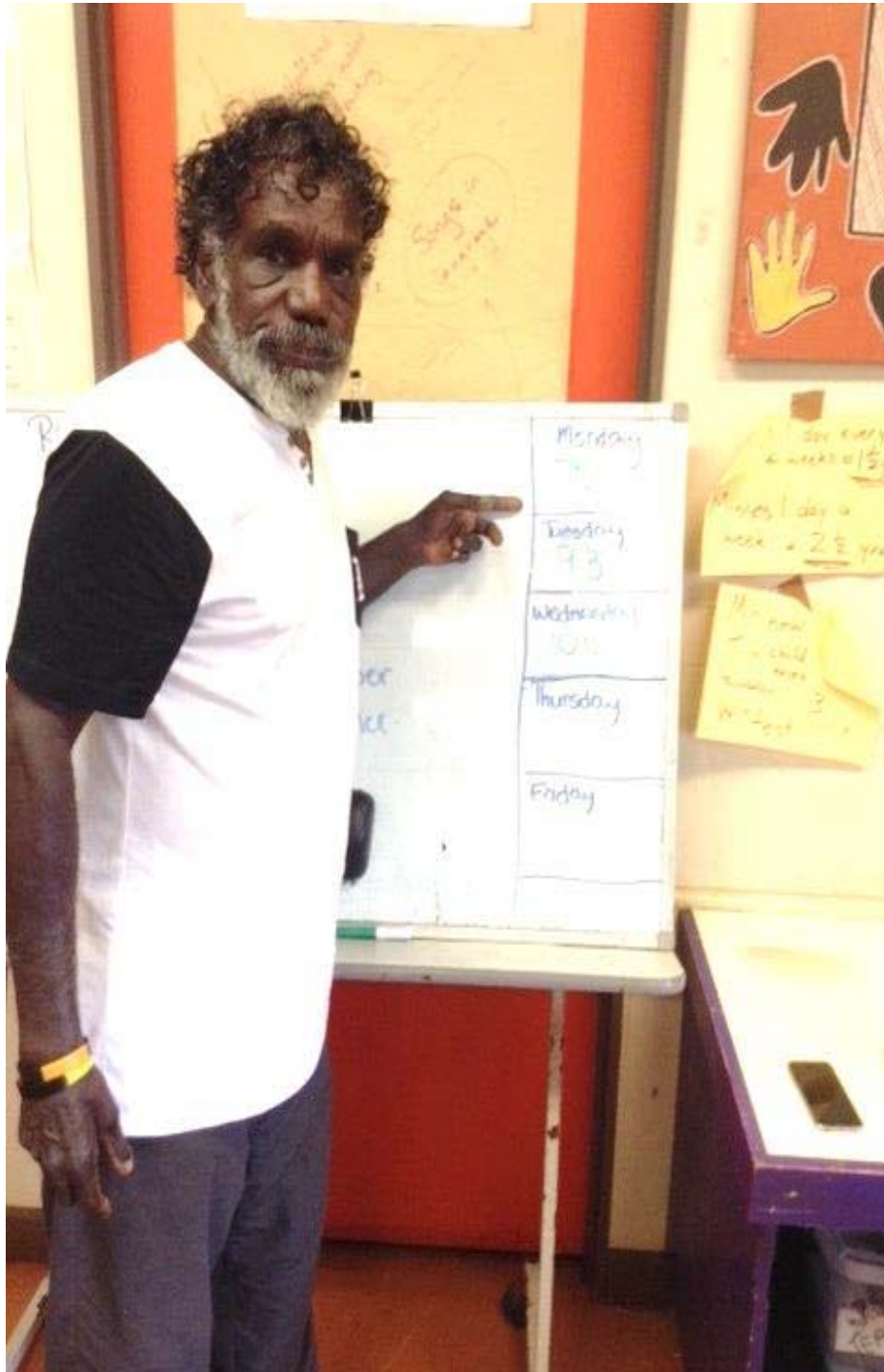
- **Respecting and acknowledging the participation and involvement of Aboriginal people**
- **Allowing Aboriginal people to lead and guide and have a voice and responsibility for projects in their communities**
- **Co-authoring: Aboriginal people share deep and rich cultural stories, these stories will always belong to them. Acknowledgement for collective input**
- **Engage and learn ways to connect with people in their community, country and context**

# Yolngu Code of Ethics

- A set of ancient rules or principles that give guidance to people to live a good and healthy life
- Balanda have another code of ethics
- Some things are different and some things are similar







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# Thanks for Listening



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