CONSULTATION ON THE ADVOCACY AND INFLUENCE STRATEGY

Advocacy & Alliances Committee

SO WHY ARE WE HERE?

To update conference participants on AES advocacy work

To discover your needs as evaluators/ policy makers and stakeholders to make evaluations more useful and part of 'the way things are done around here'

To involve you in crafting the future

To seek your ideas on the content and implementation   processes of an advocacy

WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

Activities by individuals or groups which aim to **influence** decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions, usually to advance the public good.

Advocacy is most effective when there are recognised and sustainable avenues to build and maintain relationships, foster communication about issues and developments, and collaboration on solving problems.

EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS GIVE RISE TO NEW WAYS OF ANTICIPATING AND RESOLVING NEEDS

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ADVOCACY: WHERE HAVE WE COME FROM?

Initial focus on community of evaluation professionals as well as others who are somehow involved in evaluation

The AES has historically engaged in advocacy to its membership group and beyond.

- professional practice (courses, workshops, summer schools)
- Standards for evaluation
- Ethics
- Publications
- Responding to government enquiries

Influence is one of the key priorities in the AES Strategic Plan 2016-2019

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WHY DOES ADVOCACY MATTER?

TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS TO:

Meet emerging challenge and opportunities

To grow evaluation in a relevant way, the AES needs to better understand the needs of its members and stakeholders

Valued, understood and useful

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ADVOCACY OBJECTIVES

Strengthening AES capacity to:

- Support decision-makers to appreciate, understand and utilise evaluation approaches and methods to improve policy and practice; and

  - Support its members and the evaluation profession to better understand the needs of decision-makers and assist them to achieve improved client outcomes.

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OUTCOMES

Fostering a respectful mutual learning environment between evaluators, commissioners, end-users and other stakeholders → Making engagement easier through a sense of shared enterprise

ADVOCACY OUTCOMES

- the AES is valued as a thought leader in evaluation [internal outcome]

- there are more informed decisions made about policy and practice, which align with the advancement of the public good [external outcome]

- Win-win position we are all committed to robust evidence to inform policy and practice that aligns with the public good

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TO ACHIEVE THAT WE NEED TO

Create a respectful consultative and mutual learning environment between evaluators, government and other clients –

Make engagement between evaluators and clients base easier

Develop a sense of shared enterprise between evaluators and clients

- (Win-win position - we are all committed to robust evidence to inform policy and practice)

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WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Towards a 2019 strategy: a more clearly articulated and resourced approach with both formal and informal dimensions (i.e. planned and unplanned/responsive actions)

- Guided by a vision of what could be
- Beginning with what is feasible

Values-based approach:

- *Collaboration / Inclusiveness / Relevance / Professional service / Innovation*

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REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

Reflect on recent challenges you've encountered when conducting, commissioning, managing and/or using evaluations…

What could have gone better? Why?

In what ways do you see potential for AES-led advocacy to benefit or enable your work?

IDEAS FOR ACTION

What should an advocacy strategy contain in the ideal world? Consider its priorities and approaches

Prompts for your thinking…

What are the most critical priorities for the AES to advocate on, or aim to influence?

Who are our key stakeholders: our audiences and our allies?

What tools, avenues and mechanisms will be most effective?

What existing approaches can we leverage?

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WORDS OF WISDOM

Risks and challenges

What challenges might confront the AES in its efforts to influence decision-makers and/or advocate on particular issues?

How might these be overcome?

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NEXT STEPS