



# aes18

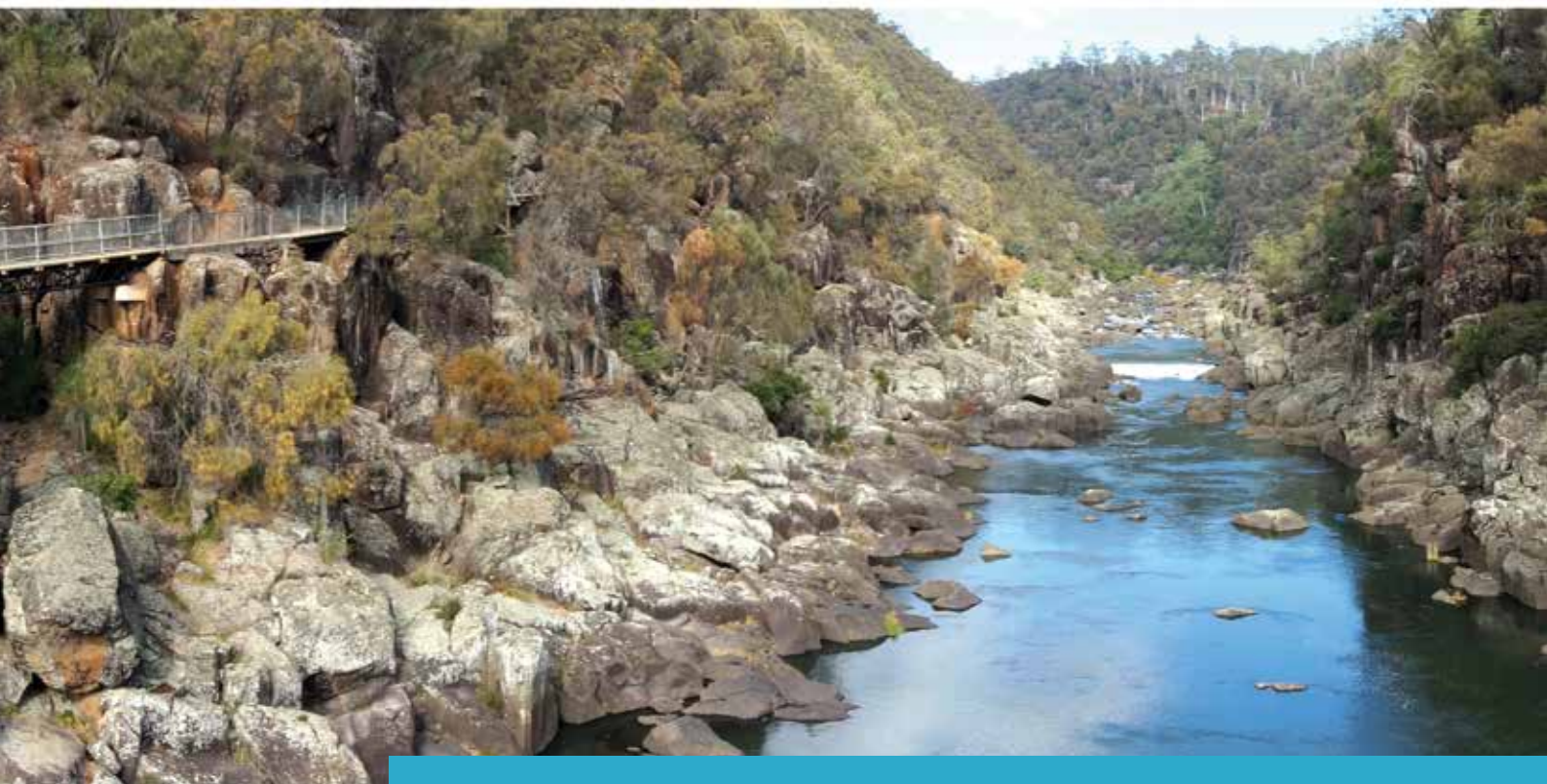
International **Evaluation** Conference

Pre-conference workshops 17 & 18 September

Conference 19–21 September 2018

**Launceston | Australia**

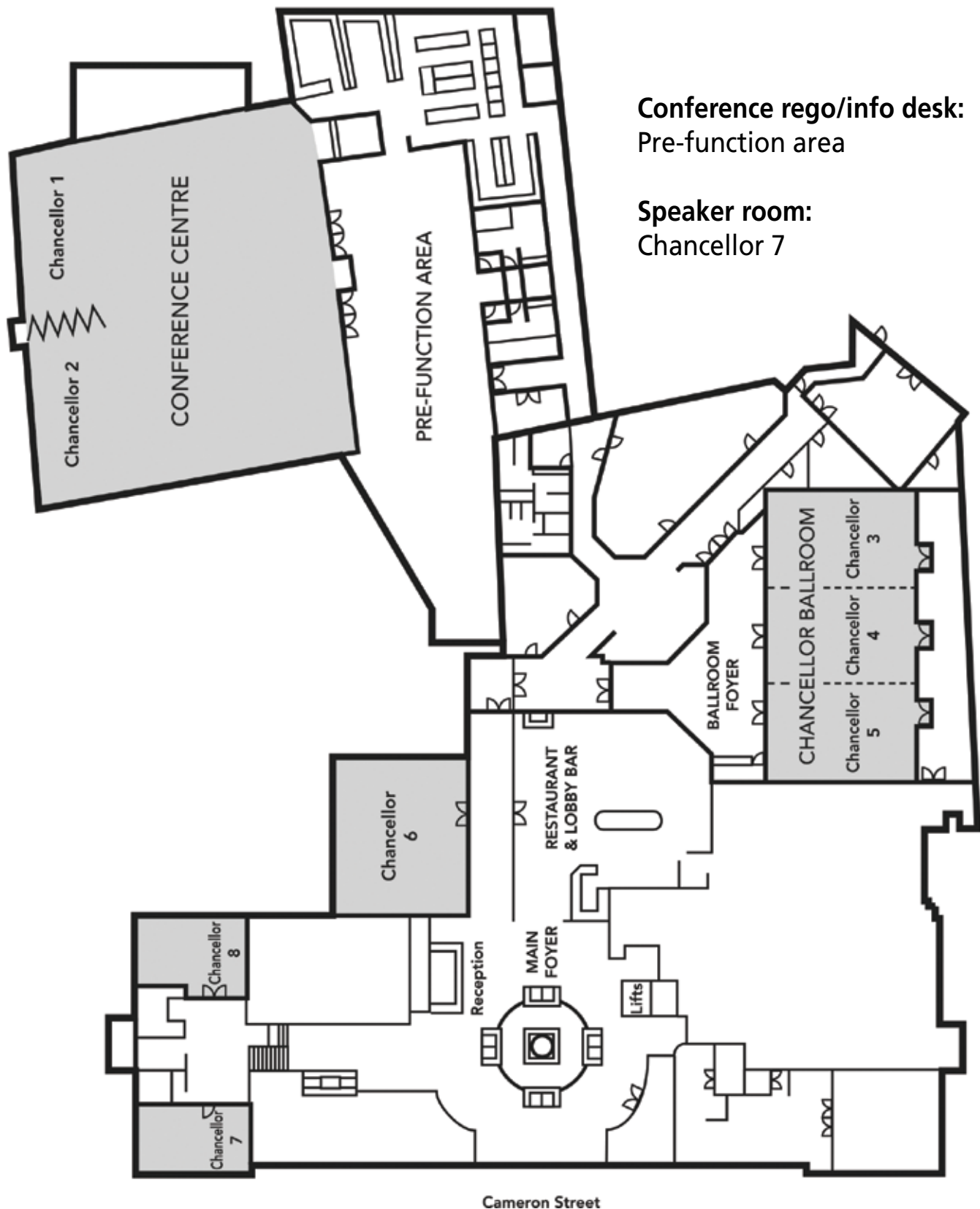
*'Transformations'*



Program and abstract book

# VENUE MAP

**Hotel Grand Chancellor Launceston**  
29 Cameron Street  
Launceston, Tasmania, Australia



# table of contents

03	welcome
05	conference information
08	keynote & invited speakers
12	conference supporters
15	welcome to country and conference opening 2018 conference support grants for emerging Indigenous evaluators
16	special program
18	social program
19	exhibitors
20	program overview
22	acknowledgements
25	detailed program
35	abstracts



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## International **Evaluation** Conference

Pre-conference workshops 17 & 18 September

Conference 19–21 September 2018

**Launceston | Australia**

Dear colleagues

### **Transformations**

The Conference Organising Committee is delighted to welcome you to the Australian Evaluation Society's 2018 International Evaluation Conference.

This year's conference theme is ***Transformations***. The context in which evaluation takes place is rapidly transforming and our practice must evolve with it.

Our conference program examines this transformation and explores the skills and mindsets needed to ensure evaluation continues to make a difference.

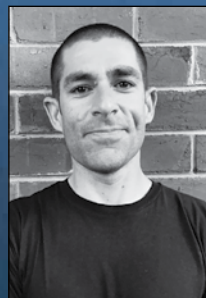
We've designed this year's conference program to include diverse pre-conference workshops, esteemed keynote speakers and more than 100 sessions (with a range of session formats – including a new five minute presentation format). Of course, we are also continuing the Great Debate tradition!

We have brought together more than 400 delegates with diverse experience and backgrounds to help us explore the Transformations theme. The 2018 conference has a strong focus on interactivity, skill building and participation.

We strongly encourage you to get involved.



**Jess Dart**  
Co-convenor



**Dan Borg**  
Co-convenor



**Michelle Wightwick**  
Conference Manager



**Bill Wallace**  
Conference Director





Australian Government  
Department of Social Services

The Department of Social Services (DSS) is the Australian Government's lead agency in the development and delivery of social policy, and is working to improve the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia.

DSS' policies and services respond to need across people's lives — looking after families, children and older people; providing a safety net for people who cannot fully support themselves; enhancing the wellbeing of people with high needs; assisting people who need help with care; and supporting a diverse and harmonious society.

DSS supports people and families in Australia by encouraging independence and participation, and supporting a cohesive society.



# conference information

## Dates

### Pre-conference workshops

Monday 17 and Tuesday 18 September 2018

### Conference

Wednesday 19 to Friday 21 September 2018

## Registration Desk

### Pre-conference workshops

#### Location:

Ballroom Foyer  
Hotel Grand Chancellor Launceston  
29 Cameron Street, Launceston, Tasmania

#### Registration times:

Monday 17 September	8:00am to 2:00pm
Tuesday 18 September	8:00am to 2:00pm

### Conference

#### Location:

Pre-function area, Conference Centre  
Hotel Grand Chancellor Launceston  
29 Cameron Street, Launceston, Tasmania

#### Registration times:

Wednesday 19 September	8:00am to 4:00pm
Thursday 20 September	7:30am to 4:00pm
Friday 21 September	7:30am to 2:00pm

## Speaker preparation room

### Sponsored by Grosvenor Management Consulting

#### Location:

Room – Chancellor 7  
Hotel Grand Chancellor Launceston  
29 Cameron Street, Launceston, Tasmania

This room will be available for all presenters to upload their presentations with the assistance of the audio visual technician. The technician will be in attendance during the below times.

#### Speaker preparation room times

Wednesday 19 September	8:00am to 4:00pm
Thursday 20 September	7:30am to 3:00pm
Friday 21 September	7:30am to 2:00pm

All presenters are required to visit the speaker preparation room and provide their presentation in MS PowerPoint format, aspect ratio 16:9, on a USB drive to the technician at least two hours prior to the commencement of their session (except for early morning sessions in which case you should supply your presentation from 7:30am). This will ensure that the technician has met with all presenters and that they are fully aware of your presentation requirements. It is our objective that presentations operate as smoothly as possible.

## Conference managers

The 2018 Australian Evaluation Society International Conference is managed by:

Australian Evaluation Society Ltd  
PO Box 476, Carlton South, Victoria, 3053, Australia  
Email: [conference@aes.asn.au](mailto:conference@aes.asn.au)

## Program changes and message board

All program changes made and messages received during the conference will be placed on the Message and Program Changes board. To collect or leave a message, visit the Registration Desk during opening hours.

### Instant response survey and conference evaluation

Please help improve this year's conference evaluation by telling us what you think of conference presentations that you attend. Simply go to the online conference program, open the presentation you have attended, and instant response feedback.

The online program can be found at:

Mobile devices: <https://aes18.sched.com/mobile>  
Desktop browser: <https://aes18.sched.com/>

Emily Mackay and Penny Smallwood are evaluating this year's conference. Be aware that they may approach you to participate. We encourage delegates to contribute to this important evaluation. It's exciting that delegates will have the opportunity to be part of an evaluation living within an evaluation conference.

## A note on phones and time

As a courtesy to fellow delegates and speakers, please ensure your mobile phones are silent during conference sessions and that you are seated before the advertised start time for each session. Entry doors will be closed at that time.

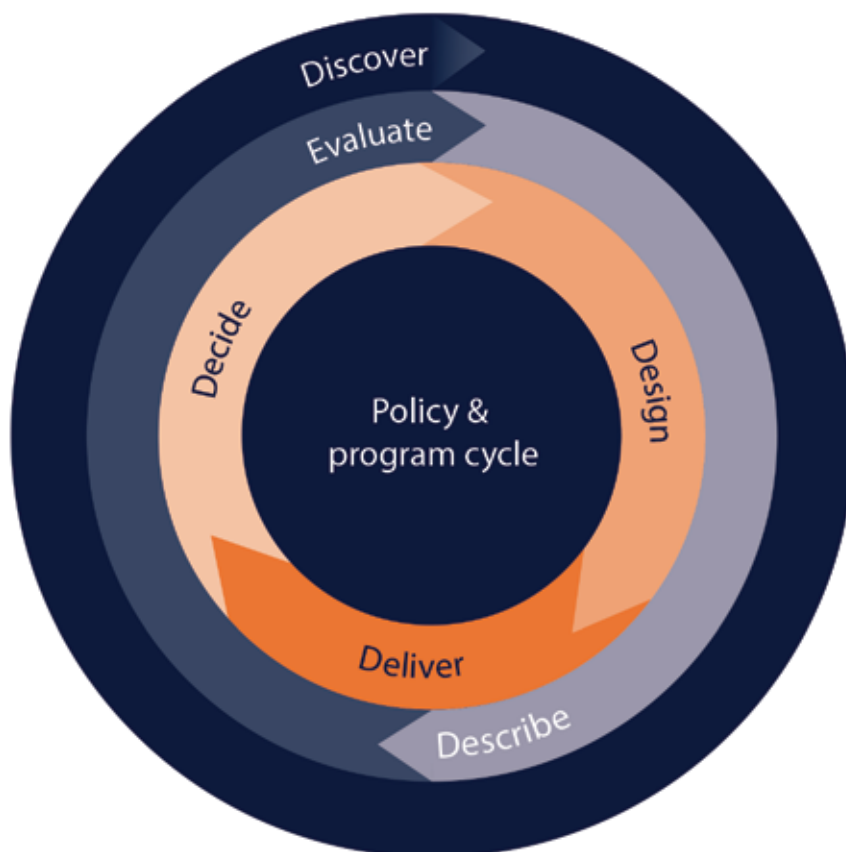
## Twitter #aes18LST

The hashtag for the conference is **#aes18LST**, for those who wish to participate in social media interactions. Twitter will be used throughout the conference for just-in-time information and delegates are encouraged to comment and interact. Follow us **@AESociety**.

## Facebook [facebook.com/evalsociety](https://facebook.com/evalsociety)

The Facebook page has been set up to enable more detailed questions and comments and to enable delegates to network with others during the event. This will operate for a short period following the conference as well.

**ARTD** is a leading Australian public policy and evaluation consulting firm. We were pioneers in the development of program logic and remain at the forefront of evaluation methodology. Our approach is real world—we listen to our clients and bring evidence and insight to decision makers *across the policy cycle*.



**Discover** through applied workshops, capacity building and mentoring.

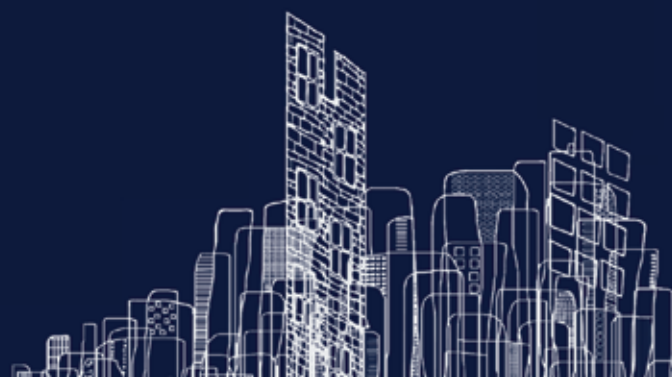
**Describe** customer and stakeholder views and service systems.

**Evaluate** your policy or program, appropriately and ethically, focusing on real-world outcomes.

**Decide** on the best policy option, using the available evidence.

**Design** effective human-centred policy by engaging communities and stakeholders.

**Deliver** and track your policy or program with guidelines, monitoring systems and implementation plans.





## Wifi Internet at the venue

Complimentary wireless internet is available at the venue for delegates.

*In-house delegates:*

Room number and surname

*Conference delegates:*

Username: EVENTS / Password: HGCL

## Conference program mobile web application

The current version of aes18 Conference program and abstracts is available as a web application for mobile devices: <https://aes18.sched.com/mobile>

The mobile web app stores the program data locally on your phone or tablet for offline access too. *Please sign into the web app on all your devices to that you can change and view your own conference schedule.*

## Catering

All catering breaks will be served amongst the exhibition, located in the Exhibition Hall.

*Breaks sponsored by ACIL Allen Consulting*

## Special dietary requirements

If you have advised us of special dietary requirements, please speak to a member of the venue staff during catering breaks. Catering staff have a full list of delegates with special dietary requirements.

## Name badges

All participants will receive a name badge and lanyard upon registration. Name badges are required at all times for identification purposes and admission to sessions, exhibition, and catering breaks.

## Privacy

The AES respects your right to the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information. We observe and comply with all relevant government legislation, regulations and industry codes of practice. Information collected in respect of proposed participation in any aspect of the Conference will be used for the purposes of planning and conduct of the Conference and may also be provided to the organising body or to the organisers of future Australian Evaluation Society International Conferences.

## Delegate lists

The delegate list, available on request to [conference@aes.asn.au](mailto:conference@aes.asn.au), contains the name, organisation, and region of all registered delegates who have given permission for their details to be included. The AES has excluded delegates who have withheld permission to publish their details, in accordance with the Privacy Act.

## Photography and filming

The conference organisers may photograph and film onsite during the conference. The images and footage may be used for post-conference reports, case studies, marketing collateral and supplied to industry media if requested. If you do not wish for your photo to be taken or to appear in any video footage, please raise your hand in front of the photographer.

## Smoking policy

Tasmania imposes a strict no smoking policy in venues, restaurant, bars and shopping centres in Launceston. Hotel Grand Chancellor Launceston is a smoke free facility. No indoor smoking areas are provided and delegates should move well outside when smoking.

## Personal property

Please take good care of your personal belongings. Do not leave them unattended. The Hotel Grand Chancellor Launceston and organisers will not be responsible for any loss or damage to your personal properties.

## Disclaimer

The program is correct at the time of publishing. The AES reserves the right to cancel, delete, modify or alter items from the program or to delete, modify or alter any aspect of the Conference timetabling and delivery at their sole discretion and without notice. Neither the host organisation nor the meeting organisers or their contractors will accept any liability for any loss or inconvenience caused to any party consequent to such changes.

The views and opinions expressed at the Conference are those of the presenters and participants and are not necessarily endorsed by the Australian Evaluation Society (AES).

## Getting around Launceston

Almost everything in Launceston is within walking distance. There are also bus and taxi services available.

### Buses:

Launceston's public transport includes an extensive public and private bus service operating in and around the city and suburbs. Metro is Launceston's major city and suburban public transport provider. See the Metro timetable here: <https://www.metrotas.com.au/timetables/launceston/>

**Taxis:** phone 13 10 08

# keynote speakers



Top – left: Sharon Gollan; right: Michael Quinn Patton; and Penny Hagen

Bottom – left: Karol Olejniczak; centre: Kathleen Stacey; right: Kate McKegg





## Sharon Gollan

### Leader and facilitator of Cultural Respect and Safety training, South Australia

Sharon Gollan is a descendent of the Ngarrindjeri nation of South Australia, with family and cultural connections to many communities within and beyond South Australia. Sharon has worked professionally and academically in a range of human services fields in Australia. She has over forty years of experience in the health, youth, children and community services sector. Through her leadership positions within the public and non-government sectors she has gained extensive experience in the development, implementation and review of government programs, policies and initiatives.

Sharon is well known for her work as a leader and facilitator of Cultural Respect and Safety training, which can lead to respectful partnerships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

As a result of working with Sharon over several years, one agency went from no Aboriginal people accessing their services to winning a State award for achieving a marked increase in access and respectful services for Aboriginal people.

## Kathleen Stacey

### Managing Director and Principal Consultant, beyond..., South Australia

Kathleen Stacey is the Managing Director and Principal Consultant at beyond... She spent her formative working years within the public sector and academia, before establishing and expanding beyond... into its current form. The company conducts consultancy, evaluation, research and training work in human services fields, with a specialist focus in health, education, youth, early childhood, mental health, and family and community support services. It has developed a strong reputation for culturally respectful work in Aboriginal programs and organisations, and has

worked consistently and collegially with Aboriginal consultants since beyond...’s inception in 2000. beyond... specialises in: program design, planning, implementation and evaluation; organisational and service reviews; strategic and business planning; research; facilitation; and workforce and curriculum development, including development and delivery of training. Kathleen also co-facilitates Cultural Respect and Safety training in partnership with Sharon Gollan.

## Michael Quinn Patton

### Independent Evaluation Consultant, Minnesota, USA

*Michael is delivering his keynote by video link, supported by expert facilitator, Kate McKegg*

Michael is an independent evaluation consultant based in Minnesota, USA. He is former President of the American Evaluation Association (AEA) and author of eight major evaluation books, including fourth editions of *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* and *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* used in over 500 universities worldwide. He has also authored books on Practical Evaluation, Creative Evaluation, and Developmental Evaluation: Applying Systems Thinking and Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use. He co-authored a book on the dynamics of social innovation and transformation with two Canadians entitled *Getting to Maybe: How the World is Changed*. He is recipient of the Myrdal Award for Outstanding Contributions to Useful and Practical Evaluation Practice, the Lazarsfeld Award for Lifelong Contributions to Evaluation Theory, and the 2017 Research on Evaluation Award, all from AEA. He regularly conducts training for The Evaluators’ Institute and the International Program for Development Evaluation Training. His latest books are *Principles-Focused Evaluation* (2018) and *Facilitating Evaluation: Principles in Practice* (Sage Publications, 2018). He is currently working on a book on Blue Marble Evaluation for Global Systems Transformation.

## Penny Hagen

### Design Strategist and Participatory Design Coach; Co-design Lead, Auckland Co-design Lab, Auckland

Penny assists organisations and teams to apply co-design and design-led approaches to the design and implementation of strategy, programs, policies and services. She specialises in projects with social outcomes and supports capability building with teams and organisations wanting to increase their social impact through the adoption of more participatory and evaluative approaches.

Penny has supported cross sector teams and communities in Australia and New Zealand responding to complex social issues including youth employment, youth mental health and wellbeing, chronic health conditions and family violence. Penny has a PhD in participatory design and much of her work involves the integration of different disciplines such as health, design and evaluation to increase impact around social outcomes.

Penny has worked with organisations such as the Young and Well CRC in Australia, developing a framework to integrate Participatory Design and traditional evidence-based approaches for the design of mental health interventions for young people. She also worked with Lifehack in New Zealand supporting the development of a design and evaluation model for innovation in youth wellbeing. She is currently Co-design Lead at the Auckland Co-design Lab, helping to build co-design and social innovation capacity across public service and community teams.

# keynote speakers – cont

## Karol Olejniczak

**Assistant Professor, University of Warsaw, Centre for European Regional and Local Studies (EUROREG UW), Warsaw, Poland**

Karol Olejniczak is an Assistant Professor of public policy at EUROREG – University of Warsaw, Poland, and a visiting scholar at The George Washington University, Washington DC. He is also a co-founder of policy research company Evaluation for Government Organization (EGO s.c.).

His research interests focus on knowledge brokering, and the application of games and behavioral insights to program evaluation. He is an author of a number of publications on regional policy, methodology of evaluation and organizational learning. He has been conducting comparative public policy research in the US, the Netherlands, UK and Poland. He has executed a number of evaluations and policy analyses for Polish institutions and the European Commission.

In 2014, Karol received the title of Evaluation Leader of Poland, an award

granted by the Polish government on the 10th anniversary of Polish membership in the European Union. In 2016, he received the University of Warsaw Award for Excellence in Teaching Social Science.

## Kate McKegg

**Director, The Knowledge Institute Ltd, New Zealand**

Kate has worked in the fields of evaluation, evaluation capacity building, research, policy and public sector management since the late 1980s. She has developed specialist skills in developmental evaluation, programme evaluation, evaluation capacity building, strategy, policy, research, training and facilitation. She has been applying these skills for over 25 years in government, non-government, philanthropic and community contexts, including many indigenous settings.

Kate is the director of The Knowledge Institute Ltd and a member of the Kinnect Group, as well as an

indigenous led collective Tuakana Teina, based in the Waikato region of New Zealand. She is also a co-founder of the Developmental Evaluation Institute and a founding member and current Deputy Convenor of the Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association (ANZEA).

Kate is co-editor of New Zealand's only evaluation text, *Evaluating Policy and Practice, a New Zealand Reader* (2003), and – along with Nan Wehipeihana, Kataraina Pipi and Veronica Thompson – was a recipient of the Australian Evaluation Society 2013 Best Evaluation Policy and Systems Award for a developmental evaluation of an indigenous sport and recreation programme.

She is also co-editor (along with Michael Quinn Patton and Nan Wehipeihana) of the book *Developmental Evaluation: Real World Applications, Adapted Tools, Questions Answered, Emergent Issues, Lessons Learned, and Essential Principles*, Guildford Press, New York, (2015).

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## conference mc

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## Duncan Rintoul

**Principal Project Officer – Evaluation Capacity Building, NSW Department of Education, Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation; Director, Rooftop Social**

Duncan has worked in social research and evaluation since 2000. His favourite things to chat about – apart from as he put it 'his kids and how good Wollongong is' – are:

- evaluation capacity building
- design thinking/innovation
- evaluation in education, particularly school education
- public sector evaluation policy and strategy
- the linkages between social/market research and evaluation.

Duncan has served on the AES Board from 2012–15.



# Clear Horizon

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# conference supporters



Australian Government

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## Australian Department of Social Services

GOLD SPONSOR – CHANGE AGENT

The Department of Social Services is a critical source of social policy advice for the Australian Government. We work in partnership with government and non-government organisations to ensure the effective development, management and delivery of a diverse range of policies and programs focused on improving the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia.

[dss.gov.au](http://dss.gov.au)

## Clear Horizon

### Clear Horizon

GOLD SPONSOR – KEYNOTE SPEAKER:  
PENNY HAGEN

Clear Horizon provides bespoke design, monitoring and evaluation services. We partner with international agencies; local, state and federal government; industry bodies; and not-for-profits to design and implement robust, human-centred monitoring and evaluation, for simple through to complex situations. We're leaders in facilitating theory of change and program logic processes and in design, program logic, theory of change, and monitoring and evaluation training.

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### ARTD Consultants

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FUNCTION

Established in 1989, ARTD is one of Australia's leading public policy consulting firms. We work with government agencies, NGOs and communities to make evidence-informed policy decisions; co-design service models and delivery strategies; plan for, track and evaluate outcomes; and continuously improve performance. We were early pioneers in the use of program logic and remain at the forefront of evaluation theory and practice. Our approach is simple—we listen to our clients and their stakeholders and draw on our expertise to bring evidence and insight to decision makers.

[artd.com.au](http://artd.com.au)



### ACIL Allen Consulting

GOLD SPONSOR – REFRESHMENT BREAKS

ACIL Allen Consulting is Australia's largest employee-owned independent public policy, economics and corporate public affairs consultancy. Staff have the skills and knowledge required to design and undertake rigorous evaluations in practice, including in qualitative research and econometrics.

The firm regularly evaluates large public interventions, such as national policies and international education programs, to more targeted interventions for discrete communities. Staff are experienced in working with Australia's First Peoples, youth and people with a disability, drawing on culturally appropriate research methods. The firm is adept at the application of theory-based methods (program logic), qualitative research methods (such as case study research) and more quantitative studies (cost-benefit analyses or quasi-experimental designs).

[acilallen.com.au](http://acilallen.com.au)



### Urbis

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DINNER

At Urbis, we have one simple goal – to shape the cities and communities of Australia for a better future. It's something we achieve by drawing together a network of the brightest minds. Think of Urbis as a creative community of practice experts, working collaboratively to deliver fresh thinking and independent advice and guidance – all backed up by real, evidence-based solutions.

Whether you engage with us in the areas of planning, design, policy, heritage, valuations, transactions, economics or research, you know you're dealing with the experts who will connect you to a better outcome, every time. We advise developers, property owners, investors, private firms, NGOs, community groups, industry associations and all levels of government – local, state and federal. We help our clients find a way through the competing interests that surround any project involving people, places and property – community and social concerns, environmental and heritage values, planning policies, commercial imperatives. We believe that the most workable and elegant solutions will emerge – and ultimately, the best cities and communities – when the best minds think and talk and work together.

[urbis.com.au](http://urbis.com.au)





### **Grosvenor Performance Group**

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LANYARD

Grosvenor's team of evaluation experts have extensive experience in advising the public sector. From program design and performance monitoring to evaluation and capability development, Grosvenor's evaluators help you review the success of your programs and make clear, informed decisions.

[grosvenor.com.au](http://grosvenor.com.au)



### **MEERQAT Pty Ltd**

SILVER SPONSOR – CONFERENCE APP

MEERQAT Pty Ltd is a company dedicated to developing online tools that engage stakeholders in evaluation and other quality improvement activities. Its flagship products – MEERQAT and BPCLEtool – use the latest technology to enable holistic evaluation of programs, projects and processes, tapping into the knowledge and experience of team members and other stakeholders.

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Urbis is proud to be the Gold Sponsor  
for the AES18 International Evaluation  
Conference Gala Awards Dinner.

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# Welcome to Country and conference opening

## Welcome to Country by Auntie Nola Hooper

Auntie Nola is a proud Tasmanian Aboriginal woman, she is well-respected within the community for her leadership, strength and her passion for supporting and strengthening Tasmanian Aboriginal culture through shell necklace making, water carriers and mutton birding. Auntie Nola also sits on the board of the Elders Council of Tasmania and we are fortunate enough to have her here with us to Welcome us to Country.

## Conference opening

Following the Welcome to Country, AES President Lyn Alderman officially opens the conference.

## Opening keynote address by Michael Quinn Patton, with Kate McKegg

*Michael will be appearing by video link, with Kate McKegg facilitating*

Last year Andy Rowe presented climate change and sustainability as deep global challenges of the 'Anthropocene' – the geological age characterised by humans' influence on the planet. He argued that 'Every aspect of human activity needs to change if we and other life forms are to have a sustainable future'. That is a vision of transformation. But designing and evaluating genuinely transformational initiatives is different from designing and evaluating projects and programs. In Michael's words: 'at international conferences on transformation, I witnessed the challenges framed as complex, multidimensional, multi-layered, cross-silos, and dynamic – followed by traditional project and evaluation presentations that were anything but transformational. My premise: autonomous and isolated projects and programs do not lead to global systems transformation.'

This presentation will present a theory of global transformational change and the Blue Marble (whole Earth) evaluation implications of that theory.

## aes18 conference support grants for emerging Indigenous evaluators

*sponsored by*

**Australian Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet**

**Roberts Brown**

**Conference delegates**

In 2018 we are pleased to award grants to support thirteen Indigenous evaluators from the Australasian region to participate with us in Launceston. We welcome our grant recipients and hope you thoroughly enjoy this opportunity.

As well as developing recipient's capacity, the support grants strengthen the knowledge base of the evaluation sector by bringing the grantees' knowledge and understanding to experienced evaluators.

Thank you to those who helped publicise the grants and encourage prospective applicants. Thank you also to the panel who volunteered their expertise and time to select this year's grantees.

The AES particularly thanks the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Roberts Brown and the delegates who donated for their generous support in 2018.



# special program

**AES Annual General Meeting – followed by**  
**‘What could the Romans actually do for us?’ – an**  
**interactive Forum on the concept of an Evaluator-**  
**General and what it could mean for AES members**

**Thursday 20 September, 5:30pm–7:00pm**  
**Conference Centre**

Join the AES Board as we celebrate another year's achievements by members of the AES.

*Followed by:*

***‘What could the Romans actually do for us?’ - an***  
***interactive Forum on the concept of an Evaluator-***  
***General and what it could mean for AES members***

Initially proposed by Nicholas Gruen, and more recently supported by the AES and stakeholders such as the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, the concept of an independent Evaluator-General reporting to the Australian Parliament is showing signs of gaining traction. While many support the concept in-principle, what might its actual design and implementation look like, and what could this mean for AES members both internal and external to Government? Lead by a Panel, this interactive session will explore with the AES membership what are the possible implications for doing evaluation, evaluation capacity and capability building, and creating an independent arm, plus what it could mean for the status of evaluation, the sector and profession.

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## 2019 Rosalind Hurworth Prize

**Friday 21 September, 2:30pm–4:00pm, Closing Plenary**

Presented by Dr Carol Quadrelli, *EJA* co-editor



Each year we celebrate the best submitted conference paper in honour of the late Associate Professor Rosalind Hurworth, long time and dedicated editor of the *Evaluation Journal of Australasia* (*EJA*). The prize is publication of the winning paper in the next issue of the *EJA*.

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## In the deep end? Evaluation 101 for new evaluators

**Wednesday 19 September, 11:00am–12:00pm**  
**Conference Centre**

Presented by Charlie Tulloch, this presentation will provide an introductory overview of the evaluation field, adapted from evaluation capability building materials prepared and delivered within a large professional services firm. It will explore various definitions of evaluation, outline the rationale for undertaking evaluations, outline the role

of evaluation across the government policy cycle, detail the most suitable types of evaluation, and step through practical considerations relating to planning, conducting and reporting on evaluation findings. It will draw on the AES Evaluators Professional Learning Competency Framework to identify the skills that new evaluators should seek to build as they develop. By the end of this session, those attending the conference to learn the basics will have a better understanding about their development path, and the contribution they can make to extending their own practice building personal capital.

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## Strengthening the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia

**Thursday 20 September, 9:30am–10:30am, and**  
**Friday 21 September, 1:30pm–2:30pm**

Facilitated by the AES Learning and Professional Practice committee, these two consultation workshops will explore options for strengthening the capacity and professionalisation of the evaluation sector. The AES wants your views about priorities for skill development, learning pathways, embedding professional competencies and opportunities to increase demand for and strengthen the operating environment for evaluation.

Workshop 1 will identify and discuss issues of most interest and concern to members.

Workshop 2 will build on the first, and help shape the direction for the AES in strengthening the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia.

The outcomes of the workshop sessions will be shared at the conference closing plenary.

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## Freaking super sweet webinars: learning new tricks from young guns (aka Webinars 101: AES webinar working group reports back)

**Thursday 20 September, 11:00am–12:00pm**  
**Conference Centre**

The AES is transforming and wants to increase member value. In this interactive session, the AES Webinar Working Group will share what they've learnt and their activities so far. The Group will provide an overview of what a webinar is (and isn't), different delivery options within an evaluative setting (the techie bit) and top tips and tricks for facilitating online. The session will end with reflections on the value of the tool for AES members as a vehicle for professional development, and a tool for use in evaluations. Throughout the session, the presenters will incorporate the use of other interactive tools, e.g. PollEverywhere, that can be used to garner engagement and gather data, so attendees leave with first-hand experience of the technology options available to them.

### **AES Committees/Special Interest Groups**

#### **AES groups can meet during lunch breaks.**

These meetings will either be planned or ad hoc. Please advise the registration desk if you are planning a meeting. Details can be found on the program changes board near the Registration Desk.

Ask at the registration desk if you wish to contact delegates, or make a plenary announcement.

### **Developing an AES Advocacy and Influence Strategy: A consultation and co-design session for AES members**

**Thursday 20 September, 12:00pm-1:00pm**  
**Chancellor 5**

The AES Advocacy and Alliances Committee is developing an Advocacy and Influence Strategy in order for the AES to project its 'voice' and to enable it to better serve its members and the profession. The Committee is offering an opportunity for AES members to be involved during the Conference. This consultation and needs analysis session is an opportunity for AES members to contribute to the design

of the Strategy. The session will explore what needs or issues members have regarding advocacy and influence, and their thinking about the most relevant and useful approaches.

### **What to do in Launceston and Northern Tasmania**

The largest city in the region, Launceston is a vibrant hub for food and wine, and culture. There's also a touch of wilderness with Cataract Gorge just a few minutes walk from the city centre.

The city is located on the banks of the Tamar River and is the gateway to the Tamar Valley. Out of Launceston, the surrounding green fields and country lanes are lined with 150 year old hawthorn, poplar and elm trees, while in the rich farmland of the Tamar Valley you'll find lavender plantations, vineyards, strawberry farms and orchards.

This idyllic setting will satisfy other interests too, from those of history enthusiasts to nature lovers.

More information at:

<http://www.northerntasmania.com.au>

# DIY Program Evaluation Kit

A practical guide that helps you plan and conduct evaluations



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PUBLIC SECTOR ADVISORY

# social program – official

## Tuesday 18 September

### aes18 Welcome reception

*sponsored by ARTD Consultants*

Time: 6:00pm–8:00pm

Location: **Penny Royal Wine Bar & Restaurant**  
1 Bridge Road, Launceston

Getting there: Penny Royal is in walking distance of the conference venue, and most Launceston hotels.

Join us the evening before the conference kicks off to raise our glasses to toast the aes18 International Evaluation Conference.

This year's welcome is located in the iconic Penny Royal adventure park. Enjoy pre-conference entertainment in a unique and iconic space. The welcome reception is open to conference and workshop delegates. Delegates can pick up their conference lanyards on arrival.



## Wednesday 19 September

### 2018 AES Gala Awards Dinner

*sponsored by Urbis*

Time: From 6:30pm

Venue: **Albert Hall Launceston**

47 Tamar St & Cimitero St, Launceston  
Getting there: Albert Hall is a short walk from the conference venue, and most Launceston hotels. Wayfinding maps will be displayed on the conference notice board at the registration desk.

MC: Duncan Rintoul

This year's dinner is located at the beautiful historically significant 1891 Victoria Albert Hall. The hall contains a water-powered organ manufactured by an English firm, Charles Brindley, circa 1859.

Join delegates for a banquet dinner as we celebrate excellence in evaluation across the AES regions.

During the dinner, we recognise leaders in evaluation with the announcement of the 2018 AES Awards for Excellence in Evaluation. The award recipients represent excellence for each Award category. We will also be inducting new Fellows, and introducing recipients of this year's Support Grant for Emerging Indigenous Evaluators.

The conference dinner is included in the registration fee for delegates with a full three-day registration. It is not included for day delegates.





# social program – optional

## Wednesday 19 September

### Newcomers Breakfast (optional)

*Hosted by the Learning and Professional Development committee*

Time: 7:30pm–8:30am  
Venue: **The Eatery on Cameron**  
39 Cameron St, Launceston  
(next door to the Hotel Grand Chancellor)  
Getting there: It's literally a three-minute walk from the conference venue

If you're new to the AES conference this is the best way to start your conference experience. We are happy to invite those new to the conference and evaluation to come along and say hello and enjoy either breakfast, or just a coffee, and share your evaluation experiences. Everyone pays their own bill. No need to register, just turn up and say hi!

## Thursday 20 September

### Birds of a feather networking lunch

Time: 1:10pm–1:50pm  
Location: Conference Centre, Hotel Grand Chancellor

We invite you to have lunch with other delegates with similar interests in evaluation. We'll provide 10 tables with pre-set topics, and a further 5 tables with emergent topics. We'll provide the topic and a couple of questions to get you started.

Pre-set topics are: commissioning evaluations; developmental evaluation; evaluating systems change initiatives; NRM evaluation; aid effectiveness; education evaluation; participatory evaluation, health evaluation, not for profit evaluation, M&E technology.

## visit the exhibitions



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 **MEERQAT**  
Quality Assessment Tools

Exhibitions will be open during breaks:

Wednesday 19 September	10:30am–3:30pm
Thursday 20 September	10:30am–4:00pm
Friday 21 September	10:30am–1:30pm

### EXHIBITORS

ARTD Consultants  
Australian Department of Social Services  
Australian Evaluation Society  
Clear Horizon Consulting  
Grosvenor Performance Group  
MEERQAT Pty Ltd  
Centre for Program Evaluation,  
University of Melbourne

# program overview

## Day 1: Wednesday 19 September

9:00am–10:30am	<b>OPENING PLENARY</b> Welcome to Country by Aunty Nola Hooper Conference opening by Lyn Alderman, AES President <i>followed by:</i> Keynote address by Michael Quinn Patton (video): 'Getting real about transformational change: The Blue Marble Evaluation perspective', facilitated by Kate McKegg
<b>10:30AM–11:00AM</b>	<b>MORNING TEA</b> <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
11:00am–12:30pm	<b>CONCURRENT SESSIONS</b>
<b>12:30PM–1:30PM</b>	<b>LUNCH</b> <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
1:30pm–3:00pm	<b>CONCURRENT SESSIONS</b>
<b>3:00PM–3:30PM</b>	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b> <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
3:30pm–5:00pm	<b>CONCURRENT SESSIONS</b>
From 6:30pm	<b>Conference Dinner</b> (Venue: Albert Hall Launceston) <i>sponsored by Urbis</i>

## Day 2: Thursday 20 September

8:00am–9:30am	<b>PLENARY</b> Keynote address by Penny Hagen: 'Scaling up, out and deep: What we are learning about social innovation for transformation'
9:30am–10:30am	<b>CONCURRENT SESSIONS</b>
<b>10:30AM–11:00AM</b>	<b>MORNING TEA</b> <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
11:00am–1:00pm	<b>CONCURRENT SESSIONS</b>
<b>1:00PM–2:00PM</b>	<b>LUNCH</b> <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
2:00pm–3:30pm	<b>CONCURRENT SESSIONS</b>
<b>3:30PM–4:00PM</b>	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b> <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
4:00pm–5:30pm	<b>PLENARY</b> Keynote address by Karol Olejniczak: 'Transforming evaluation practice with serious games'
5:30pm–7:00pm	<b>AES Annual General Meeting and Member Forum</b>

## Day 3: Friday 21 September

8:00am–9:00am	<b>PLENARY</b> Keynote address by Sharon Gollan and Kathleen Stacey: 'Cultural accountability in evaluating Aboriginal initiatives and programs'
9:00am–10:30am	<b>CONCURRENT SESSIONS</b>
<b>10:30AM–11:00AM</b>	<b>MORNING TEA</b> <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen Consulting</i>
11:00am–12:30pm	<b>CONCURRENT SESSIONS</b>
<b>12:30PM–1:30PM</b>	<b>LUNCH</b> <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen Consulting</i>
1:30pm–2:30pm	<b>CONCURRENT SESSIONS</b>
2:30pm–4:00pm	<b>CLOSING PLENARY</b> The Great Debate  <i>followed by:</i> Conference close AES President and Handover to AES 2019 International Evaluation Conference



## EJA | EVALUATION Journal of Australasia

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EJA provides the opportunity to disseminate current research and innovative practice in the evaluation field and is multi-disciplinary and cross sectorial in its scope. AES members, organisations, postgraduate students and individuals involved in the practice, study or teaching of evaluation are invited to submit their work to journal, selecting from a range of submission types.

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**Editors:**  
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# acknowledgements

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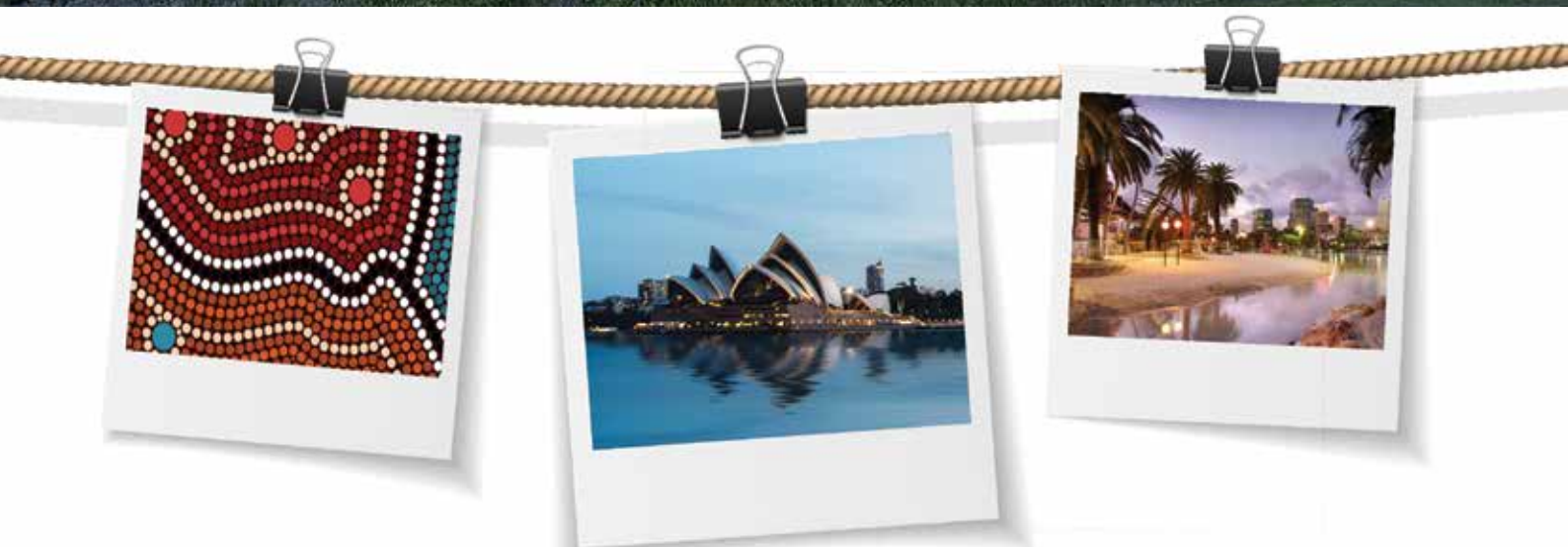
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Applications for conference support grants open March 2019

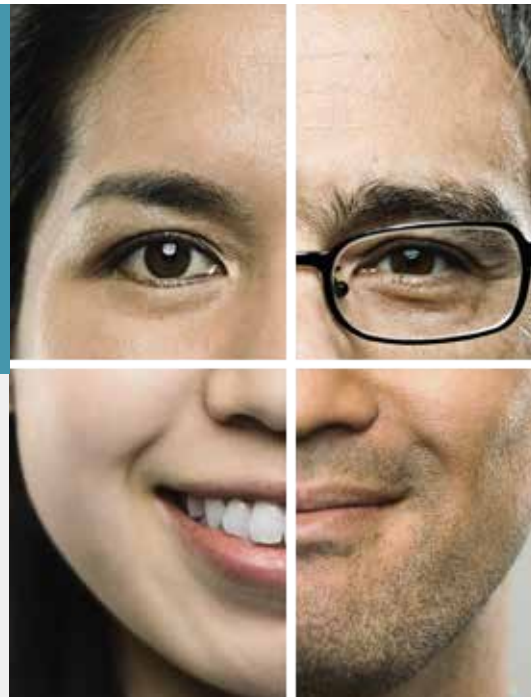
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# aes18

International **Evaluation** Conference

Pre-conference workshops 17 & 18 September

Conference 19–21 September 2018

**Launceston | Australia**

*'Transformations'*

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## DETAILED PROGRAM AND ABSTRACTS

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# PROGRAM WEDNESDAY

## PLENARY SESSION – CONFERENCE CENTRE

09:00 – 10:30

**Welcome to Country**  
Aunty Nola Hooper

**Conference opening**  
Lyn Alderman, AES President

*followed by*

**Keynote address: 'Getting real about transformational change: the Blue Marble evaluation perspective'**

Michael Quinn Patton (via video link)  
Facilitated by: **Kate McKegg**

MC: **Duncan Rintoul**

### LEGEND: Presentation modality

- SP Short paper
- LP Long paper
- P Panel
- SBS Skill building session
- IS Interactive session

## CHANCELLOR 3 11:00 – 12:30 **Capability and mindset**

- 11:00 Integrated care maturity model  
SP *Amy Hogan*
- 11:30 Beyond 'reach': rethinking the evaluation of digital government  
SP *Tanja Porter*
- 12:00 Transforming research organisations via monitoring, evaluation and learning: how can we evaluate our own work?  
SP *Larelle McMillian, Helen Percy, Toni White*

## CHANCELLOR 3 13:30 – 15:00 **Capability and mindset**

- 13:30 What we wish we'd known: the experiences of new and emerging evaluators  
P *Nerida Buckley, Rebecca Denniss, Amy Gullickson, Sally Hartmanis, Matt Healey, Liz Smith*

### **Ignite sessions**

- 14:30 Maximising the value add of a strategic evaluation function in an international non-government organisation (NGO)  
*Peta Leemen, Sarah Leslie*
- 14:35 Evaluative study to assist a transformation of the Indigenous affairs system  
*Kevin Dolman*
- 14:40 Strengthening program impact on systems and building evaluation into systems  
*Jade Maloney, Katherine Rich*
- 14:45 Evaluating influence  
*Joanna Farmer*
- 14:50 Systemic transformation in action: turbo-charging evaluation and impact in the NZ science system  
*Helen Percy, Toni White*



## CHANCELLOR 3 15:30 – 17:00 **Capability and mindset**

- 15:30 Integrating evaluation and design roles: innovations in recent NGO projects  
SP *Robert Drake, Vanessa Hood*
- 16:00 Between the known and the unknown: exploring innovation in evidence-based programs  
LP *Alexandra Ellinson*

# #aes18LST



### CHANCELLOR 4 11:00 – 12:30

#### Transformations in diversity and power

- 11:00  The STrengthening Evaluation Practices and Strategies (STEPS) in Indigenous settings in Australia and New Zealand Project: next 'steps' in the journey  
*Margaret Cargo, Sharon Clarke, Lynley Cvitanovic, Jenni Judd, Gill Potaka Osborne, Lisa Warner*
- 12:00  Using co-design to give voice to Aboriginal people in the design of a culturally appropriate infant maternal health service  
*Sue Leahy, Amanda Reeves*




### CHANCELLOR 5 11:00 – 12:30

#### Transformations in digital innovation big data and user-centred design

- 11:00  Big data, big possibilities, big challenges: lessons from using experimental designs in evaluation of system-level educational reforms  
*Ben Barnes, Duncan Rintoul, Ian Watkins*
- 12:00  Size matters: quantifying the size of the challenge through big data, analytics and evaluative thinking  
*Rico Namay*



### CHANCELLOR 4 13:30 – 15:00

#### Capability and mindset

- 13:30  Theories on and of: a systematic analysis of evaluation's domains of knowledge  
*Ghislain Arbour*
- 14:00  The offerings and challenges of transdisciplinarity for evaluation  
*Keren Winterford*
- 14:30  Synthesising Kirkpatrick's four-levels  
*Francesca Demetriou*


### CHANCELLOR 5 13:30 – 15:00

#### Transformations in digital innovation big data and user-centred design

- 13:30  Outcomes, dashboards and cupcakes  
*Clare Davies, Jenny Riley*
- 14:30  Leveraging publicly available longitudinal and transactional data sources to create comparison groups in quasi-experimental and natural experimental evaluation scenarios  
*Gerard Atkinson*

### CHANCELLOR 4 15:30 – 17:00

#### Transformations in diversity and power

- 15:30  Personal and professional transformation through cultural safety training: Learnings and implications for evaluators from two decades of professional development  
*Sharon Gollan, Kathleen Stacey*
- 16:30  Inclusive and culturally safe evaluation capacity building  
*Sharon Babyack, Doyen Radcliffe, Alison Rogers*

### CHANCELLOR 5 15:30 – 17:00

#### Systems transformations

- 15:30  Buka Hatene – an innovative model promoting adaptive management for improved aid effectiveness in Timor-Leste  
*Regan Field, Louise Maher*
- 16:00  Lessons on designing, monitoring, evaluating and reporting for policy influence programs  
*Rini Mowson, Byron Pakula*
- 16:30  The potential for system level change: addressing political and funding level factors to facilitate health promotion and disease prevention evaluation  
*Joanna Schwarzman*



**CHANCELLOR 6****11:00 – 12:30****Systems transformation**

- 11:00 **P** Thinking local and global: Tasmanian lessons in pursuit of transformational systems change  
*Catherine Manley, Anna Powell, Ebony Wood*

**Ignite sessions**

- 12:00 Embracing the 'fish out of water' – a novice evaluators' experience introducing reflective practice to influence systems transformation  
*Sophie McEniry*
- 12:05 Economic evaluation of justice support: transforming life pathways for people with intellectual disability  
*Ruth McCausland, Rebecca Reeve*
- 12:10 Joining the dots: evaluation and strategy  
*Joanna Farmer*
- 12:15 Using systems theory to explore the impacts and outcomes of a research and evaluation capacity building partnership  
*Rochelle Tobin*
- 12:20 Designing a transformative evaluation framework  
*Sarah Stamp*

**CONFERENCE CENTRE****11:00 – 12:30****Special session**

- 11:00 **IS** In the deep end? Evaluation 101 for new evaluators  
*Charlie Tulloch*

**CHANCELLOR 6****13:30 – 15:00****Systems transformation**

- 13:30 **SP** The promise design-thinking and implementation science holds for social impact evaluation: views from practitioners and evaluators  
*Rachel Aston, Ruth Aston, Robbie Francis, Timoci O'Connor*
- 14:00 **SP** Whose outcome is it anyway? Using matrices to serve many masters  
*Nolan Stephenson*
- 14:30 **SP** Co-creating an evaluation of an innovative collective impact project: the Katherine Individual Support Program  
*Jenne Roberts*

**CONFERENCE CENTRE****13:30 – 15:00****Transformations in diversity and power**

- 13:30 **IS** New words, old approaches: weaving together foundational principles for contributing to transformation through evaluation  
*Robyn Bailey, Roxanne Bainbridge, Emma Walke*

**Transformations in digital innovation big data and user-centred design**

- 14:00 **SP** New evaluation techniques for the transformation of Melbourne: time-and-place targeting technology and the decline of the 300-page evaluation report  
*David Spicer*

**CHANCELLOR 6****15:30 – 17:00****Systems transformation**

- 15:30 **SBS** Is this strategy working? The systems thinking approach to investing for impact  
*Lewis Atkinson*
- 16:30 **SP** The Office of the Inspector-General's Cyclone Debbie review: lessons for delivering value and confidence through trust and empowerment  
*Michael Shapland*

**CONFERENCE CENTRE****15:30 – 17:00****Capability and mindset**

- 15:30 **IS** Learning from failure: a safe space session  
*Matt Healey*

**Transformations in diversity and power**

- 16:30 **SP** Values and synthesis: evaluation's power core  
*Amy Gullickson, Kelly Hannum*

# PROGRAM THURSDAY

## PLENARY SESSION – CONFERENCE CENTRE

08:00 – 9:30

**Keynote address: 'Scaling up, out and deep: what we are learning about social innovation for transformation'**

Penny Hagen

MC: Duncan Rintoul

## PLENARY SESSION – CONFERENCE CENTRE

16:00 – 17:30

**Keynote address: 'Transforming evaluation practice with serious games'**






Karol Olejniczak

MC: Duncan Rintoul

*followed by*


**AES Annual General Meeting and Member Forum**

### LEGEND: Presentation modality


-  Short paper
-  Long paper
-  Panel
-  Skill building session
-  Interactive session

# #aes18LST

## CHANCELLOR 3

 9:30 – 10:30

### Special session

- 9:30  Strengthening the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia, workshop 1  
*Sue Leahy*


## CHANCELLOR 3

 11:00 – 13:00



### Transformations in diversity and power

- 11:00  Developmental evaluation in Indigenous contexts: transforming power relations at the interface of different knowledge systems  
*Sonya Egert, Kate McKegg, Samantha Togni, Nan Wehipeihana*
- 12:00  Developmental evaluation, biostatistics, primary health care researcher and Indigenous voices: culture clash or symbiotic relationship?  
*Deborah Askeew, Sonya Egert, Philip Schluter, Samantha Togni*

## CHANCELLOR 3

 14:00 – 15:30

### Transformations in diversity and power

- 14:00  The Lived Experience Evaluators Project: combining design thinking and innovation to build cultural capital in the evaluation sector  
*Anna Strempel*
- 14:30  In their own words: how we (the boring adults) worked with young people (the cool kids) in Papua New Guinea to develop a bilingual post-program survey, why we did it, and why it was a good idea  
*Junior Muke, Lauren Siegmann*

### Ignite sessions

- 15:05 Measuring a healthy workplace environment in 10 questions: developing a rapid environmental audit tool for Victorian workplaces  
*Clara Walker*
- 15:10 Evaluation and transformation: it's the politics stupid  
*Chris Roche*
- 15:15 Transforming the experience of seriously ill children, young people and their families: a real life example of evaluation in action  
*Sarah Moeller*

## CHANCELLOR 4

### Capability and mindset

9:30 – 10:30

- 9:30 **LP** Realist axiology: a realist perspective on 'valuing' in evaluation  
*Gill Westhorp*

## CHANCELLOR 5

### Transformations in diversity and power

9:30 – 10:30

- 9:30 **LP** Transforming evaluation culture and systems within the Australian aid program: embracing the power of evaluation to promote learning, transparency, and accountability  
*Tracey McMartin*

## CHANCELLOR 4

### Capability and mindset

11:00 – 13:00

- 11:00 **P** Evaluative thinking and strategic learning – nice words, do they make any difference?  
*Meg Beilken, Hayley Rose, Zazie Tolmer, Mila Waise*
- 11:00 **P** Evaluation capability building: transforming evaluation culture or spinning wheels?  
*Martin Hall, Vanessa Hood, Megan Kerr, Delyth Lloyd, Kate Nichols, Amanda Reeves, Roberta Thorburn, Eleanor Williams*

## CHANCELLOR 5

### Systems transformations

11:00 – 13:00

- 11:00 **P** The Enhanced Commonwealth Performance Framework – the opportunity for the Australian evaluation community  
*Lyn Alderman, Brad Cook, David Morton, David Roberts, David Turvey*

### Special session

- 12:00 **IS** Developing an AES Advocacy and Influence Strategy: a consultation and co-design session for AES members  
*Alexandra Ellinson, Margaret MacDonald*

## CHANCELLOR 4

### Capability and mindset

14:00 – 15:30

- 14:00 **P** Evaluative rubrics: a tool for making explicit evaluative judgements  
*Kate McKegg, Nan Wehipeihana*

### Ignite sessions

- 15:00 Just add water: the ingredients of an evaluation consultant  
*Matt Healey*
- 15:05 What happens when the public is not a monolithic audience?  
*Judith Lovell*
- 15:10 'Bring a friend to work day': the value of dragging non evaluator colleagues along to the AES Conference  
*Liam Downing*
- 15:15 Sizing up social campaigns: evaluation in a market research world  
*Gerard Atkinson*
- 15:20 If what you are doing scares you, you're probably on the right track: 5 things I've learned about how to co-design an evaluation  
*Jenne Roberts*

## CHANCELLOR 5

### Systems transformations

14:00 – 15:30

- 14:00 **SP** Principles before rules: child-centred, family-focused and practitioner-led evaluation in child protection  
*Stefan Kmit*
- 14:30 **SP** Youth Partnership Project: applying place-based collective impact and evaluating for systems change  
*Maria Collazos*
- 15:00 **SP** From outputs to outcomes: a system transformation approach for the Victorian child and family service sector  
*Emily Mellon*



**CHANCELLOR 6** 9:30 – 10:30  
**Transformations in digital innovation big data and user-centred design**

- 9:30 **SP** Ethics in evaluation: navigating ethical requirements and processes to improve the quality of evaluation  
*Ellie McDonald, Eleanor Williams*
- 10:00 **SP** How algorithms shape our lives: evaluating the unseen  
*Kristy Hornby*

**CONFERENCE CENTRE** 9:30 – 10:30  
**Transformations in diversity and power**

- 9:30 **IS** Evaluation literacy: exploring the skills needed to motivate and enable others to access, understand and use evaluation information in non-government organisations  
*Leanne Kelly, Alicia McCoy, Alison Rogers*

**CHANCELLOR 6** 11:00 – 13:00  
**Transformations in diversity and power**

- 11:00 **SP** When an evaluator benefits: the challenges of managing values and power in evaluating with a lived experience  
*Joanna Farmer*
- 11:30 **SP** Sharing research results to shape future services  
*Rachel Brown, Gill Potaka Osborne, Kiri Parata*
- 12:00 **SBS** Working with values in evaluation  
*Keryn Hassall*

**CONFERENCE CENTRE** 11:00 – 13:00  
**Capability and mindset**

- 11:00 **IS** Freaking super sweet webinars: learning new tricks from young guns (a.k.a. webinars 101: AES webinar working group reports back  
*Kara Scally-Irvine, Kahiwa Sebire, Liz Smith*
- 12:00 **IS** Ethical dilemmas in evaluation practice  
*Anne Markiewicz*

**CHANCELLOR 6** 14:00 – 15:30  
**Transformations in diversity and power**

- 14:00 **P** Challenging the status quo: the emerging evaluators panel  
*Skye Bulleen, Nathan Delbridge, Francesca Demetriou, Joanna Farmer, Sarah Leslie, Rini Mowson, Eunice Sotelo*
- 15:00 **SP** The promise and practice of partner-led evaluation: a policy research programme case study  
*Jess Dart, Stuart Raetz*

**CONFERENCE CENTRE** 14:00 – 15:30  
**Capability and mindset**

- 14:00 **IS** 'What about me?': a campfire session to co-design transformational self-care guidelines for evaluators  
*John Stoney, Emma Williams*
- 15:00 **SP** Transforming evaluation: necessary but not sufficient to make a meaningful contribution to society  
*Julie McGearry*

# PROGRAM FRIDAY

## PLENARY SESSION – CONFERENCE CENTRE

08:00 – 9:00

**Keynote address: ‘Cultural accountability in evaluating Aboriginal initiatives and programs’**

Sharon Gollan, Kathleen Stacey

MC: **Duncan Rintoul**

## CLOSING PLENARY – CONFERENCE CENTRE

14:30 – 16:00

**It’s the AES18 Great Debate and it’s going to be huge!**

MC: **Duncan Rintoul**

### LEGEND: Presentation modality

- SP Short paper
- LP Long paper
- P Panel
- SBS Skill building session
- IS Interactive session

## 🏠 CHANCELLOR 3

🕒 9:00 – 10:30

### 💬 Capability and mindset

- 9:00 P Traps for young players: a panel session by new evaluators for new evaluators  
*Dan Borg, Victoria Cook, Ellie McDonald, Jennifer Thompson*

### 💬 Ignite sessions

- 10:00 Realities of monitoring and evaluation in a not-for-profit – *Eboni Tiller*
- 10:05 When do we have enough evidence!!! – *Zazie Tolmer*
- 10:10 We should be democritising evaluation, not sanctifying it – *Duncan Rintoul*
- 10:20 TLDR (too long, didn’t read): let’s knife evaluation reports – *Liz Smith*

## 🏠 CHANCELLOR 3

🕒 11:00 – 12:30

### 💬 Capability and mindset

- 11:00 SP Total value measurement: are we counting what actually counts?  
*Les Trudzik*
- 11:30 SP Reconciliation Action Plans as drivers of social change: the engagement process in the evaluation of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games RAP  
*Kate Frances, Ross Williams*

### 💬 Ignite sessions

- 12:00 For all in tents and porpoises: the use of spell check in evalaution – *Evie Cuthbertson*
- 12:05 Charting a course through unpredictable seas: how Amaze is using evaluative approaches to adapt to large-scale sector reform without losing sight of long term outcomes  
*Braedan Hogan, Natasha M Ludowyk*
- 12:10 Alcohol culture change: developing an overarching framework and method to evaluate activities under the VicHealth Alcohol Culture Change Initiative – *Virginia Lewis*
- 12:15 Improving the quality of suicide prevention programs: strengthening the evidence-base with evaluation and collaborative partnerships  
*–Michelle Kwan*

## 🏠 CHANCELLOR 3

🕒 13:30 – 14:30



### 💬 Systems transformations

- 13:30 P Umbrellas and rain drops: evaluating systems change lessons and insights from Tasmania  
*Jess Dart, Galina Laurie, Anna Powell, Kitty te Riele, Jo Taylor, Ebony Wood*

# #aes18LST

## **CHANCELLOR 4** **9:00 – 10:30**

### **Transformations in diversity and power**

- 9:00  Designing research and evaluation for a complex system: the Stronger Smarter Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education  
*Jana Andrade, John Davis, Cathy Jackson*
- 10:00  'It's about involving Aboriginal people in every aspect of decision making': understanding the enablers and drivers of evaluation in Indigenous higher education in Australia  
*Kim Robertson, James Smith*




## **CHANCELLOR 5** **9:00 – 10:30**

### **Transformations in diversity and power**

- 9:00  Taking an intersectional approach to evaluation and monitoring: moving from theory to practice  
*Elise Holland, Sarah Kearney, Anna Trembath*
- 10:00  Q: Can realist evaluations be designed to be more suitable for use in Indigenous contexts? (A: It depends)  
*Kevin Dolman, Emma Williams*



## **CHANCELLOR 4** **11:00 – 12:30**

### **Capability and mindset**

- 11:00  Pathways and progressions: adapting our system of evaluation education to meet the needs of evaluators and funders  
*Amy Gullickson*
- 11:30  Transforming evaluation relationships: evaluators as responsive and flexible mentors  
*Tim Carey*
- 12:00  Evaluation fatigue and the tragedy of the commons: are we plundering our participants' finite resources of patience and trust?  
*Adrian Field*


## **CHANCELLOR 5** **11:00 – 12:30**

### **Systems transformations**

- 11:00  Evaluation Ready: transforming government processes and ensuring evaluability  
*Lyn Alderman, Ruth Pitt, David Turvey*
- 12:00  Realist evaluation: tracing the evolution of realist program theory over the years of the Resilient Futures Project in South Australia  
*Bronny Walsh*


## **CHANCELLOR 4** **13:30 – 14:30**

### **Capability and mindset**

- 13:30  'Drive out fear': creating space for evaluative thinking and speculation for practitioners and organisations  
*Susan Garner, Carolyn Page*

## **CHANCELLOR 5** **13:30 – 14:30**



### **Special session**

- 13:30  Strengthening the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia, workshop 2  
*Sue Leahy*




## **CHANCELLOR 6** **9:00 – 10:30**

### **Capability and mindset**


- 9:00 Evaluation reports: writing, editing and  
 wrangling Word  
*Ruth Pitt*
- 10:00 Visionary, maybe, but how viable? Understanding  
 executive leaders' thinking about evaluation  
 mainstreaming within child and family welfare  
*Amanda Jones*

## **CONFERENCE CENTRE** **9:00 – 10:30**

### **Transformations in digital innovation big data and user-centred design**



- 9:00 Evolving the evaluation deliverable  
 *Gerard Atkinson*

### **Capability and mindset**

- 10:00 Transforming evaluation to better address  
 complexity  
*Julie Elliott*



## **CHANCELLOR 6** **11:00 – 12:30**

### **Capability and mindset**

- 11:00 'Stories for purpose' – transforming the use  
 of documentary film, participatory media  
 and participatory forums in monitoring and  
 evaluation, in order to create evidence based  
 visual reports  
*Margaret Howard, Susan Rooney-Harding*
- 12:00 Why do well designed M&E systems seldom  
 inform decision making?  
*Byron Pakula, Damien Sweeney*


## **CONFERENCE CENTRE** **11:00 – 12:30**

### **Transformations in diversity and power**

- 11:00 We are women! We are ready! Amplifying our  
 voice through participatory action research  
*Tracy McDiarmid, Alejandra Pineda*
- 12:00 Inclusive Systemic Evaluation: Gender equality,  
 Environments, Marginalised voices for Social  
 justice (ISE4GEMS) – a new UN Women approach  
 for the SDG Era  
*Kathryn Meldrum, Jill Thomas*


## **CHANCELLOR 6** **13:30 – 14:30**

### **Capability and mindset**

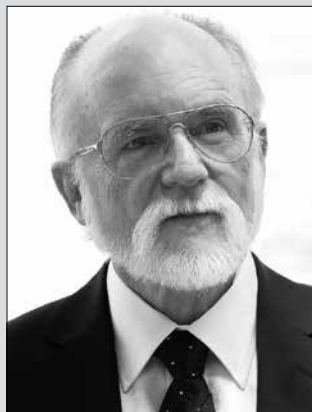
- 13:30 Designing better surveys: from zero to hero  
 *Dan Borg*

## **CONFERENCE CENTRE** **13:30 – 14:30**

### **Transformations in digital innovation big data and user-centred design**

- 13:30 Into the great wide open (data): understanding  
 and using big and open data in evaluations  
*Jessie Wilson*

## Getting real about transformational change: the Blue Marble Evaluation perspective?



**Michael Quinn Patton**, *Independent Evaluation Consultant, Minnesota, USA*

The session will be preceded by Welcome to Country by Auntie Nola Hooper and a conference opening address by **Dr Lyn Alderman**, AES President.

Michael will be appearing by video link, facilitated by **Kate McKegg**.

MC: **Duncan Rintoul**

Last year Andy Rowe presented climate change and sustainability as deep global challenges of the 'Anthropocene' – the geological age characterised by humans' influence on the planet. He argued that 'Every aspect of human activity needs to change if we and other life forms are to have a sustainable future'. That is a vision of transformation. But designing and evaluating genuinely transformational initiatives is different from designing and evaluating projects and programs. In Michael's words: 'at international conferences on transformation, I witnessed the challenges framed as complex, multidimensional, multi-layered, cross-silos, and dynamic – followed by traditional project and evaluation presentations that were anything but transformational. My premise: autonomous and isolated projects and programs do not lead to global systems transformation.'

This presentation will present a theory of global transformational change and the Blue Marble (whole Earth) evaluation implications of that theory.

## Wednesday morning session 11:00 – 12:30

### Integrated care maturity model

**Simone Cheung, Amy Hogan**, *Deloitte Access Economics*;  
**James Linden**, *NSW Ministry of Health*

In 2014, the NSW Government invested \$180 million over six years under the Integrated Care Strategy. This funding was invested in innovative and locally led models of integrated care, as well as a range of system enablers, to explore how health care might be delivered to communities differently and in a more integrated way.

In May 2017, the funding body for the Integrated Care Strategy commissioned a state-wide formative evaluation of the strategy. The evaluation was at a program level but was informed by a high-level analysis of the 20 projects that were delivered by the Local Health Districts (LHDs) under the strategy. The complexity of the evaluation was that each of the LHDs had commenced implementation at varying points in time and the models of care and target cohorts were also different for each LHD.

The evaluation approach relied heavily on qualitative data because the strategy was early in its implementation. The data sources included consultations with all Integrated Care sites, stakeholder surveys, past evaluation findings, linked hospital data sets and patient reported measures for a selection of LHDs.

A maturity model, presented as a radar diagram, was developed to enable a comparison of LHDs against five dimensions of integrated care: program and service innovation; patient-centred care and empowerment; digital health and analytics; models of care; and partnerships. The maturity model was designed to be aspirational and encourage growth, such that the highest ratings of maturity represented leading practice stages of integrated care.

The maturity model provides a visual representation of maturity across the LHDs and highlights where there are strengths and/or gaps across the dimensions of integrated care. This enabled a state-wide evaluation of progress and facilitated the sharing of learnings on what works in NSW.

### In the deep end? Evaluation 101 for new evaluators

**Charlie Tulloch**, *Policy Performance*

Ask any evaluator how they ended up in this field, and most will say that they fell into it. Right in the deep end. This can be overwhelming, with theoretical, methodological, logistical and ethical challenges to consider. This presentation will provide an introductory overview of the evaluation field, adapted from evaluation capability building materials prepared and delivered within a large professional services firm. It will explore various definitions of evaluation; outline the rationale for undertaking evaluations; outline the role of evaluation across the government policy cycle; detail the most suitable types of evaluation; and step through practical considerations relating to planning, conducting and reporting on evaluation findings. It will draw on the AES Evaluators Professional Learning Competency Framework to identify the skills that new evaluators should seek to build as they develop. By the end of this session, those attending the conference to learn the basics will have a better understanding about their development path, and the contribution they can make to extending their own practice = building personal capital.

## Thinking local and global: Tasmanian lessons from the pursuit of transformational systems change

**Catherine Manley**, *Miles Morgan Australia*; **Ebeny Wood**, *Anna Powell, Beacon Foundation*

During 2017, a team in Perth was seeking out a case study subject for a forthcoming publication on Australian skills development at the local level and came across a live example of transformational systems change in action, right here in Tasmania.

The Beacon Foundations' Collective Ed is a work-in-progress example of systems change design and practice, and demonstration of the willingness and commitment of Tasmanian community, education, industry and government. Currently working with six Tasmanian secondary schools, Collective Ed is designed to help schools try and test new ideas and new ways of helping young people complete Year 12.

This special panel brings together practice observers, designers, and evaluators, as well as school leadership associated with the Collective Ed project. The session is designed to stimulate discussion of, and engagement with the panel's perspectives and explore answers to valuable conference questions from both a local and global standpoint: What are we learning about collaborating with unlikely partners and operating at the systems level? How is evaluation practice adapting to work at the system level?

## Big data, big possibilities, big challenges: lessons from using experimental designs in evaluation of system-level educational reforms

**Duncan Rintoul**, **Ben Barnes**, **Ian Watkins**, *NSW Department of Education*

For many evaluators, quasi-experimental designs fall at the first set of hurdles, due to the absence of readily available data sets and the difficulties associated with identifying appropriate comparison/control groups. At the NSW Centre for Educational Statistics and Evaluation (CESE), we have been fortunate to clear these first hurdles on occasion, only to then hit the second set: the technical challenges of working with big data.

This paper is a chance for participants to get their hands dirty... or at the very least to hear the stories of people with dirty hands. The presenters are senior practitioners: the Director of CESE's evaluation unit and the Principal Data Analyst responsible for statistical modelling. The paper will lift the lid on this important (but uncommon) aspect of evaluation practice: the models they build; the data management challenges they face; the internal political challenges they face; the statistical methods that bear more – or less – fruit; and how they translate 'heavy quant' back into actionable insights for policy and program management.

Through a set of case studies, the presenters will draw out practical lessons and tips for making these designs work – including what the team has needed in terms of skillsets, models, software, datasets, mindsets and other complementary elements of evaluation design that sit alongside the quant.

## The Strengthening Evaluation Practices and Strategies (STEPS) in Indigenous settings in Australia and New Zealand Project: next 'steps' in the journey

**Amohia Boulton**, **Gill Potaka Osborne**, **Lynley Cvitanovic**, *Whakauae Research for Maori Health and Development, NZ*; **Sharon Clarke**, *Women's and Children's Health Network Government of South Australia*; **Lisa Warner**, *YWCA Adelaide*; **Jenni Judd**, *Central Queensland University*; **Margaret Cargo**, *University of Canberra*

The STEPS project has coalesced as a discrete piece of work over several years. Its genesis lies in the desire of a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous evaluators in NZ and Australia to improve evaluation undertaken in Indigenous settings. Mixed-method concept mapping methodology was used to brainstorm practices and strategies to support culturally safe evaluation; 106 strategies were consolidated and sorted into conceptually meaningful groups; each strategy was rated on relative importance and achievability. Approximately 400 participants were involved in this work. Concept maps for each country were developed using multi-dimensional scaling and hierarchical cluster analyses. The 12 cluster Australia map reflects three thematic regions: (1) An Evaluation Approach that Honours Community; (2) Core Heart of the Evaluation; (3) Cultural Integrity of the Evaluation. The 11 cluster New Zealand map reflects four regions: (1) Authentic Evaluation Practice; (2) Building Māori Evaluation Expertise; (3) Integrity in Māori Evaluation; (4) Putting Community First. Both maps highlight the importance of cultural integrity in evaluation.

Differences include the distinctiveness of the Respecting Language Protocols concept in the Australia map with language being embedded within the concept of Knowing Yourself as an Evaluator in a Māori Evaluation Context in the NZ map. The ratings on importance and achievability highlight that all concepts are important though differences exist between countries in perceived achievability. In both countries the concepts of Evaluator Qualities and Evaluator Integrity were rated as very important and as most achievable. We will present an overview of the concept maps and highlight importance and achievability ratings. Participants will be invited to discuss how resources can best be harnessed to 'grow' evaluation that works for Indigenous communities.

## Beyond 'reach': rethinking the evaluation of digital government

**Tanja Porter**, *ACIL Allen Consulting*

It's been almost a decade since the Australian Government announced that social media would revolutionise how citizens engage with government and would lead to a raft of improvements in policy making and service delivery. Today, social media features in most government interactions with citizens – from managing expectations about hospital waiting times, to taking reports on pot holes that need fixing, or consulting on tax policy reform.

How do we evaluate the impact of government activity that involves social media? Commonly we use the data generated by social media (hits, likes, shares, etc.) and draw conclusions about outcome and impact based on these measures of popularity and 'reach'. Social media measurement tools and dashboards make it increasingly easy to do so.

Drawing from case studies of social media in the development of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the 'one punch' laws in NSW, my research shows that this data disguises the complexity of citizen-government interactions on social media. Evaluations relying on social media data alone are blind to context and power relations and can result in inaccurate appraisals of an activity's outcome or impact.



Introducing the concept of 'deliberative systems' and the emerging techniques of 'digital ethnography', and by applying them to the same two case studies, this presentation will show how evaluators can achieve far richer, and more nuanced insights of citizen-government interactions through social media.

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### **Embracing the 'fish out of water' – a novice evaluators' experience introducing reflective practice to influence systems transformation**

**Sophie McEniry**, *Bendigo Health*

'Systems thinking' is a loaded, hyped, and often misused term. Join a novice evaluator in her journey of navigating and creating a culture of reflection, experimentation and action in her small team. Listen to a story about how a couple of words, and a kind act can have in supporting aspiring evaluators and systems change. Learn how introducing a 'reflective practice' process has changed outcomes for practitioners, influences systems engagement, transition and transformation.

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### **Transforming research organisations via monitoring, evaluation and learning: how can we evaluate our own**

**Larelle McMillan, Samantha Stone-Jovicich**, *CSIRO*;  
**Toni White, Helen Percy, Lan Chen**, *AgResearch New Zealand*;

The potential for monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) to enhance innovation and impact is receiving increasing attention in practice and research. AgResearch NZ and CSIRO Agriculture & Food are working with our biophysical researchers to transform our organisations to achieve increased innovation and impact through embedded MEL at the project and program level. Lessons from CSIRO and AgResearch NZ has shown that it is difficult to systematically show the value of MEL in practice, with many researchers and managers asking "Is it worth the effort and resources?". While there are an increasing number of case studies and anecdotes pointing towards the role of MEL in helping deliver social, economic and environmental impacts, there is limited evidence, collated through systematic and rigorous methods, to substantiate this. In this paper, the authors present an evaluation framework we developed drawing on insights from complexity science (the Cynefin framework) and reflective practices (the 'what, so what, now what' evaluation inquiries). The aim of the framework is to enable our organisations to gather empirical evidence, to track our MEL processes and outcomes in ways that enables organisational learning and informs research strategies and actions; and to enable comparative analyses. The authors share insights from piloting this framework and provide reflections on how it can support researchers and science organisations to transform the way impact and innovation is framed and delivered.

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### **Size matters: quantifying the size of the challenge through big data, analytics and evaluative thinking**

**Rico Namay**, *Ministry of Education, NZ*

Although at a young stage in terms of unleashing the full extent of what they can offer to policy-setting, big data and analytics plus evaluative thinking are a potent mix that could have real and huge impact in the way policy is set or research and evaluations are conducted in the future.

This presentation shows how the transformative power of linked government data and analytics, combined with the ability to ask the right questions, help:

- evaluate policy options
- make value for money assessments
- target participants for intervention programs, and
- set specific and measurable goals for organisations – school clusters in particular.

Reflections on some lessons gleaned from the application of big data and analytics follow the examples.

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### **Using co-design to give voice to Aboriginal people in the design of a culturally appropriate infant maternal health service**

**Sue Leahy**, *ARTD Consultants*

Traditional consultation approaches typically start with a service or program model in mind and ask for people's views, often ending up with a solution largely reproducing the status quo. Co-design presents a valuable method for disrupting traditional power dynamics. Using creative techniques co-design processes help to build a safe space in which participants can explore difference and find commonalities that cross normal boundaries and relationships.

This paper describes the steps in a successful co-design process to develop a new maternal and child health (MCH) service model to ensure Aboriginal families have access to culturally responsive and high quality MCH services.

20 key stakeholders with expertise in working with Aboriginal families or delivering MCH services were drawn from across the state – half Aboriginal and half non-Aboriginal. They participated in a three-phase co-design process that explored in depth the needs and experiences of Aboriginal families, generated new service ideas to respond to these needs and then refined service features for implementation. Through a series of workshops stakeholders produced a flexible and tailored service model firmly centred on the needs of Aboriginal families.

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### **Economic evaluation of justice support: transforming life pathways for people with intellectual disability**

**Ruth McCausland, Rebecca Reeve**, *UNSW*

Young people with intellectual disability from backgrounds of disadvantage often become 'managed' by the criminal justice system in the absence of holistic support in the community. This is extraordinarily costly in human and economic terms. This presentation reports on an economic evaluation of a program run by the Intellectual Disability Rights Service in NSW that demonstrated how the provision of appropriate support and services at a critical intervention point can transform the lives of individuals with intellectual disability in the criminal justice system, work towards more equitable legal outcomes and also result in cost savings to government.

## Joining the dots: evaluation and strategy

Joanna Farmer, *beyondblue*

Evaluation is often seen as something that occurs at the micro, program level, while strategy happens up at the macro, organisational level. Increasingly though, organisations are thinking about how they can measure the performance of their strategy, and the programs that contribute towards it, to drive long-term strategic goals. The presenter reflects on her experience developing organisational strategy using an evaluation background, highlighting the key stages of developing organisational strategy, and how evaluative thinking can be used to improve goal-setting, implementation and monitoring at all levels of an organisation.

## Using systems theory to explore the impacts and outcomes of a research and evaluation capacity building partnership

Rochelle Tobin, Jonathan Hallett, Roanna Lobo Lobo, Bruce Maycock, *Curtin University*

The Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Applied Research and Evaluation Network (SiREN) takes a partnership approach to building the research and evaluation capacity of organisations working to address sexual health and blood-borne virus issues in Western Australia. Despite the potential of partnership approaches, like SiREN, to improve public health practice, there is limited

understanding of how they work and the kinds of outcomes they can achieve. This presentation will describe the application of systems theory to understand how, and in what ways, the SiREN model has influenced research and evaluation practices.

## Designing a transformative evaluation framework

Sarah Stamp, Nerida Leal, Rhian Stack, Bianca Reveruzzi, Katrina Middlin, Jessica Eggleton, *Queensland Family and Child Commission*

The Queensland child protection system is undergoing a ten-year reform program to transform the system. This evaluation requires an equally transformative evaluation framework. Evaluations scheduled at three time points require different approaches to define and measure success given the varied purposes of the evaluations, maturity of the reform program and data available for each evaluation, which were unknown at program commencement. AES delegates will have the opportunity to hear about how the organisation designed a flexible, transformative evaluation framework with subsequent evaluation plans defining success measures to allow evaluation planning to occur early while ensuring the evaluations are appropriate.

## Wednesday afternoon session 13:30 – 15:00

## Theories on and of: a systematic analysis of evaluation's domains of knowledge

Ghislain Arbour, *Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne*

The evaluation discipline deals with a diverse body of knowledge. Some theories, concepts and other models are about investigating the value of things, and some are about how evaluation partners engage in the evaluation process. Others are about how people should conduct evaluations, and we also have ideas about how we communicate the results from such evaluations. We even developed theories about events that happen after the evaluation is done, concerning decision-making and other types of use.

But what is evaluation knowledge, really? What defines it? What delineates it from other disciplines? What is the role of other disciplines in developing evaluation knowledge? Can all contributions relevant for evaluation qualify as evaluative knowledge?

This paper is an attempt at answering the aforementioned questions. In so doing, it proposes a systematic framework to organise the various evaluation's domains of knowledge. The framework is driven by a fundamental distinction between theories on evaluation and theories of evaluation. The former are the theories and concepts from various disciplines that are applied to the social object of evaluation to explain, among others, the administrative, political and sociological nature of evaluation. The latter are the theories and concepts that explain the determination of value.

## The promise design-thinking and implementation science holds for social impact evaluation: views from practitioners and evaluators

Ruth Aston, Timoci O'Connor, *The University of Melbourne*; Rachel Aston, *ARTD Consultants*; Robbie Francis, *The Lucy Foundation / University of Otago, NZ*

In the last decade the prevalence of complex evaluands (multi-site, multi-input, multi-output and multi-outcome) aiming to achieve social change has exponentially grown. However, the expansion and development of approaches to measuring the impact of these evaluands has not kept pace. A multi-year research project conducted by the authors investigated measures for evaluating the impact of complex social change initiatives, and found that intervention design and implementation are proxy indicators for intervention impact. This short paper presentation will draw on the key findings of the research project 'creating measures for social change' and will present challenges and promising approaches in social impact evaluation including the role of technology, co-design and implementation science.

Evaluators and social change practitioners from the University of Otago National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, The Lucy Foundation and ARTD Consultants will present critical practical considerations for applying the findings of the research drawing from evaluations in public health, social enterprise and family violence. The ways in which inclusive and accessible information about design and implementation could support the adaptive monitoring and evaluation needs in challenging social change contexts will also be reflected on.

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## Outcomes, dashboards and cupcakes

Jenny Riley, *Navigating Outcomes Pty Ltd*

Outcomes based performance management is heading our way. Windana Drug and Alcohol Recovery has been getting ready, but needed an outcomes measurement framework that works for them and their clients, one that is meaningful, robust and proportionate. They wanted it not to be a tick-box, top-down, administration burden but something that could add value to and perhaps drive their work.

With this in mind Windana embarked on an outcomes measurement journey in April 2017. The ambition was to introduce real-time outcome measurement into a 35-bed therapeutic community in Maryknoll, Victoria. The organisation took the time to build the skills and knowledge of its team about what outcomes are versus outputs. Residents participated in a 'theory of change' workshop, allowing identification of short, medium and long term outcomes.

The consultants worked with Windana to recommend validated tools to collect data that aligned with intended outcomes. The team visioned a dashboard of how this data could be feed back to clients and staff in real-time. They launched the dashboards on 4 December (this is where the cupcakes come in) and have been collecting and using the data to support their work in Maryknoll.

The presenter will provide feedback from staff and clients six months into using the live dashboards, i.e. was it worth it? Is it adding value to our work? What are we learning?

This paper will share the process, including what worked well and what could have been done better. The presenter will share recommendations for setting up outcome measurement in other therapeutic communities and programs in the AOD sector and the 'what next' thinking about shared measurement across the sector and opportunities for data linkage.

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## What we wish we'd known: the experiences of new and emerging evaluators

Rebecca Denniss, *Matthew Healey, First Person Consulting; Liz Smith, Litmus/AES; Amy Gullickson, Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne; Nerida Buckley, Sustainability Victoria; Sally Hartmanis, Deloitte Access Economics*

The beauty of evaluation as a discipline and a professional practice is that it involves diverse skills, capabilities, mindsets and approaches that can be applied across diverse contexts, cultures, landscapes and sectors. While this presents opportunities, it can also be overwhelming.

New and emerging evaluators often get told what they need and what they should be doing – so, instead, the panel will be asking them for their perspective. In this session, a collection of movers and shakers with a range of experiences has been brought together: a young up-start who started up his own evaluation firm; new and emerging evaluators from the government and non-government sectors; an evaluation educator who challenges and inspires evaluators across all stages of their careers; an experienced evaluator and senior AES member who describes herself as a 'disrupter'.

If you are a new or emerging evaluator, this is your chance to ask questions, seek mentoring and advice, share experiences and, most importantly, tell your colleagues what you need to transform your career.

If you're an experienced evaluator, it's your chance to meet some of the region's brightest new evaluators – and talk to them about all the things you wish you'd known in the early stages of your career!

Facilitated by new and emerging evaluators for new and emerging evaluators, this panel session will involve discussion about capabilities, mindsets, approaches and skills (learning from failures and f\*ck ups), mentoring and support, professional pathways.

After hearing a bit about the stories of each of the panellists, the majority of this session will be dedicated to questions and answers, and facilitated audience discussion.

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## New words, old approaches: weaving together foundational principles for contributing to transformation through evaluation

Robyn Bailey, *Allen + Clarke; Emma Walke, University of Sydney; Roxanne Bainbridge, Central Queensland University*

Do new terms such as 'co-design' signal substantively new or different approaches to evaluation? Or are they repackaging old concepts, concepts fundamentally important for ensuring the self-determination of Indigenous peoples? Do 'co' approaches – co-design, co-operative inquiry, co-production, co-creation – inherently address issues such as power and control over decision-making and resources, or can they further entrench current inequities?

The authors contend that it is not evaluation approaches in and of themselves that can contribute to better outcomes for Indigenous peoples. Rather, the application of principles and practices which consciously address issues of inequity in power, diversity of voices, values and knowledge, and benefits arising from such evaluation projects.

The authors have started to build a principles-based framework for guiding their practice, both during the co-design and evaluation of a substantive program aimed at improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This framework attempts to weave together principles emphasised by Aboriginal and Western forms of inquiry – differing ways of knowing, doing and being.

The authors invite you to a yarnning circle to talk about foundational principles and practices which respect 'all learn, all teach' processes and practices. The authors would like to explore whether there are evaluation approaches that are inherently more culturally safe and transformative, whether it is the way in which we apply our craft that is key to realising better outcomes for Indigenous and ultimately all peoples, or whether it is something else. The knowledge generated in the session will be shared back with participants, using both visual and written mediums.

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## The offerings and challenges of trans-disciplinarity for evaluation

Keren Winterford, *Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney*

This paper explores the offerings but also the challenges of employing theory and practice of transdisciplinary research, which is being increasingly employed in academic research, to realms of evaluation. This way of working is in response to a recognition of 'wicked' problems, complexity and that solutions for the future will not be solved by single disciplines alone. As Einstein said "we cannot solve our problems with the same thinking that created them."

Transdisciplinarity offers an approach through which to ask different types of questions, to different types of actors, in order to create new types of transformative knowledge for improved program design and implementation.

The paper describes aspects of transdisciplinary research, including purposive, holistic, participatory, experimental and action focused and dynamic, and situates these within practice examples of evaluation. The paper highlights the importance of situating evaluator expertise with other sets of knowledge and exploring underlying world views that inform policy and program interventions. This type of practice is increasingly in line with how projects and programs operate.



Transdisciplinarity offers a set of thinking and practice which situates the evaluator together with other sets of knowledge. This includes equally valuing and integrating different knowledge and perspectives, and by working outside traditional definitions and crossing disciplinary boundaries, adapting and transforming to find connections and meaning.

The paper tests the practice of transdisciplinary research against the expectations of evaluation practice and highlights challenges of working through such an approach which include uncertainty of bringing multiple actors together in a process of co-design and co-production, use of different languages, and dominance of singular frameworks. Despite its challenges, the paper concludes that transdisciplinarity provides a useful means through which to guide evaluation theory and practice and for evaluators to contribute to addressing societal problems, discourse and strengthened policy and programming objectives.

## Whose outcome is it anyway? Using matrices to serve many masters

Linda Leonard, Nolan Stephenson, *WA Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development*

Was the project outcome met? How many times have we heard that phrase as we try to justify the outcome of a project for further funding? In general terms, the assumption is, the outcome of a project will meet a particular stakeholder need and addresses the issue. This is not always the case. We find ourselves in situations where the outcome meets the needs of one type of stakeholder but many others have vested interests. Through one lens the project is deemed successful through another it has failed. How then do we meet the needs of various audiences while staying true to a project outcome?

This presentation looks at the transformation from the single outcome based approach of project delivery, to an approach that meets expectations of a range of vested interests. A quote from Homer states 'if you serve too many masters you will suffer'. We approach with caution, aware of the complex pathways which may be formed transitioning to an end point. Audiences facing complex environments, driven by political and budgetary constraints will be interested in gaining insights into how multi-level logical thinking can meet the needs of a range of parties.

Experiences of this particular program has shown that the use of matrices offers insight, awareness and decision support thinking to a wider audience. It explores how one approach, Rubrics, can be used to provide a decision support framework to enable stakeholders to understand levels of success from varying points of view. Using the theory behind Rubrics, allows for development of measurement standards, decision making and validation of priorities for a variety of needs. The methodology allows for transformation away from linear thinking, to one that reflects multi-criteria consideration of stakeholders who want buy-in on the result.

## New evaluation techniques for the transformation of Melbourne: time-and-place targeting technology and the decline of the 300-page evaluation report

David Spicer, Kirstin Couper, *Colmar Brunton*

The impact of disruptions initiated by the transformation of transport infrastructure is a hot topic in Melbourne. Improvements to crucial arterial roads and public transport corridors mean there is a lot for Melburnians to consider when planning a journey.

The authors will share the results from an evaluation of the impact of twelve infrastructure disruptions. Each of the twelve disruptions covered different locations, time periods and transport modes. Historically, there has been concern that traditional lagging

indicators from online and phone surveying could not capture accurate or timely recall of travel experience. The authors overcame this limitation using 'geo-targeted sampling' as part of a suite of methodologies. They used targeted surveys on mobile devices using GPS data to identify individuals who had been present at a specific location at a specific time. There was no traditional 'Evaluation Report' for this study, nor did the authors use static 'scorecards' or similar devices across the 12 disruptions. Instead, they shaped the way that policy-makers and planners could interrogate the data relevant to their area by providing a series of interactive online dashboards. The dashboard enabled the dissemination of findings that created a space where a broad range of stakeholders could test their hypotheses. These stakeholders may not have been able to answer their own research questions using traditional and static report/scorecard materials. This did not de-value the role of the evaluator who was always on hand to aid with interpretation and translation of data into insights. Rather, it empowered clients and their stakeholders to take control of their own data. The dashboard outputs will be demonstrated in this presentation.

## Maximising the value add of a strategic evaluation function in an international non-government organisation (NGO)

Sarah Leslie, Peta Leemen, *The Fred Hollows Foundation*

In this presentation, the authors will present their experiences as internal evaluators in an international NGO trying to develop a strategic evaluation function.

This will include:

- developing the evaluation policy, defining strategic evaluations and developing guidance on how to do these; how many strategic evaluations have been done to date and a more in-depth profile of a couple
- learnings on how to effectively structure, commission and manage these evaluations and support learning from the evaluation
- how the authors have tried to apply their learnings in more recent evaluations and the implications for the NGO's overall monitoring and evaluation system.

## Synthesising Kirkpatrick's four levels

Francesca Demetriou, *Lirata Consulting*

Donald Kirkpatrick published the four-level model for evaluating training programs in his 1994 book *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels*. His objective was to 'provide a simple, practical four-level approach for evaluating training programs' (Kirkpatrick, 2006). Since then, the framework has been applied extensively in evaluating training and development programs.

What is clear in choosing to utilise this framework, is that the evaluation takes on a specific values frame: that these four levels (Reaction, Learning, Behaviour, Results) are the appropriate criteria in which to judge the program on. What is not clear is the relative importance of each of the four levels, and how evaluators should therefore approach synthesising findings about the four-levels to reach an overall judgement about the performance of a program.

Synthesis is an important step in evaluation, but there is a tendency for this step to occur in ways which are not rigorous, nor explicitly justified, leading to hidden assumptions behind conclusions provided in evaluations.

In the context of the Kirkpatrick model, for a training program to be considered 'good', how well does each of the four levels need to perform to determine that a program is adequate, good, or excellent? Can a training program where participants learn a lot, but the results for the organisation are limited be considered 'good'?

Using Jane Davidson's (2005) guidance on evaluation synthesis, and a literature review on the use and critiques of the Kirkpatrick model, this paper considers the assumptions behind the model to provide guidance for determining the relative importance of the four levels.

An example in practice is presented, where a synthesis methodology is developed for a Tasmanian community leadership program evaluation that uses the Kirkpatrick model.

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## Co-creating an evaluation of an innovative collective impact project: the Katherine Individual Support

**Jenne Roberts**, *Menzies School of Health Research*; **Eslyn Fletcher**, *Katherine Regional Aboriginal Health and Related Service (KRAHRS)*; **Graham Castine**, *Kalano Aboriginal Corporation*; **Darrell Brock**, *Wurli Wurlijang Aboriginal Health Service*; **Simon Quilty**, *Katherine District Hospital*

A consortium of Aboriginal service providers have united with a small 60-bed hospital to ensure that homeless, frequent attenders of the emergency department are not turned out onto the streets after receiving treatment. They had a compelling idea – that their combined efforts could transform the service system and improve wellbeing – and they didn't want to wait until they had exhausted their pilot funding to find out if it worked. So, these social innovators chose to work with a developmental evaluator. Together, they use evaluation to improve design and implementation, strengthen their collective impact and transform into a cohesive, person-centred network of services.

This presentation will outline the magic that results from combining Indigenous concepts of wellbeing, developmental evaluation and the lived experience of participants to co-create knowledge, solve complex service system gaps as they are identified, and increase access to social and health services. They co-create culturally appropriate methods to ensure participants receive culturally appropriate collaborative case management, primary health care and timely access to services.

This presentation will illustrate the complexities of bringing stakeholders together to:

- generate a shared workplan and common set of indicators of positive impact
- identify the principles and values that underpin the co-creation and collective impact approach adopted by the Consortium
- reflect on the value of their combined efforts to support the 500-plus people who present frequently to the Emergency Department.

The presentation will explore some of the problems encountered in evaluating collective impact and how they are being tackled and overcome. The Consortium members and frontline service providers (from several agencies) will speak candidly (in person and in a video presentation) about how they have been able to open an innovation process to ongoing, collective scrutiny.

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## Leveraging publicly available longitudinal and transactional data sources to create comparison groups in quasi-experimental and natural experimental evaluation scenarios

**Gerard Atkinson**, *ARTD Consultants*

One of the challenges faced by evaluators is how to effectively determine the impacts of a program when a control group is not readily available. Sometimes the design of the program makes such groups impossible or unethical to create (e.g. mandatory or

selective participation), or constraints on resources and scope make such investigations infeasible.

These challenges have led to the development of quasi-experimental and natural experimental approaches to evaluation. In parallel to the adoption of these techniques, the shift to policies of 'open government' has enabled greater public access to data. Much of these data capture transformations in society over time, or provide records of how people have interacted with government and public services. In the right situations, these data can be used to augment impact evaluations through creating comparison groups for analysis.

This presentation looks at a variety of publicly available data sources, ranging from large scale longitudinal studies such as HILDA, geographic data such as the Geographic National Address File, or transactional data such as public transport journeys. These data sets can be used to enhance the robustness of quasi-experimental and natural evaluations. Through exploring example data sets and case studies, we consider the challenges of identifying and preparing such data, the privacy and ethical implications, and the value that such data can add to the evaluation process.

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## Evaluative study to assist a transformation of the Indigenous affairs system

**Kevin Dolman**, *Kevin J Dolman Consulting*

The research aim for the author's PhD thesis is to identify the systemic problems that have been hindering the efficiency and effectiveness of the Indigenous affairs system. It involved a detailed case study of the Council of Australian Governments' Indigenous Whole-of-Government Trials Project, which was undertaken from 2002–2007. Under this project, the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments had agreed to experimentally plan and deliver services to eight trial regions around Australia, which have substantial Indigenous populations. The application of two public administration practices were required: 1) whole-of-government coordination; and 2) a partnership with the Indigenous communities. The theory was that better socioeconomic outcomes from public expenditure would prevail with this approach.

The author investigated how well the trials succeeded in implementing this approach. He found there was very little success in applying the two practices across all eight trial sites and consequently, there were very little positive socioeconomic outcomes from the overall project. In seeking to understand the reasons for this disappointing result, the author appraised the quality of the project's public administration by analysing the policy development, the implementation and evaluation stages against recognised best practice standards. The research revealed a pattern of relatively poor quality public administration across all three stages of the project.

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## Strengthening program impact on systems and building evaluation into systems

**Jade Maloney**, *Katherine Rich*, *ARTD Consultants*

To address 'wicked' social problems, there's a need for programs to recognise their potential to impact on systems and for ongoing learning to be built in. So what can we evaluators do to amplify the impact of an evaluation project on systems?

The authors will share three takes from their work with Fair Trading.

1. Evaluators can assist program managers to build systems thinking into design – incorporating ways of addressing systems issues into their logic rather than treating them as external factors or barriers.
2. Evaluators can build capacity for evaluative thinking among program staff in every evaluation project.

3. And, when the context is right, they can also create a transferable monitoring and evaluation framework that organisations can continue to use when the project ends.

## Evaluating influence

Joanna Farmer, *beyondblue*

Evaluation theory has primarily emerged from the desire to measure the impact of discrete programs or interventions. However, for many organisations, especially not for profits, their primary goal is advocacy, and attributing behaviour change to any one action is challenging. These organisations often still have to demonstrate impact to funders, Boards and government – so how do you evaluate influence?

The presenter draws on theory and her experience evaluating advocacy and influence models, providing simple and practical steps to understand and attribute change.

## Systemic transformation in action: turbo-charging evaluation and impact in the New Zealand science

Helen Percy, Toni White, *AgResearch Limited*

How do we 'turbo-charge' evaluation and impact in the New Zealand science and innovation system?

What does it take for research, government and industry organisations to explore a collective approach to tackling the challenge of evaluating science impact?

This presentation tells the presenters' story of collaboration for system transformation: collaborating across organisations through the Impact Planning and Evaluation Network, and – through a facilitated forum – gaining a shared understanding, language and benchmarking of current evaluative capacity; identifying what's needed to turbo-charge the current state; and initial steps to achieving systemic transformational change.

## Wednesday afternoon session 15:30 – 17:00

## Integrating evaluation and design roles: innovations in recent NGO projects

Robert Drake, *SmartSteps*; Vanessa Hood, *Rooftop Social*

One of the exciting developments in evaluation is for evaluators to also be involved in the program design process. This session will explore how the dual evaluation/co-design role can work in practice, using program logic as a tool. This will be an interactive session, where the presenters will build a program logic on the floor to show the process in action. By building and challenging the program logic in a quick, collaborative manner, participants will experience how a project design can evolve rapidly to give it a better chance of achieving long-term outcomes. This is evaluation planning and program design, rolled together.

This session uses financial literacy programs as a case study, based on work undertaken recently with a cluster of NGO projects where evaluative/design thinking has made a big leap forward. The effects have been fascinating to observe. Teams have embraced major changes to the project design. The funder has supported increased funding where the program logic showed it was necessary to get the desired outcomes. The process also helped plan a better evaluation, as the program logic revealed the points where evaluation focus was most critical.

The presenters will also explore the environment that fosters the transformation into evaluation/co-design. Key factors include early engagement, agile evaluators, funders demanding a program logic and encouraging innovation, and capacity building amongst program managers to foster evaluative thinking.

The session will be of interest to evaluators who are keen to broaden their practice into co-design, and to active co-designers who wish to share insights.

## Buka Hatene – an innovative model promoting adaptive management for improved aid effectiveness in Timor-Leste

Louise Maher, *M&E House, Timor-Leste*

In Timor-Leste, an innovative approach to transforming monitoring, evaluation and learning capacity and quality for improved aid effectiveness has been developed. The Australian government has established M&E House, a monitoring and evaluation focussed facility designed to contribute towards a high performing and continually improving development program by ensuring that:

- the Australian Embassy is equipped with evidence and capacity to continually improve decision-making and tell a clear performance story, and
- implementing partners generate and use evidence to learn, adapt and produce user-focused reports.

M&E House will transform current practice into a whole-of-program adaptive performance management system. M&E specialists implement the program, supported by an Australian organisational partnership. M&E House has facilitated the development of a whole-of-program performance assessment framework identifying shared outcomes and indicators for improved integration, collaboration and reporting across program boundaries, and will develop an underpinning information management system. Strategic reviews on cross-sectoral issues provide evidence for improved systems-level programming. Implementing partners are facilitated to develop and implement M&E plans, apply adaptive practice, and improve reporting. Evaluation capacity building is focussed on improving foundational capabilities, changing mind-sets, and building motivation.

The M&E House model allows for application of a single M&E approach, which is utilisation focussed, realist, and consolidates evidence from mixed-methods. It enables M&E methods to be trialled, improved and scaled out. It ensures M&E expertise is accessible to stakeholders, and keeps M&E front-of-mind for implementers. A lean and influential approach ensures targeted information is available for decision-makers. It allows for trusting relationships to develop, to ensure stakeholder participation and engagement in improving program performance.

Baseline data on M&E systems justifies the need for an innovative solution, and early evidence after one year indicates that the



M&E House model may be an effective and relevant solution to transforming MEL systems for improved aid effectiveness in Timor-Leste.

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## Learning from failure: a safe space session

**Matt Healey, First Person Consulting**

The increasing appetite from government, philanthropy and other funders for innovative approaches to complex social and environment challenges has driven many towards such trends as design thinking, human centred design and co- design. These design approaches emphasise (among other things) a willingness to try and fail, and, most importantly, to learn from that failure.

For evaluators, failure (or the potential for failure) is a risk to be mitigated. Should failure occur or mistakes be made, they tend to be kept in-house or otherwise not shared more broadly. To fail means disappointing clients, stakeholders (internal and external) and the communities we seek to benefit.

Given that, and the increasing emphasis on integrating design into our practice, how can evaluators come together to learn from our collective failures and mistakes? How can we pass this learning onto the next generation of evaluators in a way that acknowledges their own experiences and perspectives? What are the opportunities unearthed for the evaluation sector and field by this failure?

This interactive session addresses these questions through facilitated discussion and shared reflection. Through a mix of lightning talks, small group discussions and whole room consensus-making, the session will elicit sharing about times that mistakes were made and what lessons can be learned from those mistakes – for conference attendees and the field of evaluation.

This session will result in a set of agreed upon principles that (hopefully) lay the groundwork for the future sharing of instances where mistakes were made and the lessons learned. This session will be guided by a set of house rules to ensure that attendees feel comfortable in sharing. Upon entry, participants will provide their name, contact details and consent to these principles, which will also enable follow-up after the session.

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## Is this strategy working? The systems thinking approach to investing for impact

**Lewis Atkinson, Haines Centre for Strategic Management LLC**

The systems thinking approach is an important tool for evaluators because it is a way to:

- clarify the system level that you are trying to change
- be people-centric by having a focus on clarity of measures of their 'better-off-ness' Rapidly build evaluation capacity
- establish a common language for measuring impact
- focus on evidence-based practice and continuous improvement Turn strategic reflection into practical action
- ensure a participative process with stakeholders to co-design to create systems change Have a low tech/low cost introduction to measuring outcomes of programs
- use iterative hypothesis testing to validate theory of change for programs
- ensure accountability for theory of change over time, by whom and at which systems level
- create a narrative that is evidence-based and reported as a contribution to social impact

The authors use group reflection & discussion based on a Results Based Accountability (RBA) adoption case study within a medium-sized NFP company delivering community services in

Queensland. Practitioners will be exposed to how RBA and other systems thinking tools and participative methods for stakeholder engagement are used build evaluation capacity, create an evaluative culture, encourage timely utilisation of feedback loops and a commitment to strategic learning.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- understand how systems thinking that can be applied facilitate evaluative thinking
- understand how Results Based Accountability (RBA) is used to Build Evaluation Capacity
- understand how to use RBA to report change for people at different system levels
- understand that the systems thinking approach can accommodate any validated method of measurement of change over time.

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## Personal and professional transformation through cultural safety training: learnings and implications for evaluators from two decades of professional development

**Kathleen Stacey, beyond... (Kathleen Stacey & Associates); Sharon Gollan, Sharon Gollan & Associates**

This presentation will:

- provide an orientation to the focus of and our approach to cultural safety training,
- share learnings from 15 years of evaluation feedback from workshop participants, and
- propose how understanding cultural safety can assist in the development, implementation and evaluation of programs designed for, or inclusive of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

The concept of cultural safety has emerged in NZ and Australia over the past 20 years – it addresses how power operates and equity is/is not achieved based on cultural identity in the context of colonisation. In Australian training contexts, it shifts the focus from learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to non-Indigenous people learning about themselves, and exploring their relationship with racism, whiteness and the dominant culture. This can be confronting, but for many it results in personal and professional transformation, particularly if undertaken as part of an organisational cultural change process.

Qualitative evaluation data has been gathered since 2004 by an Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal partnership that has facilitated over 400 interactive two-day workshops across all Australian states and territories, involving sectors such as: health, family and community support, child protection, education, law and justice, Aboriginal affairs, and planning and transport/infrastructure. The data demonstrates different ways in which many participants experience personal and professional transformation, including how they will apply this to their work contexts.

In our experience as evaluators, a clear understanding of and commitment to contribute to cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians can result in critical changes to how programs are developed and implemented, and whether meaningful outcomes are achieved. It is also a vital lens through which any evaluator should approach their role in evaluating programs designed for, or inclusive of, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Australians.

## Lessons on designing, monitoring, evaluating and reporting for policy influence programs

Ikarini Mowson, Byron Pakula, *Clear Horizon*

Development aid is transforming from direct service provision to influencing policies to promote systemic change and achieve development outcomes. More and more aid programs are seeking to become catalytic drivers through influencing policies. These influencing programs have some distinct elements that mean traditional approaches to design, monitoring, evaluation and reporting are not as relevant.

Drawing on experience in facilitating and developing monitoring and evaluation frameworks for policy influence programs, this paper presents some practical lessons that can be applied by designers, managers and evaluators.

First, we must understand the five main characteristics of policy influence programs including complexity; unpredictable links between cause and effect; the scope and scale may move away; policy goals and commitments may change; and outcomes / impacts may be delayed. Second, there needs to be clear definition of policy changes expected in the programs. Policy changes may be defined in a very broad manner that allow the program to capture policy decisions and processes, including implementation. Policy changes could also be defined to capture every step in the policy cycle. Third, use people-centred approaches to theory of change including stakeholder analysis, in order to step out causal pathways and make sure intermediate outcomes are clearly articulated. Fourth, monitoring systems can be strengthened by using light approaches such as influence log to sufficiently capture the intricate details that are often not known if they will be the triggers of change. Fifth, apply multiple evaluation methods to measure influence, particularly methods to assess the contribution of an intervention to policy change rather than outputs or outcomes.

Evaluating contribution is more realistic, cost-effective and practical than seeking to establish attribution or using experimental approach. Some outcome harvesting tools such as outcome mapping, episode studies or significant instances of policy and systems improvement (SIPSI) could be used in the evaluation.

## Between the known and the unknown: exploring innovation in evidence-based programs

Alexandra Ellinson, *UTS Institute for Public Policy and Governance*

As evaluators we are increasingly tasked with assessing innovation in programs – including in programs that are also intended to be evidence-based. While there isn't an inherent contradiction here, there can be some tensions. The imperative for evaluators to account for both innovation and an evidence-base creates challenges in evaluation design, delivery and reporting: particularly because innovation is often associated with high expectations around outcomes (or at least more efficient outcomes), even if the response is less thoroughly tried and tested.

To navigate these challenges, it is helpful to clarify (and to do so in collaboration with program commissioners and deliverers) what stages and around what aspects of a program innovation is expected to operate. Drawing on lessons from recent projects, the author outlines a typology that locates innovation in (1) the commissioning approach e.g. outcomes-based contracting; (2) the funding strategy e.g. social investment models; (3) the design process e.g. co-design, and/or (4) the structure of information sharing within program delivery e.g. developmental learning. As each of these is an attempt to encourage more responsive, targeted

and often localised solutions, each demands different ways of prioritising the role of evidence in informing what might work best.

The author concludes by reflecting on the need for evaluators to recognise how our activity can create or contribute to risk-averse program environments that are less conducive to innovation. We need to reflect critically on our 'observer effect'.

Accordingly, the author sets out some practical considerations for evaluators – from how we use theory, resource evaluation components, and report on outcomes – so that we work in a way that minimises these impacts.

## The Office of the Inspector-General's Cyclone Debbie review: lessons for delivering value and confidence through trust and empowerment

Iain MacKenzie, Rowena Richardson, *Inspector-General Emergency Management*

The purpose of this presentation is to demonstrate how system-level evaluation can lead to tangible improvements and benefits to communities.

In March 2017, Tropical Cyclone Debbie and subsequent severe weather events resulted in the activation of all levels of Queensland's emergency management system (the System). Strong winds, torrential rain and flooding resulted in significant damage to homes, infrastructure and agriculture, impacting many communities. The effect of Debbie across a large area of Queensland is now well documented and the vast recovery effort continues.

The Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management (the Office) in Queensland is mandated to provide assurance to state government and the community on the effectiveness of the System. The Office reviewed how the System responded to Debbie. The review ensured that lessons were captured; common themes for improvement identified; and good practice shared system-wide.

The presentation will explore the rigorous evaluation methodology, including extensive consultation. Sources of evidence included:

- attendance at 23 formal debrief sessions undertaken by local, district and state disaster management groups, NGOs, state and commonwealth agencies
- engagement with 65 entities, reviewing policy, plans and other associated data that supports disaster management activities
- analysis of specific data related to Debbie, e.g. Emergency Alert campaigns
- research into good practice evidence and case studies to inform identified themes analysing previous reviews undertaken by the Office and other entities
- a community survey was undertaken of 1200 residents in affected areas in Queensland to capture public opinion and validate findings.

The review found that the disaster management system in Queensland is well constructed, experienced and practiced and identified a range of opportunities for improvement and good practice examples. Five major themes emerge from the evaluation: planning, public information and engagement, information management, evacuation, and capability.

Recommendations have been accepted by government, including the implementation of a system-wide lessons management program.

## **The potential for system level change: addressing political and funding level factors to facilitate health promotion and disease prevention evaluation**

**Joanna Schwarzman, Belinda Gabbe, Monash University; Ben Smith, The University of Sydney/Monash University; Adrian Bauman, The University of Sydney; Chris Rissel, NSW Ministry of Health; Trevor Shilton, National Heart Foundation, Western Australia**

Despite the known importance of evaluating prevention initiatives, there are challenges to conducting any evaluation, and efforts can fall short in terms of quality and comprehensiveness. Evaluation capacity building research and strategies have to date focused on individual and organisational levels. However, the factors acting to influence evaluation practice at the level of the prevention system have not been explored.

The authors conducted a national mixed-methods study with 116 government and non-government organisations that sought to identify the factors that influence evaluation practice in the prevention field. Participating organisations took part in three phases of data collection. These were qualitative interviews (n=40), a validated evaluation practice analysis survey (n=216, 93% response rate) and audit and appraisal of two years of evaluation reports (n=394 reports).

In this presentation the authors focus determinants of evaluation practice at the prevention system level. They found the system played a key role in the demand for evaluation, however it also presented significant challenges, particularly through time-limited funding agreements and mismatched expectations of policy makers and funded agencies. The political and funding contexts impacted on the resources available for prevention programs and the purpose, scope and reporting requirements for evaluation. The authors also found some prevention organisations were proactive in negotiating and modifying elements of the political, contextual and administrative requirements to improve the conditions for evaluation. Other organisations with less evaluation capacity, resources and experience were not in a position to engage in advocacy to the same degree.

Evaluation capacity building is an increasingly important component of many evaluator's roles, and there are still important gains to be made within prevention organisations and government agencies. This research builds on insights concerning organisational level influences, and can guide evaluators, practitioners and policy.

The transformation adopted essential principles including inclusion, flexibility, empowerment, ownership and effective communication. These principles were incorporated to ensure that everyone involved were brought along on the journey to strengthen the monitoring, evaluation and learning systems.

An independent researcher was engaged to assess the degree to which the organisation was able to build evaluation capacity. This organisation's journey of change and the methodology used to make the assessment may be useful for other organisations who could undertake a self-assessment or for other researchers who could adapt the process.

Acknowledging that there are no common measures for assessing the sustainability of evaluation capacity building, this presentation will contribute to knowledge on this topic by sharing an example that has been implemented in practice.

## **Values and synthesis: evaluation's power core**

**Amy Gullickson, Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne; Kelly Hannum, Aligned Impact, LLC**

Values, criteria, standards, and synthesis together form the lens that defines the worth of the object being evaluated and the quality of its performance. To answer the question about how good a particular something is, we must combine values with information about how the evaluand is performing. Values determine what good looks like, but to be useful, they must be translated into criteria, indicators and performance standards to make them explicit. Those choices of criteria and standards then influence what information is needed to make an evaluative judgment. Once the data is collected, the operationalized values are combined with that information using a synthesis method to arrive at evaluative judgements about performance.

The values that drive the evaluation, and the integrity of the synthesis method are key to promoting fairness, equity, accessibility and sustainability – they are the core power in the task of evaluation. Yet, despite their importance they have been largely missing in evaluation research, training, and practice.

In this session, the authors review these primary elements (values, criteria, standards, and synthesis) and present steps for applying them in practice to enhance the equity and integrity of evaluations. The session will conclude with a facilitated discussion on research needs, further ideas for application, and potential ways to stay connected on this topic.

## **Inclusive and culturally safe evaluation capacity building**

**Sharon Babyack, Doyen Radcliffe, Indigenous Community Volunteers; Alison Rogers, PhD Candidate, University of Melbourne**

There is an urgent need to move towards culturally safe, appropriate and relevant ways of evaluating that contribute to better outcomes for Indigenous peoples. An Indigenous non-profit community development organisation has transformed towards this goal by intentionally building evaluation capacity over a period of four years. The organisation now incorporates participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches into community development practices to improve measurement and capture the outcomes with the communities.



Thursday keynote session 08:00 – 09:30

## Scaling up, out and deep: what we are learning about social innovation for transformation

**Penny Hagen**, *Design Strategist and Participatory Design Coach; Co-design Lead, Auckland Co-design Lab Auckland*

MC: **Duncan Rintoul**



This talk shares challenges and questions emerging from ongoing social innovation efforts in Aotearoa New Zealand. Outcomes of such initiatives include new relationships, attitudes, capacities, practices, structures and connections across parts of the 'system'. There is a focus on co-design, prototyping, growing capability and providing 'biodegradable support'. Efforts are place-based and grounded in culture, recognising different forms of power, resource and knowledge. As we explore the potential for systemic and structural change we are finding that terms such as impact, scale and success need to be closely examined. An integrated evaluative practice helps us to focus more keenly on what is working and why and hold us to account, but we are still learning what will be most meaningful in service of the transformative intent. This exploratory talk reflects on what we are trying and learning thus far and why.

Thursday morning session 09:30 – 10:30

## Ethics in evaluation: navigating ethical requirements and processes to improve the quality of evaluation

**Ellie McDonald, Lisa Thomson, Meredith Jones, Eleanor Williams, Jan Browne**, *Department of Health and Human Services*

Navigating how and when to apply for ethics approval is often a challenge for evaluators. Determining when an evaluation is aligned with quality assurance and when the proposed evaluation plan should be assessed through a formal ethics process is not always clear cut. Now, with the emergence of new ways to access data and evolving practices such as 'human-centred design', it is essential that we have the knowledge and processes in place to tackle ethical considerations effectively. The Centre for Evaluation and Research (the Centre) in the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services recently consulted with departmental staff and human research ethics secretariats from 14 government departments and NGOs across Australia to better understand today's challenges facing ethics approval. The purpose of this review was to investigate the ethical barriers program and policy areas are experiencing when conducting an evaluation, research or co-design project. In a world where emergent technologies, design methodologies and data accessibility are constantly changing, how can we support evaluators and researchers to navigate ethical boundaries in a timely and reasonable way? The findings provided insight into a range of strategies that could be used to encourage more accessible ethical processes. The Centre found that:

- staff are seeking more tailored guidance and support regarding ethics and ethics process
- ethical approval processes would be more effective if secretariats reviewed and provided advice prior to submission
- an alternative low-risk process would encourage more staff to comply with ethics requirements rather than seeking ways to go around it

- more diverse membership of Human Research Ethics Committees both in terms of cultural background and subject matter expertise would improve the ability of committees to process applications appropriately

The Centre will discuss the findings of this review. More broadly, this presentation will discuss the ways that organisations and people can support ethical research and evaluation, from large-scale data linkage exercises through to the elements of smaller scale qualitative participatory or human-centred methodologies.

## Realist axiology: a realist perspective on 'valuing' in evaluation

**Gill Westhorp**, *Charles Darwin University*

Evaluation intends to contribute to learning and to inform decision-making by providing information about the value, worth or merit of interventions, initiatives or innovations. Over the past 20 years, realist evaluation has transformed parts of the evaluation sector by introducing new ways to think about what programs are and how they work. The approach is grounded in realist ontology (the philosophy of 'what exists') and realist epistemology (the philosophy of knowledge.) However, there has been little significant work on realist axiology – the philosophy of value and valuing – in evaluation. This presentation will open the axiological black box, enquiring into the ways that a realist understanding of value and valuing may inform evaluation. It will present and briefly discuss seven questions, each with implications for evaluation practice:

- What is the relationship between the ideas of 'values' and 'value'?
- Can there be a realist axiology that derives from, or is at least consistent with, realist ontology? Are there implications of realist ontology for 'values' with particular importance for evaluation, such as 'responsibility'?
- In realist analysis – are values (in both senses) contexts, mechanisms, or outcomes?

- What are the relationships between programs' inherent value and values and those of intended beneficiaries? Can 'the realist question' be adapted to evaluate value positions and differences?
- How might we take a realist approach to value and values themselves, recognising that what we value, and to what extent, is different in different contexts?
- How might we take a realist approach to the ethical frameworks which guide our work – research ethics and evaluators' codes of ethics?

This presentation is intended to stimulate discussion about an under-developed area of realist evaluation practice. By doing so, it has the potential to transform evaluation practice in ways which may in turn contribute to the transformation of policies and programs.

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## Strengthening the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia, workshop 1

### AES Learning and Professional Practice Committee (LLP)

In 2017 the AES commissioned Better Evaluation and ANZOG to explore options for strengthening the capacity and professionalisation of the evaluation sector. The report explores options to increase motivation, capacity and opportunities.

The LLP is interested in your views about priorities for skill development, learning pathways, embedding professional competencies and opportunities to increase demand for and strengthen the operating environment for evaluation.

There are two workshop style sessions and participants are invited to attend either one or both: Workshop 1 will identify and discuss issues of most interest and concern to members; workshop 2 will build on the first, and help shape the direction for the AES in strengthening the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia. The outcomes of the workshop sessions will be shared at the conference closing plenary.

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## Evaluation literacy: exploring the skills needed to motivate and enable others to access, understand and use evaluation information in non-government organisations

**Alison Rogers**, *The Fred Hollows Foundation*; **Leanne Kelly**, *Windermere*; **Alicia McCoy**, *beyondblue*

The motivations and abilities of individuals to gain access to, understand and use evaluative information is highly varied. Evaluation literacy can make evaluation more appropriate, understandable and accessible. This world café session intends to reveal and share ways that we engage with colleagues to enhance evaluation literacy. This session is aimed at internal evaluators in non-government organisations, employees who practise and promote evaluation, and external evaluators working with organisations. The presenters invite participants to share their experiences and learn from others. The session will examine a key issue: how do individuals promote evaluation among their colleagues in non-government organisations?

Understanding social connections between colleagues and elucidating interpersonal dynamics is useful for considering how to transform team work dynamics. Drawing upon a social psychological theory called social interdependence theory, the presenters will facilitate the world café discussion around setting cooperative goals. Focused on ways of promoting evaluation, the questions will be structured around:

- How do you set common goals that link all individuals? How are individuals held accountable for their contribution?

- How do you ensure there are opportunities to connect? How do you provide encouragement? What is your preferred communication style?
- How do you incorporate opportunities for reflection?

The world café session will use examples from the literature as a starting point. Participants rotating through the questions will be provided with an opportunity to share their real world experiences and hear from others. Participants will leave with an increased understanding of this topic with evidence from the literature, theory and practical examples. This useful networking opportunity will enable practitioners attempting to promote evaluation among their colleagues with practical strategies to enhance their practice.

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## Transforming evaluation culture and systems within the Australian aid program: embracing the power of evaluation to promote learning, transparency, and accountability.

**David Slattery**, *Tracey McMartin*, *Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)*

Evaluation is a core means of assessing the effectiveness of Australian aid. Over the past five years, DFAT has progressively transformed its evaluation culture and systems from one non-compliance with policy requirements, and non-publication of results to what is now a structured and systematic approach to assessing and providing feedback on performance. Once a focus for strong external criticism of Australia's aid administration, evaluation is now regarded as one of its biggest strengths.

This paper will identify and examine the key drivers for this transformation, including:

- the importance of strong institutional leadership
- clarity over accountabilities for delivering evaluations
- flexibility to determine priorities and to design evaluations that will address these priorities
- realism about the capacity of programs to commission and use evaluations
- mechanisms for protecting the independence of evaluations, and
- a culture that values independent viewpoints and contestation and is willing to be transparent about the challenges it faces.

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## How algorithms shape our lives: evaluating the unseen

**Kristy Hornby**, *Grosvenor Performance Group*

Increasingly decisions about our lives are being made by algorithms. This is the case across government, large corporates and social networking platforms. Algorithms at Centrelink decide whether you are targeted for debt recovery, while those at the bank decide whether you get a home loan and Facebook decides what 'fake news' will appear in your feed. In some cases, such as Centrelink robodebt and Facebook fake news scandals, the poor outcomes have been widely and publicly criticised. In many other cases, you are probably not even aware if, and how, an algorithm is making decisions about your life.

This session explores the ways in which algorithms shape our everyday lives and the role evaluation has to play in safeguarding us from these unseen decision makers.

## When an evaluator benefits: the challenges of managing values and power in evaluating with a lived experience

Joanna Farmer, *beyondblue*

Traditionally, we tend to think of evaluators as external 'agents of evaluation' working with a number of program stakeholder groups, including program clients, to provide findings and recommendations to program staff.

Increasingly, this reality is changing as evaluation capacity increases within service delivery organisations – evaluators often come from 'within'.

Interest in participatory evaluation has grown, with a range of evaluation approaches that could be considered under the umbrella of participation, such as empowerment and democratic evaluation. However, these approaches continue to present a false binary between evaluator and program beneficiary. This fails to recognise that sometimes evaluators come from within the community that the program is designed to assist. These approaches posit that the evaluator neutrally applies the standards and criteria established by others. For example, in democratic evaluation 'the evaluator acts as a broker in exchanges of information between groups who want knowledge of each other'. (MacDonald, 1996)

In this paper, the presenter will draw on her experience as both an evaluator (within program delivery and as an external evaluator) and a mental health lived experience advocate. She proposes that when evaluating programs of which the evaluator is a potential beneficiary there are challenges not currently accounted for in participatory evaluation approaches, and traditional conflict of interest processes.

However, these challenges can be managed. Here, she presents a range of considerations for the 'evaluator as beneficiary' and practical solutions to manage potential conflict of values and power.

The power of evaluation as a democratic enabler of lived experience capacity cannot be underestimated, and addressing the challenges head on will produce more meaningful outcomes for both evaluators and communities.

## Evaluative thinking and strategic learning – nice words, do they make any difference?

Zazie Tolmer, *Clear Horizon*; Mila Waise, *Department of Health and Human Services*

The presenters are involved in delivering the Children and Youth Area Partnerships (CYAP) a Victorian government-led Collective Impact initiative delivered through place-based area partnerships in eight sites across Victoria. The Area Partnership members are intentionally diverse and together

- identify systemic and local factors that contribute to the vulnerability of children, young people and their families
- design and test new ways of thinking and prototypes to overcome these, and
- seek to influence uptake of successful prototypes by government, business, philanthropy, community and others.

Ultimately, the initiative aims to work out how government can lead collaborative place-based approaches that result in real and sustainable positive change for those experiencing vulnerability.

A key component of the approach is to embed evaluative thinking and strategic learning. We are finding that in order for the learning and local innovative practices to drive system change, a strong authorising environment and collaborative governance is needed. There needs to be a strong collective forum where learning can be further tested and innovative practice can be implemented. There needs to be a culture where partners feel 'safe to fail' and

learn while continuously refining their work. There needs to be an environment where accountability is well balanced with learning and power is shared. Only this has the potential to lead to true transformation at the local and system levels and within each component/actor in the system.

The following questions will be explored in the presentation:

- What does evaluative thinking and strategic learning mean and look like in a government-led Collective impact initiative? What are the tensions and 'easy fits'?
- What difference has it made to our work? What are the implications on our resources, the intensity of the work, the impacts and ripples?
- Yeah but, so what? Has any of this actually sparked the transformation we are after?

The presentation will be delivered by three presenters, which will include perspectives and expertise from:

- one Principal Advisor that is a place-based practitioner that leads the initiative within an area level, who is also the local backbone and drives the change process locally
- a representative from the central government unit that provides whole-of- initiative backbone support and leads transformation within government, and
- an evaluator who has been engaged to provide practice advice and embed a learning culture across the initiative.

The presentations will be followed by question time from the audience where answers will be provided to generate a short discussion on themes that the audience will be most interested in.

## Freaking super sweet webinars: learning new tricks from young guns (a.k.a. webinars 101: AES webinar working group reports back

Kara Scally-Irvine, *Evalstars Limited*; Liz Smith, *Litmus*; Kahiwa Sebire, *Flinders University*

The AES is transforming and wants to increase member value. We know many AES members are not located in easy reach of the regional seminars and workshops. In 2018, the Member Services Engagement (MSE) committee decided to trial the use of webinars, with a particular emphasis on enabling greater learning and connection opportunities for members unable to attend AES events. We established a webinar working group to identify potential applications of webinar technology and best practice guidelines for webinar technology and online facilitation. In keeping with design thinking approaches, we tested our assumptions with a pilot: 'A webinar on how to run webinars'.

In this interactive session, the AES Webinar Working Group will share their learnings and activities so far. An overview of what a webinar is (and isn't) will be provided, as well as different delivery options within an evaluative setting (the techie bit) and top tips and tricks for facilitating online. The presenters will end with their reflections on the value of the tool for AES members as a vehicle for professional development, and a tool for use in evaluations. Throughout the session, the use of other interactive tools (e.g. PollEverywhere, that can be used to garner engagement and gather data) will be introduced, so attendees leave with first-hand experience of the technology options available to them.

The presenters hope to deliver this session as a webinar (and later as a webcast) so members not attending the conference can benefit.

The MSE committee will also seek feedback on what the membership might like to see next from the AES to support professional development.

## The Enhanced Commonwealth Performance Framework – the opportunity for the Australian evaluation community

David Morton, Brad Cook, *Department of Finance*

The Australia Parliament – through the Joint Committee on Public Accounts – has encouraged the Department of Finance and others to support capacity-building to further implement the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework. Evaluators have a key role. They will need to be clear about what they have offer, and how they can help deliver better performance information to government, the Parliament and public more broadly. They will need to be willing to adapt what evaluators do and know today, and participate in developing the flexible approaches needed in the future. The performance frameworks calls for approaches that deliver performance information that simultaneously supports accountability to the taxpaying public and everyday operational decisions. The Australian evaluation community is encouraged to reflect on what it has to offer and how it can work with others to shape the evolution of the performance framework.

The performance framework commenced on 1 July 2015. It succeeds if it enables the Australian Parliament and public to understand the benefits of Commonwealth activity. The framework encourages entities and companies to move past over-reliance on input and output-based performance measures. There is a clear role for evaluators to contribute to this important adjustment. Opportunities lie in helping a larger cross-section of the Commonwealth public sector understand and use the evaluators' toolbox – for example, program theory and qualitative analysis – to improve the quality of published performance information available to stakeholders. The evaluation community has the opportunity to be at the centre of key expertise, and to make a critical contribution to building the capability of 'performance professionals' across the public sector.

## Developmental evaluation in Indigenous contexts: transforming power relations at the interface of different knowledge systems

Samantha Togni, *RMIT University*; Nan Wehipeihana, Kate McKegg, *Kinnect Group*; Sonya Egert, *Inala Indigenous Health Service*

Innovation is required in Indigenous settings to strengthen communities and address challenging and complex social issues. Evaluation in these contexts is important to understand innovation effectiveness and takes place at the interface of different knowledge systems. Therefore, the challenge for evaluation in these contexts is to transform the power and privilege inherent in evaluation and to be centred on Indigenous voices, values and aspirations.

Developmental evaluation is designed to support innovation development in complex and dynamic contexts. Informed by complexity theory and systems thinking, developmental evaluation is relationship-based and pays attention to different perspectives, inter-relationships, context, boundaries and emergence. As the practice of developmental evaluation continues to evolve, recognition of its ability to respond to different cultures, diverse communities and Indigenous peoples' worldviews is increasing. Understanding how this is achieved is important.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous evaluator panellists will critically reflect on our developmental evaluation practice experience in New Zealand and Australian Indigenous contexts in relation to transforming power relations and at the interface of different knowledge systems. The panellists will reflect on what genuine co-creation that recognises different worldviews looks like in practice, the dynamic role and orientation of the evaluator and how developmental evaluation grounded in culture can address

power and privilege, facilitate collaboration in innovation and support Indigenous peoples' aspirations. We will also discuss the challenges and limitations of using developmental evaluation in culturally diverse contexts. To promote rich discussion, we will invite audience participation through questions and sharing of experiences of developmental evaluation in Indigenous or culturally diverse contexts.

The history of evaluation too often has been detrimental to, and marginalised, Indigenous people and communities. Our western frames of thinking and reasoning are simply not adequate for meeting the aspirations of Indigenous communities. Developmental evaluation offers an approach to include diverse knowledges in these pursuits.

## Sharing research results to shape future services

Kiri Parata, Gill Potaka-Osborne, Rachel Brown, *Whakauae Research for Māori Health and Development, NZ*

*Transforming Māori lives through excellent research  
Rangatiratanga  
Hauora tangata  
Manaaki tangata  
Mātauranga  
Ngākau tapatahi me te aurere  
Transforming Māori lives!*

This waiata (song) was composed by staff of Whakauae Research for Māori Health and Development (Whakauae Research Services), an iwi (tribal) owned and mandated research centre in Aotearoa New Zealand. The research centre focuses primarily on Māori public health research, evaluation and health services and health policy research. The waiata describes ngā mātāpono (values) of the organisation to achieve Pae Ora (healthy futures) and transformation for our Māori people and aligns with New Zealand Health Strategy documentation. This presentation describes how Whakauae has supported the development of three Māori evaluators using a pragmatic approach within a Kaupapa Māori paradigm. The presentation will include information regarding three case studies and the methods employed to engage, research and evaluate alongside whānau (families) and their communities. Whakauae Research Services are committed to dissemination and translation using a range of methods however significant challenges remain in this space including research design that doesn't adequately allow for time and resources to meaningfully engage with end users. Despite these challenges, three distinct dissemination methods were undertaken using infographics, posters and booklets that echo whānau and provider voices. As part of the learnings from the project, it is recommended that researchers and health providers consider appropriate and useful dissemination methods at early stages of any research. Early considerations better benefit interest groups ensuring methods that may be usefully applied enabling challenges in translation of research results to be effective and therefore appropriately managed. The findings from this study show that Māori being diverse populations often live simultaneously in a range of cultural worlds. Therefore, research that attempts to impact on future wellbeing needs to recognise, reflect and cater for diversity both within providers and whānau.

## Ethical dilemmas in evaluation practice

Anne Markiewicz, Anne Markiewicz and Associates

This session will consider a range of ethical dilemmas faced by evaluators in their evaluation practice. The context for ethical evaluation practice will be set through a short introductory presentation that outlines the four foundation ethical principles of respect, relevance, responsibility and reciprocity. This presentation will be followed by consideration of a number of scenarios where ethical dilemmas exist in each of the four 'R' areas. The presentation of four scenarios will then be followed by opportunities for



members of the audience to pose their own ethical dilemmas from their practice experiences.

This session will be highly interactive as common evaluation challenges and dilemmas are identified and responses to ethical dilemmas are discussed and considered.

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## Evaluation capability building: transforming evaluation culture or spinning wheels?

**Delyth Lloyd, Eleanor Williams**, *Victorian Department of Health and Human Services*; **Vanessa Hood**, *Rooftop Social*; **Megan Kerr, Amanda Reeves**, *Victorian Department of Education and Training*; **Kate Nichols**, *Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources*; **Roberta Thorburn**, *Australian Department of the Environment and Energy*; **Martin Hall**, *New South Wales Department of Education*

Building an organisation's evaluation culture and capability is not an exact science. Different approaches are suited to different contexts and must be responsive to the organisation's individual characteristics. Factors such as leadership, systems, processes, staff attitudes and skills will inform what strategies will be most effective in transforming an organisation's evaluation culture. Who leads the evaluation capability effort and the resources available will also determine the approach. Sometimes evaluation capability building is led by a central team, other times it is dispersed throughout the organisation, or contracted-in via external consultants. Sometimes the funding and resources are flowing, while other times there is only a trickle.

So what is the current situation in the public sector at State and Commonwealth level, a sector undergoing marked transformation and reform with increased demand for accountability, outcomes-thinking, evaluation and evidence-driven ways of working? In this context, what different approaches are being used to help strengthen organisational evaluation culture and capability building? Are evaluation capability building endeavours equipping government organisations to thrive in this time of change?

This interactive session will explore the current evaluation capability and culture building approaches being used in five large State and Commonwealth government departments, including the: Victorian Department of Education and Training; the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services; the Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources; the Australian Department of the Environment and Energy; and the New South Wales Department of Education.

The session will be invaluable for those who work in, or with, any government agency as well as those interested in evaluation capability building more broadly. Each organisation will showcase different evaluation culture and capability building approaches tailored to their context. A facilitated mini-workshop will then invite participants to reflect on the implications for their own organisations and co-create practical strategies for enhancing evaluation capability and culture building practice in different contexts.

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## Developing an AES Advocacy and Influence Strategy: a consultation and co-design session for AES

**Alexandra Ellinson**, *Public Policy & Governance, UTS*

Influence is one of the key components of the AES 2015–2019 Strategic Plan. The AES Advocacy and Alliances Committee is developing an Advocacy and Influence Strategy in order for the AES to project its 'voice' and to enable it to better serve its members and the profession.

The Strategy is underpinned by the key principles of:

- *Collaboration*: within the AES membership and between the members and clients
- *Inclusiveness*: sharing information and ideas with clients and members
- *Continual professional growth*: within membership and clients
- *Professional service*: on behalf of and to our members
- *Innovation*: new ways to respond to new times

In keeping with these principles, the Advocacy and Alliances Committee is offering an opportunity for AES members to be involved during the Conference in a consultation and needs analysis session that will contribute to the design of the Strategy. The session will explore what needs or issues members have regarding advocacy and influence, and their thinking about the most relevant and useful approaches.

A background paper will be made available for participants to read prior to the session.

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## Developmental evaluation, biostatistics, primary health care researcher and Indigenous voices: Culture clash or symbiotic relationship?

**Deborah Askew**, *The University of Queensland*; **Samantha Togni**, *S2 Consulting*; **Philip Schluter**, *University of Canterbury*; **Sonya Egert**, *Inala Indigenous Health Service*

The authors implemented a transformative model of primary health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with complex chronic disease. This research project used developmental evaluation to develop, adapt and understand why and how our intervention had the impact it did. Therefore, this project brought together different paradigms, different priorities and different languages. The challenge was to unite these different perspectives to improve health outcomes for Indigenous people.

Quantitative research is characterised as being value-free, structured, logical and reductionist, with the researcher being distant and independent to the research. In contrast, developmental evaluation requires flexibility, innovation, tolerance for ambiguity, and the evaluator is inseparable to the process of refinement and adaptation of the intervention. Improvements in the health of Australia's Indigenous people requires honouring the Aboriginal definition of health. Bringing these worldviews together required identification of shared values and beliefs.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous researcher and evaluator panellists will critically reflect on the challenges, opportunities and successes the authors experienced implementing, refining, adapting and evaluating their model of care and bringing together these different knowledge systems. The panellists will reflect on

- how their personal ideologies and values created a space where the importance of each different worldview was recognised and given its rightful place in the project
- how tensions at the interface were recognised and celebrated as opportunities to learn; and how developmental evaluation facilitated the successful conduct of the research project and improved Indigenous peoples' health.

To promote audience participations, paired discussions and feedback will be facilitated where participants can share their own stories of successes, failures, and learnings in similar situations.

The history of research and evaluation has too often privileged outcomes that are frequently of little benefit to Indigenous people and communities. Developmental evaluation offers an approach to facilitate symbiotic relationships rather than tragic culture clashes.

## Working with values in evaluation

**Keryn Hassall**, *The Australia and New Zealand School of Government*

Values underpin evaluative decision-making, and evaluation experts have advocated for clarity of values in evaluation. But there are conceptual and practical challenges to working with values. This session draws on the findings of values research in social psychology and combines this with techniques for values inquiry developed by evaluation thought leaders.

The learning objectives of this skill-building session are to

- give participants some understanding of the research into values, to enable them to comfortably talk about values, and
- provide ways to include values explicitly through all stages of evaluation, and particularly for evaluative synthesis.

Values are trans-situational goals that motivate people's action and serve as guiding principles in their lives. In a society or organisation, values are the broadly shared abstract ideas about what is good

and desirable. These social values serve to justify actions that are taken in pursuit of these goals, and are implicitly and explicitly embedded in policies and programs. Values underpin the programs we evaluate, and how we evaluate them. Working with values allows evaluators to make clearer decisions about evaluative criteria, evaluation methods, to interpret the distribution of outcomes, and make evaluative judgements.

Participants will learn about research into values, with a framework for understanding values that can be used to facilitate discussions about values in evaluation. The session will guide participants through using this framework to interpret and map values as they appear in a social context – in policies, programs, documents and organisations. It will show the importance of understanding and being explicit about values in all stages of program development – through the process of needs analysis and developing a program theory.

Participants will learn about techniques for eliciting and clarifying values, and discuss ways to incorporate values in each stage of an evaluation, and how this clarity about values can enable more effective evaluative synthesis.

## Thursday afternoon session 14:00 – 15:30

## Principles before rules: child-centred, family-focused and practitioner-led evaluation in child protection

**Stefan Kmit**, *South Australian Department for Child Protection*

Supporting a learning environment through evaluation requires more than just the monitoring of service indicators. The South Australian Department for Child Protection (DCP) is committed to principles-based evaluation processes with children, families and practitioners that acknowledge the improvement journey is just as significant as the final outcome. Known as 'the rudder for navigating complex dynamic systems' (Patton, 2018), principles-focused evaluations enable us to think beyond structures and processes to re-direct focus on service user experience and outcomes. Our ability to form and reform service approaches based on what key stakeholders tell us underpins a continuous improvement and questioning culture.

This is all driven by a passion to best identify how we can

- better use the voice of the child
- shift our view of children and families from service users to service shapers
- orient findings towards practitioner learning, and
- create more opportunities for closer collaboration across the board.

Recent 'evidence-informed practice' (Moore, 2016) evaluations of the DCP Young People's Council and the DCP Volunteer program have featured the voice of children and their families and carers within the system. Using these as case studies, we will examine the evaluation design and engagement strategies incorporated with children and families and share critical learnings about applying a principles-focused approach.

## The Lived Experience Evaluators Project: combining design thinking and innovation to build cultural capital in the evaluation sector

**Anna Stempel**, *Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC)*

This presentation will share lessons from the Lived Experience Evaluators Project (LEEP). ASRC worked with human-centred service designers to develop this pilot, which trains people seeking asylum who have professional backgrounds to become evaluators. Participants complete a paid internship in which mentors from the evaluation sector support them to design and conduct evaluations for the ASRC.

The anticipated outcomes are:

1. People seeking asylum gain skills, experience and opportunities that will help them to secure professional employment.
2. The ASRC has access to evaluators with valuable lived experience.
3. The input of evaluators from diverse backgrounds increases cultural capacity within the evaluation sector.

The results of the pilot evaluation will help the organisation decide whether and how to scale the model up. The project is exciting because of its potential to transform the evaluation sector while creating positive outcomes for a highly marginalised group, whose expertise is often overlooked. Further, it provides a real-world case study of how to integrate evaluation and design.

The project team introduced Clear Horizon and TACSI's InDEEP (Integrated Design, Evaluation and Engagement with Purpose) framework during the later stages of the project; they can draw some conclusions about the value of using such a framework by comparing their experience from the early stages, where they were feeling their way through the collaboration, to the process that followed the adoption of InDEEP. One of the early findings has been that using the InDEEP framework helped to clarify the respective roles of designers and evaluators. The experience suggests that diving in without a clear framework can result in design 'crowding out' evaluation, or vice-versa. The InDEEP framework helped the project integrate the two disciplines and ensure they were mutually beneficial. This presentation will explore these and other lessons from the LEEP pilot.

## 'What about me?': a campfire session to co-design transformational self-care guidelines for evaluators

Emma Williams, John Stoney, Northern Institute, CDU

Evaluators often – and increasingly – work in high risk, high stress situations. These include data collection in fragile states and conflict situations but also working in relatively 'safe' environments with evaluands in traumatic situations if the experience is sufficiently intense that the evaluator experiences vicarious trauma. Data collection when evaluating institutions of power presents its own challenges. Reporting also may provide a high risk, high stress point for evaluators. 'Telling truth to power' is seldom easy, and there are situations where it can have impacts on evaluators' career prospects and, in some settings, personal safety. Even the stress of juggling multiple projects with tight timelines that impose periods of little sleep, let alone adequate space for reflection, can impact on evaluator wellbeing.

This presentation presents guidelines drafted in response to this issue and based on primary and secondary research:

- *Evaluation planning*: self-care guidelines based in part on a transformation of ethical practice questions (These often assume that the researcher/evaluator holds power and is not at risk; reverse-engineering the questions to consider potential risks to evaluator wellbeing proved a fruitful source of self-care guidelines.)
- *Debriefing guidelines*: for use by evaluators after particularly stressful situations, based in part on transformed disaster management tools
- *Self-assessment*: this checklist enables evaluators to assess their own capacity – including capacity for evaluative judgement – in high risk, high stress situations.

The campfire session will use a co-design variant process involving pre-circulated materials to enable session participants to test and refine these draft guidelines.

## Evaluative rubrics: a tool for making explicit evaluative judgements

Nan Wehipeihana, Research Evaluation Consultancy Limited - a member of the Kinnect Group; Judy Oakden, Pragmatica Limited - a member of the Kinnect Group; Kate McKegg, The Knowledge Institute - a member of the Kinnect Group; Julian King, Julian King & Associates - a member of the Kinnect Group

Evaluation rubrics are a powerful and influential approach to evaluation-specific methodology that can be used in collaborative/participatory or independent evaluations to build a clear, shared understanding of how quality, value, and effectiveness are defined. Evaluative rubrics make explicit the basis for evaluative judgments about effectiveness or performance, as well as importance.

Drawing from their experience of using rubrics in many evaluation settings, the presenters in this panel session will provide an overview of rubrics, as well as more detail about different kind of rubrics and their uses, their strengths and weaknesses, and the ability of rubrics to explore and integrate shared values providing a clear and transparent basis for making decisions.

Participants will gain insights from panel members' practice about rubrics in the following areas:

### *An overview of rubrics*

What are rubrics? Where do they come from? What are the components of a rubric? Why are they useful / transformative for evaluation practice?

### *Different kinds of rubrics:*

What different types of rubrics are there? What are their key features? What are the design considerations for each? What is the comparative value of each type for making evaluative judgments?

### *The strengths and weaknesses of rubrics*

What are the strengths of rubrics? Troubleshooting, faults and mishaps – overcoming the weaknesses of rubrics in practice? How do they transform evaluation practice?

### *Using rubrics to integrate shared values*

Whose perspectives and values count when using rubrics? How do you weave different values into the design and use of a rubric? Why does this matter?

## Challenging the status quo: the emerging evaluators panel

Panel: Skye Bullen, PCT Consulting; Fran Demetriou, Lirata Consulting; Joanna Farmer, beyondblue; Sarah Leslie, Fred Hollows, Rini Mowson, Clear Horizon

Facilitators: Eunice Sotelo, Nathan Delbridge, Clear Horizon

This panel will invoke conversations that explore ideas that will challenge the status quo in evaluation. The session will also seek to establish a community of practice for emerging evaluators.

The panel will introduce emerging evaluators from a range of professional backgrounds. With the focus on ideas that challenge the status quo, each panel member will offer their unique perspective and experience, drawing on ideas around the role of evaluators in alleviating poverty, how evaluation can drive Aboriginal sovereignty, and opportunities for inclusivity and integrating lived experience into evaluation. Facilitated by emerging evaluators, the session will include opportunities for the audience to pose questions to the panel.

## Youth Partnership Project: Applying place-based collective impact and evaluating for systems change

Maria Collazos, Save the Children

'Wicked problems' demand a new way of thinking and working; one which moves beyond independent programs with isolated impact, to a collaborative approach with a common goal. By rethinking the system and how it operates, we can discover new solutions with population level impact. Being able to measure this impact is key. This practice- focused presentation explores systems change evaluation, using the place-based collective impact initiative, the Youth Partnership Project (YPP), as a case study.

Despite significant investment in the community, there has been persistent issues of youth crime and anti-social behaviour in the south-east corridor of Perth. The YPP was formed as a strategic project to develop a cross-sector early intervention system for the region, and is a demonstration site for Western Australian reform. The project brings together a broad cross-sector of partners to systematically identify the most vulnerable young people in the community and collaboratively address complex needs which are the responsibility of multiple agencies.

This presentation will delve into the challenge of evaluating systems change in initiatives with multiple levels of impact, from individual to systemic. The presenter will consider how impact at these different levels affect one another and draw on the YPP's approach of using developmental evaluation to provide a framework for continuous learning, emergent strategies and monitoring effectiveness and efficiency. Finally, cost-benefit analysis as an advocacy tool to articulate the need for prevention-focused collaboration and system reform will be discussed.

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### **In their own words: how we (the boring adults) worked with young people (the cool kids) in Papua New Guinea to develop a bilingual post-program survey, why we did it, and why it was a good idea**

**Lauren Siegmann**, *Clear Horizon*; **Ceridwen Spark**, *RMIT University*; **Junior Muke**, *Equal Playing Field*

The authors of this paper were evaluating a program on preventing violence against women in Papua New Guinea that worked with young people. This program had been diligently collecting pre and post survey data. The evaluation started with a dataset of approximately 2000 pre and post surveys, expected to be used in the evaluation. The surveys were validated instruments that had been used in evaluations of similar programs – for this reason the data was seen as being of high quality. On closer examination it was clear to the evaluation team that the data had limited value with no meaningful trends in the survey responses. It was concluded that it was likely that the young people completing these surveys did not understand the questions. The language in the survey was formal, and some students found it easier to talk about concepts – like gender – in Tok Pisin, a local language, rather than English. It was likely that the constructs the survey was measuring did not align to the changes the students were experiencing. The pre and post questions misunderstood the way in which attitudinal changes happened for young people.

The authors worked with young people who had been in the program to redesign the survey so that it

- captured the types of changes that according to the students happened for them as a result of the program
- used their own words and language to describe these changes, and
- was bilingual, so that students could choose to complete the survey in their preferred language.

In this presentation, the presenters discuss the participatory methods used to develop the survey; the ways in which the survey was validated; and the politics surrounding the re-development of the survey.

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### **Just add water: the ingredients of an evaluation consultant**

**Matt Healey**, *First Person Consulting*

The AES' Professional Learning Competency Framework presents a range of areas to focus learning and development. The Framework also acknowledges that 'people bring different strengths, knowledge and skills to their work as evaluators'. Given that, what are the core ingredients of a 'good' evaluation consultant outside of the competencies?

The presenter will discuss some of these ingredients based on some reflections of his status as an early career evaluator (less than five years) and co-founder of a small evaluation firm. Importantly, Matt wants attendees to walk away thinking about how other early career evaluators can be supported in their practice.

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### **Transforming evaluation: necessary but not sufficient to make a meaningful contribution to society**

**Julie McGeary**, *Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources*

This presentation aims to challenge the notion that transforming the way evaluators practise will be instrumental in solving the main problems facing our profession.

Drawing on the views of eminent evaluators, and the presenter's own 16 years of evaluation experience in the public sector, it will be argued that transformative approaches to evaluation are necessary but not sufficient to overcome the constraints increasingly imposed by the authorising environment in which we operate.

Few would disagree that evaluations should be relevant, meet market expectations and meaningfully contribute to society. These aims are not new; the struggle to achieve them is ongoing with mixed results. Audiences at the 2017 AES Conference in Canberra heard Sandra Mathison provide a gloomy assessment of evaluation's current ability to contribute to the public good. She offered three reasons for this: (1) evaluation is constrained by the dominant socio-political ideology; (2) it lacks independence, and (3) it is a conserving practice, generally maintaining the status quo.

A decade earlier, Eleanor Chelimsky discussed the clashes that occur between evaluative independence and the political culture it challenges. She warned of the danger of focusing too much on the easier to control methodology issues, and being distracted from the much harder to control, but larger problem of evaluation's political context.

Certainly, those who supply evaluations should keep abreast of emerging evaluation theories, practices and the potential advantages offered by innovative tools and technologies. Harnessing the technological advances and new ways of thinking can lead to profound and radical change in our practice and credibility. But in our urgency to transform evaluation, let's not overlook the context in which we operate. The social, political and cultural forces explored in this presentation ultimately determine whose values are considered, whose expectations dominate, and how meaningfully our evaluations are able to contribute to society.

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### **From outputs to outcomes: a system transformation approach for the Victorian child and family service**

**Emily Mellon**, *Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare*

The Victorian child and family service sector is undergoing a profound transformation from a service system to a learning system where experimentation, rapid knowledge sharing and continuous improvement will be the norm. The sector is transforming from a disparate network of services to an integrated learning system that better serves Victoria's children and families.

The learning system assumes a culture of inquiry, experimentation and learning which requires certain knowledge, skills and motivation akin to an evaluation capacity building (ECB) effort. This paper explores how the Victorian child and family services' Outcomes Practice and Evidence Network (OPEN) is supporting community sector organisations to move from outputs to outcomes to better serve vulnerable children and families.

The presenter will share the Outcomes Practice and Evidence Network approach which has drawn on Learning Organisation, Knowledge Translation and ECB literature to develop a framework for systemic capacity building. Significantly there is an appreciation that both bottom-up and top-down efforts are required for system transformation, the challenges in cohesively framing and delivering these efforts will be discussed. In addition some of the particular



strategies used to bridge the gap between research and practice, demystify and improve evaluation practice and support the sector to create, share and use better quality evidence will be presented. Importantly, the presenter will focus on a specific case example from the child and family service sector to demonstrate the impact of our approach and the experience of system transformation efforts at the local level.

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### **The promise and practice of partner-led evaluation: a policy research program case study**

**Stuart Raetz**, *Australian Red Cross*; **Jessica Dart**, *Clear Horizon Consulting*; **Tiina Pasanen**, *Overseas Development Institute*; **Julien Colomer**, *International Union for the Conservation of Nature*

This presentation will reflect on a partner-led approach that was taken in an evaluation of a global policy research program. The International Forestry Knowledge Programme (KNOWFOR) was a £38 million UK Aid funded partnership between the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Bank Programme of Forests (PROFOR) between 2012–2017.

The partner-led approach involves shared ownership, leadership and responsibility for evaluation with multiple actors. In KNOWFOR the evaluation partners took a lead role in design and planning, data collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting. Partners were supported by an external evaluation facilitator (Clear Horizon Consulting) who played a coordination role while an external quality assessor (the Overseas Development Institute [ODI]) provided independence and credibility. The decision to take a partner-led evaluation was made by partners to build on ownership of a shared M&E system, harness organisational knowledge and to enhance partner's ability to learn.

Based on the shared KNOWFOR experience of those involved in the evaluation as well as independent observers this presentation will argue that the partner-led evaluation has the potential to create meaningful dialogue and learning within and between donors and implementing partners. However, the potential advantages of partner led evaluation need to be seen in the light of several challenges in this approach that are highlighted by the KNOWFOR evaluation. These challenges included coordination between partners and timeframes, ensuring independence from bias, balancing partner versus program learning, supporting differing levels of partner capacities and ensuring shared ownership of the evaluation findings.

Overall the KNOWFOR case highlights the potential of partner led evaluation to provide an opportunity for inter-organisational learning. In the right institutional environment this approach also presents an opportunity to decentre the traditional donor/recipient relationship. The KNOWFOR case provides rich insight into these dynamics and challenges.

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### **Measuring a healthy workplace environment in 10 questions: developing a rapid environmental audit tool for Victorian workplaces**

**Clara Walker**, **Amy Timoshanko**, *Cancer Council Victoria*

The Victorian Government's Achievement Program supports workplaces to create healthy environments which can contribute to improved health and wellbeing of employees and the broader community. This paper outlines the scoping, developing and testing a rapid audit tool to capture change in workplace environments, practices, policies and culture relating to health and wellbeing. The tool was developed based on a synthesis of existing tools and a

rapid review of best practice. Testing was conducted with a sample of workplaces, and feedback sought from experts and health promotion professionals. This presentation presents lessons learned from the scoping, development and testing process.

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### **What happens when the public is not a monolithic audience?**

**Judith Lovell**, *Al Strangeways*, *Charles Darwin University*

This session illuminates a public engagement initiative that transformed how some of its audience engaged with a donated public artwork (2010) in Alice Springs.

Installing a 'founding father'-type statue (white man, gun in hand), without the 'due process' of the Public Arts Committee could be described as flaunting our region's love of informality. The subsequent engagement (2017) of a public audience initiated 20 arts-based responses to the man, story and statue. With sound bites, their images tell of a public engagement initiative linking realist philosophy and arts processes, and a transformation of our understanding of evaluating public engagement initiatives.

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### **'Bring a friend to work day': the value of dragging non evaluator colleagues along to the AES Conference**

**Liam Downing**, *Charles Sturt University*

Since 2015, the presenter has brought non-evaluator colleagues to AES conferences. In a striking correlation, he has seen the number of people at his organisation using evaluative thinking in their day-to-day work grow in the same period. While correlation is not causation, Liam would like to use this presentation to present qualitative evidence gathered from said colleagues around how they contribute to evaluative thinking and practice within his own organisation. In not unrelated arguments, Liam will also demonstrate that these non-evaluators think evaluators are pretty fun, and in some cases even start to consider themselves evaluators and act as such.

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### **Evaluation and transformation: it's the politics stupid**

**Chris Roche**, *La Trobe University*

This presentation will argue that evaluation is an inherently political process and this reality cannot be ignored or wished away. Particularly if evaluation seeks to contribute to more transformative change.

The presenter will explore why doing so is naive and dangerous, as well as suggesting some practical ways that evaluation can embrace politics more effectively.

A number of synthesis reviews in different sectors underline the importance of politics, and the political and institutional context, in contributing to the likelihood of research and evaluation uptake. This includes, for example: health policy (Liverani et al, 2013), nutrition policy (Cullerton et al, 2016), transport policy (Sager, 2007), and low carbon technology policy (Auld et al 2014).

There are also some substantive explorations of this issue in relation to evidence (Parkhurst, 2017); results and evidence in international development (Eyben et al, 2015) and evaluation (Taylor and Balloch, 2005).

Amongst other things these studies note:

- that despite the recognition that politics is important it is often underexplored in evaluation design and outreach

- that there are tried and tested approaches to exploring these issues from political science, organisational studies etc which could be better drawn from
- that there is a tendency to see politics as a problem to be got round or bypassed, rather than an inevitable and important part of policy processes and decision making
- or there is a tendency to simply blame the lack of 'political will' as the reason for lack of follow through on evaluation finding, without any attempt to unpack why that is the case, what the interests are in maintaining the status quo, or what underpinning values, norms or ideas might be at play.

If we accept that this is the case then the presenter argues that much of the work that has been done in the international development sector on 'thinking and working politically' (twpcommunity.org) and on 'knowledge, power and politics' (Jones et al 2013) could be embraced in a more politically savvy approach to evaluation, which aims to speak truth to power.

### Sizing up social campaigns: evaluation in a market research world

Gerard Atkinson, *ARTD Consultants*

Evaluation by its nature is a hybrid discipline, and often we find our work overlapping with other disciplines. In the consulting world, this translates to competing against other sectors for the same work. This presentation looks at one such example – evaluation of social impact marketing campaigns. When the goals of a campaign are so much more than moving product, what value do we add as evaluators in assessing whether a campaign worked? And what skills do evaluators need in order to go toe-to-toe with the market research field?

### Transforming the experience of seriously ill children, young people and their families: a real life example of evaluation in action

Sarah Moeller, Claire Treadgold, *Starlight Children's Foundation*

Starlight Express Rooms (SERs) provide a medical-free zone where children can escape from the hospital environment. Every three years, Starlight undertakes an evaluation of all nine SERs in Australia and in this Ignite session, the presenters will share the story – and the learnings – of this review, highlighting how effective evaluation contributes to transforming the hospital experience of seriously ill children. The presenters will share insights on the importance of stakeholder engagement, the challenges of capturing the voices of children and young people in a meaningful way (and yes, there will be a burping frog involved), and the effective dissemination of results.

### If what you are doing scares you, you're probably on the right track: 5 things I've learned about how to co-design an evaluation

Jenne Roberts, *Menzies School of Health Research*

Co-design is transforming the way evaluators work, yet there is not a lot of guidance on how to facilitate a co-design process. This presentation will highlight five things the presenter has learned during two recent evaluation co-design processes:

- (1) an internationally funded HIV program in Indonesia, and
- (2) a Collective Impact project with four Aboriginal community controlled organisations in the Northern Territory.

The presentation will cover: Start with the end; Walk alongside; Work in both worlds; Done is better than perfect; Radical beats routine. Rest assured: if what you are doing scares you, you are probably on the right track.

## Thursday keynote session 16:00 – 17:30



### Transforming evaluation practice with serious games

Karol Olejniczak, *Assistant Professor, University of Warsaw, Centre for European Regional and Local Studies (EUROREG UW), Warsaw, Poland*

MC: **Duncan Rintoul**

During the presentation Karol will explore with the audience the innovative and dynamically developing practice of serious games to find inspiration for addressing some of the key challenges of our evaluation practice.

The presentation will start with a two-dimensional typology of games for evaluation, distinguishing between the level of complexity of a policy issue, and the intended primary purpose of the inquiry. Then Karol will present four types of games for evaluation, illustrating them with exemplars of real-life application. These are: games for testing retention of skills and knowledge, games for teaching knowables, games for crash-testing mechanisms, and games for exploring system dynamics.

In conclusion, everyone will assess, using real-time survey, the potential utility of the presented game types for advancing evaluation practice. And, of course, as with all games, there will be the opportunity to win prizes.

# ABSTRACTS: Friday 21 September 2018

Friday keynote session 08:00 – 09:00



**Sharon Gollan** (photo left), *Leader and facilitator of Cultural Respect and Safety Training, South Australia*



**Kathleen Stacey** (photo right), *Managing Director and Principal Consultant, beyond..., South Australia*

## Cultural accountability in evaluating Aboriginal initiatives and program democracy

MC: **Duncan Rintoul**

In their paper on Wednesday, the presenters emphasised that a clear understanding of and commitment to contribute to cultural safety is a vital lens through which any evaluator should approach their role in evaluating programs designed for, or inclusive of, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Australians. This requires evaluators to think deeply and critically about power, inclusion and the relationship between them.

In this keynote session, Sharon and Kathleen will introduce participants to cultural accountability and invite them to reflect on an evaluation of an Aboriginal initiative or program with which they are familiar, because they conducted, were involved in or read about it. Through applying the lens of cultural accountability to this reflection, the plenary will generate different learnings and identify new ideas about how to undertake similar evaluations in the future.

Friday morning session 09:00 – 10:30

## Evaluation reports: writing, editing and wrangling Word

**Ruth Pitt**, *Department of Social Services*

Despite the increasing popularity of visual presentation methods, writing is still a core skill for evaluators. Evaluators need to write for diverse audiences and produce attractive, error-free reports while facing tight deadlines and budgets. The presenter has previously worked as an editor, an evaluator and a consultant supporting organisations to improve their evaluation documents. In her current role, the presenter receives and reviews numerous evaluation reports. These experiences have given her insight into the common problems with evaluation reports, why they occur and how to fix them. In this skill building session, Ruth will share tips and tricks for improving your writing when facing a deadline, whether the final version is due in one hour, one day or one week.

One hour – the clock is ticking and you've only just finished writing. Ruth will demonstrate affordable editing software that can quickly reduce errors and improve consistency. She will also provide a handout outlining the features and costs of other options.

One day – the final report is due tomorrow and your draft is... okay. Ruth will provide a checklist of common problems that can be addressed in one day, and demonstrate Word features that will help you find and fix them.

One week – you planned carefully and left plenty of time for revising and editing. Ruth will share practical steps for improving the structure, readability and visual appeal of your reports.

This skill building session is suitable for evaluators of any level of experience who would like refresher training in writing and editing,

particularly on how technology can support (rather than thwart) efforts to deliver a quality report on time.

## Traps for young players: a panel session by new evaluators for new evaluators

**Dan Borg**, *Jennifer Thompson*, *VicRoads*;  
**Victoria Cook**, *Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources*; **Ellie McDonald**, *Department of Health and Human Services*

What are the common traps for young players newly transitioned to evaluation? New to evaluation and asking this question – then this is the session for you. Come and hear about the lessons learnt from a panel of practitioners who have recently transitioned to evaluation through diverse pathways. Hear also from evaluators with dedicated roles in building evaluation capability (and the common issues encountered). You'll also have the opportunity in this facilitated session to share your experiences and lessons learnt.

Part panel, part facilitated session/panel forum, the panellists will discuss pathways into evaluation practice; successes and challenges in making the transition; all aspects of the evaluation journey (from first conversations with clients/commissioners to evaluation reporting); lessons in maximising evaluation use; and, where to turn to for help.

The session will involve a mix of a facilitated panel; audience Q&As and facilitated group activities designed to encourage audience participation and sharing of experiences.

## Evolving the evaluation deliverable

Gerard Atkinson, *ARTD Consultants*

A key principle of utilisation-focused evaluation is that it needs to be useful to stakeholders, whether they are evaluation commissioners, policy developers, or the general public. Much of the theory of utilisation-focused evaluation centers on the process of evaluations, and the early and sustained engagement of stakeholders. Consideration is also given to the way an evaluation is communicated, a.k.a. the 'deliverable', focusing on tailoring the communication of findings to match how different stakeholders absorb information.

In prior decades, the sole deliverable was almost always a written report. As users of evaluations became more time poor, visual techniques for conveying information gained popularity. Slideshow presentations became a key part of communicating findings, to the point of replacing written reports in some cases. More recently, as evaluations have utilised large data sets and responded to a desire to make findings interactive, dashboards have gained in prominence as the core deliverable. However, each of these are imperfect solutions. Slideshows often omit some of the technical details required by those seeking to operationalise the findings, and dashboards are strongly focused on presenting quantitative analyses. So the question arises: what's next?

This interactive session is an opportunity for participants to bring their own ideas and needs, and brainstorm what might be the next step in the evolution of the evaluation deliverable. Starting with an overview of the evolution of the deliverable and the aims of utilisation-focused evaluation, participants will then work together in small groups with creative stimuli to explore ideas for new types of deliverables that overcome current challenges in usability and communication. Groups will consider what the next generation deliverable might look like, how it might be developed in an evaluation process, how it fits with existing deliverables, and what skills will be needed to design and deliver these in collaboration with stakeholders.

## Designing research and evaluation for a complex system: the Stronger Smarter Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education

Cathy Jackson, John Davis, *Stronger Smarter Institute*

The mission of the Stronger Smarter Institute is to create transformative change in outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Through the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program, the organisation supports educators to reject the deficit thinking that comes from a racialised view of education and become agents of change. In the classroom, the strength-based Stronger Smarter Approach posits that Indigenous students can be both 'Strong and Smart': students can be both strong in culture and smart in the classroom.

In this session, the presenters describe how the Institute has developed its evaluation model over several years to work towards an understanding of the question 'When does the Stronger Smarter Approach work best?' They show how they draw on Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing, using the Bunya Bunya Cycle to guide their understanding of a complex problem requiring local solutions. The Bunya Bunya Cycle moves away from the Western positioning of the 'researchers' and 'the researched' towards privileging the Indigenous voice, and sharing and giving back.

The approach draws on Complexity Theory to understand Indigenous education as a complex system, and the Stronger Smarter Approach as an intervention with simultaneous causal strands; and it draws on Realist Evaluation theory to assert the agency of educators in choosing how to respond. The presenters will show how a strength-based approach leads them to a confidence in the power of educators and Indigenous communities

to deliver local solutions. The presenters will describe how these understandings have led them to develop a series of emergent logic models that will continue to be refined as their research evolves.

## Taking an intersectional approach to evaluation and monitoring: moving from theory to practice

Sarah Kearney, Anna Trembath, Elise Holland, *Our Watch*

In recent decades, there have been growing efforts to apply intersectional theory to the field of gender equality, health promotion, and other areas of social policies. While much of the focus so far has been on understanding how to apply an intersectional lens to policy and programming, of equal importance is the application of an intersectional approach to monitoring and evaluation and its potential to reveal meaningful distinctions and similarities in order to better understand the impact of social interventions; and monitor progress toward social policy outcomes.

The panel consists of practice specialists with expertise in evaluation and monitoring from Our Watch, the national foundation for the prevention of violence against women. Each panellist applies an intersectional approach to designing either project-level evaluations or monitoring frameworks for tracking population-level change. This panel will open by exploring the concept of intersectionality and its role in the development of transformative social policy. Building on this theoretical understanding, the panellists will be interviewed by a facilitator on how they have embedded intersectionality into their monitoring and evaluation projects, drawing primarily from examples of violence prevention interventions and initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality. Examples will include: the evaluation of a national cultural change campaign (delivered across digital platforms) and the development of monitoring mechanism which tracks population-level progress towards the prevention of violence against women.

The panel will conclude with an interactive facilitated discussion. Audience members will be asked to interrogate evaluation case studies (provided by the panellists), discussing whether the examples are intersectional, and identifying practical steps to advance an intersectional approach of the case study. At the conclusion of the panel, participants will be directed toward relevant resources to support them to move from 'inclusive' evaluations that simply recruit for diversity, towards transformative, intersectional evaluation design.

## Realities of monitoring and evaluation in a not-for-profit

Sophia Harryba, Eboni Tiller, *UnitingCare Wesley Bowden*

As a not-for-profit that has dedicated significant resources and commitment to embedding monitoring and evaluation within their work, UnitingCare Wesley Bowden believe they have a unique contribution to the conference.

The presenters will be focusing on the 'realities of monitoring and evaluation in a not-for-profit' where they will highlight the successes, challenges and lessons learned since beginning their M&E journey.

The two primary foci for this presentation are:

- the impact of monitoring and evaluation on our everyday work and how staff have experienced the change
- the challenges in building capacity within the organisation for ownership of the monitoring and evaluation framework.



## Transforming evaluation to better address complexity

Julie Elliott, RMIT, PHD candidate

Over the past 20 years, some insights from complexity science have been adopted into evaluation, including applications in Developmental Evaluation, systems approaches in evaluation and realist evaluation. But mainstream evaluation practice, including evaluation tied to Results Based Management and performance management, is largely built upon assumptions that interventions always operate under conditions of equilibrium, outcomes can be predicted in advance and the relationship between cause and effect in linear and unidirectional.

For many interventions, such as place based initiatives, social change strategies and those that aim to establish conditions to stimulate social innovation, this is not the case. Instead they exhibit the features of Complexity: collective patterns of culture and group identity fold back onto the individuals who formed them through an interplay of connection, interdependence and human agency that is dependent upon memories from the past, learning and anticipation of the future, including second-guessing or out-guessing what others will do. Complexity shifts how we see the world. It replaces 'reductionism' and understands human social interaction as always complex and emergent.

This paper begins by summarising the initial uptake of some complexity ideas and methods in evaluation. It then sets out some more radical ideas and methods from Complexity Science with potential utility in evaluation. It ends with some suggestions for how the theory and practice of evaluation might be transformed to better address complexity.

## Visionary, maybe, but how viable? Understanding executive leaders' thinking about evaluation mainstreaming within child and family welfare

Amanda Jones, Berry Street

The need within the child welfare sector to understand, evidence and improve programmatic impact is intensifying. Evaluation mainstreaming (EM) holds much promise for meeting that need. EM can be understood to represent a major organisational change endeavour, and also has the key characteristics of a complex innovation.

Leadership has been identified as a critical factor in both organisational change initiatives and innovation implementation. The Organisational Evaluation Capacity Building (OECB) field also recognises leadership as a key building block in initiating, implementing and sustaining OECB. It is a critical factor in gauging organisational readiness. Executive leadership, specifically, provides critical leverage for this purpose of resetting an organisation towards major change.

The construct of leadership readiness, however, is not well understood in the OECB literature. We do not know what executive leaders think about mainstreaming during the pre-adoption phase when they first encounter and consider the merit EM. How the context of child welfare practice might mediate executive leader views is also given limited attention.

This presentation explores the thinking of executive leaders about EM within the specific context of a large child welfare organisation within Victoria. The attitudes, value propositions and other thinking of the entire executive leadership were collected at two points in time: prior to deliberating about EM for inclusion in the forthcoming triennial strategic plan, and following formal plan sign-off.

Findings are useful both for understanding how executive leaders think about the desirability and feasibility of EM, and the nature

of readiness to buy-in. The implication for evaluation theory and practice is that the OECB field constructs and assesses leadership too narrowly. It would benefit from unpacking the pre-adoption leadership readiness stage to a greater degree, and drawing on change management and implementation science theory and tools to assist with its conceptualisation and measurement.

## 'It's about involving Aboriginal people in every aspect of decision making': understanding the enablers and drivers of evaluation in Indigenous higher education in Australia

James Smith, Curtin University; Kellie Pollard, Kim Robertson, Charles Darwin University

Growing Indigenous participation and success in higher education has frequently been highlighted as a priority for improving the health, social and economic outcomes of Indigenous peoples and Australian society. Recent academic scholarship has reinforced the importance of strengthening evaluation in Indigenous higher education contexts in Australia to achieve this goal. This has paralleled national and global commentary about the importance of data sovereignty within Indigenous affairs policy and program settings. Despite successive calls from high level Indigenous advisory groups for the Australian Government to invest in a performance, monitoring and evaluation framework that is tailored to the unique needs and priorities of the Indigenous higher education sector, this has not yet occurred.

In this presentation, the authors draw on in-depth interviews with 24 Indigenous scholars from across all state and territory jurisdictions across Australia to describe evaluation in higher education from an Indigenous standpoint. The research subsequently privileges Indigenous voices and identifies enablers and drivers likely to strengthen evaluation of Indigenous success in higher education contexts; these are:

- growing Indigenous leadership
- increasing funding and resources
- investing in strategy development
- leading innovative policy development, implementation and reform
- investing in cultural transformation and quality improvement
- addressing white privilege and power
- improving Indigenous student outcomes
- valuing Indigenous knowledges and prioritising Indigenous epistemologies
- incentivising cultural competence
- embracing political challenges as opportunities
- promoting cultural standards and accreditation
- reframing curricula to explicitly incorporate Indigenous knowledges and practices
- investing in an Indigenous workforce, and
- recognising sovereign rights.

The presenters will discuss these findings in the context of three primary domains of control: *Indigenous, Government and University* control. In doing so, they will unpack the social-political complexities of negotiating evaluation work specific to Indigenous success in higher education. They will show how significant transformations can be achieved in policy and practice contexts in higher education, if Indigenous standpoints are prioritised.

## **Q: Can realist evaluations be designed to be more suitable for use in Indigenous contexts? (A: It depends)**

Emma Williams, Kevin Dolman, *Northern Institute, CDU*

Realist evaluation has been growing in popularity over the past 20 years, and is now being used in Australian and Canadian Indigenous contexts. This presentation, developed by realist Indigenous and non-Indigenous colleagues, looks at how (and to what degree) realist evaluations can be designed to be culturally safe, and more suitable for use in different Indigenous contexts. We note that a single proposed solution is impossible, given the diversity of Australian Indigenous peoples, and describe issues that arise in different Indigenous contexts. One area of innovation is methods, identifying how techniques developed in a European context – such as realist interviewing – have been and can be further adapted to suit preferred ways of sharing information in different Indigenous contexts. More challenging is understanding how the ontology and epistemology of realist evaluation, and particularly its understanding of causation, align with the ontologies, epistemologies and understandings of causality of different Indigenous peoples. Steps towards a cross-cultural understanding of realist philosophy are presented, together with the challenges this presents. The impact of who 'owns' the evaluation, who leads and shapes it, will also be discussed with reference to realist evaluations.

## **When do we have enough evidence!!!**

Zazie Tolmer, *Clear Horizon*

In a design process, whether it's co-design or another approach, not knowing when we know enough, or have enough evidence on the problem, insights, opportunities etc. can paralyse the process. The 'expert' cannot always be there to provide the assessment and confidence for design groups to move on. To address this challenge,

the team the presenter is working with at the Department of Health and Human Services has developed and tested a new 'Ah help me! Do I have enough evidence or good enough quality to continue?' tool. In this Ignite presentation, Zazie would like to share and test it with you.

## **We should be democritising evaluation, not sanctifying it**

Duncan Rintoul, *Rooftop Social*

Duncan is a card carrying evaluator – literally. But most of the people he works with aren't: they're project managers, designers, policy analysts... the list goes on. For evaluation to 'make a difference', it's got to get closer to the action. Out of the realm of being a specialised technical sub-specialty and get into the skillsets and mindsets of non-specialists.

## **TLDR (too long, didn't read): let's knife evaluation reports**

Elizabeth Smith, *Litmus*

Boring, long reports are killing evaluation. Getting evidenced reports to under 30 pages is an art form. Litmus are on a mission to get their reports in the Times top 100 best sellers. Or better yet to be dog-eared and thumb-marked, and used to create change.

Come and hear how the organisation is executing this mission. Elizabeth will share Litmus' processes to hear a client say 'I love your report'. And how they overcome the traditionalists and blockers. Let's make evaluation great again. Embrace the reporting revolution.

## **Pathways and progressions: adapting our system of evaluation education to meet the needs of evaluators and funders**

Janet Clinton, Amy Gullickson, *Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne*

Formal evaluation education has followed a pathway primarily dictated by the discipline in which it is taught (e.g., public administration, community psychology, education, health) and generally the focus has been on good practice in research methods (LaVelle, 2014). Informal training and professional development has been more focused on evaluation specific skills, but that is dictated by market demands.

The AES Evaluators' Professional Learning Competencies cover both research and evaluation-specific ground and have been an important first step to understanding what is required to do the tasks of evaluation. However, they are insufficient alone to promote high quality practice and provide evidence to funders of evaluators' qualifications.

To achieve these aims, we must understand what kind of learning each competency requires (e.g., basic, complex), and the levels of performance that can be demonstrated within each competency (e.g., novice, expert). Both of these steps are essential if we are to

meet the needs of our diverse cadre of practicing evaluators and provide clear pathways for learning and professional recognition. In this session the presenters will report on efforts to address these two issues using existing taxonomies (Biggs & Collis, 1982; Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1980), the processes and results, and lessons learned. This will spring board a discussion of what's next for evaluation education in terms of adaptation to: i) better meet the needs of evaluators who are new, experienced, and everywhere in between; and ii) make evaluation a recognisable profession to funders.

## **Total value measurement: are we counting what actually counts?**

Les Trudzik, *ACIL Allen*

*Evaluation* NOUN

1. the making of a judgement about the amount, number, or VALUE of something; assessment ([en.oxforddictionaries.com](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com))

Have you ever been in the situation of believing something is of inherent value but frustrated at not being able to put an adequate measure on that belief?

Evaluation by its very definition requires careful thought about measuring all the attributes of value of the subject or topic under

assessment. Not just the tangible benefits but also the intangible. The latter can often be significant but difficult to quantify, especially so in public and social policy settings, where there are increasing needs to consider cross-sectoral and transformational factors, and many of the derived benefits or value may have an indirect relationship with the specific outputs of the program.

Multi-criteria analysis is typically used as the 'goto' way to assess a range of tangible and intangible value measures. But this approach fails to recognise that intangible value by its nature does not usually combine in the same additive way that conventional financial or economic value does. Intangible value, capacity building as an example, is not lost or reduced when given to or shared with others, but is available to both and as such conforms to a network economics model where there are increasing, not decreasing, marginal returns. It is also important to understand the ways in which the different value attributes can interrelate and influence each other.

This presentation will outline how evaluators can address the challenges of first classifying, and then understanding and combining, all the attributes of value that may be being delivered – that is, assessing the total value not just the value that is easy to count.

## **'Stories for purpose' – transforming the use of documentary film, participatory media and participatory forums in Monitoring and Evaluation, in order to create evidence-based visual reports**

**Susan Rooney-Harding**, *The Story Catchers*; **Margaret Howard**, *Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure*

In this session, the presenters look at how documentary film and stakeholder participation in monitoring and evaluation can be used to create visual reports. It's the story behind the numbers that bring a traditionally dry process to life.

Story Catchers uses qualitative data collection methodologies, participatory media (where the audience can play an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing and sharing media content) and documentary videographers to collect stories. These stories are then used in the creation of a series of documentaries to be employed in participatory forums and in the monitoring, evaluation and reporting process.

Working with monitoring and evaluation specialists Story Catchers uses a variety of evidence-based methodologies. A Monitoring and evaluation specialist conducts participatory forums with stakeholders to unpack the documentary films; the findings are then used to in producing a traditional written report. This report and media previously collected are then used to create a short visual documentary report (approx. 8–10 minutes) to accompany the written report.

The presenters will look at the participatory monitoring and evaluation process that was used in the APY Lands in South Australia with the 'One the Right Track Remote' drivers licensing program. They will show the final documentary and discuss its uses for communications and how it can shape program direction and policy change, help change legislation and for refunding of programs.

A lot of Story Catchers' work is with government agencies working with indigenous programs that are looking to implement more inclusive and culturally appropriate evaluation and reporting methodologies.

The presenters will discuss the user experience (the client) of the above methodology employed in the 'On the Right Track remote' program and review how the documentary piece has been used.

## **Evaluation Ready: transforming government processes and ensuring evaluability**

**Ruth Pitt**, *Lyn Alderman*, *Department of Social Services (DSS)*; **Katherine Barnes**, **David Turvey**, *Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS)*

### **Abstract 1: Evaluation Ready: transforming government processes**

The Australian Government's Digital Transformation Agenda, announced in the 2015/16 federal budget, includes establishing two grants hubs, the Business Grants Hub (located in DIIS) and the Community Grants Hub (located in DSS). These hubs are intended to streamline how grant programs are designed, established and managed across the Commonwealth. This centralisation of grants administration is a significant systems-level change that presents both challenges and opportunities for evaluation.

This presentation will outline the work being done at the two Departments to embed evaluation services within their respective grants hubs, looking at key successes to date and challenges ahead. In particular, it will examine how the hubs have moved evaluation planning into the design phase by ensuring evaluation is included in the costings for new programs and by providing 'evaluation readiness' services. These services align with the utilisation-focused evaluation approach of holding 'launch workshops' to assess and enhance evaluation readiness, with the aim of improving the timing and relevance of future evaluation activities (Patton 2012). The speakers will discuss the implications of these services for evaluative thinking and practice. How each of the hubs capitalise on the opportunities offered through centralised evaluation services will be of interest to evaluators who are interested in transforming evaluation from being on the periphery of programs to being at the heart of their design and delivery.

### **Abstract 2: Evaluation Ready: ensuring evaluability**

Ensuring good evaluation involves more than just hiring evaluators and setting them to work. It requires preparation, capability and an evaluation mindset. It requires programs to be evaluation-ready. How reassuring would it be if program developers knew from the outset the types of evaluations planned for their program and when they would commence? If they knew the questions that would be asked and the methods and indicators that would be used to answer them? And if evaluators were confident that the data required would be collected, tested and available for use when needed? In short, if evaluability was assured?

This presentation explores how the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science's Evaluation Ready tool has improved the evaluability of its programs. At or near the design stage of a new program, Evaluation Unit staff work with policy and program specialists to develop a program logic, evaluation questions, data requirements and an evaluation schedule. These documents comprise an evaluation strategy, which informs program documentation including application forms and reporting templates. The tool has been reviewed and refined to enhance speed and consistency of application. The unit's ambition is to have it considered public sector best practice. In this presentation, the experience of applying the Evaluation Ready tool in the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science is explained and its impact on evaluability is assessed. Examples illustrate how the process has all but eliminated the need for scoping studies and evaluability assessments. The presenters show how the process interacts with program rollout arrangements and performance reporting frameworks for individual programs. And as it hasn't always been easy, some of the challenges encountered and lessons learned along the way will be highlighted.

## **We are women! We are ready! Amplifying our voice through Participatory Action Research**

**Tracy McDiarmid, Amanda Scothern, *International Women's Development Agency (IWDA)*; Paulina Belo, *Alola Foundation***

IWDA's work is grounded in the principles of gender equality and women's rights, delivered in partnership with inspiring organisations across the Asia Pacific region. The organisation recognises that gender equality requires incremental and transformative change which occurs over generations, and that strengthening women's movements through collective action and learning is a key strategy in achieving change. Capturing those changes in the voices of diverse women is at the heart of its commitment to ethical, feminist, participatory evaluation.

This interactive session models the principles and practices of IWDA's approach. It will explore how evaluations can be designed to strengthen the capacity of diverse women as co-researchers; to build on and generate knowledge as a resource of and for the women who create, own and share it; and to design evaluative spaces that promote authentic, inclusive forms of evidence.

A campfire approach will highlight recent experiences, including the design of a mid-term reflection using feminist participatory action research methodologies and the development of our Feminist Research Framework (Nov 2017), and engage session participants to enquire into, and explore other applications of these principles and practices drawing on their own experience. Discussions will include evaluation design (experiences, challenges, applicability to different contexts) and methodological practices such as appreciative inquiry, narrative and performative methods.

Key learnings are envisaged on topics such as participatory design processes (ensuring delivery and community partners are involved in the development of key questions and appropriate methodologies), capacity building (empowering diverse women as co-researchers in data collection and analysis), and accessible and applicable learning (communicating and using findings relevant to diverse partners to support political, economic and social change). Peer-to-peer exchange will be captured, and will inform the circulation of sector guidance drawing on experience and learning of session participants.

## **Reconciliation Action Plans as drivers of social change: the engagement process in the evaluation of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games RAP**

**Kate Frances, Ross Williams, *Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia***

In a nationwide first for Australian events, a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) has been developed for the Gold Coast 2018 (GC2018) Commonwealth Games. An independent evaluation of the RAP has been identified as a priority initiative by the Queensland Government and between November 2017 and July 2018, researchers undertook the evaluation of this RAP. The primary data collection methodology involved face-to-face consultations with a range of stakeholders.

For many stakeholders, the GC2018 RAP represents an important framework for improvement in opportunities (particularly employment, training and contracting opportunities), relationships and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader Australian community. Recognising that RAPs represent an emerging trend as drivers of social change, especially in the ways in which organisations are publicly committing to specific actions that produce or contribute towards tangible outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, the evaluators assessed how far their evaluation practices reflected the RAP paradigm.

This paper will explore how the evaluators of the GC2018 Commonwealth Games RAP have managed to occupy the same space as RAPs as drivers of social change through embodying the concepts central to RAPs in their engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and stakeholders.

## **Transforming evaluation relationships: evaluators as responsive and flexible mentors**

**Timothy Carey, *Centre for Remote Health, Flinders University*; George Tremblay, Jim Fauth, *Center for Behavioral Health Innovation, Antioch University New England, US***

In 2017 the Australian-American Fulbright Commission funded a research project at the Center for Behavioral Health Innovation (BHI), Antioch University New England to investigate the important factors for initiating and sustaining ongoing monitoring and evaluation within an organisation.

The research was conducted by an Australian Fulbright Scholar who interviewed 15 people from different organisations with whom BHI had partnered at various times to establish evaluation procedures and protocols for a range of different projects. A surprising finding of the project was the potential to transform the role of external evaluators. Based on the data gathered from the research participants it appears that external consultants can offer important expertise and guidance in an ongoing way.

Rather than working with organisations for discreet periods of time to reach conclusions about a specific program's effectiveness, research participants described the value in having flexible and responsive mentors who were external to the organisation but available in an ongoing capacity. Transforming the way in which the role of evaluators is conceptualised enabled service providers to change their attitudes from fearing evaluation to embracing it as a learning process that is crucial to effective service delivery. While evaluation expertise remained an important aspect of the external evaluator's role, they were able to expand the support they provided and establish a different relationship with organisations. Participants described the value of having summaries of research evidence presented to them by the external evaluators as well as having resources such as Powerpoint slides prepared. Importantly, having the external evaluators as an ongoing presence meant service providers were much more likely to maintain fidelity to the relevant model. Transforming relationships with external evaluators required reorganising mindsets concerned with the traditional role of evaluators, however, the benefits of this transformation appeared to be engaged, committed, and motivated service providers.

## **For all in tents and porpoises: the use of spell check in evaluation**

**Evie Cuthbertson, *Grosvenor Management Consulting***

One of the most important technological advances has been the spell check tool. Saviour of many an evaluation report from embarrassing grammatical errors and spelling mistakes. However spell check unchecked may be your undoing...

- Who is Hoo Ristic? And what does he do?
- Efficiency, funkiness and appropriateness
- Activities, inputs, outages and outrages
- Designing your random control trolls

Slides will be presented in comic strip format, using clip art and eg. use of speech bubbles!



## Evaluation fatigue and the tragedy of the commons: are we plundering our participants' finite resources of patience and trust?

Adrian Field, *Dovetail Consulting Ltd*

The 'tragedy of the commons' explores the drivers and consequences of systems of shared resources, where individual users – acting independently according to their own self-interest – behave contrary to the common good of all users, by depleting or spoiling that resource through their collective action.

First developed in the 1800s with regard to cattle grazing on common land, it has subsequently been explored more widely to encompass such issues as the Earth's natural resources and the knowledge commons. In this session, the presenter will pose the question of what if people's willingness to take part in evaluation and research activities is itself a finite resource? In a world where almost every day we receive an invitation to take part in consumer research, and individual data is routinely collected and shared, are we irrevocably depleting a resource that as evaluators we fundamentally rely on? What are the transformations that we need to make in our mindsets, and instigate more broadly in our professional and policy networks?

The presenter was inspired by a daily transactional experience of depositing a cheque in a bank, whereupon he was asked a few days later to complete an online survey about the experience. It led him to record over subsequent months the extent to which he was being invited to take part in surveys, and alongside this to reflect on the implications of this near-daily bombardment for our own practice.

The presentation will explore and discuss with participants the options available to us as evaluators in our work; the wider forces at play that can undermine our individual best efforts; and the transformations we need beyond our individual practice if we are to support the credibility and impact of our work.

## Why do well designed M&E systems seldom inform decision making?

Byron Pakula, Damien Sweeney, *Clear Horizon*

Monitoring and evaluation is broadly accepted as part of good project design and implementation. However, M&E systems regularly fail to feedback information to improve learning or change actions by managers, donors and decision makers. As the aid program transforms itself, focusing more on problem driven iterative adaptation, the emphasis on reflecting, learning and changing is ever increasing. The authors conducted a stocktake of M&E investment level systems across an entire DFAT aid portfolio – including desktop review, key informant interviews, and a detailed rubric based on the DFAT Reporting and M&E Standard.

While it focused on one country, lessons were further developed based on a broad range of experience. The stocktake found that the majority of M&E Plans were well designed, though sometimes overly complicated. However, the quality diminished along the M&E pathway, in relation to implementing the M&E plans, communicating information, and using information for learning and adaptive management. Additionally, it was identified that implementing partners were often dependent on M&E advisers, often with varying approaches, and in some cases, varying quality. Partner-led, participatory and engaging approaches leads to improved reporting and learning. Good M&E ideally involves the participation of program design and program implementation staff to support ownership and understanding of M&E systems. Moreover, engaging donors in the reflection and reporting processes supports communication and facilitates decision making. Supporting this, embedding evaluation in the implementation team through Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) is integral to the quality of M&E systems. Making this an intentional process to increase

individual motivation, knowledge, and skills and to enhance a group and/or organisation's ability to conduct and use monitoring and evaluation' as per Labin et al (2012) helps build and reinforce a culture of M&E, leading to the use of information to generation knowledge that supports adaptive management and learning.

## Realist Evaluation: tracing the evolution of realist program theory over the years of the Resilient Futures project in South Australia

Bronny Walsh, *Community Matters*

Evaluators have been working with a research Institute to undertake a collaborative, capacity building evaluation of a pilot program called 'Resilient Futures'. The program aimed to improve wellbeing for young people from disadvantaged communities by delivering, through schools and youth sector agencies, resiliency training and mentoring support for young people. The evaluation was intended to inform future decision-making about the Resilient Futures program, and to inform program improvement over time. A realist evaluation methodology was selected because it was a learning-oriented methodology which could contribute to program refinement, while also explaining different outcomes for different sub-groups and in different contexts.

The program was being developed, tested and refined during the evaluation. It started as a small-scale pilot in a few agencies, underwent a complete transformation of the delivery model and became a large-scale program delivered to hundreds of young people through multiple agencies. The program model moved from delivery of a pre-designed program in which high fidelity was expected, to supporting and resourcing the delivery agencies to adapt and use core materials in ways that were appropriate to their own setting. This required a significant change in the program theory and a change in evaluation methods. Realist evaluation is intended to be iterative, gradually developing and refining program theory through recurrent rounds of evaluation.

This paper demonstrates how it can respond to transformation within programs. It will trace the evolution of the evaluation, demonstrating the changes in program theory, evaluation questions and methods required as the program evolved. Key findings from the final round of the evaluation will also be presented.

## Inclusive Systemic Evaluation: Gender equality, Environments, Marginalised voices for Social justice (ISE4GEMS): a new UN Women approach for the SDG Era

Anne Stephens, *James Cook University*

This presentation will introduce participants to a systemic thinking evaluation guidance, produced by UN Women. The ISE4GEMS is a new approach for the Sustainable Development Goals Era, which due to the many interrelated and interconnected SDGs, requires evaluators to think systemically, systematically and intersectionally.

The presenters will introduce the GEMs framework – a framework for complex and systemic intersectional analysis which calls to attention culturally appropriate and ethical practices in evaluation planning, conduct, analysis and dissemination phases. The ISE4GEMS seeks to promote social transformation by understanding complex phenomena through a systemic approach and importantly, building evaluation capacity and every stage. The GEMs framework invokes an ethical imperative in the systemic methodological approach to the principles and practices to hear from different voices, values and forms of evidence to promote fairness, equity, accessibility and sustainability. This presentation will discuss both the theory and learned practice of its application with the UN and other global participants.

## Charting a course through unpredictable seas: how Amaze is using evaluative approaches to adapt to large-scale sector reform without losing sight of long term outcomes

**Natasha Ludowyk**, *Ludowyk Evaluation*;  
**Braedan Hogan**, *Amaze*

The rollout of the NDIS requires the disability sector to be more agile and evidence-based than ever before. Amaze (the peak body for Autism in Victoria), has invested in significant organisational transformation to meet the requirements of the new system and how impact is measured, balanced with the capacity to influence system reform through advocacy.

The presenters will describe the challenges of transforming to deliver services and advocacy, and meaningfully measure impact, in a rapidly evolving sector, and how evaluative strategies have been applied to each of these within a holistic MEL framework.

## Alcohol culture change: developing an overarching framework and method to evaluate activities under the VicHealth Alcohol Culture Change Initiative

**Virginia Lewis**, **Michael Livingstone**, **Katherine Silburn**,  
**Geraldine Marsh**, *La Trobe University*; **Genevieve Hargrave**,  
**Emma Saleeba**, *Victorian Health Promotion Foundation*

*The challenge:* evaluate nine projects working to shift alcohol culture within different target groups. Funded by VicHealth's Alcohol Culture Change Initiative (ACCI), the projects are delivered by different kinds of organisations.

*The approach:* using the Initiative's underlying Alcohol Cultures Framework, the authors developed an overarching evaluation framework that highlights the similarities between the projects. This has supported development of a minimum set of common impact indicators to be used across all of the projects, and recommended questions for project communications and events. How is it going?

This presentation will discuss the feasibility and usefulness of this approach to managing complexity.

## Improving the quality of suicide prevention programs: strengthening the evidence-base with evaluation and collaborative partnerships

**Michelle Kwan**, *Suicide Prevention Australia*

In a sector with a relatively 'immature' evidence base, is it possible to systemise quality improvement? When asked to project manage the design, development and implementation of a nationally coordinated, evidence-based, online resource to support service planning, delivery and continuous quality improvement – the biggest challenge and time commitment?

*Stakeholder engagement.*

The Suicide Prevention Hub (The Hub) is an Australia-first resource, created to strengthen best practice in suicide prevention. The Hub exists to support and inform Government and others involved in service planning and commissioning at a local and regional level, and is a useful reference tool for communities seeking to implement suicide prevention activities.

## Friday afternoon session 13:30 – 14:30

## 'Drive out fear': creating space for evaluative thinking and speculation for practitioners and organisations

**Carolyn Page**, *The Clear English Company*; **Susan Garner**,  
**Rob Richards**, *Public Sector Policy Solutions (PSPS)*

At a time when government and non-for-profit organisations are being asked to improve their practices in describing performance and applying the lessons from evaluation, it is important to take a tough look at some of the impediments. In an era of increased political exposure for senior managers, there is considerable risk in airing a policy or implementation failure – even though the 'take away' learning may be the most positive thing to emerge from it. In an Academic Symposium on 'Improving Performance Information – Developing an Entity Performance Story' hosted by the Department of Finance in 2016, Professor Brian Head, of the Institute of Social Science Research at the University of Queensland, noted the strength of institutional and cultural barriers to talking about negative outcomes, going so far as to suggest that there is almost no 'space' for this in government practice: 'We need to have confidential spaces in which we can have these discussions – a 'cone of silence'. We should make it a place we can really have these discussions.'

At the team and individual level, the common divide between 'policy' and 'program' expertise can also result in forms of organisational silence that rob policy debate of essential insights. For these practitioners, too, there may be no safe 'space' to share insights and to speculate about theory and practice, to spot risks, or debate alternative approaches to our pressing policy challenges.

From their private practice in policy analysis, evaluation, evidence, and organisational change management – and from their three-year collaboration as public policy and evaluation trainers – the presenters will provide suggestions about 'what works', focussing on the principles of organisational and individual learning.

## Designing better surveys: from zero to hero

**Dan Borg**, *Independent consultant*

The online or hard copy survey is one of the go-to data collection tools in the evaluator's tool box. Easy to use online software is making these kinds of surveys more accessible than ever before with hundreds of questions for the budding survey designer to choose from. But what makes a quality survey? How do you know that your survey is well constructed and has the right kinds of questions designed to elicit high quality and reliable responses?

In this skill building session, aimed at those new to survey questionnaire design, the art of designing a good survey questionnaire will be explored.

The presenter will work with the audience through the fundamentals of survey design, including overall structure; common question types and good practice in their use. He will also work through some common ways in which the design of surveys can influence responses (either increasing or decreasing reliability). By understanding how we can commonly go wrong in the design of surveys, he will highlight strategies for avoiding these problems.

Participants will leave the session with an increased understanding of: the role of the survey designer in influencing the reliability of results; common survey problems and how to avoid them; and foundational principles for good survey design.

## **Umbrellas and rain drops: evaluating systems change lessons and insights from Tasmania**

**Jess Dart**, *Clear Horizon*; **Anna Powell**, *Ebeny Wood, Beacon Foundation*; **Jo Taylor**, *Paul Ramsay Foundation*; **Kitty te Riele**, *Peter Underwood Centre, University of Tasmania*

There is a gradual shift in realisation that intractable or wicked problems are going to require different types of solutions – and different ways of working together. There has been considerable energy in setting up and establishing collaborative initiatives to disrupt and change systems. These initiatives don't fit the usual confines of a program or service. They often work across sectors, are emergent, with long establishment phases. With the challenge of how to work with this new kind of initiative comes the challenge of how we meaningfully evaluate in this space. It's a big topic, and in this panel we focus on evaluation in the establishment phase of a systems change initiative.

Early ideas include looking to diagnose what is holding the system in a non-optimal state, to looking for key anchors that enable systems change such as adaptive leadership, collaborative health, and trusting relationships.

Panellists offer four different perspectives on the topic of evaluating initiatives with systems change endeavours: the philanthropist funder, the backbone leader, the project director and the evaluators. Each present their challenges and their ideas for how to evaluate systems change projects on a real example of a five-year project in Tasmania in five schools.

## **Into the great wide open (data): understanding and using big and open data in evaluations**

**Jessie Wilson**, *Allen and Clarke*

The idea of big data and open data – and the increasingly inevitable incorporation of these approaches into evaluations – is terrifying for some and tantalising for others. For those falling into the former category, a lack of understanding, familiarity, and/or confidence in approaching big/open data has the potential of limiting one's own evaluative practice. In other contexts, limitations with and/or misapplications of big/open data can also impact on the validity and credibility of the evaluation designs and findings we produce.

The purpose of this interactive session is two-fold: 1) to address these fears, concerns, and limitations about use of big/open data in evaluations; and 2) to begin to learn how to use these approaches in our own evaluative practices.

The presenter has a strong quantitative research background and is just beginning her own big/open data journey within an evaluation context. She promises to be encouraging and honest about how we evaluation professionals can start to become, in the words of Michael Bamberger, more 'sufficiently conversant' with these new approaches and begin building them into our ever-transforming toolkits to enhance how we evaluate policies, programs and interventions.

With the above purposes in mind, the session will use a World Café approach and practical, real-world Australasian examples to discuss and share learnings about:

- what big data and open data is and is not and differences between these approaches
- evaluative situations in which the use of big/open data is and is not appropriate, framed by various considerations (e.g., evaluation methodology, evaluation questions and criteria, stage in the evaluation's project cycle), and

- limitations of big/open data use in evaluations (e.g., data reliability and quality, ethics, consent) and management of these limitations.

Participants will also be provided with a guide for how to assess big/open data quality within an evaluation context.

## **Strengthening the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia, workshop 2**

AES Learning & Professional Practice Committee (LPP)

In 2017 the AES commissioned Better Evaluation and ANZOG to explore options for strengthening the capacity and professionalisation of the evaluation sector. The report explores options to increase motivation, capacity and opportunities.

The LLP is interested in your views about priorities for skill development, learning pathways, embedding professional competencies and opportunities to increase demand for and strengthen the operating environment for evaluation.

There are two workshop style sessions and participants are invited to attend either one or both: Workshop 1 will identify and discuss issues of most interest and concern to members; workshop 2 will build on the first, and help shape the direction for the AES in strengthening the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia. The outcomes of the workshop sessions will be shared at the conference closing plenary.

## **Friday closing 14:30 – 16:00**

## **It's the aes18 Great Debate and it's going to be huge!**

MC: Duncan Rintoul

Bear witness to the battle of the biggest evaluation brains as two teams fight it out to reign supreme. Six experts will use their evaluation knowledge, evaluative logic, wit and charm to win the day and prove that they are the better side. The topic is contentious and opens the way for a synthesis and lively critique of the conference theme. The competition will be heated and the insights will be world-class.

The aes18 Great Debate topic is:

***Evaluation as a profession will be replaced by artificial intelligence and we should all be looking for new jobs***

The debate will be battled out during the final conference plenary session with the Duncan Rintoul, our MC in the moderator's chair.

The affirmative team will argue artificial intelligence will replace the role traditionally played by evaluators, and some version of Siri or Alexa drawing on all existing evidence to produce an instant evaluation of a policy or program for minimal cost. The negative team will argue that evaluation is even more relevant than ever, and that artificial intelligence will simply assist evaluators do an even better and demanded role.

*Followed by:*

**Conference close  
AES President handover to aes19 Conference**









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