COMPLETING THE PICTURE

Building the tools to weave Indigenous paradigms into evaluation practice

SOCIAL IMPACT TOOLBOX

New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council

UTS

Please be aware this presentation contains the names of deceased persons.

The **UTS Social Impact Toolbox** democratises access to social impact evaluation **resources & knowledge**. Empowering organisations to evaluate their social impact in a way that is **reliable, accessible** and **free**!

LEARN ABOUT SOCIAL IMPACT

FIND THE RIGHT TOOLS

DESIGN PROGRAM FRAMEWORKS FOR IMPACT

WHAT WE ALREADY KNEW...

Competitive tendering & the rise of 'big charity'
The attempt to create a 'quasi social services market through privatisation and competitive tendering'. Illusion of decreased risk and administrative burden (Onyx, Cham & Dalton, 2016).

Myth of "economic growth as gold standard"
The economic lens can lead to relational and ecological values to be neglected. Prioritised neoliberal values of individualism, efficiency and scale.

Metrics aren't meaningful & approaches aren't relevant
Use of meaningful metrics is limited and inhibited by the common use of proxies rooted in western discourse. Standardised frameworks are leading to abstraction and dilution of context specific outcomes.

...the picture was incomplete.

HOW DO WE RESPOND?

...we seek to complete the picture!

" There is a need to move away from a transactional way of engagement to a relational way of engagement. Indigenous approaches to managing relationships are built around developing trust, power sharing and reciprocity. Applying a first nations lens to evaluation, we seek to build the capacity of the Not-for-Profit sector to find meaningful and appropriate metrics for the Indigenous community.

- Dr Dean Jarrett

OUTCOMES ▶

Developed with community through a co-design process, the Hub will address two gaps. The first being the lack of access to and celebration of Indigenous evaluation methods and paradigms.

The second, being the ability of Indigenous organisations to evaluate their programs using meaningful and appropriate metrics - evident in the common use of proxies rooted in western discourse.

SOCIAL IMPACT TOOLBOX

1.
Build awareness of evaluation practices that celebrate and integrate Indigenous paradigms.

2.
Promote decolonising metrics, that combat current practices that set Indigenous organisations up to fail.

3.
Support Indigenous organisations to engage in meaningful program evaluation, using methods and metrics that are valued by their communities.

4.
Increase mainstream service providers' understanding of, access to and use of Indigenous methodologies – and promote adoption of Indigenous wisdom in their practice and funding expectations.
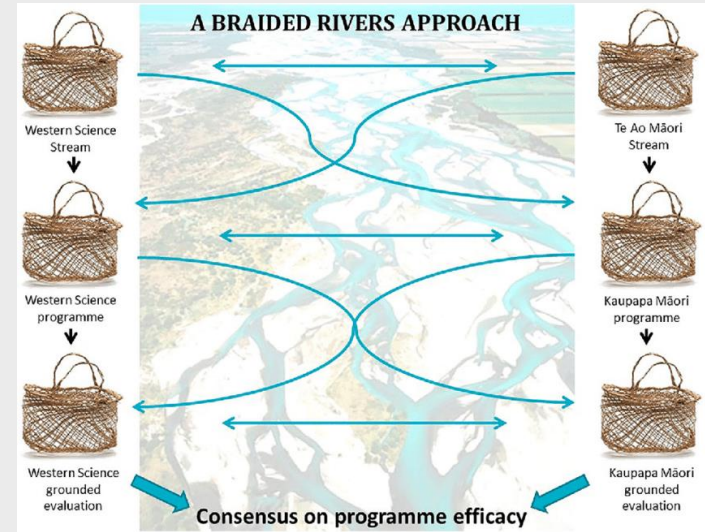
WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'WEAVING'?

"We see the world more fully when we use both [Traditional Knowledge & Western Science]."

- Robin Kimmerer (2013)

*When we weave diverse paradigms together each strand **maintains its integrity** and enables a more complete picture.*

*This **strengthens our understanding** of the world and informs how we approach social impact and evaluation.*

'He Awa Whiria: a braided rivers approach' (McFarlane & McFarlane, 2022)

WHAT IS A PARADIGM?

Paradigms – which some refer to as world view, philosophy or spirituality – are embedded in our daily lives. They provide the **value system by which we orient ourselves** and the parameters for our decisions and behaviour.

Ontology: What you believe
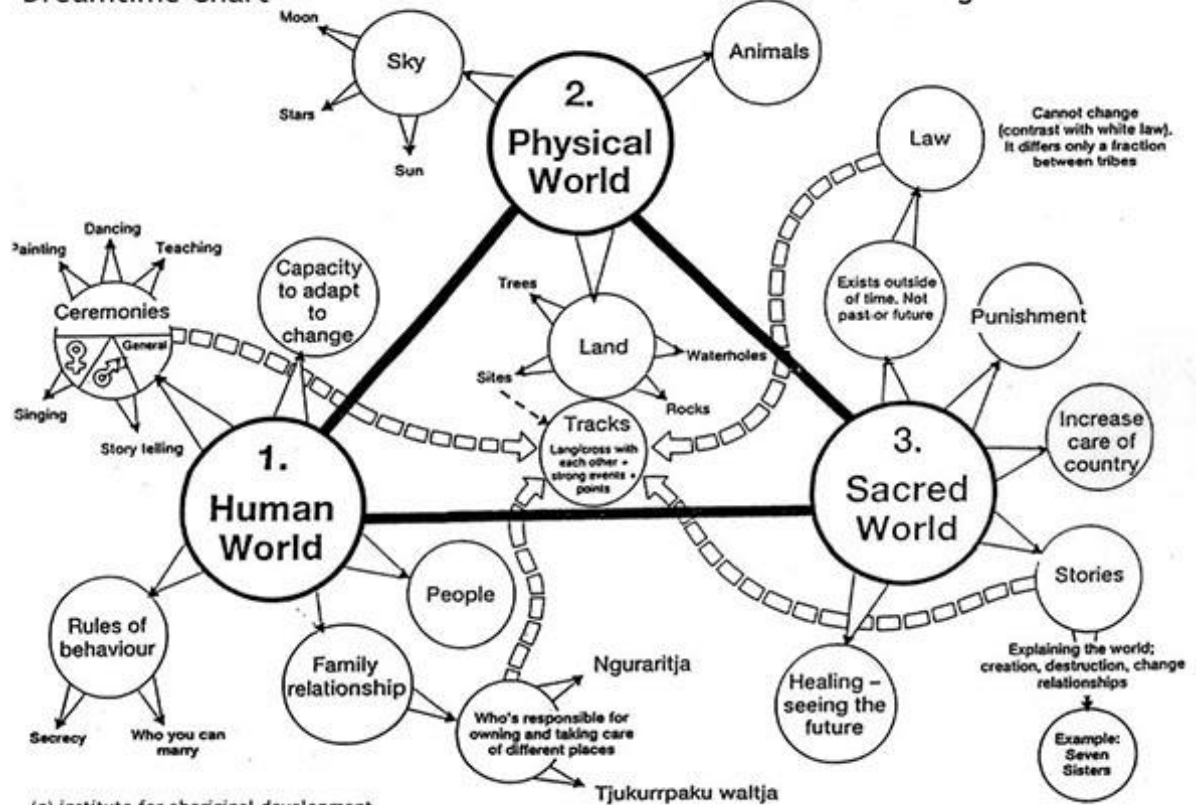
Epistemology: How you think

Axiology: Your morals, ethics or values

Methodology: How you use your thinking to gain knowledge about what you believe

An example from Eastern and Central Arrernte Country

Dreamtime Chart

www.aboriginalart.com.au

Moon
Sky
Stars
Sun

Animals

2. Physical World

Law

Cannot change (contrast with white law). It differs only a fraction between tribes

Painting
Dancing
Teaching
Ceremonies
General
Singing
Story telling

Capacity to adapt to change

Trees
Land
Sites
Waterholes
Rocks

Exists outside of time. Not past or future

Punishment

Tracks
Lang/cross with each other + strong events + points

1. Human World

3. Sacred World

Increase care of country

Rules of behaviour

People

Stories

Explaining the world; creation, destruction, change relationships

Secrecy
Who you can marry

Family relationship

Nguraritja

Who's responsible for owning and taking care of different places

Healing – seeing the future

Example: Seven Sisters

Tjukurrpaku waltja

(c) institute for aboriginal development

RESOURCES: INTEGRATED, ACCESSIBLE & FREE

Literature review of Indigenous Evaluation best-practice

Industry briefing **reports**

Evaluation **training** (online and face-to-face)

Case-studies celebrating Indigenous evaluation, wisdom and practice

Curated **database** of Indigenous metrics and evaluation methods that are culturally relevant, and capture metrics that are valued by community.

INDUSTRY BRIEFING REPORT

Understanding the context & establishing the foundations

Provides **easy access to the literature and practices** that can enhance program delivery.

Showcases Indigenous evaluation best-practice - including integration of Indigenous paradigms in evaluation practice.

Contains **literature summaries, key resources** and **insights** around implementation and integration.
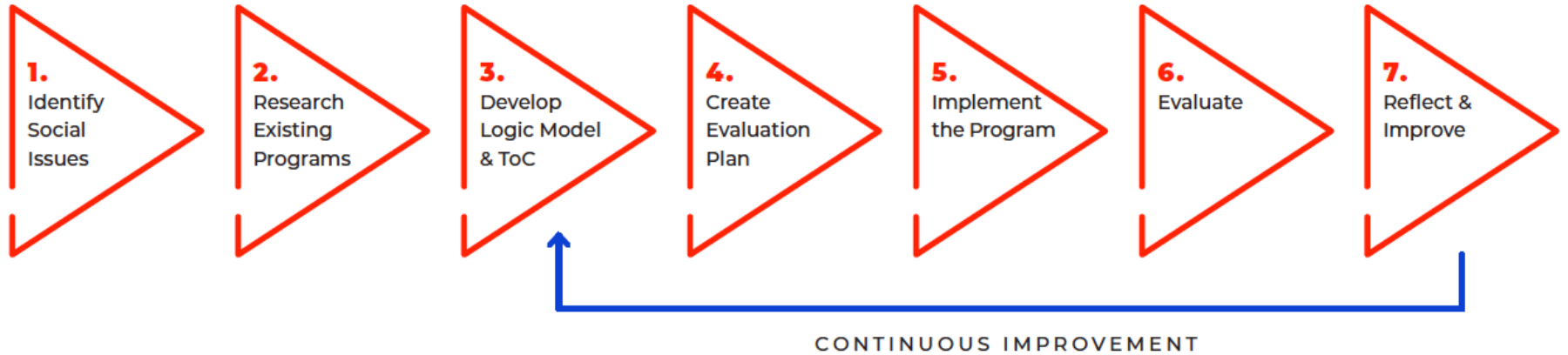
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WHAT'S OUT THERE?

Some examples:

- Evaluation Society First Nations Cultural Safety Framework, Australian Evaluation Society (Gollan & Stacey, & 2021)

- Ngaa-bi-nya Framework (Williams, 2018)

- Mayi Kuwayu: The National Study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing (www.mkstudy.com.au)

- The Australian Indigenous Governance Institute 'Indigenous Governance Toolkit' (AIGI, 2022)

- *He Awa Whiria*: a braided rivers approach (McFarlane & McFarlane, 2022)

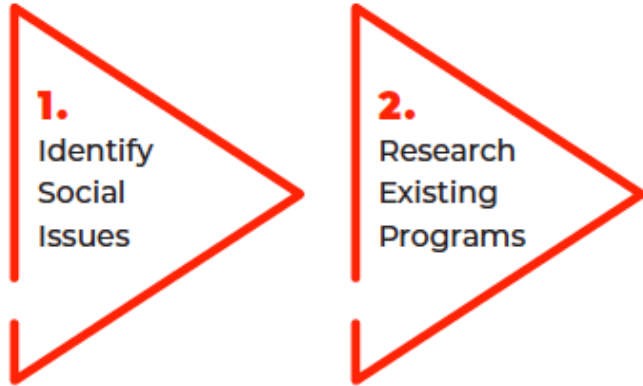- Relationally Responsive Standpoint (Yunkaporta & Shillingsworth, 2020)

RELATIONALLY RESPONSIVE STANDPOINT

Process	Term / Metaphor for Process					
Ethical Process	Respect	Axiology	Law	Valuing	Spirit	Root
Relational Process	Reflect	Ontology	Existence (relations)	Being	Heart	Stem
Intellectual Process	Connect	Epistemology	Knowledge	Knowing	Brain	Branch
Operational Process	Direct	Methodology	Practice	Doing	Feet/hands	Leaf

Yunkaporta & Shillingsworth, 2020

PROGRAM PLANNING PROCESS

1. Identify Social Issues

2. Research Existing Programs

3. Develop Logic Model & ToC

4. Create Evaluation Plan

5. Implement the Program

6. Evaluate

7. Reflect & Improve

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

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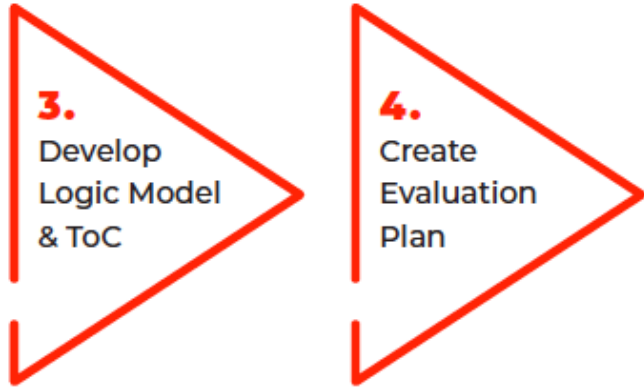Social Impact Toolbox (2018)

STAGE 1: CONCEPTION

To truly understand others, we need to understand our world view and the way it shapes how we see others.

QUESTION EXAMPLE:

- Where does my thinking come from, and what are my assumptions?
- Where do my personal and/or organisational values come from?
- Do I have any biases that I am bringing into this work?
- What is my world view and how may this align or contrast with Indigenous paradigms?

1.
Identify
Social
Issues

2.
Research
Existing
Programs

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STAGE 2: DESIGN

3.
Develop
Logic Model
& ToC

4.
Create
Evaluation
Plan

Good design requires you to take the time to get things right! This includes considerations of:

- **Governance**
- **Methods**
- **Protocols**
- **Data Sovereignty**

CONSIDERATIONS:

- How is the project/evaluation being designed? By who? And for what purpose?
- Who benefits?
- Is the project and/or evaluation wanted by community?
- Who has authority in the design?
- How am I involving and empowering Aboriginal people in the design?

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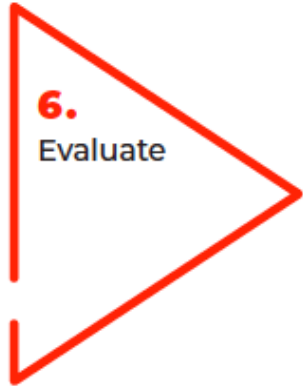# STAGE 3: IMPLEMENT

5.
Implement
the Program

Evaluation has historically appropriated knowledges, exploited and misrepresented research subjects, informed prejudice and racism, and established power imbalances that benefit the evaluators or program funders rather than research participants (Sherwood, 2012).

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Am I adhering to appropriate protocols and observing respectful practice?
- What ethical considerations do I need to observe?
- How am I ensuring Knowledge holders maintain ownership of the wisdom shared?

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STAGE 4: REVIEW

Relational and cultural dynamics can change in community throughout the lifecycle of a program. It is important to invite community into the final review process and avoid abstraction.

"Traditional Owners are the ultimate judges on whether the consultation process has been meaningful"
(AIATSIS, 2020. p.2)

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Who is conducting the review?
- Are the findings truly reflective of what people have shared?
- Have I allowed time for community to review the findings and provide feedback or additional insight?

6.
Evaluate

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STAGE 5: PUBLICATION & DISSEMINATION

7.
Reflect & Improve

While evaluations are often a requirement for funding or policy decisions, the bodies undertaking the evaluation cannot claim ownership over wisdom that is collectively owned by the communities studied and as such dissemination must benefit them.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Does analysis and dissemination empower Indigenous people or engage from a deficit narrative?
- What methods will speak to my audience most effectively?
- How does publication benefit Indigenous communities?
- What protections are in place to protect participating individuals and communities?

SOCIAL IMPACT TOOLBOX

We know the picture of Australia is incomplete, and the journey to completion requires **challenging current paradigms** that dominate evaluation practice.

Understanding, celebrating, and integrating Indigenous paradigms into the way we measure success will take Australia one step further in completing the picture.

In doing so, we will begin to see difference as a **gift rather than a deficit** and accept different ways of knowing as not only **valid, but valuable.**

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