



Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department



Data, Evaluation
and Behavioural
Insights Branch

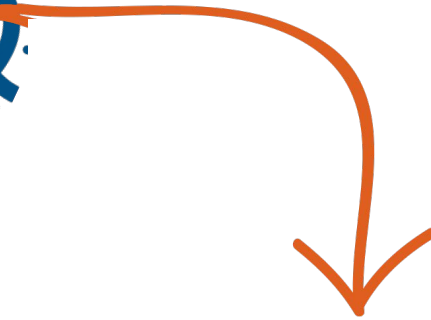
Developing a Tool for Measuring Evaluation Maturity at a Federal Agency

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AGD
Evaluation
Insights Team

Ideal culture at AGD?



Routinely plan for,
manage and use
evaluation to make
decisions

How do we get there



Evalumagation?

I love that place!
We should go
there tonight!



See evaluation
as **essential** to
their role

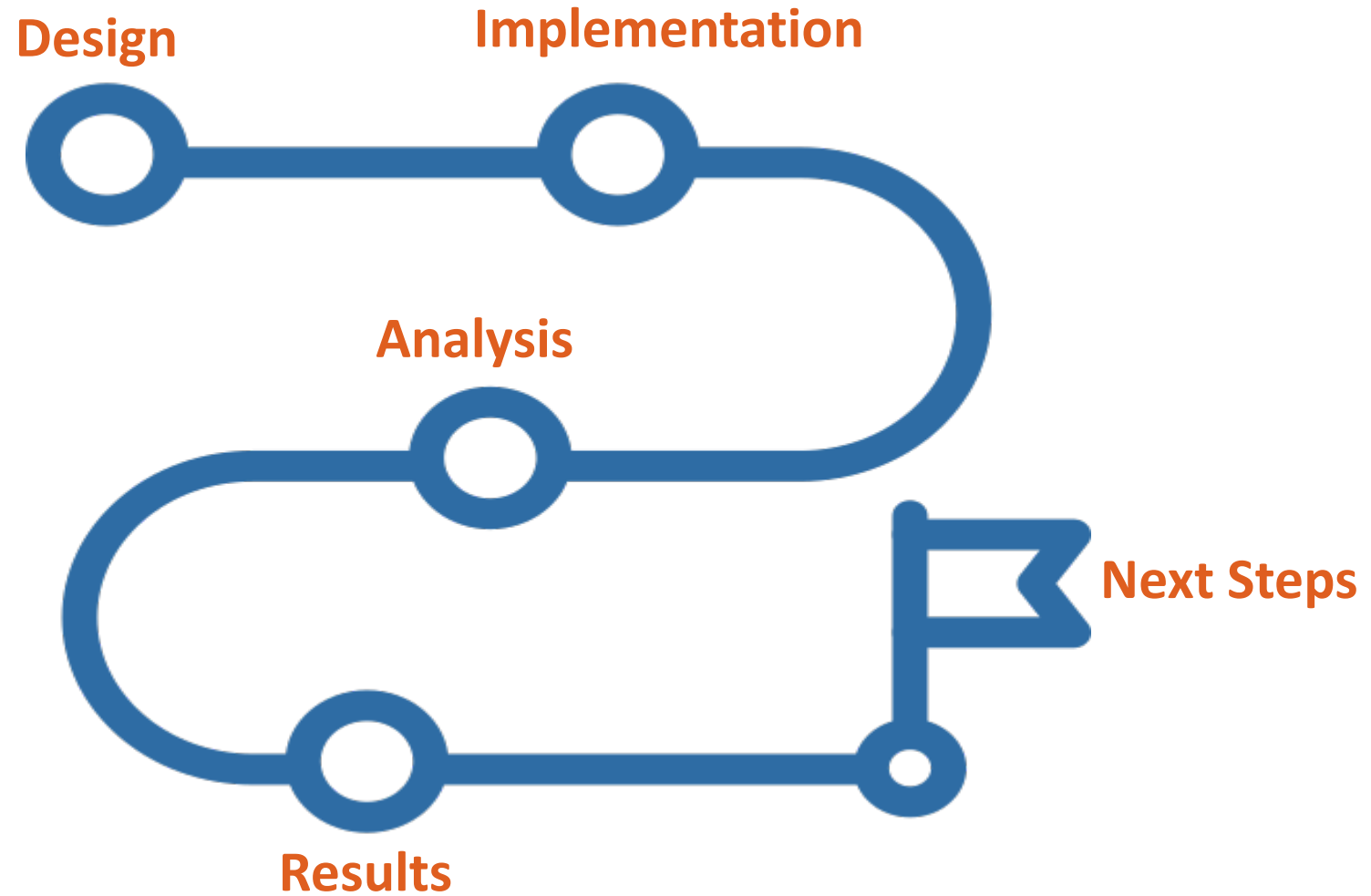


Practice
**evaluative
thinking**



Routinely plan for,
manage and use
evaluation to make
decisions







Visit the **Evaluation Insights** content on the intranet, meet with us in person in Canberra or Melbourne, or contact us at evaluation@ag.gov.au to chat with us more about monitoring and evaluation and how we can help you.

Hub-and-spoke, partial cost-recovery model

- Bespoke support
- Understanding AGD evaluation landscape (survey etc)
- M&E Frameworking
- Procurement activities
- Delivering evaluation
- Training
- NPP support and review

Two Key Components

Evaluation Capacity and Maturity Survey

Focus Groups with SESB1/2s

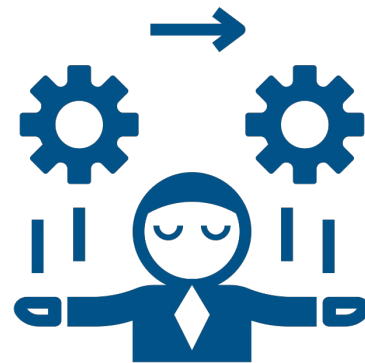




What tools exist?



Absence of a standard measurement tool for evaluation capacity and maturity



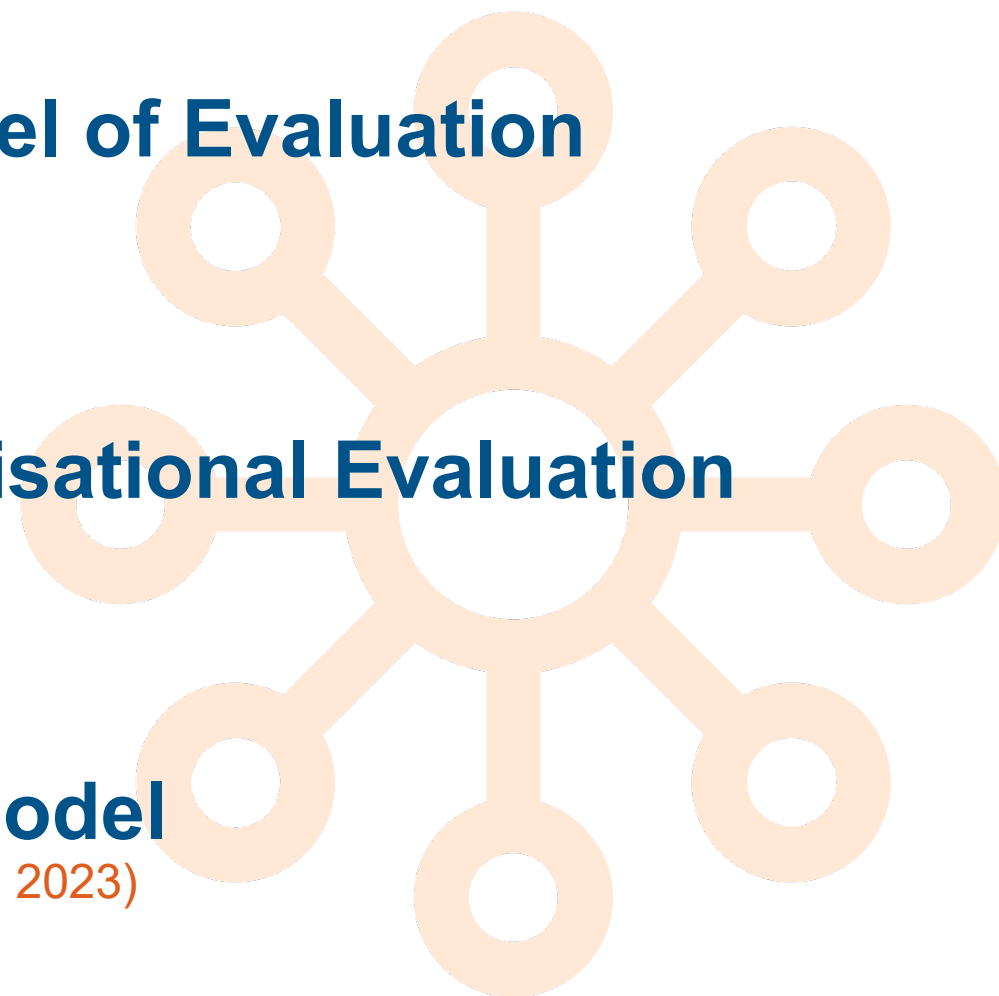
Use existing theories and frameworks to develop survey tool



Multidisciplinary Model of Evaluation Capacity Building (Preskill and Boyle, 2008)

Dimensions of Organisational Evaluation Capacity (Bourgeois and Cousins, 2013)

Evaluation Maturity Model (Maloney, Bayley, Rintoul, and Astbury, 2023)





Domains & Sub-domains



Capacity to Do Evaluation

Human resources and technical skills

Budget for evaluation

Professional development

Access to internal support

Access to external support



Evaluation Use

Awareness of evaluation

Learning from evaluation

Evaluation and evidence to inform decision making

Evaluation data governance, retention, and sharing

Direct use of evaluation

Intersectional and inclusive evaluation



Evaluation Environment

Leadership and demand for evaluation

Evaluative culture

Organisational infrastructure and resources

Evaluation embedded in program or policy life cycle

Ethics in evaluation



Designing the Framework to be sustainable and adaptable

Key findings from the literature:

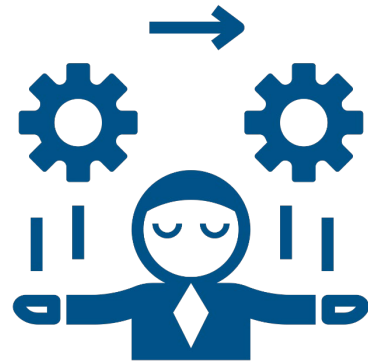
- 1 ECB strategies need to be treated as systems and include infrastructure to support both supply and demand of evaluation
- 2 Change is developmental and occurs in stages. An organisation's evaluation capability exists on a continuum
- 3 Culture change is a slow process that takes sustained effort over many years

Framework characteristics:

- Systems approach
- Bottom-up and top-down
- Maturity model to assess current behaviours and tailor strategies to different needs across organisation
- Build in monitoring and evaluation to assess progress and adapt as needed



Response rates are known to be low



- Partnered with AGD Behavioural Insights Unit to improve survey design and messaging
- Use of follow-up emails to improve response rates
- Planned promotion of the survey

engAGD

Help shape the department's new evaluation service

From Monday 16 October, the Evaluation Insights Team will launch the **Evaluation Capacity and Maturity Survey** for all staff.

Your input will help us understand what evaluation might look like through diverse perspectives, as well as support you through the newly established Evaluation Insights Team, located in the Data and Behavioural Insights Branch.

The team aims to support the [Transformation strategy](#) to identify and deliver ongoing learnings and continue to advance our services to become increasingly resilient, adaptable and impactful.

[Find out more about the team](#) or email evaluation@ag.gov.au.



AGD screensavers



Results from Focus Groups informed areas of interest for survey analysis.



Key themes:

1. There is strong demand for evaluation in AGD

“Projects where you're under most pressure to deliver are also going to be the projects under most pressure to demonstrate change.”

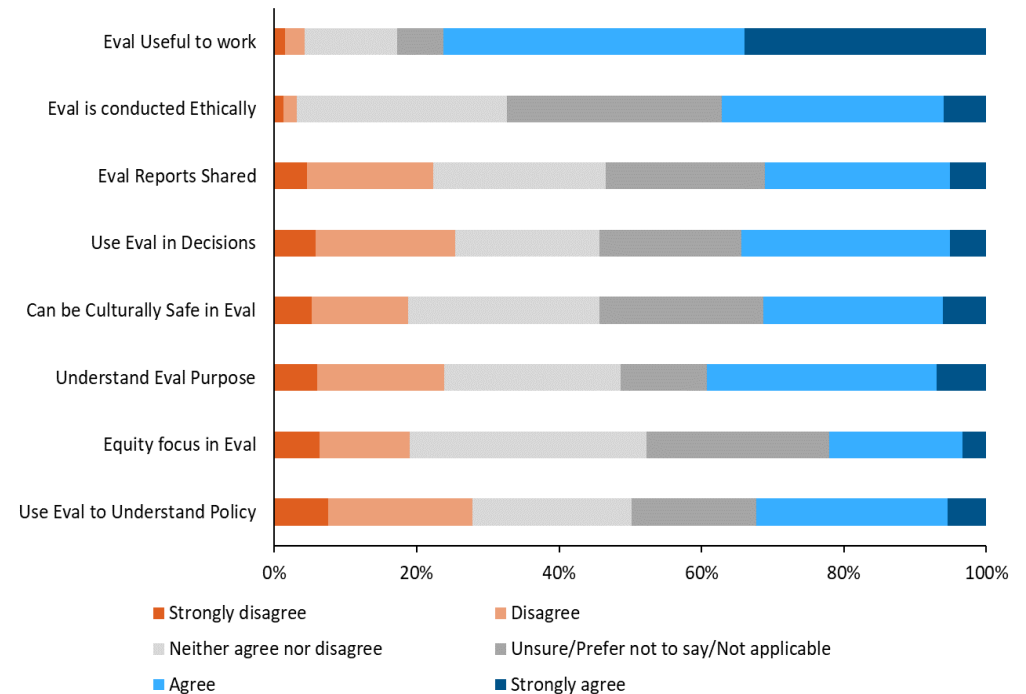
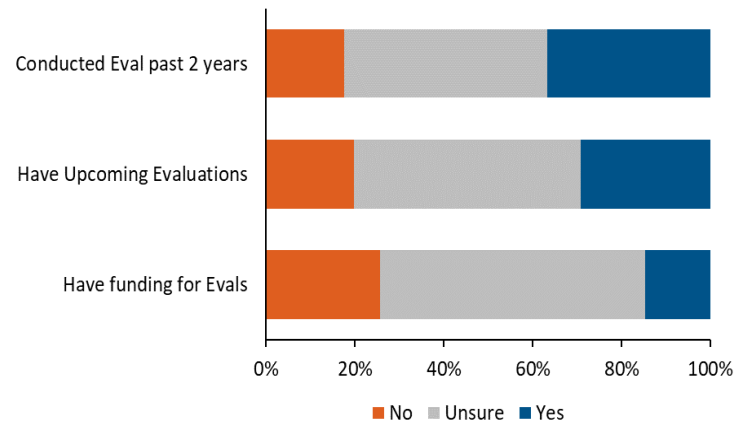


AGD wants evaluations...

76% of all respondents agreed that being able to evaluate policies and programs is useful to their work.

37% agreed that their area has conducted evaluation in the past two years.

29% agreed that their area has current plans for upcoming evaluations.



Key themes:

2. The perceived evaluation capability is low or developing

“I would say the maturity around evaluation in the department is quite low. I mean, obviously your team is new, but even just looking across the department... It's not something that they do generally.”



...But may not be able
to do them

37% of respondents *disagreed* that “Our division has enough skills to address evaluation demands”

Levels of “Neutral” and “Unsure” Responses were High across all questions

Classification	Neutral or Unsure Responses across all questions
APS	44.91%
EL	40.70%
SES	37.99%
Grand Mean	42.52%

Rates of Unsure/Prefer not to say/Not applicable responses across questions





Key themes:

3. A centralised monitoring and evaluation function can support the department in many ways.

“Having a bit of a pressure release valve that someone can come in and help do a bit of work with them at that point when they're feeling all of that other pressure I think is terrific. Terrific investment.”



AGD wants us to offer a lot of things

Proportion of all respondents who selected a particular evaluation offering





Key themes:

4. There are a range of barriers to evaluation that needs to be addressed in order to strengthen evaluation capacity and maturity.

“I think evaluation and monitoring is one of the real underdone areas we don't have the time space, money, capacity to do it. It is the first thing that's dropped off.”

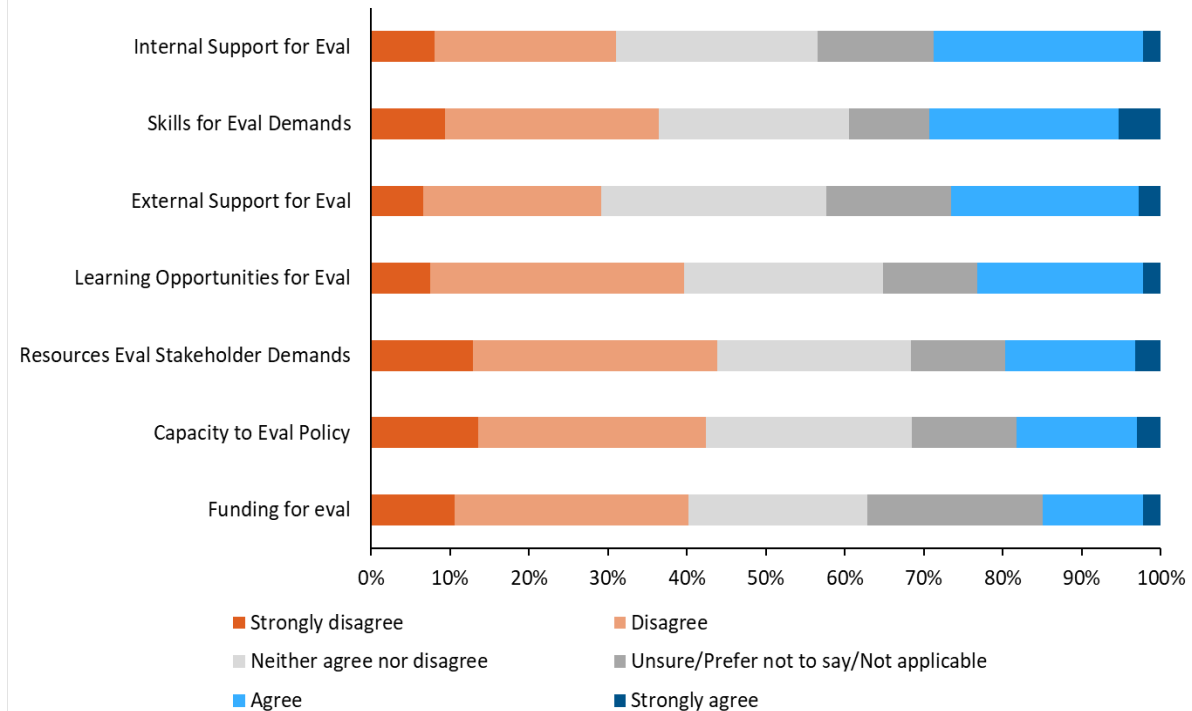


Evaluation Capacity and Resourcing

44% disagreed that they had the resourcing to address stakeholder evaluation demands

40% disagreed that they had sufficient funding for resourcing activities

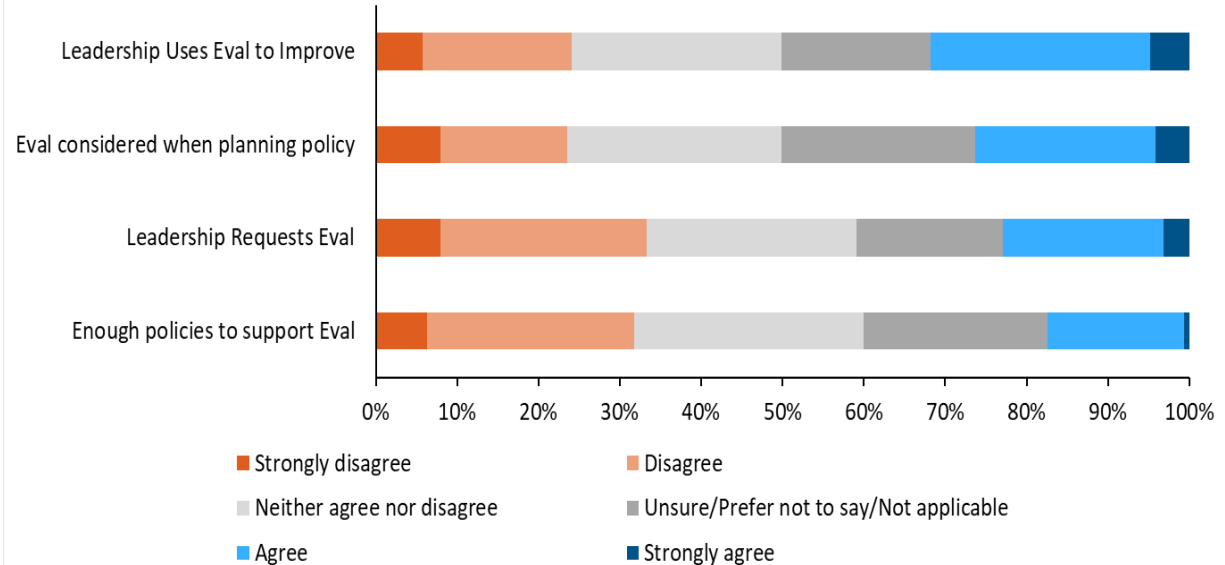
42% disagreed that their areas have the capacity to conduct evaluations of their policies and programs.



Evaluation Environment and Culture

32% **disagreed** that there are sufficient policies, procedures, guides in place to support evaluation

34% **disagreed** that their leadership requests evaluation.





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Focus groups³⁽⁺⁾

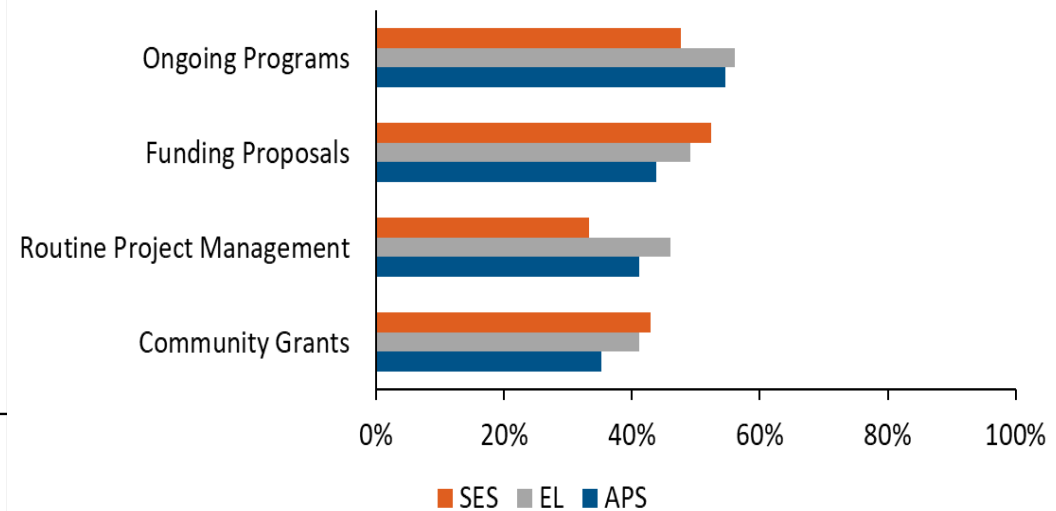
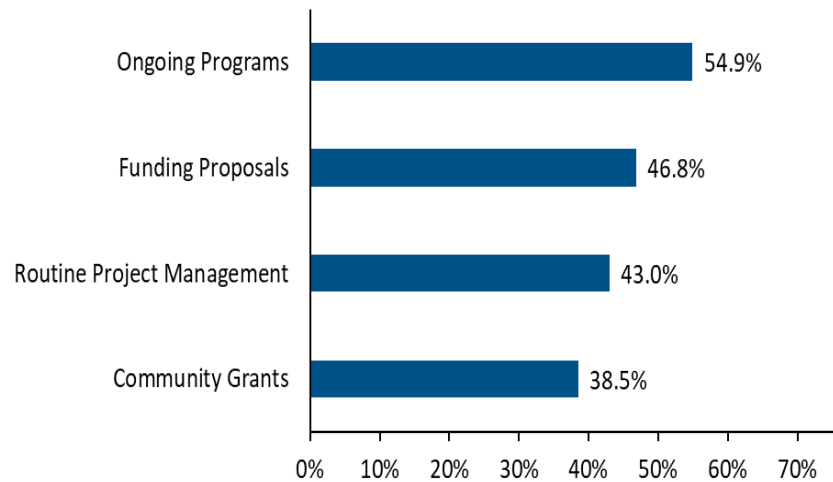
Key themes:

5. Evaluation needs to be built into existing AGD processes

“I think for me if we're going to do it correctly we need to factor it in early. Say for example, when we're doing NPP processes to make sure that we're getting the right type of evaluation that it will be useful and value for money.”



Proportion of all respondents who selected a particular policy or program process where they believe evaluation should be embedded





Key themes:

6. Staff may be unaware of what **ethical, equitable, or culturally safe** evaluations look like and therefore there may be a need for skill building in inclusive and safe evaluations.

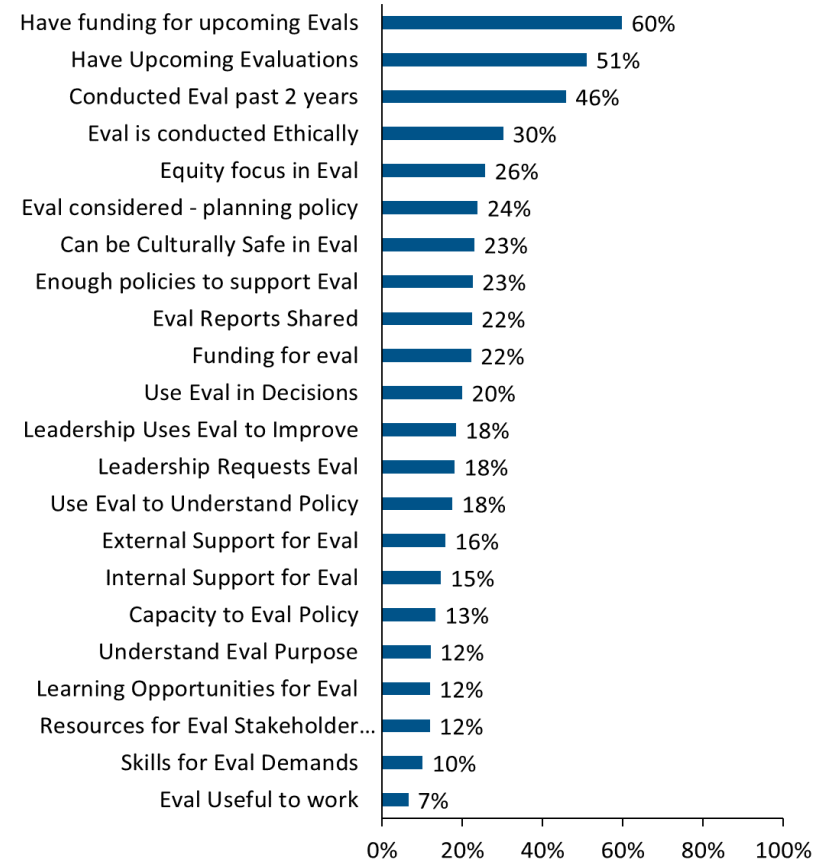
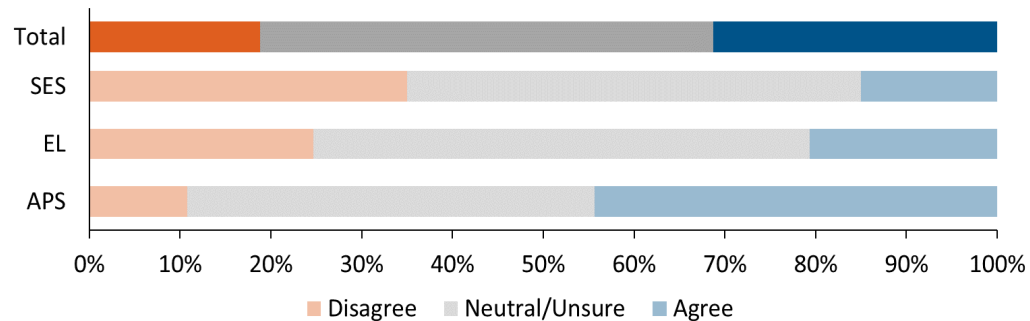
“When you're talking about vulnerable, you know, like children or vulnerable families who experienced family violence. You know that comes with ethics approvals challenges... the access to the information that we need to make them as meaningful as possible I think it's is one of the barriers that I think we face.”



Rates of Unsure/Prefer not to say/Not applicable responses across questions

19%

of respondents disagreed that their division can undertake culturally safe and appropriate evaluations when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and First Nations communities, with high rates of neutral/unsure responses.



Use survey results to plan future evaluation **capacity building initiatives**

Embed evaluation in the **NPP budget process**

Resourcing of evaluation through **blended cost recovery model**

Embed **First Nation** evaluation approaches

Continue provision of quality evaluation **advice and support**

Develop of resources and training





Thank you

**“Without data,
you're just another
person with
an opinion”**

(W. Edwards Deming)



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