



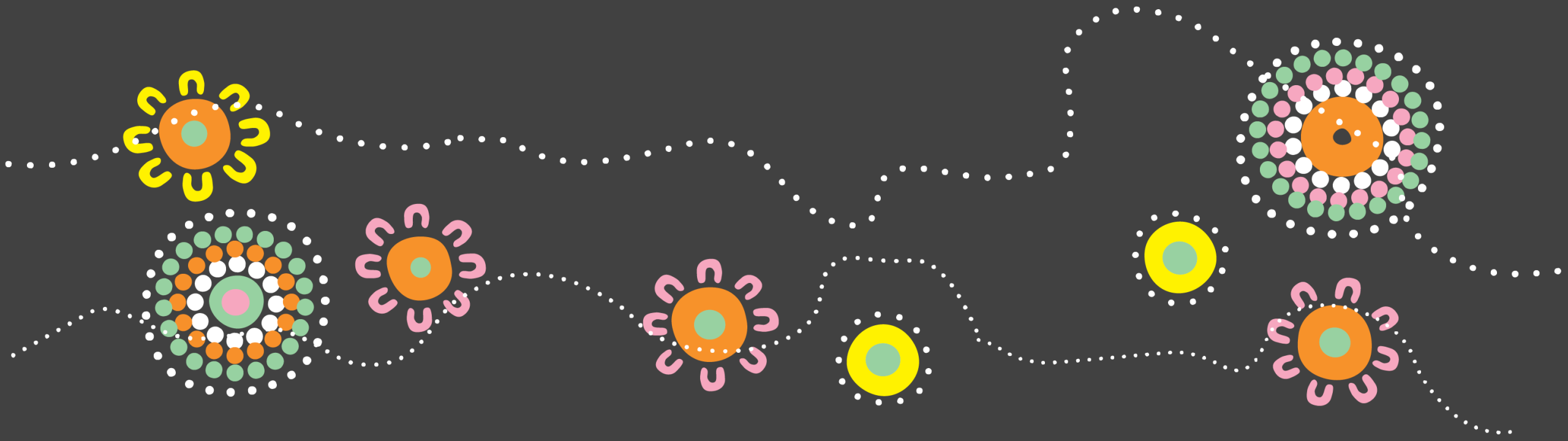
# Culturally inclusive evaluation with culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Australia



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# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters in which we work and the knowledge-holders of the oldest continuous cultures in the world. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

# Why should evaluators in Australia consider cultural diversity?



## The Statistics

- 48% of Australians have at least one parent born overseas
- 28% of Australians were born overseas
- 22% of Australians speak a language other than English at home
- 15% of Australians who speak a language other than English at home, have low English Language Proficiency
- 100% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land



- Because all evaluands include people from diverse cultural backgrounds!

# How is Australia tracking in considering cultural diversity in evaluations?

- Guidelines
  - AES First Nations Cultural Safety Framework
  - Currently no guidelines about other forms of culturally inclusive evaluation
- Opportunities
  - Apply existing literature to practice

# Existing Literature: Culturally Responsive Evaluation (CRE)

- A framework for conducting evaluations: “A process entailing the manner in which the evaluator plans the evaluation, engages the evaluand and its stakeholders, and takes into account the cultural and social milieu surrounding the program and its participants.” (p. 78, Frierson et al 2010)
- Assumes culture is important, and key to valid evaluation
- Prioritizes
  - Gaining a deep understanding of evaluand context
  - Reflexivity of evaluators and Diversity of evaluation teams
  - Culturally specific knowledge and ways of knowing
  - Cultural appropriateness
  - Engaging stakeholders from different cultural groups

## Useful reading:

Frierson, H.T., Hood, S., Hughes, G.B., & Thomas, V.G. (2010). A Guide to Conducting Culturally Responsive Evaluations. In *2010 User-Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation*, edited by Frechtling, J. and Westat, 75-96. National Science Foundation.

Chouinard, J.A., & Cousins, J.B. (2009). A Review and Synthesis of Current Research on Cross-Cultural Evaluation. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 30(4) 457-494

Chouinard, J.A., & Cram, F. (2020). Culturally Responsive Approaches to Evaluation: Empirical Implications for Theory and Practice. *Sage Research Methods*. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781506368559>

# CRE: Takeaways

- We're not far off from being able to implement CRE
- There is huge potential in Australia for evaluation to be done in a culturally responsive way by deploying diverse evaluation teams
- It is challenging for any one evaluator to have a full grasp of all the contextual factors that need to be considered for each cultural community.
  - Collaboration with experts or community members from the relevant communities is key for success.
- A broad understanding of migration patterns and policies and of the common challenges faced by CALD communities is critical

**Putting these  
ideas into  
practice...**



# A way to deploy CRE: Consider culture and cultural appropriateness at all stages of the evaluation process



01



02



03



04


**Design**

**Participant  
recruitment**

**Data Collection**

**Analysis &  
Reporting**

# Findings from CIRCA's internal research



“ If someone from a different cultural background had been doing the research, the whole process would have been affected. The target group would have been hard to recruit, they would not understand how to get a representative sample of Pasifika backgrounds, participants would not have opened up due to distrust. The quality of data would not have been as good because the relationships were not established. Everything is relational, and about connection.”

CIRCA Pasifika-background Research Consultant

# Reflections



# How can CRE and other theories push us to improve our approach?

CRE and other theories (standpoint theory and social psychology) can help us reflect on how we can potentially:

- Use evaluation to interrogate and advocate for structural change to policies and practices that affect culturally diverse communities
- Improve the design and focus of evaluations to ensure they are cross-culturally valid and appropriate

# Challenges to implementation

- There continues to be racism and intolerance to cultural difference in Australia
- Clients need to be receptive, willing to change their practice and invest in the work
- We need to be in a position to bear some of the risk of pushing back – not always possible

# Key takeaways

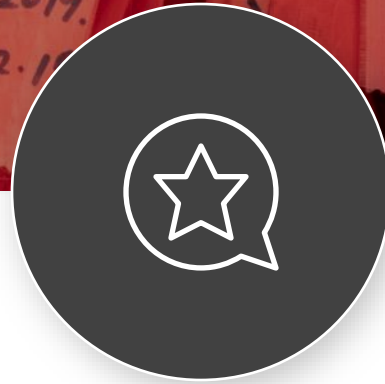
- Australia is diverse
- Evaluations must be able to appropriately assess the impact of programs and policies on culturally and linguistically diverse peoples
- Incorporating culturally inclusive evaluation approaches into more evaluations is a critical next step for Australia.
  - It's not hard, we've just got to do it



# Discussion



**Questions?**



**Feedback?**



**Implications?**



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