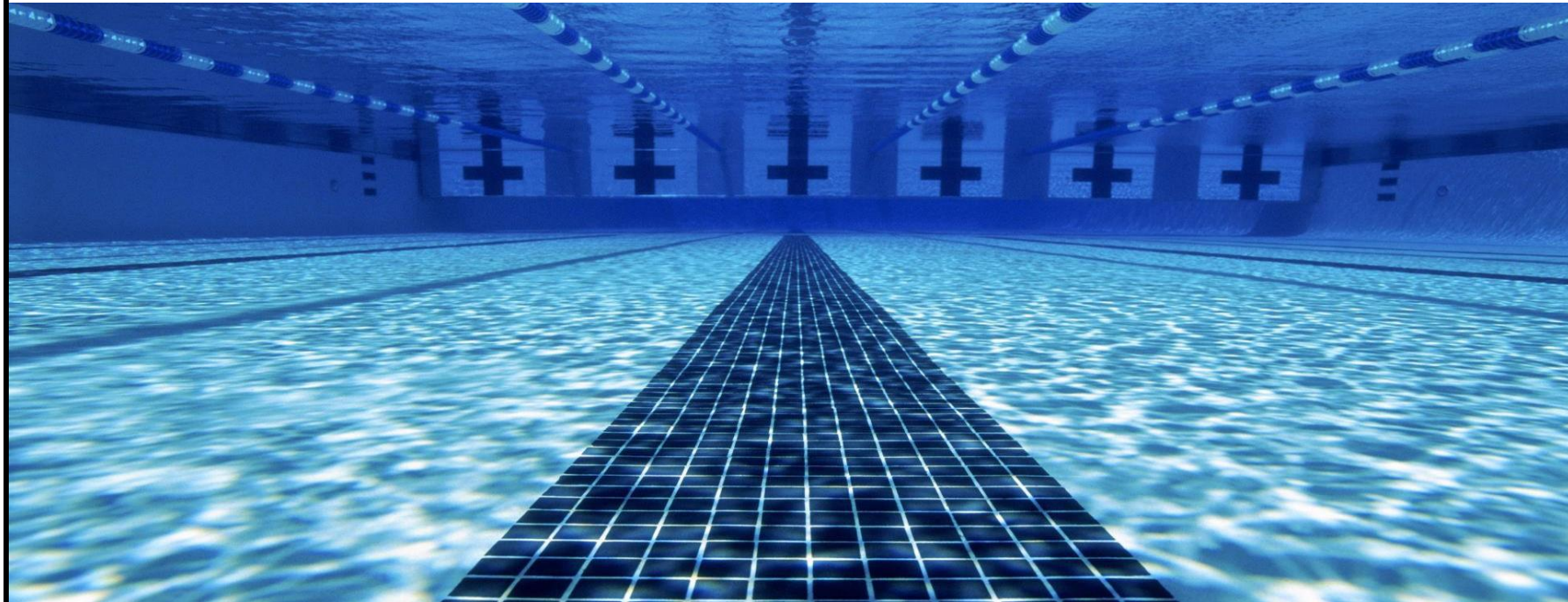


PLANNING YOUR CONFERENCE VOYAGE: KEY EVALUATION CONCEPTS FOR NOVICE SAILORS

CHARLIE TULLOCH, DIRECTOR, POLICY PERFORMANCE

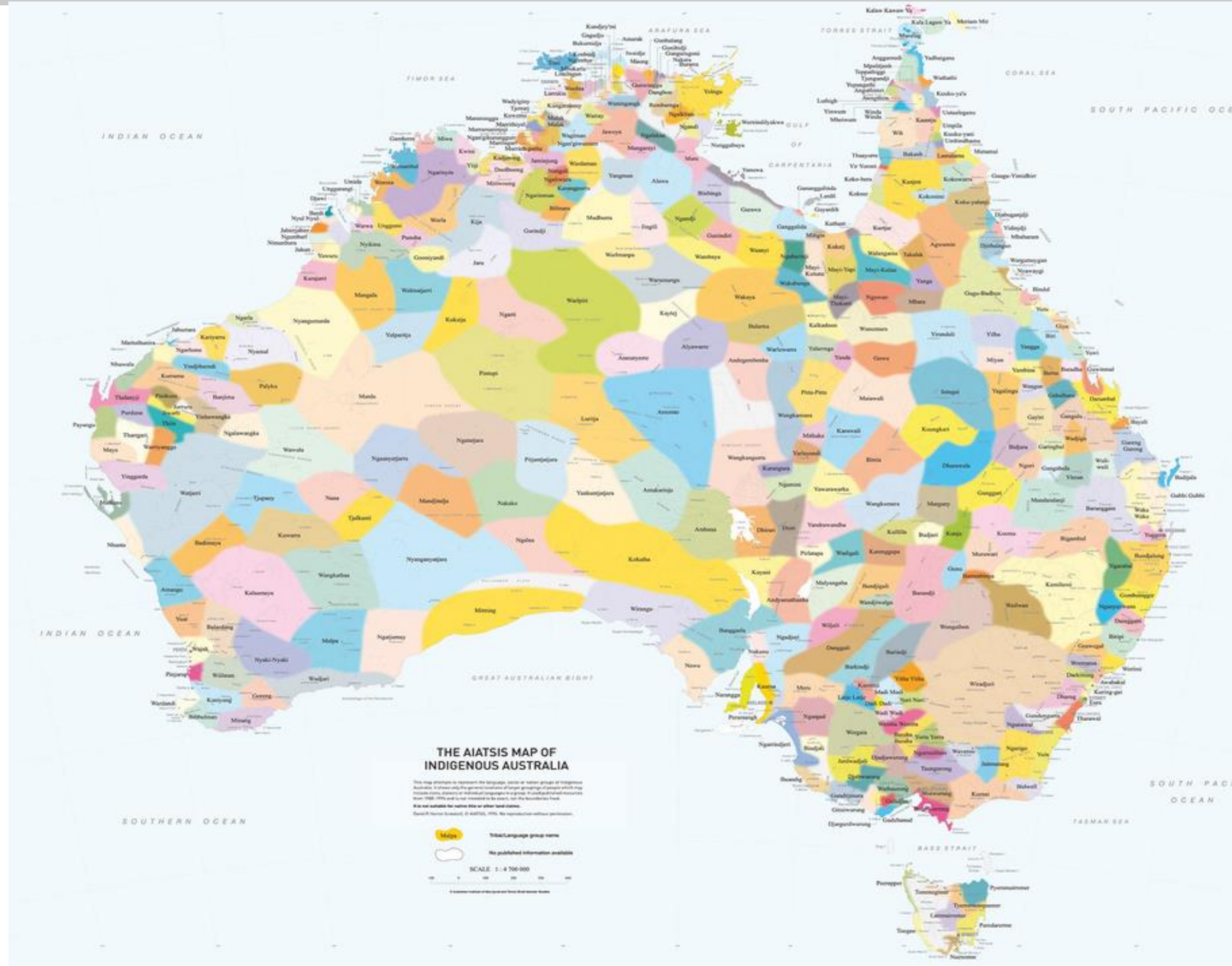
AES24, PLENARY THEATRE



Thank you for welcoming me to Naarm



Acknowledging the many First Nations



A few words we can use while we are here!

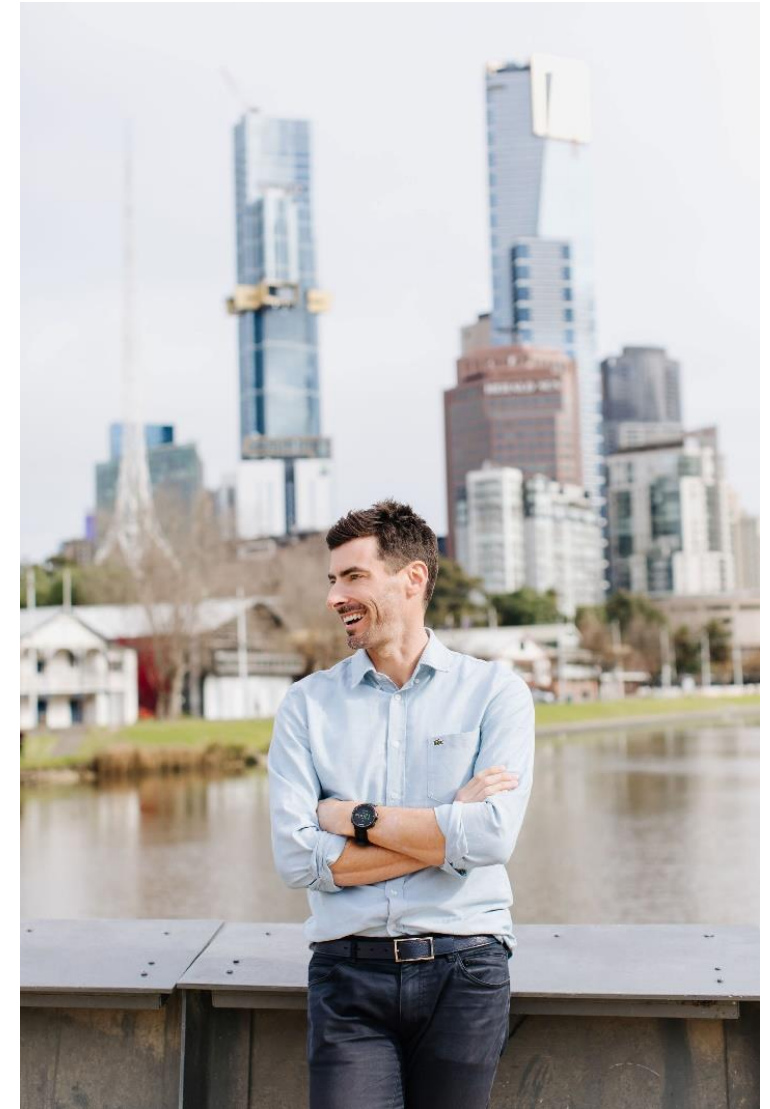
- **WOIWURRUNG**
Welcome = womin jeka
- **See You Soon = Bilvadu-
njan-warr**
- **Sorry = woobedin**

My ambitions for this session...

“I hope you leave this session with a clear picture of the wonderful field of evaluation, and a better perspective of how you might play a role.

And that you meet somebody and no longer feel alone or lost at this conference.

And that you have some fun along the way...”



Practically speaking...

CORE CONCEPTS

We will chat about...

- Language and some key terms
- A few different evaluation approaches and methods
- The main steps to consider when you are doing evaluation projects
- Where and how to develop your evaluation skills further

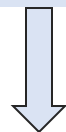


= Some slides, content and thought-provoking discussion

NETWORKING/CONNECTING

You will also...

- Have a chance to meet some other conference attendees



= Some introductions and further thought-provoking discussion

NAVIGATING AES24

I'll provide some thoughts on...

- The conference program
- Good sessions for first-time or new evaluators
- Social tips
- The unmissables... !



= Making your voyage safe and picturesque



Ideas box... for anything evaluation-related...



Navigating AES24...

- If this is your first conference, you have chosen a good one!
 - big attendance
 - fantastic speakers
 - central venue
 - friendly people
 - good Melbourne coffee...
 - and a BIG focus on new evaluators... it was not always the case... !
- There weren't many 'young' evaluators either
- But so much has changed and the evaluation world is as age, gender, location, ethnically, socially, methodologically and neurologically diverse as it's ever been...

Navigating your energy at AES24...

- Take on the conference in a way that works for you mentally, physically, personally...
- The conference is 8.30-late each day... a lot of content.
 - Sitting down and listening for too long can be tiring;
 - Networking/chatting for too long can be tiring;
- Your body and brain will likely need breaks at various points... so **DON'T FEEL GUILTY** at all if and when you need some time out... you'll come back stronger for it!

Navigating session choices at AES24...

- TOUGH decisions will need to be made, and you will definitely have FOMO
- The program is so balanced that you really can't go wrong, no matter which room you choose
- Use the AES24 app
- Maybe try every room once!
- Also consider the session types that you feel will work best for you...

Look at the breadth.... Conference Day – 1/3

Indigenous African Evaluation **Indigenous Justice** Enhancing Grant Program Evaluation Haidt's metaphor
- Evaluation Psychology **Value for Money** **Navigating your Conference Voyage** **First Nations**
Investment Framework Quasi- experimental Workforce Design Warlpiri community
level tools Outsized impact from Collaborative Practice **Aboriginal Culturally Sensitive**
Approaches Small Community Organizations Evaluation enhancement **Aboriginal & Pacific**
Research Futures NFP-Pitfalls/Pointers **Evaluators on own** Survey Engagement Strategies Supporting
deaf participation **Valuing First Nations Cultures** Co-creating Collaborative Impact -Beyond
Numbers Student Evaluators Roadmap Link-Up Services & Wayfinding Local Actors Evaluation Value Strategic
Impact Evaluation Education **First Nations Cultural Safety Framework** **Pacific**
Evaluation Ethics Program Evaluation Transformation Rapid Evaluation Techniques Anticipatory evaluation
shift **Meta-evaluation for social justice** Measuring Evaluation Maturity **STEM Footprints**
Evaluation Lab **Pacific Evaluation Landscape** **First Nations Community**
driven MEL Evaluation Trigger Warnings **Aboriginal Culturally Grounded Evaluation**
Framework Embracing Evaluation Failure

Conference Day – 2/3

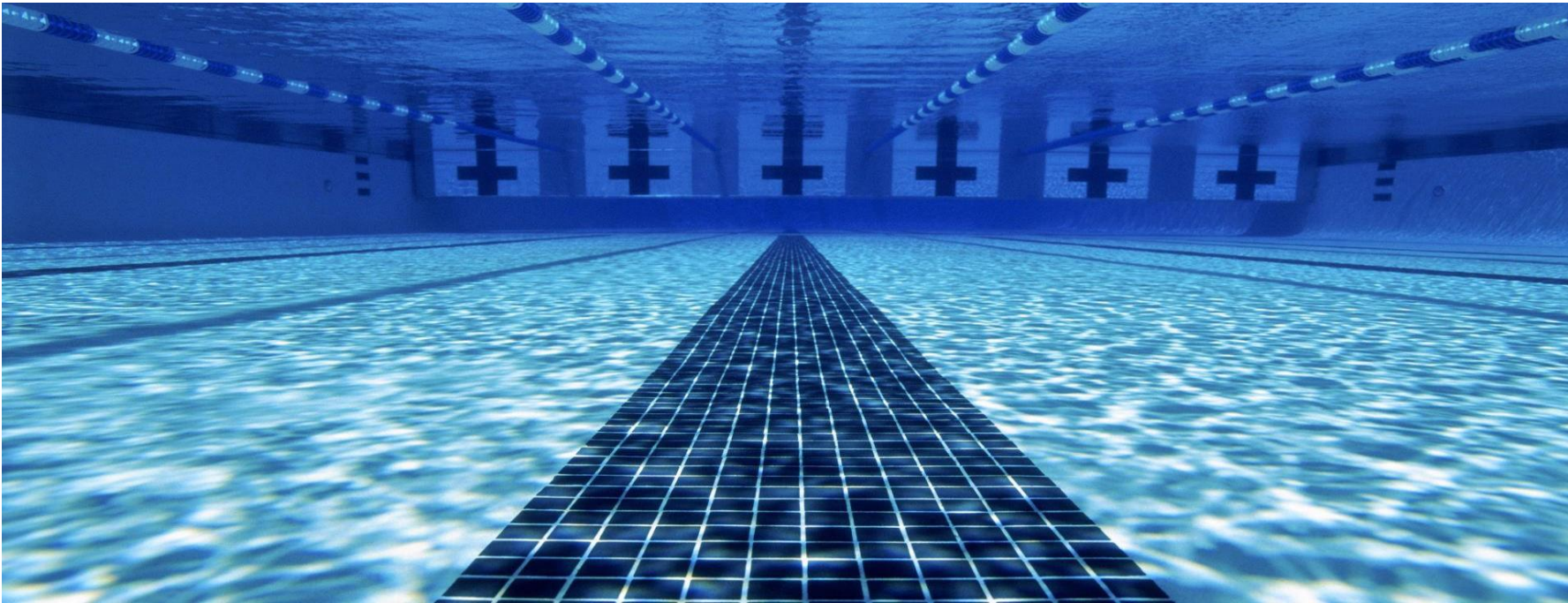
Transdisciplinary Evaluation Insights **Realist Development Evaluation Insights**
Horticulture Robust M&E Organizational Strategic learning model Evaluator Cognitive Bias Challenges
Navigating Causal Linkages Rational Approach Evaluations **Evaluating Climate Resilience**
Culturally Inclusive Evaluation **SA -Community Change Evaluation** Human Centred Design
Centering Victim Survivor Voices Refining program theory **Participatory Evaluation**
Systems Evaluations vs Others **Optimising School Program Evaluations** Evaluation &
Sustainable Finance **Man vs. Machine Approaches** Embedded Evaluation Insights
Scaling Impact Evidence Portal Examination **RCTs First Nations Culturally**
Responsive Evaluation Long-Term Evaluation in Complex Policy Areas Impact Measurement Approach
Reforms **ML in Evaluation** Evaluation to Transformation **Exploring First Nations**
Knowledge Systems Measuring Evaluation Capability Building **Evaluation Journey**
Mapping Reimagining Organization Learning **Asia Pacific Evaluator Network**
Learnings AES Mentor Mentee **AI for Qualitative Data Analysis** Evaluation vs. SIM
Qualitative Sensemaking

Conference Day – 3/3

Equity through Participation **Quasi Experimental Evaluation** Deciding Validated Tools
Development Evaluation Methods **Principles-Based Approach to First Nations**
Engagement Evaluation Journal of Australasia Mixed Methods **Value Proposition using**
Rubrics Social Impact Measurement Guiding Waypoints **WA-Kimberely - Development**
Evaluation Lessons : ACT Evidence and Evaluation Academy **GEDSI Baseline Research**
Evaluation Recommendations Place - based Evaluations **Values in Evaluation vs.**
Impact Assessment Program Implementation Tools **Multicultural Survivors Empowerment**
Prioritising Voices that Most Effected Navigating Ethical Dilemmas **ILM vs. ELM**
Qhub for LGBTIQ+ **Evaluative Judgements using Rubrics** Arts Industry Led
Approach **Trauma Informed AI Assessment Tool** Program Evaluation Fundamentals
Participatory Analysis Workshop **Tokenistic Evaluation Practices Outcomes Measures in Mental Health** **First**
Nations Leaderships in Education Excellence Palliative Care Evaluation Tools **Rapid**
Evaluations **Values in Evaluation Journey**

OK, TIME FOR SOME KEY TERMS IN EVALUATION

#1 VALUES



Our own values...

Who are we?

Perspectives

Histories

Backgrounds

Cultural norms

Religious or other beliefs

Political persuasions

Genders and sexual preferences

Interests

Lived experiences

= Biases/attitudes

This may influence:

WHAT we evaluate

HOW we evaluate

WHEN/WHERE we evaluate

WHAT we ask/hear/remember/report

Even WHY we want to evaluate in the first place

Other people's values...

Who are they?

Perspectives
Histories
Backgrounds
Cultural norms
Religious or other beliefs
Political persuasions
Genders and sexual preferences
Interests
Lived experiences

This may influence:

WHETHER they seek to be involved
HOW they may view you & evaluation
WHAT they may wish to discuss
HOW they communicate with you
WHEN/WHERE they are comfortable and open
WHAT they may tell you

Know your influences... a bit of who am I... ?



Rescuer
of Roxy



Husband
to Jess



Over-age
(yes,
seniors)
tennis
player

From
Melbourne

Father
of Lola



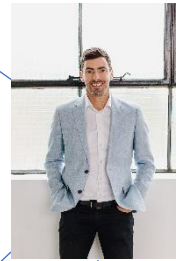
Recognised that our attitudes, views and perspectives can shift with our life course



Rescuer of Roxy



Husband to Jess



Recently became an Adelaidean



Father of Lola and Ned



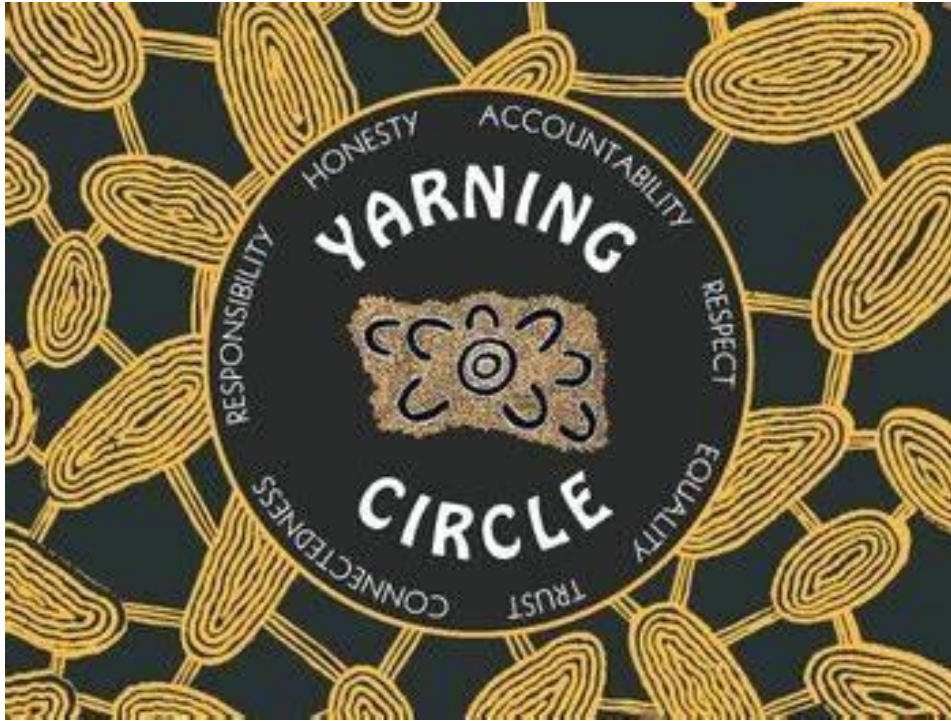
Tennis player



So with this in mind... now is a good chance to meet a few people... to better understand their values and histories



Or just to have a yarn...



Ok – it's easy - a 10 minute chat... in pairs or in small groups, make sure everybody in the room is included!

X

Name (role, organisation)

X

Years of interest/experience in the eval field

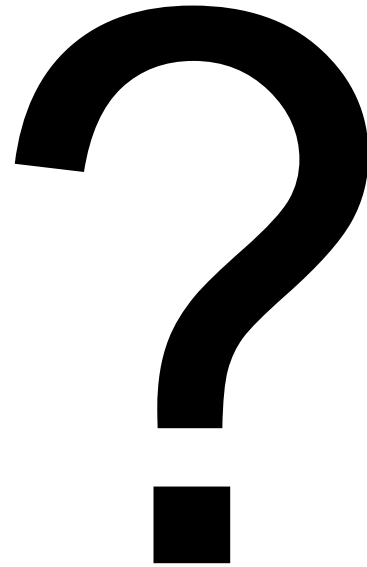
X

Main motivation to attend the Conference

X

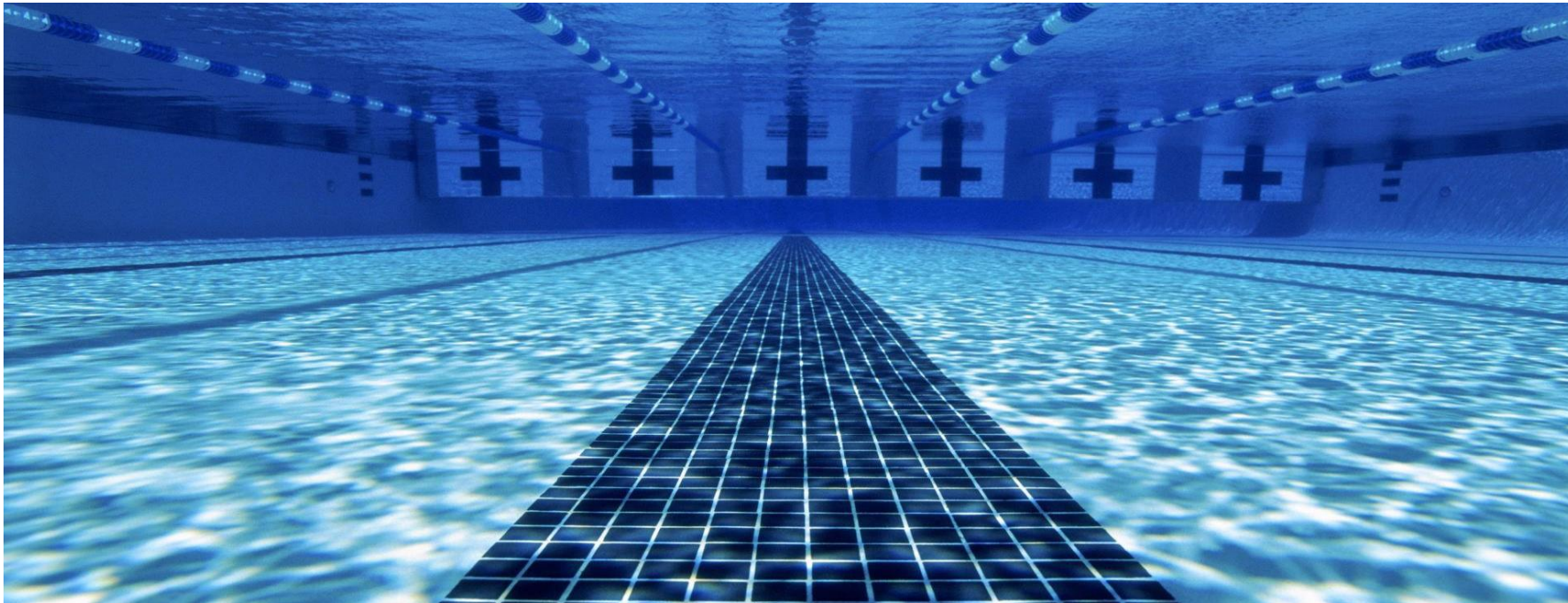
Values... about you/about them... something fun!

A reminder to add anything you like to the questions box, its time will come...



KEY TERMS IN EVALUATION

#2 MONITORING



Monitoring

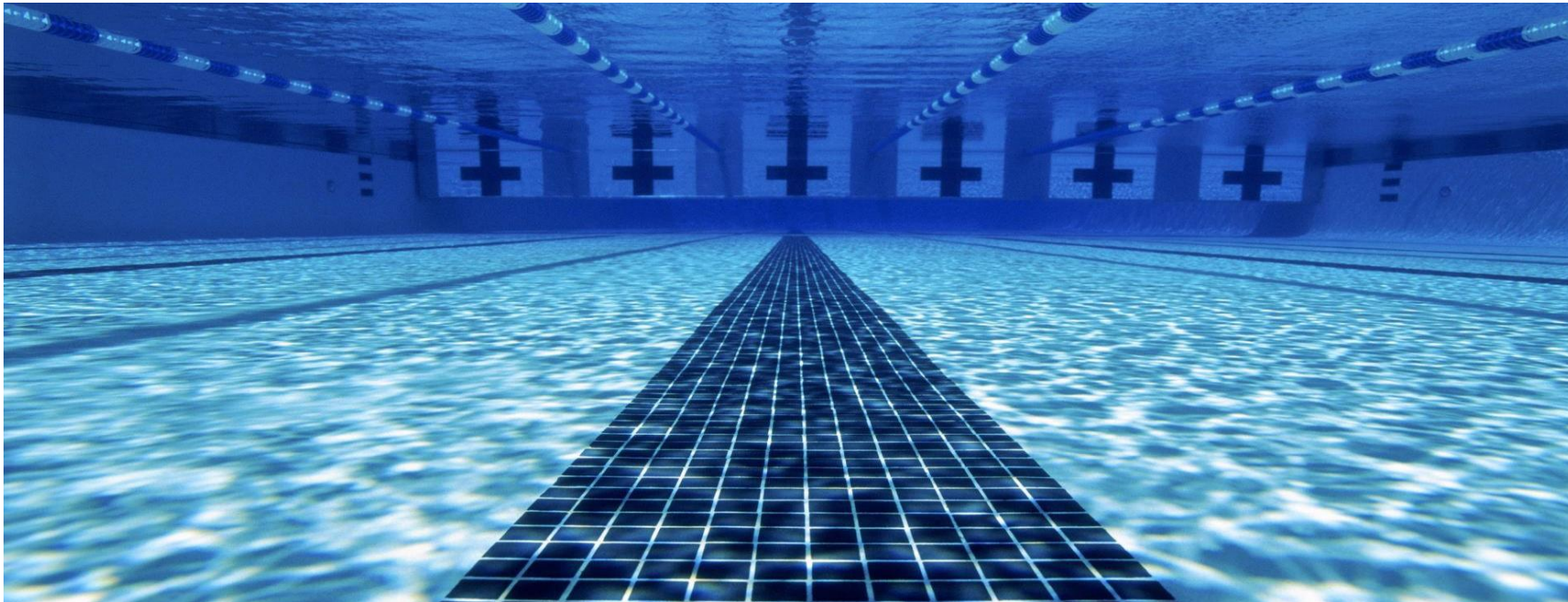
Monitoring

Monitoring is the process of ***collecting progress information over time***, with this data often used to understand what has been delivered (outputs), risks and other information to help with day-to-day management.

Usually not heavily focused on outcomes and impacts (effectiveness)

KEY TERMS IN EVALUATION

#3 EVALUATION



Evaluation

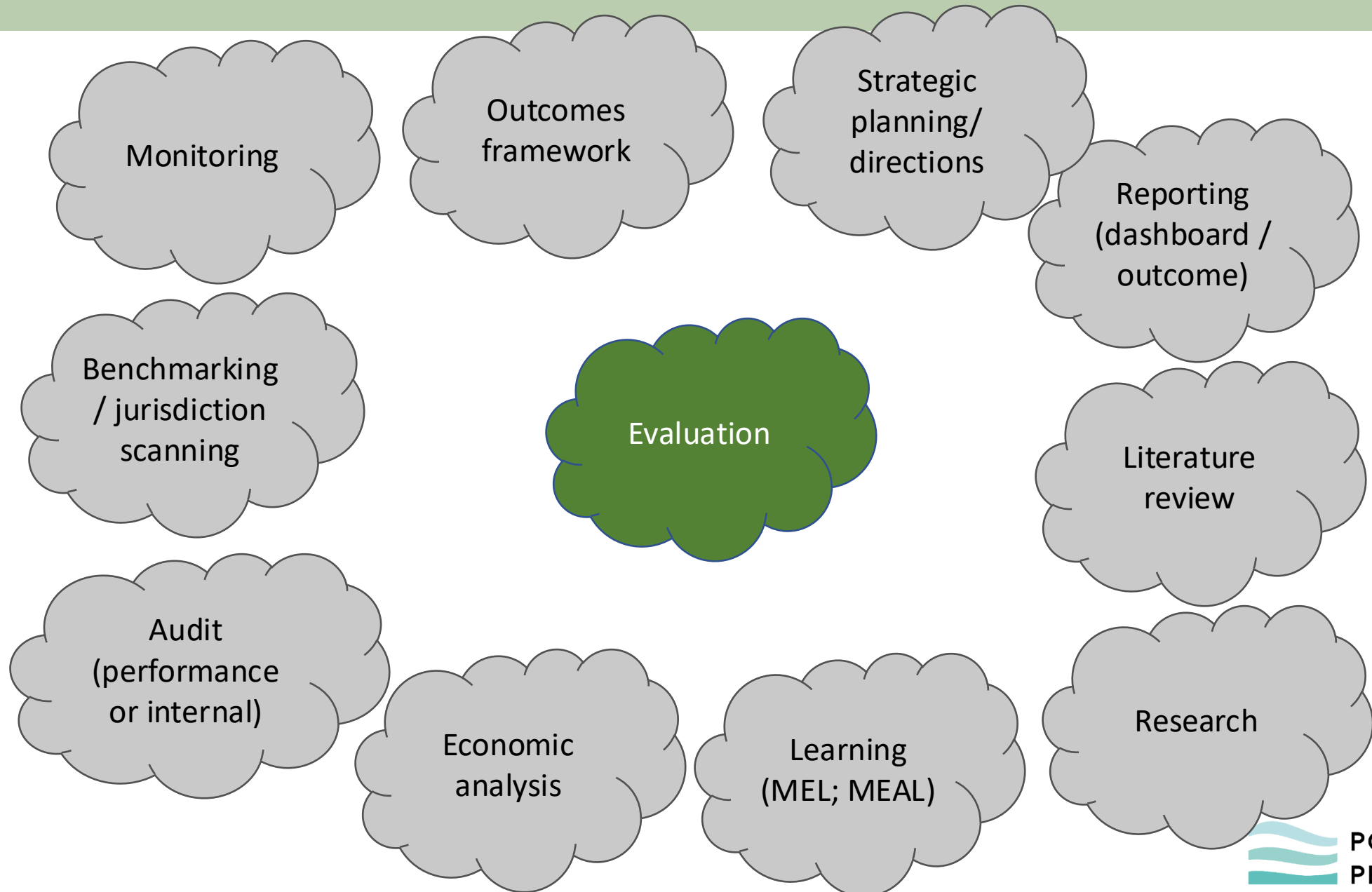
Evaluation

There are different approaches to doing evaluation projects, but generally...

Evaluation is the process of defining, collecting and analysing information and using this as the basis for drawing findings and recommendations for improvement.

*Evaluation may be a **verb** (e.g. I'm busy evaluating X)
or a **noun** (e.g. here's my evaluation of X)*

Meet some of evaluation's closest relatives!



A list of reasons why evaluation might be helpful

Evaluation can help to:

- Address questions about **current and emerging problems**
- Inform program and policy **planning** efforts
- **Monitor** program performance
- Provide timely **feedback** to decision makers to make changes when needed
- Increase **accountability** and **transparency**
- Reduce waste and enhance **efficiency**
- **Improve** programs and policies in a systematic manner
- Support major **decisions** about program reform, expansion, or termination
- Assess whether existing programs are still **needed or effective**
- Identify program implementation and outcome **failures and successes**
- Identify **innovative solutions** that work
- Inform the development of **new programs** where needed
- Examine the requirements for the transfer of promising programs to **new sites**
- **Share information** about effective practices across government programs and agencies

Source: An Evaluation Roadmap for A More Effective Government, available at: [AEA > Policy Advocacy > Effective Government Roadmap \(eval.org\)](#)

See also: Executive Office of the President: Office of Management and Budget (June 2021): Evidence-based Policymaking: Learning Agendas and Annual Evaluation Plans: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/M-21-27.pdf>

This may need a cultural change...

7.1 What is a culture of evaluation and learning?

A culture of evaluation and learning is one that places a high value on evaluation evidence and encourages its generation, dissemination and use (box 7.1). Some of the features of a culture of evaluation and learning are:

- a critical approach to policy and program management, including looking for better ways of doing things, being reflective, and incorporating 'lessons learned'
- accepting that many answers are not known and being prepared to experiment
- valuing results and evidence
- an organisational environment where it is safe to expose and learn from mistakes and engage in critical self-reflection
- a commitment to transparency, including the publication of evaluations
- leadership that reflects the above qualities.

Source: Productivity Commission (2020), Indigenous Evaluation Strategy, p.233
available at: <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/indigenous-evaluation#report>

The role of the evaluator

So, as our evaluator, you will be exposed to the dysfunctional inner workings of our organization. Most of us choose to ignore these as they make us feel uncomfortable. By extension, you will also be ignored most of the time. But when something is really important, it is your job to make us listen and see the truth. No matter how hard it is for us to hear.



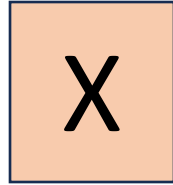
freshspectrum

The types of projects/work often done by evaluators

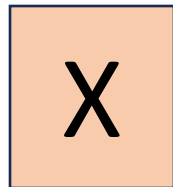
Evaluators primarily support the following types of activities:

- **M&E Planning:** Defining measures, systems, phasing and approaches for program monitoring and evaluation
- **Evaluation readiness review:** Projects to review available evidence and determine what can feasibly be evaluated, including when and how
- **Capability building:** Supporting organisations and individuals to build their evaluation skillsets and experiences
- **Early phase reviews:** Supporting early phase implementation via reflective practices
- **Mid-phase reviews:** Looking at implementation and emerging outcomes
- **Lapsing program evaluations:** Reviewing implementation and achievements toward the conclusion of the funded period with a view to adaptation, enhancement and re-funding
- **Post-implementation review:** Beyond the completion of a response, seeking to better understand the longer-term outcomes and impacts

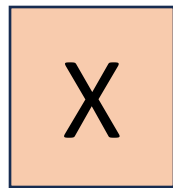
Networking exercise #2: reflections on evaluation



What sorts of things (projects/programs) tend to be evaluated and why?



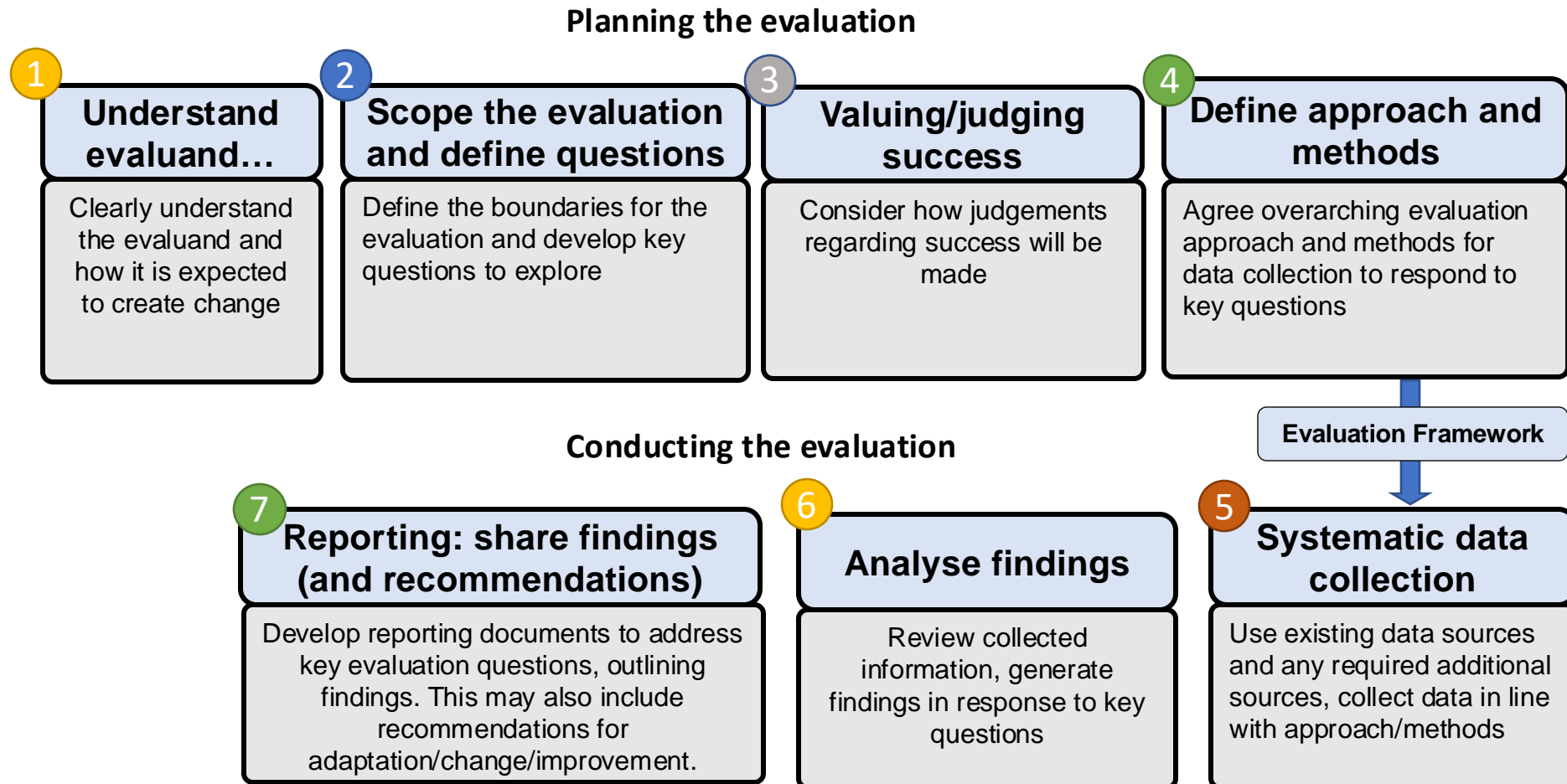
Is there anything in your context/knowledge area holding that is holding evaluation back?



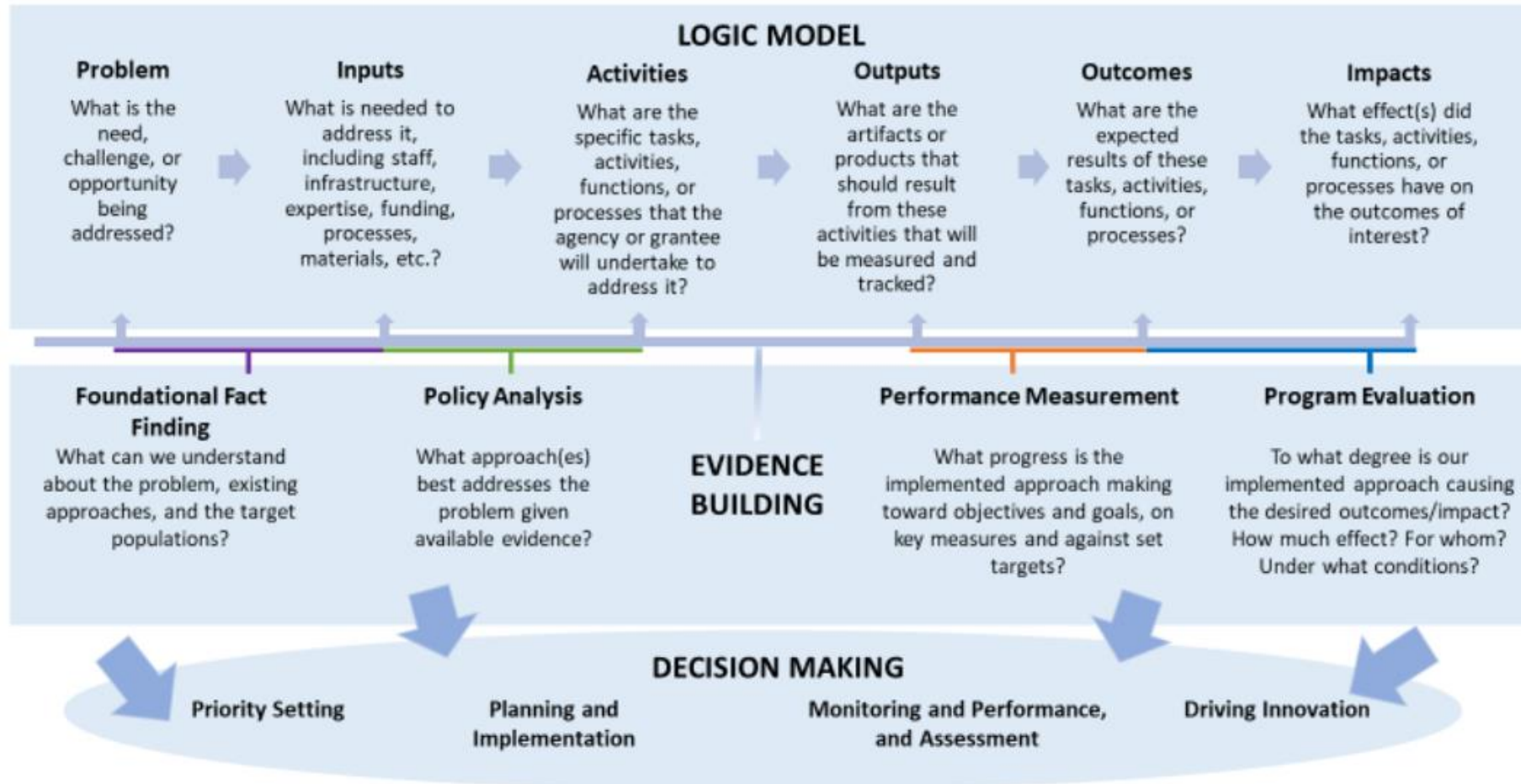
How can evaluation make the most difference?

10 minutes, so you can swap seats and chat with somebody new...

If you are involved in a standard evaluation project...



1. Program logic (a broader perspective)



2. Scoping the evaluation

Audience

Who is the evaluation report intended to inform? Consider primary intended users or the findings and other audiences.

Governance

What are the sign-off processes and timelines for the evaluation work?

Questions

What will the evaluation try to find out?

Needs

Assessment of the **need** for the program
(e.g. among target population(s), in various locations)

Appropriate-
ness

Assessment of program **design and theory**
(in meeting needs of target population, may be compared to other alternatives)

Efficiency

Assessment of program **processes and implementation**
(analysis of program delivery processes, achievements and reflections)

Effectiveness

Assessment of program **outcome/impact**
(testing achievements/changes)

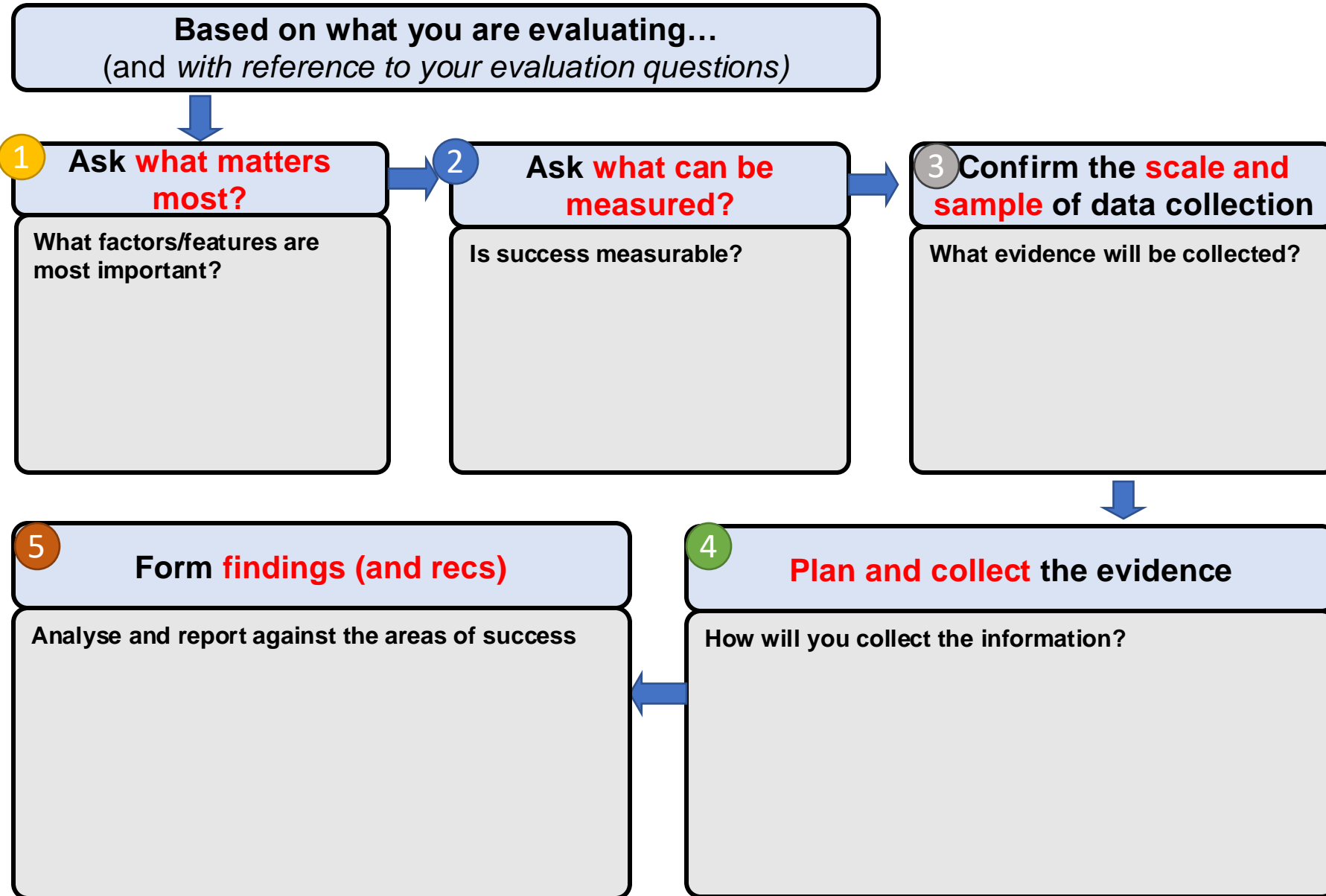
Cost-benefit

Assessment of **program cost and efficiency**
(e.g. financial analysis, (social) return on investment, cost-benefit)

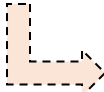
Stakeholders

Who needs to be involved in the evaluation? What is the best way to involve different stakeholders? When is the best time to engage each group? Any ethical considerations?

3. Work out what matters in judging success



4. Decide on the evaluation approach

Needs analysis	Undertaking preliminary research to define needs among the target population
Co-design	Working closely with program designers and beneficiaries on the design of effective policies
Monitoring and evaluation (and learning) or outcomes framework	Defining measures, indicators, targets, data collection approaches for a program
Developmental evaluation (or real-time evaluation)	Hands-on approaches to help evaluate programs that are changing over time, with the evaluator playing the role of 'critical friend' as programs are shaped and re-shaped
Implementation or process evaluation	With limited focus on outcomes, analysing the implementation of a given program
Theory-based evaluation	Assessing the extent to which a program was implemented as intended and achieved its objectives
 Realist evaluation	Considering what works, for whom, in what circumstances and why (or why not)

4. Common evaluation approaches

Process-outcomes evaluation

Looking at implementation activities and associated outcomes achieved

Randomised control trials (RCT) or experimental approaches

Treatment and control groups, selected randomly, to promote counter-factual analysis

Non-equivalent group designs (aka quasi-experimental designs)

As above, but with groups not selected randomly

4. Agree on methods for data collection

Data collection methods	Key considerations
Interviews / focus groups	Sample / scale / saturation Structured / semi-structured / conversational
Observation	Role of evaluator / setting / generalisability of findings
Case studies	Sites / sample / focus / cost / generalisability of findings
Surveys	Closed or open questions, response options, delivery mode
Benchmarking / jurisdiction scans	Selection of measures and comparator data points
Financial analysis / cost-benefit / cost-effectiveness analysis	Robustness of assumptions / cost relative to alternatives

4. Write up an evaluation framework

- Evaluation frameworks/strategies/plans conclude the planning process and detail the major elements of the evaluation approach.
- The key evaluation questions are critical.

Summary of the evaluand (program logic and description)

Scope of work to be completed (client needs)

Key questions to be investigated

Stakeholders and engagement methods

Data collection approach and data sources

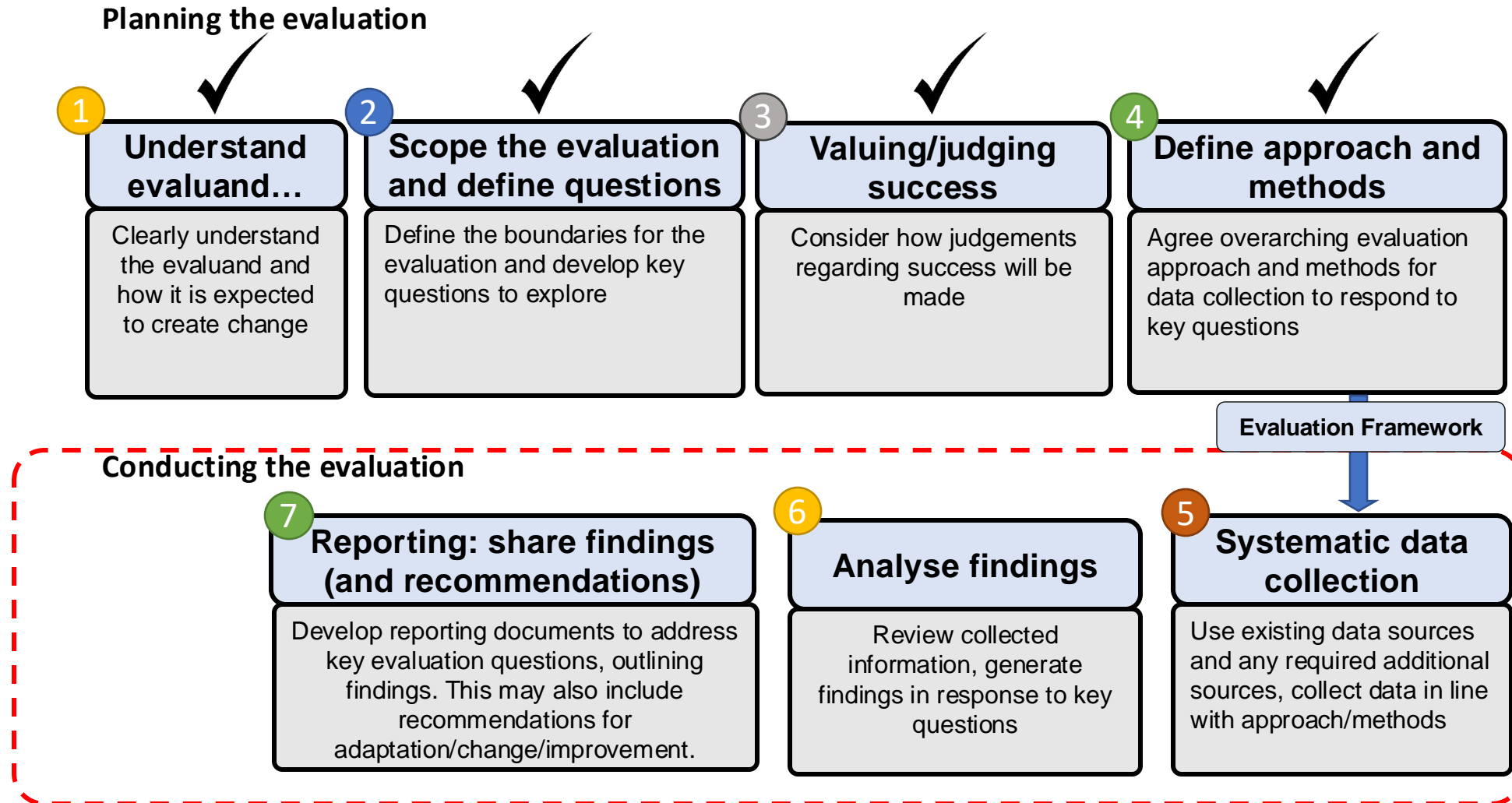
Approach to making value judgments

Timeframes and milestones

Deliverables

Ethical dimensions / project management any other elements?

DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, REPORTING



Reporting #1



Reporting #2

THE PROBLEMS OF EVALUATION



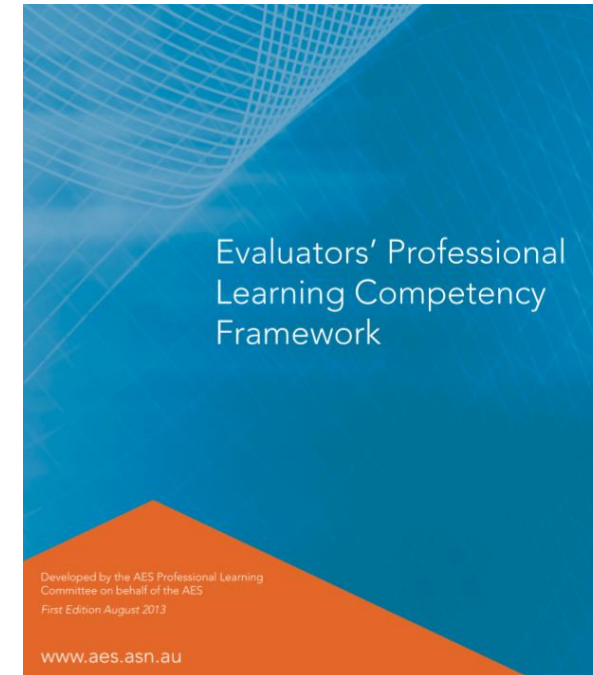
WHERE YOU CAN LEARN MORE



AES guidance: competencies

AES Professional Learning Competency Framework

- Evaluative attitude and professional practice
- Evaluation theory
- Culture, stakeholders and context
- Research methods and systematic inquiry
- Project management
- Interpersonal skills
- Evaluation activities



<https://www.aes.asn.au/evaluator-competencies>

AES guidance: ethical conduct

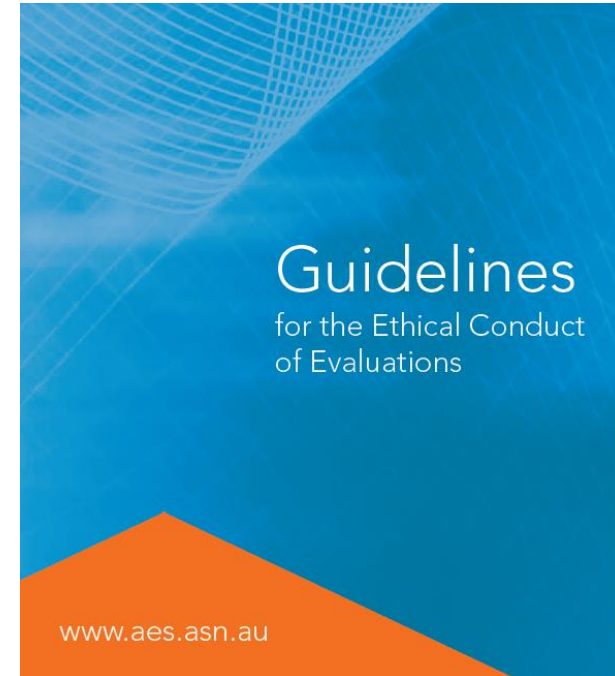
AES guidelines for the ethical conduct of evaluations

- Commissioning and preparing for an evaluation
- Conducting an evaluation
- Reporting the results of an evaluation

AES code of ethics

See also:

- AIATSIS Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies
- NHMRC - Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders 2018



Source: AES (2018), Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations:
<https://www.aes.asn.au/ethical-guidelines>

AES guidance: cultural safety

AES First Nations Cultural Safety Framework

An important resource for culturally safe evaluation theory, practice and use.

Resource covers:

- The principles of culturally safe evaluations
- Practical guidance on the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the evaluation process
- Practical guidance on achieving culturally safe evaluation in all phases of the process
- Outcomes that can be achieved through full and consistent implementation of the Framework.



Source: AES (2021), First Nations Cultural Safety Framework:

https://www.aes.asn.au/images/AES_FirstNations_Cultural_Framework_finalWEB_final.pdf?type=file

Information sources

1. AES Conferences (glad you are here!)
2. Australian evaluation society website (aes.asn.au)
 - Evaluation journal of Australasia
 - List of conferences
 - Links to evaluation resources
 - The consultants directory
 - Evaluation tenders
 - Job vacancies
 - Calendar of events
 - Special interest groups
 - Emails (e.g. blog)

See also:

- American evaluation society (eval.org)
- Canadian evaluation society (evaluationcanada.ca)

Information sources

3. International journals (free for AES members):

- Evaluation
- Evaluation review
- Journal of mixed methods research
- Qualitative research
- Evaluation and the health professions
- AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples

See also:

- New directions for evaluation
- American journal of evaluation

4. Centre for program evaluation at the University of Melbourne

- Defined units
- Master of evaluation program
- P.H.D in evaluation

5. Attend evaluation training sessions

- AES workshops on subjects of interest
- Evaluation training programs run by consultancies

Information sources

6. International evaluation resources:

- Better evaluation (www.betterevaluation.org)
- Magenta Book - UK Treasury guidance on evaluation (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-magenta-book>)
- Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation, UK Evaluation Society: (<https://www.evaluation.org.uk/app/uploads/2019/04/UK-Evaluation-Society-Guidelines-for-Good-Practice-in-Evaluation.pdf>)
- Research methods knowledge base - Trochim (www.socialresearchmethods.net)
- World Bank: Independent evaluation group (<https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/>)

7. Government evaluation resources:

- NSW Evaluation Toolkit: <https://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/tools-and-resources/>
- WA Program Evaluation Guide: <https://www.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-01/evaluation-guide.pdf>
- CW Department of Finance: [Evaluation in the Commonwealth \(RMG 130\) | Department of Finance](#)
- NT Government: <https://treasury.nt.gov.au/df/financial-management-group/program-evaluation-unit>

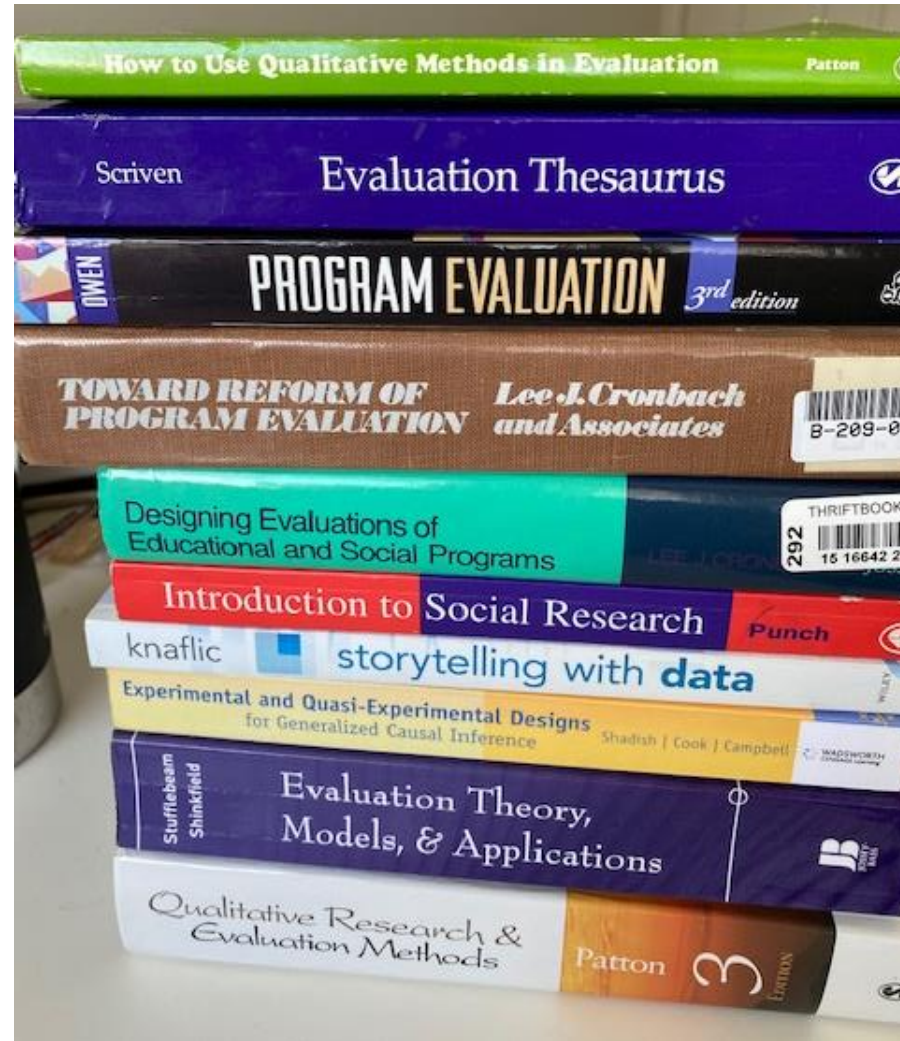
Information sources

8. Textbooks/related resources... a few other recommendations:

Alkin, Marvin (2012), *Evaluation Roots (2nd Ed)*.

Bamburger, Rugh, Mabry (2014, 2nd ed.), *RealWorld Evaluation: Working Under Budget, Time, Data and Political Constraints*.

Weiss, Carol H. (1997, 2nd edition), *Evaluation*.



THE QUESTIONS BOX!!!???



“Bilvadu njan-warr (see you soon)”

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