



# Talking about evaluation

*Evaluation is a type of critical thinking. It involves systematically collecting, analyzing and using information to enhance learning and decision making.*

## Why invest in evaluation?

Evaluation offers a range of powerful tools to make judgments about the value of any set of procedures, activities, strategies, projects, policies, programs, organisations or systems.

### The benefits of evaluation include:

- It provides a transparent mechanism for accountability for business structures (including government, NGOs, and community organisations) by assisting with monitoring progress and meeting reporting requirements.
- It enables good governance, sound decision-making and smart resource allocation.
- It encourages evidence based policy and practice by assessing data from a range of sources.
- It improves program and policy design by 'starting with the end in mind' resulting in clearly defined intended outcomes and ensuring alignment with organisational activities.
- It supports best practice and integrates well when embedded with stakeholder engagement, strategic planning, project management and continuous improvement approaches.
- It can clearly demonstrate what's been happening, what works and doesn't work for whom, in what context and why.
- It can empower people whose voice might otherwise not be heard by including them in evaluation activities and giving them a say about decisions/services that affect their lives.

## You don't have to go it alone

The Australasian Evaluation Society (AES) offers a wealth of evaluation resources to get your organisation started or improve your approach to evaluation, including:

- a directory of evaluation consultants - [more info](#)
- access to professional development and networks - [more info](#)
- guidelines for ethical conduct in evaluation - [more info](#)
- a peer reviewed evaluation journal - [more info](#)
- evaluator competency framework - [more info](#)
- an international evaluation conference - [more info](#)