

# Hybrid evaluation in science organisations: *a shared experience*

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# AgResearch

Government owned  
Science Institute: CRI

Focus on pastoral science,  
agri-food and agri-  
technology

Projects per year: ~700

Staff numbers: ~680

Regional campuses: 4



# CSIRO

Australian Government  
corporate entity

Focus on Australia's  
national challenges across  
11 portfolios including  
Agriculture & Food (pre &  
post farm gate)

Projects per year: ~1500 A&F

Staff numbers: ~1000 A&F

Sites: 12

# Why work together?



Common needs

Common drivers

Common pathways

Shared learnings

Collaborative practice

Support

Optimised effort

Optimised impact

Collegiality

# Why utilise hybrid forms of evaluation in our science organisations?

Utilise and develop internal capability

Legacy and sustainability

Engaging commitment to, and ownership of impact



# CSIRO: Impact Champions

- Identification of impact champions via EOI process and through research directors
  - Champions time funded from core funds in business unit
  - Looking for staff keen to broaden skill set and work across teams
- 101 monitoring & evaluation training in house (1 day) + workshop coaching
- Impact champion training as part of broader team workshops
  - Stakeholder mapping
  - Program logic
  - M&E Plans
- Support a portfolio of 40 impact focus areas with M&E (with support)
- Development of a community of practice
  - Regular one-on-one coaching; 3 month face to face

# Impact champion's reflection

CSIRO Agriculture & Food has 7 Impact champions

*"this role of impact champion has helped me to understand personally how to design projects to have greater impact; and I'm gaining more respect from colleagues as I work with them do the same"*

*"I wasn't sure about this whole impact thing at first, but now I can see scientists do need support to navigate this - because once they were only judged on publications alone"*

*"working through impact pathway and stakeholder mapping has helped our whole group better articulate the outcomes we're seeing from our work and design what we want to evaluate in the future - it's helped us get on the same page across a diverse range of skill sets"*

## Implementation insights

Champions are not always the people you'd suspect - look to build diversity and opportunities for earlier career staff

Recognition and rewarding champions is critical to build their confidence and the profile of their role

Ongoing coaching, mentoring, support is essential - as teams evolve, so does the champion's role

Without leadership from 'the top' for evaluation, you'll be on a treadmill - executive champions are essential

# AgResearch Evaluation Champions

- Evaluation champions identified through their science team leaders
  - Champions time funded within programme
  - Looking for good people skills, keenness to learn and be engaged
- ‘101’ evaluation training with external evaluator (1 day)
- Evaluation champion training (2 days)
  - Stakeholder identification
  - Programme logic
  - Evaluation Plans
  - Facilitation skills
- Coached through first few participatory workshops
- Community of practice
  - Ongoing coaching and support
  - Regular team reflections via video conference

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PLUS

5

PLUS

3...

PLUS CRITICAL FRIENDS...



## A champions insights



## Implementation insights

Without leadership from 'the top' for evaluation, you'll be on a treadmill - executive champions are essential

Cultural change includes having sustained and engaged support from management.

Ongoing coaching, mentoring, support is essential - as teams evolve, so does the champion's role

Strategies for reach into diverse organisations are essential.



## Implementation insights

Champions are not always the people you'd suspect - look to build diversity and opportunities for earlier career staff

Champions time must be resourced

Recognition and rewarding champions is critical to build their confidence and the profile of their role

Champions need ways to support and connect with each other.

We need to keep asking ourselves, 'what is it that keeps our champions engaged' - how are they rewarded.



A framed sign is mounted on a grey stone wall. The sign has a white border and a black center with white text. To the right of the sign, there is a decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, semi-transparent green triangles of various shades, creating a modern, geometric design.

**GIVE A MAN  
A FISH AND YOU  
FEED HIM FOR A DAY;  
TEACH A MAN  
TO FISH AND  
YOU FEED HIM  
FOR A LIFETIME.**

The shared journey

**IN A SHARED FISH,  
THERE ARE NO BONES**

DEMOCRITUS