



aes17

International
Evaluation Conference

3-7 September 2017 Canberra | Australia

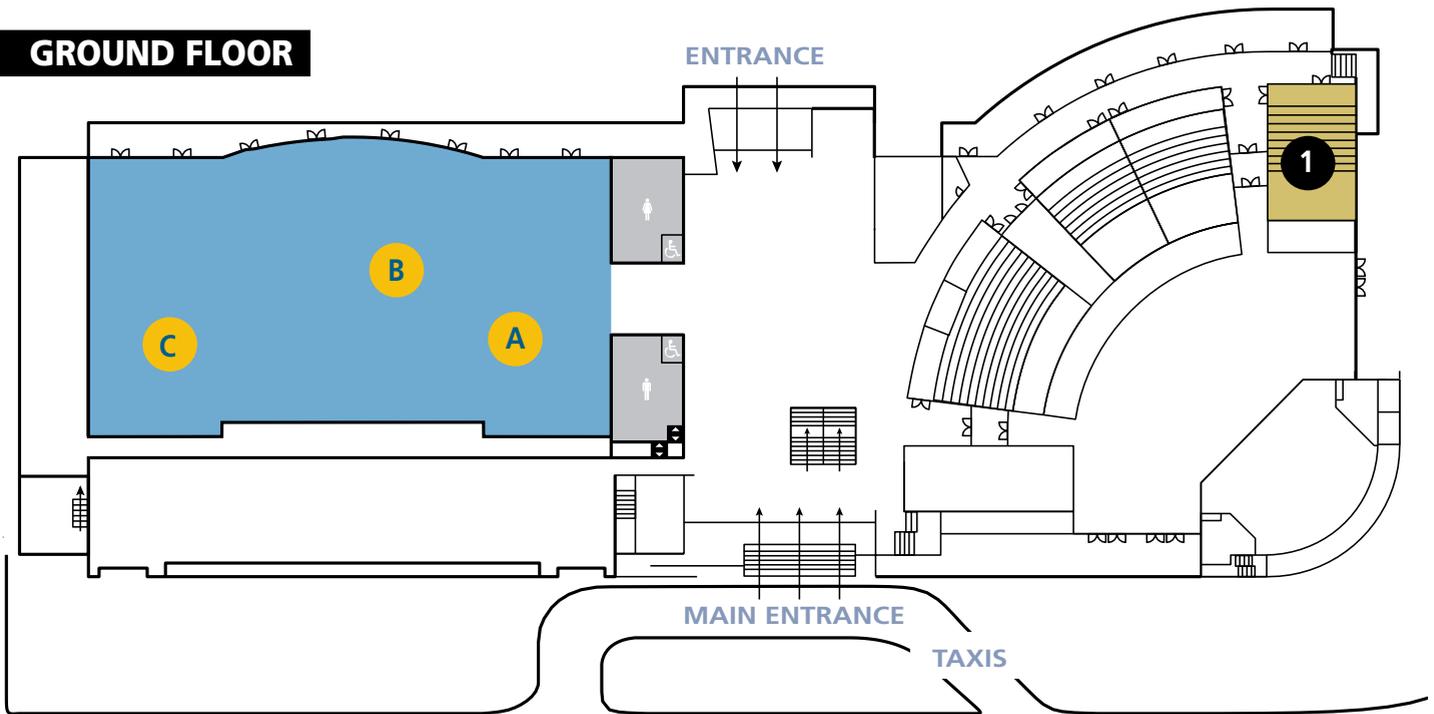
Evaluation Capital

Program and abstract book



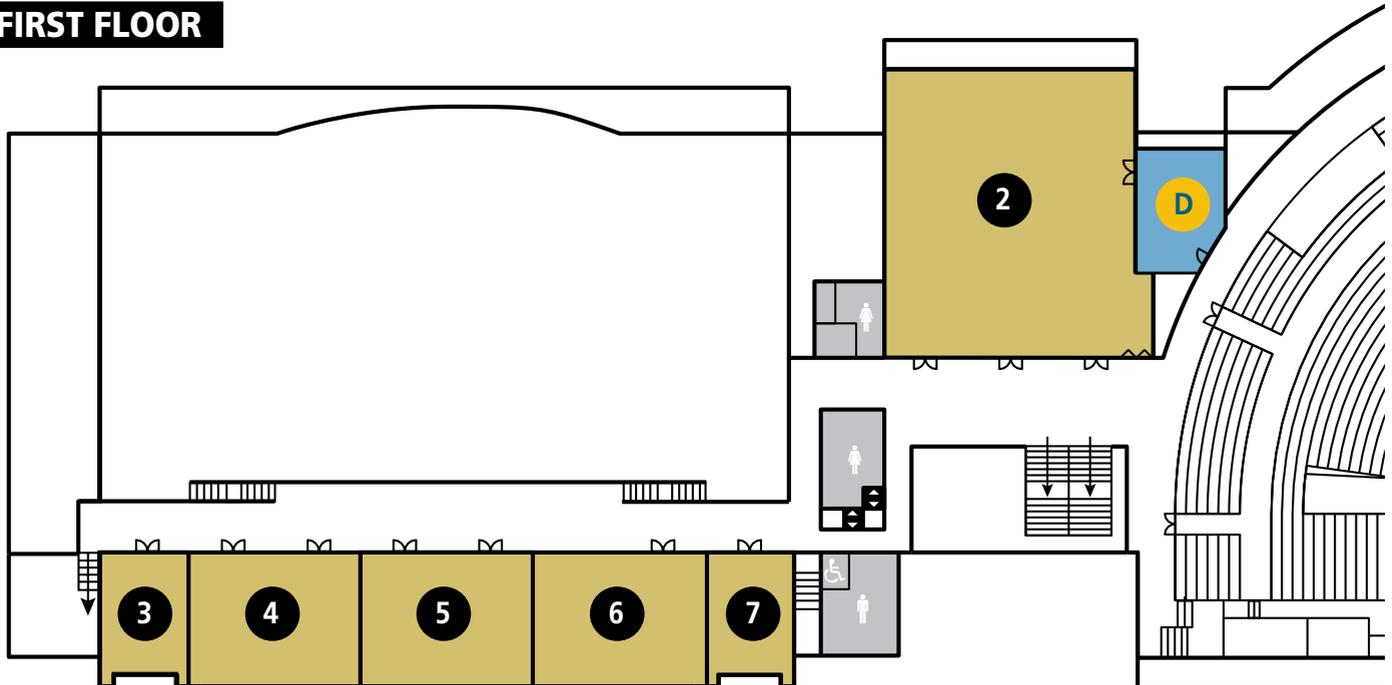
VENUE MAP

GROUND FLOOR



- A** Registration/information desk
- C** MEERQAT Chill Out Area
- B** Exhibition/posters/meal breaks
Refreshments sponsored by ACIL Allen
- 1** Sutherland Theatrette

FIRST FLOOR



- D** Speaker preparation room
(Executive Room)
Sponsored by Grosvenor Management Consulting
- 2** Ballroom (Plenary)
- 5** Murray Room
- 3** Derwent Room
- 6** Swan Room
- 7** Torrens Room
- 4** Fitzroy Room

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CONFERENCE SUPPORTERS

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aes 17

International **Evaluation** Conference

Pre-conference workshops 3 September

Conference 4–6 September

Post-conference workshops 7 September 2017

Canberra | Australia

Dear Colleagues

Evaluation Capital

Australia's capital Canberra, an Aboriginal word for 'meeting place' is the where delegates will meet this year for the AES annual international conference.

Known also as the 'bush capital', the natural and built environment offers delegates everything from early morning walks around Lake Burley Griffin, a vibrant café-culture within a five kilometre radius of the National Convention Centre, more restaurants per head of population than any other Australian city, and a litany of national institutions from the National Botanic Gardens, the National Museum, the National Library, the National Abortorium, and of course new and old Parliament House, just to name a few. The conference and social program will give you a taster of many of these, so we hope you will take the opportunity to enjoy the national capital in the arguably the best season of the year—springtime.

While 'hinting' at the national capital location, the 2017 conference theme *Evaluation Capital* captures two important, but often neglected ideas in evaluation.

First, evaluation is a durable asset for sound governance. That is, longevity and permanence should be built into our evaluation systems because societies with more evaluation capital are better off than those with less. The second idea concerns the inherently political nature of evaluation, and that evaluation commissioners and practitioners must be sensitive to the effect of politics when making their evaluative choices.

A very special welcome to our distinguished keynote speakers, international delegates, including presidents from other evaluation associations and, of course, all the presenters who will bring a wealth of knowledge and thought-provoking discussion to this year's conference theme. The program reflects diversity and depth across the different subthemes, and a smorgasbord of session types. The final Great Debate panel discussion is a must for all conference delegates!

We would like to thank our committee members and other volunteers who have contributed to organising this event, but in particular our AES staff, Bill Wallace and Michelle Wightwick, whose dedication and commitment has led to the stimulating program we'll be experiencing together. Over coming days, we look forward to hearing from you as we explore the multilayered nature of evaluation capital, and importantly, so we can help to optimize your conference experience.



Julie Elliott
Conference Convenor



Susan Garner
Program Chair



Michelle Wightwick
Conference Manager



Bill Wallace
Conference Director



The Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) is an independent unit within Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose work contributes to evidence and debate about aid effectiveness.

ODE's work spans three key areas:

- It quality assures the department's internal aid performance assessment systems.
- It supports, conducts and reviews program-level evaluations of Australian aid investments.
- Finally, it conducts strategic-level evaluations with a policy or thematic focus.

ODE publishes all of its evaluations. For more information, visit our website—search ODE@DFAT

ODE received the AES Award for Excellence in Evaluation (Public Sector) in 2014 and 2016.

conference information

Dates

Pre- and post-conference workshops

Sunday 3 and Thursday 7 September 2017

Conference

Monday 4 to Wednesday 6 September 2017

Registration Desk

Pre- and post-conference workshops

Location:

Novotel Canberra, 64 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra

Registration times:

Sunday 3 September 8:00am to 2:00pm

Thursday 7 September 8:00am to 2:00pm

Conference

Location:

Exhibition Hall (Ground Floor), National Convention Centre
31 Constitution Avenue, Canberra

Registration times:

Monday 4 September 7:30am to 4:00pm

Tuesday 5 September 7:30am to 4:00pm

Wednesday 6 September 7:30am to 3:00pm

Speaker preparation room

Sponsored by Grosvenor Management Consulting

Location: Executive Room (Level 1), National Convention Centre, 31 Constitution Avenue, Canberra

This room will be available for all presenters to upload their presentations with the assistance of the audio visual technician. The technician will be in attendance during the below times.

Speaker preparation room times

Monday 4 September 7:30am to 4:00pm

Tuesday 5 September 7:30am to 3:00pm

Wednesday 6 September 7:30am to 2:00pm

All presenters are required to visit the speaker preparation room and provide their presentation in MS PowerPoint format, aspect ratio 16:9, on a USB drive to the technician at least two hours prior to the commencement of their session (except for early morning sessions in which case you should supply your presentation from 7:30am). This will ensure that the technician has met with all presenters and that they are fully aware of your presentation requirements. It is our objective that presentations operate as smoothly as possible.

Conference managers

The 2017 Australasian Evaluation Society International Conference is managed by:

Australasian Evaluation Society Ltd
PO Box 476, Carlton South, Victoria, 3053, Australia
Email: conference@aes.asn.au

Program changes and message board

All program changes made and messages received during the conference will be placed on the Message and Program Changes board. To collect or leave a message, visit the Registration Desk during opening hours.

Instant response survey and conference evaluation

Please help improve this year's conference evaluation by telling us what you think of conference presentations that you attend. Simply go to the online conference program, open the presentation you have attended, and instant response feedback.

The online program can be found at:

Mobile devices: <https://aes17.sched.com/mobile>

Desktop browser: <https://aes17.sched.com/>

Jen Thompson is evaluating this year's conference. Be aware that Jen may approach you to participate. We encourage delegates to contribute to this important evaluation. It's exciting that delegates will have the opportunity to be part of an evaluation living within an evaluation conference.

A note on phones and time

As a courtesy to fellow delegates and speakers, please ensure your mobile phones are silent during conference sessions and that you are seated before the advertised start time for each session. Entry doors will be closed at that time.

Twitter #aes17CBR

The hashtag for the conference is **#aes17CBR**, for those who wish to participate in social media interactions. Twitter will be used throughout the conference for just-in-time information and delegates are encouraged to comment and interact. Follow us **@AESociety**.

Facebook facebook.com/evalsociety

The Facebook page has been set up to enable more detailed questions and comments and to enable delegates to network with others during the event. This will operate for a short period following the conference as well.

Wifi Internet at the venue

Complimentary wireless internet is available at the National Convention Centre for delegates. WiFi access lasts for 3 hours continuous access, 4 times per day. To log in:

1. Select 'NCC Wireless' from the available networks
2. Open your preferred web browser
3. The login page should open automatically, if it does not appear type portal.reivernet.com into the URL field.
4. Click 'Select' under 'Public Areas' option.
5. On next page, scroll down and click 'Connect'.

Conference program mobile web application

The current version of aes17 Conference program and abstracts is available as a web application for mobile devices: <https://aes17.sched.com/mobile>

The mobile web app stores the program data locally on your phone or tablet for offline access too. Please sign into the web app on all your devices so that you can change and view your own conference schedule.

Catering

All catering breaks will be served amongst the exhibition, located in the Exhibition Hall.

Breaks sponsored by ACIL Allen Consulting

Special dietary requirements

If you have advised us of special dietary requirements, please speak to a member of the venue staff during catering breaks. Catering staff have a full list of delegates with special dietary requirements.

Name badges

All participants will receive a name badge and lanyard upon registration. Name badges are required at all times for identification purposes and admission to sessions, exhibition, and catering breaks.

Urbis Barista Bar

Come and visit the Urbis Barista Bar, located in the Exhibition Hall. During meal breaks, trained baristas will have your next coffee readily available to help you stay energised and engaged.

Sponsored by Urbis

Privacy

The AES respects your right to the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information. We observe and comply with all relevant government legislation, regulations and industry codes of practice. Information collected in respect of proposed participation in any aspect of the Conference will be used for the purposes of planning and conduct of the Conference and may also be provided to the organising body or to the organisers of future Australasian Evaluation Society International Conferences.

Delegate lists

The delegate list, available on request to conference@aes.asn.au, contains the name, organisation, and region of all registered delegates who have given permission for their details to be included. The AES has excluded delegates who have withheld permission to publish their details, in accordance with the Privacy Act.

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	Caroline Tomiczek Associate Director 02 8233 9628 0402 135 135 ctomiczek@urbis.com.au
	Joanna Farmer Senior Consultant 03 8683 4989 0426 108 033 jfarmer@urbis.com.au

Photography and filming

The conference organisers may photograph and film onsite during the conference. The images and footage may be used for post-conference reports, case studies, marketing collateral and supplied to industry media if requested. If you do not wish for your photo to be taken or to appear in any video footage, please raise your hand in front of the photographer.

Smoking policy

The ACT imposes a strict no smoking policy in venues, restaurant, bars and shopping centres in Canberra. The Novotel and NCC are smoke free facilities. No indoor smoking areas are provided and delegates should move well outside when smoking.

Personal property

Please take good care of your personal belongings. Do not leave them unattended. The Novotel, NCC and organisers will not be responsible for any loss or damage to your personal properties.

Disclaimer

The program is correct at the time of publishing. The AES reserves the right to cancel, delete, modify or alter items from the program or to delete, modify or alter any aspect

of the Conference timetabling and delivery at their sole discretion and without notice. Neither the host organisation nor the meeting organisers or their contractors will accept any liability for any loss or inconvenience caused to any party consequent to such changes.

The views and opinions expressed at the Conference are those of the presenters and participants and are not necessarily endorsed by the Australasian Evaluation Society (AES).

Transport

The NCC is located in the Canberra CBD.

Public transport—is operated by Transport Canberra providing buses to most areas of the city. Information and timetables available at: transport.act.gov.au
Fares/tickets: transport.act.gov.au/myway-and-fares

Taxis—a range of taxi services operate from taxi ranks across the city. To book a cab, phone one of the services listed at: visitcanberra.com.au/getting-around/taxis-and-ride-sharing

Canberra Airport transfers—a shuttle runs between the airport and the National Convention Centre (\$12)
canberraairport.com.au/travellers/parking-transport/buses-and-coaches-2

Paid public car park National Convention Centre
nccc.com.au/convention-centre-parking



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- ▶ **Evaluate** your policy or program, using appropriate and ethical approaches focused on real-world outcomes.
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keynote & invited speakers



Richard Weston

Chief Executive Officer, Healing Foundation

Richard Weston is a descendant of the Meriam people of the Torres Strait. For the past six years, he has served as Chief Executive Officer of the Healing Foundation, Board Member of Families Australia and member of the Commonwealth Government's Independent Advisory Council on Redress for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.

The Healing Foundation is a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation that partners with communities to address the ongoing trauma cause. The organisation has supported more than 135 culturally strong, community led Indigenous healing projects around Australia, and over 19,600 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, women and men have participated in healing activities. About 94% of participants have reported improvements in their social and emotional wellbeing.

Prior to being CEO of the Healing Foundation, Richard was CEO of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service and prior to that was CEO of Maari Ma Health in far west NSW based in Broken Hill. Under his leadership, Maari Ma won several health awards, including five NSW awards and a national award.



Dugan Fraser

Program Director, RAITH Foundation, South Africa

Dugan Fraser is Program Director of the RAITH Foundation—a privately funded social change organisation, which finances organisations working for social justice in South Africa. Dugan leads the Foundation's strategy, implementation and evaluation work. The Foundation believes empowering civil society actors will help South Africa overcome systemic injustice and unfairness and become the fair, just society envisioned by the Constitution. It uses evaluation to share and document lessons about how to accelerate systemic change.

Before joining the RAITH Foundation, Dugan worked in the South African public service. He helped develop South Africa's Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System. He designed and implemented large-scale systems to monitor and evaluate land reform, social development and public service governance. Dugan is also the Chairperson of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association.

Dugan believes evaluation can help deepen democracy and create stronger institutions. But to shift 'big systems', he believes the evaluation profession needs to engage with the interplay of political strangeness, policy ambitions, and institutional capacity to implement and learn. He also reflects on how evaluators can explain their value-add in a noisy market place of ideas and fashions.



Sandra Mathison

Professor of Education; University of British Columbia and Executive Director, Institute for Public Education – BC, Canada

Sandra Mathison's research focuses on educational evaluation and especially on the potential and limits of evaluation to support democratic ideals and promote justice in education. Sandra's research focuses in large part on the intended and unintended consequences of government mandated high stakes testing on teachers, students and quality of education. She has conducted national large- and small-scale evaluations of K-12, post-secondary, and informal educational programs and curricula; published articles in the leading evaluation journals; and edited and authored a number of books. She is editor of the *Encyclopedia of Evaluation*, co-editor (with E. Wayne Ross) of *Defending Public Schools: The Nature and Limits of Standards Based Reform and Assessment* and *Battleground Schools*. She is co-author (with Melissa Freeman) of *Researching Children's Experiences*. She was Editor-in-Chief of *New Directions for Evaluation* and is currently co-editor of *Critical Education* and a member of the Institute for Critical Education Studies. Sandra is the Executive Director of the Institute for Public Education – BC, a research think tank focusing on public education in British Columbia.



Andy Rowe

Evaluation and economics consultant, Canada

Andy Rowe is a former President and a Fellow of the Canadian Evaluation Society. He has a PhD from the London School of Economics and has been on the faculty of universities in Canada and Scotland, worked in Canada and for the U.S. government, with a public/private oceans research cooperation, and globally as a consultant.

Andy's Rapid Impact Evaluation is a flexible low cost mixed methods approach to evaluating impacts. It is an accepted approach under the Canadian National Evaluation Policy and used by federal agencies in the U.S. and Canada, by the Global Environment Facility and others. His evaluation systems for conflict resolution interventions have been used in U.S. federal agencies for 15 years, in Canada and by the World Bank. And the approach to knowledge use developed with Kai Lee of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation continues to be shape the Foundations' Science Program and is finding a place in evaluations of international normative products and promoting use in evaluation offices.

His recent publications focus on evaluation in complex multi-system settings such as sustainable development. He initiated the Fellows' Strand—now an annual feature of Canadian Evaluation Society conferences—and is now initiating a storytelling effort for CES Fellows to share their knowledge and experience with the field, and especially with new entrants to evaluation. He is on the Board of Ecotrust Canada and an associate editor of *Evaluation and Program Planning*.



Gill Westhorp

Professorial Research Fellow, Charles Darwin University

Gill Westhorp leads the Realist Research Evaluation and Learning Initiative (RREALI) at Charles Darwin University. RREALI develops new methods and tools within a realist framework, supports development of competency in realist approaches and provides realist evaluation and research services. Current projects include developing realist economic evaluation. Gill is particularly interested in the development of realist methods for hard-to-evaluate initiatives, including prevention programs, large scale policies and programs, complex interventions and cross-cultural realist evaluation.

Gill is a co-author of the international reporting standards, quality standards, and guidance materials for RAMESES I and II). She is author of a guidance note on Realist Impact Evaluation and co-author of another on evaluating prizes and challenges, of articles on realist evaluation and complexity theory, and various project-based articles and publications.

Gill is Director of Community Matters Pty Ltd, a research and evaluation consultancy based in South Australia; an Associate in the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies at RMIT University, Melbourne; and a member of the Advisory Committee for the Centre for the Advancement of Realist Evaluation and Synthesis at Liverpool University, UK. She is a past member of the national AES Board and was previously the inaugural Convenor of the Australasian Evaluation Society's Special Interest Group in Realist Evaluation and Realist Synthesis and Convenor of the South Australian chapter.



INVITED SPEAKER

Nicholas Gruen

Chief Executive Officer, Lateral Economics

Nicholas Gruen is a policy economist, entrepreneur and commentator; founder of Lateral Economics and Peach Financial; Visiting Professor at Kings College London Policy Institute; and Adjunct Professor at UTS Business School.

Nicholas chairs the Open Knowledge Foundation (Australia) and is patron of the Australian Digital Alliance. He chaired The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI) from 2010—2016.

conference supporters



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- It quality assures the department's internal aid performance assessment systems.
- It supports, conducts and reviews program-level evaluations of Australian aid investments.
- Finally, it conducts strategic-level evaluations with a policy or thematic focus.

ODE publishes all of its evaluations. For more information, visit our website—search ODE@DFAT.

ODE received the *AES Award for Excellence in Evaluation (Public Sector)* in 2014 and 2016.



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

Australian Department of Social Services

CHANGE AGENT

The Department of Social Services is a critical source of social policy advice for the Australian Government. We work in partnership with government and non-government organisations to ensure the effective development, management and delivery of a diverse range of policies and programs focused on improving the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia.

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ACIL Allen Consulting is Australia's largest employee-owned independent public policy, economics and corporate public affairs consultancy. Staff have the skills and knowledge required to design and undertake rigorous evaluations in practice, including in qualitative research and econometrics. The firm has evaluated large public interventions, such as national policies and international education programs, through to smaller interventions for discrete communities. Much of this work has concerned Australia's First Peoples, drawing on culturally appropriate research methods. The firm is adept at the application of theory-based methods (program logic), qualitative research methods (such as case study research) and more quantitative studies (cost-benefit analyses or quasi-experimental designs).

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The Department of Social Services (DSS) is the Australian Government's lead agency in the development and delivery of social policy, and is working to improve the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia.

DSS' policies and services respond to need across people's lives — looking after families, children and older people; providing a safety net for people who cannot fully support themselves; enhancing the wellbeing of people with high needs; assisting people who need help with care; and supporting a diverse and harmonious society.

DSS supports people and families in Australia by encouraging independence and participation, and supporting a cohesive society.



Welcome to Country and conference opening

Welcome to Country by Paul House

Ngambri custodian Paul House will deliver his 'Welcome to Country' on behalf of Ngambri-Ngurmal, Ngunnawal-Wallaboolooa Aboriginal peoples of the ACT.

Paul believes in the importance of cultural knowledge 'embodying and preserving the relationship to the land', and being passed on by each succeeding generation. He calls on us to 'respect and honour all people and all the country ... to give honour, be respectful, be polite, be gentle and patient with all'.

Conference opening

Following the Welcome to Country, AES President Lyn Alderman officially opens the conference.

Opening keynote address by Professor Sandra Mathison

Does evaluation contribute to the public good?

While perhaps an uncomfortable consideration, we need to ask whether evaluation contributes to the public good. By most accounts, evaluators' work isn't contributing enough to poverty-reduction, human rights, and access to food, water, education and health care. We need to consider whether formal evaluation practice may be getting in the way of and hindering social change. Evaluation is framed by micro-context, as well as the macro-dominant socio-political ideologies. We need to be conscious of these frames and reflect on how they shape our practice. To provoke dialogue on these ideas, this talk shares thoughts about how evaluators, funders, and users of program evaluation could do more to make a positive contribution to the public good through evaluation.

aes17 conference support grants for emerging Indigenous evaluators

sponsored by

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

Australian and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG)

Whakauae Research Services Limited

Roberts Brown

Conference delegates

In 2017 we are pleased to award grants to support twelve Indigenous evaluators from the Australasian region to participate with us in Canberra. We welcome our grant recipients and hope you thoroughly enjoy this opportunity.

As well as developing recipient's capacity, the support grants strengthen the knowledge base of the evaluation sector by bringing the grantees' knowledge and understanding to experienced evaluators.

Thank you to those who helped publicise the grants and encourage prospective applicants. Thank you also to the panel who volunteered their expertise and time to select this year's grantees.

The AES particularly thanks the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Australian and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG), Whakauae Research Services Limited, Roberts Brown and the delegates who donated for their generous support in 2017.

special program

AES Annual General Meeting

Monday 4 Sept, 5:30–6:15pm, Sutherland Theatre

Join the AES Board as we celebrate another year's achievements by members of the AES.

Interactive poster session (with welcome drinks)

Monday 4 Sept, 6:30–7:30pm, Exhibition Hall

This session will allow participants to walk through the living gallery as presenters present their posters and engage in discussion. You are strongly encouraged to take part.

2017 Rosalind Hurworth Prize

Wednesday 6 Sept, 8:30–9:30am, Morning Plenary



Each year we celebrate the best submitted conference paper in honour of the late Associate Professor Rosalind Hurworth, long time and dedicated editor of the *Evaluation Journal of Australasia (EJA)*. The prize is publication of the winning paper in the next issue of the *EJA*. The award is presented by Lyn Alderman, Editor, *EJA*.

Presentation by Nicholas Gruen

Why Australia needs an Evaluator General

Wednesday 6 Sept, 11:00–11:30am, Sutherland Theatre

Senior managers and politicians often talk about the need for 'evidence-based policy', but like the weather, they do little about it. Why?

Because it's hard—much harder than the boosters understand. Evaluation's low status in the professional policy making hierarchy, its being outsourced to 'experts—often with their own institutional imperatives in the academy—and senior managers' consequent lack of familiarity with its demands, has effectively prevented it ever being properly tried.

Nicholas Gruen will explain his proposal for an Evaluator General to

- raise the professional status of monitoring and evaluation expertise
- collaboratively integrate it into the making and delivery of policy and programs
- generate monitoring and evaluation outputs that are publicly reported in as close to real-time as possible to optimise ongoing performance and accountability.

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• research • monitoring and evaluation • impact assessment • policy and strategy development • organisational performance, change and review • performance audit and assurance

Invited panel

Evaluation in the context of current debates about a collapsing relationship between science and society

Wednesday 6 Sept, 11:00–11:30am, Sutherland Theatre

Evaluation is not static. It changes over time, reflecting shifts in the larger societies in which it is embedded. For this panel session, four distinguished scholars discuss their 'big-picture' vision for evaluation capital within this broader socio-political context and how it influences the way that they conduct their teaching, research supervision, academic-industry partnerships, and their own practice and research on evaluation. This interactive session is intended to contribute to the debate about socio-political influences on the contribution of evaluation capital to meet society's changing needs, including its relationship with research and science and through shaping evaluators expectations, values, and goals

Publishing in *EJA*

Wednesday 5 Sept, 2:00–3:00pm, Fitzroy Room

The editors of the *Evaluation Journal of Australasia (EJA)*—Lyn Alderman, Liz Gould, Carol Quadrelli and Bronwyn Rossing— would like to extend an invitation to all evaluators to publish their projects and practice wherever possible. The panel session offers new and experienced authors, journal article reviewers and book reviewers an opportunity to speak

directly with the editors. This is the third year this type of session has occurred and it is wonderful to see previous participants taking up reviewing opportunities and established authors offering ongoing support to new authors.

Resolving conflict in evaluation practice: stories and scars from the field, a Forum with the AES Fellows

Wednesday 6 Sept, 12:30–3:00pm, Sutherland Theatre

Presented by John Owen, Anthea Rutter, and Rick Cummings, along with a panel of Fellows of the AES, this session examines ways in which conflict affects the conduct of evaluation practice, and suggests methods by which conflicting situations can be resolved by the evaluator(s).

AES Fellows are members of the Society with extensive experience in evaluation who have been recognised for their contributions to evaluation and to the Society.

AES Committees/Special Interest Groups

AES groups can meet during lunch breaks.

These meetings will either be planned or ad hoc. Please advise the registration desk if you are planning a meeting. Details can be found on the program changes board near the Registration Desk.



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social program

Monday 4 September

Newcomers Breakfast *(optional)*

hosted by the aes17 Organising Committee

If you're new to the AES conference this is the best way to start your week. We are happy to invite those new to the conference and evaluation to come along and say hello and enjoy either breakfast, or just a coffee, and share your evaluation experiences. Everyone pays their own bill. No need to register, just turn up and say hi!

Playing Fields

23–43 Allara Street, Civic

[Literally a three-minute walk from the conference venue]

Time: 7:30am–8:30am

aes17 welcome drinks with interactive poster presentation *(official)*

Time: 6:30pm–7:30pm (immediately after the AES AGM) in the **Exhibition Hall**, National Convention Centre

Join us as we welcome delegates and raise our glasses to toast the commencement of the 2017 AES International Evaluation Conference.

The welcome drinks will be held with the interactive poster session. This session will allow participants to walk through the living gallery as presenters present their posters and engage in discussion. The session will take place until 7:30pm. You are strongly encouraged to take part.

Other optional social activities

aes17 Conference Committee has identified a number of other social activities to enhance your conference experience, while opening up additional networking opportunities across the three days. Information on early morning walks, coffee, breakfast and dinner venue options on each day of the conference will be provided in your satchel. These additional social activities will also be highlighted in Delegate Alert emails, so do keep an eye on your inbox!

For further information about optional social activities ask at the Conference registration desk or just find one of the aes17 Conference Committee members.

Other sightseeing/cultural tours of Canberra can be found through Canberra Secrets canberrasecrets.com.au which specialises in acquainting people who are visiting Canberra for the first time with some of the less well-known parts of Canberra.

Tuesday 5 September

Newcomers Breakfast *(optional)*

hosted by the aes17 Organising Committee

If you're new to the AES conference this is the best way to start your day.

We are happy to invite those new to the conference and evaluation to come along and say hello and enjoy either breakfast, or just a coffee, and share your evaluation experiences. Everyone pays their own bill. No need to register, just turn up and say hi!

332 Manhattan 332manhattan.com.au

Unit 332, 240 Bunda Street, Civic

[A mere five-minute walk from the conference venue]

Time: 7:15am–8:15am

2017 AES Gala Awards Dinner *(official)*

At the Village Centre, **National Arboretum**, Forest Drive, Canberra City. From 7pm

Getting there: Coaches leave the National Convention Centre (Coranderk Street side) for the Arboretum at 6:30pm, returning to the NCC following the dinner. Taxis also travel to and from the Arboretum.

Guest speaker: Dr Nicholas Gruen, Lateral Economics

This year's Gala Awards Dinner is located in the Village Centre at the National Arboretum. The Arboretum is home to 94 forests of rare, endangered and symbolic trees from Australia and around the world.



Join delegates for a banquet dinner as we celebrate excellence in evaluation across the AES regions.

During the dinner, we recognise leaders in evaluation with the announcement of the 2017 AES Awards for Excellence in Evaluation. The award recipients represent excellence for each Award category. We will also be inducting new Fellows, and introducing recipients of this year's Support Grant for Emerging Indigenous Evaluators.

The conference dinner is included in the registration fee for delegates with a full three-day registration. It is not included for day delegates. Tickets are available for purchase at the registration desk from \$185.00 on Monday only.

visit the exhibitions

Exhibitions will be open during breaks and the welcome drinks:

Monday 4 September
10:30am–7:30pm

Tuesday 5 September
10:30am–4:00pm

Wednesday 6 September
10:30am–3:30pm

EXHIBITORS

Australasian Evaluation Society

Better Evaluation

Clear Horizon

MEERQAT

Centre for Program Evaluation,
The University of Melbourne

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Clear Horizon



MEERQAT
Quality Assessment Tools



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program overview

Day 1: Monday 4 September

9:00am–10:30am	OPENING PLENARY Welcome to Country by Paul House, on behalf of Ngambri-Ngurmal, Ngunnawal-Wallaboolooa Aboriginal peoples of the ACT Conference opening by Lyn Alderman, AES President <i>followed by:</i> Keynote address by Sandra Mathison: 'Does evaluation contribute to the public good?'
10:30AM–11:00AM	MORNING TEA <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
11:00am–12:30pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS
12:30PM–1:30PM	LUNCH <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
1:30pm–3:00pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS
3:00PM–3:30PM	AFTERNOON TEA <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
3:30pm–4:30pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS
4:30pm–5:30pm	PLENARY Keynote address by Gill Westhorpe: 'The practicality of good theory'
5:30pm–6:15pm	AES Annual General Meeting
6:30pm–7:30pm	Welcome drinks with interactive poster presentation

Day 2: Tuesday 5 September

8:30am–9:30am	PLENARY Keynote address by Richard Weston: 'Evaluation is not life or death—it's far more important than that'
9:30am–10:30am	CONCURRENT SESSIONS
10:30AM–11:00AM	MORNING TEA <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
11:00am–12:30pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS
12:30PM–1:30PM	LUNCH <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
1:30pm–3:30pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS
3:30PM–4:00PM	AFTERNOON TEA <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen</i>
4:00pm–5:00pm	PLENARY Keynote address by Andy Rowe: 'Evaluation for the Anthropocene'
7:00pm–11:00pm	Conference Dinner (Venue: National Arboretum Canberra)

Day 3: Wednesday 6 September

8:30am–9:30am	PLENARY Keynote address by Dugan Fraser: 'Better stewardship of evaluation capital can help deepen democracy'
9:30am–10:30am	CONCURRENT SESSIONS
10:30AM–11:00AM	MORNING TEA <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen Consulting</i>
11:00am–12.30pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS
12:30PM–1:30PM	LUNCH <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen Consulting</i>
1:30pm–3:00pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS
3:00PM–3:30PM	AFTERNOON TEA <i>sponsored by ACIL Allen Consulting</i>
3:30pm–5:00pm	CLOSING PLENARY 'It's the aes17 Great Debate and it's going to be huge!' <i>followed by:</i> Conference close Lyn Alderman and Handover to AES 2018 International Evaluation Conference

Support for Indigenous evaluators at the 2018 AES Conference

With the generous support of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, we are excited to announce that we are supporting a minimum of five Indigenous Australians to attend the 2018 AES International Evaluation Conference, to be held from 17–21 September. We strongly encourage Indigenous Australian evaluators to present at next year's conference, and apply for assistance to attend.

And we ask all delegates to use their networks to promote the scheme.

Supported by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Applications open
March 2018**



**For more information
on next year's grants,
email aes@aes.asn.au**

acknowledgements

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An invitation
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EJA | EVALUATION
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A quarterly publication of the Australasian Evaluation Society

EJA provides the opportunity to disseminate current research and innovative practice in the evaluation field and is multi-disciplinary and cross sectorial in its scope. AES members, organisations, postgraduate students and individuals involved in the practice, study or teaching of evaluation are invited to submit their work to journal, selecting from a range of submission types.

A special conference session: 'Publishing in EJA' takes place on Wednesday 5 Sept, 2:00–3:00pm, Fitzroy Room.

Submissions online at www.aes.asn.au
Go to 'Resources', then 'Evaluation Journal of Australasia'

Enquiries: publications@aes.asn.au Tel: +61 3 9035 3469

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Editors: Lyn Alderman, Liz Gould, Carol Quadrelli,
Bronwyn Rossingh

aes 17

International **Evaluation** Conference

Pre-conference workshops 3 September

Conference 4–6 September

Post-conference workshops 7 September 2017

Canberra | Australia

'Evaluation Capital'

DETAILED PROGRAM AND ABSTRACTS



PROGRAM MONDAY

PLENARY SESSION – BALLROOM

09:00 – 10:30

Welcome to Country
Paul House

Conference opening
Lyn Alderman, AES President

followed by

Keynote address: 'Does evaluation contribute to the public good?'

Sandra Mathison

PLENARY SESSION – BALLROOM

16:30 – 17:30

The practicality of good theory
Gill Westhorp

LEGEND: Presentation modality

-  Short paper
-  Long paper
-  Panel
-  Skill building session
-  Consultation and collaboration

 **DERWENT ROOM**  **11:00 – 12:30**

 **Use findings**

11:00  Using evaluation to influence policy and practice—Improving the Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour Service in New Zealand
Sandra Collins

11:30  The benefits of independence to the use of findings for the evaluation of a long-term biodiversity monitoring program
Helen Watts, Emmo Willinck

12:00  The engagement of youth in program evaluation: The results of a scoping review
Sarah Heath

 **DERWENT ROOM**  **13:30 – 15:00**

 **Use findings**

13:30  Evaluation-based advice with uncertain evidence: Examples from program and policy evaluations
Martin Gould, Les Trudzik

14:00  A realist approach to evaluating the rationales and practices of collaborative governance
Rachel Eberhard

14:30  Complex evaluations in the political context: Designing an evaluation framework for a whole-of-government reform program
Nerida Leal, Rhian Stack

 **DERWENT ROOM**  **15:30 – 16:30**

 **Use findings**

15:30  Making a difference: Developing actionable recommendations and getting them implemented
Kathryn Newcomer

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🏠 FITZROY ROOM ⌚ 11:00 – 12:30
💬 Insights from theory

- 11:00 In the deep end? Evaluation 101 for new evaluators
 SBS
Charlie Tulloch
- 12:00 Hybrid evaluation in science organisations—a shared experience
 SP
Toni White

🏠 MURRAY ROOM ⌚ 11:00 – 12:30
💬 Learn from practice

- 11:00 Policy Logic: Creating policy and evaluation capital in your organisation
 SBS
Carolyn Page, Russell Ayres
- 12:00 He Kāinga Kōrerorero participatory evaluation
 SP
Kate Averill

🏠 FITZROY ROOM ⌚ 13:30 – 15:00
💬 Insights from theory

- 13:30 Testing Value for Money: Two case studies from a Pacific gender equality program
 LP
Nea Harrison, Anna Bryan
- 14:30 Building on established community development theories to enhance the rigour and utility of program evaluation: A case study of the Fiji Community Development Program
 SP
Catriona Flavel

🏠 MURRAY ROOM ⌚ 13:30 – 15:00
💬 Learn from practice

- 13:30 Evaluating innovation—the start of a conversation...
 SP
Caroline Henwood, Kari Sann
- 14:00 Using innovative methods in evaluation—what is needed?
 C&C
Patricia Rogers

🏠 FITZROY ROOM ⌚ 15:30 – 16:30
💬 Insights from theory

- 15:30 What is evaluation? Strengthening our capital through self-definition
 LP
Amy Gullickson

🏠 MURRAY ROOM ⌚ 15:30 – 16:30
💬 Learn from practice

- 15:30 Belling the cat: Commissioning for outcomes and evaluating place-based initiatives
 LP
Tim Reddel

🏠 SUTHERLAND THEATRETTE ⌚ 11:00 – 12:30

💬 Learn from practice

11:00 Evaluation in the round: A 360-degree view of evaluation in educational reform

P

Georgia Dawson, Janet Clinton, Jon Quach, John Bush

🏠 SUTHERLAND THEATRETTE ⌚ 13:30 – 15:00

💬 Diverse identities

13:30 Engaging complexity: Developmental evaluation in remote Indigenous Australia

P

Martu Leadership Group, Peter Johnson

💬 Learn from practice

14:30 Supporting country ownership of development outcomes: How monitoring and evaluation in a public-private partnership can contribute to evaluation capital

SP

Elizabeth Morgan, Chris Taput

🏠 SUTHERLAND THEATRETTE ⌚ 15:30 – 16:30

💬 Learn from practice

15:30 Developmental evaluation: An emerging practice for informing policy

P

Rob Kennedy, Mila Waise, Regina Hill, Jenny Riley

🏠 SWAN ROOM ⌚ 11:00 – 12:30

💬 Build systems

11:00 Building evaluation capital in government

SP

Sarah Goswami

💬 Insights from theory

11:30 Improving validity: Asking the right questions in evaluations

SP

David Roberts

💬 Build systems

12:00 Evaluation capacity building and social capital

SP

Zita Unger

🏠 SWAN ROOM ⌚ 13:30 – 15:00

💬 Build systems

13:30 The inside narrative: Evaluation service and blueprint design

SP

Kathleen Palmer, Nathaniel Pihama

14:00 Evaluating large-scale education reform in the delivery of initial teacher education in Australia

SP

Amanda Stevenson, Anita Torr, Edmund Misson

14:30 Towards a more strategic and holistic system for evaluating public policies and programs

SP

Jew-Chung Kon, Mandy Charman

🏠 SWAN ROOM ⌚ 15:30 – 16:30

💬 Build systems

15:30 Strengthening evaluation through evaluation: Driving improvement in the Australian aid program

SP

Tracey McMartin

16:00 Balancing learning and accountability: Building an effective internal evaluation function for Australia's foreign aid program

SP

David Slattery, Wendy Jarvie

TORRENS ROOM🕒 **11:00 – 12:30****Build systems**

- 11:00 **SP** Building the evaluation capital of Australia's national Family and Children service sector, towards improved client outcomes, services and systems, and collective social impact

*Elizabeth Clancy, Reima Pryor***Diverse identities**

- 11:30 **SP** Community commissioned evaluations: Taking downstream participation of communities to a new level

Phillip Miller

- 12:00 **SP** Evaluation of a settlement service delivery model for newly arrived refugees in Australia

Kathryn Williams

TORRENS ROOM🕒 **13:30 – 15:00****Diverse identities**

- 13:30 **SP** Mobilising multiple knowledges to evaluate the effectiveness of Indigenous land: Sea management in northern Australia

Beau Austin

- 14:00 **SP** Diverse identities, diverse design: Building an evaluation framework for two distinct program populations

Marc Gehrman, Sara Dixon

- 14:30 **SP** Diverse identities, values and views of different stakeholders and cultural inclusivity in monitoring and evaluation of DREAMS

Reuben Kivuva

TORRENS ROOM🕒 **15:30 – 16:30****Diverse identities**

- 15:30 **C&C** The STrengthening Evaluation Practices and Strategies (STEPS) in Indigenous settings in Australia and New Zealand Project: Moving forward the 'next' steps

Amohia Boulton, Sharon Clarke, Lisa Warner, Jenni Judd, Margaret Cargo

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PROGRAM TUESDAY

PLENARY SESSION – BALLROOM

08:30 – 09:30

Evaluation is not life or death—it's far more important than that

Richard Weston

PLENARY SESSION – BALLROOM

16:00 – 17:00

Evaluation for the Anthropocene

Andy Rowe

LEGEND: Presentation modality

-  Short paper
-  Long paper
-  Panel
-  Skill building session
-  Consultation and collaboration

 **DERWENT ROOM**  **9:30 – 10:30**
 **Diverse identities**

09:30  Evaluation and the Indigenous voice: Core values for legitimising ethical conduct
Bronwyn Rossingh, Djuwalpi Marika, Yalmay Yunupingu

 **DERWENT ROOM**  **11:00 – 12:30**
 **Diverse identities**

11:00  Growing impact: Challenges in understanding impact in Indigenous affairs—building demand, identifying gaps and highlighting progress in organisational and sectoral evaluation capacity
Kim Grey

11:30  Building robust evaluation systems in Indigenous health: Examples from the Tackling Indigenous Smoking program evaluation
Alison Faure-Brac

12:00  What do we know about evaluation in Indigenous higher education contexts in Australia?
James Smith

 **DERWENT ROOM**  **13:30 – 15:30**
 **Diverse identities**

13:30  The value of incorporating Aboriginal cultural knowledge (human capital) into an Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service evaluation to deliver credible and useable findings to both Community and Government
Carol Vale, Vladimir Williams

14:00  Youth participation in evaluation: Promoting inclusivity and building evaluation capital
Heidi Peterson

14:30  The promise and peril of using randomised control trials to evaluate social programs for Indigenous Australians
Katherine Curchin, Nicholas Biddle

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🏠 FITZROY ROOM **🕒 9:30 – 10:30**
💬 Learn from practice

09:30 Supporting managers to use evaluators more effectively: A Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation
SBS
Greet Peersman

🏠 MURRAY ROOM **🕒 9:30 – 10:30**
💬 Insights from theory

09:30 Intervention logic: Putting the logic back in logic models
SBS
Andrew Hawkins

🏠 FITZROY ROOM **🕒 11:00 – 12:30**
💬 Learn from practice

11:00 What would we use and how would we use it? Can innovative digital technology be used to both enhance and evaluate wellbeing outcomes with highly vulnerable and disadvantaged young people?
SP
Rhianon Vichta, Brian Collyer

11:30 Who owns the data? Considerations of governance, ethics, access and use of data for evaluators in 2017
C&C
Kararaina Scally-Irvine

12:00 How to manage for results in ten minutes using common evaluation tools
SP
Scott Bayley

🏠 MURRAY ROOM **🕒 11:00 – 12:30**
💬 Insights from theory

11:00 How to be a front-end champion: Five principles for building evaluation capital
SP
Anthea Rutter, Zita Unger

11:30 Evaluating the success and failure of national policy reform: A meta-evaluation of Australia's National Mental Health Strategy (1992–2012)
SP
Carla Meurk, Francesca Grace

12:00 From theory of hope to theory of change: Learning from behaviour change practice to strengthen project design and evaluation
SP
Damien Sweeney

🏠 FITZROY ROOM **🕒 13:30 – 15:30**
💬 Learn from practice

13:30 Professionalising evaluation—propositions, tensions and opportunities
C&C
Kate McKegg

14:30 Professionalisation of evaluation: Possible pathways within the AES context
C&C
Greet Peersman, Patricia Rogers

🏠 MURRAY ROOM **🕒 13:30 – 15:30**
💬 Insights from theory

13:30 Chains of logic: Overcoming limitations of program theory and its use in evaluation
LP
Ian Patrick

14:30 Repurposing substantive theories in evaluation: Opportunities and risks in transferring formal theories into new domains
C&C
Kim Grey, Gill Westthorp

🏠 SUTHERLAND THEATRETTE ⌚ 9:30 – 10:30

💬 Learn from practice

- 09:30 **P** Building evaluation capital in the environmental policy field: What do we have, what do we need?
Fabio Jimenez, Nathan Sibley, David Winfield, Mitch Jeffery

🏠 SUTHERLAND THEATRETTE ⌚ 11:00 – 12:30

💬 Use findings

- 11:00 **SP** Better by design: A framework for bridging design and evaluation
Matt Healey

💬 Build systems

- 11:30 **P** Stepping out: Evaluators working as designers
Jess Dart, Zazie Tolmer, Sara Webb

🏠 SUTHERLAND THEATRETTE ⌚ 13:30 – 15:30

💬 Build systems

- 13:30 **P** The evolution of evaluation in Australia's capital
Speakers: Darren Box, Stein Helgeby, Noel Sutton
Chair: Pierre Skorich

💬 Learn from practice

- 14:30 **SBS** The G.I. Joe Fallacy: Cognitive bias as a hook for engaging senior decision-makers in evaluative thinking
Martin Hall, Alex Oo, Duncan Rintoul

🏠 SWAN ROOM ⌚ 9:30 – 10:30

💬 Build systems

- 09:30 **C&C** Evaluation system longevity and permanence: Using scenario thinking to build resilient evaluation capital
Catherine Manley, Naysa Brasil Teodoro

🏠 SWAN ROOM ⌚ 11:00 – 12:30

💬 Build systems

- 11:00 **SP** Building evaluation capability to improve educational outcomes for at risk children and young people
Shelly Rao, Zane Mather

- 11:30 **SP** Concept mapping: Results from the STrengthening Evaluation Practices and Strategies (STEPS) in Indigenous settings in Australia and New Zealand Project

Amohia Boulton, Lisa Warner, Sharon Clarke, Jenni Judd, Margaret Cargo

- 12:00 **SP** Working towards building an evaluation system in NSW Health

Renee Fortunato, John Marshall, Mahendra Sharan

🏠 SWAN ROOM ⌚ 13:30 – 15:30

💬 Build systems

- 13:30 **LP** Performance leadership: The key to strengthening evaluation systems and program outcomes
Scott Bayley

- 14:30 **C&C** Evaluation and the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework: Opportunities for the evaluation community

Brad Cook, David Morton

TORRENS ROOM
 **9:30 – 10:30**
 **Use findings**

09:30 **SP** Mission Australia's Room to Grow: Program evaluation of an intervention for hoarding disorder and domestic squalor in central Sydney

Leah Cave, Joann Fildes

10:00 **C&C** Map-enabled experiential review: Enhancing the relevance of evaluation at the program delivery coalface

Donna Cohen

TORRENS ROOM
 **11:00 – 12:30**
 **Use findings**

11:00 **SP** Applying a Theory of Change in a developmental evaluation project to influence system-level change in New Zealand's Agricultural Innovation System

Toni White

11:30 **SP** Using developmental evaluation to strengthen the dissemination and use of quality improvement data from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healthcare centres

Alison Laycock

12:00 **SP** Creating credible findings in evaluating a complex programme: The New Zealand Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health Project

Carolyn O'Fallon

TORRENS ROOM
 **13:30 – 15:30**
 **Use findings**

13:30 **SP** Engaging with philanthropy: A funder's perspective on how to maximise the reach of your findings

Squirrel Main

14:00 **SP** Getting the balance right: The benefits of an integrated policy/economic approach to evaluation

Poppy Wise, Nicki Hutley

14:30 **SP** Using evaluation findings as an asset to inform future strategic choices for organizational and country projects: Learning from the rich experience of Oxfam's Securing Rights Programme's evaluation methodology and results

Roselyn Nyatsanza, Musa Sibindi, Hilda Manokore

15:00 **SP** Evaluation: What's the use?

Jade Maloney

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PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY

PLENARY SESSION – BALLROOM

8:30 – 9:30

Better stewardship of evaluation capital can help deepen democracy

Dugan Fraser

PLENARY SESSION – BALLROOM

15:30 – 17:00

It's the AES17 Great Debate and it's going to be huge!

Chaired by Lyn Alderman, AES President

followed by

Conference close
Lyn Alderman, AES President

Handover to AES 2018 International Evaluation Conference

LEGEND: Presentation modality

-  Short paper
-  Long paper
-  Panel
-  Skill building session
-  Consultation and collaboration

 **DERWENT ROOM**  **9:30 – 10:30**
 **Diverse identities**

09:30  Challenging heterosexist bias in evaluation practice
Jeffery Adams

 **DERWENT ROOM**  **11:00 – 12:30**
 **Diverse identities**

11:00  Exploring the potential relevance of Sen's capability approach to evaluation
Yvette Clarke

11:30  Inclusive evaluation through video as data and output
Karen Fisher

12:00  One step removed: Making sense of evaluating a governance reform project for climate change and disaster risk management in the Pacific
Keren Winterford

 **DERWENT ROOM**  **13:30 – 15:00**
 **Diverse identities**

13:30  Power and political positioning in Indigenous evaluation: Exploring the relationship between developmental evaluation and cultural responsiveness in evaluation
Samantha Togni

14:00  Building a regional evaluation system for fisheries in the Pacific
Connie Donato-Hunt

Build systems

14:30  How do we know that our work works? Building an evidence base and evaluation capital
Anne Crawford

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🏠 FITZROY ROOM ⌚ 9:30 – 10:30
💬 Use findings

- 09:30 Promoting evaluation use by exploring evaluator educative roles
 SP
Krystin Martens
- 10:00 Generating evaluation capital: Meta-evaluations as 'compound interest' evaluations
 SP
Tracy McDiarmid, Bethia Burgess

🏠 MURRAY ROOM ⌚ 9:30 – 10:30
💬 Insights from theory

- 09:30 I'm doing an impact evaluation, what evidence do I need?
 SBS
Scott Bayley

🏠 FITZROY ROOM ⌚ 11:00 – 12:30
💬 Use findings

- 11:00 How might we change the AES so it is more relevant to you?
 C&C
Vanessa Hood, Liz Smith, Dan Borg
- 12:00 Maximising use: Lessons from evaluating New Zealand's Aid Program in the Pacific
 SP
Rosalind Dibley, Ned Hardie-Boys

🏠 MURRAY ROOM ⌚ 11:00 – 12:30
💬 Insights from theory

- 11:00 Reviewing evaluation frameworks: A systematic approach
 SP
Janet Clinton, Ghislain Arbour
- 11:30 Messy work! Combining participatory action research and developmental evaluation approaches in remote NT Indigenous communities
 SP
Cat Street, James Smith
- 12:00 Social capital: A reflection on the theory, implications and use in evaluation
 SP
Erin Blake

🏠 FITZROY ROOM ⌚ 13:30 – 15:00
💬 Use findings

- 13:30 Evaluating the role for volunteers in public service reform and commissioning services: Case study of a volunteer home visiting service comprising the innovative combination of Randomised Control Trial and Social Return on Investment methodologies
 SP
Les Hems, Rebekah Grace
- 14:00 How to publish in the Evaluation Journal of Australasia
 C&C
Lyn Alderman, Liz Gould, Bronwyn Rossingh

🏠 MURRAY ROOM ⌚ 13:30 – 15:00
💬 Insights from theory

- 13:30 Fidelity, contextualisation and sustainability: Demonstrating conceptual platforms in evaluation
 LP
Gill Westthorp, Emma Williams
- 14:30 Evaluation and the creativity of constraint
 SP
Liam Downing

🏠 SUTHERLAND THEATRETTE ⌚ 9:30 – 10:30

💬 Build systems

- 09:30 **P** Embedding evaluation systems into government
David Turvey, Wayne Poels, Robyn Shannon, Kathryn Mandla

🏠 SWAN ROOM ⌚ 9:30 – 10:30

💬 Learn from practice

- 09:30 **C&C** Dilemmas in evaluation practice of an ethical kind
Anne Markiewicz

🏠 SUTHERLAND THEATRETTE ⌚ 11:00 – 12:30

💬 Special sessions

- 11:00 **SP** Why Australia needs an Evaluator General
Nicholas Gruen
- 11:30 **P** Invited panel: Evaluation in the context of current debates about a collapsing relationship between science and society
Janet Clinton, Mark Evans, Patricia Rogers, Emma Williams

🏠 SWAN ROOM ⌚ 11:00 – 12:30

💬 Learn from practice

- 11:00 **SP** The global political participation and leadership of women: Use of the ISE4GEMs approach to undertake a UN Women corporate evaluation
Anne Stephens, Shravanti Reddy
- 11:30 **SP** No more number-crunching! The 4E's approach to social return on investment
Carolyn Hooper
- 12:00 **SP** Making the most of your internal evaluation capital using reflections meetings
Renee Madsen

🏠 SUTHERLAND THEATRETTE ⌚ 13:30 – 15:00

💬 Special sessions

- 13:30 **P** AES Fellows Forum: Resolving conflict in evaluation practice—stories and scars from the field
John Owen, Anthea Rutter, Richard Cummings

🏠 SWAN ROOM ⌚ 13:30 – 15:00

💬 Learn from practice

- 13:30 **LP** Evaluating the evaluation: Stories from the Community Development Program
Kylie Brosnan, Sharon Barnes, Michael Barnes
- 14:30 **SP** Emotions, relationships, and politics between external evaluation consultants, program staff, and non-Indigenous organisational cultures in the conduct of evaluation of Indigenous programs
Lauren Siegmann, Rebecca Harnett, Sissy Austin

TORRENS ROOM

🕒 9:30 – 10:30

Build systems

09:30 Building an evaluation team: Lessons and questions from the hiring process

SP

Gerard Atkinson

10:00 What makes a 'government evaluator' in Australia?

SP

*Stefan Kaufman, Duncan Rintoul***TORRENS ROOM**

🕒 11:00 – 12:30

Build systems

11:00 Australia's Priority Investment Approach to welfare and the Try, Test and Learn Fund

SP

Murray Kimber

11:30 The Oxfam Asia MEL of Influencing Capacity Building Journey: A case study of evaluative capacity building in complex organisational and cultural contexts

SP

Jayne Pilkinton

12:00 The Capacity Development Evaluation Framework: Providing value to users

SP

*Fiona Kotvojs***TORRENS ROOM**

🕒 13:30 – 15:00

Build systems

13:30 Integrated evaluation capital creation in a low capital environment: The design and use of an IT platform for evaluative management in the land of the unexpected (PNG)

SP

Kate Averill

14:00 I'm an evaluator, not a magician: Designing evaluable programs

SP

Joanna Farmer, Caroline Tomiczek

14:30 Building an evidence-based social sector in New Zealand: How to increase the validity and visibility of evidence and evaluation in Government decision-making

SP

Carolyn O'Fallon

#aes17CBR

Does evaluation contribute to the public good?



Sandra Mathison, *University of British Columbia and Executive Director, Institute for Public Education, Canada*

The session will be preceded by Welcome to Country by Paul House and a conference opening address by Dr Lyn Alderman, AES President.

While perhaps an uncomfortable consideration, we need to ask whether evaluation contributes to the public good. By most accounts, evaluators' work isn't contributing enough to poverty reduction, human rights, and access to food, water, education and health care. We need to consider whether formal evaluation practice may be getting in the way of and hindering social change. Evaluation is framed by micro-context, as well as the macro-dominant sociopolitical ideologies. We need to be conscious of these frames and reflect on how they shape our practice. To provoke dialogue on these ideas, this talk shares thoughts about how evaluators, funders, and users of program evaluation could do more to make a positive contribution to the public good through evaluation.

Building evaluation capital in government

Sarah Goswami, *Victoria Lane, QLD Department of Agriculture and Fisheries*

Increasingly, government departments are being held accountable for investment in public services. They are expected to demonstrate effective stewardship and responsible use of taxpayer-funded resources, whilst operating in a fiscally constrained environment. The *Queensland Financial Accountability Act 2009*, requires that 'accountable officers and statutory bodies achieve reasonable value for money by ensuring the operations of the department or statutory body are carried out efficiently, effectively and economically'.

Evaluation capital is a key asset in demonstrating this. Whilst there is a directive for agencies to evaluate and demonstrate value for money, it has in practice been difficult to embed long-term as many systems and decision makers have neglected the role of organisation wide evaluation capital.

This paper will outline the work being undertaken in the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Queensland to implement an 'Impact and Investment Framework', to support and embed evaluation in a multidisciplinary setting. A central tenant of this framework is 'ownership'—building the evaluation culture in the organisation through staff ownership, combined with low input, high benefit (to individuals and the organisation) systems. The framework comprises of four key elements: (i) impact mapping, (ii) performance measurement, (iii) a snapshot of investment, and (iv) a strategic program of evaluation.

It has been designed to be low cost, effective and efficient, whilst enabling business improvement, meeting accountability needs and, allowing the department to demonstrate the value of its work.

This paper will demonstrate how the implementation of an integrated system can facilitate comparable evaluation across disciplines, scales and complexity using logic modelling as the starting point. It will also highlight some of the challenges of implementation and how these were overcome with insights from continuous evaluation of the project.

Building the evaluation capital of Australia's national Family and Children service sector, towards improved client outcomes, services and systems, and collective social impact

Elizabeth Clancy, *Reima Pryor, Centre for Family Research and Evaluation*

The Australian Department of Social Services (DSS) is placing increasing emphasis on funded programs and services being 'evidence-based', and in building sector evaluation capacity. There is recognition when services use and disseminate evaluation learnings, benefits include a broader evidence-base, increased service delivery effectiveness in terms of client outcomes, and increased efficiency in terms of cost-benefit analysis. To support this, in 2015, DSS funded an Expert Panel with skills in program planning and outcomes evaluation. As a member of this panel, the Centre for Family Research and Evaluation (CFRE, a collaboration between Drummond Street Services and Deakin University) has for the past 18 months provided sector support in evaluation for over 50 organisations nationally—across program areas, including parenting and children's services, family relationship and post separation, Communities for Children and Refugee and Settlement Services, across metropolitan, rural and remote Aboriginal, communities.

Since July 2016, CFRE under funding from DSS and the Attorney General's Department, has been working with the Victorian Partnership of Family Relationship Centres (VPFRC) to develop and implement an Outcome Evaluation Framework and outcome measures for their Family Dispute Resolution services, with a view to national rollout and long-term sector outcome measurement. FDR services are embedded in the complex Family Law service system, and FDR processes and outcomes have implications not only for the families they service, but the complex social issues and systems, and significant government policies and funding, they sit within.

Drawing on over ten years' experience of the benefits of building evaluation capital for organisational and sector sustainability, CFRE will share their organisational and project learnings, including approaches to build evaluation alliances, leadership, culture, policies, procedures and technical capacity. The presenters will

invite discussion on the collective social impacts to be achieved through building the evaluation capacity of service sectors.

Using evaluation to influence policy and practice—Improving the Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour Service in New Zealand

Sandra Collins, *Education Review Office, NZ*

The Education Review Office (ERO) plays a significant role in system-level improvement through its external evaluations. Through a range of system-level evaluations ERO seeks to enhance both policy and practice by strengthening both the evaluation capability and capacity of the system and those who work within it. As well as undertaking external evaluation of all New Zealand schools and early learning services, ERO also undertakes national system-level evaluations.

In 2004, 2009 and 2017 ERO evaluated the Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTL) service. The RTL service aims to improve learning and teaching for students with moderate learning or behaviour difficulties in schools. RTL are a group of trained itinerant specialist teachers, working across clusters of schools, who provide support to ensure good educational outcomes for Years 0–10 students. RTL services are managed by full-time Cluster Managers, situated in 40 lead schools. Both the 2004 and 2009 evaluations found variability in the way the RTL clusters were governed and managed. ERO noted 'a lack of strong external and internal accountabilities for the use of funding and management of RTL remains an issue in a large proportion of clusters'. Self review (internal evaluation), planning and reporting were found to be the weakest across the 40 clusters evaluated.

In response to the evaluation findings, the Ministry of Education worked in collaboration with key sector groups to undertake a significant transformation of the RTL service. This transformation included reducing the number of clusters from 199 to 40 and appointing cluster managers with responsibility for cluster management in collaboration with lead school principals. The Ministry of Education asked ERO to undertake a subsequent evaluation in 2017 to focus on the extent to which the transformation of the RTL service had addressed the findings of the 2004 and 2009 evaluations.

This presentation will focus on the use of the findings from the 2009 RTL evaluation, and the design and implementation of the 2017 RTL evaluation which has a strong focus on building evaluation capability and capacity in the RTL service. These evaluations are contributing to building evaluation capital by generating specific actionable recommendations for policy-makers and practitioners, while also supporting RTL cluster managers and lead school principals to strengthen their capacity to engage in their own internal evaluation for continuous improvement.

In the deep end? Evaluation 101 for new evaluators

Charlie Tulloch, *KPMG*

Ask any evaluator how they ended up in this field, and most will say that they fell into it—right in the deep end. This can be overwhelming, with theoretical, methodological, logistical and ethical challenges to consider. This presentation will provide an introductory overview of the evaluation field, adapted from evaluation capability building materials prepared and delivered within a large professional services firm. It will explore various definitions of evaluation; outline the rationale for undertaking evaluations; outline the role of evaluation across the government policy cycle; detail the most suitable types of evaluation; and step through practical considerations relating to planning, conducting and reporting on evaluation findings. It will draw on the *AES*

Evaluators Professional Learning Competency Framework to identify the skills that new evaluators should seek to build as they develop.

By the end of this session, those attending the conference to learn the basics will have a better understanding about their development path, and the contribution they can make to extending their own practice = building personal capital.

Evaluation in the round: A 360-degree view of evaluation in educational reform

Georgia Dawson, Janet Clinton, Jon Quach, *Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne*; John Bush, *Evidence for 4 Learning (E4L)*

Educational interventions aimed at scale, must be able to demonstrate their impact on children's learning outcomes to influence policy and attract ongoing funding. Evaluation stands front and centre to meet this demand for evidence of effectiveness and scaling up. This panel presentation will present the perspectives of three key stakeholders with respect to current practices within this context.

First, John Bush will present a philanthropic funder's position, including the background and context of the learning impact fund whose remit is to identify, fund and evaluate programs that will raise the academic achievement of children in Australia—especially those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

The second and third presentations will bring evaluation practice to the fore by presenting a current impact and process evaluation of a reading intervention in NSW primary schools for struggling early readers. Dr Jon Quach will present the design of the impact component, a randomised controlled trial. Georgia Dawson will then present the rationale and design of the process evaluation. Both presenters will discuss together the nexus between each component of the evaluation, including how each aspect will contribute to robust measures on which to determine the impact on student reading achievement and the causal factors involved.

Finally, the fourth presentation will take a unique perspective presenting the evaluator as evaluatee. Professor Janet Clinton, an evaluator with extensive evaluation capital will share her experience as a recipient of evaluation in the Visible Classroom Project, funded by the UK Education Endowment Foundation. A change in role that has yielded valuable insights to her own evaluation practice.

The overall objective of this panel presentation is to provide the audience with a 360-degree view of systems level reform in education and the role and contribution of evaluation. The panel will challenge our thinking about methodologies and paradigms in an effort to build clarity going forward.

Policy Logic: Creating policy and evaluation capital in your organisation

Carolyn Page, *The Clear English Company*; Russell Ayres, *Russell Ayres Consulting*

Policy Logic was developed in 2001 as a way of bringing policy and program expertise together in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and is now successfully used in many agencies. This innovative presentation will engage participants in a lively conversation about the policy/program implementation divide which can be an impediment to good policy and evaluation practice. Through this interaction, participants will gain hands-on experience of Policy Logic in action, including tips for successful facilitation.

Policy Logic incorporates the outcomes hierarchy at the heart of Program Logic, but places greater emphasis on the policy 'problem' (in government terms) to be addressed by a policy or program - and any barriers which may necessitate government intervention.

As the presenters will demonstrate, Policy Logic participants are encouraged to move directly from speculating about 'the problem', to making statements about what 'success' would look like in the long term—about policy outcomes. Participants then draw on program managers' expertise to identify success at the end of one year ('making a good start'), and predict change we'd see by the mid-term (if we are 'getting traction')—when governments often want to know if a program has 'worked'. Two other standard Policy Logic elements include: a mapping of others in the same policy space; and any data, evaluation or research questions to be pursued.

The Policy Logic approach can be used at any policy stage and lay the foundations for any kind of evaluation. It has been shown to be equally effective in 'scaling up' to meta-policy level and 'scaling down' to project level. The lively, interactive nature of Policy Logic also makes it an important tool in bridging the divide between policy and program expertise—and in building a confident, speculative conversation in your organisation about 'what's needed' and 'what works'.

Improving validity: Asking the right questions in evaluations

David Roberts, *RobertsBrown*

A major issue for evaluators is the validity of the answers people give when questioned on topics of interest to evaluators. Cognitive and psychological research show that people generally do NOT search all their memory or use rational processes to answer the questions we ask. Indeed, what people 'Say' in interviews often bears little relation to actual behaviour in the past or in future. Instead, implicit cognitive processes throw up a large number of possible answers, most of which never reach conscious awareness. One such answer may emerge in our awareness as 'the' answer. Sometimes, two or three answers emerge to awareness as 'probable' answers for consideration. Generally, we then use a 'best fit' heuristic to choose between the 'probable' answers generated by our implicit processes.

While the cognitive research is relatively clear, there is very little research into how we might apply the lessons to our own evaluation practice. The research does suggest that the closer the interview context is to the context of action the greater the validity of the responses. So techniques that are able to recreate the context of action are more likely to generate valid answers.

This interactive session explores the lessons from research and how those lessons might be applied to improve our research techniques. Participants will be asked to participate in a question–answering session and then to explore the cognitive bases of their responses. We will then discuss the cognitive research to see how it applies to the experience of the group. If time allows, the final part of the session will involve participants working together to develop ideas about how to apply the research to developing questions.

Community commissioned evaluations: Taking downstream participation of communities to a new level

Phillip Miller, *Orgnex Pty Ltd*

The purpose of the presentation is to raise the possibility of a new approach to commissioning evaluations of international aid and development programming. The presentation will build upon the outputs of the conference workshop on the same topic as well as previous thinking to promote the notion of giving the most important stakeholders of a development project (that is, the project beneficiaries) leadership of the evaluation process from the outset. Ideas will be presented about how to radically alter the power relations underpinning the evaluation process and facilitate opportunities for community members representing the

diversity nature of communities to own evaluation processes and outcomes. Community commissioned evaluation can transform the role of communities from being repositories of information for extraction to designers and users of evaluation products. Drawing upon evaluation experiences, the presentation will suggest how communities can become powerful agents in the cycle of learning, better hold organisations that deliver aid projects to account. Through the presentation participants will:

- be introduced to the concept of community commissioned evaluation
- learn of the potential barriers and advantages to community commissioned evaluation that have been identified by peers

The presentation will primarily be of interest to people who work in the international aid and development sector and academics. However, the topic could also resonate with those involved in domestic evaluations as there is scope to apply similar principles in this context. In terms of the *Evaluators' Professional Learning Competency Framework*, the presentation relates to the domain of: Attention to Culture, Stakeholders, and Context.

The presentation will help evaluators and those who commission evaluations rethink the value perspectives inherent in the process of commissioning evaluations; raise possibilities to ground evaluation in culturally diverse processes from the outset; and, reshape evaluation as a more empowering experience for the most important stakeholders in the process.

The benefits of independence to the use of findings for the evaluation of a long-term biodiversity monitoring program

Helen Watts, *Evaluation and Sustainability Services*;
Emmo Willinck, *Murray Local Land Services*

Are evaluation findings being used by environmental organisations? Can the conduct of an independent evaluation and use of its findings really support the evolution of a program? The presentation will discuss the findings based on the results of an anonymous survey undertaken with some regional natural resource management (NRM) organisations and government environment agencies, exploring their experience in the use of evaluation findings, including what hinders and what supports useability. In addition, a case study of an independent evaluation commissioned by Murray Local Land Services (MLLS), one of the NRM organisations surveyed will be presented. MLLS commissioned an evaluation of their long-term terrestrial biodiversity monitoring program that has been delivered in partnership with the Australian National University. It came at a significant time in the program's cycle and at a time of significant organisational change for MLLS. The evaluation was tasked with investigating stakeholder perceptions of relevance and worth. Finally, the presenters will tease out and explore with the audience lessons on evaluation use and the factors that aid in the use of evaluation findings.

Evaluation capacity building and social capital

Zita Unger, *Ziman*

Evaluation capacity building is often undertaken as individual training skills and proficiency. Building a sustainable evaluation function is so much more than developing evaluation skill and expertise. It involves creating and supporting a strategic and institutional motivation for that expertise.

This presentation will focus on effective strategies undertaken over a three-year period to build an evaluation function in a nonprofit organisation with a large volunteer base. In this context, issues such as sustainability, continuous improvement and attracting funds were high priority areas, despite little prior experience of evaluation in the organisation. The successful utilisation of the *Ray Rist Supply*

and Demand 2011 framework is described, to provide guidance for evaluation capacity building and its component institutional, human, technical and financial capital dimensions.

From the perspective of evaluation supply and demand, the organisation at first appeared supply-heavy and demand-poor despite the ongoing development of evaluation skill and expertise. In turning this around, deliberate action to grow institutional capital was taken. One important activity was development of an evaluation strategic plan for the board to endorse. The heart of this plan involved an evaluation vision and a conversation about 'evaluation capacity' and 'building capacity' in the organisation. From a cultural perspective, evaluation needed to buy into and leverage off the strong social capital of the volunteer base to build evaluation commitment and internal credibility.

The case example supports the Rist argument that evaluation capacity building strengthens and contributes to good governance. Equally, it is argued that social capital is a necessary dimension of evaluation capacity building, which an evaluation culture must nurture in order for evaluation to remain a durable asset.

Evaluation of a settlement service delivery model for newly arrived refugees in Australia

Kathryn Williams, Peter Samsa, Megan Blanchard, Dave Fildes, Australian Health Services Research Institute, University of Wollongong; Tadgh McMahon, Katrina Grech, Settlement Services International

The Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) program, funded by the Department of Social Services, is the key settlement service available to refugees and other humanitarian entrants on arrival in Australia. HSS is delivered by non-government providers including Settlement Services International (SSI) in the Sydney region and Western NSW. SSI commissioned an evaluation to build the evidence base for its decentralised service delivery model which has staff located at nine Migrant Resource Centres. Co-location enables case managers to develop relationships with local services and supports. This is expected to strengthen links between clients and community networks.

The evaluation aimed to assess the model's contribution to settlement outcomes. The evaluation was structured around a conceptual framework of settlement outcomes and took a triangulation approach, collecting data from stakeholder interviews and a survey of former clients. Comparison data were obtained from the first wave of data from 'Building a New Life in Australia'—a large longitudinal study of refugees—and population surveys using the Personal Wellbeing Index.

The evaluation presented ethical and logistical challenges. Refugees are a vulnerable population, requiring careful consideration of recruitment, confidentiality and consent procedures. Lack of English language proficiency can be a barrier to engagement in evaluation. However, in collaboration with SSI the authors developed culturally sensitive materials and data collection processes and were able to speak to former clients in their community languages. Consequently, 236 people completed the survey by telephone interview or in writing (response rate 58.7%).

Former clients reported successful settlement, particularly where SSI had opportunity to influence outcomes, such as helping people achieve social participation and confidence in tasks of daily life. The largely positive findings stand in contrast to prevailing political narratives around refugees in Australia. The evaluation allowed refugees to be heard and thus to influence future service delivery.

Hybrid evaluation in science organisations—a shared experience

Toni White, Helen Percy, AgResearch; Larelle McMillan, CSIRO Agriculture & Food; Samantha Stone-Jovicich, CSIRO Land & Water

Typically, organisations source their evaluation capability and capacity needs by utilising either their own internal evaluators or teams, or by using external evaluators. A hybrid form of evaluation capacity and capability development seeks to shift from these traditional pathways, towards utilising key staff members to develop evaluation skills in order to encourage a more enduring and wide reaching impact of evaluation within the organisation.

Adoption of this hybrid model has evolved within two science organisations as an approach of best fit for the needs of the organisation and in response to an increasing need for improving and proving impact: at an organisational level, and within specific science programmes. Utilising key science staff to assist with evaluation reach through these organisations enabled an increased capacity to engage more science teams with evaluative processes and practices. This has moved evaluation more firmly into science programmes—a space where evaluation had not had a significant home base in the past. Underpinning this approach is a coaching and mentoring model, supported by current literature, that explains how key staff move from novice through to expert status over time, utilising different training options reinforced by experiential learning and reflective processes.

CSIRO's Impact Champions (Agriculture and Food) and AgResearch's Evaluation Champions initiatives provide cross-organisational insights and learnings for other organisations considering implementing this 'fit for purpose' approach which requires volunteers, evaluation coaching, training, tools, processes and commitment. As such this paper shares key learnings about the drivers behind the initiatives, how they were operationalised, the impact and reach created as well as key overall insights.

He Kāinga Kōrerorero participatory evaluation

Kate Averill, Evalstars Limited, NZ; Joe Te Rito, Ako Aotearoa, NZ

I speak te reo Māori, therefore I am Māori.

The He Kāinga Kōrerorero programme (the Programme) is a government-funded te reo Māori (Māori language) revitalisation programme delivered by Te Ataarangi Trust (national Māori language service provider). The Programme's purpose is to facilitate and encourage the use of te reo Māori in the home and wider community. An evaluation was commissioned to determine the Programme's effectiveness, efficiency, and relevancy of delivering and sustaining the spoken language in the home and wider community.

The evaluation approach was collaborative, strengths-based and values-focused. Stakeholders across different levels were brought together to openly and collaboratively discuss the Programme's values, goals and objectives. Through initial hui (workshops), stakeholders identified six kaupapa Māori values that were to underpin current and future evaluation processes: Rangatiratanga (empowerment), Whanaungatanga (network and support systems), Manaakitanga (everyone has value), Māramatanga (knowledge, awareness and planning), Mahi pono (safety, trust and integrity), Te Ao Māori (maintaining Māori identity). This participatory approach fed into the development of a results model to scaffold ongoing iterative evaluation activities, reporting, and adaptive management.

This evaluative process identified previously unrecognised benefits such as increased cultural awareness and engagement, greater sense of community and identity, and growing use of language hubs, to be integrated into the results model and theory of change. The evaluation found that the Programme outputs were being

under-reported with the Programme's reach actually around 2.35 times the intended reach. This under-reporting contributed to a lack of long-term funding and limits to future growth opportunities. It also provided a previously untapped evidence-base to inform discussions on renewed priorities and resourcing within the community and funding bodies. A key lesson learned from this evaluative process was the value of stakeholders participating in, and contributing to, the evaluative journey and learning together through adaptive evaluation design.

The engagement of youth in program evaluation: The results of a scoping review

Sarah Heath, Katherine A. Moreau, *University of Ottawa, Canada*

Participatory and collaborative evaluation approaches require partnerships between trained program evaluators and program stakeholders (Cousins & Earl 1995) in the collection of information about program activities, to make judgments about programs, improve program effectiveness, and inform decision making (Patton, 1997). Due to the inclusive nature of participatory and collaborative evaluation approaches, evaluation may be seen by organisations and individuals as beneficial, democratic,

emancipatory, and empowering. However, researchers conducting research on program evaluation may question the feasibility and effectiveness of using participatory and collaborative evaluation approaches to engage youth in program evaluation. The objectives of this paper are to summarize the findings of a scoping review that aimed to:

- summarize the extent to which participatory and collaborative approaches are used to engage youth in program evaluation
- highlight common participatory and collaborative evaluation approaches used to engage youth in program evaluation, and
- identify research priorities to further investigate the use of participatory and collaborative evaluation approaches for engaging youth in program evaluation

The findings of this review revealed that few program evaluations used participatory and collaborative approaches to engage youth in program evaluation. These findings illustrate the need to further explore the evaluation practices used to evaluate youth serving programs, including the applicability and potential use of participatory and collaborative evaluation approaches. Such approaches may better engage youth involved in programs and services as well as provide insight to decision-makers and other stakeholders involved in serving youth populations.

The inside narrative: Evaluation service and blueprint design

Kathleen Palmer, Nathaniel Pihama, *Te Puni Kōkiri – Ministry of Māori Development, NZ*

One key role of Te Puni Kōkiri – Ministry of Māori Development is to develop and implement innovative trials and investments to promote better results for Māori (indigenous people of New Zealand). Greater emphasis on this role requires a bigger and broader evidence-base about how well policy and programme models improve results for Iwi, hapū and whānau Māori (tribe, sub-tribe and families). In turn, more efficient and effective coordination of research, monitoring and evaluation is required across the agency.

The presentation argues for a view that service design is as important as evaluation methodology, and as it builds durable evaluation capital, it is a critical driver increased quality. The presentation describes how the authors applied the business concepts of service design and blueprinting to getting better value for Te Puni Kōkiri from evaluation services.

The 2017 strategic project to develop an evaluation service design and blueprint had the following objectives:

- nail upfront smarts (technical competence of intervention logics and evaluability assessment)
- master procurement (government sourcing rules)
- champion usability (brokering knowledge transfer)

The result is that improvements to the evaluation service design increased the confidence of managers who are charged with investing to promote better results for Māori. The implication for evaluation practice is that good design and coordination of internal agency activities is a good investment as it produces durable assets of public value.

Mobilising multiple knowledges to evaluate the effectiveness of Indigenous land: Sea management in northern Australia

Beau Austin, *Charles Darwin University*; Otto Bulmaniya **Campion**, *ARNetwork & Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation*; Cissy Gore-Birch, *Bush Heritage Australia*

Indigenous peoples' have maintained complex cultural-social-ecological systems for millennia in northern Australia. To continue this work in the 'here-and-now', partnerships with external investors such as governments, industry, non-government organisations and philanthropies have been formed via the mechanism of Indigenous land and sea management. This intercultural work is complex, involving multiple knowledges and often multiple ways of being.

Though not without risk, the development of appropriate mechanisms for demonstrating benefits and impact from investment in the sector are important for continued growth. As such, transdisciplinary approaches to evaluating partnerships are required that can work with diversity across cultural, social, ecological and many other domains in innovative ways.

Two case studies from northern Australia will be presented that describe intercultural governance mechanisms designed to deliver innovative Indigenous land and sea management enterprises. Indigenous knowledge holders have been crucial to developing approaches that cross or span epistemic and ontologic boundaries or divides. These bottom-up initiatives illustrate how the rights and knowledges of Indigenous peoples can influence power relations and, consequently, the pathways being developed to demonstrate benefits of 'looking after Country'. Multiple evidence-based approaches that effectively mobilise local Indigenous knowledges will be fundamental to strengthening Indigenous land and sea management partnerships into the future, which in turn are fundamental to sustaining and enhancing livelihoods and wellbeing across the north Australian Indigenous estate. Co-existence of multiple knowledge systems, whose differences can enhance rather than detract from evaluations, must be promoted. To achieve this, generative 'good faith' approaches to evaluation should be adopted with a focus on principles, process and trust.

Evaluating innovation—the start of a conversation...

Caroline Henwood, *IOD PARC Australasia*;
Kari Sann, *KSA Consult*

There is recognition that competitiveness and large-scale, transformational social change depends on innovation—technological innovation, process innovation. Whilst this idea is as old as Einstein, there is a wave of innovation policy across the public sector. As governments seek to grow their economies, ministers are enthusiastically launching programs that aim to foster and support innovation. Reflections from reviewing innovation programs in the environment, gender equality and international development sectors include:

- the concept needs to be defined
- some factors (leadership, culture, collaboration, return on investment) seem to support innovation, and
- frameworks for making evaluative judgements about innovation are required

The presenters will briefly present their experiences of reviewing innovative programs but are keen to consult and collaborate with colleagues who work on innovation programs, or who have evaluated innovation to explore three key questions:

- What is innovation?
- What factors promote or detract from innovation?
- What methods/approaches can be used to evaluate innovation programs?

Evaluation-based advice with uncertain evidence: Examples from program and policy evaluations

Martin Gould, *Les Trudzik*, *ACIL Allen Consulting*

Outcome evaluations can be key inputs into the reform or development of policy and programs. In the best case scenario an evaluation can prove whether an intervention works or not. But in many cases, due to the nature of the activity being evaluated or limitations to the available evaluations methods, it is not possible to arrive at a firm conclusion on the outcomes achieved by a policy and program. Developing evaluation-based advice for decision makers under such conditions can be challenging.

This presentation will examine how to develop advice based on evaluations with uncertain evidence, using a recent evaluation of high education equity programs as a case study. It will explore the difference between establishing what is true, and deciding what to do based on the evaluation information available. The presentation will present a tentative framework for developing advice under conditions of incomplete evidence.

Engaging complexity: Developmental evaluation in remote Indigenous Australia

Ann Ingamells, **Peter Johnson** and three participants,
Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa; **Paul Crossley**, *World Vision*

Aboriginal people in desert communities may not aspire to be whitefellas. They do aspire to better navigate through and between Aboriginal and whitefella worlds, to strengthen their communities and their futures. This panel presentation speaks to a program in which remote Aboriginal people are defining and building the skills and capacities to do this.

Much of what we think of as evaluation is challenged in such a space. Important indicators of change and progress for community may be viewed as taken-for-granted advances by funders. The communal focus and collaborative ethos which are critical to community led initiatives and to sustainability, confuse the more conventional evaluation of individual change and progress towards national indicators. Governments often look to evaluation to render the world actionable to them, within their policy frameworks and the political scope available to them. A desire for evidence, best-practice models and programming certainty resides in a convincingly ordered view of the world. Evaluation in complex cross-cultural contexts dealing with challenging issues gains little purchase in such a policy regime, contributing to the poor policy and evaluation record in remote Aboriginal Australian contexts.

Speaking to these tensions, investors, evaluators, program staff and program participants, will outline a program, its practices, and its evaluation and ways they have wrestled with these issues and are discovering ways through them. A key evaluation challenge is to foster conversations towards a 'both-ways' appreciation of the challenges, the program and evaluation. It is the role of such evaluations to help decision makers 'see' and 'hear' beyond political immediacy and across cultural borders so as to make deeply meaningful cross cultural policy that supports sustainable change, community aspirations and ownership.

Testing Value for Money: Two case studies from a Pacific gender equality program

Nea Harrison, *Pandanus Evaluation*; **Emily Miller**,
Brenda Andrias, *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Support Unit*; **Anna Bryan**, *CARE International in PNG*

Value for Money (VfM) assessments are increasingly becoming an important consideration within monitoring and evaluation frameworks. An effective VfM approach will help donors, implementers, partner governments and communities understand costs and results, so that we can make more informed choices. This paper provides insights about designing frameworks to evaluate VfM in the context of a complex multi-country gender equality program.

Review of the VfM literature for social development programs indicates that an evaluation led VfM approach that draws on a program's theory of change and monitoring, evaluation and learning framework is more suitable than an economic rationalist approach. In response, the Australian Government's Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women) Program created a program level theory-based VfM approach that utilises the program's theory, program logic, evaluation questions and associated data collection and analysis processes to assess progress. The approach is guided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's VfM principles to maximize aid effectiveness. The VfM rubric was tested as part of the Pacific Women three-year evaluation conducted in 2016.

Pacific Women also conducted a project level VfM evaluation of the CARE International Coffee Industry Support Project (CISP) in PNG in early 2017. The evaluation tested the appropriateness of a VfM approach and the application of a scoring and weightings system to assess all aspects of the Project. The CISP VfM rubric drew on the Pacific Women VfM approach, but was more detailed to include project specific components identified by Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, CARE and the Pacific Women Support Unit during the design process. The testing of the VfM approaches in these evaluations provided important learnings, which may be applicable for other transformative development programs.

Evaluating large-scale education reform in the delivery of initial teacher education in Australia

Amanda Stevenson, Anita Torr, Edmund Misson,
Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) leads national approaches to initial teacher education, teaching and school leadership through evidence based policies, standards and resources.

Outcomes for Australians students is in decline on domestic (NAPLAN) and international OECD measures. AITSL has a key role in implementing the Australian Government's *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* reform agenda (TEMAG, 2015) focusing on stronger quality assurance of teacher education: the Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Programs in Australia; Standards and Procedures 2015.

National implementation of TEMAG reforms is the shared responsibility of stakeholders across the national education spectrum including: AITSL, commonwealth, state and territory education departments and teacher regulatory authorities, ITE providers and schools. There are 47 ITE providers across Australia, up to 380 ITE programs and 30,000 commencing ITE students per year. The impact of the reforms are multifaceted - intended to reach across the education sector and ultimately to improved outcomes for Australian school students. Implementation investment has topped \$16 million.

Evaluation of the TEMAG reforms is embedded in a political reform agenda with multiple, diverse and competing stakeholders and policy objectives. The evaluation system must accommodate the impact of a changing political environment and longevity in impact on student achievement gains while monitoring the short and midterm achievements of the reform program. It requires sector and government wide socialisation and commitment.

Ultimately, the evidence base driven from the evaluation of the TEMAG reforms will provide ongoing feedback for iterative development of reform delivery and will contribute as much to education policy as the reform agenda itself.

This paper reviews the national approach to evaluate the impact of the TEMAG reform agenda exploring the opportunities for an evaluation system to build evaluation capital, through monitoring and building large-scale multidimensional public policy reform in Australia.

Diverse identities, diverse design: Building an evaluation framework for two distinct program populations

Marc Gehrman, Sara Dixon, Victoria Visser, *The Science of Knowing*

The StandBy Response Service (StandBy) provides support and assistance for people who have been bereaved through suicide by responding to individuals' unique needs. StandBy operates in numerous regions around Australia, including several rural and remote areas with large Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations. Evaluating a suicide bereavement support service requires a considered and inclusive approach, drawing on the expertise and experiences of local service providers. It is also critical to consider cultural differences in how suicide and health and wellbeing are conceptualised, and the disproportionate rate of suicide and higher prevalence of suicide clusters in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.

Two distinct evaluation methodologies were developed in response to these considerations to independently measure how StandBy responds to suicide bereavement in both the Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous contexts. This approach ensured the evaluation framework was culturally appropriate, and relevant to the health and wellbeing outcomes anticipated by both groups of service users. This process also supported a constructivist understanding of how knowledge is generated by working with stakeholders and service users to discuss and negotiate evaluation processes.

This presentation showcases how the StandBy evaluation adopted inclusive practices that recognised the diverse identities, values and views of stakeholders and service users. The presentation includes a discussion on the two evaluation methodologies, and how findings could be merged to form an overall understanding of StandBy's impact.

An outline of the consultation process will demonstrate how we worked with stakeholders and service users to develop the two methodologies. This includes a discussion of how consultation processes recognised diversity and fostered cultural inclusivity, and the co-creation of knowledge in evaluation practice. The presentation will also cover how the evaluation has been embedded into ongoing service delivery to ensure its permanence and contribution to StandBy's evaluation capital.

A realist approach to evaluating the rationales and practices of collaborative governance

Rachel Eberhard, *Eberhard Consulting*

Collaborative governance is the practice of engaging stakeholder organisations in policy decisions. Both researchers and practitioners recommend collaborative governance to address complex and intractable policy issues. Yet governance practice in water policy in Australia and internationally shows limited and variable adoption of collaborative approaches. There is a lack of critical thinking about how and why governments use collaborative approaches, and their impact on outcomes.

Drawing on realist evaluation, this research examines the rationales and practices of governments and stakeholder organisations as they interact in key decision points of two longitudinal case studies in Australian water policy—the Murray Darling Basin and the Great Barrier Reef. More than 40 interviews across multiple levels and organisations were used to understand the logic of institutional decisions about the objectives and modes of engagement. Findings highlight significant constraints to the adoption of collaborative governance as envisaged in the normative literature. Conditions that enable effective governance and the potential impact on governance outcomes are identified.

This research makes an important methodological contribution extending the application of realist evaluation from the behaviour of individuals to the functioning of governance networks. As a novel approach the work adds value to the growing field of governance assessment, and in so doing seeks to contribute to the better design and operation of purposeful governance structures to addressing complex and challenging policy issues.

Using innovative methods in evaluation—what is needed?

Patricia Rogers, *BetterEvaluation/ANZSOG*

The changing nature of programs and policies and the context in which they are implemented, and the rise of different focuses for evaluation, create a need and opportunity for innovation. Innovation can be in the form of: new technology (such as using social media data or machine learning for analysis); a bricolage, or a patchwork, of previous ideas and techniques brought together more coherently and used more systematically; or borrowing ideas and methods from other disciplines and professions. However it

is not so easy to choose which of these new approaches might be appropriate to use, or to develop the skills and infrastructure to use them. This session will present a small number of innovations in evaluation and focus on a discussion around what is needed for participants to be able to use them—in terms of what can be done by individuals, agencies, the AES and other organisations.

Towards a more strategic and holistic system for evaluating public policies and programs

Jew-Chung Kon, Mandy Charman, Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources

Effective public policies and programs should be underpinned by robust evaluation evidence that are generated and used to inform their design and delivery within the existing political context. At the organisational level, the generation and use of evidence are in turn driven by a range of enablers that a government agency can invest over time to best meet its evidence needs. These enablers include the agency's evaluation leadership, governance, culture, capability and processes—factors that can take multiple attempts over many years to optimise.

This presentation will describe a model used by a large Victorian Government department, where a holistic system for evaluation was recently established to help achieve the department's vision of a productive, competitive and sustainable Victorian economy that contributes to a prosperous and inclusive society. A key feature of this model includes the creation of a strategic evaluation function that is embedded in a whole-of-department evaluation capability building agenda and outcomes framework. This model is intended to maximise the value of existing resources and generate more enduring evaluation evidence, at the big picture level. It is also intended to help decision makers better understand how government interventions across a range of portfolios are collectively contributing to long-term outcomes.

Experiences to date have generated lessons that could benefit other government agencies and the evaluation community more broadly.

Diverse identities, values and views of different stakeholders and cultural inclusivity in monitoring and evaluation of DREAMS

Reuben Kivuva, Kisii University, Kenya

Despite considerable progress in the global response to the epidemic, AIDS is the leading cause of death among women of reproductive age. To address this, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Girl Effect, Johnson & Johnson, Gilead Sciences and ViiV Healthcare started an initiative named 'DREAMS'.

DREAMS is an ambitious partnership to reduce new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women in ten sub-Saharan African countries. The DREAMS partnership is to deliver a core package of evidence-informed approaches that go beyond the health sector, addressing the structural drivers that directly and indirectly increase girls' HIV risk—including poverty, gender inequality, sexual violence and lack of education.

The main goal of DREAMS is to help girls develop into **D**etermined, **R**esilient, **E**mpowered, **A**IDS-free, **M**entored, and **S**afe women. These girls and young women live in most of the disadvantaged communities and neighbourhoods. They are living in communities where they have to contend with the many formal and informal groups in their community—groups that provide leadership, services and social connections.

In order to implement and monitor the process calls for the engagement of the community groups in many ways through

using a special approach with selected groups to guide them in becoming 'action groups'. These community action groups become leaders of activities and leaders of change within their groups and communities. Engaging with groups requires energy, focus and diplomacy. This is a report on the implementation process and how the different groups were used in monitoring and evaluation of the program.

Building on established community development theories to enhance the rigour and utility of program evaluation: A case study of the Fiji Community Development Program

Catriona Flavel, Coffey

The Fiji Community Development Program (FCDP) is a \$20m DFAT investment aimed at reducing hardship and increasing the resilience of Fiji's most poor and marginalised through grants and capacity building support to civil society organisations (CSOs). FCDP used formative evaluation and iterative needs analysis to design the Community Action Program (CAP)—an innovative approach to combining capacity building with funding in order to improve the way CSOs engage with communities.

An evaluation of the CAP was undertaken in 2016 and compared its approach with theories including Asset Based Community Development, Sustainable Livelihoods Approach and Community Driven Development.

The purpose of this presentation is to discuss how this comparison was used to:

- refine the program theory underpinning the CAP
- objectively assess the relevance and effectiveness of the CAP
- generate findings and recommendations to improve future program design in Fiji and on other DFAT programs, and
- consider how established theories can be effectively applied in the Fiji context

Using community development theories to assess the CAP program enhanced the objectivity of the evaluation and the utility of evaluation findings; it reinforced the validity of the approach and informed the recommendations. It was, however, important to recognise that the CAP approach was designed to meet the specific needs of CSOs and the realities of working in Fijian villages and settlements. By testing the program logic underpinning the CAP, the evaluation developed important insights into CSOs and community dynamics in Fiji which influence how established approaches can be delivered.

This presentation will highlight the importance of incorporating cultural and contextual factors into objective assessment in order to assess the efficacy of program design and produce evaluation products that are meaningful and useful.

Supporting country ownership of development outcomes: How monitoring and evaluation in a public-private partnership can contribute to evaluation capital

Elizabeth Morgan, Chris Taput, Oil Search Foundation, PNG

Papua New Guinea has been the focus of extensive international donor assistance for over 30 years. Evaluations of donor programs in PNG are often conducted through the lens of donor countries and stories of failure abound. These stories can impact on the morale of leaders at the political and administrative levels of government and in other sectors, undermine the confidence of the population, and damage national identity and the country's image.

Achieving positive change in complex contexts is now recognised as one of the most challenging development dilemmas facing all governments and donors across the world. A growing body of literature and research on evaluation and addressing complex social and economic problems, is challenging practitioners and donors to rethink evaluation practices and international development. From the 2007 Paris Agreement to the very recent interest in Collective Impact and theories of change, international development is being reshaped to ensure partner countries, rather than donor partners, drive development agendas.

Collaboration is also seen as essential to achieving sustainable outcomes. In that context, public-private partnerships are increasingly important to changing life circumstances and addressing development indicators. In PNG, the Oil Search Foundation, a not-for-profit, is supported by Oil Search Limited, a PNG resource company committed to collaborating with the PNG Government to achieve sustainable development outcomes. Oil Search Foundation is engaged in a transformative process to contribute to improving lives by working through Government systems and thus building local capacity.

The presentation will discuss the efforts by Oil Search Foundation to engage in planning and evaluation activities which build evaluation capital, by capturing and telling stories of change and respecting local leadership as PNG leaders shape their own solutions. Collective impact, thinking and working politically, action research, and collaboration theory all offer insights into this partnership journey. Understanding how culture impacts on evaluation efforts is also addressed.

Complex evaluations in the political context: Designing an evaluation framework for a whole-of-government reform program

Nerida Leal, Rhian Stack, Katrina Middlin, Sarah Stamp, Bianca Reveruzzi, Alexia Lennon, Queensland Family and Child Commission

While evaluators can often access examples of complex evaluation frameworks and reports, detailed information about the thought processes and decisions that influenced the evaluation design are less available. The purpose of this paper is to provide insight

into the development of an evaluation framework for a whole-of-government reform program including 121 recommendations being implemented by government and non-government stakeholders over a ten-year period. This politically-sensitive reform program is being evaluated with multiple tiers of evaluation (activity-level and whole-of-reform program level) planned at critical points of the implementation to assess process, impact and outcomes. This paper focuses on the consultation and decision-making process adopted in the development of the whole-of-reform program level evaluation framework designed to inform the adaptive management of the reform program and assessment of outcomes achieved at the year 3, 5 and 10 time points.

A consultative, iterative approach, with priority given to engaging and involving all key stakeholders throughout the development of the framework, was adopted to mitigate the effects of key challenges involved with this task. Key challenges included:

- negotiating the evaluation design with the multiple stakeholders to meet their varying needs;
- working with stakeholders to identify availability and quality of information to feed into the evaluation at each time point;
- designing an evaluation framework (including methods and underlying data collection tools) which is flexible enough to be responsive to data availability and the variable nature of activities at different time points; and
- anticipating shifting government priorities which may significantly affect program implementation and evaluation.

A constant process of reflection and quality improvement allowed these challenges to be addressed, and will continue to allow lessons learned from earlier evaluations to inform the design of future studies. This paper concludes with a summary of insights which may be valuable for other evaluators designing complex evaluations.

Strengthening evaluation through evaluation: Driving improvement in the Australian aid program

Tracey McMartin, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

Evaluation is a core means of assessing the effectiveness of Australian aid. For DFAT, evaluation is also a valuable management tool for decision-making. Such functions depend on quality evaluation. The Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) within DFAT undertook a review of project level evaluations in order to gauge quality, confirm typical characteristics and identify possible areas for improvement. This meta-evaluation, conducted by ODE staff, rated evaluations against nine key quality criteria such as clarity or purpose, suitability of methods and use of evidence. The review found that generally evaluations were of a good standard but noted shortcomings in the use of these reports. In particular the quality of recommendations, and related to that, the completion of management responses and publication of evaluation reports, were identified as areas needing improvement.

Drawing on the findings of this review, and on extensive consultation within DFAT, across the Australian public service and internationally, ODE set about developing a new evaluation policy. As its objective the policy seeks to place use at the centre of DFAT's evaluation practice, with the publication of reports inclusive of a departmental management response as a key indicator. For a number of years publication and management response rates have been low. To address this challenge ODE decided a different tack was required.

DFAT's new evaluation policy reflects a demand driven approach. This system allows managing areas to select and scope the evaluations that will best assist them in delivering the aid program. These evaluations are compiled from across the department into an annual evaluation plan that is published on the department's website. Clearer management arrangements also feature in the policy with the DFAT Secretary approving the evaluation plan and senior managers now accountable for finalising management responses and ensuring publication.

Staff from ODE will present in detail the method and findings from the meta-evaluation and highlight how this has informed the key features of DFAT's new aid evaluation policy.

The Strengthening Evaluation Practices and Strategies (STEPS) in Indigenous settings in Australia and New Zealand Project: Moving forward the 'next' steps

Amohia Boulton, Lynley Cvitanovic, *Whakauae Research Services Limited, NZ*; **Sharon Clarke**, *South Australian Department of Health*; **Lisa Warner**, *YWCA of Adelaide Inc*; **Jenni Judd**, *Central Queensland University*; **Margaret Cargo**, *University of Canberra*

The ultimate goal of the STEPS in Indigenous settings in Australia and New Zealand Project is to identify actions that can be taken by organisations, such as the AES, as well as by individuals to strengthen practices in the Indigenous evaluation space in Australia and New Zealand. To this end, the STEPS project, with the support of an international project advisory group, has engaged a broad cross section of evaluation stakeholders in both countries in a concept mapping study. The purpose of the study is to identify strategies to strengthen evaluation practice and to then rate these strategies on their importance and feasibility. The detailed results of the study will be presented in a short paper at the conference. During the presentation, which will include a consultation and collaboration session, conference participants will have the opportunity to translate the results of the study into actions that the AES can either implement or support within short (6–18 months), medium (3– years) and longer term timeframes (5– years).

The session will be structured as follows: The key results of the concept mapping study will be presented. Participants will be asked to form small groups; each group will be assigned a key result from which to generate ideas for action that can be undertaken or supported by the AES. STEPS Project Advisory Group members will be invited to facilitate the small group discussions. Each small group will then have the opportunity to feedback to the wider group with respect to the ideas for action they have considered.

Finally, representatives from the AES Board and/or STEPS Project Advisory Group will be invited to respond to the proposed actions during the closing phase of the session.

What is evaluation? Strengthening our capital through self-definition

Amy Gullickson, *Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne*

The *AES Evaluator's Professional Learning Competencies*, published in 2013, gave our society a great start at clarifying the skills, knowledge and attitudes expected of those who practice evaluation. Internationally, other societies have taken the same steps. Across the societies, there is no expectation that any evaluator should demonstrate mastery on all competencies; systems like Canada's certification process require percentage across the full set. This perspective implies that all competencies within a set, therefore, are equal.

The AES Board has made exploring professionalisation a priority in their most recent strategic plan. As we consider a move toward professionalisation, we must determine if all competencies are equal, or whether there are indeed some that define our profession as distinct from others (e.g., social science researchers or organizational development consultants). To be best able to serve as a 'durable asset for sound governance', we must define evaluation in a way that clarifies our profession, prioritises our competencies and makes clear evaluation's contribution to societal betterment.

In this paper, the presenter will explore the connections between the definition of evaluation, the skills, knowledge and abilities required to conduct evaluation, the resulting criteria for good

evaluation and good evaluators, and the implications for training. The presenter is a member of the AES Learning and Professional Practice Committee, who engages in evaluation teaching and consultancy in Australia. The stance she will take in this presentation is illustrative, intended to demonstrate a potential way forward in the move toward professionalisation.

Developmental evaluation: An emerging practice for informing policy

Rob Kennedy, Mila Waise, *Vulnerable Children's Reform Unit, Victorian State Government*; **Regina Hill**, *Regina Hill Effective Consulting Pty Ltd*; **Jenny Riley**, *Navigating Outcomes*; **Kerry Graham**, *Collaboration for Impact*

Governments are constantly looking to ground policy on a robust evidence base, but there are often inherent biases in what evidence they look to in order to inform their policy and program development. While governments are accustomed to commissioning formative and summative evaluations they are less familiar—and arguably less comfortable—with more emergent, developmental evaluation techniques. It is those techniques though that are uniquely placed to provide insights on more innovative and adaptive policy and program responses, particularly those working in areas of significant complexity and change.

This panel will explore the process that was used to commission, implement and leverage a developmental evaluation of the Victorian Government's Children & Youth Area Partnerships—a collaborative, cross-sector, place-based initiative aimed at improving outcomes for vulnerable children and their families. It will explore the challenges that were faced in undertaking an evaluation of this type, the benefits derived from adopting this evaluation approach and the learnings generated about how to implement and leverage this type of approach within government to inform program development and evolution.

The panel discussion will be led by members of the Vulnerable Children's Reform Unit that commissioned the evaluation and include members of the developmental evaluation team involved in the delivery of it.

Belling the cat: Commissioning for outcomes and evaluating place-based initiatives

John Stoney, Tim Reddel, *Australian Department of Social Services*

Governments have a role to play in creating the environment in which people have access to the resources and opportunities people need to live a reasonable life. Australia like many other countries has had an ongoing interest in longer term place-based strategies to address geographically concentrated, entrenched social problems. There has been renewed activity within the Department of Social Services (DSS) to utilise and evaluate place-based initiatives more effectively. Places by nature are inherently complex and dynamic. Commissioning, implementing, supporting and evaluating place-based initiatives consequently presents a number of challenges and opportunities.

DSS has co-developed a unique, yet practical approach to evaluation of place-based initiatives with the help of some of Australia's leadership thinkers in place-based interventions and their measurement.

Making a difference: Developing actionable recommendations and getting them implemented

Kathryn Newcomer, *The George Washington University, USA*

The focus of this paper is on efforts needed to get recommendations implemented to improve the performance of government agencies in a highly political environment drawing upon the experience of the Offices of Inspector General in the U.S. Federal Government.

U.S. Inspectors General (IGs) operate in a strategic environment requiring that they

- work with a variety of stakeholders for their respective offices and agencies,
- (balance conflicting expectations regarding independence, accountability, and engagement, and
- finesse the often volatile politics and personalities found in the USA national capital.

Metaphorically, IGs are often described as 'walking the barbed wire fence' between Congress and the executive branches of government—this also applies to the conflicts inherent in dealing with various stakeholders and personalities engaged in the politics surrounding federal programs. Another occasionally used metaphor points to the challenges facing IGs in this environment, likening their work to 'walking through a minefield' with potentially explosive consequences if they fail to meet expectations, overstep their bounds, or step on the toes of a powerful group in pursuit of fraud, waste or mismanagement. In order for IGs to have a positive impact on their agencies' operations, they must amass important evaluation capital through earning a reputation for objectivity, fairness and accuracy—and through providing credible evidence to support their findings and recommendations.

This paper draws upon two years of work that includes both qualitative research with six extensive case studies of federal IG offices (with over 50 interviews) and a survey conducted of all federal IGs (in 2016). The presenter will describe how IG offices work to improve agency operations, processes and programs through the development of actionable recommendations. First, she will discuss the processes the IG offices use to develop recommendations, as well as to meet challenges to presenting recommendations that

will be effective in making the changes that the IG staff deem to be needed. She then discusses the challenges and opportunities IG offices face in getting their recommendations implemented. Finally, she discusses how recommendation development and implementation processes are affected by and may affect the IG's independence, accountability and engagement in their strategic environment.

The lessons learned hold relevance to other national and sub-national audit offices.

Balancing learning and accountability: Building an effective internal evaluation function for Australia's foreign aid program

David Slattery, *Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)*; **Wendy Jarvie**, *University of New South Wales*

The push for greater accountability over foreign aid spending has seen some jurisdictions adopt external evaluation models such as the Independent Commission for Aid Impact, which was created to scrutinise the effectiveness and impact of development assistance provided across all departments in the United Kingdom.

In Australia, similar models have been under active consideration, but thus far, governments have resisted calls for external models for aid evaluation. Instead, the independence of evaluation has been bolstered by establishing an independent advisory committee to oversee the aid program's evaluation function, the Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE), which is a unit within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Established in 2012, the IEC is a model of evaluation governance that is unique in the federal bureaucracy.

This paper will examine the origins and evolution of this approach, and its strengths and weaknesses compared to other models. Overall, the IEC has helped to preserve many of the advantages of ODE's position as an internal evaluation unit, while addressing some of its disadvantages. In particular, the IEC has provided ODE with valuable leverage in taking forward difficult issues with management, and the improved its credibility as a source of authoritative assessments of the quality of Australia's aid program.

The practicality of good theory

Gill Westhorp, *Professorial Research Fellow, Charles Darwin University*

Just as evaluation provides capital for policy and programs, theory provides capital for evaluation. But the word 'theory' means many different things, and different kinds of theory bring different kinds of capital. Meanwhile, arguably, what some (but not other) stakeholders need from evaluation is changing in response to current challenges—technological change, climate change, and challenges to democracy and science.

This paper will outline how evaluation can adapt to the new demands this changing context brings. It will demonstrate, using examples from real evaluations, how emerging approaches to commissioning evaluations, writing evaluation questions, and developing program theory, along with better use of different kinds of 'theory capital', can better enable evaluation to meet the changing needs of its users.



ABSTRACTS: Tuesday 5 September 2017

Tuesday keynote session 08:30 – 09:30

Evaluation is not life or death—it's far more important than that

Richard Weston, *Chief Executive Officer, Healing Foundation*

Evaluation is part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies' post-colonial survival kit. The Healing Foundation's Theory of Change for Healing is the first time that the evidence base on trauma has been combined with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worldview. The Foundation has developed it through years of learning from practice, working with thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in communities around Australia. We believe if policy makers design and develop initiatives drawing on the Theory of Change for Healing it will support our communities to thrive rather than just survive.



Tuesday morning session 09:30 – 10:30

Mission Australia's Room to Grow: Program evaluation of an intervention for hoarding disorder and domestic squalor in central Sydney

Leah Cave, Joann Fildes, *Mission Australia*

From July 2015 to June 2016, Mission Australia implemented and evaluated an intervention for hoarding disorder and domestic squalor across the central and eastern Sydney region. Mission Australia's evaluation found statistically significant positive change in the clutter and cleanliness of participants' living environments and their overall wellbeing. Improvements were also seen in participants' subjective assessment of clutter in their homes, their capacity to complete instrumental activities of daily living and their overall cognitive functioning:

- wellbeing of participants improved with scores rising from 61 to 68
- cleanliness and clutter in living environments improved with scores reducing from 16.6 to 9.6; participants reported lower levels of their own clutter, with scores reducing from 4.7 to 3.7
- living skills improved with the proportion of those assessed as being 'high functioning' on a range of activities of daily living rising from 58% to 73%
- cognitive functioning improved with scores rising from 23.8 to 24.4

Key practice recommendations included:

- Social interaction should be central to program design—there is strong therapeutic value to social support throughout service delivery and supportive relationships between participants.
- Adapted Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is highly beneficial for those experiencing hoarding disorder—hoarding disorder is a mental health issue and requires psychological support.
- Participants must be centrally involved in all decision-making—enforced cleans are likely to lead to traumatisation and other negative outcomes, even with prior warning and consultation.

- Home visits are essential—it is important for participants to be supported to organise and discard possessions in their own homes.
- Ongoing support through peer support networks is beneficial—continuing support after 'formal' interventions sustains behaviour change learnt throughout program.

Evaluation system longevity and permanence: Using scenario thinking to build resilient evaluation capital

Catherine Manley, Robert Allen, *Miles Morgan Australia*

Australia's world of work, learning and living is set to change significantly if we are to take heed of the booming world of scenario thinking and future studies.

Given that no future is certain, this interactive session will introduce the concept of scenario thinking—an adjacent concept of systems thinking—and present a series of scenarios to enable us to consider the resilience of our evaluation system, whatever the future brings.

This intentionally collaborative session is designed to stimulate discussion amongst evaluation practitioners, academics, educators, commissioners and other evaluation community members to collectively:

- determine the implications of such future evaluation scenarios
- contribute to the preparation of the evaluation system and its community as it adapts to these future needs, and
- ensure evaluation maintains its presence as a durable asset by addressing the following burning questions:
 - What evaluation system needs will there be in these futures? What will these futures mean for evaluation practice?
 - What ramifications will the futures have for policy-making, service delivery and program design?

The scenarios presented in this session are built upon those developed as part of a recent Australian Government and industry Future of Work study, and the session is a unique opportunity to challenge and examine the scenario implications from an evaluation standpoint.

Evaluation and the Indigenous voice: Core values for legitimising ethical conduct

Bronwyn Rossingh, *Accountability Notions*; **Djuwalpi Marika**, *Yirrkala Community*; **Yalmay Yunupingu**, *Yirrkala School*

This paper aims to propose a higher level of reflection and understanding for evaluators engaging in evaluations of Indigenous based programs. Whilst the AES strives towards cultural competence and ethical conduct by its membership and evaluators further afield, there is still much to be learnt from Indigenous people to understand what ethics means from an Indigenous perspective.

This paper analyses the extant literature to provide a background of ethics in evaluation including Indigenous evaluations and provides commentary from Indigenous people regarding what the core values are and how they see the future of evaluation in their community.

This paper is based on community evaluation experiences and valuable input from Indigenous people. The learnings for evaluators arising from this paper include:

- Indigenous ethical values and principles
- A refocus on 'whose' ethics are important
- Providing a voice for Indigenous people to contribute to the landscape of evaluation and how that may be done.

This paper informs both theory and practice concerning evaluation in Indigenous contexts and contributes a further dimension to the foundations of ethical conduct.

Intervention logic: Putting the logic back in logic models

Andrew Hawkins, *ARTD Consultants*

Program logic is often conceived of as a model of a program's theory of change. This presentation argues that while logic and theory are very useful in evaluation, conflating the two leads to under-developed theory and over-extended logic.

The presentation will start with a brief discussion of program theory, theories of change and causal mechanisms. A theory may be as simple as a few sentences describing how and why a program is intended to work, or as in-depth as a collection of realist context-mechanism-outcome configurations. They differ in their level of granularity. They share the common function of explaining why we expect change to occur.

Presenter and audience will then visit the philosophy of causality to argue that program logic comprised of a series of boxes and arrows falsely implies that A leads to, or generates B (e.g. awareness of the program does not lead to participation in the program). Instead it will be proposed that a configurationist approach to causality with necessary and sufficient conditions provides a more useful underpinning to program logic than one implying a sequence of cause and effects.

The first step in intervention logic is diagramming the conditions considered necessary for achieving program outputs, and the assumptions we are relying on for this to hold. The second is diagramming the conditions that these outputs and assumptions must be sufficient for generating. The third is diagramming the conditions or outcomes these outputs should contribute to, along with the effects of external factors. By giving explicit attention to the interplay between aspects the program has relative control

over (inputs and activities) and those that it does not (assumptions, external factors) this approach provides a holistic model of how an intervention is intended to be effective.

Note: Participants are asked to bring a program logic they have developed to the presentation.

Supporting managers to use evaluators more effectively: A Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation

Greet Peersman, *The Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG)*;

Patricia Rogers, *BetterEvaluation/ANZSOG*

Recent discussions about evaluation capacity development have emphasized the importance of both supply and demand. This session will demonstrate, share and discuss a new resource aimed at improving demand for evaluation. *A Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation* is a free online resource developed to support project/program managers to more effectively plan and manage evaluations. It covers developing a Terms of Reference (including interactive software to develop a Terms of Reference which can be customized to specific organizational requirements), recruiting evaluators, and overseeing the evaluation design and conduct. The guide includes ways of identifying and addressing complicated and complex aspects of the project, program or policy and their implications for the evaluation.

The session will provide an opportunity to discuss ways of supporting a partnership between evaluators and evaluation managers and will be particularly useful for those working either internally or externally to develop organizational evaluation capacity. Participants will be able to access the free resource and additional linked resources during and after the session.

Building evaluation capital in the environmental policy field: What do we have, what do we need?

Fabio Jimenez, *The University of New South Wales*;

Nathan Sibley, *Australian Department of Environment and Energy*; **David Winfield**, *Alluvium Consulting Australia Pty Ltd*

This panel focuses on evaluative research and works in the environmental policy field. It aims to contribute to the discussion of the methods, criteria and challenges associated with evaluating public policies and programs addressing issues such as, but not limited to, climate change, conservation, natural resources management and energy. Since the late 1990s, evaluation scholars and practitioners are giving increasing attention to the environmental policy field, however, in most cases their studies reproduce the methods, criteria and approaches employed in the evaluation of interventions in other policy fields.

This panel will explore different experiences (positive and challenging as well) faced by evaluators interested in making environmental policies more effective, relevant and sustainable. With this purpose, it will present three short papers that discuss, from academic, professional and government platforms, the theory and practice of evaluation in the environmental policy field. At the end of the panel, presenters expect attendees to better understand what evaluators know today as well as challenges and opportunities in tackling evaluations in the environment and natural resources management sectors. By arranging this panel, the presenters aspire to gain attention for evaluative research in non-traditional fields, and discuss whether these fields might be addressed with the same methodological and theoretical repertoire.

Map-enabled experiential review: Enhancing the relevance of evaluation at the program delivery coalface

Donna Cohen, Vitas Anderson, Philip Cohen, *MEERQAT P/L*

Indicators form the centrepiece of most monitoring and evaluation frameworks and are a valuable evaluation tool. However, many important aspects of program delivery do not lend themselves to indicator measurement. Indeed, individuals involved in program delivery often find it difficult to relate indicators to their day-to-day activities and may struggle to engage with evaluation activities and outcomes as a consequence. This is a major impediment to achieving improved program implementation, which is one of the primary objectives of evaluation.

Map-enabled experiential review (MEER) is an innovative approach to data collection in the context of program evaluation that complements indicator measurement and actively engages individuals involved in program delivery. The approach uses interactive graphical tools to collect data about program activities.

The data reflect the experiences of stakeholders involved in program delivery and therefore provide an additional evidence-base for interpreting indicator data.

In 2016–17, the MEER approach was included in the first round of evaluation of the Rural Community Intern Training (RCIT) Program run by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services. The MEER tool was employed at each of the five RCIT program sites and engaged stakeholders in a series of structured conversations. The graphical nature of the tool revealed the relationship between various streams of activity within the program, which was educative for stakeholders and helpful in identifying root causes of issues. As similar conversations occurred at each of the five program sites, it was possible to distinguish 'local' issues from 'global' issues, which informed recommendations to the department following the evaluation.

This project demonstrates the value of the map-enabled experiential review approach in building evaluation capital. The approach is engaging for participants, provides structure to qualitative evaluation processes, captures data not accessible through indicator monitoring and assists stakeholders to develop ownership of the evaluation outcomes.

Building evaluation capability to improve educational outcomes for at risk children and young people

Deirdre Shaw, Shelly Rao, *Education Review Office, NZ*

This presentation shows how the Education Review Office (ERO) builds systems within New Zealand's education landscape to build evaluation capital through:

- methodologies that are specific to the context
- engaging stakeholders in the development of evaluation frameworks—so policy questions are addressed and findings inform policy, and educational leaders engage with and use evaluation findings
- external evaluation that builds evaluation capability and capacity among evaluands
- developing internal systems to build our own capability and the culture to do and use improvement-focused evaluation

ERO's current focus is to build both our own evaluation capital and that of the people working in the diverse education contexts ERO evaluates. A significant feature of ERO's approach has been the development of evaluation methodologies and evaluation indicators specific to particular education contexts. These include schools, early learning services, kura and kōhanga reo, residential services and alternative education. This paper describes the different evaluation methodologies and indicators developed for residential services and alternative education for some of New Zealand's most at risk children and young people. It will enable participants to explore the various policy and education settings in New Zealand, develop approaches to external evaluation and collaboration for improvement. The building of evaluative capability through stakeholder engagement will also be discussed.

ERO evaluates and reports on all New Zealand schools and early learning services on a regular cycle in English medium and Māori medium settings. ERO also undertakes national evaluations designed to influence and inform the national education debate. The purpose of these evaluations is to act as change levers in education, to raise systemic issues, to enhance education policy design and implementation, and to assist key players to improve the quality of education and the level of student achievement. Each evaluation must be completed within limited timeframes. Adaptive expertise is an essential characteristic of the ERO evaluator.

Growing impact: Challenges in understanding impact in Indigenous affairs—building demand, identifying gaps and highlighting progress in organisational and sectoral evaluation capacity

Kim Grey, Stephen Powrie, *Australian Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet*

Australian Indigenous affairs is a complex, adaptive policy space, featuring emergent properties, multiple strands of causal pathways, and diverse stakeholders. Since the changes that brought eight portfolio areas into the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), the cross sectoral nature of government effort has become more apparent. Gaps in our knowledge about whether programs make a difference have become clearer. Importantly, the diversity of world views and nature of knowledge is increasingly at the forefront of challenges to our evaluation practice.

Asking tough questions about the contribution of interventions and services to overcoming Indigenous disadvantage is a priority for PM&C and the Australian government more broadly. This was highlighted by the announcement in February 2017 of a \$40 million commitment over four years to strengthen evaluation, monitoring and review of Indigenous specific programs.

This presentation will examine how recent expansion in evaluation investment is continuing to develop the evidence base about what works to address complex social and economic problems. The session will explore the elements and challenges of putting evaluation systems into place. We will look beyond the evaluation effort undertaken by the department to include the wider evaluative effort undertaken in the delivery sector, and the contribution of Indigenous people, academics and evaluators who collectively help to develop the transferable knowledge necessary to address complex policy challenges.

Challenges in implementing specific approaches will be discussed. These include strengthening measurement of impact, linking administrative data and exploring explanatory research and analysis techniques. Progress in using robust and ethical techniques, notably participatory or collaborative methods, in exploring impact in this complex policy space will be discussed. Many challenges for the organisation and the wider sector arise from confounded causality and diverse worldviews. These suggest a major role for collaborative responses to understanding impact and supporting action at many levels of leadership.

How to be a front-end champion: Five principles for building evaluation capital

Anthea Rutter, *Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne*; **Zita Unger**, *Ziman*

Stakeholder analysis is a vital component of best practice evaluation. Although most evaluators undertake a 'front-end' process of some kind, the methodology described here allows for a more strategic approach.

The benefits of a thorough stakeholder analysis coupled with a solid understanding about diverse stakeholder interests, adds to the evaluation toolbox, as well as adding to the evaluation capital within an organisation. This capital is further increased with processes such as: program logic activities; the identification of credible measures; building an evaluation design and developing accountability across organisations and sectors in support of the evaluation process.

The presenters introduce their Strategic and Tactical Evaluation Management (STEM™) model, a stakeholder driven process focused on the alignment of evaluation needs with organisational needs in determining the value and contribution of policies, programs and products to 'bottom line' success.

The four elements of the STEM™ Evaluation Process are: stakeholder engagement, indicator development, evaluation design and reporting relevance. At each stage, a key strategic question is posed, which also has an equivalent evaluation focus (clarify, design, collect and report). Thus, the key question assists in generating an important evaluation outcome, thereby ensuring that stakeholder information needs and organisational needs (the 'investment return') can be positioned and managed for purposes of the evaluation.

A front-end champion is more than a facilitator of evaluation design. They improve the quality of evaluation experience by modelling the 'long tail' of relevance at each evaluation stage. The five principles of effective evaluation design and analysis are discussed in the context of a case study involving a human services organisation and a philanthropic trust.

What would we use and how would we use it? Can innovative digital technology be used to both enhance and evaluate wellbeing outcomes with highly vulnerable and disadvantaged young people?

Rhianon Vichta, *Brisbane Youth Service*

Tracking outcomes with highly transient and research resistant young people is a particular challenge for evaluators. Can digital technologies such as apps and interactive websites tap into tech-savvy youth culture to engage vulnerable young people in both tracking their own progress, and providing meaningful real-time data about their outcomes over time? Putting wellbeing trackers directly into the hands, and phones, of young people who are accessing youth support services seems to make good sense, in principle. If they were going to actually be used, however, the technology would need to also provide direct user benefit as well as being relevant and engaging. There are a great number of apps and websites which aim to support wellbeing, including some designed specifically for vulnerable young people. There is also evidence supporting the use of web-based progress trackers to simultaneously measure and promote progress towards personal goals like weight loss and stress management. Would use of this kind of technology provide an innovative way to both enhance and measure outcomes with highly transient and vulnerable young people? Will young people with highly complex needs use apps/sites like these outside of, or alongside, their relationships with support workers?

This presentation shares key learning emerging from youth consultation and co-design workshops focussed on how young people accessing homelessness support services view the potential use of online wellbeing tools to both track and build real-world wellbeing.

Applying a Theory of Change in a developmental evaluation project to influence system-level change in New Zealand's Agricultural Innovation System

Tracy Williams, *NZ Institute for Plant & Food Research Ltd*; **Jeff Foote**, **Graeme Nicholas**, *Institute of Environmental Science and Research, NZ*; **James Turner**, **Akiko Horita**, *AgResearch, NZ*; **Tim Barnard**, *Scion Research, NZ*

This paper describes the development and use of a Theory of Change (ToC) to improve the capacity of New Zealand's Agricultural Innovation System to deliver impact from research targeting complex problems. This activity was situated in a five-year, Government-funded research program, Primary Innovation, which explored the role of co-innovation in achieving economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes.

A key element in this research program was a Community of Practice (CoP)—a learning hub of actors embracing industry, research, community, Māori, and Government roles and functions. The ToC was developed to guide the evaluation of the CoP using semi-structured interviews and a Social Network Analysis. Efforts to construct the ToC began in narrative form, helping to articulate underlying assumptions. The ToC was represented as a conceptual model to capture assumptions about dynamic and non-linear relationships between the CoP and intended outcomes, and the specific actions undertaken to activate the ToC. This paper reviews the process of developing and applying a ToC to discern 'What happened?', 'Why?' and 'Who was involved?'

The ToC proved to be a powerful navigation tool that enabled rich data to be gathered and analysed. Most importantly, it was used to evaluate the extent to which Primary Innovation and the CoP may have influenced science and innovation policy development, and program design while building evaluation capital in the research team.

Better by design: A framework for bridging design and evaluation

Matt Healey, *First Person Consulting*

Design thinking, human centred design and co-design ('design') have all gained traction in the last several years across a variety of fields and disciplines, most recently in public policy. Much like sustainability in the later parts of the 20th century, these approaches to design are set to become one of the dominant paradigms in policy in the 21st century, as it brings the promise and means by which governments and other stakeholders can tackle the complexity that continues to define our world.

In addition to providing a process for addressing complexity, these design approaches bring with them an approach that is based on human-centeredness—the end user needs to be engaged and considered throughout the process to produce something that is best tailored for those users needs. It is this mindset that lends itself to addressing many of the issues that government are typically expected to address: homelessness, social services, even taxes! However, with the popularity of design increasing, there is a need for clarity over what these design approaches are and what they mean for evaluators. Going forward there will be a need and even an expectation for evaluators to possess the understanding, skills and mindsets of these design approaches.

This session will present a conceptual framework for thinking how these design approaches and evaluation can be better linked from the outset and, in particular, how one can strengthen the other across the program and policy cycles. The session will do this through three different lenses: (i) designing programs and services, (ii) designing monitoring and evaluation systems, and (iii) as the deliverer of evaluations (internal or external).

Attendees will be provided with a copy of the framework. This session has been developed as part of the AES Design & Evaluation Special Interest Groups suite of activities.

Concept mapping: Results from the STrengthening Evaluation Practices and Strategies (STEPS) in Indigenous settings in Australia and New Zealand Project

Amohia Boulton, *Lynley Cvitanovic*, *Whakauae Research Services Limited, NZ*; **Lisa Warner**, *YWCA of Adelaide Inc*; **Sharon Clarke**, *South Australian Department of Health*; **Amal Chakraborty**, *University of South Australia*; **Jenni Judd**, *CQUniversity AustraliaWide Bay Hospital and Health Services, Bundaberg Health Pro*; **Margaret Cargo**, *University of Canberra*

The STEPS project has coalesced as a discrete piece of work over several years, but its genesis lies in the desire of a group of evaluators to improve evaluations undertaken in Indigenous settings. A draft set of principles have been developed (presented at AES in 2014) and a dynamic conceptual evaluation framework constructed (presented at AES in 2015). In this short paper, the authors present the results of a concept mapping exercise since undertaken to identify the issues and considerations requiring attention in the design and evaluation of Indigenous programs by Indigenous and non-Indigenous evaluators and commissioners of evaluation. Over 80 participants were engaged in this study. From the online and face-to-face brainstorming activities, 350 strategies to improve Indigenous evaluation practice were identified. These strategies were iteratively refined to a unique set of 122 strategies which were then sorted into conceptually meaningful groupings ('clusters') and rated on their perceived importance and feasibility. The results will be presented visually using the following set of concept maps:

1. a cluster map depicting core strategy areas ('clusters') to guide evaluation practice;
2. a go-zone map which shows strategies that are most important and feasible to implement to improve Indigenous evaluation practice;
3. ladder graphs which show differences in importance and feasibility ratings by participant background characteristics e.g., primary role in evaluation, level of experience, country.

The key implications of these maps will be discussed for strengthening Indigenous evaluation practice. This presentation will set the stage for a consultation and collaboration session where conference participants will have the opportunity to discuss what action AES can take to strengthen Indigenous evaluation practice in the short, medium and longer terms.

Building robust evaluation systems in Indigenous health: Examples from the Tackling Indigenous Smoking program evaluation

Alison Faure-Brac, *Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA)*

Services are increasingly required to ensure programs and practices are informed by evidence, and funding is increasingly tied to demonstration of outcomes. For many organisations, a shift to outcomes-based reporting requires a major change in thinking, and the development of systems to support data collection. Further,

teams are not recruited for their evaluation skills, nor is it their core role. This paper discusses how the Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program has sought to guide and support 37 organisations (grant recipients) funded to undertake multi-level regional approaches to tobacco control, to deliver evidence-based activities, to measure local activity outcomes, and contribute to national tobacco reduction outcomes.

Examples will be provided of the evaluation system that supports the TIS program, including the establishment of a National Best Practice Unit to support grant recipients by building the technical capacity and culture of organisations to measure, interpret and present program outcomes at a local level; the development of a web-based portal that hosts information on planning smoking cessation activities and assessing 'what works'; and a social media platform to encourage information sharing and collaboration among grant recipients.

Alongside local evaluation activities, a national evaluator is building evaluation capital by assessing national TIS program impact. Grant recipients are using five nationally consistent performance indicators as the basis for their activities and performance reporting. The indicators have the dual purpose of allowing organisations to report outcomes for locally relevant activities, and contributing to a national picture of TIS program impact.

The authors will discuss the role and responsibility of TIS grant recipients, the National Best Practice Unit and the national evaluators, and the barriers and enablers for this evaluation system to enhance reflective practice and to contribute to the evidence.

Evaluating the success and failure of national policy reform: A meta-evaluation of Australia's National Mental Health Strategy (1992–2012)

Carla Meurk, **Meredith Harris**, **Brian Head**, **Wayne Hall**, **Harvey Whiteford**, *The University of Queensland*; **Francesca Grace**, *New South Wales Ministry of Health*

Heightened fiscal constraints, increases in the chronic disease burden and consumer expectations are among several factors contributing to a global interest in evidence-informed health policy. Evaluations of past policy initiatives can inform future policy development, however, they are complicated by the multidimensional, subjective and inescapably political nature of policy success and failure.

This paper presents a meta-evaluation of the Australian National Mental Health Strategy (NMHS). The authors use a multi-dimensional, theoretically informed framework, to analyse documentary evidence from six government-funded, independently conducted, evaluations. The analysis highlights variability in the character of evaluations both over time and in relation to different policy levers. The Coalition of Australian Governments (COAG) Plan appeared to be the most successful of the three plans analysed, however an observable shift in evaluation approach and a narrowing of scope over time complicates the assessment of policy success and failure. Despite these limitations, policy learnings can be derived from a series of 'unequivocal' policy successes and failures, as depicted in the documents analysed.

Who owns the data? Considerations of governance, ethics, access and use of data for evaluators in 2017

Kararaina Scally-Irvine, **Josie de Boer**, **Oscar Louisson**, **Michael Campin**, *EvalStars Limited, NZ*

There is an increasing drive to gather, manage, and use data—big or small—including by evaluators. Technology is enabling wider and faster collection of, and access to data—including aggregated data sets. The ability to actively measure and monitor outcomes using data provides opportunities to integrate evaluation

practices throughout society. However, social and economic data is information about people and their environment. This raises multiple ethical questions: Why is this data needed? Who has access to the data? Where is it stored? How will it be used? Who owns the data? What professional and ethical implications do these developments have for our professional practice as evaluators?

The ever-changing landscape of data for communities, individuals, organisations, and government make the ethical considerations of tracking and measuring outcomes ever more important in the age of 'data analytics'. The ethics of data sharing (open data)—the opportunities, risks, and responsibilities (including implications for data governance) will be highlighted. The moral, ethical, and legal viewpoints will be considered.

In this session, the presenters will use examples from both their own experience and other public examples to illustrate some of the emerging considerations and challenges in this sphere. This is done with a view to stimulating a discussion that will inform our (collective) future practice. The presenters will ask people to reflect on their own experience, and the examples outlined to consider what are the opportunities, risks, and responsibilities of individuals, communities, organisations, and government, to this emerging challenge to the profession of evaluation? The presenters will be prepared with provocative and thought provoking questions to ensure a robust group discussion.

Using developmental evaluation to strengthen the dissemination and use of quality improvement data from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healthcare centres

Alison Laycock, *Charles Darwin University*; **Jodie Bailie**, **Ross Bailie**, *University Centre for Rural Health, University of Sydney*; **Veronica Matthews**, *University Centre for Rural Health, University of Sydney, Lismore*; **Frances Cunningham**, *Menzies School of Health Research, Charles Darwin University*; **Gillian Harvey**, *Adelaide Nursing School, The University of Adelaide*; **Alliance Manchester Business School, The University of Manchester**; **Nikki Percival**, *The Australian Centre for Public and Population Health Research, University of Technology Sydney*

Developmental evaluation is gaining recognition as a useful approach for implementation research. The wide-scale interactive dissemination project 'Engaging Stakeholders in Identifying Priority Evidence-Practice Gaps, Barriers and Strategies for Improvement' aims to engage primary health care stakeholders in the interpretation and use of aggregated continuous quality improvement data. This presentation describes the application and outcomes of developmental evaluation within the project.

Administrative records, surveys, participant interviews and reflective team processes were data sources for a developmental evaluation designed around the iterative processes of the dissemination project. These involved phases of online reporting and feedback that enabled rapid feedback cycles with ongoing reflection and data interpretation. The evaluator was embedded in the project team to facilitate timely refinements during project implementation.

As the dissemination strategy and evaluation progressed there were many opportunities to collect data and apply evaluative thinking to team decisions. Stakeholder participation was supported by commitment to improving health, perceived relevance of data to local settings and roles, confidence in data quality and seeing previous feedback reflected in reports. Barriers included large reports, limited confidence in analysing data, time constraints and perceptions that reports targeted others. These factors and other feedback informed adaptations. The team shortened surveys whilst retaining items essential to meaningful data collection and merged two phases of reporting and feedback. They refined data presentation and report formats, developed targeted messages and

plain language summaries, and used varied platforms and products to promote the findings.

Developmental evaluation enabled the team to strengthen the design and implementation of a novel dissemination project in a complex environment, while exploring what was working well and not so well for participants, the research team and the realisation of intended outcomes.

Stepping out: Evaluators working as designers

Jess Dart, **Zazie Tolmer**, *Clear Horizon*;
Sara Webb, *Duniya Pty Ltd*

This panel will continue the conversation that began last year on the interface between program evaluation and design. This panel is being led by members of the new Design and Evaluation special interest group, which now has 80 members.

Three key areas have been identified where design and evaluation intersect and these are:

- Evaluators using human-centred design approaches to develop useful measurement frameworks
- Evaluators working alongside designers (often referred to as working as developmental evaluators)
- Evaluators stepping sideways to work as designers: designing policies, services, programs and strategies

This panel focuses on the third area: how evaluators are working as designers at the front end of designing policy, services and programs. In particular, the session will look at how this plays out in different sectors including: international development; social services; community programs.

The panel will begin with an overview of what we mean by design and evaluation, followed by three speakers who have worked as designers in different sectors and will explore the evaluative tools they drew on, and what new things they needed to learn. The presenters will poll the audience to add to the map of how evaluators are working as designers, and conclude the session with a summary of commonalities and differences in how evaluators are working as designers and assemble a sketch of the challenges and opportunities that the evaluation community faces in blending design and evaluation.

Working towards building an evaluation system in NSW Health

Renee Fortunato, *Agency for Clinical Innovation (NSW)*

NSW Health is shifting to a focus on value rather than volume. Eight Leading Better Value Care programs will be implemented statewide in 2017–18 with the intention to improve system performance against the Triple Aim: system efficiency, improved health outcomes, and improved patient experience.

Existing Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) economic evaluations have been critical to inform selection of the eight programs for future investment and scaling up implementation. The monitoring and evaluation approach is currently being designed. The vision is to build a system of monitoring and evaluation including multi-level cascading indicators to guide and measure the program and its impact across relevant system levels. These levels include health pillar organisations such as ACI, Local Health Districts, hospital and clinical team levels. This approach seeks to build alignment of functions and focus across numerous components of the NSW Health system to optimise program success. It also provides an example of how economic evaluation, performance management and incentive systems can intersect to attempt to achieve better program outcomes.

The purpose of this presentation is to describe how economic evaluation has been an effective tool in increasing investment to scale up implementation of clinical programs across NSW Health. The presenters will share their experience on building a multifaceted approach to monitoring and evaluation to support these eight large system changes and share a program example. Reflections on how evaluation is currently viewed and recognised within this context will also be explored.

What do we know about evaluation in Indigenous higher education contexts in Australia?

James Smith, Kellie Pollard, Kim Robertson, Sue Trinidad,
Curtin University

The Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (2012) provided a clear mandate for investing in policies and programs that support Indigenous pathways, participation and achievement in higher education in Australia. While there have been notable investments and significant national reforms in Indigenous higher education over the past few years, the recommendation within this report to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework is yet to be actioned. Similarly, there is scant publicly available evaluation evidence about the effectiveness of program and policy investments in this space. In parallel, both the Productivity Commission and Australian Government have emphasised the importance of strengthening evaluation in Indigenous program and policy contexts across Australia.

Bringing these two national conversations together, this presentation will examine what we currently know about evaluation in Indigenous higher education contexts in Australia. It is based on qualitative research project currently being conducted through the Office of Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at Charles Darwin University. This has been funded through the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education. Human research ethics approval has been obtained. It will draw on empirical evidence derived from individual interviews with two participant groups: (i) Indigenous leaders and scholars within higher education institutions; and (ii) government policy-makers with a role in equity and/or Indigenous higher education program and policy development and reform.

Narratives from individual interviews with these two participant groups will be compared and contrasted to identify key themes and areas for improvement. Findings will be used to discuss the challenges and opportunities associated with building evaluation capital in Indigenous higher education contexts in Australia. Feedback will also be sought in relation to the development of tools and resources to guide enhanced evaluation practice in this space.

From theory of hope to theory of change: Learning from behaviour change practice to strengthen project design and evaluation

Damien Sweeney, *Clear Horizon*

This presentation looks at how behaviour change theories and frameworks can strengthen Theories of Change (ToC). ToC, or logic models, are central to project design and the development of monitoring and evaluation frameworks. A ToC should reflect reality as closely as possible for it to be useful. Developing a ToC merges project design with evaluation. Ideally, a ToC is co-designed with stakeholders and experts as well as being informed by research. A ToC is the product from a process of engagement (with

stakeholders, beneficiaries, experts) and research. ToCs often reflect a behavioural change aspect, and the behaviour change that is sought can often be the key to whether a project is successful or not. Yet, the complexity of behaviour change is seldom reflected in ToCs. It can be easy to fall back to provide knowledge and skills, change attitudes, and thereby change behaviour. But as the adage goes 'you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink'.

As evaluators facilitating the development of ToCs, we have an opportunity to learn from the behaviour change practitioners and take our theory of change models to the next level. There are numerous behaviour change theories and frameworks to learn from (e.g. theory of planned behaviour, community-based social marketing). A common point across behaviour change theories and frameworks is the need to identify the barriers and drivers to change, from the target group themselves. This has parallels to Human-Centred Design—an area that is gaining increased prominence in Australia. Without this formative research, we tend to lean on assumptions, thinking that we know why that proverbial horse doesn't want to drink! And as a result, we can develop a ToC based on false assumption, and we can squander the capital invested into the project.

This presentation will provide an overview of how to apply behaviour change practice to develop stronger ToCs, and hopefully leading that horse to finally drink.

How to manage for results in ten minutes using common evaluation tools

Scott Bayley, *Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)*

In a time of global economic pressures governments around the world are increasingly looking for ways to ensure that their resources are used effectively. Managing for results (MfR) has emerged as a centrepiece of global efforts to improve the effectiveness of public resources. Australian government agencies and international development organisations are increasingly adopting results-oriented approaches to manage their affairs and achieve better outcomes.

MfR is a fundamentally different approach than what is traditionally seen in public sector agencies. Adopting a 'results approach' means shifting management attention away from inputs, activities and processes towards a greater focus on the intended results—outputs, outcomes and impacts—at each stage of the program management cycle. What is popular in rhetoric and theory, however, is proving to be surprisingly difficult to implement in practice.

This presentation will offer program staff and evaluators a simple, practical and proven approach to managing for results using the continuous improvement cycle and program logic models. Participants will also have the opportunity to discuss common misunderstandings and objections to MfR including:

- It's too expensive, the money can be better used elsewhere We already know all about the shortcomings of our program
- Program staff are concerned about loss of control, negative publicity, possible loss of public confidence and political support
- MfR assumes that social changes can be predicted and controlled
- MfR is all about performance indicators, reporting and accountably, this tends to drive perverse behaviors amongst program staff
- Some of our most important goals cannot be easily measured or assessed.

Creating credible findings in evaluating a complex programme: The New Zealand Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health Project

Carolyn O'Fallon, *Superu, NZ*

The Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health Project (YMHP) was established as a four-year cross-agency program in 2012 to improve the mental health and wellbeing of youth aged 12 to 19 with or at risk of developing mild to moderate mental health issues. It consisted of a range of initiatives implemented by different Government agencies, schools, and local health boards, to improve the mental health and wellbeing of youth in New Zealand. Our agency was commissioned by the Ministry of Health, in partnership with the Ministries of Social Development and Education, to lead a strategic evaluation of whether, how well and why YMHP as a whole was progressing towards the outcomes set out by Cabinet in 2012.

The evaluation was conducted in two phases. The Phase 2 Summative Evaluation, which incorporated the results of a cost-benefit analysis and a mixed methods evaluation providing locality and national perspectives from in-depth studies of YMHP in different parts of New Zealand, supplemented by reviews and evaluations of individual initiatives, monitoring reports and other documentation, was completed in late 2016. On the basis of the findings of the strategic evaluation, the Ministry of Health with its partnership agencies has proposed investing a further \$60 million into the initiatives that the evaluation showed were working well in improving youth mental health and wellbeing for the New Zealand government's budget for 2017–18.

The paper discusses the approach used to evaluate this program involving multiple agencies across multiple jurisdictions, having multiple components, and implemented over a multi-year time frame. In particular, it is considered how the agency worked with key stakeholders throughout the evaluation, and triangulated the data and information collected, to ensure the delivery of findings that would be credible and used in their decision-making.

Tuesday afternoon session 13:30 – 15:30

The value of incorporating Aboriginal cultural knowledge (human capital) into an Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service evaluation to deliver credible and useable findings to both Community and Government

Carol Vale, *Murawin*; Debbie Stanford, *Human Capital Alliance*; Vladimir Williams, Cherie Butler, Elizabeth Best, *NSW Ministry of Health*

The Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service (AMIHS) is a community-based maternity service funded by a state government health authority, which aims to improve the health outcomes of Aboriginal babies and their mothers. Operating for over 15 years, AMIHS is now delivered in 45 sites across the state.

In 2016, the Agency commissioned a consortium of an Indigenous and non-Indigenous research companies to evaluate AMIHS, using a mixed-mode evaluation designed with a best practice foundation to place Aboriginal knowledge and expertise at the centre of the evaluation.

AMIHS involves a midwife (often non-Aboriginal) and an Aboriginal Health Worker working together to provide culturally safe antenatal and postnatal care. Central to developing the evaluation methodology has been the acknowledgement of the Aboriginal experience of 'walking in two worlds'; this is evident in the development of evaluation questions, governance structures, the research team, ethics considerations, and specific research tools. Aboriginal perspectives have been embedded across all phases of the evaluation. This includes:

- The significant role of Aboriginal stakeholders in developing the draft evaluation framework, which in turn informed project tendering
- Selection of a research team that, in composition and operation, closely mirrors the partnership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers at the heart of AMIHS principles and philosophy
- Development of the evaluation governance, which includes an advisory committee with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal stakeholder representation (i.e. frontline workers, peak organisations, policy makers), an independent cultural reference group, and a strong working relationship between these advisory groups and the research team
- Genuine stakeholder engagement in the final evaluation plan.

The authors believe their approach, guided by a range of Aboriginal knowledge and expertise—organisational, community and evaluation—is technically robust and will build evaluation capital in the Aboriginal evaluation sector to deliver findings that are usable and credible to both community and government.

This research contributes in theory and practise to growing the cultural competency of those involved in research work with Aboriginal communities (commissioning agents and researchers). Such knowledge can ultimately be critical to evaluation findings being acted upon by both those commissioning and those close to providing services to the end user. The presentation will describe the early foundations of the evaluation research and how they are critical to establishing a project-long adherence to 'best practice'.

To highlight how quality cultural processes operate and how this has delivered rigorous technical evaluation research method, two of the AMIHS evaluation's unique aspects will be presented. The first unique aspect is the formation and workings of the Cultural Reference Group, established by the commissioning agent to provide Aboriginal cultural and community perspectives to inform all aspects of the evaluation. The second unique aspect is the evaluation consultant's application of the Field-based Implementation Rating Scale (FIRS), a method used in education settings in the USA but rarely in Australia—especially for health services. FIRS seeks to distil the essential characteristics of a program, which then become the focus for a level-of-implementation rating.

Overall, in terms of evaluation capital, the evaluation process enables stakeholder partners to enter into a process where the 'whole story of the river can be told', not just the parts that are seen from above the river surface.

Engaging with philanthropy: A funder's perspective on how to maximise the reach of your findings

Squirrel Main, *The Ian Potter Foundation*

Realism and sensitivity to political processes are key components of ensuring that evaluation findings are used, but what does a usable end product look like? How often do clients or funders read an 80-page report? Is political connection a prerequisite for the uptake of evaluation recommendations? What about credibility—are the majority of philanthropically-funded evaluations 'good enough' to ensure government uptake of programs?

Evaluations can be formative or summative. While formative results are generally not reported to funders, summative evaluations can be passed on. Increasingly, Australian foundations are collating and synthesising the results of their summative evaluations.

A thorough review of over 1000 grants made by one foundation over the past five years revealed only 16% of grantees had measured all of their intended outcomes. Moreover, only 5.5% of the grants had an outstanding measurement and evaluation of their long-term outcomes. An appreciative inquiry approach was used to determine themes of these outstanding evaluations. These themes will be discussed in the presentation.

Additionally, all 1000 grant recipients were asked to reflect on the process and report key learnings. Dozens of the learnings pertained to the evaluation process. These ideas range from succinct reporting to embedding stakeholders on governance committees. Again, the main themes of the review will be presented and discussed. Audience members will be encouraged to consider the practical implications of these findings in enhancing public policies and programs. Audience interaction (via PollEverywhere) will be an integral component of the conference presentation.

Performance leadership: The key to strengthening evaluation systems and program outcomes

Scott Bayley, *Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)*

The general public continues to demand ever greater levels of services while governments are faced with ongoing budgetary pressures. Citizens and parliaments are also seeking to hold decision-makers to account for improved program outcomes. Public officials everywhere are desperately trying to solve their performance problems. That is why they keep searching for the ultimate performance system. They won't find it. Why? Because the best performance system doesn't exist. Systems don't improve performance, leaders do.

To truly improve program performance within a context of constrained resources, active performance leadership is required, measurement and reporting alone are simply not enough. This presentation will provide an overview of the role and challenges for Performance Leaders in evaluation capacity building and achieving outcomes. It looks at how organisational leaders play a determining role in conceptualising and communicating an organisation's focus on continuous improvement. Senior leaders have a great many opportunities to strengthen their agency's focus on performance though:

- what they choose to attend to, where their times goes—their criteria for allocating resources
- their reactions to problems and crisis
- the questions performance leaders ask at meetings
- holding staff accountable for learning and continuous improvement
- their distribution of rewards and status, as well as recruitment, selection, promotion, and retirement decisions.

Session participants will be encouraged to consider issues such as:

- Does performance feedback inevitably lead to performance improvements?
- Where do drivers for change come from?
- Why are evaluation capacity building initiatives so difficult to implement? Why is it so easy for agencies to backslide after having made significant progress?
- Is our theory of change for organisational performance improvement realistic?

The evolution of evaluation in Australia's capital

The prominence and focus of evaluation over Government programs has shifted significantly over the last 20 years. Not only have techniques for conducting evaluation changed but the expectations of the Australian community, relationships with Government and the fundamental mechanisms of the machinery of Government have all shifted and continue to move into the future. So what does all of this change mean to us today and into the future? What are the opportunities to make better use of evaluation, to harness the greater access to data, and to respond to changing community demands? Are there lessons to be learned from past experience?

During this long and dynamic history, the Canberra Evaluation Forum has been promoting discussion, networking and reflection on the art and science of evaluation with a focus on promoting its importance to policy makers and programme managers. In this special session, jointly sponsored by the Institute of Public Administration Australia (ACT Division), the Canberra Evaluation Forum and the AES, members of the Canberra Evaluation Forum will discuss the history and evolution they have observed in evaluation in the capital, insights on what this means for evaluators today, and what the future might hold in an age of increasing data, widely accessible technology and artificial intelligence.

Chains of logic: Overcoming limitations of program theory and its use in evaluation

Ian Patrick, *Ian Patrick & Associates*

The use of program theory has become commonplace in evaluation practice, but not without accompanying critique. This paper identifies and responds to such misgivings, exploring means to make program theory a more useful approach.

The widespread adoption of forms of program theory—such as program logic in evaluation—is evident in how it is employed as a means to check understandings of the relationship between program action and expected results, and as a reference point to assess subsequent program performance. Despite this perceived utility, critique of program theory mounts. It is viewed by some as representing a narrow conceptualisation of change, as a linear, chain-like sequence of cause and effect, while reality is more complex. Others point to the systemic nature of programs and the context in which they operate, with many influences on change often ignored in program theory. Still further critique relates to the difficulty of arriving at a unified program theory when stakeholders have varied perceptions and influences on change. Few efforts have been made to refine program theory and the manner in which it is utilised as a response to such critique.

This paper explores four possible enhancements of the use of program theory by (i) use of a different means to identify, investigate and test assumptions (and related evaluation questions) which represent either critical pre-conditions or influences on change (ii) use of broader and more holistic categories of action in program logic, such as strategies (iii) identifying and representing systemic factors outside the immediate program but influential on change, and linking these to program logic (iv) use of participatory methods to capture different stakeholder perspectives on change. The paper will explore the relative merits of these different enhancements, opportunities to combine different elements, and their overall potential contribution to the utility of the program theory approach.

Professionalising evaluation—propositions, tensions and opportunities

Kate McKegg, *The Knowledge Institute Ltd (a member of the Kinnect Group)*

Evaluation professionalisation activity is occurring across a number of domains and jurisdictions in local, national, international contexts. On the face of it, professionalisation activity appears to be stimulating discussion and debate among those in the field about their professional identity and practice, as well as a raft of institutional and organisational activity to grow and improve evaluator and evaluation quality. However, it's far from clear what outcomes the field and others might be seeking from professionalisation; nor are the political, cultural, ethical, implications and impacts of current professionalisation efforts well understood. There are many important questions facing the field with regard to professionalisation, not the least is which how well positioned and prepared the field might be for a professionalisation journey.

This session will present findings from current PhD research on evaluation professionalisation and professionalism, discussing some of the tensions, drivers, pressures and opportunities—local, national and international—that are emerging as the field grapples with the journey of professionalisation. In this session key theories and ideas that have influenced many decades of research on professionalisation will be outlined and some propositions about evaluation professionalisation will be presented for discussion and feedback. The feedback will be incorporated into the PhD research being undertaken by the presenter. Participation in the session will be voluntary and the discussion and feedback process will have ethical approval by Melbourne University.

Youth participation in evaluation: Promoting inclusivity and building evaluation capital

Heidi Peterson, Sophie Purdue, *Oaktree*

This presentation will illustrate how the participation of young people in evaluation processes promotes inclusive and diverse stakeholder perspectives in evaluation practices as well as the impact of representative evaluation in influencing public policies.

Youth participation refers to the inclusion of young people in the design, implementation and analysis of M&E activities. It is a growing trend, necessitated by the large youth bulges in many low and middle-income countries, and ensures that youth themselves can inform decisions that directly affect their lives.

The case study of the Beacon Schools Initiative (BSI) in Cambodia, an education program that was recently adopted into national education policy, demonstrates the impact of youth-led evaluation in capturing inclusive stakeholder perspectives and the resulting policy advocacy.

Oaktree, Australia's largest youth-led development organisation, funded and evaluated BSI. This evaluation experience showed how young people conducting evaluations with young stakeholders can overcome power inequities. Leveraging the benefits of peer-to-peer engagement can reduce evaluator–subject power imbalances and promote rapport through shared identities, leading to more open and nuanced dialogue. This builds legitimacy for the evaluation findings, allowing for more effective policy advocacy.

The findings also suggest the potential impact that training and utilising local young people in evaluations could have. A shared cultural identity, often missing in external evaluations, may further be able to capture inclusive and diverse stakeholder perspectives. Moreover, training young people in evaluations enables the building of evaluation capital within developing contexts.

The implications of the findings compel evaluation commissioners and practitioners to consider the role of young people in their evaluation practices, especially in programs that directly affect young people. This builds on a small, but rapidly growing, body of knowledge around the value of youth participation in evaluation processes.

Getting the balance right: The benefits of an integrated policy/economic approach to evaluation

Poppy Wise, Nicki Hutley, *Urbis*

A vicious cycle can take hold in relation to public policy and the evaluation of its impacts. In a tight fiscal environment such as ours in Australia, programs and services (and their evaluation budgets) are increasingly being trimmed to find savings. However, without these programs and services, the very issues they are designed to address may worsen, driving up costs for governments of the future. Related to this, without investment in evaluation of both the social and economic impacts of programs and services, it is difficult to argue for increased investment now, leading to cost avoidance in the future. By bringing together social program evaluators and economists, Urbis has uncovered many benefits of an integrated approach. This paper will explore three recent examples across policy domains as diverse as disability, energy efficiency and social financing where this dual social/economic frame has delivered recommendations strongly grounded in the political realities of the day, and supported public sector decision-makers to plan for a better tomorrow.

The social and economic balance must be just right—there is danger in the pendulum swinging too far in either direction. Too great a focus on social impact measurement without contextualising findings within the fiscal realities of the day can lead to wasting time on recommendations there is no budget to support. On the other hand, an obsessive focus on the economic argument threatens to lose sight of the immense value of non-pecuniary benefits for society. This paper will explore striking this balance by bringing together two disciplines who don't always speak the same language or use the same tools, but are pulling together for a common goal.

Using evaluation findings as an asset to inform future strategic choices for organizational and country projects: Learning from the rich experience of Oxfam's Securing Rights Programme's evaluation methodology and results

Roselyn Nyatsanza, Musa Sibindi, *Oxfam*

This presentation is a follow up from last year's long paper presentation entitled 'An innovative and participatory methodological approach that enhances learning: A case of Oxfam in Zimbabwe Securing Rights in the context of HIV and AIDS Programme (SRP) mid-term learning and review'.

This year, the presentation will focus on results from the end term evaluation. The program has gone through a four-year journey and along the way a lot has changed; the nature of the HIV pandemic itself and its manifestations, the political, social and economic context in Zimbabwe as well as globally, individuals and communities and civil society organizations. As the program comes to an end in June 2017, and at the same time, Oxfam in Zimbabwe gears up to start a second phase of the program, it is important to look at what has happened over the four years in order to foster and

support adaptive learning from the evaluation. Thus ensuring that we are all 'learning from practice'.

The purpose of this presentation is to share the methodology and lessons from the end term evaluation of the program drawing on the need, importance and relevance of evaluation as a durable asset for sound governance. The evaluation will test Oxfam's theory and assumptions on how anticipated change would happen, identifying which strategies have worked and why they worked; what didn't exactly work/yield expected results/changes, and what could have been done differently and provide adaptive learning and recommendations. The evaluation will thus measure clarity, acceptance and quality of the SRP.

The presentation will profile how the program's theory of change, innovative strategies and pathways of change have worked to show change in three different ways:

- partnership framework of working at the different levels (micro, meso, macro)
- working with key target groups including people with disability
- capacity building as a main thread that ensures empowerment for both partners and communities.

The use of the findings is critical to ensure realism and sensitivity to political processes and meeting the practical needs surrounding the evaluation in order to maximize the use of findings to enhance sound program designs for country offices. The evaluation will use a participatory approach that will involve partners, donors, key stakeholders and staff making use of mixed methods both quantitative and qualitative. The methods will reflect an empowerment approach to evaluation.

Evaluation and the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework: Opportunities for the evaluation community

Brad Cook, David Morton, Australian Department of Finance

A key focus of the Australian Government's enhanced Commonwealth performance framework—implemented to allow Commonwealth entities to fulfil relevant obligations under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*—is ensuring that the accountable authorities of Commonwealth entities, ministers, the Parliament and the public are able to use performance information to draw clear links between the use of public resources and the results achieved. Performance information provides the evidence for assessing whether the use of public resources is achieving meaningful results. Taxpayers and the Australian Parliament—like the shareholders of a company and financial supporters of charitable institutions—have a right to know what results are being achieved with the money they have provided.

The new performance framework encourages Commonwealth entities to expand the range of tools they use to report on performance to increase the focus on outcomes and impacts. It is expected that evaluations will be an important element of this expanded toolkit. The potential of evaluation to help improve the stock of performance information is obvious, but yet to become visible in public reporting. Evaluation can provide stakeholders with a fuller appreciation of what entities achieve in complex policy environments, and, in doing so, build the confidence and trust in interventions undertaken by Commonwealth entities. Practitioners are largely responsible for ensuring this potential is realised, through adapting their toolkit to produce valued information for stakeholders and to assist senior managers to make informed choices about where to invest public resources. Demonstrating the relevance of evaluation, and securing its role in advancing the quality of performance reporting, is largely in the hands of the evaluation community. It has the opportunity to lead the public sector in dealing with some of the more challenging aspects of demonstrating the value it adds.

The promise and peril of using randomised control trials to evaluate social programs for Indigenous Australians

Katherine Curchin, Nicholas Biddle, Australian National University

Policy makers are often interested in whether particular programs or policies are having the desired impact, as well as what is driving positive (or negative) outcomes. Although there are a range of methods to obtain such causal inference, Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) are increasingly being used within social policy. One policy area for which evaluations in general and RCTs in particular have had less than complete penetration is Indigenous policy.

Many Indigenous people share a geographic, historical and cultural context that is different to the rest of the Australian population. Considerable policy focus is devoted to improving the outcomes of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, but the conclusions from trials on other population groups in Australia (let alone overseas) cannot automatically be applied to the Indigenous population. There are, of course, limitations to and concerns with the use of RCTs to evaluate Indigenous programs. Some of these are generic to social policy more broadly, including the potential for control groups to miss out, skills gaps within the policy community, political reluctance and scalability. There are also Indigenous-specific concerns. These include a negative history with policy experimentation, the desire for community ownership of data and heterogeneity across and within Indigenous communities (for example by language or cultural identity).

This paper examines these methodological, political and ethical concerns in turn and argues that many can be addressed by sensitive design. The authors illustrate the trade-offs involved in designing a rigorous evaluation of an Indigenous social program using the example of the ongoing evaluation of Narragunnawali (a Reconciliation Australia program in schools and early learning services), which employs an RCT with an encouragement design.

Repurposing substantive theories in evaluation: Opportunities and risks in transferring formal theories into new domains

Kim Grey, Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne; Gill Westhorp, Charles Darwin University

Substantive theories relevant to evaluation of social programs arise in many fields such as behavioural or social science, organisational theory, political economy and others. Theories that arose from research in one field may offer explanatory potential, and be reused in different sectors to examine different problems. This results in use of the same theory in quite different ways, perhaps not as intended in its original application.

Questions arising from this practice include: Do underlying evidence based theories about human behaviour automatically transfer to new areas of behaviour or new levels of systems? Is borrowing theories valid? Mitchie and Abrahams (2004) describe interventions which repurpose theory without validity checks as evidence inspired rather than evidence based.

What does this teach us about the utility of a theory? How can we know if we get it right? What happens if we mess it up? Should an organisation engage in validity checks to build our evaluation capital? Explicitly sharing experience in transferring theories and evidence obtained about the extension of a formal theory to a new context has potential to advance the field of social policy evaluation.

Participants are encouraged to bring examples to discuss. One presenter will begin by describing several repurposed substantive theories, spanning individuals, communities and service systems:

- behaviour change theories, e.g. stages of readiness for change
- social change theories, e.g. collective efficacy
- service delivery, e.g. coproduction.

Groups will discuss the relevance of theories developed and tested in one sector, and their application in others. A second presenter will guide discussion of whether theories are always transferable predominantly inspirational—or offer potential for false comfort.

Professionalisation of evaluation: Possible pathways within the AES context

Greet Peersman, Patricia Rogers, *The Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG)*

The presenters will provide an overview of 41 approaches that can and have been used for professionalisation in evaluation and other related fields.

Following discussion, feedback is sought on the recommendations that the AES focuses, connects and augments its current activities to increase motivation, capacity and opportunity for evaluators and evaluation. The presenters recommend that the AES prioritises action in the short-term focussing on:

- Developing and promoting ongoing and connected professional development and wrap-around support that is explicitly linked to the existing *Evaluators' Professional Learning Competency Framework*
- Promoting the use of the existing *Evaluators' Professional Learning Competency Framework, Guidelines on Ethical Conduct of Evaluation and Code of Ethics*
- Supporting sharing and learning from practice
- Becoming a more visible and effective advocate for evaluation
- Engaging in strategic partnerships with other evaluation associations and professional associations

It is also recommended that:

- The AES consider developing a voluntary credentialing process only after member consultation and informed by evidence about the effectiveness of this approach in other countries. It also needs to take account the high investment needed to pursue this pathway.
- The AES does not pursue the gatekeeping pathway (controlling entry to the field). We do not see this as feasible or desirable, given the diversity of competencies that is required to suit different contexts for evaluation, the high investment needed, and the potential negative impacts of excluding competent practitioners for whom evaluation is not their primary identity.

The G.I. Joe Fallacy: Cognitive bias as a hook for engaging senior decision-makers in evaluative thinking

Gerry O'Sullivan, Martin Hall, Duncan Rintoul, *NSW Department of Education*

The human brain is a funny thing. When it comes to working with data and thinking evaluatively, there are all manner of shortcuts that we take (sometimes accidentally, sometimes wilfully) that impede so-called 'rational' processes.

In a current evaluation capacity building project in a NSW government agency, it was found that the language of 'evaluative

thinking' has achieved significant cut-through, leading to audiences at numerous internal leadership gatherings. One aspect of this that has particularly captured leaders' interest is cognitive bias, and strategies that can be used to help manage them. In this interactive presentation, participants will be exposed to 20 cognitive biases that can impede evaluative thinking.

However, knowing about cognitive biases doesn't necessarily mean we can avoid them. (This is the G.I. Joe Fallacy, i.e. the false belief that 'knowing is half the battle') The second half of the presentation will draw on experience from the room, in terms of how people manage these biases in their project teams and in evaluation stakeholder relationships. If the outcomes from this discussion are anything like those from the workshops the presenters have run with senior decision-makers in their agency, many of these strategies are likely to involve evaluation planning techniques.

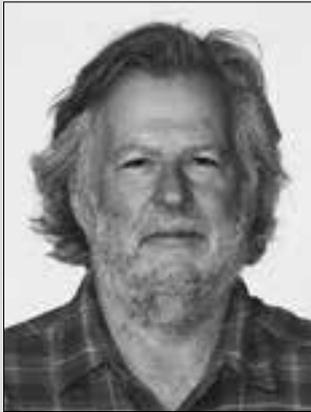
Evaluation: What's the use?

Jade Maloney, *ARTD*

Evaluation emerged as a professional discipline to guide government decision-making about social policies and programs. The significant amount of government expenditure on evaluations has been justified by the potential of evaluations to improve client outcomes and ensure effective targeting of resources (Patton, 2008, p.xvii). However, consistent with the concerns about the limited use of research to inform government decision-making (Head, 2006), concerns about non-use of evaluations have plagued the profession since it emerged (Patton, 2008; Brandon & Singh, 2009). So what can we Australasian evaluators do in our practice to set our work up for use? And what should we do when we hit barriers to use, like 'small p' and 'big P' politics?

The findings of a recent survey of AES members and in-depth follow-up interviews with internal and external evaluators around Australia (completed between November 2016 and February 2017) suggest we need to focus on both the supply and demand side factors for evaluation. On the supply side, evaluators need the interpersonal and communications skills to develop effective relationships and bring stakeholders together to agree on the purpose of the evaluation. On the demand side, agency leadership needs to support and set the context for evaluation use, while individual staff need to be receptive to learning from evaluation. When the context is less conducive to evaluation use, there are practical steps evaluators can take to shift it.

Learning from our collective experience will help ensure evaluation reports don't sit on shelves gathering dust because use of evaluation will be embedded within governance systems.



Evaluation for the Anthropocene

Andy Rowe, *Evaluation and economics consultant, Canada*

Climate change and sustainability are deep global challenges. Geologists have dubbed the current epoch the 'Anthropocene' – the geological age characterised by humans' influence on the planet. Every aspect of human activity needs to change if we and other life forms are to have a sustainable future.

Yet many evaluations still treat human and natural systems as unconnected, and do not value sustainable impacts. If evaluation is to stay relevant and useful to these times, it needs to become 'sustainability ready'. Sustainability-ready evaluation will be a connected evaluation that is not bound by sectors, program siloes and partitioned evaluation approaches. Connectivity provides a body of tested thinking and processes which can help the practice of evaluation become more relevant to the needs of our rapidly changing world.

ABSTRACTS: Wednesday 6 September 2017

Wednesday keynote session 08:30 – 09:30



Better stewardship of evaluation capital can help deepen democracy

Dugan Fraser, *Program Director, RAITH Foundation, South Africa*

South Africa is a young democracy facing many challenges, including the urgent need to include people who are left out of mainstream life and the economy. Evaluation, if done better, could deepen democracy and accelerate inclusion. Despite attempts, evaluation hasn't yet realized this potential. The growing practice of Responsible Investment has lessons for how this could be done. 'Responsible evaluation' would be based on greater attention to stewardship. This would involve the responsible planning and management of evaluation resources to achieve collective impact.

Commissioners committed to responsible evaluation would consciously reflect on how their evaluations can contribute to larger societal objectives, and actively pursue collaborations and seek shared-value solutions to realize this vision. A mindset of stewardship will help investments in evaluation earn better social returns, and see evaluations improve democracy and social inclusion.

Wednesday morning session 09:30 – 10:30

Building an evaluation team: Lessons and questions from the hiring process

Gerard Atkinson, *Australia Council for the Arts*

An ongoing challenge is the creation and management of effective teams to undertake evaluation activities. When hiring, managers and team leaders have to balance a need for core evaluation skills with domain-specific knowledge.

This latter requirement can limit the ability to target the pool of professionally qualified evaluators, especially outside of the social development and health sectors. Therefore hiring is undertaken more broadly, and establishing whether a candidate understands the methods, theory, and ethical requirements of evaluation becomes a key requirement of the process. This presentation looks at the case of the Australia Council for the Arts and how it has approached the process of selecting members of its Evaluation team. The team was formalised at the beginning of 2016, reaching full capacity in one year from two to five members, through a series of hiring processes. It will cover the lessons learned from experiences of: designing the job description and selection criteria; advertising the position; targeting fields of practice with complementary skills; identifying suitable candidates; and interviewing and testing processes for candidates.

Promoting evaluation use by exploring evaluator educative roles

Krystin Martens, *Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne*

Competent evaluators need to be knowledgeable in the conduct of systematic inquiry, but this is not enough. Throughout an evaluation competent evaluators must also be adept at recognizing the inherent political nature of evaluation and be able to skillfully interact with clients, stakeholders, program staff, program recipients, and other interested parties. From the initial stage of pre-evaluation negotiations to the concluding stage of post-report support, an array of people will come in contact with the evaluator. These interested parties will carry a collection of

unique assumptions, beliefs, and agendas, as well as possible misconceptions and anxieties, all of which the evaluator must consider in order to competently perform their job. The presenter will discuss how purposefully taking on and moving between the educative roles of teacher and learner can successfully allow evaluators to address these considerations.

The idea of evaluator as an educator can be traced back to 1960s and has since been discussed by many evaluation thought-leaders. Building on the evaluation literature, The presenter will summarise and expand on this position of evaluation capacity building by submitting that beyond the educator role, evaluators also need to acknowledge and embrace learning roles. The discussion of evaluator as a learner will include topics such as relationship power redistribution through authority relinquishment. After outlining the relevance of both roles, the presenter will discuss how evaluators can consciously maneuver between the two positions of teacher and learner to enhance evaluation use.

Embedding evaluation systems into government

David Turvey, *Australian Department of Industry, Innovation and Science*; **Wayne Poels**, *Australian Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet*; **Robyn Shannon**, *Australian Department of Employment*; **Kathryn Mandla**, *Australian Department of Social Services*

To what extent can evaluation findings influence government policy? Evaluations are, or should be, a critical source of evidence to support policy development and implementation in a robust, rigorous and systematic manner. In the current financially-constrained environment, this is more important than ever. But evaluations can only make a difference if they are valued and supported within an organisation. If your organisation is struggling to embed an evaluation culture, enhance the impact of your evaluations, or produce a coherent performance story at the portfolio level or across multiple initiatives, you are not alone. In this panel discussion, senior executives from four federal departments will discuss their very distinct paths in embedding evaluation systems within their organisations, and share strategies that you may want to explore in your own organisation.

Developing evaluation systems for large bureaucracies requires strategic thinking and careful planning to improve our 'performance stories' and allow for more complex evaluation methodologies to measure impact at the portfolio level. This guided discussion will consider organisational barriers to ensuring that evaluations are independent, transparent and integrated within departments, and that their findings feed back into policy development. Getting buy-in at the highest levels can make all the difference in our endeavours to build understanding and acceptance of evaluation activities across organisations.

The panellists will draw on their experience in managing evidence-based policy systems, regulatory reforms, and administering business and community programs across a range of complex economic and social issues to illuminate both the challenges and the rewards of building evaluative capacity. You will walk away with a kit of tools tried and tested across a broad policy landscape.

Challenging heterosexist bias in evaluation practice

Jeffery Adams, *Massey University, NZ*

High-quality evaluation practice should ensure the diverse identities and values of stakeholders and other participants are represented. However this is often negatively impacted by heterosexist bias—a default assumption notable in many evaluation endeavours. Heterosexism stems from an assumption that heterosexuality is natural, universal, and therefore inevitable; as a foundational system it oppresses non-heterosexually identified individuals. Whether this bias is intentional or unintentional, the outcome is that people with certain sexual and gender identities such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT), and their views and experiences are not adequately represented in many evaluation projects. For example, a recent needs assessment of homelessness in Auckland ignored issues of sexuality and gender despite homelessness being a significant issue for LGBT young people. Further, it is almost standard practice in survey design to obtain information on gender of participants by offering only female and male options, thereby not recognising those people with alternative gender orientations.

In this consultation session a brief presentation will be given outlining some of the key features of, and the negative impacts arising from, heterosexist bias. Participants will then work in small groups to discuss the implications of this bias in current evaluation practice and provide ideas about the ways more inclusive evaluation practice can be fostered. Short presentations will be made back to the whole group; and all ideas collated and circulated to attendees after the workshop. After the session interested people will be invited to contribute to the development of resources to support other evaluators in fostering sexual identity and gender diversity in evaluation practice.

I'm doing an impact evaluation, what evidence do I need?

Scott Bayley, *Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)*

Are quantitative or qualitative methods better for undertaking impact evaluations? What about true experiments? Is contribution analysis the new 'state of the art' in impact evaluation or should I just do a survey and use statistical methods to create comparison groups? Determining one's plan for an impact evaluation occurs within the constraints of a specific context. Since method choices must always be context specific, debates in the professional literature about impact methods can at best only provide partial guidance to evaluation practitioners. The way to break out of this methods impasse is by focusing on the evidentiary requirements for assessing causal impacts.

This unique session will present a brief summary of the literature on the philosophy and principles of causal analysis, and relate these to some common evaluation models. A framework for applying three key evidentiary criteria will be examined and participants will be guided through examples of how to apply these in typical everyday situations.

In this innovative skills building session participants will:

- Be exposed to a new way of thinking about impact evaluation
- Become familiar with the evidentiary requirements for undertaking impact evaluations Gain practical experience in the application of evidentiary criteria for casual analysis
- Develop their skills in critiquing impact evaluation reports.

The session will involve participants in practical exercises designed to illustrate the application of key ideas and concepts. The presenter will encourage participants to transfer their understandings to their own contexts throughout the session with an emphasis on practical applications. Participants will be provided with a range of resource materials to support their evaluation practices back in the workplace.

Dilemmas in evaluation practice of an ethical kind

Anne Markiewicz, *Anne Markiewicz and Associates*

This session will consider a range of ethical dilemmas faced by evaluators in their evaluation practice. The context for ethical evaluation practice will be set through a short introductory presentation that outlines the four foundation ethical principles of respect, relevance, responsibility and reciprocity. This presentation will be followed by consideration of a number of scenarios where ethical dilemmas exist in each of the four 'R' areas. These dilemmas will be presented to participants, who will be asked respond to the scenarios, discussing their approaches to the ethical dilemmas that have been raised. The presentation of four scenarios will then be followed by opportunities for the audience to pose their own ethical dilemmas drawn from their practice experiences.

This session will be highly interactive as common evaluation challenges and dilemmas are identified and responses to ethical dilemmas are discussed and considered.

What makes a 'government evaluator' in Australia?

Kate Gilbert, *Victorian Department of Health and Human Services*; **Stefan Kaufman**, *Environmental Protection Agency Victoria*; **Duncan Rintoul**, *NSW Department of Education*

As increasing numbers of Australian government departments create dedicated evaluation units, this session will discuss the skills and competencies required to do this work, and how it differs from other forms of evaluation work that we have been trained to do. Government evaluators typically have a broad remit across contributing to the quality of individual evaluation studies, developing evaluation strategy/ies and supporting evaluation culture from within, including the use of evaluation findings and knowledge transfer. The skills and competencies required of these roles is similarly diverse, and novel strategies are required to recruit, support and develop the teams and individuals charged with this complex work.

The Swiss Evaluation Society has provided a pertinent topic for discussion by developing an *Evaluation Managers Competencies Framework* which expands upon their general evaluator competencies. The framework recognises the distinct and different skills required of people managing evaluations as distinct from directly conducting evaluations. The Swiss competencies will be tabled for discussion about their relevance and potential

usefulness in supporting the growing workforce of Australian government evaluators.

The Community of Practice model for supporting evaluators working in government will also be discussed with reflection on its success in Victoria over many years and the potential for reinstating this in Victoria.

Generating evaluation capital: Meta-evaluations as 'compound interest' evaluations

Tracy McDiarmid, *International Women's Development Agency*

During 2015–16, four separate evaluations were conducted of International Women's Development Agency's (IWDA) long-term women's economic empowerment programs in the Solomon Islands and Timor Leste. A meta-evaluation then explored commonalities, comparisons and lessons, between the four programs and drew on global literature and frameworks to provide recommendations for IWDA's future economic empowerment programming. This paper explores how the process of evaluation contributes to organisational governance in terms of establishing an evidence-based policy environment, an informed learning platform, and programming informed by evaluation 'capital'.

The meta-evaluation identified that the four projects shared a common approach, namely supporting women's participation in informal economies via savings and loans clubs, however the key point of difference between the four projects was how they approached the issue of advancing gender equality through women's economic empowerment. One project sought to provide women with separate but equal access to resources, and leadership; another provided explicit gender awareness training; the third focused on improving men's respect and support for women; and the final project focused on improving women's income and supporting women's leadership.

The outcomes identified in the evaluations were mapped against the four quadrants of the Gender at Work framework, namely impacts in individual, collective, formal and informal spaces. Utilising this framework allowed the impact of economic empowerment programming to be assessed more broadly in terms of its holistic contribution to gender equality, and was useful in identifying that there was no evidence of policy or structural change. The process of drawing together the findings and recommendations of multiple evaluations in a shared thematic area allows the organisation to generate additional evaluation capital. This capital has been beneficial in key areas such as developing broad policy recommendations via an organisational Women's Economic Empowerment Framework currently in development, and informing future program directions, specifically in terms of integrating systemic change and 'do no harm' approaches to address gender based violence.

Wednesday morning session 11:00 – 12:30

Australia's Priority Investment Approach to welfare and the Try, Test and Learn Fund

Murray Kimber, *Investment Approach Taskforce, Australian Department of Social Services*; **Kathryn Mandla**, *Policy Systems, Australian Department of Social Services*

The Priority Investment Approach is a new way of looking at the welfare system. It uses data analysis to provide insights into how the system is working and uses those insights to find innovative ways of helping more Australians live independently of welfare. The Try, Test and Learn Fund focusses on groups identified in Priority Investment Approach valuations as being at high risk of long-term welfare dependency and whose risk could be reduced with new or innovative policy responses. The Fund aims to trial new and innovative projects to identify what approaches work and move quickly to transform investment in existing programs or make the case for new investments. Collaboration and co-design are key features of the Fund with monitoring and evaluation central to the design of each policy response.

Exploring the potential relevance of Sen's capability approach to evaluation

Yvette Clarke, *Koori Justice Unit, Victorian Department of Justice and Regulation*

The capability approach has emerged in recent decades as a theoretical framework about well-being, development and justice. The approach was pioneered by the economist and philosopher Amartya Sen, and was further developed by the philosopher Martha Nussbaum. The core tenet of the capability approach is its focus on what people are able to do and to be—that is, on their capabilities. The focus of the capability approach is on extent to which a person is able to function in a particular way, whether or not he or she chooses to do so. The capability approach suggests that wellbeing should be measured not according to what individuals actually do (functionings) but what they can do (capabilities). (Sen 1993)

Despite being described as 'a broad normative framework for the evaluation of individual well-being and social arrangements' (Robeyns, 2005), initial investigation of the evaluation literature indicates that the sector has not substantially engaged with the theory. This paper will explore the potential relevance of Sen's capability approach to evaluation theory and practice.

In doing so this paper will seek to uncover:

- Whether and how the capabilities approach has been operationalized in evaluation practice. How the capability approach aligns or complements various approaches to evaluation, and
- Whether the capabilities approach can provide a useful starting theory for evaluating and measuring difficult to define topics.

Reviewing evaluation frameworks: A systematic approach

Janet Clinton, **Ghislain Arbour**, *Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne*

Frameworks about evaluation activities and products, scoping from evaluation policies, models, plans or designs, are becoming quite common. Despite many approaches to evaluation and a plethora of published frameworks, there is much variance both in the understanding of these terms and in the quality of these frameworks.

Over the past decade, in an effort to increase the quality of evaluation frameworks, the evaluation community have published many guidelines for developing them. Many government, not-for-profit and for-profit organisations have adopted approaches to developing these frameworks. Similarly, evaluation experts are often called upon to review such frameworks. However, in the absence of an established methodology on that matter, we must rely on a non-systematic type of expert judgment.

This paper outlines the process and the dimensions of analysis for reviewing frameworks. It suggests the use of a rubric and a set of high level indicators to assess the quality or emergent nature of frameworks. The paper also discuss the potential of such review for

constructive feedback for the improvement and the development of evaluation frameworks. Theories underlying evaluation frameworks as well as theories from institutional analysis (e.g. Ostrom, 2005) provide the foundation for the methodology of the review. Case examples are used to explain how the approach was developed, and used to assess and provide feedback to agencies.

The global political participation and leadership of women: Use of the ISE4GEMs approach to undertake a UN Women corporate evaluation

Anne Stephens, *James Cook University*; **Shravanti Reddy**, *Independent Office of Evaluation, UN Women*

In 2016, a collaboration of researchers from Australia and the UK collaborated with UN Women's Independent Evaluation Office to develop the *Inclusive Systemic Evaluation (ISE) Approach for Gender Equality, Environments, and voices from the Margins (GEMs): A Guide for Evaluators for the SDG Era* (hereon known as the ISE Guide). Intended to be a practical tool to support the future provisions of people with serious unmet needs, whether physical, social, economic, educational, or political. It contains a dozen tools, examples of practice and other resources to evaluate multiple and concurrent systems of complex situations. It was also developed in response to meeting the demand for robust and appropriate systemic methodology, tools, strategies, and training for practitioners working with the Agenda 2030, Sustainable Development Goals in the international development sector. The ISE Guide was published mid 2017 but testing and refining the draft methodology commenced in late 2016 with the UN Women corporate evaluation of the global participation of women in leadership and politics. In this presentation, Anne will introduce both the ISE Guide and UN Evaluation Expert Shravanti (via skype) to discuss the benefits and learnings of using this approach to high-level corporate evaluation. They will also discuss how the ISE contributes to building knowledge and practice of evaluation across a range of complex situations and the capacity development required to implement the ISE Guide in your setting.

Why Australia needs an Evaluator General

Nicholas Gruen, *Chief Executive Officer and Founder, Lateral Economics*

Senior managers and politicians often talk about the need for 'evidence-based policy', but like the weather, they do little about it. Why?

Because it's hard—much harder than the boosters understand. Evaluation's low status in the professional policy making hierarchy, its being outsourced to 'experts'—often with their own institutional imperatives in the academy—and senior managers' consequent lack of familiarity with its demands, has effectively prevented it ever being properly tried.

Gruen will explain his proposal for an Evaluator General to

- raise the professional status of monitoring and evaluation expertise,
- collaboratively integrate it into the making and delivery of policy and programs
- generate monitoring and evaluation outputs that are publicly reported in as close to real-time as possible to optimise ongoing performance and accountability.

How might we change the AES so it is more relevant to you?

Vanessa Hood, *Rooftop Social*; **Liz Smith**, *Litmus*; **Ann Braun**, *Development Evaluation | M&E Support*; **Dan Borg**, *Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association*

Business-as-usual is over! Like many professional associations, the AES must innovate or die. Feedback from members tells us the AES satisfies baby boomers (well sort of), but for emerging evaluators the AES is dull, unwelcoming and simply not that relevant. So, how might we change the vibe, to make the AES more relevant to members and non-members?

A group of intrepid evaluators tackled this question using a human centred design approach, as part of an online training course facilitated by IDEO. Team members were from the AES Design and Evaluation Special Interest Group and the AES Members Services and Engagement Committee.

Human centred design starts with the people you're designing for and ends with new solutions tailored-made to their needs. Embedded in this process are both creative and evaluative thinking.

Internationally, evaluation and design disciplines are blending. Human-centred design is used widely in the business world, for example IKEA, Lego, Google, Facebook and Apple. Evaluation has an important role in design, prototype testing and implementation. This connection is clearly demonstrated in the use of developmental evaluation in complex societal change.

The study team is enthused about the convergence between these two disciplines. Our mission during the IDEO training was to increase our understanding of design processes and understand how design interfaces with evaluation. We also used the training forum to challenge the AES with ideas for becoming more relevant to members and non-members.

At this interactive conference session, participants will learn about and use some human-centred design tools and debate their place in evaluation. Participants will also contribute their ideas to reimagine the AES.

The Oxfam Asia MEL of Influencing Capacity Building Journey: A case study of evaluative capacity building in complex organisational and cultural contexts

Jayne Pilkinton, *Oxfam*

Central to Oxfam's commitment to a just world without poverty is the assumption that structural and systemic outcomes are required to achieve transformational change. Oxfam's Strategic Plan identifies that among the key strategies used to achieve its vision is working with communities and civil society organisations to achieve policy change and create enabling environments for practice change. Recent Oxfam country strategies emphasis change pathways that contribute to policy and practice change: strengthening civil society capacity to influence decision-makers, contributing to shifts in attitude and norms and community mobilisation to support policy reform. While these strategies are common across Oxfam projects we are still developing the evaluative capacities—organisational awareness and systems and staff knowledge and capabilities required to learn about where and how we contribute to sustainable and meaningful policy and practice change.

The Oxfam Asia MEL of Influencing Capacity Building Journey was a response to a demand driven need to strengthen organisational and staff capabilities. Among the challenges to developing this evaluative capacity building program is that it needed to contribute to foundational understandings of monitoring, evaluation and

learning (MEL) and introduce new approaches and methods informed by systems thinking and adaptive management.

This presentation will provide an overview of the MEL of Influencing Capacity Building Journey that took place over nine months in 2016–17 and involved 22 staff from 12 country offices. It will describe the organisational contexts, explain the design, share learning about effective approaches to evaluative capacity building across complex organizational, cultural and political contexts and provide examples of how participants have used learning. Drawing on Preskill and Boyle (2008) the presentation will suggest that effective capacity building needs to be supported at the range of organisational levels, facilitated by MEL and thematic specialists and integrate a range of delivery modes including peer learning.

Inclusive evaluation through video as data and output

Karen Fisher, *Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW*;
Sally Robinson, *Southern Cross University*

This evaluation of a disability inclusion project, the Community Inclusion Initiative, was a qualitative action-learning evaluation that used video as data and output. The presentation discusses why video was used in this way, the benefits and difficulties experienced and lessons for future video methods in disability evaluation.

Video was used with other methods to achieve Weaver and Cousins (2004) inclusive evaluation framework (control of decision-making; diversity of participants; power relations among participating stakeholders; manageability of implementation; and depth of participation). The focus of the evaluation was on assessing changes in community inclusion for people with disability using new models of support aimed at increasing such inclusion. The evaluation occurred in the context of transition to the new NDIS arrangements.

Video data was collected in three ways: the evaluators recorded longitudinal interviews and other observation data with the project participants over 12 months; the participants and their supporters were encouraged to record video about their experiences in the project themselves; and a professional film company recorded specific material in the second round interviews, following analysis which identified preliminary themes. Considerations during the process were participants' willingness to be recorded on film, the evaluators' filming competence, conflict between data collection and good film footage as output, and ethical questions about positive portrayal of participants' stories for public viewing.

The final outputs included three thematic films, three participant stories and one summary film. The films are available free online for use by the participants, the organisations involved, the commissioning agency and the public. The experience demonstrated that the method was inclusive and rewarding for most of the participants with disability. Future evaluations adopting these methods could be made efficient through early evaluation planning of story lines for outputs so that conflicts between data collection and outputs were minimised and participants are familiar with the format.

Messy work! Combining participatory action research and developmental evaluation approaches in remote NT Indigenous communities

Cat Street, **Allison Stewart**, **James Smith**, *Charles Darwin University*

There are many differing interpretations of participatory action research and the means by which it can support positive change. The approach involves establishing a systematic cycle of reflection and learning, and is ultimately oriented towards problem solving.

Developmental evaluation also involves this learning cycle, but places more emphasis on the active application of learning to engender positive systems change.

The Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative attempted to combine developmental evaluation and participatory action research approaches in a two-and-a-half year project that aimed to inspire six remote Northern Territory Indigenous communities to include higher education among their normal expectations. In theory, combining these approaches in this setting was appropriate as some of their underlying principles, such as contextualised learning and power sharing, were consistent with the principles that underpinned the WCE initiative.

The design of the initiative and a number of contextual factors, however, presented challenges to making this work in practise. In this paper we draw on empirical research and evaluation data to discuss the tensions that arose, the costs and benefits relating to how these tensions were resolved, and outline key learnings.

No more number-crunching! The 4E's approach to social return on investment

Carolyn Hooper, *Allen and Clarke Policy and Regulatory Specialists, NZ*

As a social science researcher specialising in narrative accounts of the lived experience, there are a couple of phrases that have made the presenter cringe: 'return on investment' and 'value for money'! Seemingly used interchangeable in tender requests, this is an aspect of evaluation that she has shied away from, deferring to her colleagues who are more numeracy-minded. During a recent evaluation of a funding distribution model that provides developmental funding to ethnic minority health service providers, the client recognised that 'return on investment' was an unrealistic expectation, and took a sideways step, asking instead for the evaluation to explore the social return on investment.

It became apparent that the data sought by the number-crunchers was not available: having never been sought, it had not been collected. Oh dear. Exit the number-crunchers; enter the '4E's' approach, which focuses on equity, economy, efficiency, and effectiveness; considered from the point of view of the service user. The approach not only delivered useful findings, it also propelled the development of new insights and a model that the health service providers could use to guide future development.

This presentation will describe the theory behind the approach and then demonstrate how it was used in the analysis and theorising, wrapping up with what might be done differently next time.

Invited panel: Evaluation in the context of current debates about a collapsing relationship between science and society

Recently we have witnessed a powerful campaign against expertise and established knowledge. There has been a rise of anti-expertise sentiment and anti-intellectualism, including through the pervasiveness of the internet and explosion of media options. There is concern about a decay in our ability to have constructive, positive public debate. Evaluation is not static. It changes over time, reflecting shifts in the larger societies in which it is embedded.

For this panel session, four distinguished scholars have been invited to discuss their 'big-picture' vision for evaluation capital within this broader socio-political context and how it influences the way that they conduct their teaching, research supervision, academic-industry partnerships and their own practice and research on evaluation. The scholars will consider:

- Whether the current climate of alternative facts, attacks on science, the ubiquity of Google and its role in reinforcing the

conflation of information, knowledge and experience presents challenges or opportunities to the development of evaluation theory and practice?

- Whether evaluation is less vulnerable to the attacks against expertise and knowledge because of its applied nature and multi-disciplinary or alpha-disciplinary status or more at risk because it has produced too few beneficial impacts and outlived its usefulness?
- Has academia and the evaluation profession been complicit in diminishing the relationship between experts, decision makers and the general public?
- What should be the response from academia and the evaluation profession?

This interactive session is intended to contribute to the debate about socio-political influences on the contribution of evaluation capital to meet society's changing needs, including its relationship with research and science and through shaping evaluators expectations, values, and goals.

The Capacity Development Evaluation Framework: Providing value to users

Fiona Kotvojs, *Kurrajong Hill P/L*

Adoption of effective capacity development is considered critical to reducing poverty through international development assistance activities (World Bank, 2005). Consequently, annual global investment in capacity development now exceeds USD30 billion (World Bank Institute, 2012). However, capacity development results have been questionable, evaluation findings have contributed little to addressing this due to their poor quality and numerous weaknesses (for example Carman, 2007; UNDG, 2006; Watson, 2006). In short, the evaluation of capacity development has failed to meet the definition of an asset: being 'useful or valuable' and providing 'economic value that is expected to yield a benefit to the owning entity in future periods'.

This paper reports the findings of research to determine whether application of one of the available frameworks for evaluation of capacity development (the Capacity Development Evaluation (CDE) Framework) was useful and expected to provide a future benefit. Thus, whether it represented an asset. To assess this, the research determined whether stakeholders considered the Framework: (i) useful (providing the information and demonstrating the characteristics they required), and (ii) to provide future benefit. The research also assessed whether the Framework addressed the weaknesses with capacity development evaluations identified in the literature.

The research adopted a case study approach and applied the CDE Framework to three initiatives with different characteristics. The research found that the CDE Framework was useful, provided an immediate and future benefit, and its application overcame most of the weaknesses identified with previous evaluations. Significantly, the Framework had enabled early identification of what was not working on each initiative and had been applied by users elsewhere. Thus, the CDE Framework proved to be an asset: useful and yielding a benefit. The paper presents the results and identifies that characteristics of the Framework that provide these benefits.

One step removed: Making sense of evaluating a governance reform project for climate change and disaster risk management in the Pacific

Keren Winterford, *Institute for Sustainable Futures University of Technology Sydney*

This paper provides practitioner insights into evaluating a complex program involving diverse stakeholder identities; multiple pathways to change; and differing expected program outcomes. Challenges

and opportunities are offered in assessing program initiatives that sought to influence governance reform with multiple actors, and across a range of cultural and political economy contexts.

The paper explores the practice of a mid-term evaluation of the Pacific Risk Resilience Program (PRRP). The goal of the program is that 'communities are more resilient to risks from climate change and disasters' and end of program outcomes are focused on integration of climate change and disaster risk management considerations into national and local level planning. The PRRP is implemented through a partnership between UNDP and the international NGO, Live and Learn Environmental Education (LLEE), in four Pacific island countries: Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Funding for the three-year program is provided by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Rather than focusing on evaluation findings, this paper will explore the practice of how to assess program implementers when they are not responsible for implementation, but instead work to influence the action of others. The PRRP is implemented by a range of different stakeholders with varying degrees of authority, autonomy and influence, which makes it challenging to assess the Program attribution and contribution to change.

The paper provides an overview of the evaluation approach taken including the use of a theory of change, defining core areas of inquiry, qualitative methods and a multi stakeholder perspective. The value and limitations of the DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance is also explored especially in relation to programming centred on governance reform. The evaluation highlighted the need 'to be place based', understand political economy and use locally defined criteria to ensure relevance and contribution of the evaluation to local development agendas.

Social capital: A reflection on the theory, implications and use in evaluation

Erin Blake, *independent evaluation consultant*

In his 1993 seminal work, Putnam argued that social capital was a key factor that underpinned institutional performance, democratic practices and economic wellbeing in regional Italy. He noted that more prosperous regions in northern Italy had stronger civic traditions based in 'networks and norms of civic engagement' that facilitated trust and reciprocity. In his later work, Putnam elaborated further on the concept of social capital, arguing that for diverse and multi-ethnic states to function effectively, remain peaceful and continue to be prosperous, it was essential for its citizens to develop stocks of 'bridging' social capital whereby people developed bonds with people from backgrounds different to their own.

Closer to home, Cox—in a 1995 Boyer Lecture—argued that Australia was at risk of losing the 'social glue' that bound our multi-cultural and diverse nation together. She noted that debates regarding citizenship were focused on citizens as economically motivated, competitive and rational individuals which belied the importance of social bonds and networks. Cox feared that public policy based on these notions would further undermine social capital and alienate the communities from the state and each other.

Social capital has had a significant influence on the theory and practice of evaluation. Some academics and evaluators have sought to measure social capital, its influence and impact. Others have used it as the basis for developing theories of change and designing interventions. For utilisation-focused evaluators, the concept underpins the process of evaluation itself; how the evaluator engages with the stakeholders and evaluands.

In an increasingly complex, inter-connected and yet seemingly fragmented world—where populism, racism and nationalism appear to be on the rise—this presentation will revisit the theory of social capital and reflect on how it influences contemporary evaluation theories and practice.

Making the most of your internal evaluation capital using reflections meetings

Renee Madsen, *NQ Dry Tropics*

Building evaluation capital is essential for any organisation or team, in order to improve and progress towards their ultimate goal. An organisation's staff members can be a huge asset in building this evaluation capital, and the wisdom, learnings and knowledge accumulated in people's heads can be incredibly valuable.

How do you capture that 'evaluation gold' in people's heads? How do you do it in a systematic, professional way that is going to add value to your organisation's work, engage your staff, and be sensitive to the political and cultural issues inherent in any organisation or team?

This presentation will provide a practical, common sense tool for reflective practice, known as reflections meetings, that audience members can take away and adapt for use in their own environment. Reflections meetings are a collaborative, cost-effective and responsive way to build an organisation's internal evaluation capital using its most valuable resource—its staff. Using real-life learnings and examples from an organisation that has embedded this tool into its own culture, audience members will gain tips for running ongoing reflections meetings with staff, learn about issues that may come up and ways to address them, understand how reflections meetings fit in with the organisation's overall evaluation framework, and learn how to build evaluative and facilitation skills.

The presentation will discuss ways of incorporating realist evaluation, participatory evaluation and other key concepts into reflections meetings, and how to address internal politics and power imbalances to ensure that all staff can contribute to reflective practice and the building of evaluation capital.

Maximising use: Lessons from evaluating New Zealand's Aid Program in the Pacific

Rosalind Dibley, *NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade*;
Ned Hardie-Boys, *Allen + Clarke, NZ*

New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has focused on developing an evaluative culture across its Aid Program. As part of developing this culture, it has promoted a Utilisation-Focused Evaluation (UFE) approach, where the focus is on utility and use of the evaluation process and findings to inform improvements to policies and programs.

In 2015, the Ministry embarked on a series of country, regional, and thematic program evaluations. The UFE approach was piloted on evaluations of four Pacific Island country programs and key learnings were applied to the evaluations of the Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu programs.

Key features of the UFE approach used include:

- earlier and increased engagement with stakeholders to develop an evaluation plan use of local expertise
- communicating and testing findings and recommendations with stakeholders before the evaluations are finalised

Focusing on evaluation users throughout the process is leading to greater ownership and uptake of findings, both within the Ministry and by its development partners in the Pacific. There are also challenges, such as balancing participation of intended users with independent evaluative judgements, meeting the multiple intended uses, and securing local partners to enhance engagement in the evaluation process.

Jointly presented by evaluators from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the main intended user of the evaluation findings), and Allen + Clarke (an independent evaluation consultancy that has led evaluations of several Aid Program projects), we will share learnings from adopting a UFE approach. The presentation will draw on both the commissioner's and practitioner's experiences, discussing both benefits and challenges experienced, how these challenges were addressed and managed, as well how the approach could be improved for future evaluations.

Wednesday afternoon session 13:30 – 15:00

Integrated evaluation capital creation in a low capital environment: The design and use of an IT platform for evaluative management in the land of the unexpected (PNG)

Michael Campin, Josie de Boer, Kate Averill, Oscar Louisson, *EvalStars Limited, NZ*

Evaluation capital is frequently a scarce resource inside organisational processes. By integrating evaluation functions systematically into the administrative processes of small community-based organisations; resources can be preserved, business processes enhanced, and funders kept confident.

This presentation shares the experience of the consultant team in designing and implementing a collaborative Evaluative Learning and Management (ELM) system with Ginigoada Foundation, a NGO in Papua New Guinea (PNG). This included building the capability of Ginigoada staff to embed evaluation capital into the organisation's processes. Ginigoada provides mobile training courses to help pathway settlement youth into vocational training opportunities and on the job training positions. Ginigoada seeks to improve the lives of settlement youth through increased employability, self-confidence, and health skills.

The presentation will cover the motivations, context, design principles, implementation methods, results and lessons of tailoring the ELM platform for Ginigoada. In mid-2015 the consultant group, jointly funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the World Bank, undertook to help Ginigoada tell its organisational performance story for funders and stakeholders alike. The assistance incorporated evaluative management principles to track outcomes at a learner and organisational level through structured data collection, storage, and reporting. A key dimension of interest in this application was the robust collection of data to enable follow-up with participants after they had left contact with the organisation.

PNG, being the land of the unexpected, meant that the undertaking was not without its share of challenges. The learnings in this respect will prove to be most valuable for evaluators and organisations alike who are looking to tell their performance story through increasing evaluative capital via an integrated evaluative management solution, particularly those with an IT dimension.

Power and political positioning in Indigenous evaluation: Exploring the relationship between developmental evaluation and cultural responsiveness in evaluation

Samantha Togni, *RMIT Doctoral student*

Evaluation in Indigenous contexts is inherently political. This paper will draw on a decolonising methodologies paradigm to examine culturally responsive evaluation through developmental evaluation in Indigenous settings. It will explore how developmental evaluation operates at the interface of different knowledge systems through examples from practice.

The history of evaluation and evaluation use within Indigenous communities has too often been detrimental to, and marginalised, Indigenous people and communities. Consequently, many Indigenous peoples are sceptical of and mistrust the value of evaluation. In Australia, much evaluation in Indigenous contexts continues to be carried out by non-Indigenous evaluators, raising questions of power and privilege inherent in evaluation. Over the last 15 years evaluation scholars have argued that the recognition of and attention to culture and cultural context in evaluation are essential for improving social programs and undertaking culturally valid evaluation. Partly, this has emerged from a decolonising framework.

Developmental evaluation is designed to support innovation in complex and dynamic contexts where a program or service is emerging. Informed by complexity theory and systems thinking, its essential principles do not explicitly include cultural responsiveness. However, developmental evaluation is relationship-based and pays attention to different perspectives, inter-relationships, context, boundaries and emergence. Within the contexts in which I have applied developmental evaluation it has enabled the recognition and affirmation of different ways of knowing and valuing to inform the innovation development, evaluation design, methods and interpretation of findings. The evaluation has been culturally grounded, the usual power relationships disrupted through co-creation of the innovation and evaluation, and the evaluator being part of the development team.

There is emerging evidence from practice that developmental evaluation can be culturally responsive in its application. However, developmental evaluation is an emerging practice and we need more empirical research to understand its practice, especially in Indigenous and culturally diverse contexts.

Evaluating the role for volunteers in public service reform and commissioning services: Case study of a volunteer home visiting service comprising the innovative combination of Randomised Control Trial and Social Return on Investment methodologies

Les Hems, *Ernst & Young*; Rebekah Grace, *Macquarie University*

Public service reform continues apace at both Australian Commonwealth and State/Territory governments. Government are seeking to commission quality services that deliver agreed outcomes and meet client expectation including providing client choice. Increasing competition, digital disruption, social innovation, increasingly casualised labour market, ageing population, and budget pressures are all combining to challenge the strategies and viability of operations of service providers.

Volunteers have always played a fundamentally significant role in delivering public services but what about their role in these public service reforms. This presentation considers the potential role for volunteers to help service delivery systems work efficiently and effectively through a case study of a volunteer home visiting

service for vulnerable families, Volunteer Family Connect (VFC). This potential is explored in the context of the findings from an innovative combination of a Randomised Control Trial (RCT) and Social Return on Investment (SROI).

The presentation will demonstrate the value of linking a mainstream evaluation methodology, an RCT with emerging methodologies, SROI. The RCT evaluates the efficacy of VFC whilst the SROI considers the balance of benefits and costs not only for families but also government and the three service providers delivering VFC. These two methodologies were selected in order to provide evidence to scale up the service, if efficacy is proven, and to demonstrate that volunteers have a role to play in public service reform.

The findings from the pilot RCT and forecast SROI suggest that VFC is delivering support for vulnerable families and by integrating with other services provides long term value to Government in terms of cost savings and meeting policy goals.

The presentation will conclude by exploring the roles for government and evaluation practitioners in commissioning and delivering evaluations that go beyond the efficacy of a program and explore the broader value to government and communities.

Fidelity, contextualisation and sustainability: Demonstrating conceptual platforms in evaluation

Gill Westhorp, Emma Williams, *Charles Darwin University*

World Vision is a consortium of almost 100 national organisations aiming to improve wellbeing for poor and vulnerable children in international development settings. There is a constant tension between the recognised need to adapt programs to local contexts and cultures on the one hand and the desire to build evidence-based programs, which implies a need to ensure fidelity to program models, on the other.

This presentation describes a new approach to theory used in an evaluation of two programs, one in maternal and infant health and the other in child protection. Both programs had existing program theories, albeit of quite different types. The evaluation added to this by developing program-theory-style models for four key concepts: the concept of 'fidelity' when contextualisation is expected; high-quality contextualisation when fidelity to models is expected; impacts on equity; and the contributions of fidelity and contextualisation to sustainability.

Theory models were developed for three concepts (fidelity, contextualisation and sustainability) early in the evaluation and tested and refined through the evaluation. A new model for sustainability was also developed from the evaluation findings. The evaluation also took into account, to the extent possible, the impacts of two overarching contexts—developing states and fragile states—on the issues investigated. The evaluation generated specific insights for each program. It also found support for the main tenets of the 'concept theories' and identified ways in which each could be improved. These will be presented. Because the concept theories are not specific to individual programs, they are potentially applicable to a range of programs, and have the potential to make a significant contribution to the theory and practice of adaptive management. The implication is that evaluation practices can be adapted to escape the boundaries of 'single program' evaluations, and to contribute to portable learning across program types.

Evaluating the evaluation: Stories from the Community Development Program

Kylie Brosnan, Sharon Barnes, Michael Barnes, Ipsos

The evaluation of the Community Development Programme (CDP) will be made up of a number of components, including community case studies in eight CDP regions with eight communities participating in the research. This case study research was conducted by over 40 local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community researchers. A backbone organisation or committee was formed in each community to support and guide the research. Local community researchers were employed to undertake the survey development and data collection and finalise the community reports. Winangali/Ipsos Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers supported, mentored and trained local community researchers to undertake the research.

As part of reflective practice the local researchers evaluated what worked and what didn't when working on the evaluation. The evaluation of the evaluation included a short survey by local community researchers, discussion with the backbone committee and video diaries during fieldwork. The contexts for each community and each local community researcher varied significantly. Local community researchers used different methods, some were experienced researchers and for others it was their first time. The composition of the backbone organisations and how they were involved in the project also varied.

This paper will demonstrate the self-determination, philosophy, methods and techniques employed by the local community researchers to deliver a case study evaluation. The findings of the evaluation of the evaluation will be informative for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander evaluators seeking to understand how to improve their evaluation practice and for non-Indigenous evaluators seeking to understand how to adopt a strengths based approach to evaluation in remote communities.

AES Fellows Forum: Resolving conflict in evaluation practice—stories and scars from the field

John Owen, Anthea Rutter, Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne; Richard Cummings, Murdoch University

This panel session examines ways in which conflict affects the conduct of evaluation practice, and suggests methods by which conflicting situations can be resolved by the evaluator(s).

There is broad agreement about the political nature of evaluation. Theorists such as Carol Weiss (1995) note that evaluation is conducted within a context of competing pressures of interests, ideologies, and institutional constraints.

Clients bring such issues with them to the commissioning of evaluations, either implicitly or explicitly. An advisory committee may represent client groups with different agendas, each with an expectation that findings will support their claims about the future of the intervention under review.

Where do practising evaluators obtain skills to handle conflict? There is ample evidence that both formal and informal training programs focus on the teaching of research methods. Less attention is paid to social interaction aspects of evaluation, which require people skills. The panel members suggest that dealing with conflict that arises in the conduct of much evaluative work is an important aspect within the domain of people skills.

What are the implications for practice? The evaluation profession has not yet codified a body of knowledge that would be useful for evaluator in this domain. This panel is designed to contribute to such

a body of knowledge by examining real-life experiences in dealing with conflict. Each presenter will provide a situation that has arisen from practice, and will outline how this was resolved. Other Fellows will be invited to provide examples from their practice and attendees will be encouraged to add examples from their experiences.

Toward the conclusion of the panel, these examples will be reviewed to look for common threads. An approach here would be to examine the nature of conflict at different stages of the evaluation process; during (i) negotiation/planning; (ii) data management; and (iii) findings/reporting stages.

Conclusion: We are aware that the social science literature contains extensive literature both on conflict and conflict resolution between social groups and in managing change. An extension of this panel presentation is to identify those conceptual understandings that might apply to the field of policy and program evaluation. This would be a logical extension of the contribution of this panel to the future of evaluation work both in Australasia and internationally.

I'm an evaluator, not a magician: Designing evaluable programs

Joanna Farmer, Caroline Tomiczek, Urbis

In the long run, designing investments that can be evaluated strengthens the evidence-base for policy and programs, supports continual improvement, and makes the evaluation process more rewarding for the evaluator and the client.

Often appointed long after an intervention has been established, evaluators can be asked to work magic with data collections that do not support the 'evaluability' of an investment. Reporting systems have two purposes—to support accountability back to the funder, and to support evaluation and ongoing improvements. But frequently, intervention staff will attest to swimming in a sea of reporting, while evaluators often find themselves unable to conduct meaningful analysis using that data.

This can be of particular disadvantage to quantitative data approaches, which can be less flexible than qualitative approaches, with an emphasis on larger sample sizes and collection over time. Designing evaluable measures and indicators from the outset can help create data sources which provide meaning to funders, staff and evaluators alike.

This presentation will draw on implementation theory and examples of successful evaluation and investment design approaches. The presenters will discuss projects, from small-scale community investments by not for profits to national investments by government, which demonstrate that when design is informed by an understanding of evaluation, effective data collection and analysis approaches, the investment and the evaluator benefit.

Building on the conference theme of 'evaluation capital', this presentation will show how establishing evaluability secures the effectiveness and credibility of evaluation, by opening the doors for robust evaluation approaches throughout the life of the investment.

Building a regional evaluation system for fisheries in the Pacific

Connie Donato-Hunt, Pacific Community (SPC), New Caledonia; Hampus Eriksson, WorldFish, New Caledonia

Despite diverse economic, social and development contexts, all 22 Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) are characterised by vast areas of ocean that are much greater than their land area. The Pacific Ocean is 48% of the world's ocean, representing significant economic, social and cultural benefits from marine resources. However, while the populations of many PICTs are growing, marine resources are under increasing pressure.

The importance and challenges presented by coastal fisheries has led to a complex web of overlapping regional and international policies and frameworks in the Pacific. Despite this long-standing policy landscape, the evidence-base for progress towards policy outcomes was weak.

Since 2015, however, significant advancements have been made for building evaluation systems to support regional fisheries frameworks. This presentation will outline the process of developing a harmonised regional fisheries evaluation framework, exploring key enablers such as organisational alliances, formal commitments, political buy-in and timing. In 2015, the *Future of Fisheries Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Fisheries* (the Roadmap), was endorsed by the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders. The Roadmap identifies that annual Report Cards be produced.

During the same year *A New Song for Coastal Fisheries - Pathways to Change: The Noumea Strategy* (the New Song) was developed, with similar reporting commitments. Further, in 2016, the first *Results Report Card for the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape* (FPO), another regional framework, was published.

The synergistic timing of the Roadmap, New Song and FPO Results Report created a unique opportunity for the Pacific region to align evaluation across multiple regional commitments, including another seven international and sub-regional instruments. This began with informal collaboration between organisational alliances which then developed to more formal processes involving representatives from 25 countries.

While challenges relating to data availability and resources remain, regional efforts have led to the successful development of an integrated evaluation framework to assess collective impact for Pacific coastal fisheries.

How to publish in the Evaluation Journal of Australasia

Lyn Alderman, *Australasian Evaluation Society*;
Liz Gould, *NSW Ministry of Health*; **Carol Quadrelli**;
Bronwyn Rossingh, *Accountability Notions*

The panel session offers those who are new and experienced authors, journal article reviewers and book reviewers an opportunity to speak directly with the editors of the *Evaluation Journal of Australasia*. This is the third year this type of session has occurred and it is wonderful to see previous participants taking up reviewing opportunities and established authors offering ongoing support to new authors.

The editors will explain: the difference between academic, practice and student articles; offer advice on how to conduct a journal review; provide insights on the value of doing a book review as part of your professional practice; and ask for ideas and interest areas for special reviews.

The Special Interest Groups of the AES are particularly invited to present topics and timelines to manage a special issue in 2018.

Building an evidence-based social sector in New Zealand: How to increase the validity and visibility of evidence and evaluation in Government decision-making

Carolyn O'Fallon, *Superu, NZ*

Recently, the New Zealand Government has adopted a 'social investment approach' to its investment in social services. This involves increasing the use of evidence and data, and improving data collection and analysis, such that decision- and policy-makers know what works well and for whom. An important aspect of this

approach is to learn from what is implemented, via systematic evaluation and monitoring, so the learning can feed back into the decision- making process for future investment. Given this approach, it is not surprising then that the most recent process for setting the Government's 2017–2018 budget included the requirement for agencies to support their 'bids' with evidence and evaluation plans. As an autonomous Crown entity able to provide independent assurance, we were asked to assess the evidence provided and the evaluation plans to assist the Treasury in making its recommendations to the Minister of Finance and Cabinet.

To assess the evidence, we took a two-pronged approach. First, we used an Evidence Transparency Framework, adapted from the United Kingdom's Institute for Government, to assess how (or whether) evidence had been used in various aspects of the budget bid, i.e. diagnosis of the issue, the choice of intervention, how it would be implemented, and value for money assessment. Second, we used our (soon-to-be released) Evidence Rating Scale to assess the quality of evidence for, and the effectiveness of, the intervention. Finally, we provided a general assessment of the proposed evaluation plan, with comments on how it could be improved.

This paper discusses our learning from being involved in the budget process and what we recommend for any Government wanting to increase the visibility and validity of the evidence-base in its decision- and policy-making.

How do we know that our work works? Building an evidence base and evaluation capital

Anne Crawford, Sumera Jabeen, *World Vision Australia*

In the current milieu of shrinking development resources, development organisations are under increasing pressure to demonstrate that their interventions are producing desired change. Demand for evidence on the effectiveness of interventions, both from individual and institutional donors, is growing. This necessitates for development organisations to build evidence on their interventions not only for accountability purposes but also to develop more effective programs to ensure benefits to the poor in developing countries and secure future funding. However, at the same time, resources available to build evidence are limited and requires innovative ways to deal with the problem.

In such a backdrop, World Vision Australia (WVA) is committed to enhancing its program impact by ensuring that program design is informed by evidence. Within a context of human and financial constraints, WVA has developed a strategy to increase evidence capital to improve interventions and is the focus of this presentation. The strategy includes: taking stock of where we are in terms of availability of evidence for a variety of development approaches and models being promoted by the WV in its programs; developing evidence on the key areas; and building capacity of program planners and implementers to use monitoring and evaluation to improve programming.

A detailed evidence gap analysis of core WVA project models has been undertaken to identify what works in various contexts. Methodology and results of the evidence gap analysis for one of the WVA's development project models will be shared in detail. Key priority areas for further development of evidence have also been identified. As the next step, robust evaluations are being designed to capture the impact of these project models with a special focus on developing evidence on key gap areas. This learning is expected to help improve programming at WVA and meet donors need for evidence. Learning from WVA's experience can be of use to other development and community organisations faced with similar challenges.

Evaluation and the creativity of constraint

Liam Downing, *Charles Sturt University*

Georges Perec's novel, 'Life A User's Manual' (Perec & Bellos, 1987), portrays a microcosm of life in Paris in the 1970s. Within, he paints a picture of the lives of people living and dying in 99 rooms of a 100 room apartment block in Paris. Perec navigates through each room in (seemingly) no particular order, attempting to create some sense out of what seems like a disparate collection of characters. The threads linking characters with the novel appear at first glance to be tenuous at best, and potentially misleading at worst. Upon closer analysis, however, the interleaving stories begin to make sense. Rather than simply a collection of random people co-existing within a single building, the book resolves as a treatise on what it means to live and die in society.

It is a foremost example of art operating within constraints. The constraints within which evaluators operate are well explored. The United States General Accounting Office identifies four groups of constraints evaluators should take into account in conducting evaluations: Time, cost, staff expertise, and location and facilities. Bamberger, Rugh and Mabry write extensively on the topic in *RealWorld Evaluation*, including political constraints in the mix. To an external audience, it seems like the web of constraints within the evaluation field seems restrictive.

But evaluation is not—in practice—a restrictive field. Through linking the disparate worlds of creative arts and evaluation theory—viewed through a lens of the author's experiences in evaluation—this paper will describe ways in which evaluators do respond creatively to their constraints. The author will argue that rather than viewing constraints as negatives, they can in fact drive creative and effective evaluation work. The paper will also include discussion around how to utilise the concept of creative constraint to ensure evaluation is utilised effectively.

Emotions, relationships, and politics between external evaluation consultants, program staff, and non-Indigenous organisational cultures in the conduct of evaluation of Indigenous programs

Lauren Siegmann, *String Theory*;
Rebecca Harnett, *Sissy Austin, Oxfam Australia*

This presentation will discuss two evaluation case studies. These case studies examine two evaluations of Indigenous programs, conducted by a non-Indigenous external evaluation consultant working in collaboration with an Indigenous program team in a large non-Indigenous community organisation. This paper will be presented by the evaluation consultant, the Indigenous and non-Indigenous program staff (the evaluation commissioners), and Indigenous evaluation participants.

This presentation will explore:

- How the external consultant focused on emotional and relational aspects of the conduct of evaluation and how this created a safe emotional and cultural space between the consultant and the program team
- How the relationship between the consultant and the program staff led to improved engagement with Indigenous evaluation participants and consequently the collection of high-quality data collection
- The ways in which the cultural, emotional, and relational expertise of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous program staff was critical to the success of the evaluation the positive relationships between the evaluator and program staff leads to the improved development of recommendations and utilisation of evaluation findings
- The ways in which organisational politics in a non-Indigenous organisation were navigated by program staff to ensure a safe emotional and safe cultural space for evaluation participants. The presentation will also explore the emotional impact of working within these challenges and how relationships between program staff and between the consultant and the program staff contributed to successful navigation of these challenges.

It's the AES17 Great Debate and it's going to be huge!

Chair: Lyn Alderman, *President, Australasian Evaluation Society*

Bear witness to the battle of the biggest evaluation brains as two teams fight it out to reign supreme. Six experts will use their evaluation knowledge, evaluative logic, wit and charm to win the day and prove that they are the better side. The topic is contentious and opens the way for a synthesis and lively critique of the conference theme. The competition will be heated and the insights will be world-class.

The AES17 Great Debate topic 'Is building evaluation capital the right mindset for these times or are we fiddling while Rome burns?' will be battled out during the final conference plenary session with the AES President, Lyn Alderman in the moderator's chair.

Based on the conference proceedings they will have just witnessed, three international experts will argue that

introducing the notion of evaluation capital provided a useful reminder that evaluation operates in a highly politicised environment and has stimulated fresh ideas about how to survive the fickle winds of fashion and deliver a valuable asset for sound governance.

Alternatively, three other international experts on the opposing team will argue that framing evaluation capital as a durable asset has led conference attendees to look in all the wrong places, think in old ways and constrain our capacity for progressing sustainability-ready evaluation and evaluation that genuinely contributes to social cohesion and shared value solutions.

*This session will be followed by a conference closing address by AES President **Lyn Alderman** and the handover to the AES 2018 International Evaluation Conference.*





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