

LOGO

[PROGRAM]   
Evaluation Framework[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Approved by   
[INSERT APPROVER AND TITLE]**

[DATE OF APPROVAL]

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| **EMBEDDING EVALUATION INTO EVERYDAY PRACTICE: TEMPLATES TO SUPPORT BETTER PRACTICE EVALUATION ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH**  The [Commonwealth Evaluation Toolkit](https://evaluation.gov.au/toolkit/commonwealth-evaluation-toolkit) is designed to support people to determine fit for purpose approaches to evaluate, measure, assess and report on the performance of Commonwealth programs and activities.  There are many evaluation templates, tools and resources used across the Commonwealth, and in other jurisdictions, that may assist at different stages of an evaluation. While the set of templates available here are in line with better practice, the application and use of any one tool, template or example for the evaluation of a specific program or activity is ultimately at the discretion of the manager responsible for the successful delivery of results.  The templates can be used to document how you plan to conduct an evaluation, or to strengthen routine performance measurement approaches. They are organised around the three stages typically involved in an evaluative activity:   * Planning and budgeting (steps 1, 2 & 3) * Measuring and assessing (steps 4, 5 & 6) * Reporting and being accountable (steps 7 & 8)   More information about the stages and steps involved in an evaluative activity is available on the "[How to evaluate](https://evaluation.gov.au/toolkit/how-evaluate)" page in the Toolkit.  The [tools and additional resources](https://evaluation.gov.au/toolkit/templates-tools-and-resources) available in the Toolkit also provide further guidance and examples on how to complete specific evaluative activities and tasks.  [ REMEMBER TO DELETE THESE REFERENCE NOTES BEFORE FINALISING YOUR DOCUMENT ] |

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| **TEMPLATE 3 : Evaluation framework (program)**  **Template Overview:** An evaluation framework (sometimes called a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework) supports the implementation of an evaluation of a program of work over time. The scope may include an evaluation of: a specific program; connected programs across an organisation; a connected group of programs delivered across one or more jurisdictions; or a suite of connected programs delivered within a particular cultural or social context. The framework may include guidance on data sources, management processes, theory of change/program logic models, and principles to guide the conduct of an evaluation to ensure effective program delivery. An evaluation framework is a living document that is expected to be revised as a program is implemented. |
| **A comprehensive set of templates is available in the Commonwealth Evaluation Toolkit:** These [templates](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/planning-and-reporting/commonwealth-performance-framework/evaluation-commonwealth-rmg-130/templates-tools-and-additional-resources) can be used to help assess the effectiveness, efficiency and/or appropriateness of government programs and activities. Use of these templates is NOT mandatory.   * **Planning and budgeting**    + Template 1 | Theory of change (outcome mapping)   + Template 2 | Program logic   + Template 3 | Evaluation framework (program)   + Template 4 | Evaluation terms of reference   + Template 5 | Evaluation plan   + Template 6 | Identifying stakeholders and their roles in an evaluation * **Measuring and assessing**    + Template 7 | Data evaluation matrix   + Template 8 | Data sharing agreement  (Sourced from ONDC: Data sharing agreement ONDC (datacommissioner.gov.au)) * **Reporting and being accountable**   + Template 9 | Evaluation report   + Template 10 | Evaluation action plan   + Template 11 | Evaluation closure report   [ REMEMBER TO DELETE THESE REFERENCE NOTES BEFORE FINALISING YOUR DOCUMENT ] |

**TEMPLATE 3**

An evaluation framework (sometimes called a Monitoring and Evaluation framework, or a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning framework) provides an overall framework for evaluations across different programs or different evaluations of a single program (e.g. post commencement; monitoring and evaluation; impact evaluation).

An evaluation framework can include:

• definitions and key concepts

• policies, principles and standards (including ethical standards and expectations of cultural understanding)

• guidelines for setting priorities on what, when and ways to evaluate

• guidelines for utilising evaluation findings to inform decision making

• governance roles and responsibilities.

# Document administration

Version history

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Version | Date | Description | Author |
| 1.0 |  | Executive level Approval | NA |
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1. Background and Overview
   1. Introduction

This Evaluation Framework outlines future evaluation activity for [Program Name] over the next [XX] years.

This document details the evaluation framework within which the future evaluation[s] of this program may be conducted. Establishing this framework early in a program’s life cycle ensures that the program is prepared for future evaluations and helps instil an evaluative mindset from the outset. While this framework is expected to inform the evaluations outlined herein, the evaluations themselves may deviate from this framework based on input from various stakeholders and the program’s evaluative needs at the time of each evaluation. As such, the framework provided by this document should be used to inform the drafting of an evaluation plan which will act as the project plan for each evaluation, and Terms of Reference which will specify each evaluation’s scope, resourcing, governance and any other details which will need to be considered to successfully conduct the planned evaluation[s].

As programs may change over time, this should be considered a ‘living document’. It is recommended that it be reviewed periodically or in response to significant program events.

The framework proposes a [insert summary of planned evaluations e.g. monitoring evaluation in x year and an impact evaluation in x year]. It details the reasons behind particular types and timings of evaluation activity planned, and outlines the scope of each evaluation, the evaluation questions, and the data which is available or which will have to be collected to answer these questions.

This framework has been prepared by taking into account the strategic importance of the program and the expected level of resourcing for evaluations. It has been developed by the [insert policy/program team names]. The framework has been endorsed by the [insert title and name of approver (level dependent on the entity’s governance arrangements].

* 1. Program overview

[In this section create a description of how the program operates, its funding, governance etc. Some example text follows. Adjust this section as best fits your program. For example, you may add current sensitivities, such as whether the program has ceased//has a finite life, proposed changes to the program etc. Aim for approximately half to one page in length and put additional information into a brief appendix if required.]

[Program Name] was an initiative of the Australian Government in [insert year]. It was implemented as part of the [insert Agenda/Strategy if relevant] with the intention of [insert program objectives]. The program came into effect on [insert date]. Under current funding the program will cease [insert date].

The program has been subject to [insert number] of previous reviews and evaluations. Most recently [list recent review titles and dates if applicable]. These reviews led to key changes to the program, most notably [outline key changes to program objectives, design, eligibility etc.].

1. Upcoming Evaluations

Delete and amend sections as necessary

* 1. Post-commencement 20XX-YY

[INSERT PROGRAM] will have a post-commencement evaluation in [Add year] as it is a new program. [Add any other reasoning]. This will focus on the initial implementation of the program to allow decision makers to identify early issues regarding program administration and delivery, and take corrective action if necessary.

It is proposed that this evaluation be conducted by [select one: the policy owner, adjust as needed].

* 1. Monitoring 20XX-YY

[INSERT PROGRAM] will have a monitoring evaluation in [Add year]. [Add reasoning]. This evaluation will focus on testing the program’s performance framework, including the data sources, in order to assess whether they are providing the information required for both the ongoing management of the program and future impact evaluations. In doing so, this evaluation may be able to assess the performance of the program’s short term outcomes.

It is proposed that this evaluation be conducted by [select one: the policy owner, adjust as needed].

* 1. Impact 20XX-YY

[INSERT PROGRAM] will have an impact evaluation in [insert year]. [Add reasoning]. This evaluation will assess the impact of the program. It will seek to compare program outcomes with a prediction of what would have happened in absence of the program, it may include a counterfactual or cost benefit analysis.

It is proposed that this evaluation be conducted by [select one: the policy owner, adjust as needed].

1. Preparation

This program has undergone an Evaluation Ready process to prepare it for evaluation [delete if not relevant]. This includes any ethical and cultural considerations or approvals that may impact both the program and any evaluations (see the Importance of ethics, privacy and integrity in evaluations and the Importance of culturally appropriate evaluations in [Templates, tools and additional resources](https://evaluation.gov.au/toolkit/templates-tools-and-resources) [delete if not relevant]). A suite of products has been developed by the [insert policy team]. This includes the program logic, data matrix and this framework.

The framework has been prepared in line with the [Commonwealth Evaluation Policy](https://evaluation.gov.au/toolkit/commonwealth-evaluation-toolkit) and abides by the principles outlined in the Policy.

* 1. Program logic

At the heart of each program is a ‘theory of change’ by which policy planners determine the outcomes sought and how that change can be achieved. A program logic visually represents the theory of change and describes how an intervention contributes to a chain of results flowing from the inputs, participants and activities via short and medium outcomes to long-term impact.

Program logic models can focus evaluation questions on outcomes and processes of interest. They can clarify the policy and program intentions and clarify alignment between activities and objectives.

The program logic for the [INSERT PROGRAM] is provided at Appendix 1.

* 1. Evaluation questions and data matrix

Across the lifetime of a program, evaluations need to include a range of questions that promote accountability for public funding and learning from program experiences.

The development of evaluation questions draws on the [Commonwealth's Resource Management Framework](https://www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources) and the “Rossi Steps.”[[2]](#footnote-2) These questions have four main focus areas: Design, Efficiency, Outcomes and Impacts, and Lessons Learned.

Evaluation questions for each evaluation are developed to align with the program logic document and will form the basis of the evaluation plan and the Terms of Reference. As this is a living document, evaluation questions may be added to or amended closer to the evaluation[s] to account for changes in the policy context, key stakeholders, or performance indicators.

[delete this paragraph if only one evaluation is planned] Note that not every evaluation needs to address all the evaluation questions – they can be spread out across post-commencement, monitoring and impact evaluations. Evaluation questions may also be added to or amended closer to the evaluation to account for changes in the policy context and changes in key stakeholders.

The evaluation questions are then used to draft the data/evaluation matrix to ensure that the necessary data is being gathered at the right time to facilitate the program’s evaluation. The data/evaluation matrix outlines the sources and types of data which will need to be collected by the program’s policy and delivery teams, as well as by the evaluator at the time of the evaluation, to ensure that the evaluation questions can be answered.

The evaluation questions are included in the data/evaluation matrix for the [INSERT PROGRAM] provided at Appendix 2.

1. Implementation
   1. Roles and responsibilities

There are [insert number of] internal stakeholder branches with roles in implementing the evaluations. These are:

* [Insert stakeholder branch & division names here, each as a separate dot point]

Each evaluation will be overseen [Insert how the evaluation will be governed]. The [governance group] will include representation by the program’s policy and delivery teams. Observers or subject matter experts from other areas may also be invited to participate as required.

Table 4.1.1 below outlines broad roles and responsibilities for the evaluations. Further details will be set out in each evaluation’s plan and Terms of Reference. [Use this table to outline the broad roles and responsibilities of different areas involved in your evaluation(s)]. You might include some combination of a policy area, a program area, a consultant and an evaluation area]

Table 4.1.1: Roles and responsibilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Area | Responsibility |
| [PROGRAM] Governance Group | Agree to the Terms of Reference and evaluation plan  Provide feedback on the evaluation report  Chair of the governance group to sign off on the final evaluation report |
| Commonwealth Entity/company Evaluation unit/function [delete if not applicable] | Provide evaluation guidance and input to evaluation plan  Draft the evaluation Terms of Reference and evaluation plan for the evaluation  Conduct, manage, or advise on evaluation activity as required |
| [Program partner] | Provide program data and guidance on program administration and delivery as required |
| [Policy partner] | Provide data and input as required |

* 1. Timeline

Figure 4.2.1 outlines the general sequence of events for each evaluation.

Figure 4.2.1: Roles and responsibilities [DELETE OR AMEND AS APPROPRIATE]

**Governance group formed**

**Endorses Terms of Reference**

**Reviews draft findings and recommendations**

**Report   
writing**

**Data collection   
and analysis**

**Governance group**

**Endorses report**

**Considers final report**

**Publication**

**Relevant   
Executive Body**

**Governance group**

**Governance group**

**Approves final report**

**Governance group chair**

[If specific dates are known, please include the timeline below in Table 4.2.1 for each upcoming evaluation type. If dates are not known, please delete from here to section 4.3.]

The [evaluation type] evaluation will meet at milestone events and other times as required, including those set out in Table 4.2.1.

Table 4.2.1: Dates for [evaluation type] evaluation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Activity | Date |
| Terms of Reference endorsed and provider options finalised | [date] |
| Methodology finalised | [date] |
| Preliminary results and recommendations available | [date] |
| Draft report completed | [date] |
| Final report completed | [date] |

* 1. Methodology

A mix of methods, both quantitative and qualitative, will be used to gather evidence to answer the evaluation questions. [Change if this is not the case]

Specific methodologies for the forthcoming evaluation[s] will be agreed by the Reference Group prior to the commencement of each evaluation.

The evaluations are expected to include [add/change as necessary]:

* Desktop research: a systematic review of program documents which may include program guidelines, executed grant agreements, program logic, policy papers, and program reporting and procedure manuals. This may also include a review of relevant reports and existing data;
* Literature review: a systematic review of similar programs run in other jurisdictions, reviews or evaluations of similar programs, relevant journal research articles or media reports (with caution), and [other policy specific sources of information];
* Semi-structured interviews with a range of stakeholders which may include face-to-face, telephone, or video-conferencing. With permissions, interviews will be audio recorded to enable transcription and improve the accuracy of analysis. Stakeholders to be interviewed will be identified when refining the methodology of each evaluation in consultation with the Reference Group;
* Surveys;
* Economic profiling of [identify region
* Case studies of selected projects.
* The evaluation will draw on data from [a sample of / all] [grant recipients/program participants].
* [Add further information on methodology as required]
  1. Risks

[Add comments on any risks or limitations that the evaluation faces]

For example:

* Availability of funding to engage an external consultant
* Availability of resources and skills to conduct the evaluation/s
* Data quality and availability
* Initiative is difficult to separate out from macroeconomic changes
* The burden/cost of collecting robust data outweighs the benefits of rigorous evaluation
* Changes to data collection methods would lead to a break in previously collected time series data

[**NOTE: If significant risks are identified**, please use the following risk assessment table below to detail descriptions and controls; otherwise please delete]

Table 4.4.1: Risks and controls [shade the ‘Rating’ cells as appropriate using the table below]

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Risk | Results | Likelihood | Consequence | Rating | Control |
| Insufficient resources to undertake the evaluation | Low quality evaluation report; failure to meet timeframes; stakeholder dissatisfaction; damage to reputation of the Commonwealth entity/company |  |  |  | Dedicated staff [X ASL] to [undertake and] manage the evaluation; a further [X] ASL to be transferred from [insert department] to the Evaluation Unit for the duration of the evaluation |
| Inadequate data to support analysis | Inadequate evidence to support findings; low quality evaluation report; stakeholder dissatisfaction; damage to reputation of Commonwealth entity/company |  |  |  | Agreed data matrix identifying indicators, data collection methodology, responsibility and timeframes |

The [consultant / Entity/company evaluation area [delete if not applicable]] will monitor the evaluation closely to ensure that these and other emerging risks are managed effectively. Table 2.4.2 defines the risk ratings used above.

Table 4.4.2: Risk ratings

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Likelihood rating | Consequence rating | | | | |
| Insignificant | Minimal | Moderate | Substantial | Severe |
| **Almost certain** | Minor | Medium | High | Very high | Very high |
| **Likely** | Minor | Medium | Medium | High | Very High |
| **Possible** | Low | Minor | Medium | High | Very High |
| **Unlikely** | Low | Minor | Minor | Medium | High |
| **Rare** | Low | Low | Minor | Medium | High |

[Add appendices below with program logic and data/evaluation matrix. Other potentially useful appendices to consider adding:

* Reporting metrics (i.e. survey questions for program participants, progress and closure reports)
* Detailed policy rationale (if available from policy team)
* Explanation of program governance
* Examples of admin data extract
* How the findings will be used
* How evaluation capability in the [program area] can be improved (e.g. transfer of knowledge from consultants, increased understanding of different methodologies and their application etc)

# **Appendix A** Program Logic

The program logic should be pasted into this drawing canvas space.

This is to ensure that all documents within this framework document are editable and contained in one place.

# **Appendix B** Data/Evaluation Matrix

The Data/Evaluation Matrix should be pasted into this drawing canvas space.

This is to ensure that all documents within this framework document are editable and contained in one place.

1. Adapted from the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources Evaluation Framework and [Evaluation Framework | Better Evaluation](https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/evaluation_framework_templates) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman (2004), Evaluation: A systematic approach (7th edition), SAGE, California [↑](#footnote-ref-2)