

Pre-course



Course Goal

Goal

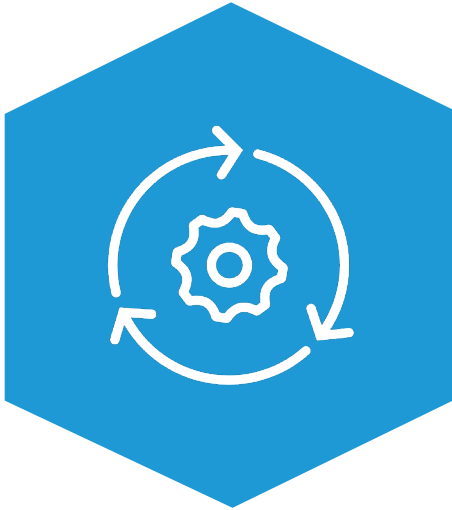
Draft an evaluation policy and create a plan for passing it in your city.

What will you do in this course?

- Engage stakeholders to create your city's evaluation policy
- Draft your city's evaluation policy
- Create a plan to socialize and implement your city's evaluation policy



Course format



**1-hour live virtual
workshops**



**Weely
assignments**



**1:1 coaching
sessions**



Course expectations

Time expectations

- 1 hour weekly live session
- 30 minute weekly coaching calls
- 1 hour per week to complete assignments + time to draft your policy

Certification Expectations

- Writing and executing an Evaluation Policy will satisfy the Rigorous Evaluations Criterion EVAL 1:
 - *Your local government has documented and implemented its commitment to the city-wide use of rigorous evaluations (such as an evaluation policy, agenda, budget requirement or funding allocation).*



Types of policies

Public-Facing Commitment: Created through a mayoral declaration, executive order, resolution, etc.

General Internal Guidelines: Declared by an internal-facing leadership directive.

Departmental Policy: Implemented internally to require the use of evaluation for certain programs or services.



Who should take this course

Each city team should include:

- At least one person with the relationships and know-how to pass policies within the city
- At least one senior city staff member who has an understanding of evaluation and how the city could use evaluation more broadly.
- (Optional) Someone who leads or works with departments that manage resident-facing programs



Course flow

Session 1 (05/08) <i>Introducing the evaluation policy</i>	No session (05/15) <i>[break week]</i>	Session 2 (05/22) <i>Drafting the evaluation policy</i>	Session 3 (05/29) <i>Implementing the policy</i>	Session 4 (06/05) <i>Passing the policy</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defining the policy• Assigning team responsibilities• Introducing the steps to creating an the policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choosing an approach to your policy• Preparing to share your progress with the team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City-share out: sharing your policy approach• Mapping stakeholders• Drafting the policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defining strategies to socialize the policy• Continue drafting the policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City-share out: Sharing your evaluation policy• Reflections and next steps



Session 1: Introduction to the Evaluation Policy

May 2024

Course flow

Session 1 (05/08) <i>Introducing the evaluation policy</i>	No session (05/15) <i>[break week]</i>	Session 2 (05/22) <i>Drafting the evaluation policy</i>	Session 3 (05/29) <i>Implementing the policy</i>	Session 4 (06/05) <i>Passing the policy</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining the policy Assigning team responsibilities Introducing the steps to creating an the policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choosing an approach to your policy Preparing to share your progress with the team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City-share out: sharing your policy approach Mapping stakeholders Drafting the policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining strategies to socialize the policy Continue drafting the policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City-share out: Sharing your evaluation policy Reflections and next steps



Session 1: Checklist

By the end of this week, you will:

- ☐ Assign responsibilities among team members and beyond
- ☐ Establish a timeline for your Evaluation Policy
- ☐ Choose an approach for your Evaluation Policy



Introduction to Evaluation Policy

City Share Out



How do you determine when something in your city should be evaluated?

Why do we want you to pass an Evaluation Policy?

Verba volant, scripta manent

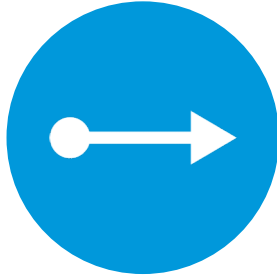
(spoken words fly away, written words remain)



Why are we dedicating a sprint to the Evaluation Policy?



Helps city leadership
formalize their
commitment to the
widespread use of
evaluation



Ensures evaluation
remains a **priority**
beyond any one
person's tenure



Helps your local
government **strengthen**
its culture of being data-
and evidence-driven



Formalizes evaluation
structures, teams,
budgets



Evaluation Policy Testimony

2023-06-09 19:33 UTC

Recorded by

Heyer, Heather

Organized by

Heyer, Heather

What do we mean by an Evaluation Policy?

A document that affirms and outlines a city-wide commitment to the use of evaluations to improve policies, programs, and services



OES Evaluation Policy

At the Office of Evaluation Sciences (OES), because we generate results that impact the lives of millions of Americans, the quality of our work and the reliability of our findings are of paramount importance. We take this responsibility very seriously, and we have developed an Evaluation Policy designed to ensure that our evaluations are conducted to the highest standards.

This evaluation policy statement presents core principles that guide OES' planning, implementation, and use evaluation to learn what works. The way in which OES conducts evaluations should always achieve the following tenets:

- **Rigor** – Our findings should be credible and mean what they purport to mean. Evaluations are conducted to the highest standards; our statements about statistical significance are clear and correct; and the limitations of our findings are clear. All OES analyses go through an internal replication, and any discrepancies between the two analyses are addressed before the results are finalized. Bottom line: Policymakers and program designers should be able to act on our findings with confidence.
- **Relevance** – Project selection should take into account (1) the policy or program priorities of our agency collaborators, and (2) potential impact on a priority outcome based. To OES, relevance is also ensured by exclusively utilizing existing administrative data as the outcome of our evaluations.
- **Transparency** – We are committed to ensuring that researchers, agency collaborators, policymakers, and the public at large are able to learn from our work. We keep a public record of all evaluations funded and publicize all of our findings (including null results and those that run counter to our own prior expectations and goals). We conduct our work in such a way that we can verify our results, and we document our work thoroughly so that others with required data access could reproduce the results.
- **Independence** – We retain control over decisions about project selection and the ability to release our evaluation results.
- **Ethical Practice** – OES evaluations will be conducted in an ethical manner and safeguard the dignity, rights, safety, and privacy of participants. Evaluations will comply with both the spirit and the letter of relevant requirements such as regulations governing research involving human subjects.

Evaluation Policy¹ 2019

Introduction

This evaluation policy outlines key principles that govern our planning, conduct, and use of evaluation. This policy indicates our commitment to conducting rigorous, relevant evaluations and to using evidence from evaluations to inform policy and practice. We seek to promote rigor, relevance, transparency, independence, and ethics in the conduct of evaluations. This policy addresses each of these principles.

Minnesota Management and Budget's mission is to serve the people of Minnesota by providing the state with leadership and guidance to support efficient and effective government. The importance of these goals demands that we support continual innovation and improvement of state-funded activities, as well as those of our partners. Through research and evaluation, we can learn systematically so that we can make our services as effective as possible.

Rigor

We are committed to using the most rigorous methods available given our evaluation questions, budget, and other constraints. Rigor is relevant in all forms of evaluation, including process, outcome, and impact evaluations that use qualitative and/or quantitative data. Rigor requires ensuring that inferences about cause and effect are well founded (internal validity); requires clarity about the populations, settings, or circumstances to which results can be generalized (external validity); and requires the use of measures that accurately capture the intended information (measurement reliability and validity).

In order to assess the effects of programs or services in a rigorous way, our evaluations use methods that isolate to the greatest extent possible the impacts of the programs or services from other influences such as trends over time, geographic variation, or pre-existing differences between participants and non-participants. For causal questions, experimental approaches are preferred. When experimental approaches are not feasible, high-quality quasi-experiments offer an alternative.

Accordingly, we employ staff with academic training and experience in a range of relevant social science disciplines. We provide professional development opportunities so that staff can keep their skills current. We also consult with external advisors who are leaders in relevant fields.

Relevance

Evaluation priorities should reflect the interests, needs, and sensitivities of the populations served; legislators and other state leaders; partners such as other state agencies, tribes, local governments, and grantees; researchers; and other stakeholders. There should be strong partnerships amongst evaluation staff, frontline program staff, policy-makers, target populations, and service providers. These stakeholders should have the opportunity to influence the questions that will be answered by evaluations. For new initiatives, evaluations are more feasible and useful when planned with stakeholders from the outset of the initiative, rather than as an afterthought.

We disseminate findings in ways that are accessible and useful to policy-makers and practitioners. We also strive to provide this information at the right time, place, and format to facilitate use.

¹This evaluation policy draws extensively from the [evaluation policy](#) published by the federal government's Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in November 2012 (the policy is also explained in the [short video](#)). We thank ACF for their leadership in concisely articulating these important principles.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Department Heads
FROM: Mayor André Sayegh
DATE: November 18, 2019
RE: Evaluation Policy and Guidelines for the City of Paterson

The purpose of this policy document is to establish the City of Paterson's evaluation guidelines so that evaluation practices become more consistent and widely used across the organization.

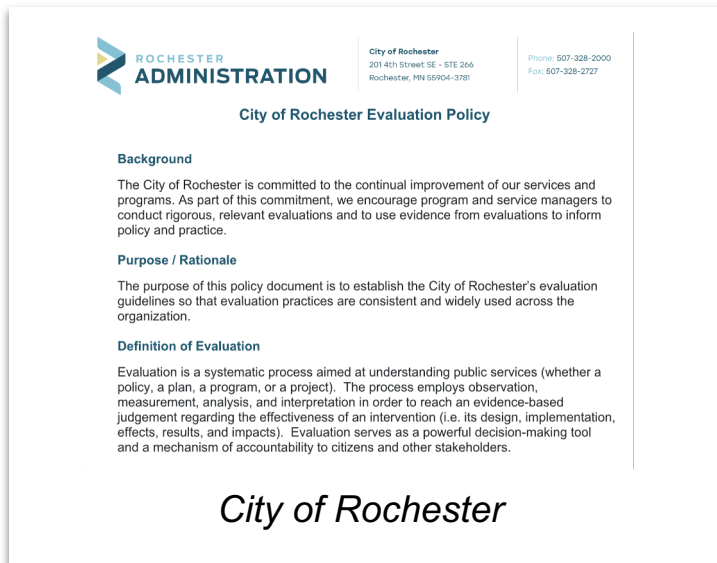
Evaluation is an independent, systematic investigation into how, why, and to what extent objectives or goals of a program have been achieved. It can help the City of Paterson answer key questions about policies, grants, initiatives, or strategy.

The City of Paterson, under the leadership of Mayor André Sayegh, is establishing the following guiding principles to inform our evaluation practice:

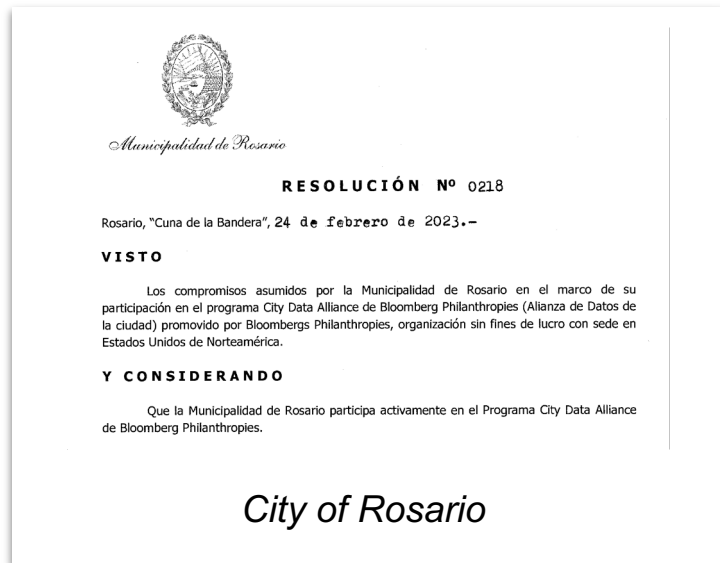
- **We lead with purpose.** We design evaluation trials with actions and decisions in mind. We ask, "How and when will we use the information that comes from this evaluation?" By anticipating our information needs, we will design evaluations that are useful to evaluate the effectiveness of a policy change or a program design. Too often, program evaluations are commissioned without a clear purpose, and then shelved without generating useful insights. We do not want to fall into that trap.
- **Evaluation is fundamentally a learning process.** As we engage in evaluation planning, implementation, and use of results, we actively learn and adapt. We stay agile. As we implement our strategies, we use evaluation as a key vehicle for learning and bringing new insights to our work.
- **Evaluation is tied to strategic goals.** We cannot evaluate everything, so we choose strategically. Department and mayoral priorities should guide decisions about where to focus our evaluation efforts, including the opportunity for learning: any urgency to make course corrections; the potential for information and/or reputational risk.
- **We choose methods of measurement that allow us to maximize rigor.** We seek to match methods to our questions and do not routinely choose one approach or method over others. We seek to use multiple methods and data sources when possible in order to strengthen our evaluation design and reduce bias. All evaluations should clearly articulate methods used and their limitations.
- **We share our intentions to evaluate, and our findings, with appropriate audiences.** As we plan evaluations, we consider and identify audiences for the findings. We communicate early with our grantees and our residents about our intention to evaluate and involve them as appropriate in issues of design and interpretation. We presumptively share the results of our evaluations so



Not all evaluation policies are created equal



The Evaluation Policy was important to **create city-wide standards and structures** to run evaluations.



The Evaluation Policy **made evaluation a priority for the city** by requiring specific departments to run annual evaluations.



City Share-Out:



Does your city have guidelines in place that resemble an **Evaluation Policy?** (e.g., a requirement to evaluate specific programs)

To successfully pass an evaluation policy, we recommend outlining key roles and responsibilities.



Evaluation Champion



Evaluation Lead



Evaluation Champion advocates for and supports evaluation activities across city government

Core Sprint Team

**Evaluation
Champion**

**Evaluation
Lead**

The Evaluation Champion (EC) will:

- Advocate for evaluation to city leadership
- Review the final version of the Evaluation Policy
- Promote the Evaluation Policy
- Create a plan to socialize and pass the Evaluation Policy



The Evaluation Lead manages the team in this sprint and is the main point of contact for the team

Core Sprint Team

Evaluation
Champion

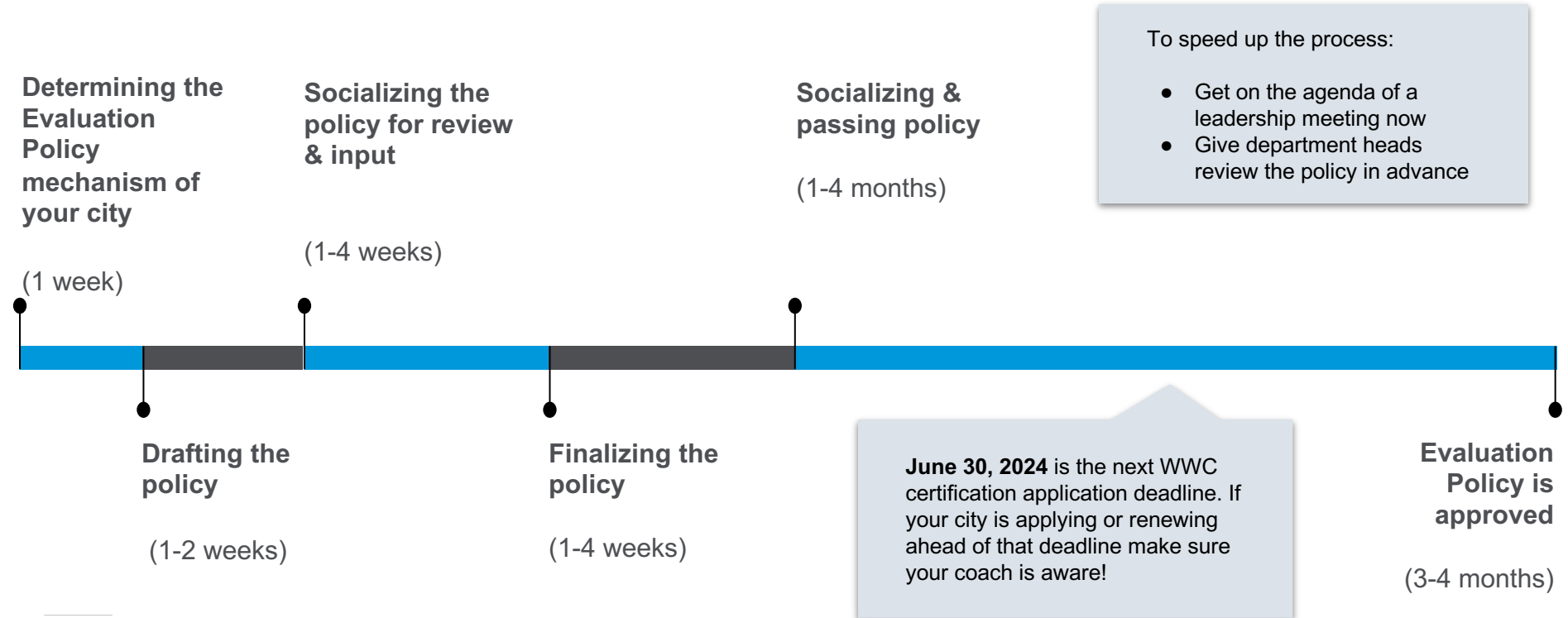
**Evaluation
Lead**

Evaluation Leads (EL) will:

- Advocate for evaluation to departments heads and colleagues
- Manage the Evaluation Team
- Review and/or complete assignments
- Attend coaching calls
- Finalize the policy
- Support in socializing & passing policy



Timeline for passing a policy



Passing an Evaluation Policy can take months!

Drafting the evaluation policy is a relatively quick process. In this sprint, focus on creating a final draft. Why?

- Passing the policy is what actually takes more time
- It is critical to request feedback from other departments
- It is useful for city staff to have something to react to
- It is strategic to anchor stakeholders to the standards presented in your policy
- It demonstrates that you have a plan in mind for why the policy is important

Thinking in advance about a roadmap from beginning to end to passing the policy will be key in achieving this goal



Steps to creating an Evaluation Policy

Jumpstart your journey: five steps to pass your policy!

1

Determine the policy mechanism that is feasible and meets the city's goals

2

Engage key stakeholders to understand policy preferences

3

Draft the Evaluation Policy

4

Implement the Evaluation Policy

5

Provide guidance to city staff on what the Evaluation Policy means for them



Jumpstart your journey: five steps to pass your policy!

- 1** Determine the policy mechanism that is feasible and meets the city's goals
- 2** Engage key stakeholders to understand policy preferences
- 3** Draft the Evaluation Policy
- 4** Implement the Evaluation Policy
- 5** Provide guidance to city staff on what the Evaluation Policy means for them



There are three general approaches to an Evaluation Policy

Public-Facing Commitment: Created through a mayoral declaration, executive order, resolution, etc.

General Internal Guidelines: Declared by an internal-facing leadership directive.

Departmental Policy: Implemented internally to require the use of evaluation for certain programs or services.



Approach 1: Public-Facing Commitment

Public-Facing Commitment: Created through a mayoral declaration, executive order, resolution, etc.

Benefits:

- Powerful tool if city leadership prioritizes evaluations
- Demonstrates inside and outside city hall that the city prioritizes the use of evaluations

Potential Drawbacks:

- It may not have the strength or specificity that an internal policy does
- The policy might be harder to pass



Example: Tempe's Evaluation Policy

EVALUATION POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The City of Tempe established the Evaluation Program to affirm Tempe's commitment to using evaluations to improve programs, policies, or services to provide better outcomes for the community. This policy establishes Tempe's high-quality evaluation guidelines and guiding principles to create a culture of evaluations that are high-quality with results that inform decisions and are shared with internal and external partners.

The Tempe Evaluation Policy is established in accordance with the City Council Resolution executed on X, 2022. This policy defines the principles governing Tempe's Evaluation Program and describes expectations for governance and departmental participation in the Evaluation Program.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to programs, policies, or services that are created, managed, or supervised by any City department, office, or employee on behalf of the City. The policy is not intended to be applied to personnel or used in the evaluating the job performance of specific City employees. It is also not intended to apply to evaluation of vendor proposals, which will continue to be evaluated under their own specific and unique criteria and in accordance with any applicable law.

III. POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Tempe conducts meaningful, novel, and actionable evaluations to more fully understand the ways the city uses resources to achieve its strategic priorities and related performance measures. Tempe generates and uses evidence from evaluations to inform decisions about programs, better enabling city departments to achieve performance outcomes, increase efficiency and provide greater accountability to the community. Evaluations support:

1. Organizational learning. Evaluations that are well designed and implemented can systemically generate knowledge that increases understanding of the effectiveness, relevance, and efficacy of programs. Learning takes place when individuals engage in discussion of evaluation results with a focus on understanding how or why various elements of a program are not progressing in order to look for opportunities to make positive changes or replicate successful programs, and not as an opportunity to place blame or impose negative consequences.
2. Program and performance improvement. Evaluations identify when and how the department has met its goals, providing leaders with evidence they need to make decisions about changes that should be made to strategies to maintain or increase progress towards its goal.

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3. Resource priority determinations. Evaluations help to inform decisions about resource requests made through the city's performance led budgeting process, highlighting where resources are needed to achieve performance outcomes. This includes decisions about the future of programs, such as whether to continue as is, enhance/scale up through additional resource requests, or shift resources.
4. Stakeholder engagement. Evaluations share valuable information internally and externally, starting with scoping of the project, to sharing results, and final decisions. Sharing through the evaluation lifecycle promotes transparency and accountability for stewardship of public funds and lead to advances in research, policy, and practice in and beyond the department leading the evaluation.

IV. DEFINITIONS

1. Actionable. Provides information that can be used to improve programs.
2. Counter Factual. An estimate of what would have happened in the absence of the intervention.
3. Evaluation. A systemic method for collecting, analyzing, and using data to examine the impact, effectiveness, and efficiency of a program. Evaluations require (1) asking a specific question, (2) making a plan to answer the question, (3) collecting data and (4) using that data to answer the question.
4. Evaluation Agenda. A one-year plan that summarizes the city's evaluation needs and identifies priority evaluations.
5. Evaluation Associates. Staff within city departments whose role is to advocate for evaluations and identify opportunities for evaluation within the city and their department. They have training in evaluation methods, have the skills to support evaluation projects and translate evaluation findings into actionable recommendations. They may also collaborate with the evaluations team on projects or training.
6. Evaluation Community of Practice (ECP). A group of individuals responsible for identifying, scoping, designing, and conducting evaluations within the city. They maintain their training in evaluation and share resources with others. Members of the ECP include the Evaluation Team, Evaluation Associates and Evaluation Steering Committee and other interested individuals.
7. Evaluation Lead. Responsible for oversight of the Evaluation Program, including leading the Evaluation Team, Chairing the Evaluation Steering Committee, and fostering the Evaluation Community of Practice.
8. Evaluation Steering Committee (ESC). Focuses on developing the evaluation agenda, prioritizing evaluations for performance led budgeting and identifying strategies to expand city evaluation capabilities and capacity. Members may include Directors, Deputies, or others with knowledge of city priorities and the budget process.
9. Evaluation Team. City employees who collaborate with Evaluation Associates and Departments implementing an evaluation to provide technical and planning support.

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The City of Tempe approved their Evaluation Policy through a city council resolution.

This policy:

- Defines high-quality evaluation
- Defines guiding principles and evaluation types
- Establishes Tempe's Evaluation Team and roles for city staff
- Identifies when evaluations are required



Approach 2: General Internal Guidelines

General Internal Guidelines: Declared by an internal-facing leadership directive.

Benefits:

- Allows leadership to provide more specificity on the types of programs or services included
- Even more successful when leaders are able to create grassroots buy-in prior to implementation

Potential Drawbacks:

- Leadership directives risk being replaced or overturned as administrations change
- No public or external commitment to evaluations



Example: City of Rochester's Evaluation Policy



City of Rochester
201 4th Street SE - STE 266
Rochester, MN 55904-3781

Phone: 507-328-2000
Fax: 507-328-2727

City of Rochester Evaluation Policy

Background

The City of Rochester is committed to the continual improvement of our services and programs. As part of this commitment, we encourage program and service managers to conduct rigorous, relevant evaluations and to use evidence from evaluations to inform policy and practice.

Purpose / Rationale

The purpose of this policy document is to establish the City of Rochester's evaluation guidelines so that evaluation practices are consistent and widely used across the organization.

Definition of Evaluation

Evaluation is a systematic process aimed at understanding public services (whether a policy, a plan, a program, or a project). The process employs observation, measurement, analysis, and interpretation in order to reach an evidence-based judgement regarding the effectiveness of an intervention (i.e. its design, implementation, effects, results, and impacts). Evaluation serves as a powerful decision-making tool and a mechanism of accountability to citizens and other stakeholders.

The City of Rochester has a weak mayoral system so they determined an internal evaluation policy was best for their city.

An executive leader approved the policy in early Dec 2022. The evaluation team then shared it during their annual town hall in Feb 2023. The policy now lives in the city's intranet as a live document.



Approach 3: Departmental Policy

Departmental Policy: Implemented internally to require the use of evaluation for certain programs or services.

Departmental Policy

- Offers the most specificity in terms of guidance on evaluation approaches and requirements
- A good option if departmental leadership is committed to evaluations, but support from top city leadership is still nascent

Potential Drawbacks:

- It is limited in terms of the scope (i.e., only applicable to one department)
- It may have a too specific approach which can make it challenging to implement in other spaces



Example: Tulsa's Office of Performance, Strategy and Innovation (OPSI's) Evaluation Policy

Your City Evaluation Policy

Background

This evaluation policy statement presents key principles that govern the Office of Performance, Strategy and Innovation (OPSI's) planning, conduct and use of program evaluations. The policy expresses our commitment to conducting rigorous, relevant evaluations and using evidence from evaluations to inform policy and practice.

OPSI seeks to promote rigor, relevance, transparency, independence, and ethics in the conduct of evaluations. This policy addresses each of these principles. The mission of the Office of Performance, Strategy and Innovation is to "...empower the organization to use data to align citywide strategies towards priority goals set by the Mayor and City Council while lowering barriers to adopting innovative practices." The importance of these goals demand that we continually innovate and improve and that we evaluate the performance and effectiveness of our programs and activities. Through evaluation, OPSI and our partners can learn systematically so that we can make our services as effective as possible.

Purpose / Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to establish the City of Tulsa's evaluation guidelines and guiding principles so that the evaluation practices foster consistency and widespread use of high-quality evaluations.

Definition of Evaluation

Evaluation is the systematic process of observation, measurement, analysis and interpretation aimed at understanding a public intervention, whether a policy, a plan, a program or a project, to reach a judgment assessment based on evidence regarding its design, implementation, effects, results and impacts. The purpose of the evaluation is to inform decisions and as a mechanism to test ideas to better serve residents through continuous improvement.

Policies / Programs / Services

Evaluation is strongly suggested for newly funded programs or services and for renewed funding opportunities for existing programs or services where there is no significant evidence base.

what they purport to mean. Evaluations are about statistical significance are clear and r. All OPSI analyses go through an internal o analyses are addressed before the results ers and program designers are able to act on

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t researchers, agency collaborators, learn from our work. We keep a public record our findings (including null results and those goals). We conduct our work in such a way our work thoroughly so that others with

...independence, to learn about project selection and the ability to release our evaluation results.

- **Ethical Practice:** OPSI evaluations will be conducted in an ethical manner and safeguard the dignity, rights, safety, and privacy of participants. Evaluations will comply with both the spirit and the letter of relevant requirements, such as regulations governing research involving human subjects.

The City of Tulsa established principles for evaluations conducted by the Office of Performance, Strategy, and Innovation (OPSI). This team conducts evaluations across city programs, so a departmental level policy covers all (or nearly all) city-led evaluations.

The Mayor's Chief of Staff approved the policy before the department adopted it internally. The OPSI Director socialized the policy with all department heads before it was formally approved.



Introduction to the worksheet



Evaluation Policy Worksheet

[City Name]

Welcome to your Evaluation Commitment Worksheet!

Introduction

The Evaluation Policy Worksheet is a document that consolidates activities your team will be encouraged to do during this 4-week Evaluation Policy Sprint. The objective of this worksheet is to guide your team throughout this sprint and facilitate the tasks your team will need to do.

How to Use this Template

This worksheet is designed to be completed in teams. This worksheet is yours! Feel free to own it and edit it as it feels more comfortable for you and your team.

Supporting materials

- Evaluation Policy examples
- Evaluation Policy template
- Eval 1 Criteria Guide

Team:

- XXXXXX
- XXXXXX
- XXXXXX

Week 1:

1.1 Team Roles & Responsibilities

- Assign a team member to be responsible for each key task of passing an evaluation policy.

Task	Who is responsible?
Choosing a mechanism for the policy	
Completing the policy draft	
Reviewing & providing initial feedback on the policy draft	
Circulating the policy more broadly for feedback	
Updating the policy	
Ensuring the policy goes through the approval process	
Creating a plan for socialization	

1.2 Timeline

- By what date do you plan to have your policy draft completed?
- By what date do you plan to pass the policy?

1.3 Reflection questions

- What value does an evaluation policy bring to your city?
- What is at risk if your city doesn't have a policy in place?



What we covered today

- The evaluation policy is a directive that affirms and outlines a city-wide commitment to the use of evaluations to improve policies, programs, and services
 - The evaluation policy brings value to your city by formalizing evaluation structures and commitments in your city
 - There are different mechanisms your city can use to create an evaluation policy —public, internal, departmental
-



Wrap up

Assignment & Coaching

Assignment:

- Complete week 1 and week 2 assignments in the worksheet by **Friday, May 17**
- Prepare to share your progress with the team on **Wednesday, May 22**

Next week: no session!

Topics for this week's coaching call:

- Team roles and responsibilities
- Policy implementation timeline
- Your policy approach



Session 2: Drafting the Evaluation Policy

May 2024

Course flow

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Session 2: Checklist

By the end of this week, you will:

- ☐ Identify stakeholders to involve when creating the policy
- ☐ Start drafting the policy



Recap

Recap: What do we mean by an Evaluation Policy?

A document that affirms and outlines a city-wide commitment to the use of evaluations to improve policies, programs, and services



OES Evaluation Policy

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- **Independence** – We retain control over decisions about project selection and the ability to release our evaluation results.
- **Ethical Practice** – OES evaluations will be conducted in an ethical manner and safeguard the dignity, rights, safety, and privacy of participants. Evaluations will comply with both the spirit and the letter of relevant requirements such as regulations governing research involving human subjects.

Evaluation Policy¹ 2019

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Minnesota Management and Budget's mission is to serve the people of Minnesota by providing the state with leadership and guidance to support efficient and effective government. The importance of these goals demands that we support continual innovation and improvement of state-funded activities, as well as those of our partners. Through research and evaluation, we can learn systematically so that we can make our services as effective as possible.

Rigor

We are committed to using the most rigorous methods available given our evaluation questions, budget, and other constraints. Rigor is relevant in all forms of evaluation, including process, outcome, and impact evaluations that use qualitative and/or quantitative data. Rigor requires ensuring that inferences about cause and effect are well founded (internal validity); requires clarity about the populations, settings, or circumstances to which results can be generalized (external validity); and requires the use of measures that accurately capture the intended information (measurement reliability and validity).

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Accordingly, we employ staff with academic training and experience in a range of relevant social science disciplines. We provide professional development opportunities so that staff can keep their skills current. We also consult with external advisors who are leaders in relevant fields.

Relevance

Evaluation priorities should reflect the interests, needs, and sensitivities of the populations served; legislators and other state leaders; partners such as other state agencies, tribes, local governments, and grantees; researchers; and other stakeholders. There should be strong partnerships amongst evaluation staff, frontline program staff, policy-makers, target populations, and service providers. These stakeholders should have the opportunity to influence the questions that will be answered by evaluations. For new initiatives, evaluations are more feasible and useful when planned with stakeholders from the outset of the initiative, rather than as an afterthought.

We disseminate findings in ways that are accessible and useful to policy-makers and practitioners. We also strive to provide this information at the right time, place, and format to facilitate use.

¹ This evaluation policy draws extensively from the [evaluation policy](#) published by the federal government's Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in November 2012 (the policy is also explained in the [short video](#)). We thank ACF for their leadership in concisely articulating these important principles.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Department Heads
FROM: Mayor André Sayegh
DATE: November 18, 2019
RE: Evaluation Policy and Guidelines for the City of Paterson

The purpose of this policy document is to establish the City of Paterson's evaluation guidelines so that evaluation practices become more consistent and widely used across the organization.

Evaluation is an independent, systematic investigation into how, why, and to what extent objectives or goals of a program have been achieved. It can help the City of Paterson answer key questions about policies, grants, initiatives, or strategy.

The City of Paterson, under the leadership of Mayor André Sayegh, is establishing the following guiding principles to inform our evaluation practice:

- **We lead with purpose.** We design evaluation trials with actions and decisions in mind. We ask, "How and when will we use the information that comes from this evaluation?" By anticipating our information needs, we will design evaluations that are useful to evaluate the effectiveness of a policy change or a program design. Too often, program evaluations are commissioned without a clear purpose, and then shelved without generating useful insights. We do not want to fall into that trap.
- **Evaluation is fundamentally a learning process.** As we engage in evaluation planning, implementation, and use of results, we actively learn and adapt. We stay agile. As we implement our strategies, we use evaluation as a key vehicle for learning and bringing new insights to our work.
- **Evaluation is tied to strategic goals.** We cannot evaluate everything, so we choose strategically. Department and mayoral priorities should guide decisions about where to focus our evaluation efforts, including the opportunity for learning: any urgency to make course corrections; the potential for organization and/or reputational risk.
- **We choose methods of measurement that allow us to maximize rigor.** We seek to match methods to our questions and do not routinely choose one approach or method over others. We seek to use multiple methods and data sources when possible in order to strengthen our evaluation design and reduce bias. All evaluations should clearly articulate methods used and their limitations.
- **We share our intentions to evaluate, and our findings, with appropriate audiences.** As we plan evaluations, we consider and identify audiences for the findings. We communicate early with our grantees and our residents about our intention to evaluate and involve them as appropriate in issues of design and interpretation. We presumptively share the results of our evaluations so



Recap: There are three general approaches to an Evaluation Policy

Public-Facing Commitment: Created through a mayoral declaration, executive order, resolution, etc.

General Internal Guidelines: Declared by an internal-facing leadership directive.

Departmental Policy: Implemented internally to require the use of evaluation for certain programs or services.



Recap: five steps to pass your policy!

1

Determine the policy mechanism that is feasible and meets the city's goals

2

Engage key stakeholders to understand policy preferences

3

Draft the Evaluation Policy

4

Implement the Evaluation Policy

5

Provide guidance to city staff on what the Evaluation Policy means for them



City share-out: Evaluation Policy Approach and Workplan

City Presentation List

X

X

X

X

What mechanism
will you choose
for your policy?

When do you plan
to pass your
policy?



Time to engage city leadership in your work!



Determine the policy mechanism that is feasible and meets the city's goals

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Engaging stakeholders will give legitimacy to your policy

Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

Population: +880,000 (2021)

Governing mechanism: Weak-mayor system

Services: City does not provide social services such as education and health

- Evaluation team drafted the policy
- The team engaged key stakeholders by requesting feedback on the policy
 - They identified departments that were interested in evaluation and running projects that the city could easily evaluation
- Evaluation Champion presented the policy alongside a city-wide data strategy to city leadership

Rosario, Argentina

Population: +1,500,000 (2021)

Governing mechanism: Strong mayor system

Services: City provides many social services

- Evaluation team drafted the policy
- The city created a technical evaluation bureau — with professionals from different departments— to review the policy
 - Criteria included departments that provide direct services to residents
- The technical evaluation bureau conducted workshops on policy guidelines and potential evaluation areas and projects

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In your worksheet, complete the key stakeholders table

Stakeholder	Level of interest	Degree of influence	Engagement strategy	Responsible & deadline
<i>Deputy Director of Education</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Evaluation Champion will reach out to her since they know each other and ask her if she would be interested in collaborating with us.</i>	<i>Deadline: in 2 weeks</i> <i>Evaluation Lead will reach out</i>



Time to engage city leadership in your work!



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Engage key stakeholders to understand policy preferences

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What are the key elements of an Evaluation Policy?

Required elements



- Background
- Policy purpose
- Definition of evaluation
- Covered programs and services
- Core evaluation principles



What are the key elements of an Evaluation Policy?

Required elements



- Background
- Policy purpose
- Definition of evaluation
- Covered programs and services
- Core evaluation principles

Additional elements


- Budget guidance or requirements
- Funding allocation
- Evaluation team
- Evaluation agenda
- Policy implementation guidance

Consider building your Evaluation Policy into new or existing policies related to data in your city!



Background

- Describes why this policy is being created and how it relates to your city's mission and leadership priorities.
- Typically 1-2 paragraphs
- It may be helpful to reference past evaluation work to build additional context

 ROCHESTER ADMINISTRATION	City of Rochester 201 4th Street SE - STE 266 Rochester, MN 55904-3781	Phone: 507-328-2000 Fax: 507-328-2727
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City of Rochester Evaluation Policy

Background

The City of Rochester is committed to the continual improvement of our services and programs. As part of this commitment, we encourage program and service managers to conduct rigorous, relevant evaluations and to use evidence from evaluations to inform policy and practice.

Purpose / Rationale

The purpose of this policy document is to establish the City of Rochester's evaluation guidelines so that evaluation practices are consistent and widely used across the organization.


Definition of Evaluation

Evaluation is a systematic process aimed at understanding public services (whether a policy, a plan, a program, or a project). The process employs observation, measurement, analysis, and interpretation in order to reach an evidence-based judgement regarding the effectiveness of an intervention (i.e. its design, implementation, effects, results, and impacts). Evaluation serves as a powerful decision-making tool and a mechanism of accountability to citizens and other stakeholders.



Purpose


- Articulates what this policy is aiming to do
- This looks different in every city. In this case, Rochester wanted to standardized evaluation projects across departments

 ROCHESTER ADMINISTRATION	City of Rochester 201 4th Street SE - STE 266 Rochester, MN 55904-3781	Phone: 507-328-2000 Fax: 507-328-2727
City of Rochester Evaluation Policy		
Background		
<p>The City of Rochester is committed to the continual improvement of our services and programs. As part of this commitment, we encourage program and service managers to conduct rigorous, relevant evaluations and to use evidence from evaluations to inform policy and practice.</p>		
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<p>The purpose of this policy document is to establish the City of Rochester's evaluation guidelines so that evaluation practices are consistent and widely used across the organization.</p>		
Definition of Evaluation		
<p>Evaluation is a systematic process aimed at understanding public services (whether a policy, a plan, a program, or a project). The process employs observation, measurement, analysis, and interpretation in order to reach an evidence-based judgement regarding the effectiveness of an intervention (i.e. its design, implementation, effects, results, and impacts). Evaluation serves as a powerful decision-making tool and a mechanism of accountability to citizens and other stakeholders.</p>		



Definition of Evaluation

- Includes your city's definition of evaluation – this is a standard definition but situated in the context of your city
- This definition should include a general statement about what evaluation is and may be expanded to include specific types of methods
- It may be helpful to describe how evaluation supports other quality and performance management tools that the city uses

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Covered Programs & Services

- Describes what types of policies, programs, and services your city will require or use to encourage the use of evaluation
- This section is flexible to fit your city's needs

Policies / Programs / Services

The City of Rochester will utilize evaluations to fill knowledge gaps regarding policies, plans, programs, and projects, including:

- Newly-funded programs or services
- Renewed funding opportunities for existing programs or services
- Policy decisions

The City will set evaluation priorities, identify evaluation questions, and assess the implications of findings. Evaluation can help resolve uncertainty and determine the relative cost-effectiveness of different interventions, models, or approaches.



Core Principles

- Describes your city's guiding principles that support high-quality evaluation work and what these principles will mean within your city context
- BIT recommends adopting these five principles (rigor, relevance, transparency, independence, ethical practice) which were developed by the U.S. Federal Office of Evaluation Services, in addition to any city-specific principles

Core Principles

Rigor:

- **What is it?** Rigor means that evaluations are conducted to the highest standard and accurately report the information; statements about statistical significance are clear and correct, and the limitations of our findings are clear.
- **Why is it important?** Rigor ensures that our findings are credible, allowing policymakers and program designers to act on our findings with confidence.
- **How do we accomplish it?** City teammates analyze and process evaluation results through an internal review and address any discrepancies before results are finalized.

Relevance:

- **What is it?** Relevance means that evaluations reflect the interests, needs, and sensitivities of stakeholders (i.e., populations served, the [Mayor](#) and members of City Council, partners and other state agencies, tribes, local governments, grantees, researchers, etc.).
- **Why is it important?** Relevance builds trust with stakeholders, and supports meaningful innovation, improvement, and learning.
- **How do we accomplish it?** City teammates develop and maintain strong partnerships amongst evaluation staff, frontline program staff, policymakers, target populations, and service providers. Stakeholders are provided opportunity to influence the questions answered by new evaluations. Once an evaluation is complete, City teammates distribute findings at the right time, place, and format to facilitate use, and in ways that are accessible and useful to policymakers and practitioners.

Transparency:

- **What is it?** Transparency means that evaluation records are retained, and all findings are published in an accessible way (including null results and those that run counter to expectations and goals).
- **Why is it important?** Transparency ensures that researchers, stakeholders, policymakers, and the public at large can learn from our work.
- **How do we accomplish it?** City teammates thoroughly document evaluations so that others with required data access can reproduce the results.

Independence:

- **What is it?** Independence means that evaluation teammates remain neutral and unbiased when conducting and assessing results.
- **Why is it important?** Independence ensures that evaluation results are [objective](#) and that decision-making is not impacted by undue influence.
- **How do we accomplish it?** City teammates design, conduct, and analyze programs with objectivity. The City's Data Evidence Decision Making Impact

Ethical Practice:

- **What is it?** Ethical Practice means upholding the standards of professional [conduct](#), and preserving and protecting the dignity of participants.
- **Why is it important?** Conducting evaluations in an ethical manner ensures that the dignity, rights, safety, and privacy of participants are safeguarded.
- **How do we accomplish it?** City teammates comply with both the spirit and letter of relevant requirements for the evaluation process ([LE](#) regulations governing research involving human subjects).



We got you covered: Evaluation Policy Template

Don't know where to start?

- We've created a template to make it convenient for your city to start drafting its Evaluation Policy
- We've also attached Evaluation Policies from other cities

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Options to give your Evaluation Policy “teeth”

What do we mean by “teeth”?

- Enforcement mechanisms
- Implementation mechanisms
- Accountability mechanisms

After all of your work, you want to make sure your policy has an impact in the real world!

Adding “teeth” to your policy can:

- Provide city staff with structure and strategies to act upon the policy and;
- Ensure that the policy is implemented in the real world



Recap, Assignments, & Next Steps

What we covered today

- A successful evaluation policy has input from key city stakeholders
 - A solid evaluation policy has a background, a purpose, a clear definition of evaluation, covered programs and services and core evaluation principles
 - Creating an evaluation budget, agenda, and/or function can give your Evaluation Policy teeth
-



Assignment & Coaching

Assignment:

- Finish Session 2 assignments in the worksheet by **Tuesday, May 28**
- Review the Evaluation Policy example!
- Draft your Evaluation Policy!
- Reach out to key stakeholders and involve them in the work!

This week's coaching call:

- Review stakeholder outreach plan with your coach
- Align on outline for the Evaluation Policy draft



Session 3: Implement your evaluation policy

May 2024


THE
BEHAVIORAL
INSIGHTS
TEAM

Course flow

Session 1 (05/08) <i>Introducing the evaluation policy</i>	No session (05/15) <i>[break week]</i>	Session 2 (05/22) <i>Drafting the evaluation policy</i>	Session 3 (05/29) <i>Implementing the policy</i>	Session 4 (06/05) <i>Passing the policy</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defining the policy• Assigning team responsibilities• Introducing the steps to creating an the policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choosing an approach to your policy• Preparing to share your progress with the team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City-share out: sharing your policy approach• Mapping stakeholders• Drafting the policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defining strategies to socialize the policy• Continue drafting the policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City-share out: Sharing your evaluation policy• Reflections and next steps



Session 3: Checklist

By the end of this week, you will:

- ☐ Complete a draft of the evaluation policy
- ☐ Create a plan to pass and socialize your evaluation policy



Time to plan for implementation!



Determine the policy mechanism that is feasible and meets the city's goals



Engage key stakeholders to understand policy preferences



Draft the Evaluation Policy



Implement the Evaluation Policy



Provide guidance to city staff on what the Evaluation Policy means for them



Ways to implement your Evaluation Policy



**Internal
communications**



**External
communications**



Training



Processes



**Human
Resources**



Ways to implement your Evaluation Policy



Internal communication

- Promote the newly-passed Evaluation Policy in the city's internal channels or newsletters
- Share a message inviting people to read the Evaluation Policy
- Provide talking points about the Evaluation Policy for managers to relay to staff
- Disseminate short features of new evaluations through internal channels like the Intranet or email



Ways to implement your Evaluation Policy



**Internal
communication**

Case study: City of Rochester

- The City of Rochester requested an agenda item in the semiannual city town hall to present the Evaluation Policy to city staff
- The Evaluation Champion shared the policy, alongside the mayor, as an internal-facing document to standardize evaluations in the city
- The actual policy was then disseminated via the city's intranet (newsletter)



Ways to implement your Evaluation Policy



External communication

- Have the Mayor or other senior leader hold a press conference or briefing about the policy and the city's commitment to evaluation
- Have the Mayor or other senior leader publish an external statement or press release
- Have the Mayor or other senior leader speak at a gathering of relevant community leaders (e.g., academic partners with whom you hope to collaborate, partners with whom you implement programs)



Ways to implement your Evaluation Policy



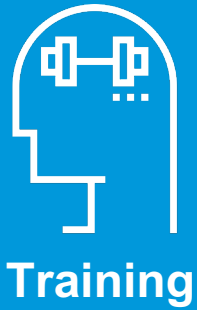
**External
communication**

Case study: City of Tempe

- The City of Tempe, passed a public-facing evaluation policy through city council.
- The city used external communications(...)???



Ways to implement your Evaluation Policy




- Host a training for department heads about how to identify evaluation opportunities
- Host training for staff to learn evaluation basics
- Work with an external evaluator to host a training on how they work
- After a project completes, host a training on lessons learned about evaluation projects (as well as sharing the results!)



Ways to implement your Evaluation Policy



Training

 **GOV.UK**

[Home](#) > [Education, training and skills](#)

Guidance


GDS Academy courses

The GDS Academy trains public sector workers in agile working and digital service design.

From: [Government Digital Service](#)

Published 27 June 2022

Last updated 18 October 2022 — [See all updates](#)

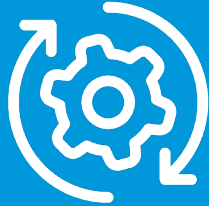
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Contents

- [Winding down of GDS Academy services](#)
- [About GDS Academy courses](#)
- [Digital and agile bitesize basics \(online course\)](#)
- [Understanding users and their needs \(online course\)](#)



Ways to implement your Evaluation Policy

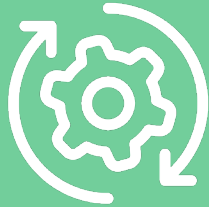


Processes

- Establish a process for employees to submit evaluation ideas
- Create an internal website (e.g., Sharepoint) or page on existing intranet with evaluation resources, instructions about how to raise evaluation ideas, etc.
- Develop and publish a prioritization matrix for selecting which evaluations will receive funding and support



Ways to implement your Evaluation Policy



Processes

Case study: City of Tulsa

- The City of Tulsa passed a departmental evaluation policy
- They set up an Evaluation Working Group to oversee the cities evaluation practice
- The group puts out a semi-annual Request for Evaluation Ideas to solicit future evaluation proposals
- This process ensures a greater diversity of evaluation topics, while ensuring evaluations are conducted in compliance with the City's evaluation policy



Ways to implement your Evaluation Policy



Human Resources

- Include evaluation-relevant objectives, goals, or accountabilities the performance review process for specific roles
- Update job descriptions for evaluation team members
- List evaluation training opportunities provided by the city or external partners
- Set up an internship program with a local university to bring evaluation skills to the government



Ways to implement your Evaluation Policy



Human Resources



Javier Morales Norambuena · 2°

Director Ejecutivo en La Fábrica de Renca

Chile · [Información de contacto](#)

Más de 500 contactos



1 contacto en común: Ignacio Soria



Conectar



Enviar mensaje

Más

Experiencia



Director ejecutivo

La Fábrica de Renca

jul. 2022 - actualidad · 5 meses



Jefe Unidad de Innovación

Municipalidad de Renca

ago. 2021 - jul. 2022 · 1 año

Experiencia



Director ejecutivo

La Fábrica de Renca

jul. 2022 - actualidad · 5 meses

- Part of Renca's Evaluation Team
- Responsible for coordinating impact and process evaluations
- Participated at City Data Alliance (Bloomberg Philanthropies)



City Share-Out:



How are you thinking to socialize your policy? What do you need to do that?



Time to plan for implementation!



Determine the policy mechanism that is feasible and meets the city's goals



Engage key stakeholders to understand policy preferences



Draft the Evaluation Policy



Implement the Evaluation Policy

5

Provide guidance to city staff on what the Evaluation Policy means for them



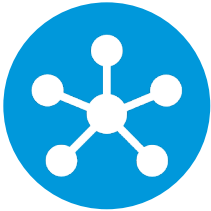
What does the Evaluation Policy mean for city staff?



Identify departments that will be required to share, follow, and/or promote the Evaluation Policy (e.g., Human Resources, Data and Evidence teams, etc.)



Meet with teams to make sure they understand the purpose of the Evaluation Policy, align with the established expectations, and share feedback.



Create sharing spaces that allow other departments (and residents) to learn about the use and commitment around the Evaluation Policy.



City Share-Out:



***What departments or agencies
may be affected by your policy?
How can you prepare to socialize
it with them?***

**With your team, discuss strategies to socialize the
evaluation policy**

Use your worksheets to write down ideas

Recap, Assignments, & Next Steps

What we covered today

- There are many strategies to socialize the Evaluation Policy —from internal communications to external notices and city-wide trainings
 - Thinking ahead about the teams and processes that will be impacted by your Evaluation Policy will help create a smooth and successful adoption
-



Session 4: Get ready to pass your Evaluation Policy

June 2024

And just like that... we're in the last session!



Session 1 (05/08) <i>Introducing the evaluation policy</i>	No session (05/15) <i>[break week]</i>	Session 2 (05/22) <i>Drafting the evaluation policy</i>	Session 3 (05/29) <i>Implementing the policy</i>	Session 4 (06/05) <i>Passing the policy</i>
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Session 4: Checklist

After this sprint, we encourage you to complete the steps below:

- ☐ Pass the policy
- ☐ Meet with city leadership to make sure they understand the policy
- ☐ Socialize the policy in your city
- ☐ Submit documentation for What Works Cities credit

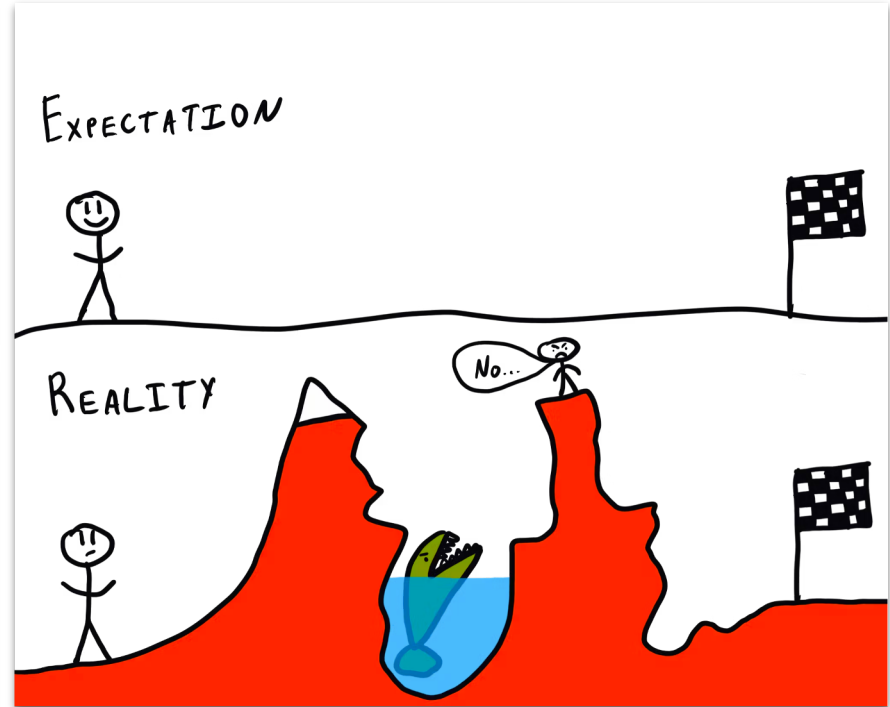


Activity: anticipating obstacles

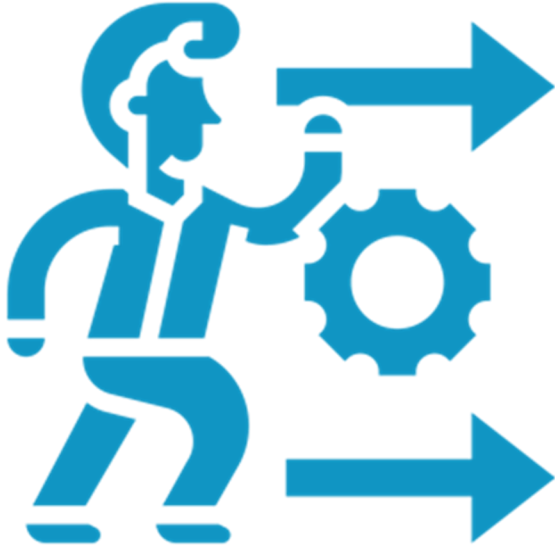
We want to end this course on an actionable note

Optimism bias: we tend to overestimate our likelihood of experiencing positive events and underestimate our likelihood of experiencing negative events

What to do about it: Start at the end. A premortem activity can help us overcome the optimism bias. In this activity, predict potential areas of failure when beginning a project.



Pre-mortems can help us to better prevent failure – by “failing in advance”



Imagine the policy has already failed

Why did this happen?

What went wrong?

What assumptions did we make?



Group Reflection (10 min)



Pre Mortem Exercise

Imagine it's 9 months from now and despite all of the team's efforts, the Evaluation Policy has been a failure —city departments are not using them and very few people in the city have heard about it. Add the potential reasons for this, what the cause was, and potential solutions.

Step 1: What went wrong?

**The
Evaluation
Policy is not
being used by
city staff**

Step 2: What was the cause?

**The Evaluation
Team didn't engage
relevant
stakeholders to the
creation of the
Evaluation Policy**

Step 3: Solution Ideas

**Identify key actors
in every department
that is supposed to
use the Evaluation
Policy and organize
a meeting to share
the Evaluation draft
with them and
gather their input**



Small group activity

In your city groups, discuss the following

1

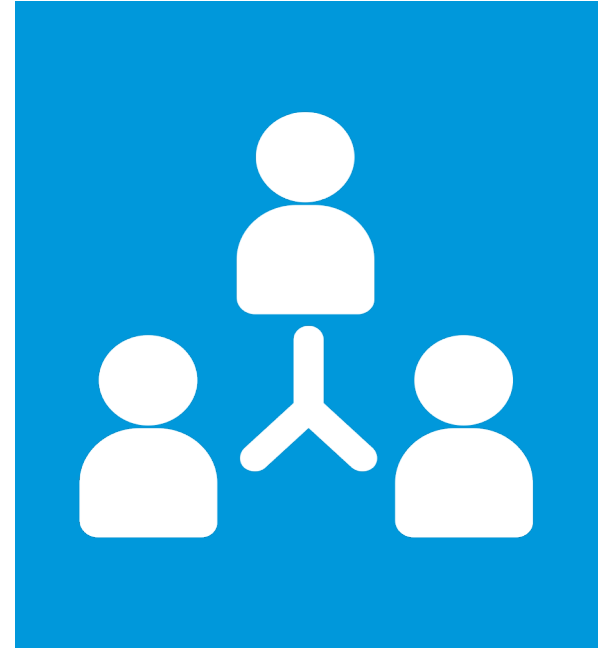
Pre-mortem activity: What can go wrong in implementing your city's Evaluation Policy?

2

What barriers could potentially make it difficult to pass an evaluation policy in your city?

3

What implementation strategies will you choose to socialize your city's Evaluation Policy? How do those strategies help to overcome the barriers?



City Share-Out:



What went wrong?

What was the cause?

What strategies did you come up with?

It's a wrap! Now.. what's next?

1. **Pass the evaluation policy.**

You have an official document that has been approved and is ready to be used by departments

2. **Socialize the evaluation policy.**

Publicize the policy to increase awareness and uptake of it!

3. **Tell us when your evaluation policy has been passed!**

If your city is certifying ahead of the next deadline, you will need to share the following documentation with your RIL or RfA coach ahead of the **June 30th deadline** certify on EVAL1:

- a. A final draft of the policy
- b. A document that shows it's been passed
- c. A document that states the creation of your evaluation working group or evaluation team

We will stay in touch on a monthly basis until you pass your policy!



What we covered today

- We heard about your journey throughout this track!
 - We learned about pre-mortems— a good way of identifying barriers and roadblocks of implementation and plan for them in advance
 - We provided guidance about what to focus on in the next months as you continue to work on passing your Evaluation Policy!
-



Thank you!