



Canadian Evaluation Society – National Capital Chapter

2025 ANNUAL LEARNING EVENT

NURTURING GROWTH FOR SUSTAINABLE EVALUATION
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2025

PROGRAM

8:30 am – 10:00 am Registration

8:30 am – 9:00 am Networking Refreshments in the Trade Show Area
Sponsored by: Carleton University – Public Policy and Program Evaluation

9:00 am – 9:15 am Opening Remarks and Welcome with Elder Barb Brant



Elder Barb Brant, Turtle Clan, Mohawk Nation, Tyendinaga

Elder Barb Brant of the Turtle Clan, Mohawk Nation from Tyendinaga which is known as the “Land of the Peacemaker”. The Great Peacemaker (Skennenrahawi in Mohawk), was one of the founders of the Haudenosaunee, commonly called the Iroquois Confederacy. It is fitting that Barb is from those lands because she inspires Peace wherever she goes. She is a gifted speaker and an inspiring teacher and has been teaching at the Kumik Elder’s lodge since 2015.

Barb has spent over 25 years working in Education. Her mentors and teachers were Sara Smith and Tom Porter. She is sanctioned by the Grandmothers and her Council to share in the traditional teachings of her people.

She was one of the Elders chosen for the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women Pre-Inquiry ceremonies and sessions in 2015. Elder Brant was then selected to work with young innovative Public Servants on the Canada Beyond 150 project to study policy issues in a new light. She predominantly worked with the Reconciliation team, as well as staff working on the program. Elder Barb has also worked with the Daring to Meet The Bear circle to guide public servants and evaluators.

Drawing on the experience of more than 30 years of teachings from Indigenous spiritual advisors, Elder Barb approached the policy development process in ways that are unusual for the public service. She began by observing and considering the physical and natural environment in which the groups were working, the personalities of the individuals, and how each person related to the group.

9:15 am – 10:15 am World Café

10:15 am – 10:30 am Refreshment Break in the Trade Show Area
Sponsored by: Ference & Company Consulting

10:30 am – 12:00 pm Concurrent Breakouts

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|---------------------|------------|---|
| Room 118ABCD | 1A1 | Leveraging Hybrid Evaluation Teams: Balancing Internal Knowledge with External Insight for Sustainable Evaluation Practices |
| Room 118ABCD | 1A2 | Visioning for the Future – Shaping Our Chapter’s Direction |
| Room 118E | 2A | Inclusive and Equitable Evaluation using a Theory of Change |
| Room 209 | 3A1 | Systems Thinking as Fertile Ground for Evaluation |
| Room 209 | 3A2 | Applying Indigenous Approaches in Federal Evaluation: Challenges and Lessons Learned |
| Room 209 | 3A3 | Leveraging Outcome Harvesting and AI to Build More Effective Evaluation Plans |
| Room 209 | 3A4 | Harnessing AI in Program Evaluation: Navigating Innovation and Ethical Considerations |
| Room 210 | 4A | Circle Teachings as Ceremony and Research |



THEME 1A: French (Evaluation Implementation: Nurturing Growth through Innovation)
1A1 Leveraging Hybrid Evaluation Teams: Balancing Internal Knowledge with External Insight for Sustainable Evaluation Practices

This panel will explore the dynamics of hybrid evaluation teams – comprising internal and external evaluators – as a sustainable model for effective evaluations. Through a moderated discussion, four experienced panelists will speak to individual and shared cases to illustrate benefits, challenges, and strategies for leveraging hybrid teams to build evaluation capacity, share expertise, apply different evaluation lenses and manage complex evaluations.

Internal evaluators often bring detailed and nuanced knowledge of their organization's programs, which aids in comprehensive data analysis and contextual understanding that strengthen the interpretive value of evaluation outcomes. However, because of their close ties to the organization, internal evaluators may experience role conflicts, especially when they are expected to balance neutral assessment with organizational pressures to secure program funding and support continuity. As noted in the literature, this may result in a perceived lack of objectivity and credibility, which could impact the use of evaluations.

The addition of external evaluators as part of evaluation teams offers valuable counterbalances to these challenges including an enhanced perception of objectivity and credibility. External evaluators also bring fresh perspectives, specialized skills, as well as experience with diverse methodologies and the integration of different lenses (e.g., sustainability, reconciliation, and EDI). They may also draw on their work with other departments and agencies, which can foster cross-departmental learning and break down silos.

The discussion will emphasize the dynamics of hybrid teams, including the practical benefits and challenges of balancing internal and external roles, managing stakeholder expectations, and creating resilient evaluation strategies. Attendees will gain practical insights on managing complex evaluations within hybrid teams, navigating role expectations, and fostering sustainable evaluation practices that align with organizational and community goals.

PRESENTERS

- François Dumaine, Partner, PRA*
- Élyse McCall-Thomas, Evaluation Manager, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council*
- Vanessa Anastasopoulos, Founder and principal, VANASTAS*
- Igor Straticiu, Senior Evaluation Analyst, Department of Canadian Heritage*
- MODERATOR: Isabelle Bourgeois, Full Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa*

Note that this presentation will be delivered in French.

1A2 Visioning for the Future – Shaping Our Chapter’s Direction

The National Capital Chapter’s board is embarking on an important planning process to shape our future direction and better serve our members. This visioning session aims to gather your input to help identify where we should be in the next three years, what aspects of our work provide the most value, and what areas may need improvement.

We understand that change within organizations takes time and that we rely heavily on the dedication of our volunteers. That’s why your feedback is crucial in helping us determine what is working well, what needs adjustment, and where we can focus our efforts for the greatest impact while remaining responsive and valuable to our members.

This session will require active participation, and members will have the opportunity to provide their input through written, verbal, or online feedback. While the session will be primarily conducted in English, contributions in both French and English are welcome. If you are unable to participate in the discussion, we encourage you to share your thoughts by reaching out to us at nccsecretariat@evaluationcanada.ca. We encourage open participation and honest feedback to help us collectively build a stronger, more vibrant chapter.

PRESENTER

- Victoria E. Díaz, Founding Partner, DPM Research*



**THEME 2A: Evaluation Reporting and Close-out: Harvesting Insights for Future Growth
Inclusive and Equitable Evaluation using a Theory of Change**

As evaluators, we are accountable for respectfully and equitably analyzing projects and programs. To promote equity and social justice in our work, it's crucial to challenge our own epistemological foundations by identifying and testing our biases to consider the ramifications of our practice. One such way to do this is by iteratively and deliberately testing a Theory of Change (ToC) throughout the project lifecycle. This workshop will involve a short tutorial followed by an immersive role-playing activity wherein participants take on roles of different stakeholders, funders, and project beneficiaries in a fictitious project. In doing so, participants will reflect on relevant considerations related to evaluation in our changing world, test each other's assumptions, discover new and novel ways to problem-solve using a ToC, and recognize the benefits that this awareness has for the communities and causes we serve.

PRESENTER

Elizabeth Sweitzer, Senior Consultant, Guidehouse



**THEME 3A: Evaluation Management and Planning: Planting the Seeds of Change
3A1 Systems Thinking as Fertile Ground for Evaluation**

Systems thinking is an approach and a suite of tools that helps to think and act in complexity. It invites us to examine issues in terms of systems, and to focus on the interdependencies. Systems thinking rejects fragmentation, focusses on relations, embraces contradictions and invites deeper, more transformative questions (and action).

This 15-minute presentation will propose systems thinking as a framework to enhance the scoping and planning of evaluations. In 2023-2024, I worked as an analyst at la Maison de l'innovation sociale in Montreal, a non-profit organization that puts systems thinking at the core of its work to improve communities. I will share with other evaluators some thoughts and references that can be part of an underpinning strategy to work in complexity and align evaluations with the greater good.

PRESENTER

Marie-Philippe Lemoine, Evaluator, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

3A2 Applying Indigenous Approaches in Federal Evaluation: Challenges and Lessons Learned

As part of the federal commitments to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, the Evaluation Branch at Indigenous Services Canada seeks new ways to implement evaluation methods and approaches centered on Indigenous worldviews and knowledge systems. Using the ongoing evaluation of the Economic Development Capacity and Readiness Program as site of inquiry, this presentation explores a hybrid evaluation methodology that both adheres to Treasury Board of Canada's Policy on Results and centers Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

This presentation will:

1. Provide a foundational context for and understanding of the methodology, including how it blends Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada requirements with Indigenous approaches. This section will include examples such as: an overview of the foundational framework developed by the Indigenomics Institute; the role of an Opening Ceremony to "Bear Witness" to the launch of the evaluation; approaches used to ensure that Indigenous Peoples and communities had a guiding role in all phases of the evaluation; and emphasizing community-defined measures of success.
2. Discuss challenges and lessons learned while implementing this framework within the bounds of the federal system, such as adhering to timelines and processes of the federal government, while respecting the timelines, processes, and wishes of communities; and honoring our mistakes and missteps.
3. Present a reflective, "so what?" discussion, which will analyze how this pilot exemplifies ISC Evaluation's objective to transform its practice, the perceived benefit that this innovative approach provided, and how the learnings from the pilot could be adapted for future work.

PRESENTER

Alexis Gilmer, Senior Evaluation Officer, Indigenous Services Canada

3A3 Leveraging Outcome Harvesting and AI to Build More Effective Evaluation Plans

This presentation aims to demonstrate how an innovative evaluation approach like outcome harvesting can be paired with AI to create more effective and sound evaluation plans.

Outcome harvesting is a flexible evaluation method that captures and verifies actual outcomes, eliminating the need for a predefined logic model. By using AI, evaluators can quickly analyze large datasets, identify patterns, and automate time-consuming tasks, though data accuracy remains a key concern. Outcome harvesting provides a critical safeguard with its built-in data verification mechanisms, ensuring that any potential errors introduced by AI are caught and corrected. This makes it a secure approach to leverage AI in evaluation, allowing evaluators to rely on AI for efficiency while maintaining confidence in the accuracy of their results. Through the use of a case study, participants will gain an understanding of what outcome harvesting is, the steps in the process where AI can be effectively utilized, and how the results of the harvest can be used to create a more effective evaluation plan.

The session will provide real-world examples of applying outcome harvesting in program evaluations without a clear roadmap and demonstrate how AI can complement this by quickly identifying trends, managing large datasets, and synthesizing qualitative and quantitative data. By the end of the presentation, participants will have practical tools for integrating AI and outcome harvesting in a responsible, effective way, empowering them to create robust evaluation plans even when a program lacks a formal structure.

PRESENTER

Chinyere Amadi Dufour, Evaluation Project Manager, National Research Council of Canada

3A4 Harnessing AI in Program Evaluation: Navigating Innovation and Ethical Considerations

Artificial Intelligence (AI) feels almost magical, offering instant responses to any question. The excitement around AI and its potential uses is contagious. When used correctly, AI is a powerful tool. For example, we used Copilot (AI) to improve this abstract's clarity. However, before using AI in evaluations, we need to understand its limitations.

This presentation will explore AI limitations and discuss how AI aligns with and challenges the core values of the Canadian Evaluation Society and of the Canadian Public Service. By exploring these aspects, we aim to provide a thorough understanding of AI's role in improving program evaluation while upholding its core values.

This presentation will:

1. Examine the Benefits and Limitations of AI: Provide a balanced view of how AI can enhance program evaluation while acknowledging its current limitations.
2. Align AI with Core Evaluation Values: Discuss strategies to ensure AI applications uphold the values of the Canadian Evaluation Society and the Canadian Public Service.
3. Introduce the FASTER Acronym: Present the FASTER framework as a guide for ethical AI use in evaluations.
4. Promote Ethical Considerations: Highlight the importance of ethical considerations in integrating AI into evaluation practices.
5. Encourage Dialogue and Innovation: Foster a conversation on the future of AI in evaluation, encouraging innovative yet responsible use of technology.

This presentation is particularly relevant to this conference as it addresses the intersection of emerging technologies and ethical evaluation practices, a key theme of our discussions.

PRESENTERS

Megan Vincent, Junior Evaluation Analyst, Public Service Commission

Lys Granier, Program Evaluator, Public Service Commission



THEME 4A: Evaluation Implementation: Nurturing Growth through Innovation
Circle Teachings as Ceremony and Research

This workshop will begin with an introduction to sharing circle protocols. This professional development training uses real-life examples and lessons learned in Indigenous performance measurement and evaluation.

Information will be relayed by sharing pictures, storytelling, and lived experiences in the field. This will be followed by a facilitated sharing circle. The intended outcome is to bridge Indigenous methodologies into evaluation practice by using sharing circles for data collection and analysis.

Indigenous approaches to holistic evaluations take into consideration the complex intersectional impacts of the environment, the community, cultural practices, traditions, as well as the existing processes and realities including environmental degradation, systemic racism, social injustice, and economic inequality.

Photos are able to visually capture progress, engage stakeholders with visual representation, provide qualitative aspects that are difficult to share in words, and used in storytelling. This workshop has been delivered online and in-person with overwhelming participation at the CES Community of Practice in 2021, Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) National conference in 2022, and the first Indigenous Evaluation Network (IEN) opening ceremony in February 2024.

This workshop will be facilitated by a certified Indigenous restorative justice circle practitioner.

PRESENTERS

Dylan Jenkins, Two-Spirit Knowledge Keeper

Marina Santilli, Planning Committee, Indigenous Evaluation Network

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm Lunch

Sponsored by: PRA Inc.

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm Keynote Presentation

Operationalizing an Urgent Mandate: The Indigenous Evaluation Network

There is an urgent need for an increase in both Indigenous evaluation approaches and protocols and ramping up the skills sets and productivity of Indigenous evaluators.

The Indigenous Evaluation Network is dedicated to supporting our landscape and its needs including networking with Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations and professions to advance Indigenous evaluation in two main ways. First, for the development of Indigenous evaluators through mentoring and job placement. Second, to advance the protocols and processes utilized in programs for and with Indigenous Peoples.

In this keynote presentation we will learn more about Indigenous evaluation but as well what is in store from the Indigenous Evaluation Network.



Andrea L.K. Johnston, CEO, Johnston Research Inc.

Since 1991, Andrea Johnston has been employed full-time as an evaluation manager working towards a future that changes the relationships between Indigenous Peoples and funding agents to operationalize an environment in which Indigenous Peoples can set their parameters. Andrea enjoys working most with colleagues and partners who support the goals of the projects in which she is engaged. She works to break down walls and works hard to learn from all those with whom she engages in dialogue during her project work.

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Concurrent Breakouts

Room 118ABCD

1B1 Partnering Process Evaluation: Insights into Coherence, Relevance, and Collaboration Effectiveness of the Resilience and Inclusion Through Investment in Sustainable Agrikultura Initiative

Room 118ABCD

1B2 Evaluation Division Review of AAFC Past Evaluations: A Focus on PIP Recommendations

Room 118ABCD

1B3 Into the Great Unknown: How to Navigate Program Evaluation on an Unfamiliar Topic

Room 118E

2B Inclusive Insights: Infusing Equity in Data Visualisations

Room 209

3B Planning and Managing Horizontal Evaluations: Lessons Learned from the Horizontal Evaluation of the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy

Room 210

4B1 A Discussion on Capacity-Building in Evaluation

Room 210

4B2 Lessons Learned from a Clarificative and Implementation Evaluation of the City of Kingston’s Municipal Services

Room 210

4B3 From Theory to Practice: Examining the Development, Implementation, and Impact of Evaluation Policy

Room 210

4B4 Obstacles to the institutionalization of program evaluation in Africa: A case study from the Democratic Republic of Congo



THEME 1B: French (Evaluation Reporting and Close-out: Harvesting Insights for Future Growth)

1B1 Partnering Process Evaluation: Insights into Coherence, Relevance, and Collaboration Effectiveness of the Resilience and Inclusion Through Investment in Sustainable Agrikultura Initiative

The Resilience and Inclusion through Investment in Sustainable Agrikultura (RIISA) project, a project from the Canadian non-profit Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), aims to foster inclusive economic growth for cacao smallholder farmers (SHFs) in Mindanao, Philippines. The project utilizes MEDA’s Market Systems Development (MSD) approach, a theory of change focused on systemic, sustainable improvements and leverages local partnerships to drive sectoral improvements through financial support and the integration of Gender, Environmental, and Social Governance (G-ESG) practices. A clarificative evaluation conducted by the students of Carleton University’s Diploma in Policy and Program Evaluation (DPPE) assessed the alignment of MEDA’s partnership strategy with RIISA’s implementation. The evaluation focused on three objectives: understanding how the partnership strategy localized the MSD approach, improving partnership practices, and developing an MSD partnership framework applicable to MEDA’s global projects. Key findings highlight structural constraints in RIISA’s initial design that did not fully align with local needs, RIISA team success in fostering trust-based, responsive relationships with local partners, and an unrealized convener role within the cacao market system. Through this first experience conducting an evaluation, the students drew many lessons on the challenges of converting international development theory into practices, on the impact of organizational context on implementation strategies, and on the influence of cultural context on evaluation results.

PRESENTER

*Geneviève Boily-Larouche, Managing Director, AMR Policy Accelerator
Billie Jane Hermosura, Consultant*

1B2 Evaluation Division Review of AAFC Past Evaluations: A Focus on Recommendations Related to Performance Information Profiles

In each evaluation project, evaluators face limitations that can make the process more challenging. At the federal level, the performance information profile (PIP) of programs and its components, as well as the quality of available data, are elements that impact the evaluation process. The Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) Evaluation Division conducted a synthesis of recent evaluations within the Ministry to establish an overview and identify recurring themes, focusing specifically on recommendations related to PIPs. The findings of this review indicate that the majority of the evaluation reports analyzed highlight gaps in PIPs. This suggests a need to further analyze these gaps in order to improve PIPs, enable better reporting on results, and facilitate our work as evaluators.

PRESENTER

Andres Canessa, Evaluation Manager, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

1B3 Into the Great Unknown: How to Navigate Program Evaluation on an Unfamiliar Topic

Navigating program evaluation in unfamiliar areas presents unique challenges and opportunities. Drawing from our extensive experience in assessing diverse programs such as space science, horse racing, and quantum physics, we, as social scientists, have developed effective strategies for conducting evaluations without being subject matter experts. This presentation will outline essential steps, key strategies, and common challenges encountered in this process. We aim to inspire participants to share their own experiences and insights.

PRESENTERS

Emily Brennan, Senior Evaluation Manager, Office of Audit and Evaluation, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Susanna Beaudin, Partner, PRA Inc.

Note that these presentations will be delivered in French.



THEME 2B: Evaluation Reporting and Close-out: Harvesting Insights for Future Growth **Inclusive Insights: Infusing Equity in Data Visualisations**

The Digital Governance Standards Institute, in partnership with the Standards Council of Canada, is in the process of developing standards on data governance. These standards also include guidance on Data Equity, which includes data collection and use. The current draft states that data collectors should "ensure that data visualisations promote inclusion and awareness across culturally, linguistically, and racially diverse audiences." But what does this look like in practice?

It is crucial that we as evaluators not only collect data in equitable and ethical manners, but also share that data back in ways that are inclusive, are relevant to diverse stakeholders, and communicate findings that contribute to actions leading to justice and equity.

This interactive workshop will draw from research, known best practices, and real-life examples. Participants will be led through facilitated discussions on data visualisation (DataViz) techniques and be provided with opportunities to critique data visualisations using a Data Equity framework adapted from the four steps to effective DataViz developed by Stephanie Evergreen:

1. Understand Your Audience
2. Clearly Articulate the Purpose of your DataViz
3. Choose the Right Chart
4. Refine Your DataViz for Accessibility

By the end of the hour, participants will learn how to:

- Use empathy to create DataViz that centres the people behind the data;
- Craft titles that support inclusive and equitable data interpretation and lead the audience to action;
- Recognize if a chart will increase or decrease the chance of racial bias in audiences
- Consider how colour, clutter, and labels can make DataViz more inclusive.

A resource list will also be given to help participants continue their DataViz Equity journeys.

PRESENTER

Kris Gowen, Senior Manager Planning Learning and Evaluation, World Education Services



THEME 3B: Evaluation Management and Planning: Planting the Seeds of Change **Planning and Managing Horizontal Evaluations: Lessons Learned from the Horizontal Evaluation of the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy**

Horizontal evaluations involving multiple organizations can often be challenging and complex, requiring close coordination with partners and careful stakeholder management. This thematic session presentation will focus on experiences from evaluators at Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada in leading the Horizontal Evaluation of the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy (CDSS). The CDSS is the Government of Canada's public health-based approach to addressing substance use related harms and the overdose crisis. The CDSS was also complemented by the federal

government's 2018 "Addressing the Opioid Crisis" initiative, which received some reallocated funding from the CDSS. The horizontal evaluation examined the impact of investments and activities under both the CDSS and the Opioid initiative between 2017 and 2022, which were delivered by Health Canada and 15 other federal departments and agencies.

In this presentation, members of the evaluation team will share lessons learned on scoping and managing the evaluation of this complex, large-scale initiative implicating 16 federal departments and agencies. The presentation will start with a brief overview of the project context, as well as the considerations that led to the evaluation scope and questions. The team will then dive into the evaluation's governance, including the implementation of an evaluation terms of reference and engagement strategy. Presenters will then highlight best practices for effective project management, such as the use of trackers and other data collection strategies to streamline the process and reduce the burden on programs and partners. The team will then conclude by presenting some of the limitations and overarching lessons learned, as well as some of the implications in advancing instrumental use in this evaluation.

PRESENTERS

Robert Tkaczyk, Evaluation Manager, Public Health Agency of Canada
Stephanie Jollette, Senior Program Evaluation Analyst, Public Health Agency of Canada
Julie Zhang, Senior Program Evaluation Analyst, Public Health Agency of Canada



THEME 4B: Evaluation Implementation: Nurturing Growth through Innovation
4B1 A Discussion on Capacity-Building in Evaluation

Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) refers to the systematic and intentional efforts to enhance the ability of individuals, organizations, or systems to conduct, use, and sustain evaluation. It involves developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and structures needed to design, implement, and utilize evaluations to improve programs, policies, and decision-making processes. This fireside chat will provide concrete examples of how evaluation can meaningfully contribute to organizational success as well as how evaluation capacity can be strengthened in public, international, and community-based organizations.

PRESENTERS

Dr. Isabelle Bourgeois, Full Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa
Dr. Eric Champagne, Full Professor, Public Administration, School of Political Studies and Director, Centre on Governance, University of Ottawa
Dr. Robert Shepherd, Full Professor, School of Public Policy and Administration, Carleton University

4B2 Lessons Learned from a Clarificative and Implementation Evaluation of the City of Kingston’s Municipal Services

We conducted a clarificative and implementation evaluation of the City of Kingston’s municipal service processes (i.e., reach and quality of services, internal communication, and collection and use of service data). Our evaluation questions focused on 1) identifying the current service processes in place and to what extent they were being implemented across departments, 2) what internal communication methods the City could leverage to improve service, 3) who municipal services are reaching currently, 4) how the City could improve its collection and use of service-related data, and 4) to what extent services are meeting resident needs. Challenges to our approach involved the complexity in creating the program theory with both internal (City staff) and external (resident) components and procuring data to adequately assess the reach of service. Our findings highlighted gaps in the clarity, consistency, and documentation of internal processes related to service delivery and that efficiency often competed with effectiveness for communicating internally to complete requests. We also identified issues with adequate closing the loop on requests both according to staff and residents, and that resident engagement with online services is likely lower in regions outside the City core where there are fewer in-person service centers. We learned that effective evaluation relies on effective project management, which we would aim to improve in future, and the importance of adequate scoping aided by the use of program theories.

PRESENTER

Dr. Valerie Wood, Research and Evaluation Specialist, Canadian Armed Forces

4B3 From Theory to Practice: Examining the Development, Implementation, and Impact of Evaluation Policy

Over the past 50 years, evaluation has been a central function of the Government of Canada given its key role in the government's expenditure management system and public reporting activities. This has resulted in the development of centralized federal evaluation policies to direct evaluation practice across federal departments and agencies. Such policies outline legislative requirements, as well as general expectations and guidelines for the federal evaluation function. In 2009, Bill Trochim argued that developing well-informed evaluation policies that can guide evaluation practice may be the most important issue facing the field of evaluation. This presentation shares the preliminary results of an empirical study examining the interpretation and implementation of the federal government's Policy on Results by evaluation practitioners and users, its role and impact on the capacity to do and use evaluations, and how contextual factors play a role in shaping the policy-practice relationship. The findings provide a better understanding of the relationship between evaluation policy and organizational evaluation capacity and the importance of adapting foundational practices to meet diverse contextual needs.

PRESENTER

Élyse McCall-Thomas, Evaluation Manager, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council

4B4 Obstacles to the Institutionalization of Program Evaluation in Africa: A Case Study from the Democratic Republic of Congo

In the contemporary paradigm of good public governance, program evaluation has become an indispensable tool, particularly in the field of international development. Its application is of paramount importance in the African context, where socio-economic challenges and the imperatives of public sector modernization call for rigorous, evidence-based approaches. Adopted in the 2000s in many African countries in the name of good governance and program-based budgeting, program evaluation is struggling to become institutionalized in Africa. And yet, its preponderant role in the democratization of public action, the rationalization of budgetary choices, and the strengthening of accountability and responsibility of public actions is unequivocal. Although several factors are highlighted at the continental level, analysis of their institutionalization at country and sector levels seem to offer a more interesting reading of causality. Using the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo, this analysis seeks to understand the challenges and obstacles to institutionalizing program evaluation in the African context.

PRESENTER

Samuel Batumike Kabagale, Doctoral Student, Public Administration, University of Ottawa

3:00 pm – 3:15 pm **Refreshment Break in the Trade Show Area**
Sponsored by: Ference & Company Consulting

3:15 pm – 4:15 pm **Concurrent Breakouts**
Room 118ABCD 1C Quality of Life Framework: From Theory to Practice in Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
Room 118E 2C Dynamic Reporting: More Show, Less Tell
Room 209 3C Integrating Environmental Sustainability in Evaluation
Room 210 4C Nurturing Growth for Sustainable Evaluation: What about AI?



THEME 1C: Bilingual (Evaluation Management and Planning: Planting the Seeds of Change) **Quality of Life Framework: From Theory to Practice in Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada**

This panel discussion on the implementation of the Quality of Life (QoL) Framework for Canada at Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities Canada (HICC) will explore the efforts of HICC in integrating QoL across the department. The objective is to provide a case example of how one department has enhanced to weave QoL into policy development, program design and operations. Specifically, the presentation will highlight:

- HICC's processes and success stories, showcasing projects and initiatives that have positively impacted quality of life; and,
- Sharing key lessons learned from these experiences.

Following this, the discussion will cover program evaluation with a policy lens, outlining the approaches used to evaluate programs and policies, and how these evaluation results inform policy decisions and improvements. The Treasury Board of

Canada Secretariat will provide an overview of the QoL Framework (its origins, structure and purpose) and its implementation in the Government of Canada.

Next, the discussion will shift to the role of corporate planning and reporting at HICC, detailing how its Departmental Results Framework is integrated into strategic planning processes and the methods used to report on performance and outcomes related to quality-of-life domains and indicators. The panel will then explore both results and risks management aspects, discussing the results framework used by HICC to measure success and the strategies for identifying and mitigating risks associated with implementing the framework across the department.

Finally, performance measurement and evaluation can inform planning, priority setting, policy and program developments, and resources allocations. Its integration into program evaluation can enable a richer understanding of a program's relevance and impact, making evaluations more meaningful to broader audiences of Canadians.

PRESENTERS

Peter Robertson, Director, Frameworks Integration Unit, Results Division, Treasury Board Secretariat
Cédric Ménard, Director, Audit and Evaluation Branch, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
Jane Stewart, Director, PRB, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
Pierce McKennirey, Manager, Corporate Planning, Reporting and Results, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada

Note that this presentation will be delivered in French and English.



THEME 2C: Evaluation Reporting and Close-out: Harvesting Insights for Future Growth
Dynamic Reporting: More Show, Less Tell

This presentation will revisit dynamic "slidedoc-style" reporting, looking into high-level principles and best practices for data visualization and page layouts to teach you how to "show more and tell less" when drafting a report. There will be a demonstration with a real-world example of a typical evaluation report implemented into this dynamic format as well as an interactive "How can we fix this?" activity to illustrate what pitfalls to avoid while drafting.

The objectives specifically will be:

- To share best practices in data visualization and dynamic report drafting;
- Demonstrate how other departments/organizations might approach implementing data visualization; and,
- Allow the attendants to apply what they've learned by pointing out how to improve pages.

PRESENTERS

Jonathan Malcolm, Senior Evaluation Officer, Innovation Science and Economic Development
Julia Hillyard, Evaluation Analyst, Innovation Science and Economic Development



THEME 3C: Evaluation Management and Planning: Planting the Seeds of Change
Integrating Environmental Sustainability in Evaluation

This session will provide an opportunity to explore why environmental sustainability should be included in all evaluations, and what tools and approaches are available now to implement this vision of program evaluation.

Having this in-person session will facilitate a direct engagement of participants. As such, attendees should expect some foundational aspects to be covered by the facilitator, but the focus will be to engage in a conversation to share our hopes, trepidation, experiences, and suggestions on how to move forward. From the design phase to data collection, and to reporting, we will collectively learn and build our confidence and ability to render program evaluation ever more relevant.

PRESENTER

François Dumaine, Partner, PRA



THEME 4C: Evaluation Implementation: Nurturing Growth through Innovation

Nurturing Growth for Sustainable Evaluation: What about AI?

This 1-hour moderated session will feature panelists from four government departments and from the private sector. Panelists will describe how they have used AI for evaluation, share their thoughts on how AI intersects with nurturing growth for sustainable evaluation, and make observations on future directions. This panel will touch on how AI influences evaluation implementation but will also explore aspects related to planning and reporting. Panelists will discuss how evaluators can prepare to evaluate interventions that mobilize AI.

PRESENTERS

Vanessa Anastasopoulos, Founder and principal, VANASTAS

David Heath, Director of Evaluation, Shared Services Canada

Shirley Steller, Director of Evaluation, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Rebecca Friesdorf, Senior Knowledge Translation Advisor, Global Affairs Canada

Stéphanie Roberge, A/Executive Director, Program Evaluation Division, Public Health Agency of Canada

MODERATOR: Marie-Philippe Lemoine, Evaluator, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

4:15 pm – 5:00 pm Closing Remarks and Karl Boudreault Award Presentation

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm Networking Reception
Sponsored by: DPM Research Inc. and VANASTAS