

# Culturally Responsive and Equitable Evaluation

Learning Through a Community-Led Approach

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# Welcome & Introductions



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Expanding the Bench® (ETB), an initiative led by Change Matrix, works to support diverse evaluators and Funders of Evaluation to value, practice, and promote a culturally responsive and equitable evaluation (CREE) ecosystem through three essential areas of focus:

- People
- Practice
- Field

# Training Goals

The purpose of this training is to:

- ☑ Introduce AFN staff to culturally responsive and equitable evaluation (CREE), its principles, and frameworks
- ☑ Highlight connections between CREE and the work that AFN members have engaged/are engaging in
- ☑ Practice ways to integrate CREE into AFN members' investment strategy and approaches

# A g e n d a

## Hour One: Introduction (Didactic Session)

- Goals and Group Agreements
- History of Evaluation
- Evaluation in Philanthropy
- CREE Principles
- The Evaluation Ecosystem- How & What Behind CREE

## Hour Two: Practical Applications (Group Engagement)

- Small Group Work: From CREE theory to practice
- Wrap up & Additional Resources

# What is “Evaluation”?

Evaluation is a systematic and intentional process of gathering and analyzing data (quantitative and qualitative) to inform learning, decisionmaking, and action.

## Key Characteristics of Evaluation:

- Grounded in a set of key questions: The questions provide the boundaries, scope, and direction of the evaluation.
- Systematic: It is intentional, planned, and purposeful, not ad hoc.
- Intended to inform decisionmaking about one or more aspects of the work, including but not limited to: process, outcomes, improvements, resource allocation, whether to continue the program/initiative, and/or change a strategy.

# Goals and Group Agreements

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# Group Agreements

Proposed guidelines for effective cross-cultural dialogue:

- “Try on”
- It’s okay to disagree
- It is not okay to blame, shame, or attack, self or others
- Practice “self-focus”
- Practice “both/and” thinking
- Notice both process and content
- Be aware of intent and impact
- Confidentiality
- Any others...?

**Change Matrix guidelines for today's session and approach to equitable evaluation in general:**

This session intends to create a space of learning rather than a space of critiquing or judgment. CREE is an organic process that is not meant to be perfect, one size fits all, or a checklist. We come into this space understanding that perfection is not the end goal and recognize that we all bring a variety of experiences, perspectives, and approaches — all of which are valid.



## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



I am knowledgeable about evaluation and incorporate it into all of my investment strategies.



%	Person Icon	Answer
4%	(1)	Strongly disagree
4%	(1)	Disagree
35%	(9)	Neither agree nor disagree
46%	(12)	Agree
11%	(3)	Strongly agree





## PARTICIPATION


### Breakdown of Participation



Please rate your knowledge and use of culturally responsive and equitable evaluation (CREE)

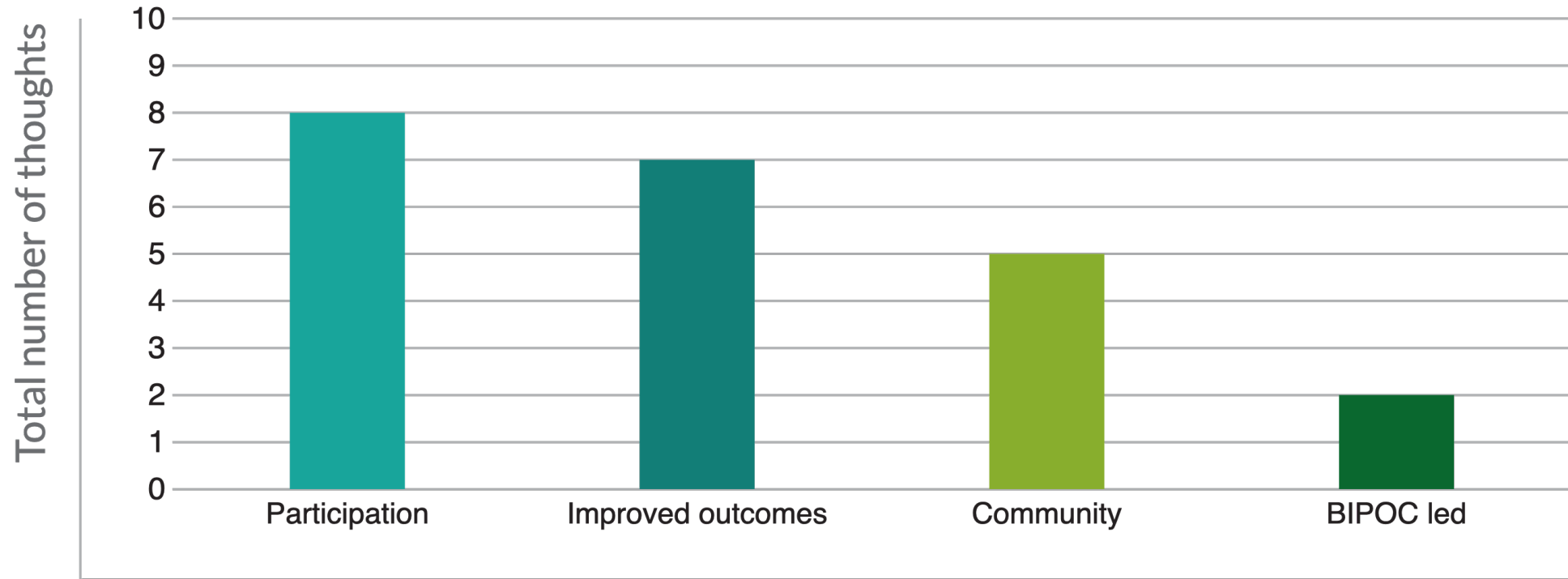


25  
Responses

%		Answer (Multi-select)
64%	(16)	CREE is new to me
12%	(3)	I know the principles of CREE but have not practiced it
16%	(4)	I have incorporated CREE to some degree in my practice
12%	(3)	I am fully committed to and practicing CREE

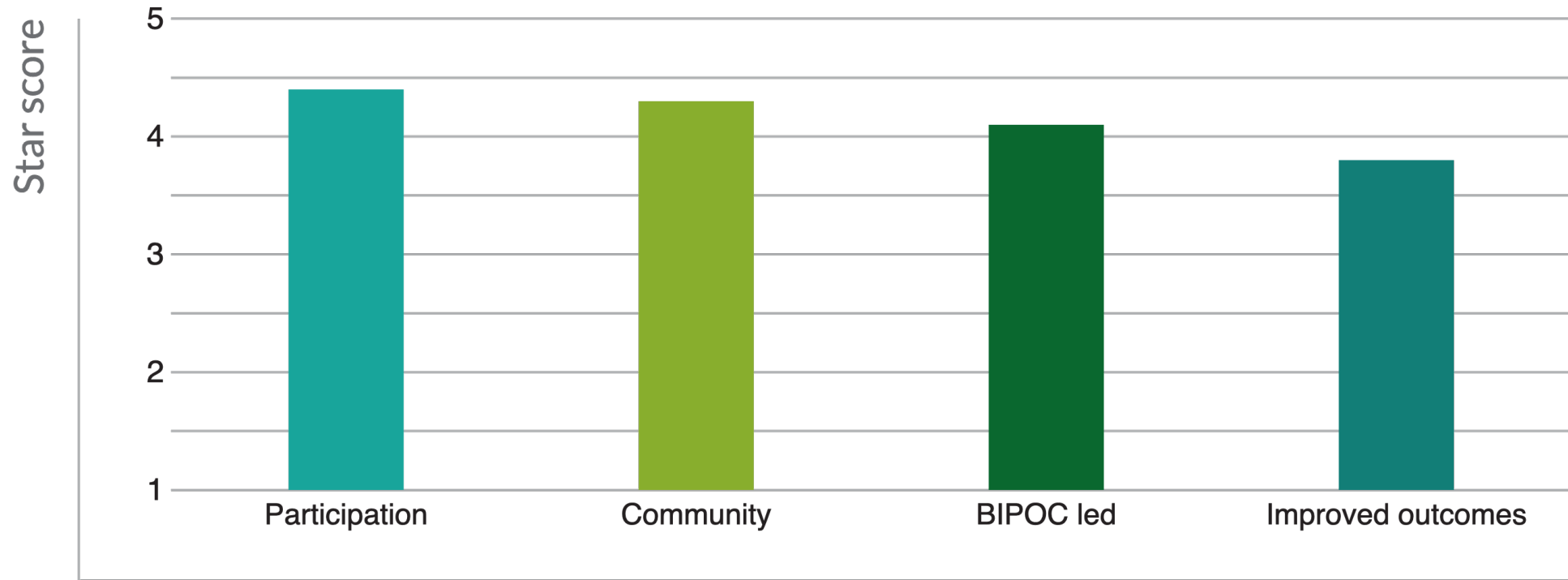


# AFN Top Themes by total thoughts





# AFN Top Themes by star score



# History of Evaluation

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“

If you don't know history, then you don't know anything. You are a leaf that doesn't know it is part of a tree.

”

- Michael Chrichton

# HISTORY OF EVALUATION

*As described and categorized by Madaus et al (2000)., and further adapted by R Lance Hogan on The Historical Development of Program Evaluation: Exploring the Past and Present*

Staff evaluations by  
Emperor of China In  
2200 BCE

Indigenous  
Evaluation  
Practices

Age of Efficiency  
and Testing

Age of Innocence

Age of  
Professionalization

?

1792-  
1900s

1900s-  
1930

1930-  
1945

1946-  
1957

1958-  
1972

1973-  
1983

1983-  
Present

What's  
Next?

Age of Reform

Tylerian Age

Age of  
Development

Age of Expansion  
and Integration



# Over 200 years of Federal Government Evaluation

**1815** US Army developed “uniformity of manufacturers’ ordinance”

Earliest recorded formal Evaluation in the US

**1845** US State Board of Education developed printed surveys to measure student achievement

First formal education evaluation in the US (Boston, MA)

Catalyst for shift to student test scores as main source of evaluation for schools and students in the US

**1932-1940** – Ralph Tyler the “Father of Educational Evaluation”

**1957** – Successful launch of Russia’s Sputnik I sparking US Congress to pass the National Defense Education Act



# A Shift to a People-Centered Approach

**1965** – Congress passes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Birth of contemporary program evaluation

Specific focus on low-income students

**1970s** – Evaluation emerges as a profession

**1980s** – Decrease in evaluation funding by the Regan Administration

**1990s - Present** – Expansion of field and integration, professional associations were developed along with evaluation standards

Participant-oriented approach enters the field in early 2000s

# The Consequences of *Prioritizing Impact Over Human Dignity* in Evaluation

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# Evaluation causes harm to marginalized communities

<p><b>Tuskegee &amp; Guatemala Syphilis Experiments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1932-1972</li> <li>• 600 Black men In Alabama</li> <li>• Over 1,300 people In Guatemala</li> <li>• US Gov experimented on low-income African American Farmers &amp; Guatemalans to learn about the progression of and treatments for syphilis.</li> <li>• Even when penicillin became recognized as an effective treatment for syphilis, study participants were not offered this treatment.</li> </ul>	<p><b>US Radiation Experiments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1940s-1980s</li> <li>• US Government conducted a research program on the effects of radiation on humans.</li> <li>• Pregnant women, the elderly, incarcerated people, and terminally ill patients received radiation doses up to 98 times greater than what was known at the time to be tolerable.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Holmesburg Prison Experiments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1950s-1970s</li> <li>• Incarcerated people were subject to a variety of experiments, exposed to toxic drugs and chemicals, participated in commercial testing</li> <li>• Suffered many side effects including hallucinations, skin lesions, scars, memory loss, and cognitive impairment</li> <li>• Broke already established ethical codes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Tearoom Trade</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1970</li> <li>• Unethical collection of private information of 134 gay men to understand "impersonal sex" in public restrooms</li> <li>• Subjects didn't know they were participating in field research and were later interviewed under the guise of a mental health interviewer</li> </ul>	<p><b>Henrietta Lacks "HeLa Cell Line"</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1951</li> <li>• African-American woman whose cancer cells are the source of the HeLa cell line, the first immortalized human cell line</li> <li>• Went to Johns Hopkins Hospital for a tumor biopsy for cervical cancer</li> <li>• Cells were cultured without her or her family's consent and with no compensation</li> <li>• Family were not made aware of the line's existence until 1975</li> </ul>
<p><b>Consent</b></p>	<p><b>Deception</b></p>	<p><b>Discrimination</b></p>	<p><b>Follow-up Care</b></p>	<p><b>Consent/Deception</b></p>

# Evaluation in Philanthropy

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# Introduction to CREE

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# CREE

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## Culturally Responsive and Equitable Evaluation (CREE)

Culturally responsive and equitable evaluation requires the integration of diversity, inclusion, and equity in all phases of evaluation. CREE incorporates cultural, structural, and contextual factors (e.g., historical, social, economic, racial, ethnic, gender) using a participatory process that shifts power to individuals most impacted.

CREE is not just one method of evaluation — it is an approach that should be infused into all evaluation methodologies. CREE advances equity by informing strategy, program improvement, decision-making, policy formation, and social change.

# 10 CREE Principles

1

Recognize it as social justice

2

Work in diverse cultural, contextual, and complex communities

3

Integrate culturally responsive practices and applications throughout the evaluation cycle

4

Correct the narrative

5

Acknowledge the history

6

Address the disparities

7

Assess, acknowledge, and address your biases

8

Commit to the communities' power, judgement, and input

9

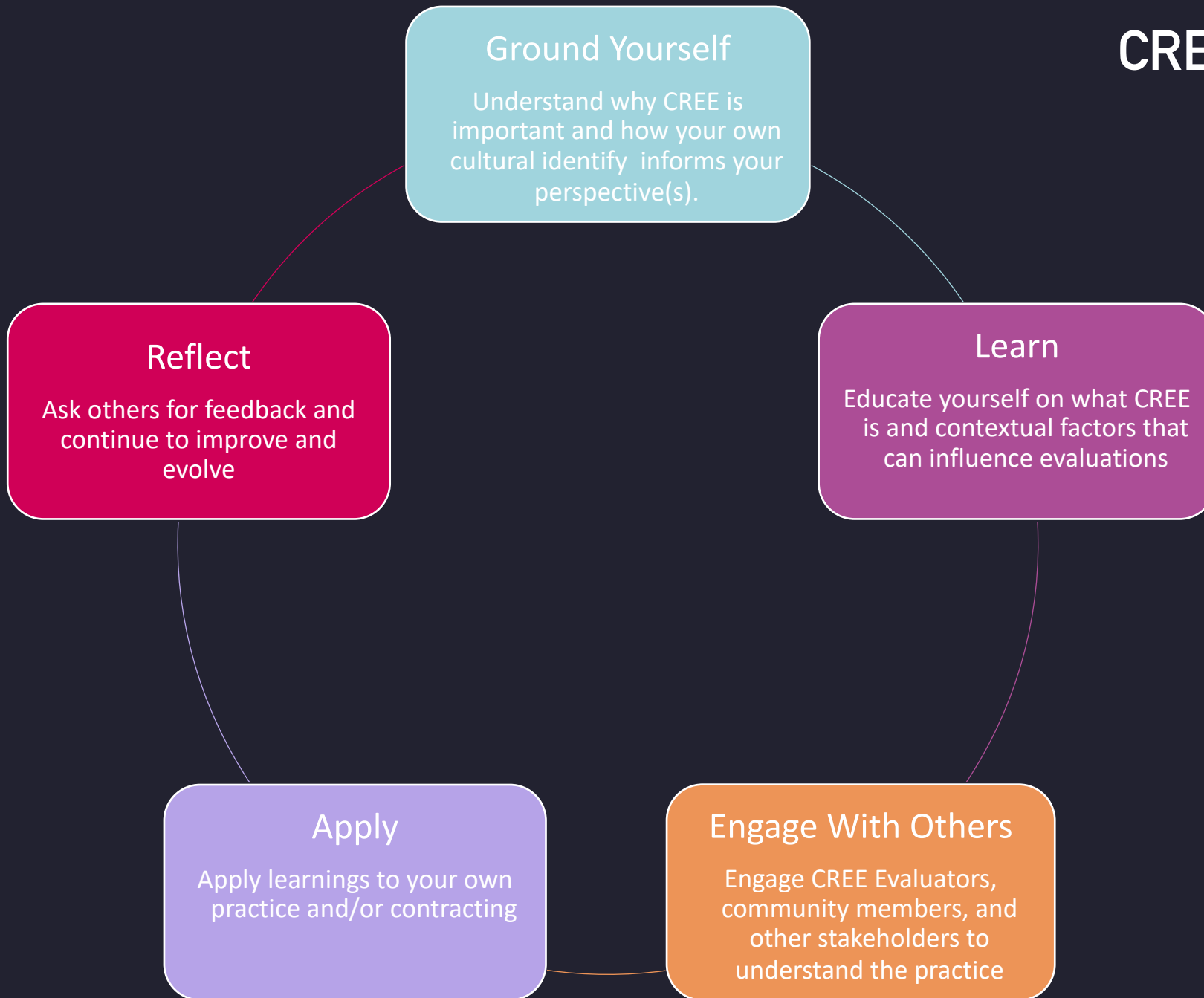
Make equity the foundation

10

Lead courageous conversations and advocate for CREE



# CREE Journey Cycle



# Practicing CREE From Where You Sit

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# Incorporating CREE into Evaluation

## Standard Practice

### Initial Thinking

- When to evaluate?
- Questions/areas of inquiry?
- Scope & Timeline

### Finding an Evaluator

- RFPs
- Consultant selection
- Contracts



## CREE-Informed Practice

### Initial Thinking

- How might your own culture, identity, and professional and lived experiences influence this evaluation?
- Whose experiences are you centering?
- Who is being evaluated and have they participated in previous evaluations?
- Who will be most impacted by this evaluation?

### Finding an Evaluator

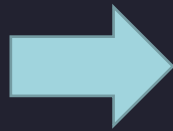
- Who are you hiring? Are they aligned with equity principles?
- Are there cultural considerations that would be beneficial for the evaluator to understand/have experience with?
- Can the evaluator help inform your initial thinking and how to best approach the participants of the evaluation?
- Any past or current evaluation relationships that you can tap into to explore community-centered consultants?

# Incorporating CREE into Evaluation

## Standard Practice

### Evaluation Underway

- Regular tactical meetings
- Develop tools and collect data
- Periodic “bigger picture” check-ins



## CREE-Informed Practice

### Evaluation Underway

- What practices have been put in place to ensure that evaluation participants are able to participate in the evaluation design?
- Are the tools and data collection processes working as intended? Is there any feedback that can be incorporated in real time, especially for any potential harm being done?
- What steps or processes are you taking to protect participants' anonymity, especially for those in smaller communities?
- What learnings are occurring and are you making note of how this might influence future evaluations?
- Have you put a process in place with set expectations for communications so that the consultants have a way to provide constructive feedback to you as the funder?
- How is power showing up in regular tactical meetings and how are you working to disrupt it?

# Incorporating CREE into Evaluation

## Standard Practice

### Making Meaning

- You have the findings, so what?
- Adapting based on what we've learned
- Sharing findings externally



## CREE-Informed Practice

### Making Meaning

- How are participants' wishes around data sovereignty, ownership, attribution, etc. being honored?
- How are you engaging participants and/or their communities to be a part of the analysis and interpretation process (i.e., meaning making)?
- Are data being analyzed in the language(s) and the cultural perspective of the community from which it was originally collected?
- Do you have a plan for sharing findings using participant-centered strategies? Making findings available in an easily digestible way?
- How will you educate or inform the evaluation audience to minimize the risk of stigmatization or the supporting of incorrect narratives re: the evaluation participants and their communities?
- How will you learn from your partners about how they took in and understood the findings, and how they felt participating in the work?

# Setting the Stage for CREE: Practical Exercise

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## Incorporating CREE into Evaluation

- 1) Middle school after school tutoring program designed to increase academic capacity in community. Considering further professional development for tutors from the community who have similar backgrounds to the students to increase enrollment and retention of students.
- 2) Community members could be made to reduce incidence of diabetes? have experienced increase in prevalence of diabetes over the last decade. What changes to the built environment



## Consider the Following Questions in Your Discussion

- What do you want to know about the challenge?
- What do you think the community will want to know the challenge?
- Name the community contextual factors that may influence the use of power and resources.
- How do you envision these learning questions informing your investment strategy or vis versa?
- What information do you need to inform the development of your learning questions? Who will you engage to inform your learning question? How will you engage them?

# Discussion Questions

- Where did you feel discomfort or anticipate pushback to a process that felt equitable?
- How would you respond to that?
- What is the cost of not responding to that pushback or challenge?

# Thank You

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# Resources

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# Incorporating CREE – The Five Project Stages



- What reflexive practices will your team use to understand how your values and experiences may influence the work?
- Who will be impacted by this project?
- Whose experiences are you centering?
- How can your planning team's experience and expertise reflect this and those with lived experience?

- What type of data are you collecting and how is this data being collected?
- Are you using language that is commonly used and understood by those providing the data?
- Who owns and has access to the data?
- How are participants' wishes around data sovereignty, ownership, attribution, etc. being honored?
- How do the data collection methods and locations take into account participants' history, context, and culture, as well as their preferences, comfort, and ease?

- Who is analyzing the data and what theoretical/analytical frameworks, identities or experiences are they bringing to the analysis?
- Are participants and/or their communities included in the analysis and interpretation process (i.e., meaning making)?
- Are data being analyzed in the language(s) and the cultural perspective of the community from which it was originally collected?
- What participatory validation and/or sense-making strategies will you use?

- Do you have a plan for sharing findings using a participant-centered strategies?
- What steps or processes are you taking to protect participants' anonymity, especially for those from smaller communities, when publishing public facing materials?
- How will you educate, or inform "consumers" or frame and contextualize findings to reduce the potential for stigmatization or supporting incorrect narratives about participants and their communities?

- How are you taking stock of what you learned about yourself and your experience with this project to inform your reflexive practice going forward?
- Are you learning from your community partners about how they took in and understood the findings, and how they felt participating in the work?

*\*Incorporating CREE into your project phases can not be done through a check list. Instead, use the pathway above to help guide and identify steps in your CREE process. Not all projects will include all of these phases or follow a distinct path. You must always center the voices of the participants of evaluation.*

**Adapted from the CREE Learning Series Workgroup 2022**

# Resources

- <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=LH826gBZuTU> – a video that outlines how to formulate an evaluation question
- <https://www.equalmeasure.org/fean2021/> - Funder and Evaluator Affinity Network: Changing the way evaluators and funders work together to deepen social impact.
- <https://expandingthebench.org> – Expanding your bench to recruit evaluators from diverse backgrounds as partners in your work.