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**Evaluation Strategy Template**

Approved By [Insert Approver name and title] on [Date]

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## Introduction

This Evaluation Strategy outlines future evaluation activity for Evaluation Strategy Template over the next [XX] years.

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

This evaluation strategy has been prepared by taking into account the strategic importance of the program and the expected level of resourcing for evaluation. Ithas been developed by the *[insert policy/program team names]* in collaboration with the *[insert name of evaluation/audit and assurance branch if applicable, otherwise delete].* The strategy has been endorsed by the [insert title and name of approver (SES Band1 or above)].

As programs may change over time, this should be considered a ‘living document’. This strategy will be reviewed periodicially or in response to significant program events by the policy team.

While this document is intended to inform the evaluation[s] outlined within this strategy, the evaluation itself may deviate from this document based on input from various stakeholders and the evaluative needs at the time of the evaluation.

## Program overview

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

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

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

## Upcoming evaluations

[Delete unnecessary evaluation sections and this text]

### Post-commencement [Add year/s]

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

### Monitoring [Add year/s]

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

### Impact [Add year/s]

Evaluation Strategy Template will have an impact evaluation in [insert year]. [Add reasoning]. This evaluation will assess the impact of the program. It will seek to compare program outcomes with a prediction of what would have happened in absence of the program, it may include a counterfactual or cost benefit analysis [only include this after you have assessed the real possibility of this type of analysis taking place].

## Evaluation preparation

This program has undergone an Evaluation Ready process to prepare it for evaluation [ensure your program has completed this process]. This includes the Program Logic, Data Matrix and this strategy.

### Program logic

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

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

The program logic for the Evaluation Strategy Template is provided at **Error! Reference source not found.**

### Evaluation questions and data matrix

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

To inform the development of evaluation questions, the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science’s (DIIS) Evaluation Unit has developed a framework based on the Department of Finance’s (DoF) Expenditure Review Principles[[1]](#footnote-1) (ERPs) and the “Rossi Steps.”[[2]](#footnote-2) The framework comprises four main focus areas: Design, Efficiency, Outcomes and Impacts, and Lessons Learned.

This framework is recommended by the DIISEconomic and Analytical Services Division’sEvaluation Unit to provide structure to the evaluation questions.

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

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

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

The evaluation questions and data matrix for the Evaluation Strategy Template are provided at **Error! Reference source not found.**

## Implementation

There are [insert number of] internal stakeholder divisions with roles in the implementation of the evaluation plans. These are:

* [Insert stakeholder branch & division names here, each as a separate dot point]
* AusIndustry, Business Services Branch
* [*Delete this dot point if the Evaluation Unit is NOT conducting the evaluation*]Insights and Evaluation Branch, Economic and Analytical Services Division, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science.

Table 1 below outlines broad roles and responsiblitlies for the [evaluation type/s]. Further details will be set out in each evaluation’s plan and Terms of Reference.

### Evaluation roles and responsibilities

[Use this table to outline the broad roles and responsibilities of different areas involved in your evaluation(s). You might include some combination of a policy area, a program area, a consultant and an evaluation area].

Table 1 Evaluation roles and responsibilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Area/Committee | Responsibility  |
| [Program Name] Evaluation Reference Group | * Endorsement of the Terms of Reference and evaluation plan
* Provide feedback on draft findings and recommendations and the draft evaluation report
* Chair of the Reference Group to sign off on the final evaluation report
 |
| Insights and Evaluation Branch | * Provide evaluation guidance and input to evaluation plan
* Draft the evaluation Terms of Reference and evaluation plan for the evaluation
* Conduct, manage, or advise on evaluation activity as required
 |
| Program partner – (eg AusIndustry) | * Provide program data and guidance on program administration and delivery as required
 |
| Policy partner – (Eg Growth Centre Policy) | * Provide data and input as required
 |

[*Delete this paragram if the Evaluation Unit is not managing the evaluation/s*]Each evaluation will be ocerseen by a [Program Name] Reference Group chaired by the GM of the Insights and Evaluation Branch. The Reference Group will include representation by the [Program Name] policy team. Observers of subject matter experts from other area, such as [list any if known], may also be invited to participate as required.

### Budget and resourcing

#### The [Add evaluation type] Evaluation

It is proposed that this evaluation be conducted by [select one: internal evaluators/ external evaluators/ a combination of internal and external evaluators]. [Explain reasoning for this decision.] It is estimated to cost [insert amount], however it is difficult to accurately forecast costs for the evaluation before finalising the scope and approaching the market. In addition, [insert ASL] ASL are expected to be required across the department for [insert duration].

[Repeat above section for each expected evaluation]

## Evaluation methodology

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

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

Methodologies from the evaluations are expected to include: [add/change as necessary]:

* Desktop research: a systematic review of program documents which may include program guidelines, executed grant agreements, program logic, policy papars, and program reporting and procedure manuals. This may also include a review of relevant reports and existing data;
* Literature review: a systematic review of similar programs run in other jurisdictions, reviews or evaluations of similar programs, relevant journal research articles or media reports (with caution), and [*other policy specific sources of information*];
* Semi-structured interviews with a range of stakeholders which may include face-to-face, telephone, or video-conferencing. With permissions, interviews will be audio recorded to enable transcription and improve the accuracy of analysis. Stakeholders to be interviewed will be identified when refining the methodology of each evaluation in consultation with the Reference Group;
* Surveys;
* Business Longitudinal Data Environment (BLADE), see below [*consult with BLADE team before including this line and associated paragraphs below*]
* Case studies of selected projects;

The evaluation will draw on data from [a sample of / all] [grant recipients/program participants].

[*Add further information on methodology as required*]

## Risks

[Use your own Departmental risk framework as appropriate. This should articulate risks or limitations that the evaluation faces, not the risks of the program in general]

[If significant mitigatable risks are identified, the following risk assessment table below may be helpful to provide descriptions and controls; otherwise please delete]

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category**  | **Description**  | **Consequence**  | **Analysis** | **Current control** |
| Likelihood | Consequence | Risk Rating  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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

(If appropriate: All risks are rated as either medium or minor and on this basis, they are accepted. The risks will be managed by routine procedures and regular monitoring to ensure that the risks are managed effectively and controls are reliable.)

## Appendices

[Other potentially useful appendices to consider adding]:

* Explanation of program governance
* Examples of admin data extracts

### Appendix 1: Program Logic – [insert Program Name]

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### Appendix 2: Data Matrix – [insert Program Name]

1. Department of Finance (2013), *Expenditure Review Principles* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman (2004), Evaluation: A systematic approach (7th edition), SAGE, California [↑](#footnote-ref-2)