



INDIGENOUS EVALUATION COMMITTEE

MEETING COMMUNIQUÉ, 11 DECEMBER 2023

The IEC met in Canberra on Monday 11 December 2023 and welcomed several new members following the resignation of outgoing IEC member Ms Nattle Smith. The IEC now has two new independent members — Associate Professor Michelle Dickson and Mr Tony Keissler — and an *ex-officio* member from The Treasury, Dr Shane Johnson. IEC member Dr Fiona Cram participated online from New Zealand. Ms Deborah Fulton represented the NIAA as the *ex-officio* member in her capacity as Acting Deputy CEO, Policy and Programs.

Key discussion points

- The NIAA is currently developing a Priority Setting Framework for program delivery across seven sectors and will share accompanying Performance Monitoring and Evaluation plans with the IEC for comment in early 2024. The plans are intended to support pipeline planning for evaluation.
- The IEC discussed its role in the context of NIAA's priorities and the role of the Australian Centre for Evaluation (ACE). Dr Johnson from the ACE spoke about the need for a whole-of-government approach to evaluation of programs for First Nations peoples. IEC members suggested the committee's role could include:
 - Assisting in the coordination of issues across evaluations.
 - Advising on how to best partner with communities.
 - Building capacity in NIAA through leveraging off training programs and workshops on Indigenous evaluation methodologies.
 - Working with the NIAA to influence other agencies' evaluation work.
 - Exploring the potential for evaluation innovation and embedding a community voice in evaluation from the beginning, particularly around traditional decision making methodologies.
- The IEC discussed the timing and who would review future evaluations on the IEC forward work plan.
- The Committee discussed how procurement processes, contract management and staff evaluation skills have impacted on evaluation outcomes.
- The Committee discussed the opportunities for building capability of Indigenous evaluators. Including:
 - The need for participatory evaluation perspectives and creating a space for a community of practice with mentoring for evaluation staff.
 - The importance of partnering with communities. NIAA could consider developing a reference group to provide early guidance on how to approach evaluation in a community and to identify what a community is curious about as a starting point in working with community and then what a community wants in an evaluation methodology.
 - To develop capability there is a need to teach methodology in an Indigenous context, to demonstrate the need to partner early and continue to build on the partnership during the evaluation, and to identify who to partner with in a community.

Next meeting

The IEC's next meeting will be held in Canberra in March 2024.

Mr Jason Ardlar

IEC Chair