



Indigenous Evaluation Committee

Terms of Reference

Role of the Indigenous Evaluation Committee

The Indigenous Evaluation Committee (the Committee) will support transparency, accountability and working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with regard to evaluation and learning in the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) and across government. The Committee's primary objective will be to strengthen the quality, credibility and influence of evaluations relating to policies and programs led by the NIAA through the provision of independent strategic and technical advice. The Committee will also provide advice on broader implications for NIAA's program performance reporting activities and leading and influencing change across government.

Responsibilities and tasks

The Committee will:

- oversee the implementation of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) Evaluation Framework;
- provide advice to the NIAA on evaluation priorities;
- provide technical advice and guidance for the NIAA's evaluations to ensure they are high quality, ethical, and inclusive in line with the NIAA's vision;
- provide technical advice to the NIAA on its program performance reporting activities
- foster leadership and bring the perspectives of Indigenous Australians into evaluation processes; and
- participate in meetings and events to help promote the IAS Evaluation Framework and continual improvements in evaluation;
- provide advice and guidance to support the NIAA to lead and influence change in evaluation planning and practice across government, to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a say in the decisions that affect them.

The IEC Chair will approve if an IEC member is engaged to provide evaluation advice to other departments.

NIAA will provide Secretariat services for the Committee, including coordinating and drafting papers for the Committee and preparing minutes of Committee meetings.

The Committee will meet three times a year in Canberra and/or through telephone/video conference as required by the Chair. It may also consider documents out-of-session at the request of the Chair.

Membership

The Committee will be comprised of at least three and no more than five external members (including the Chair) and a NIAA Deputy Chief Executive Officer. Members may be based domestically or internationally.

External members will be appointed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the NIAA for a three-year term. Members may be reappointed for additional terms.

The Indigenous Productivity Commissioner and a representative from the Australian Centre of Evaluation may attend meetings at the invitation of the Chair.



Accountability mechanisms

The Committee reports through the Chair to the CEO of NIAA. Committee members will assist the Chair to carry out the responsibilities and tasks listed and will be available to meet as scheduled.

Conflicts of interest

All Committee members must declare any actual, possible or perceived conflicts of interest in writing. NIAA will provide Committee members with a Conflict of Interest declaration to complete and return prior to their first meeting. All Committee members must declare their outside interests (actual or perceived) at the commencement of each meeting and as they arise out of session. Members must absent themselves from any discussions and judgments that involve activities of any individual, external consulting firm, or other organisation in which they have a financial or personal interest. All Committee members must have a sound understanding of the Australian Public Service (APS) values, set out in section 10 of the Public Service Act 1999.

Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles

Under the Commonwealth Grant Rules and Principles (CGRPs), external Committee members are recognised as ‘third parties’ involved in the grants administration process on behalf of the Commonwealth. Members must adhere to the key principles and applicable requirements of the CGRPs when undertaking their advisory role as a third party to NIAA’s grants administration process.

Background and context

On 1 July 2019, the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) was established as a separate entity to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The IAS Evaluation Framework, released in February 2018 moved to NIAA to guide evaluation of programs and activities under the IAS. The Evaluation Framework aims to:

- generate high quality evidence that is used to inform decision making;
- strengthen Indigenous leadership in evaluation;
- build capability by fostering a collaborative culture of evaluative thinking and continuous learning;
- emphasise collaboration and ethical ways of doing high quality evaluation at the forefront of evaluation practice in order to inform decision making; and
- promote dialogue and deliberation to further develop the maturity of evaluation over time.

The Evaluation Framework is principles-based and is intended to generate and use evidence of how activities funded under the IAS translate to improved outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

The NIAA’s vision and purpose applies beyond evaluations conducted under the IAS. The NIAA also leads and influences change across government (for example, to support the National Agreement on Closing the Gap).

