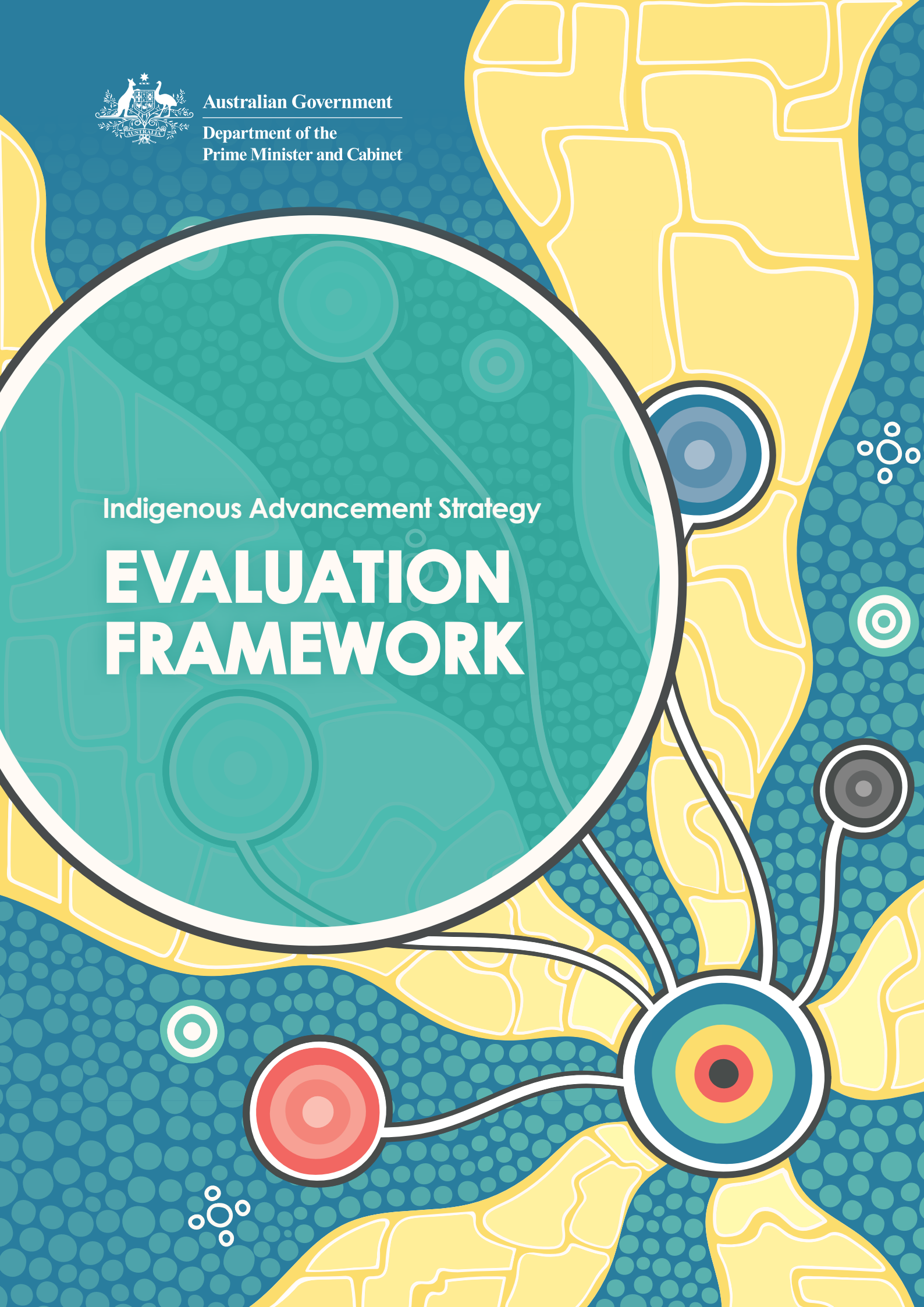




Australian Government  
Department of the  
Prime Minister and Cabinet

Indigenous Advancement Strategy

# EVALUATION FRAMEWORK



# Indigenous Advancement Strategy Evaluation Framework

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## Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of respect and reconciliation, the authors acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional custodians of this country, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia, and their continuing connection to land, waters, sea and community.

# CONTENTS

- [SCOPE](#) 2
- [PURPOSE](#) 3
- [GENERATING EVIDENCE](#) 4
- [A PRINCIPLES-BASED FRAMEWORK](#) 6
  - [Core Values](#) 6
  - [Best practice principles](#) 6
- [RELEVANT: USE OF EVALUATION](#) 8
- [ROBUST: IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EVIDENCE](#) 9
- [CREDIBLE: GOVERNANCE & ETHICS](#) 10
- [APPROPRIATE: TIMELY & FIT FOR PURPOSE](#) 11
- [OUR COMMITMENT TO TRANSPARENCY](#) 12
- [BUILDING A CULTURE OF EVALUATIVE THINKING](#) 13
- [NEXT STEPS](#) 14
- [GLOSSARY](#) 15
- [REFERENCES](#) 16
- [THE ARTWORK](#) 17



# SCOPE

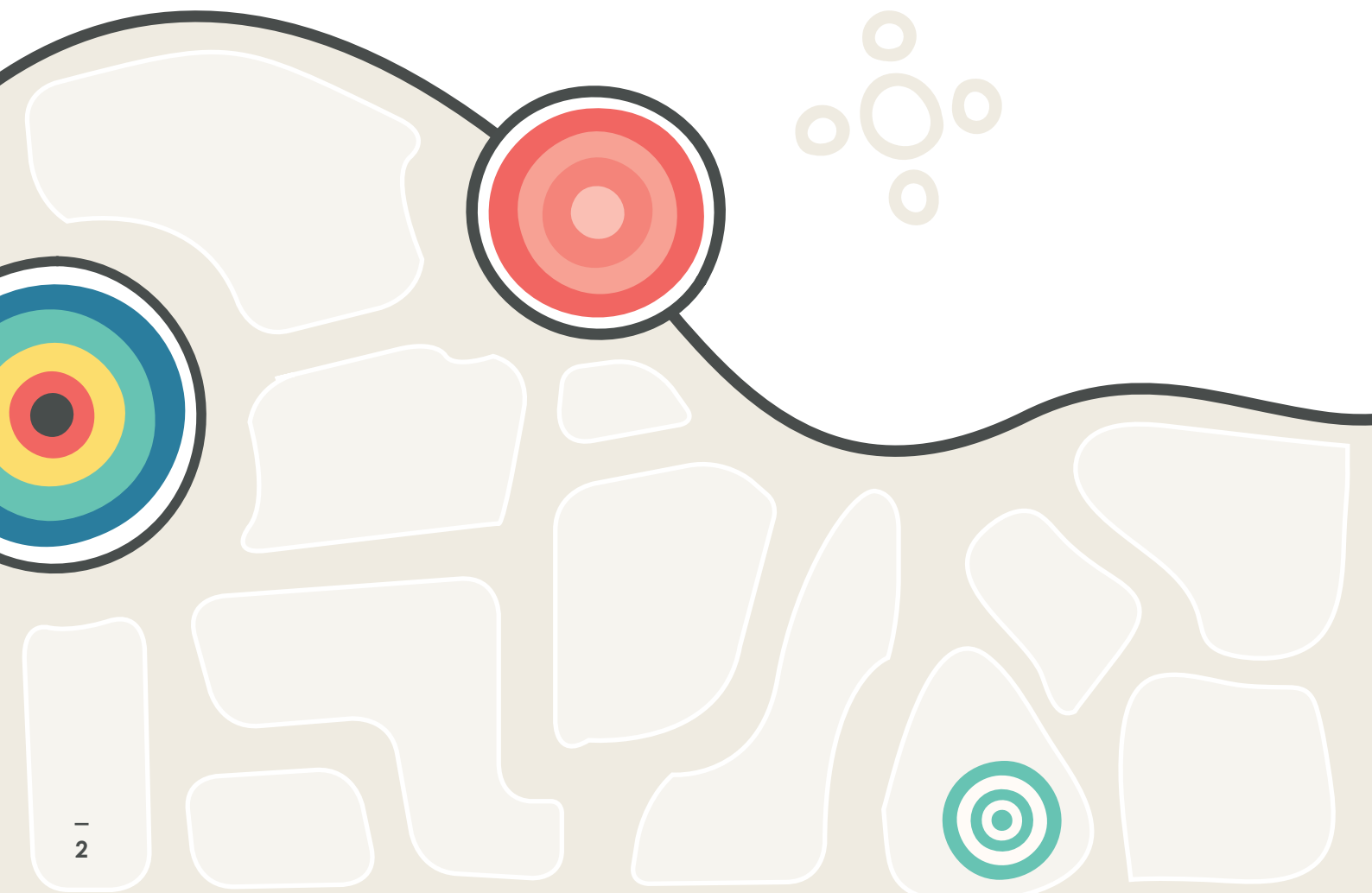
This Evaluation Framework is a guide for evaluation of programs and activities under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS), delivered by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC). The Evaluation Framework is intended to align with the wider role of the Productivity Commission in overseeing the development and implementation of a whole of government evaluation strategy of policies and programs that effect Indigenous Australians.<sup>1</sup>

This Evaluation Framework guides the conduct and development of a stronger approach to evaluation. The goals of this Framework are 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples represent diverse cultural identities, this document uses the term Indigenous Australians for consistency with the IAS policy context.



# PURPOSE

The Evaluation Framework is designed to ensure that evaluation is high quality, ethical, inclusive and focused on improving outcomes for Indigenous Australians. This recognises that where evaluation is of high quality it is more likely to be used. It aims to pursue consistent standards of evaluation of IAS programs but not impose a 'one-size-fits-all' model of evaluation.

The core values at the heart of this Framework drive fundamental questions about how well IAS programs and activities build on strengths to make a positive contribution to the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and inform our policies and programs.

The Framework sets out best practice principles that call for evaluations to be relevant, robust, appropriate and credible. High quality evaluation should be integrated into the cycles of policy and community decision-making. This should be collaborative, timely and culturally inclusive.

Our approach to evaluation reflects a strong commitment to working with Indigenous Australians. Driven by the core values of the Framework, our collaborative efforts centre on recognising the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and cultures.

Fostering leadership and bringing the diverse perspectives of Indigenous Australians into evaluation processes helps ensure the relevance, credibility and usefulness of evaluation findings. In evaluation, this means we value the involvement of Indigenous Australian evaluators in conducting all forms of evaluation, particularly using participatory methods that grow our mutual understanding.

Performance monitoring, review and evaluation are critical parts of the policy process. They provide assurance that programs and activities are delivering outcomes as intended, help inform future policy design and support decision-making by government and communities. This Evaluation Framework builds on existing approaches to performance and evaluation under the IAS and supports PMC's commitment to performance measurement as required under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (PGPA) Act 2013*.



# GENERATING EVIDENCE

## Evaluation

Evaluation is the practice of systematic measurement of the significance, merit and worth of policies and programs, undertaken to understand and improve decisions about investment. It involves the assessment of outcomes and operations of programs or policy compared to expectations, in order to make improvements (Weiss 1998).

We apply this definition of evaluation as systematic assessment that supports Indigenous Australians, communities and government to understand what is working, or what is not working, and why. To do this the Framework requires evaluations to assess programs and activities against a set of core values. These values are intended to help

support IAS evaluations to take into account the importance of values and aspirations held by Indigenous Australians.

Systematic assessment uses formal **evaluation logic**. This in-depth reasoning aims to provide credible and defensible evidence, which is used to inform decisions and highlight important lessons.

Good evaluation is planned from the start, and provides feedback along the way (ANAO 2014). Good evaluation is systematic, defensible, credible and unbiased. It is respectful of diverse voices and world views. To do this the Framework requires all evaluations under the IAS to build in appropriate processes for collaborating with Indigenous Australians.

Evaluation is the systematic collection and analysis of information about program activities, characteristics, and outcomes to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future programming.

Performance audit is a process that examines an organisation's activities or programs against established criteria to determine whether it is carrying them out with due regard to economy, efficiency, and environmental impact, and whether it has measures in place to determine how effective they are.

Quality improvement is a management process and set of tools and techniques designed to improve internal processes, practices, costs or productivity for a specific intervention.

Research is the systematic collection of data designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.

Performance measurement is a continuous process of collecting and analysing data to compare how well a project, program, or policy is being implemented against expected results.

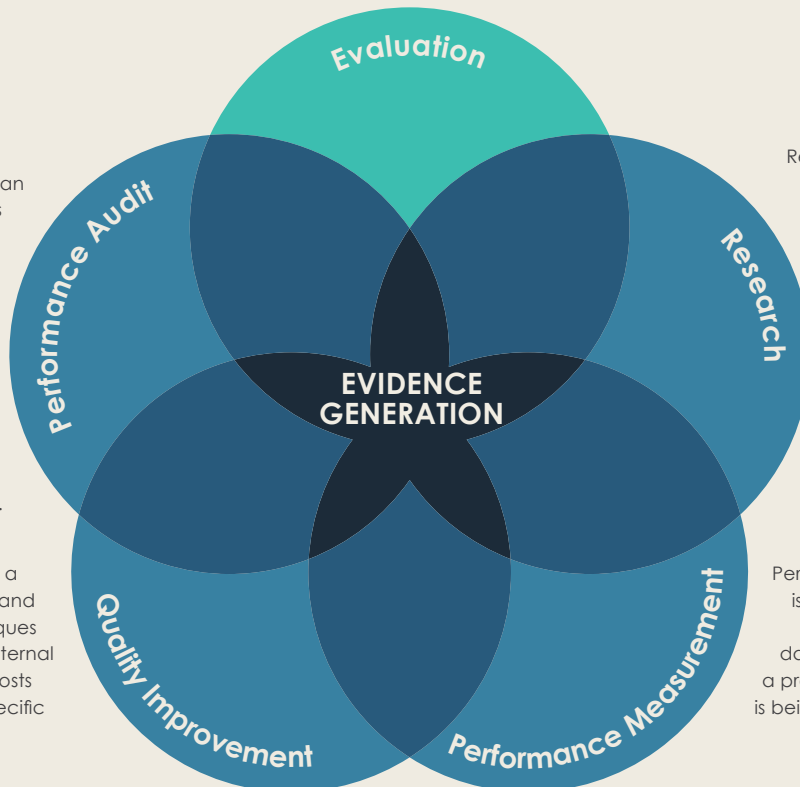


Figure 1: Different types of evidence inform evaluation practice (Lovato & Hutchinson 2017)

Evaluation is distinct from but related to monitoring and performance reviews. Evaluation may use data gathered in monitoring as one source of evidence, while information obtained through monitoring and performance reviews may help inform evaluation priorities (see Figure 1).

The Evaluation Framework supports an impact-oriented monitoring and evaluation system, intended to generate and use evidence of the links between funded activities under the IAS and how these translate to improved outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

The Evaluation Framework focuses effort on delivering high quality, robust evaluations determined through a prioritisation process, which prioritises understanding impact.

## Monitoring

Monitoring is the regular and continuous review of grant activities and provides useful insights into operational effectiveness and efficiency of funded activities. Monitoring and grant activity reviews are core business and should feed into continuous quality improvement cycles.

Monitoring and evaluation in PMC is guided by the performance reporting requirements under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (PGPA) Act 2013*. Monitoring and evaluation systems have complementary roles and purposes in evidence generation (see Figure 1).

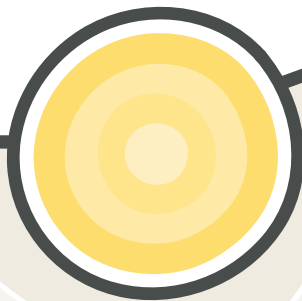
Performance is described as the extent to which an activity achieves its intended purpose. In making this assessment, it is important to establish a shared understanding of the purpose of an activity and how it is intended to work. A commitment to working collaboratively is essential in the Indigenous Affairs context.

Developing a logic model or theory of change can help to clarify purpose and determine what information is needed to assess performance. Without a sound understanding of purpose, it will not be possible to determine what results and impacts have been achieved.

Orienting monitoring and evaluation towards impact shifts the focus from outputs and indicators towards impact related questions. This shift provides timely data to guide adaptive management; and it supports collective sense-making of data (Peersman et al. 2016).

A Performance Framework complements the Evaluation Framework, by covering the monitoring components of the system. The Performance Framework guides the collection and reporting of routinely collected key performance indicators that are linked to the objectives of the IAS. It covers monitoring of all IAS grants. The Performance Framework also covers targeted grant activity reviews, designed to support continual quality improvement in service delivery.

Together, the Evaluation Framework and Performance Framework operate in tandem, to guide the conduct of monitoring and evaluation of the IAS.



# A PRINCIPLES-BASED FRAMEWORK

This Framework outlines standards to guide a consistent approach to all evaluation activity.

Our standards include a set of core values and best practice principles, which aim to ensure evaluation is high quality and therefore of use in cycles of policy and community decision-making.

## Core Values

Central to the Evaluation Framework is a commitment to working collaboratively; recognising the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and cultures are integral to evaluation in the Indigenous Affairs policy context.

All evaluations of IAS programs and activity will address three core values. The values provide a consistent reference point about appropriateness, which help decision-makers better understand the merit, worth and significance of policies and programs across the IAS. All evaluations will test the extent to which IAS programs and activities:

- build on strengths to make a positive contribution to the lives of current and future generations of Indigenous Australians
- are designed and delivered in collaboration with Indigenous Australians, ensuring diverse voices are heard and respected, and
- demonstrate cultural respect towards Indigenous Australians.

These core values reflect the significant role of the strengths of Indigenous people in generating effective policy and programs.

The core values guide central evaluation questions for all evaluations, and are the foundation for the best practice principles and streams of activity of this Framework.

## Best practice principles

The core values are central to all work undertaken under the Framework. All evaluations are guided by a set of best practice principles (detailed in Table 1). The principles are grouped under four broad criteria: relevant, robust, credible and appropriate. They provide a benchmark to aspire towards, and are a gauge for assessing the performance of the Framework itself. Reviewing effort under the Framework against the best practice principles creates feedback loops for continual learning and adaptation. The principles also inform the streams of activity: collaboration, capability and knowledge (Figure 2).

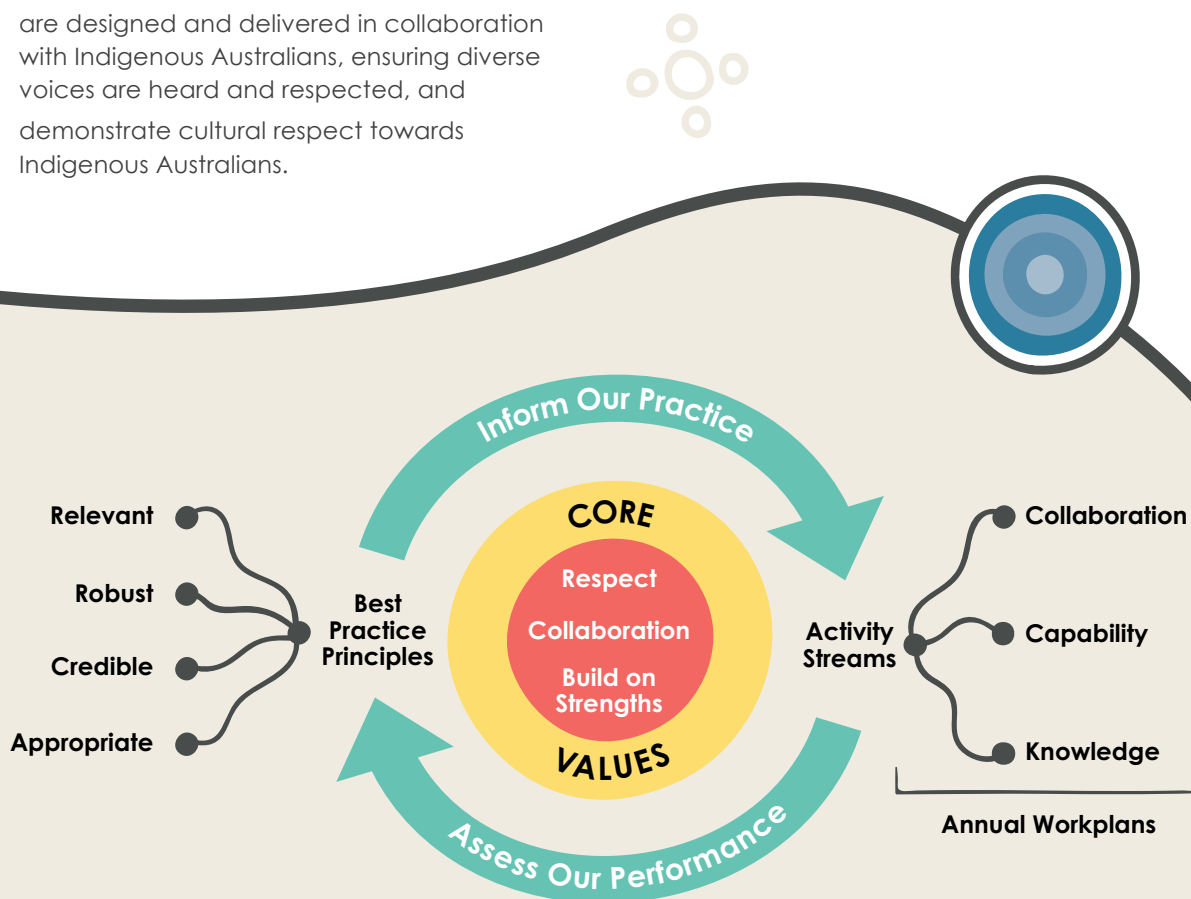


Figure 2: Core values and best practice principles guide activities of the Framework

**TABLE 1: Best Practice Evaluation Principles**

CRITERIA	PRINCIPLES	
<b>Relevant</b>	<b>Integrated</b>	<p>Evaluation supports learning, evidence-based decision-making and improvements in service delivery; it is not a compliance activity</p> <p>Evaluation planning is undertaken at the outset when policy and programs are designed</p> <p>Findings from past evaluations inform policy decisions</p>
	<b>Respectful</b>	<p>Collaborative approaches are strengths-based, build partnerships and demonstrate cultural respect towards Indigenous Australians</p> <p>Evaluation integrates diverse Indigenous perspectives with the core values to ensure findings are meaningful, relevant and useful to Indigenous communities and government</p>
<b>Robust</b>	<b>Evidence-based</b>	<p>Robust evaluation methodologies and analytical methods are used to understand the effects of programs in real-world settings and inform program design and implementation</p> <p>Appropriate data is collected to support evaluation</p>
	<b>Impact focused</b>	<p>Evaluation is focused on examining the impact of IAS investment</p> <p>Evaluations rigorously test the causal explanations that make programs viable and effective across different community and organisational settings</p>
<b>Credible</b>	<b>Transparent</b>	<p>Evaluation reports (or summaries) will be made publicly available through appropriate, ethical and collaborative consent processes</p>
	<b>Independent</b>	<p>Evaluation governance bodies have some independence from the responsible policy and program areas</p> <p>Evaluators, while working with suppliers, and policy and program areas, will have some independence</p>
	<b>Ethical</b>	<p>Ethical practice meets the highest standards for respectful involvement of Indigenous Australians in evaluation</p>
<b>Appropriate</b>	<b>Timely</b>	<p>Evaluation planning is guided by the timing of critical decisions to ensure specific and sufficient bodies of evidence are available when needed</p>
	<b>Fit-for-Purpose</b>	<p>Evaluation design is appropriate to Indigenous values and considers place, program lifecycle, feasibility, data availability and value for money</p> <p>Evaluation is responsive to place and is appropriate to the Indigenous communities in which programs are implemented</p> <p>The scale of effort and resources devoted to evaluation is proportional to the potential significance, contribution or risk of the program/activity</p>

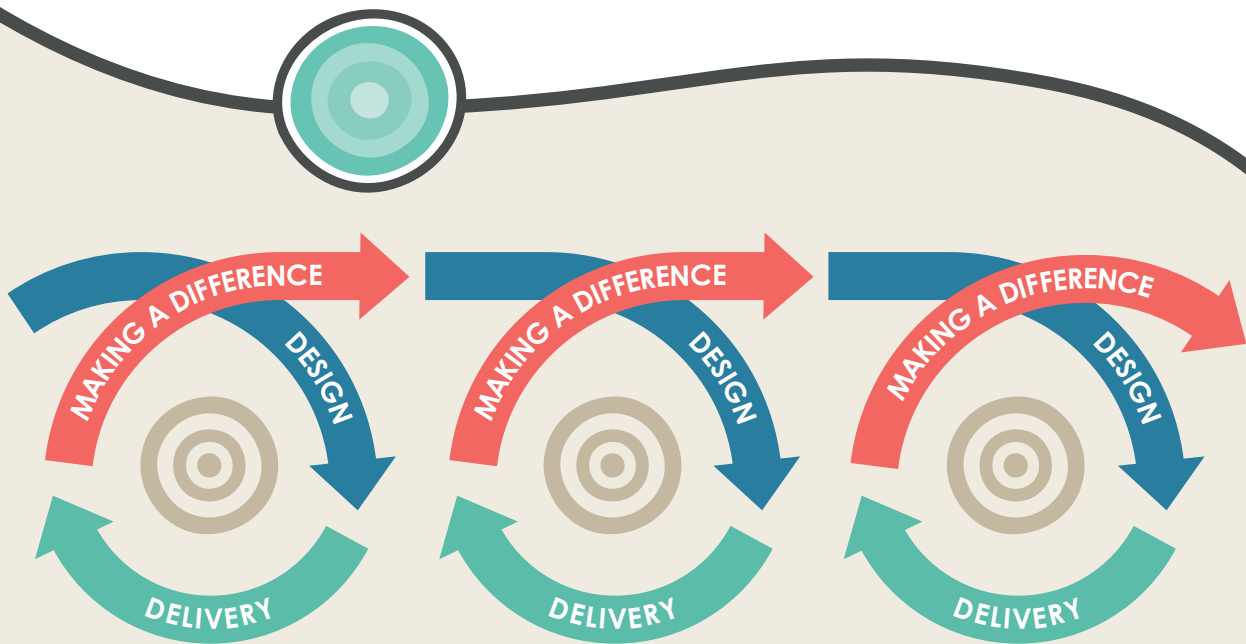
# RELEVANT: USE OF EVALUATION

High quality, systematic evaluation is critical to policy processes and community decision-making. Evidence helps inform policy and program design and supports decision-making by government and communities, to achieve better outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

Good evaluation design needs to be planned at the start of policy or program development. Relevant data must be identified. Systems need to be in place to collect and store data. Evaluation can be conducted throughout program delivery to support continuous improvement. Addressing complex, interconnected problems often requires adaptive solutions and interactive feedback cycles. Findings need to be shared throughout the evaluation process to help inform decisions about future policies and programs, growing the body of knowledge about what is helpful, useful and effective.

Evaluation needs to be integrated into the feedback cycles of policy, program design and evidence-informed decision-making. Evaluation feedback cycles can provide insights to service providers and communities to enhance the evidence available to support positive change. To increase accountability and learning, this can occur at many points in the cycle (Figure 3).

Evaluation activities under the Framework must be respectful of Indigenous Australians and integrated to generate timely and relevant evidence for decision-making. Respect towards Indigenous Australians that recognises Indigenous values and diversity of perspectives is fundamental. High quality evaluation incorporates Indigenous perspectives in refining knowledge about outcomes and in broader framing of the definitions of program success. Credible evaluations, underpinned by ethical practice, generate high quality evidence that can be used for policy and program design into the future.



<b>DESIGN</b>	Evidence from prior evaluations informs policy & program design	Program logic informs program planning	Evaluation questions are developed with Indigenous Australians
<b>DELIVERY</b>	Systems are in place for relevant, robust & credible data collection	All IAS grants are monitored and information used to improve quality	Evaluation findings are useful to communities, organisations & services
<b>MAKING A DIFFERENCE</b>	Evaluations are published & findings shared	Evaluation supports learning	Evaluation is used for decision-making

Figure 3: Monitoring and evaluation in policy and feedback cycles

# ROBUST: IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EVIDENCE

High quality, systematic evaluation is critical to the policy process and community decision-making. Evidence helps inform policy and program design and supports decision-making by government and communities, in order to achieve better outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

The Evaluation Framework has an explicit focus on **impact evaluation** and strategic **cross-cutting evaluations**. This focus is appropriate to the evaluation needs of the IAS. Evaluations under the Framework need to be timely and consider outcomes for communities where place-based initiatives are emphasised, as well as the impacts of policies and programs that are implemented Australia-wide. This has similarities to the strategic approach adopted international aid and development effectiveness (DFAT 2016).

Different understandings of impact evaluation exist (Hearn & Buffardi 2016). We purposefully do not narrowly define impact, because evaluations under the Framework must be fit-for-purpose. In practice this means we will not shy away from rigorous approaches to measuring the efficacy of 'what works', but that we will not impose a 'one-size-fits-all' model of evaluation.

A range of evaluation methodologies can be used to undertake impact evaluation. Evaluations under the Framework will range in scope, scale, and in the kinds of questions they ask. Measuring long-term impact is challenging but important. We need to identify markers of progress that are linked by evidence to the desired outcomes.

The quality of data and evidence can also be improved if the focus of the evaluation is selected in order to provide the best fit with the evaluation purpose. This involves considering options, such as, a whole of program focus, groups of similar activities, or place-based or people-centred evaluation designs.

The transferability of evaluation findings are critical to ensure relevant and useful knowledge is generated under the Framework. High quality impact evaluations use appropriate methods and draw upon a range of data sources both qualitative and quantitative.

Evaluation design should utilise methodologies that produce rigorous evidence, including **participatory methods**. Use of participatory approaches to evaluation is one example of demonstrating the core values of the Framework in practice.



# CREDIBLE: GOVERNANCE & ETHICS

The Evaluation Framework is designed to ensure evidence generated by evaluations is credible through demonstrating appropriate levels of independence.

Clear governance is necessary to guide roles and responsibilities within PMC. These roles include prioritising evaluation effort, ensuring the quality of evaluations, assessing progress in achieving the goals of the Framework, supporting the use of evaluation, and building evaluation capability and capacity.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Executive Board

The PMC Executive Board will approve the Annual Evaluation Work Plan and review progress reports.

The Minister for Indigenous Affairs will be informed of the Annual Evaluation Work Plan and will receive progress reports against it.

### Indigenous Evaluation Committee

This independent external committee will ensure the conduct and prioritisation of evaluations is independent and impartial and support transparency and openness in the implementation of the Framework.

The Committee:

- oversees the implementation of the Framework
- endorses the Annual Evaluation Work Plan, and
- provides ongoing advice, guidance, quality assurance and review.

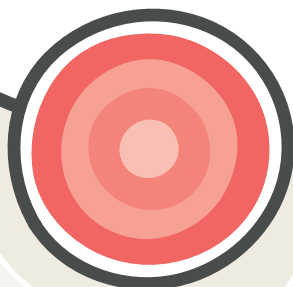
### Information and Evaluation Branch

The Evaluation Framework is led by the Information and Evaluation Branch in the Indigenous Affairs Group of PMC. This Branch also leads the development of the Annual Evaluation Work Plan, is responsible for strategic evaluations, provides guidance and support for program evaluations, and supports evaluation capability and capacity building.

### Ethical evaluations

All evaluations under the Framework are subject to ethical review. Evaluators will continue to seek guidance from relevant ethics committees. To ensure the highest standards for ethical research are met, evaluation strategies will be informed by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies' Guidelines for Ethical Research (AIATSIS 2012). This guidance aims to support the pursuit of high quality evaluation by recommending a process of meaningful engagement and reciprocity with the individuals and/or communities involved in the research. This includes the protection of privacy and assurances of confidentiality ensured through ethics protocols.

The core values of the Evaluation Framework will provide a reference point for the development of evaluation questions and evaluation methodology that is consistent with ethical requirements.



# APPROPRIATE: TIMELY & FIT FOR PURPOSE

Evaluation activity under the Framework must be timely and fit-for-purpose. High quality evaluations under the Framework will be selected in order to inform decisions within the policy/program feedback cycle and will adopt appropriate evaluative methodology.

Evaluation efforts will be prioritised, recognising that it is not possible nor desirable to evaluate all activities funded by the Department. Sometimes monitoring is sufficient. Evaluation activities will be published in an annual evaluation work plan and will reflect feedback cycles in policy and program delivery. The annual work plan will be reviewed and endorsed by the independent Indigenous Evaluation Committee and approved by the PMC Executive Board.

## Prioritising Effort

Prioritisation will consider significance, contribution and risk. Significant, high risk programs/activities will be subject to comprehensive independent evaluation. While evaluation priorities will be identified over four years, priority areas remain flexible in order to respond to changing circumstances.

<b>Significance</b>	Size and reach of the program or activity, emphasising what matters to Indigenous Australians as well as policy makers
<b>Contribution</b>	Strategic need, potential contribution and importance of evidence in relation to the policy cycle
<b>'Policy risk' level</b>	Indicated by gaps in the evidence base, and assessments from past evaluations or reviews of the program or activity

## Responsive Design and Practice

Evaluation of IAS programs and activities needs to ensure that Indigenous people, communities and organisations are appropriately involved in evaluation processes. Evaluation should be undertaken in a way that delivers evidence suitable for its intended use, as well as building knowledge for future reference.

In order to meet ethical standards (AIATSIS 2012), evaluation should also be responsive to place and appropriate to the Indigenous communities in which the programs and policies are implemented. Evaluation design needs to be appropriate to the circumstances of Indigenous communities. Choice of methods needs to balance several constraints, and should consider the timing of data collection to fit with the program lifecycle, the feasibility of methods in particular contexts, the availability of existing data, and value for money.



# OUR COMMITMENT TO TRANSPARENCY

## Assessing progress of the Framework

Improving transparency helps drive continual improvements in evaluation and increases its use (ANAO 2014).

The Indigenous Evaluation Committee will review all high priority evaluations undertaken by Information and Evaluation Branch. These reviews will be published with the evaluations.

An annual evaluation report will include a summary of reviews of other IAS evaluations. These reviews will be undertaken by the Information and Evaluation Branch with evaluations subject to review selected at random.

At the three year mark an independent meta-review of IAS evaluations will be undertaken to assess the extent to which the Framework has achieved its aims for greater capability, integration and use of robust evaluation evidence against the standards described under each of the best practice principles.

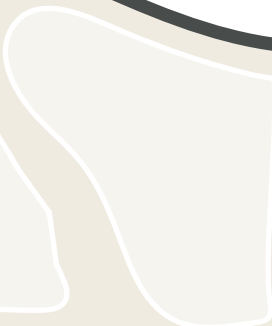
## Improving transparency to support the use of evaluations

Sharing evaluations helps inform design, delivery and decision-making. Under the Framework, all evaluation reports or summaries will be made publically available. In cases where ethical confidentiality concerns or commercial in confidence requirements trigger a restricted release, summaries of the findings will be published in lieu of a full report.

Evaluation findings will be of interest to communities and service providers implementing programs as well as government decision-makers. Evaluation activities under the Framework will be designed to support service providers in gaining feedback about innovative approaches to program implementation and practical strategies for achieving positive outcomes across a range of community settings. In line with ethical evaluation practice, communities who have participated in evaluations will have results provided to support feedback-loops in evaluation use.

Additional approaches to making evaluation findings available will be considered as part of knowledge translation to ensure the ongoing use of evaluation evidence by people, communities and policy makers.

Within PMC, senior management will provide responses to evaluations following completion, and identified actions will be followed up and recorded by the Information and Evaluation Branch.



# BUILDING A CULTURE OF EVALUATIVE THINKING

To move towards best practices in evaluation, the Framework will implement three concurrent streams of complementary activities to support continual learning and development covering: collaboration, capability and knowledge. Activities are detailed in Table 2.

A key part of building a culture of evaluative thinking through these activities will be dialogue and deliberation about best practice in evaluation to support development of the maturity of evaluation over time.

## Collaboration

Recognising the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and cultures, working collaboratively will be an integral part of evaluation activity under the Framework.

Collaboration across different areas of expertise will contribute to solving complex problems.

This means seeking and including the expertise of Indigenous Australians, service providers and academics. The Collaboration Stream of the Framework will establish, negotiate and nurture a range of partnerships and engagement processes.

## Capability

In order to deliver high quality evaluations under the Framework, effort towards building evaluation capability is critical to enhancing use in policy development. High quality evaluations will assess policies/programs against the core values. Implementation of high quality evaluations must be aligned with the best practice principles.

The Framework is not a 'how to' guide to evaluating policies and programs. The Framework promotes a systems approach to building evaluation capability and seeks to build an environment of continuous improvement.

Resource materials will support and encourage PMC staff, as well as service providers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to do and use evaluation in line with the core values and principles.

## Knowledge

Growing the body of credible knowledge available to policy making processes needs to be based on rigorous evidence. Evaluation design should integrate community values, knowledge and perspectives to ensure findings are useful, credible and helpful (Grey et al. 2016). Knowledge generated by evaluations should be shared, transferable and clearly outline the underlying assumptions of a program and how it is expected to influence changes in outcomes.

Knowledge translation will provide evidence of learning and integration of evaluation towards improvement. This will include generating and sharing transferable knowledge about impacts and interdependencies in policy and program design and implementation. This spans the need for information to support program delivery practice to be useful to place-based approaches; or overarching policy development.



**TABLE 2: Activity Streams of the Framework**

STREAM	ACTIVITIES
<b>Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing an Indigenous Evaluation Committee</li> <li>• Building a range of partnerships with communities and Indigenous organisations to undertake co-design, particularly in place-based evaluations</li> <li>• Growing evaluation communities of practice to include diverse perspectives and bring Indigenous Australians and evaluation experts together</li> <li>• Discussion of emerging issues in evaluation, including Indigenous leadership, data governance, the focus of study design, and integration of Indigenous values</li> </ul>
<b>Capability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting an agenda to build capability, including a culture of integrated evaluative thinking and continuous learning</li> <li>• Adopting innovative approaches to ensure more Indigenous Australians are involved in high quality impact evaluations</li> <li>• Supporting the use of evidence, by encouraging innovation in adaptive practice. This may take the form of coaching to support community-based continuous quality improvement processes</li> <li>• Supporting integration of evaluation planning into the design of policy and programs</li> <li>• Developing an online evaluation handbook complemented by internal support materials</li> <li>• Building systems for using, organising, retaining and applying information and data</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating community values, knowledge and perspectives into evaluation design to ensure evaluation conduct is respectful and findings are useful, credible and helpful</li> <li>• Developing annual evaluation work plans to prioritise evaluation activity</li> <li>• Undertaking quality reviews of individual evaluation projects, focusing on priority impact evaluation</li> <li>• Requiring senior management to provide responses to all evaluations following an evaluation being completed, and following up on agreed actions</li> <li>• Improving publication and communication of evaluations</li> <li>• Publishing reviews of high priority evaluations online</li> <li>• Developing knowledge translation strategies targeting the various contexts in which evaluation findings are used, such as improving use of evidence by Indigenous communities, service delivery and community organisations</li> </ul>

## NEXT STEPS

Consultation about this Evaluation Framework shows that there are a range of issues which should be discussed in the development and implementation of the approach to evaluation under the IAS. It will be important to deliberate about these issues through a range of collaboration activities. Review is built into the Framework and ongoing dialogue will support maturation of our approach to evaluation.

# GLOSSARY

**Criteria of merit** – Level of excellence tied to accepted standards.

**Cross-cutting** – Themes identified in the annual work plans that function as lenses through which evaluation may examine the interconnections across and within activities and systems. These are critical considerations for successful outcomes under the IAS.

**Evaluation logic** – High quality, rigorous evaluations establish standards of success to form evaluative judgement, ask clear evaluation questions, systematically collect and analyse the data needed to answer those questions, and reach a meaningful assessment about the merit, worth or significance of a policy or program.

**Impact evaluation** – Assessment of whether an intervention makes a difference. This term has a range of meanings. Our usage is broad, covering positive and negative, primary and secondary effects that are produced by an intervention over the short, medium and long-term, either directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. The key feature is the study of the net effect, or difference, which can be attributed to the intervention. See [www.betterevaluation.org/themes/impact\\_evaluation](http://www.betterevaluation.org/themes/impact_evaluation) for examples of impact evaluation methodologies.

**Participatory methods** – There are a wide range of participatory approaches which can be used at different stages of evaluation to involve stakeholders, particularly participants, in specific aspects of the evaluation process. Participatory methods include approaches where “representatives of agencies and stakeholders (including beneficiaries) work together in designing, carrying out and interpreting an evaluation” (OECD 2002). For an example in practice, see Sutton et al. (2016).

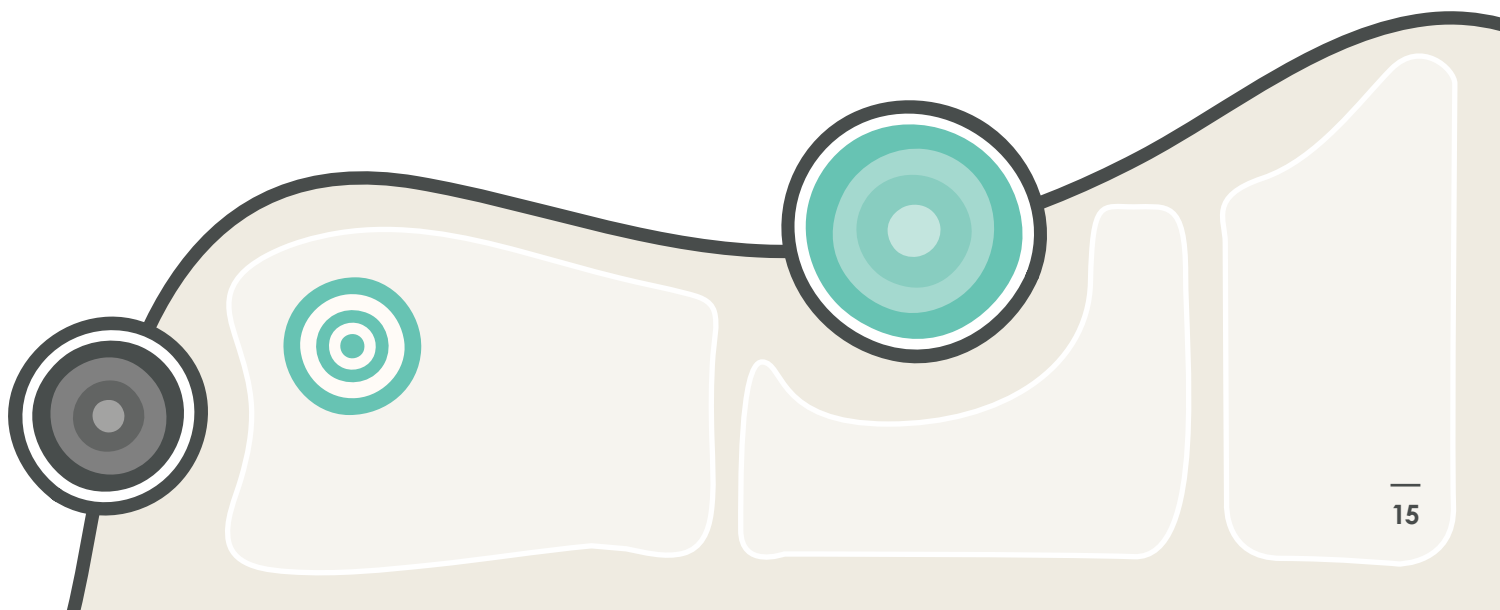
**SMART** – Specific: targets a specific area for measurement; Measurable: ensures information can be readily obtained; Attributable: ensures that each measure is linked to the project's efforts; Realistic: data can be obtained in a timely fashion; Targeted: to the objective population (Gertler et al. 2010, p.27),

**Standards** – Values inform standards in making evaluative judgements. Evaluation (as opposed to research) makes transparent assessments against referenced values through four steps:

- 1) establishing criteria of merit
- 2) setting standards
- 3) measuring performance, and
- 4) synthesis or integration to make a judgement of merit or worth (Owen & Rogers 1999).

**Theory of Change** – A theory of change is “a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It is focused in particular on mapping out or “filling in” what has been described as the “missing middle” between what a program or change initiative does (its activities or interventions) and how these lead to desired goals being achieved.”

<http://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/>



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# THE ARTWORK



## Meaning:

The artwork by Jordan Lovegrove (Ngarrindjeri) of Dreamtime Creative represents the collaboration between the Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet (PMC) and the community to evaluate, understand and improve Indigenous Advancement Strategy programs. The large meeting place represents PMC while the IAS programs and communities are represented by the smaller meeting places. The pathways connecting the meeting places show PMC evaluating and working together with the communities. The patterns going outward from PMC represent the generation and sharing of knowledge.

