

# Evaluation Essentials for Non-Evaluators: Understanding the Basics and Benefits of Evaluation

Begins at 1 p.m. Eastern





[www.evaluate-ate.org](http://www.evaluate-ate.org)



# Introductions



**Samantha**

Hooker



**Lyssa**

Wilson Becho



# Behind the Scenes



**Maureen  
Green**



**Lori  
Wingate**



**Carolyn  
Williams-Noren**



**Valerie  
Marshall**





# Behind the Scenes & Thank You



**Ellen  
Hause**



**Elizabeth  
Hawthorne**



**Blake  
Urbach**



**Elaine  
Craft**



**Pam  
Silvers**



**Emery  
DeWitt**







# Advanced Technological Education Program

[www.nsf.gov/ate](http://www.nsf.gov/ate)






This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grants No. 1841783. The content reflects the views of the authors and not necessarily those of NSF.



# One Word

## CHAT QUESTION

- What is **one** word that comes to mind when you hear “**evaluation**”?

Answer   
in chat box



# ATE Program

Advanced Technological Education

## Meet Jen Genericson\*



She has a **GREAT** idea  
for an NSF ATE proposal

\*This is a fictional character and project.  
Any resemblance to actual persons or projects is coincidental.

Renewal proposals are not appropriate for the ATE program and should not be submitted in response to this solicitation.

**Evaluation:** All ATE-funded work must be evaluated, with the exception of planning grants for centers. Project descriptions must include a subsection titled "Evaluation Plan" that includes the following information:

- Aspects of the project that will be evaluated—this is best expressed as evaluation questions that frame the evaluative inquiry or criteria that define the dimensions of project quality that will be investigated. The evaluation should address both project implementation and outcomes. Implementation encompasses the project's activities and deliverables. Outcomes are changes brought about by the project, such as—but not limited to—changes related to student learning, persistence, retention broadening participation in STEM; mee knowledge about technician education;
- The specific data sources, data collection questions or criteria, and how data will conclusions about the quality of the pro
- A timeline for the evaluation that identif frequency of communication between t
- A plan to incorporate summative evalu
- Personnel involved in conducting the e responsibilities will be divided between

There must be clear alignment between the evaluation plan and the project's intended outcomes, activities, and deliverables.

It is recommended that the evaluator be named in the proposal and a Biographical Sketch included with the proposal's supplementary documents. If the submitting organization requires evaluation consultants to be selected through a competitive bid process after an award is made, the proposer should note the policy that prohibits noncompetitive selection and describe the procedures that will be used to select an evaluator after the award is made.

*Special Information for the Evaluation of Applied Research Projects:* Applied research projects may be evaluated by an external review committee, rather than a single external evaluator. Whether by committee or individual evaluator, the evaluation of applied research projects should include review and feedback on data collection procedures, analyses, draft publications, and dissemination plans to ensure quality and enhance the impact of the research.

**B. Budgetary Information**

**Cost Sharing:**

All ATE-funded work must be evaluated, with the exception of planning grants for centers.





? What is  
evaluation?



Why should  
I do it?



How much  
does it cost?



Who can  
evaluate?



Where do I find  
an evaluator?

# Strategies and Insights into Evaluation Plans for NSF ATE Proposals

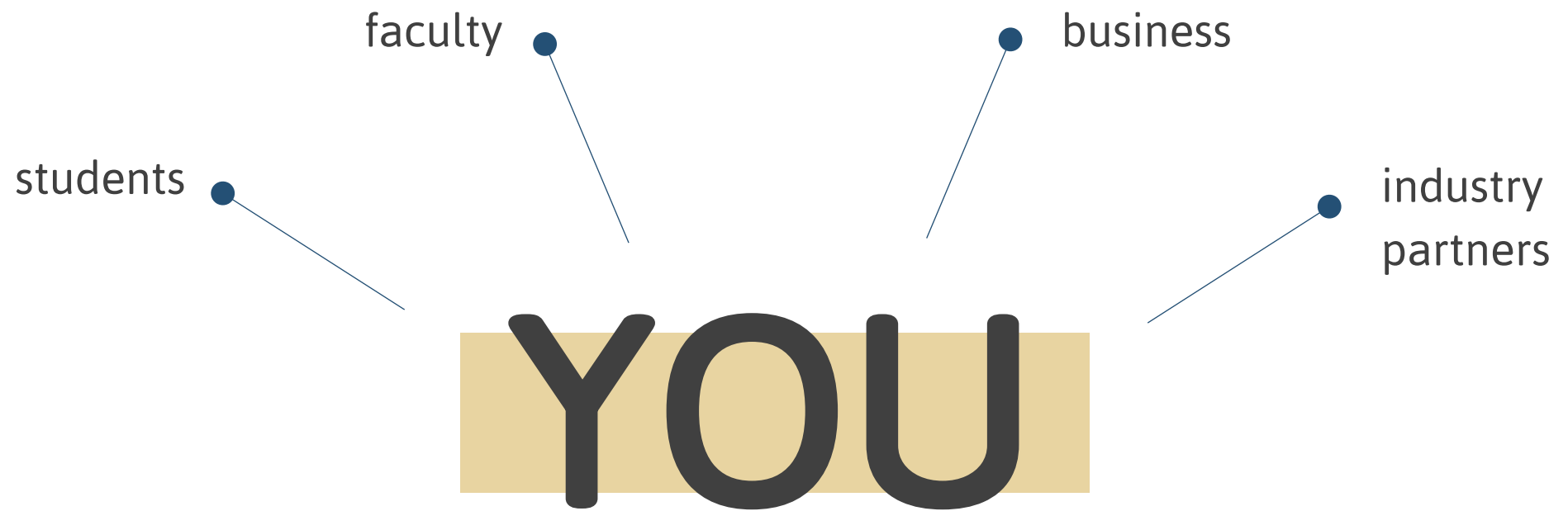
August 9, 1 p.m. Eastern







? What is evaluation?





YOU  
+  
EVALUATOR

# Evaluation

## FOUR BASIC STEPS



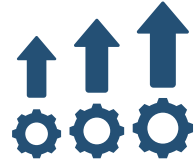




Why should I do it?

# Evaluation

## PURPOSES



Project improvement



Accountability



Evidence

# Improvement

## PURPOSE #1

- “The most important purpose of evaluation is not to prove, but to improve.”

# Improvement

## PURPOSE #1



Joint Committee on Standards  
for Educational Evaluation



- Utility
- Feasibility
- Propriety
- Accuracy
- Accountability

Learn more at  
[evaluationstandards.org/program](https://evaluationstandards.org/program)

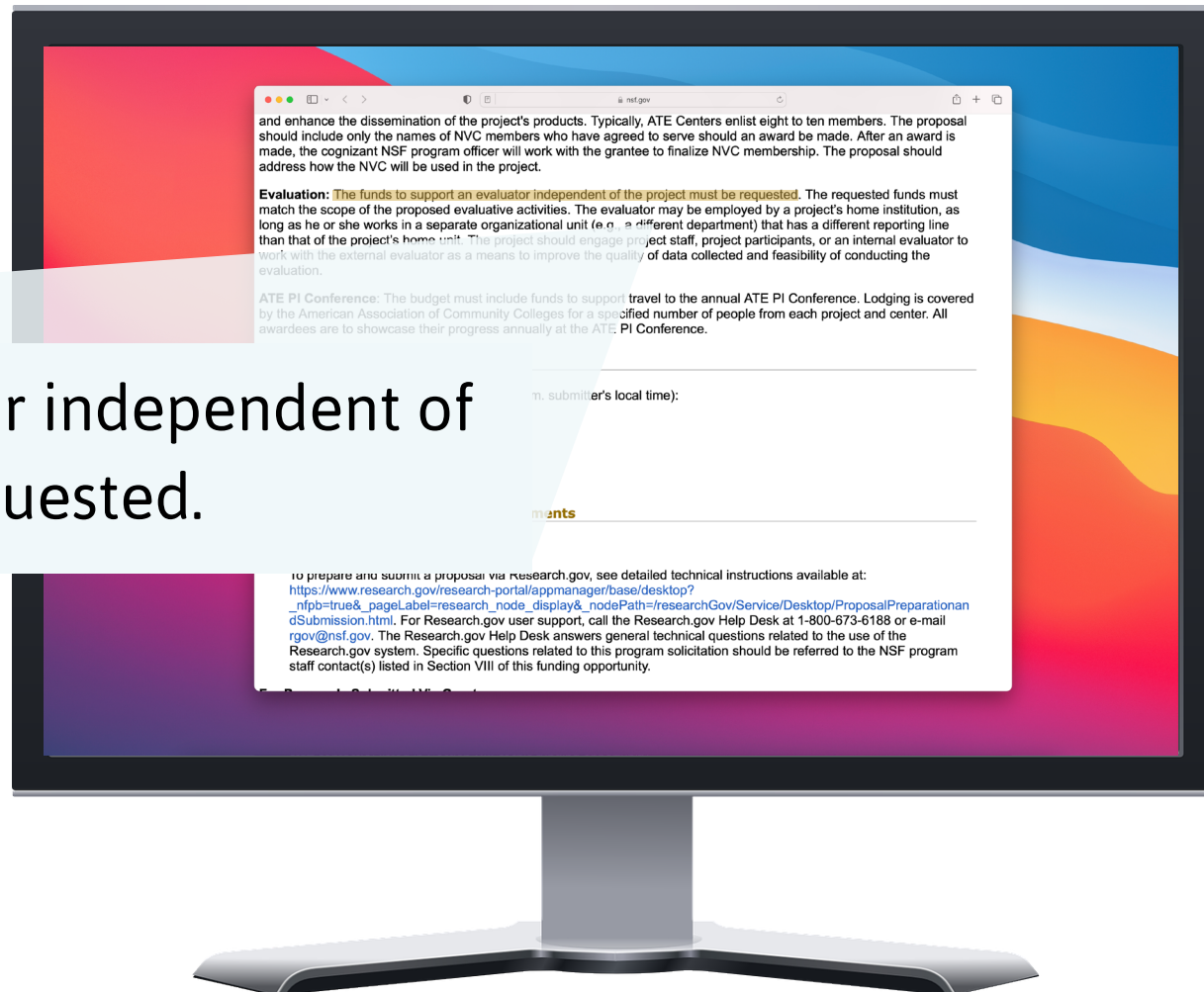


# Accountability



## PURPOSE #2

The funds to support an evaluator independent of the project must be requested.



# Accountability



PURPOSE #2

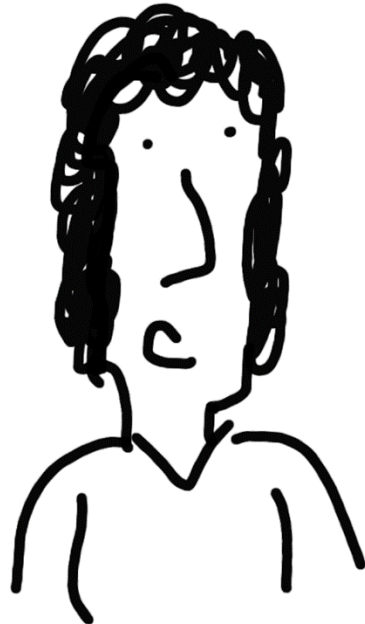


# Evidence



## PURPOSE #3

So, did it work?

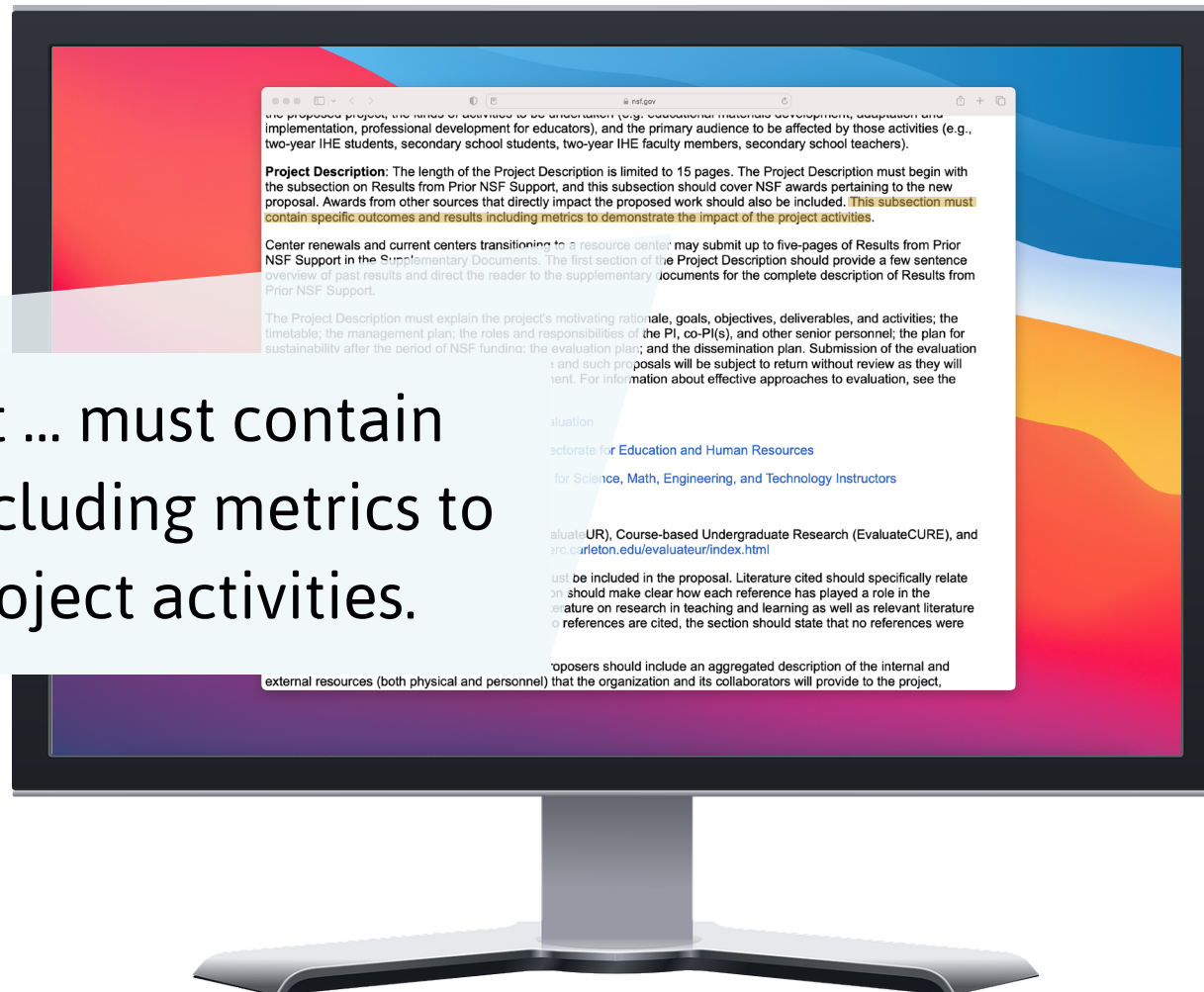


# Evidence



## PURPOSE #3

Results from Prior NSF Support ... must contain specific outcomes and results including metrics to demonstrate the impact of project activities.



# Which is the best evidence of outcomes?

## POLL QUESTION

### Example A

The prior project was funded to increase the number of students completing 2-year degrees and entering the technical workforce. Funded activities included developing bridge courses, enhancing recruitment efforts, and developing support resources and strategies for first-generation college students.

### Example B

All project objectives were achieved: 150 students enrolled in the new ATE course. 300 first-generation students benefited from newly developed resources aimed at addressing their diverse needs. 400 potential students were reached with new recruitment strategies.

### Example C

The average pass rate for targeted courses increased from 62% to 85% (n=325). Student's placement in jobs right after graduation increased from 55% to 84% (n=250). First generation students said that they felt a strong sense of belonging in the program and received additional support that helped them be successful.

Answer  
in poll box



# Which is the best evidence of outcomes?

## Example A

The prior project was funded to increase the number of students completing 2-year degrees and entering the technical workforce. Funded activities included developing bridge courses, enhancing recruitment efforts, and developing support resources and strategies for first-generation college students.

## Example B

All project objectives were achieved: 150 students enrolled in the new ATE course. 300 first-generation students benefited from newly developed resources aimed at addressing their diverse needs. 400 potential students were reached with new recruitment strategies.

## Example C

The average pass rate for targeted course increased from 62% to 85% (n=325). Student's placement in jobs right after graduation increased from 55% to 84% (n=250). First generation students said that they felt a strong sense of belonging in the program and received additional support that helped them be successful.



\$ How much does it cost?

and enhance the dissemination of the project's products. Typically, ATE Centers enlist eight to ten members. The proposal should include only the names of NVC members who have agreed to serve should an award be made. After an award is made, the cognizant NSF program officer will work with the grantee to finalize NVC membership. The proposal should address how the NVC will be used in the project.

**Evaluation:** The funds to support an evaluator independent of the project must be requested. **The requested funds must match the scope of the proposed evaluative activities.** The evaluator may be employed by a project's home institution, as long as he or she works in a separate organizational unit (e.g., a different department) that has a different reporting line than that of the project's home unit. The project should engage project staff, project participants, or an internal evaluator to work with the external evaluator as a means to improve the quality of data collected and feasibility of conducting the evaluation.

**ATE PI Conference:** The budget must include funds to support travel to the annual ATE PI Conference. Lodging is covered by the American Association of Community Colleges for a specified number of people from each project and center. All awardees are to showcase their progress annually at the ATE PI Conference.

#### C. Due Dates

- Full Proposal Deadline(s) (due by 5 p.m. submitter)
  - October 14, 2021
  - October 06, 2022
  - October 05, 2023

#### D. Research.gov/Grants.gov Requirements

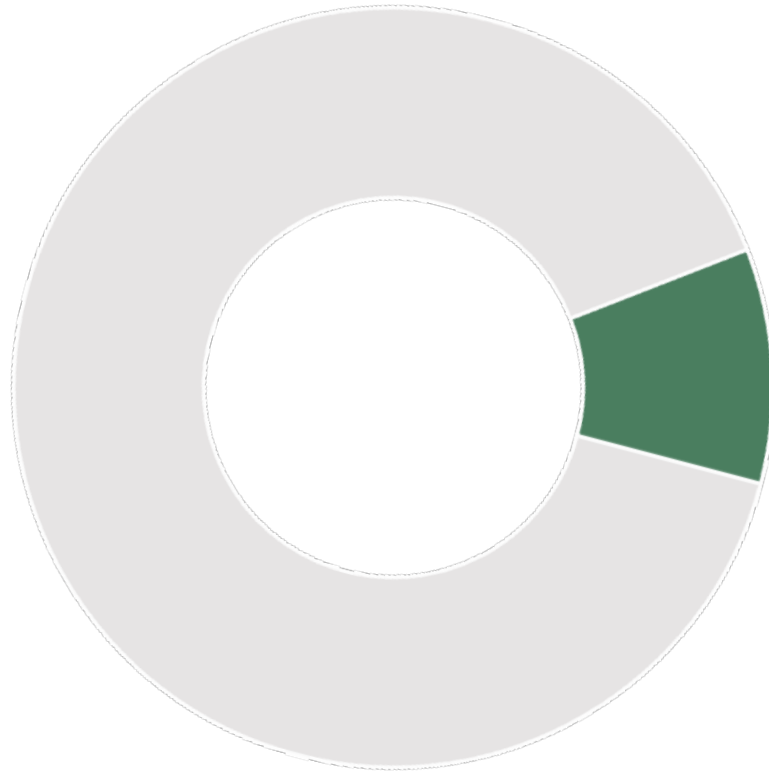
##### For Proposals Submitted Via Research.gov:

To prepare and submit a proposal via Research.gov, see detailed technical instructions available at: [https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?\\_nfpb=true&\\_pageLabel=research\\_node\\_display&\\_nodePath=/researchGov/Service/Desktop/ProposalPreparationandSubmission.html](https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=research_node_display&_nodePath=/researchGov/Service/Desktop/ProposalPreparationandSubmission.html). For Research.gov user support, call the Research.gov Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail [rgov@nsf.gov](mailto:rgov@nsf.gov). The Research.gov Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the Research.gov system. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this funding opportunity.

The requested funds must match the scope of the proposed evaluative activities.

# BUDGETING

## RULE OF THUMB



Dedicate

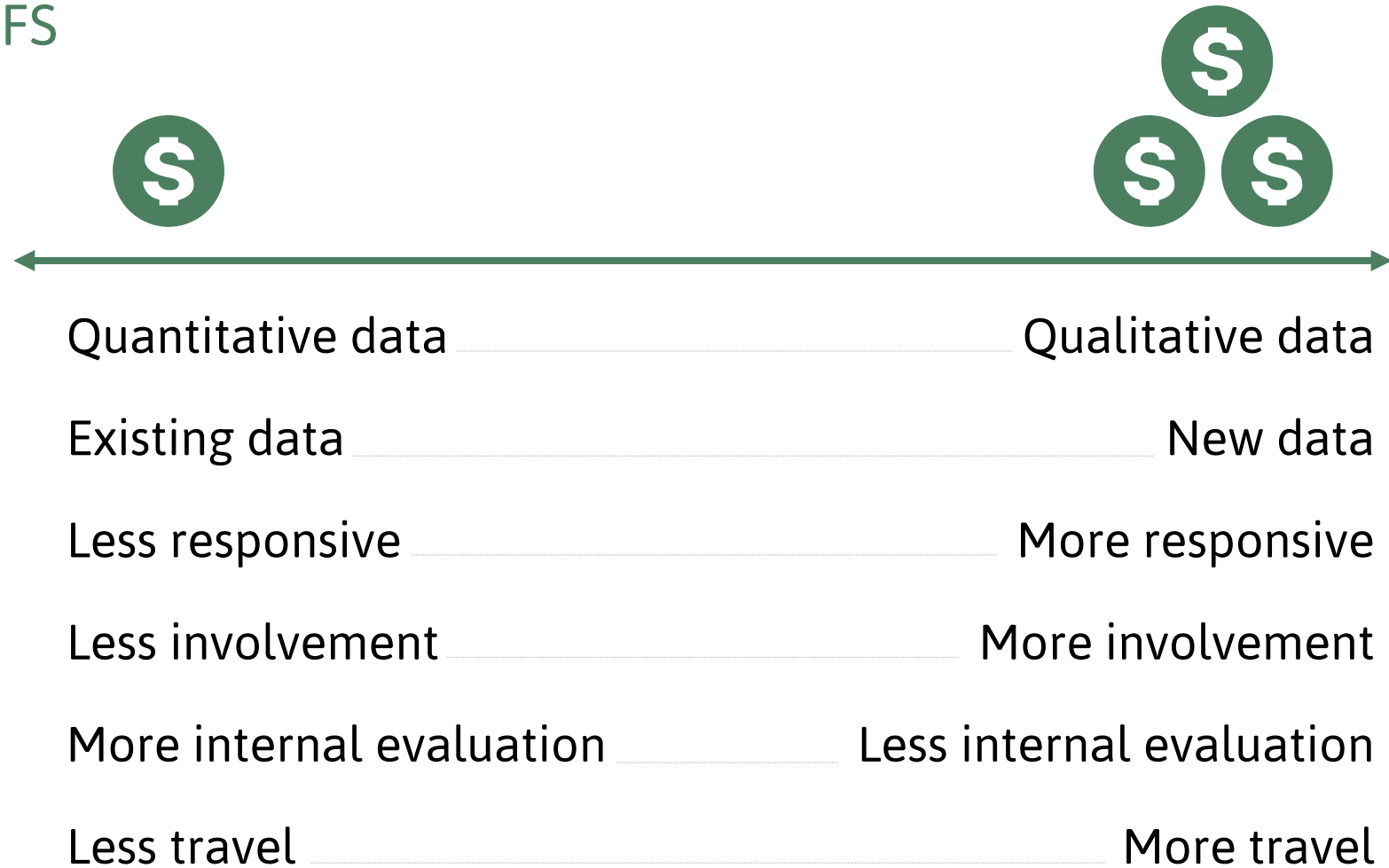
**10%**

of direct project  
costs to evaluation



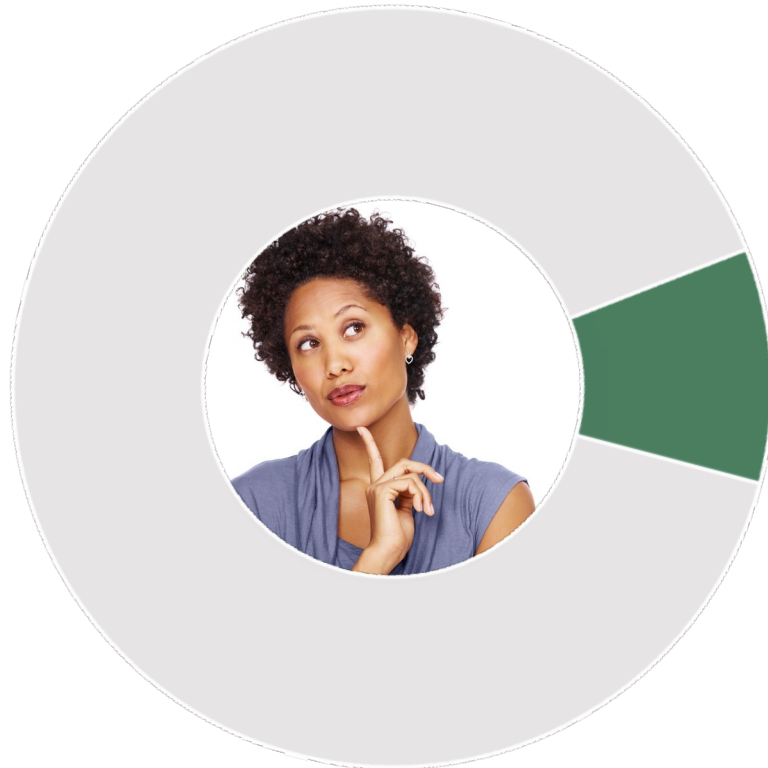
# BUDGETING

## TRADE OFFS



# BUDGETING

## EXAMPLE



Total Project Budget:

\$650,000 over 3 years

-\$130,000 for F&A

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**\$520,000 direct costs**

**10% EVALUATION BUDGET:**

\$52,000 total for 3 years

\$ 17,333 per year

- Evaluator's time
- Travel costs for site visits
- Evaluator's overhead costs

# QUESTION BREAK

Use  
chat window



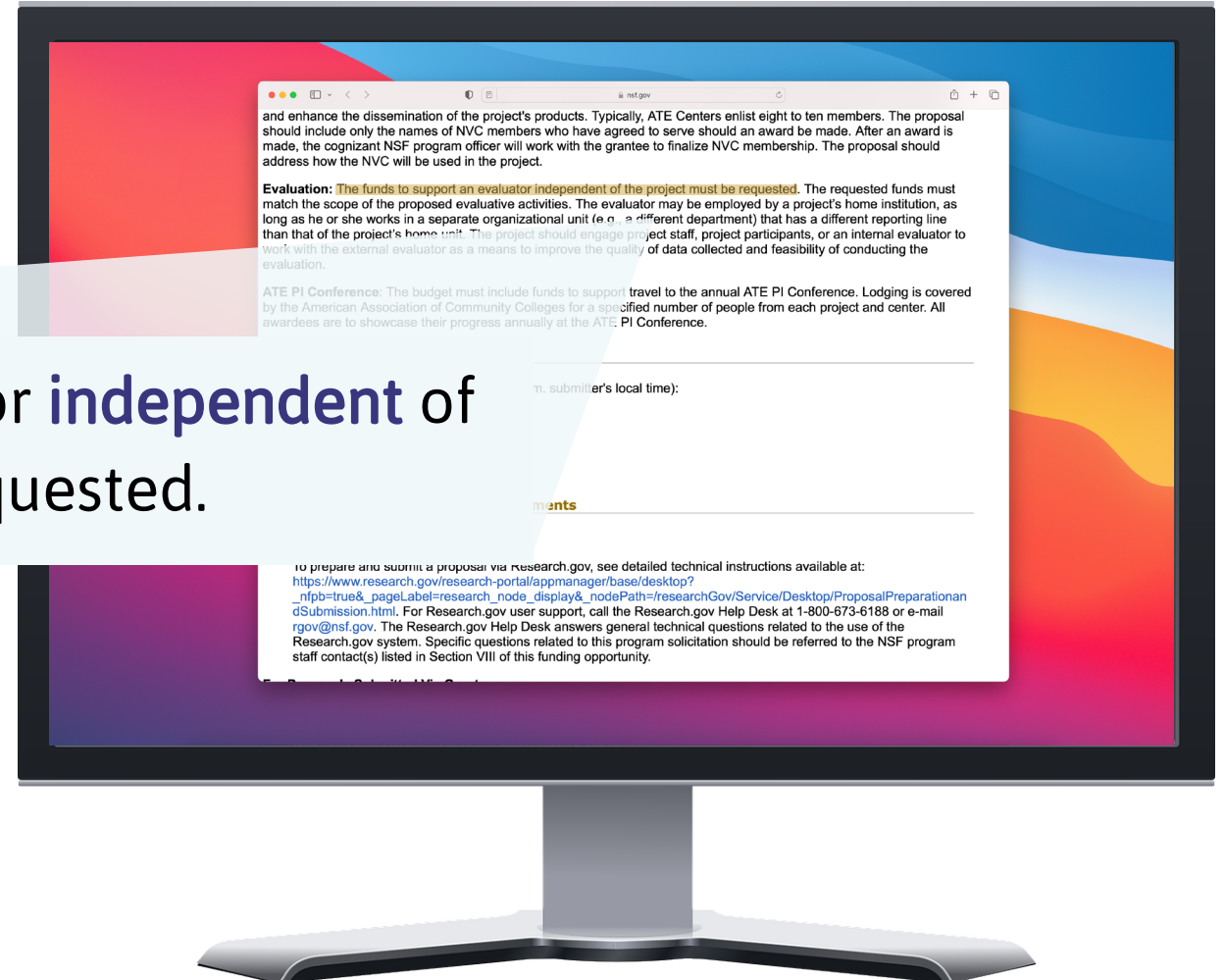
A top-down view of a collaborative workspace. Several people are gathered around a dark wooden table, working on various tasks. One person is writing in a notebook, another is pointing at a chart. The table is cluttered with work-related items: a laptop displaying a presentation slide, a tablet showing a bar chart, a keyboard, a mouse, a coffee cup, and several papers with charts and diagrams. A large, semi-transparent dark blue banner is overlaid across the bottom half of the image, containing the text "Who can evaluate?".

 Who can evaluate?

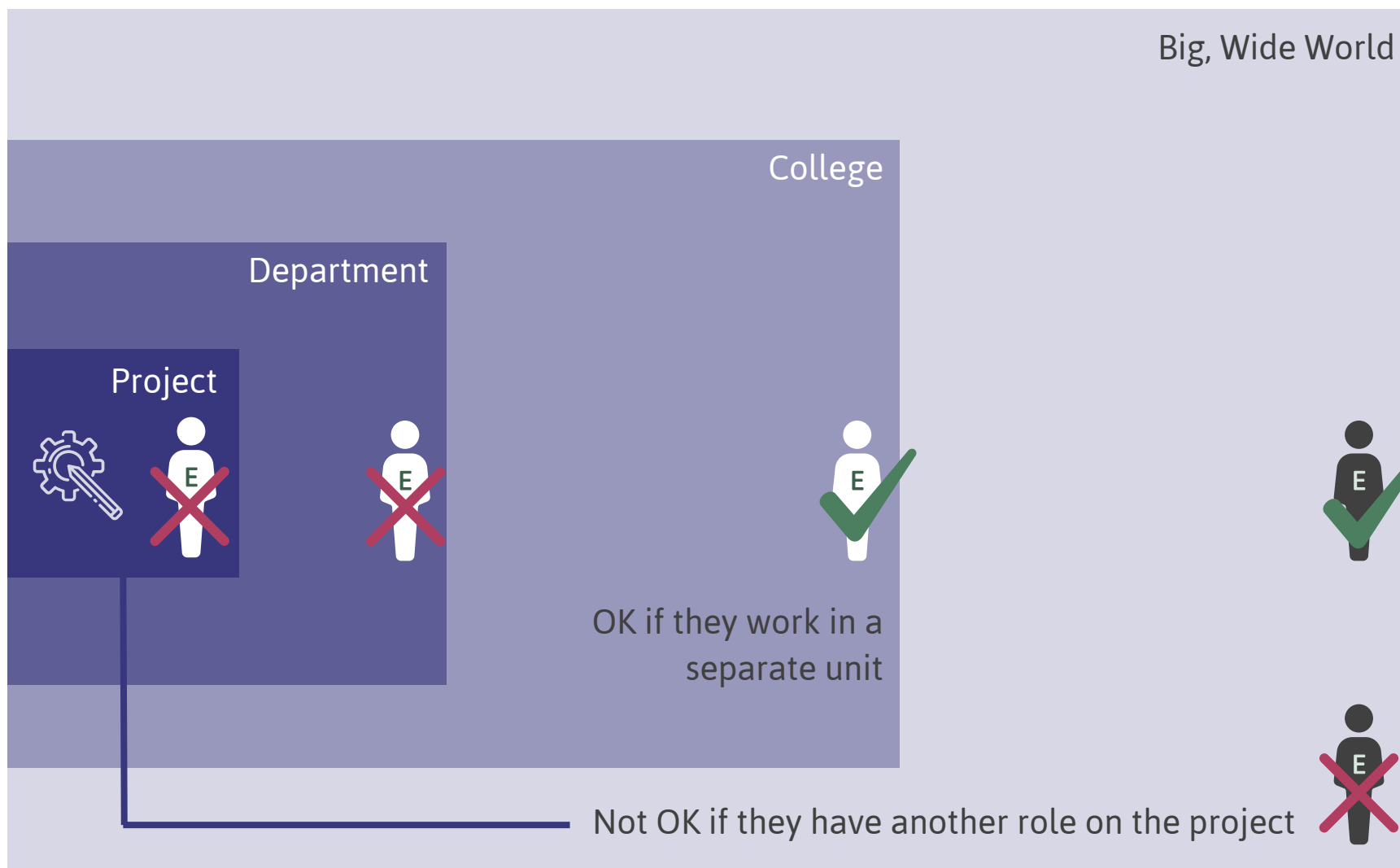


# Independent EVALUATOR

The funds to support an evaluator **independent** of the project must be requested.



# What counts as an independent?



# Professional

## EVALUATORS

- What to look for in an evaluator:
  - ☑ Experience as an evaluator
  - ☑ Research skills
  - ☑ Communication skills
  - ☑ Understanding of NSF and 2-year-college contexts

Small  
Evaluation  
Consultant

e

Large  
Evaluation  
Center

# Which evaluator would you recommend?

## POLL QUESTION

### Evaluator A

- Ph.D., Higher education administration
- 10 years of experience leading accreditation teams for technical programs at two-year colleges
- Published 5 research articles and 2 book chapters on technical education and student services

### Evaluator B

- M.A., Organizational psychology with emphasis in program evaluation
- Currently serving as lead evaluator for 25 NSF-funded projects
- Recipient of Outstanding Evaluation award from American Evaluation Association

### Evaluator C

- M.S., Information technology
- Retired dean of technical programs at community college
- Received more than \$4 million in NSF grants over 20-year career

Answer  
in poll box

# Which evaluator would you recommend?

## Evaluator A

- Ph.D., Higher education administration
- 10 years of experience leading accreditation teams for technical programs at two-year colleges
- Published 5 research articles and 2 book chapters on technical education and student services

## What is your experience with project evaluation?

- Currently serving as lead evaluator for 25 NSF-funded projects
- Recipient of Outstanding Evaluation award from American Evaluation Association
- Received more than \$4 million in NSF grants over 20-year career



# Which evaluator would you recommend?

## Evaluator A

- Ph.D., Higher education administration
- 10 years of experience leading accreditation teams for technical programs at two-year colleges
- Published 5 research articles and 2 book chapters on technical education and student services

## Evaluator B

- M.A., Organizational psychology with emphasis in program evaluation
- Currently serving as lead evaluator for 25 NSF-funded projects
- Recipient of Outstanding Evaluation award from American Evaluation Association

Do you have time to work on my project's evaluation?

Who would do most of the work and what are their credentials?

Do they have experience with ATE projects?

# Which evaluator would you recommend?

What research methods do you have experience with?

What is your experience as an external evaluator of grant-funded projects?

## Evaluator C

- M.S., Information technology
- Retired dean of technical programs at community college
- Received more than \$4 million in NSF grants over 20-year career



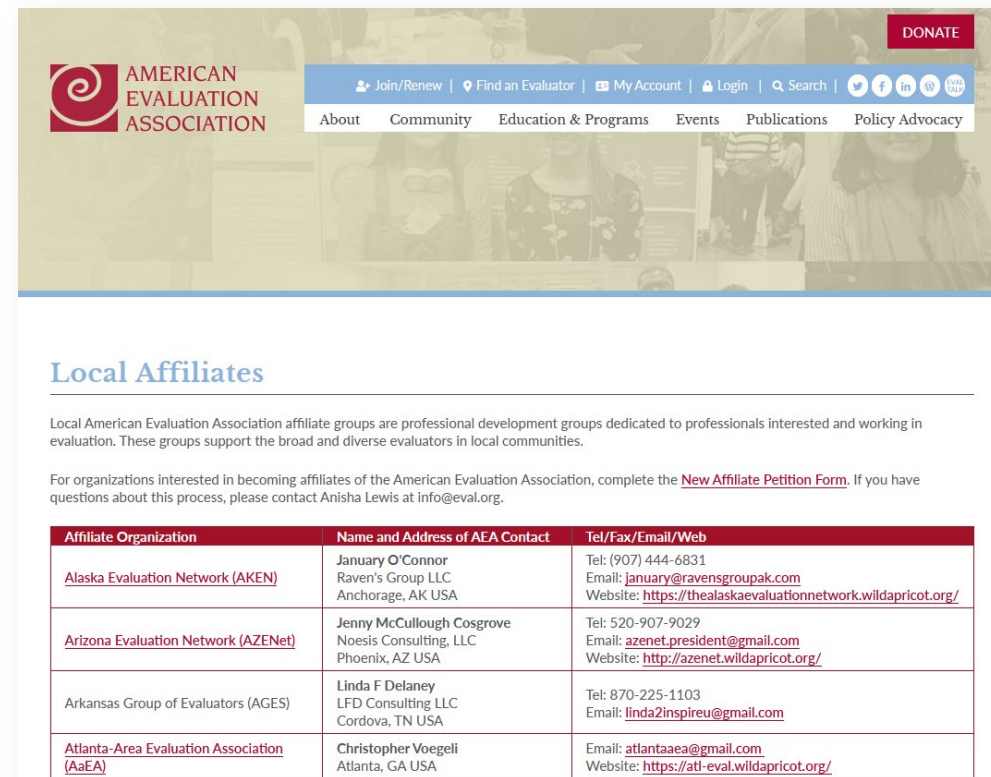
 **Where do I find an evaluator?**

# Finding

## AN EVALUATOR

American Evaluation Association (AEA)  
[my.eval.org/find-an-evaluator](https://my.eval.org/find-an-evaluator)

AEA Local Affiliate Groups  
[eval.org/community/local-affiliates](https://eval.org/community/local-affiliates)



The screenshot shows the AEA website header with the logo, navigation links (Join/Renew, Find an Evaluator, My Account, Login, Search), and social media icons. The main content area is titled "Local Affiliates" and includes a description of local affiliate groups, a link to the "New Affiliate Petition Form", and a table listing four affiliate organizations: Alaska Evaluation Network (AKEN), Arizona Evaluation Network (AZENet), Arkansas Group of Evaluators (AGES), and Atlanta-Area Evaluation Association (AaEA).

Affiliate Organization	Name and Address of AEA Contact	Tel/Fax/Email/Web
<a href="#">Alaska Evaluation Network (AKEN)</a>	January O'Connor Raven's Group LLC Anchorage, AK USA	Tel: (907) 444-6831 Email: <a href="mailto:january@ravensgroupak.com">january@ravensgroupak.com</a> Website: <a href="https://thealaskaevaluationnetwork.wildapricot.org/">https://thealaskaevaluationnetwork.wildapricot.org/</a>
<a href="#">Arizona Evaluation Network (AZENet)</a>	Jenny McCullough Cosgrove Noesis Consulting, LLC Phoenix, AZ USA	Tel: 520-907-9029 Email: <a href="mailto:azenet.president@gmail.com">azenet.president@gmail.com</a> Website: <a href="http://azenet.wildapricot.org/">http://azenet.wildapricot.org/</a>
Arkansas Group of Evaluators (AGES)	Linda F Delaney LFD Consulting LLC Cordova, TN USA	Tel: 870-225-1103 Email: <a href="mailto:linda2inspireu@gmail.com">linda2inspireu@gmail.com</a>
<a href="#">Atlanta-Area Evaluation Association (AaEA)</a>	Christopher Voegeli Atlanta, GA USA	Email: <a href="mailto:atlantaaea@gmail.com">atlantaaea@gmail.com</a> Website: <a href="https://atl-eval.wildapricot.org/">https://atl-eval.wildapricot.org/</a>

# Finding AN EVALUATOR

American Evaluation Association (AEA)  
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AEA Local Affiliate Groups  
[eval.org/community/local-affiliates](https://eval.org/community/local-affiliates)

Expanding the Bench  
[expandingthebench.org/ace/evaluators](https://expandingthebench.org/ace/evaluators)

The screenshot displays the 'Expanding the Bench' website's 'Find an Evaluator' page. The header includes the logo and a 'MENU' button. Below the header, there's a 'Search Database' section with the title 'Find an Evaluator'. A 'SIGN UP FOR FULL ACCESS' button and a 'LOGIN' link are visible. A 'FILTER RESULTS' section contains ten dropdown menus for filtering evaluators by: Location State or Territory, Racial Identity, Evaluator Type, Project Capacity, Populations of Focus, Work Geo Restrictions, Work Virtually, Experience Level, Experience Conducting, and Experience Skills. Below the filters, there's an 'Evaluator Search' input field. The results section shows two evaluators: Afi Wiggins (Atlanta, Georgia, University of Texas at Austin Charles A. Dana Center) and Ajisafé Ekundayo Adaján (Atlanta, Georgia, Creative Research Solutions). A larger profile for Afi Wiggins is shown on the right, including a 'Contact' button. The 'Work Geo Restrictions' section is partially visible at the bottom.



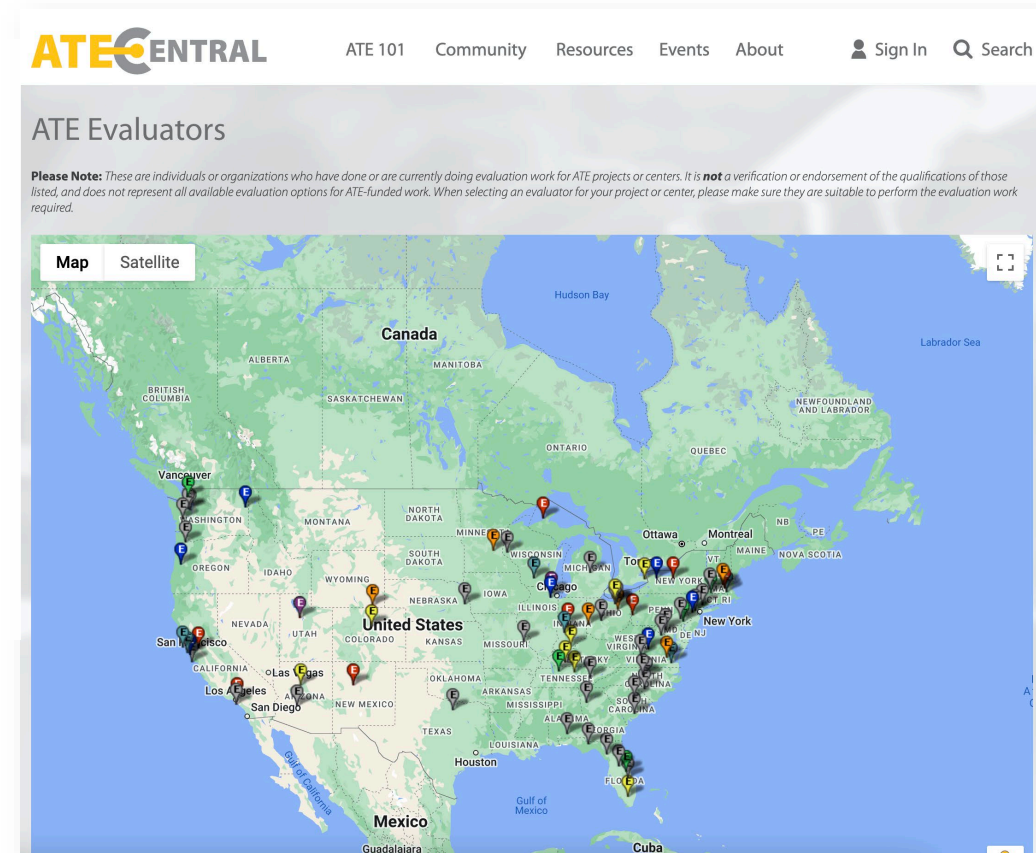
# Finding AN EVALUATOR

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AEA Local Affiliate Groups  
[eval.org/community/local-affiliates](https://eval.org/community/local-affiliates)

Expanding the Bench  
[Expandingthebench.org/ace/evaluators](https://Expandingthebench.org/ace/evaluators)

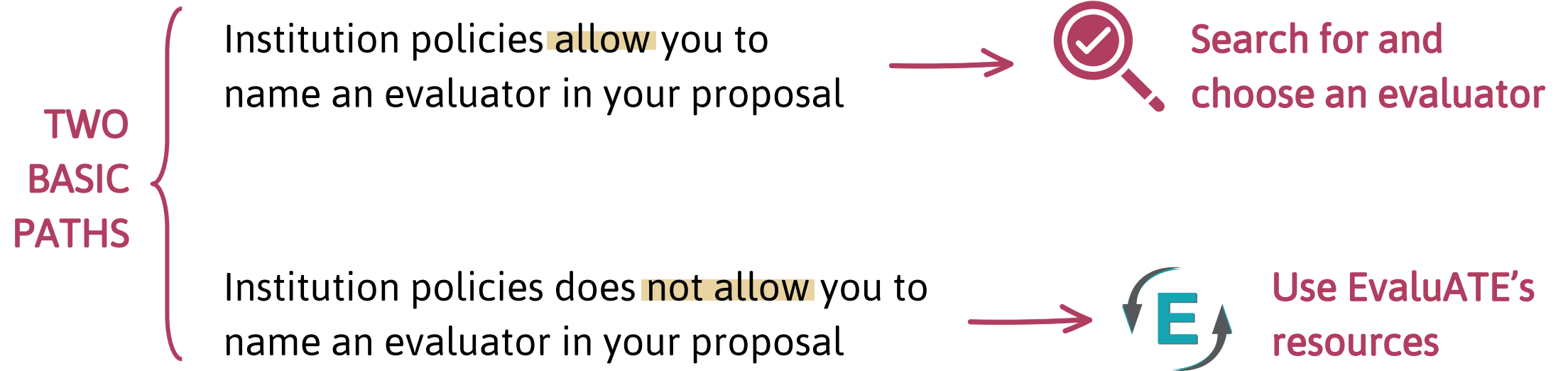
ATE Evaluator Map on ATE Central  
[atecentral.net/evaluators](https://atecentral.net/evaluators)



# Procuring

## AN EVALUATOR

 **STEP 1:** Talk with your procurement office at your institution to determine your path.



# Resources

## WRITING EVALUATION PLANS



### Evaluation Plan Checklist for ATE Proposals

Lori A. Wingate | Updated June 2023<sup>1</sup>

This checklist provides information on what should be included in evaluation plans for proposals to the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program. Grant seekers should carefully read the most recent ATE program solicitation (<http://bit.ly/nsf-ate>) for details about the program and proposal submission requirements.

#### Evaluation Plan

ATE proposals must include a subsection titled "Evaluation Plan" within the 15-page project description. EvaluATE recommends dedicating one to two pages to the evaluation plan and including the following five elements:

##### 1. Evaluator

- ☐ Identify the project's evaluator by name and organization.
- ☐ Briefly describe the evaluator's qualifications, including their experience evaluating STEM education programs.
- ☐ Refer to the evaluator's biosketch and letter of collaboration and include these as supplementary documents.
- ☐ If the evaluator is an employee of the project's host institution, explain how the evaluator is independent from the project (they should not work in the same department or be a supervisor or supervisee of project personnel).

*If the project's host institution has a policy that prohibits selecting an evaluator at the proposal stage:*

- ☐ Explain the institutional policy that does not allow for selection of an evaluator prior to funding.
- ☐ Describe how an evaluator **will** be selected after the award is made.

##### 2. Evaluation Questions

- ☐ List key questions—ideally, about three to seven—that the evaluation **will** address.
- ☐ Include questions about both project implementation (what the project does) and outcomes (what changes it brings about).
- ☐ Ensure that the questions align with the project's goals and activities as described in the proposal.
- ☐ Ensure that the questions address the project's intellectual merit (contributions to advancing knowledge) and broader impact (contributions to the betterment of society).

##### 3. Data

###### *Indicators*

- ☐ Identify what information **will** be used to answer each evaluation question (i.e., what **will** be measured).

###### *Data Collection Methods and Sources*

- ☐ Identify how the information **will** be gathered and from what sources.
- ☐ If relevant, explain sampling and use of comparison or control groups.
- ☐ If using existing data collection instruments, include citations and justify their use.

###### *Analysis*

- ☐ Identify the procedures that **will** be used to summarize quantitative and qualitative data (e.g., descriptive statistics, inferential tests, regression, deductive or inductive coding).

###### *Interpretation*

- ☐ Identify sources of comparative information (e.g., baseline data, benchmarks, group comparison; performance rubric; program community members' opinions) and explain how it **will** be used to answer the evaluation questions.

# Resources

ATE EVALUATION COACHING

[evalu-ate.org/coaching](https://evalu-ate.org/coaching)



Amy Germuth



Lola Adedokun



Keith Sturgis

# CONNECT WITH US

On LinkedIn  
[bit.ly/eval-li](https://bit.ly/eval-li)



Through our website  
[evalu-ate.org](https://evalu-ate.org)

