

are you ready for community-*owned* evaluation?

a discussion and reflection guide



introduction

about EDS

Eval Design Studio exists to deepen collective knowledge and strengthen movements that dismantle unjust systems. Everything we do – evaluation, learning partnerships, research, immersive experiences – is designed to transform how people gather, share, and relate to knowledge.

about this guide

We wrote this guide to help organizations hold honest conversations about their current evaluative practices. While you can answer the questions alone, we encourage you to answer them with your team in a facilitated group discussion. This could allow for varied perspectives to emerge along with useful ideas on how to make community-owned evaluation (COE) feasible in your context.

how to use it

Organizing: We recommend gathering people who represent different perspectives within your organization. These people ideally have various levels of seniority, from junior staff to program directors and members of your senior leadership team. They should also have diverse roles, including but not limited to general project oversight, monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL), finance, and organization-wide strategy.

Planning: All you need is a facilitator and a notetaker, though you may benefit from using a whiteboard or flip chart. You may not have time to get through all questions. In fact, you may find it useful to discuss only the questions where there is significant room for debate.

Facilitating: In pairs or as one large group, discuss answers to each question, encouraging active participation from each group member. Document key themes that emerge as you go. Remember, the goal is not necessarily to come to an agreement or solve a problem (though it's great if you do). The intent is to reflect on your current practices and whether they might be conducive to community ownership.

Progressing: When you're ready, schedule a meeting with our team and we can discuss how to carry what you discover forward as you set the stage for a community-owned evaluation.

If you have any questions along the way, feel free to contact us.