

# Embedding Evaluation in Libraries

DEVELOPING INTERNAL EVALUATORS



## Welcome!

- Enjoy the coffee
- Meet the people at your table
- Take the pre-institute survey
- Have questions about Embedding Evaluation? Write them on a post-it and add it to the Parking Lot.



# Embedding Evaluation in Libraries

DEVELOPING INTERNAL EVALUATORS



This project is made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services grant IMLS-13-19-0076-19.



## Embedding Evaluation in Libraries: Intended outcomes

Build evaluation  
knowledge and  
skills

Embed evaluation in  
your library

Develop a network  
of like-minded  
peers in your state



## Embedding Evaluation in Libraries: Intended outcomes

	Build Evaluation Knowledge and Skills	Embed Evaluation in Your Library	Develop a Peer Network
Kickoff Institute	X		X
Evaluation Project	X	X	
Videos	X	X	
Coaching Calls	X	X	
Virtual Group Discussions	X		X
Wrap-Up Institute	X		X



# Introductions

## Kickoff Institute

- Introduction to Evaluation Process
- Develop a plan for conducting your evaluation project



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- Develop a plan for conducting your evaluation project

Emerson  
Community  
Library's Project

Your Library's  
Project



## Our Plan — Day 1

### Morning (9:30-12:00):

- Evaluation in Libraries
- The Evaluation Process: Planning, Part 1

10:15-10:30 Break

12:00-1:00 Lunch

### Afternoon (1:00-5:00):

- The Evaluation Process: Planning, Part 2

2:15-2:30 Break

5:00 End



## Our Plan — Day 2

### Morning (9:00-12:30):

- The Evaluation Process: Planning, Part 3
- The Evaluation Process: Conducting Evaluation

10:45-11:00 Break

12:30-1:00 Lunch

### Afternoon (1:00-3:00):

- The Evaluation Process: Using Evaluation Results

3:00 End



## Your Goals for Participating in Embedding Evaluation

## Evaluation in Libraries

ESTABLISHING THE FOUNDATION



### Reasons to collect and analyze data

#### Needs assessment

What do community members need and want? What are their interests, priorities, and aspirations?

#### Monitoring

What services, programs, and collections are we providing? How are they changing over time?

#### Evaluation

What is the quality of our services, programs, and collections? What difference do they make?

### Reasons to collect and analyze data

#### Benchmarking

How do our services, programs, and collections compare? Are we aligned with best practices and standards?

#### Organizational analysis

How can we be more efficient? How can we best use our space? How can we make our workflows more consistent and effective?

#### Market research

How can we reach new segments of the community? What messaging will resonate?

### Differences in focus

#### Needs assessment

#### Evaluation

#### Market research

Community-focused

#### Monitoring

#### Organizational analysis

#### Benchmarking

Library-focused

### Differences in origin and perspective

#### Needs assessment

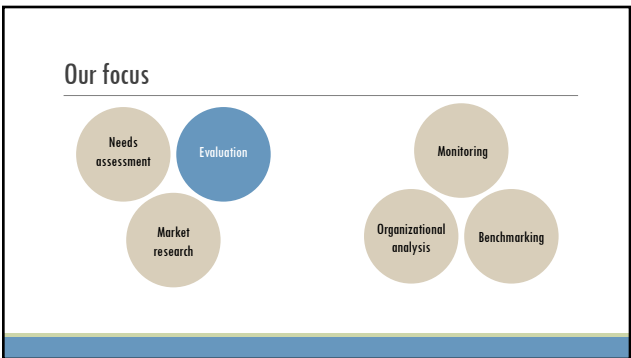
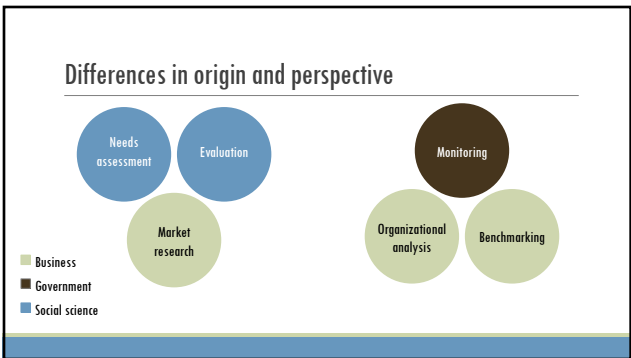
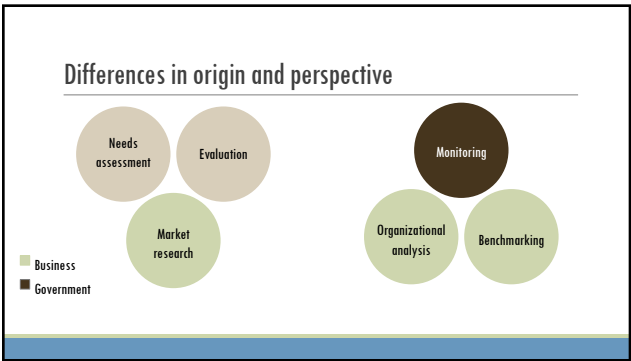
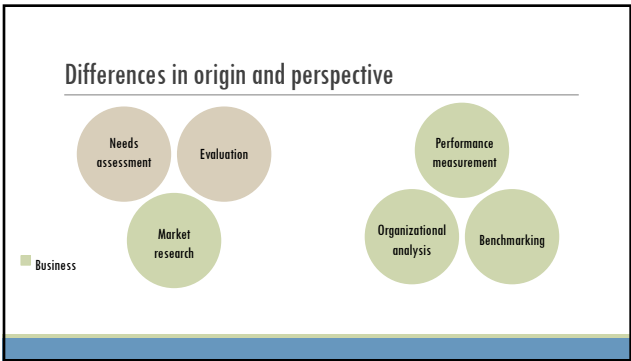
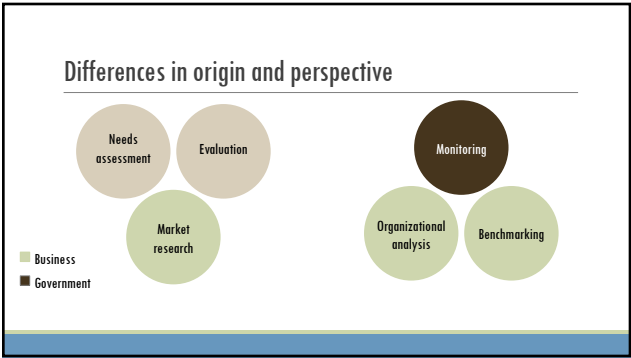
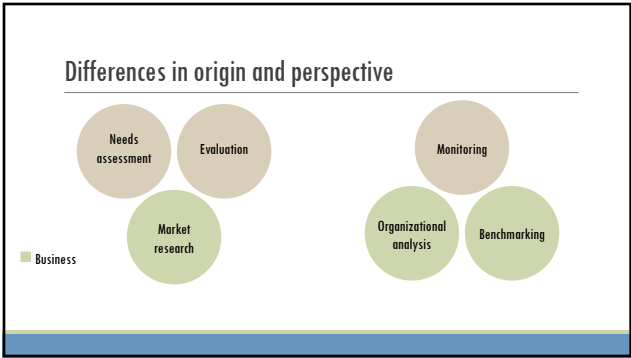
#### Evaluation

#### Market research

#### Monitoring

#### Organizational analysis

#### Benchmarking





## Evaluation: Our definition

Public facing	Examines public-facing library programs or services	Action oriented	Aims to inform real-world actions
Community focused	Adopts a community focus (rather than a library focus)		



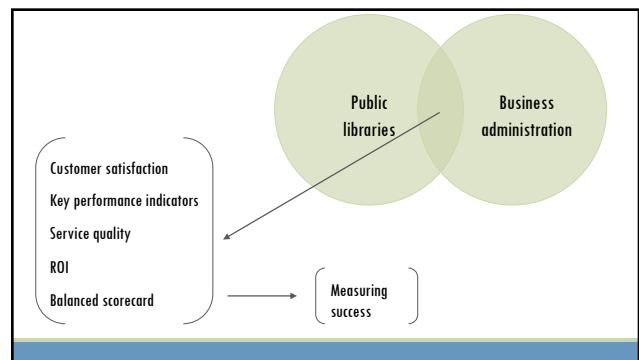
## Types of actions

- Improvement of library programs and services
- Accountability and oversight
- Funding and advocacy



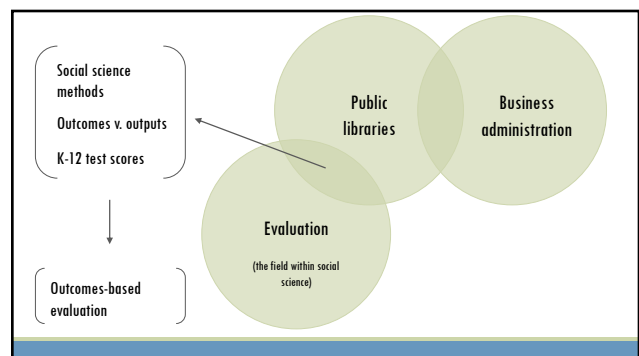
## Evaluation: Our definition

Public facing	Examines public-facing library programs or services	Action oriented	Aims to inform real-world actions
Community focused	Adopts a community focus (rather than a library focus)	Multi-dimensional	Uses multiple dimensions of success to assess programs/services



## Limitations

- Libraries focus on social benefits
  - Social benefits are difficult to define and capture
  - We believe—but can't assume—libraries deliver benefits
- Focus on "measuring success" oversimplifies a complex process



## Limitations



Libraries serve different people, with different goals, in different ways



Library use unfolds through repeated, short-duration interactions

Library-related outcomes can be difficult to isolate and capture and can vary across library users and user groups.

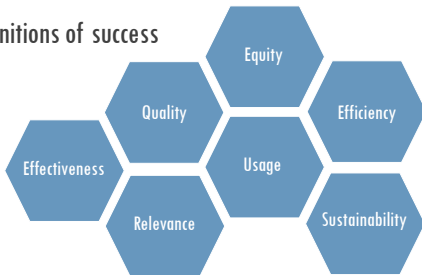
## Limitations



Outcome-related data are rarely sufficient to foster organizational learning and improvement of library programs and services.

A more comprehensive picture of success is needed

## Definitions of success



## Activity: Definitions of Success

We could adopt many different definitions of success when evaluating this Embedding Evaluation Kickoff Institute.



Work with the people at your table to identify multiple definitions of success for the Kickoff Institute.



## Evaluation: Our definition



Examines public-facing library programs or services



Aims to inform real-world actions



Adopts a community focus (rather than a library focus)



Uses multiple dimensions of success to assess programs/ services

## Activity: Characteristics of Evaluation

We have identified 6 characteristics of effective evaluation in libraries.



Review the characteristics at your table. Discuss how these inform your thinking about your evaluation project.



## Characteristics of evaluation

- Purposeful and systematic
- Grounded in empirical data and evidence
- Focused and selective
- Time-bound
- Feasible and informative
- Tailored to specific programs/services

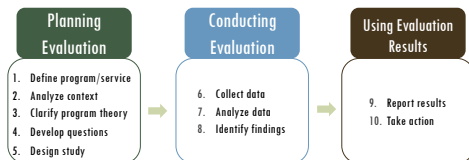


## Designing an Evaluation

THE EVALUATION PROCESS



## The Evaluation Process



## Planning the Evaluation - Step 1: Define and describe the program/service

What is the program/service?



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What are the goals of the program/service?

How is the program/service positioned in the library?



### Planning the Evaluation - Step 2: Analyze context

What is the purpose(s) and desired use(s) of the evaluation?

Who are the key stakeholders? What is their "stake"?

What is the political context?



### Planning the Evaluation - Step 3: Clarify Program Theory

What research/evaluation has already been conducted about your topic?



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What research/evaluation has already been conducted about your topic?

What are the team's mental models?

What are the components of the logic model?



### Planning the Evaluation - Step 4: Develop questions

What does success look like for this program/service?



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What does success look like for this program/service?

What are the evaluation questions?



### Planning the Evaluation - Step 5: Design study

What is your plan for conducting the evaluation (steps 6-8)?

What is your plan for using the evaluation results (steps 9-10)?



### Conducting the Evaluation - Step 6: Collect data

What data collection methods will you use to answer the evaluation questions?

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What data collection methods will you use to answer the evaluation questions?

What steps will you take to collect relevant, credible data?

### Conducting the Evaluation - Step 7: Analyze data

What data collection methods will you use to answer the evaluation questions?

What steps will you take to collect relevant, credible data?

How will you analyze the data?

### Conducting the Evaluation - Step 8: Identify findings

What data collection methods will you use to answer the evaluation questions?

What steps will you take to collect relevant, credible data?

How will you analyze the data?

What are your strategies to integrate and interpret the findings and draw conclusions?

## Using Evaluation Results - Step 9: Report results

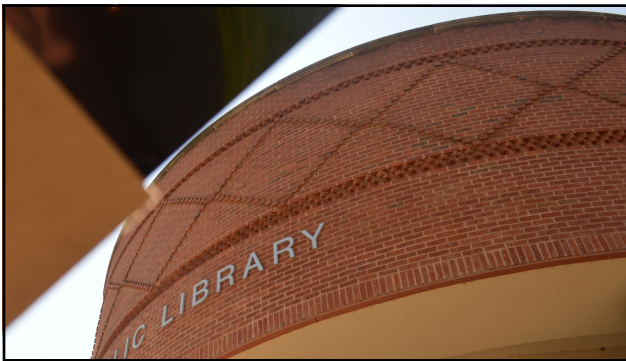
What are your strategies for reporting findings to various audiences?



## Using Evaluation Results - Step 10: Take action

What are your strategies for reporting findings to various audiences?

How will you use the findings?



## Our Plan: Develop an Evaluation for . . .

Emerson Community Library's Project

Your Library's Project

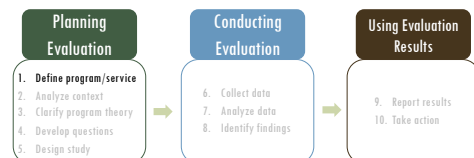


## The Evaluation Process: Step 1

DEFINE AND DESCRIBE THE PROGRAM/SERVICE



## The Evaluation Process



## Planning the Evaluation - Step 1: Define the program/service

What is the program/service?

What are the goals of the program/service?

How is the program/service positioned in the library?

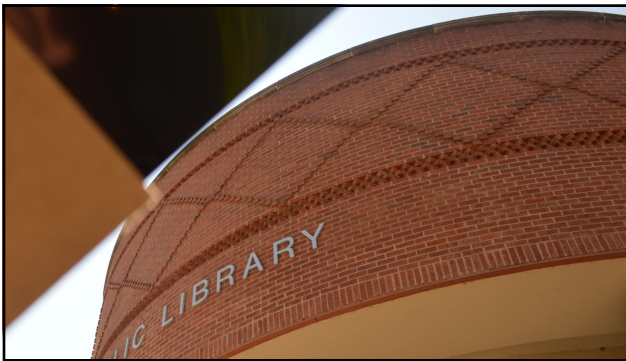


## Planning the Evaluation - Step 1: Define the program/service

What is the program/service?

### Key Considerations:

- What parts of the program/service are you going to evaluate?
- What portion of the population will be included in the evaluation?



## Emerson Community Library: Define the program/service

ECL begins their evaluation planning process by defining the math storytime program series.



Define the program that will be evaluated, based on the case study overview. What parts of the program will you evaluate? Who is your study population?



## Emerson Community Library: Define and describe the program/service

The ECL evaluation team decides to focus on:



### Storytimes:

- Only math storytimes that are part of the library's 8-session math series
- Only those storytimes delivered at the 10 Head Start centers located in the three focal communities with lowest levels of library use



### Population:

- 3-5-year-old children (although Head Start centers serve birth to 5 years old and younger children may attend the math storytimes)
- Head Start teachers in the 10 centers



## Planning the Evaluation - Step 1: Define the program/service

What are the goals of the program/service?

### Key Considerations:

- What are the priorities or aims of the program or service?





## Emerson Community Library

The program's goals include:

- to support a school district initiative focused on boosting elementary school math performance
- to engage 3-5-year-olds in math concepts and activities
- to help Head Start teachers
  - Understand the importance of early math engagement
  - Learn how they can support early math engagement with math concepts and activities
- Incorporate math concepts and activities in their work



## Planning the Evaluation - Step 1: Define the program/service

**How is the program/service positioned in the library?**

Key Considerations:

- What is the history of the program/service?
- How is it funded? Is the funding stable?
- Who are the key players in terms of staff and volunteers?
- What are the attitudes of the key players toward the program/service?



## Emerson Community Library: Define the program/service

The program was launched one year ago, funded by operating funds and a starter grant from a local corporate foundation. A variety of staff and volunteers are involved in the program.



Discuss staff's and volunteers' attitudes toward the math storytimes, and how these might impact the evaluation.



## Your Library: Define the program/service

Work with your library team to establish the following:

What is the program/service?

- What parts of the program/service will you evaluate?
- What portion of the population will be included in your evaluation?

What are the program's/service's goals?

- What are the priorities/aims of the program/service?

How is the program/service positioned in the library?

- What is the history of the program/service?
- How is it funded? Is the funding stable?
- Who are the key players in terms of staff and volunteers?
- What are their attitudes toward the evaluation?

