

FROM EVALUATION
TO ACTION:

Using Evaluation Findings to Improve Your Project



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Welcome!



- ✓ Applied researcher and evaluator
- ✓ Four years with EvaluATE
- ✓ Workplace-based learning study in ATE
- ✓ Cat mom to Jerry, Elaine, and George



Valerie
Marshall



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Objectives

-  Develop a greater awareness about evaluation and its role in the NSF ATE program
-  Identify ways to use evaluation results to benefit your ATE project
-  Know where to find evaluation resources and support

In the bottom right corner of the slide, there is a small circular icon with a white "E" and a blue arrow.

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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.



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What is your relationship with ATE?

-  Not currently funded by ATE but considering applying for a grant
-  Recently awarded an ATE grant and never previously funded
-  Have previous experience with ATE and currently have an ATE grant(s)
-  Not at all affiliated with ATE



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How familiar are you with evaluation?

-  Not at all familiar
-  Slightly familiar
-  Somewhat familiar
-  Familiar
-  Very familiar



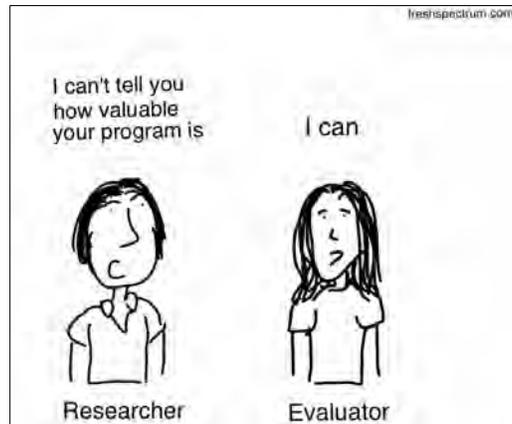
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Evaluation

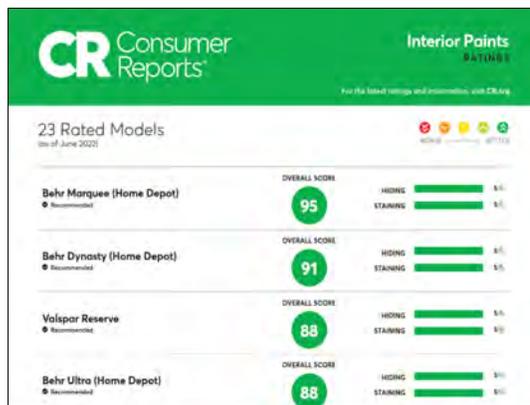
...evaluation is the act of determining the merit, worth, or significance of something, such as a program or product.



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Evaluation

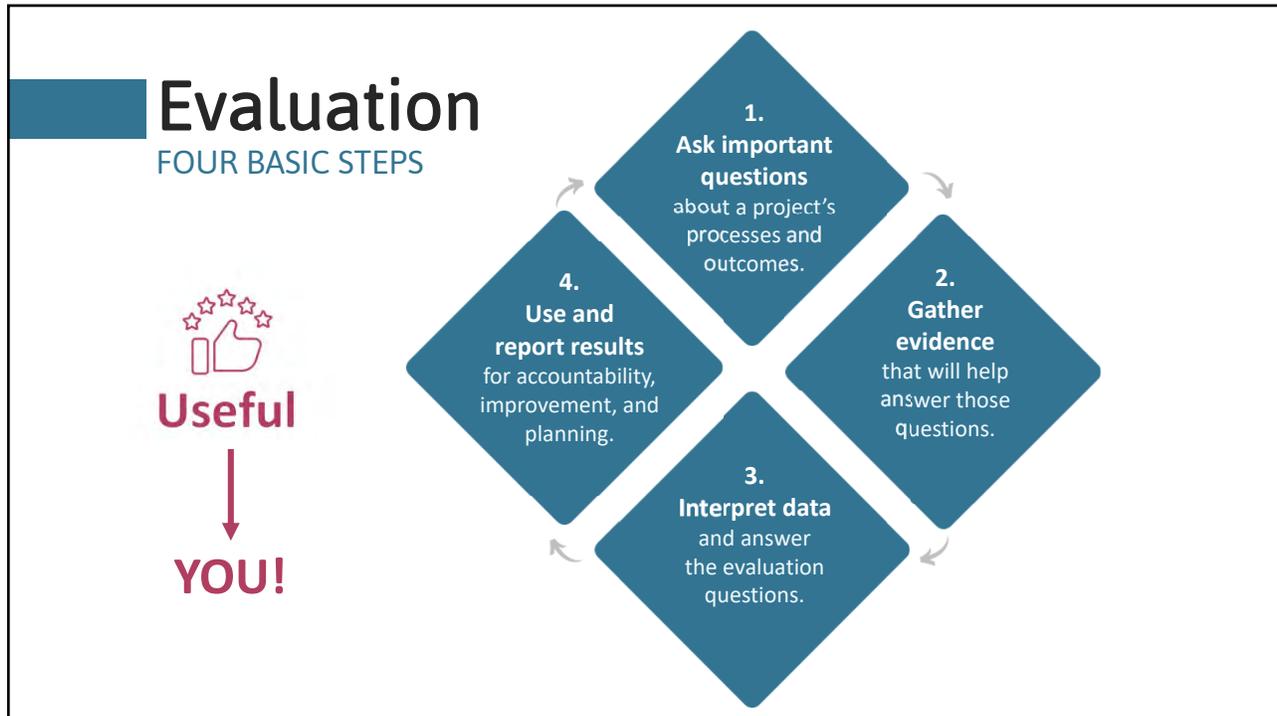
...evaluation is the act of determining the merit, worth, or significance of something, such as a program or product.



Learning

- Make informed decisions
Based on this information, I will purchase Behr, but can use Valspar if it is unavailable...
- Assess what worked well & what needs improvement
Using the overall score was helpful in selecting paints, but I should have considered other factors, too.
- Enhance understanding of a situation or results
According to Consumer Reports, I can see why Behr is a popular brand.

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Evaluation

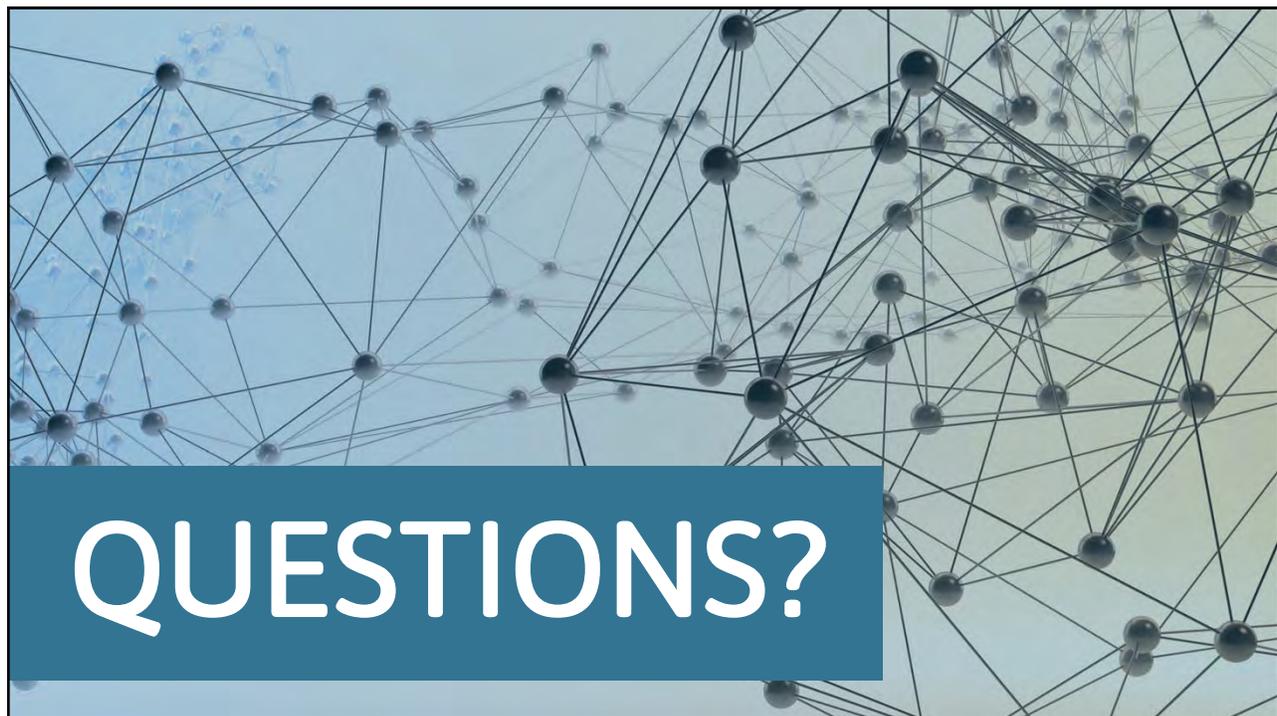
	Research	≠	Evaluation
Purpose 	Generate new knowledge.		Generate information for decision-making, learning, or accountability.
Methods 	Quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method study designs.		Quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method study designs.
Makes Claims/ Judgements? 	No.		Yes!

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Evaluation

	Evaluation	Example
Purpose 	Generate information for decision-making, learning, or accountability.	<i>Decide to make changes to a WBL program. Identify potential student outcomes to track.</i>
Methods 	Quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method study designs.	<i>Interview industry leaders. Survey students and staff. Conduct a literature review.</i>
Makes Claims/Judgements? 	Yes!	<i>How well the program is being implemented; if it should be expanded or changed. Identify worthwhile outcomes.</i>

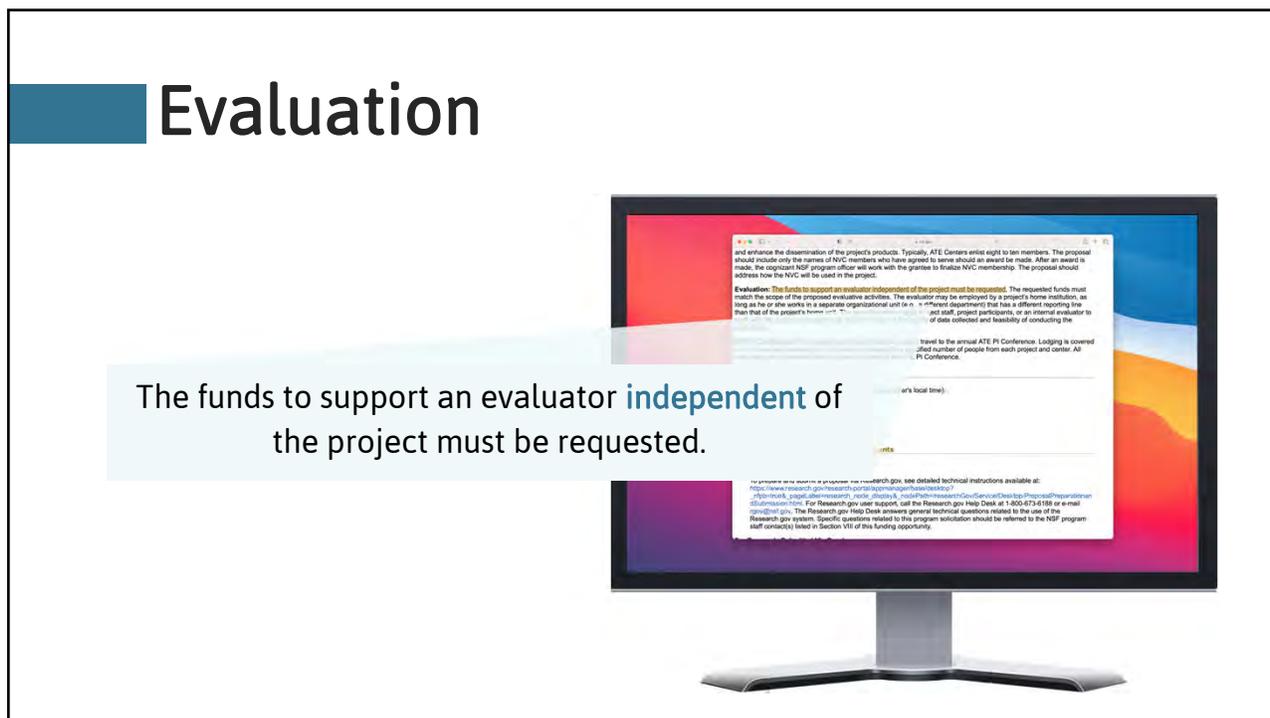
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Evaluation

1. Annual report to NSF
2. Outcomes report to NSF
3. EvaluATE's ATE Survey



The monitor displays a document with the following text:

and enhance the dissemination of the project's products. Typically, ATE Centers entail 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 cognate NSF program officer will work with the grantees 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 from 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 members are to showcase their progress annually at the ATE PI Conference.

C. Due Dates

- **Full Proposal Deadlines** (due by 5 p.m. submitter's local time)
- October 14, 2021
- October 06, 2022
- October 05, 2023

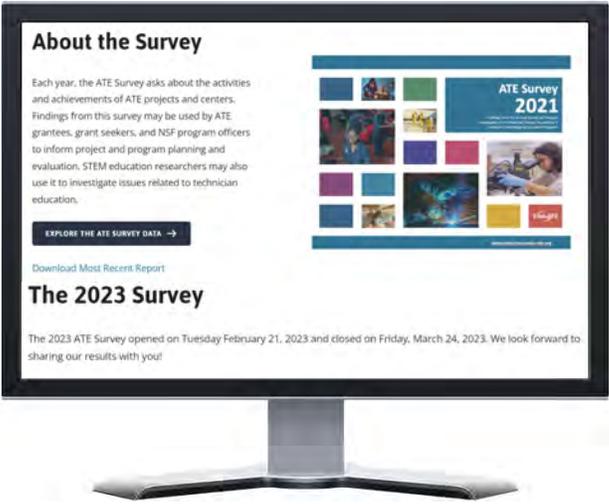
D. Research.gov/Grants.gov Requirements

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/researcher/gethelp/gettingstarted>
<https://www.research.gov/researcher/gethelp/gettingstarted>
For Research.gov user support, call the Research.gov Help Desk at 1-800-875-4188 or email grg@ef.gov. The Research.gov Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the Research.gov system. Specific questions related to the program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this funding opportunity.

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Evaluation



The monitor displays the 'About the Survey' page with the following text:

About the Survey

Each year, the ATE Survey asks about the activities and achievements of ATE projects and centers. Findings from this survey may be used by ATE grantees, grant seekers, and NSF program officers to inform project and program planning and evaluation. STEM education researchers may also use it to investigate issues related to technician education.

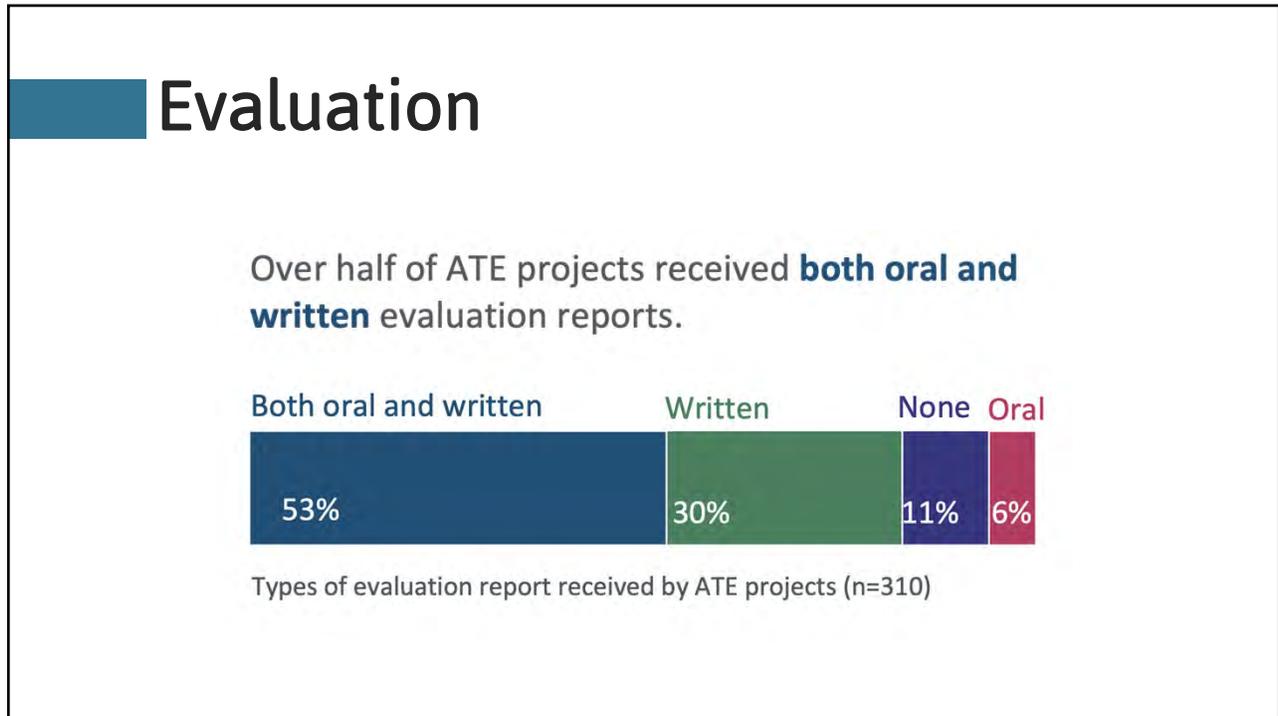
[EXPLORE THE ATE SURVEY DATA →](#)

[Download Most Recent Report](#)

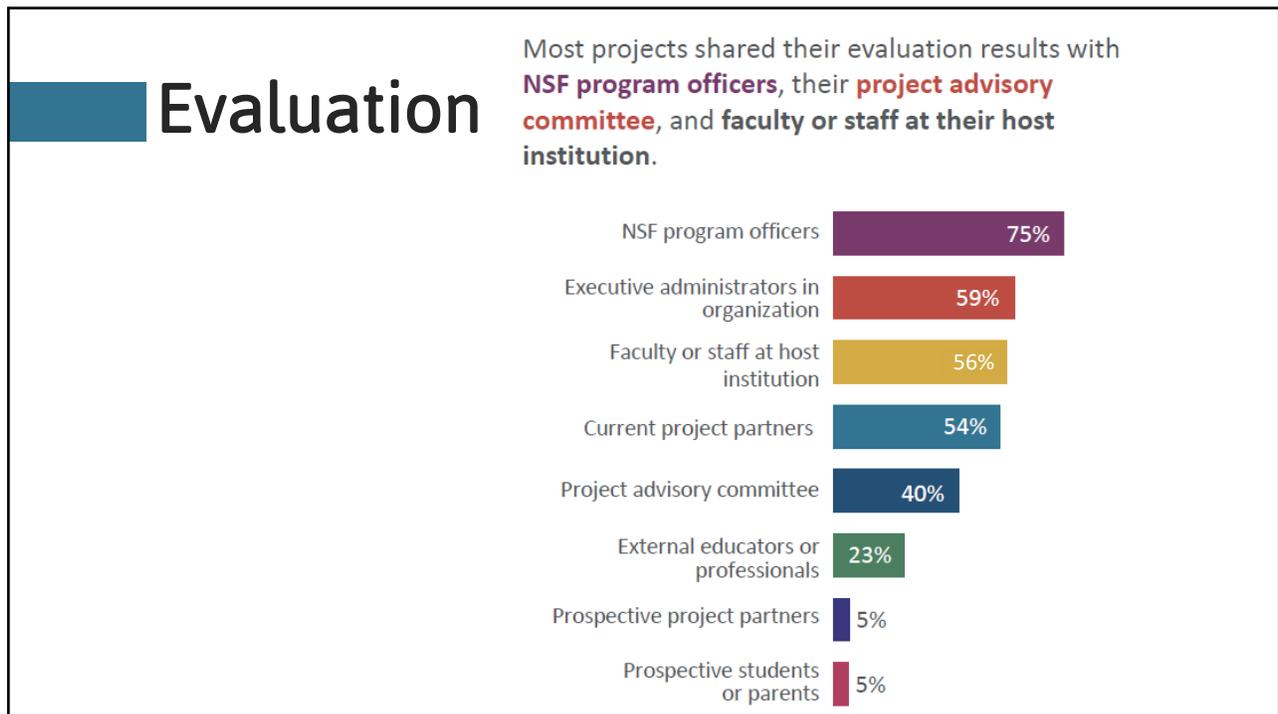
The 2023 Survey

The 2023 ATE Survey opened on Tuesday February 21, 2023 and closed on Friday, March 24, 2023. We look forward to sharing our results with you!

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Evaluation



80% of 2023 ATE Survey respondents made changes to their **project's implementation** as a result of their evaluation findings.

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Evaluation

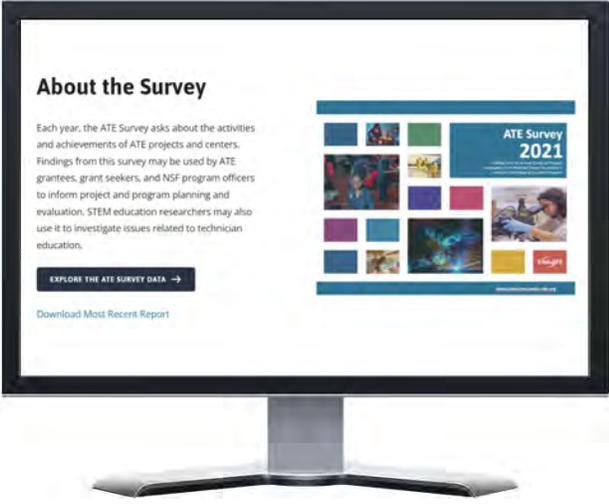


43% of 2023 ATE Survey respondents made changes to their **project's objectives, target audience, or goals** as a result of their evaluation findings.

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Evaluation

1. How do you want to receive evaluation findings?
2. What audiences will you share your results with– and why?



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Evaluation

1. How do you want to receive evaluation findings?
2. What audiences will you share your results with– and why?



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Using evaluation results



Background Information

- ✓ Jen has no previous experience with evaluation.
- ✓ ATE grant is focused on developing a new course for students for an existing program at her college, purchasing equipment, and it will offer a mentorship program and internship and job shadowing to students.
- ✓ Jen and her evaluator discussed at the beginning of the project:
 - Informational needs
 - Communication preferences, including meeting frequency
 - How evaluation results could be used at various points throughout the grant
 - Potential audiences for evaluation results

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Using evaluation results



Year 1

- Identified potential barriers and facilitators to implementation
- Made data-informed decisions about student assessments and outcomes
- Understood how purchased equipment was and could be used

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Using evaluation results



Year 1

- ✓ Used evaluator's recommendations to develop implementation solutions
- ✓ Selected an additional student assessment and outcomes
- ✓ Invested in software that would facilitate tracking usage and student outcomes

Project Improvement 

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Using evaluation results



Year 1

- ✓ Used evaluator's recommendations to develop implementation solutions
- ✓ Selected an additional student assessment and outcomes
- ✓ Invested in software that would facilitate tracking usage and student outcomes

→

- Department staff/leadership
- Other programs
- Institution's marketing team

Project Improvement 

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Using evaluation results



Year 1 **Year 2**

- Student recruitment and participation
- Assessment implementation and quality
- Industry partner recruitment and engagement
- Who and how equipment were being used

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Using evaluation results



- ✓ Continue with only one assessment
- ✓ Expand outreach efforts to industry partners
- ✓ Create additional supports for students in internships and mentoring programs
- ✓ Capture student and teacher outcomes for using purchased equipment

Project Improvement 

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Using evaluation results



- ✓ Continue with only one assessment
- ✓ Expand outreach efforts to industry partners
- ✓ Create additional supports for students in internships and mentoring programs
- ✓ Capture student and teacher outcomes for using purchased equipment

- Involves teachers and staff in other departments
- Connects with student support services

Project Improvement 

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Using evaluation results



Working collaboratively with your evaluator; meeting monthly, outline your data needs, and request how you would like to receive findings.



Identify how you can use evaluation findings at the beginning and throughout the evaluation.



Interpreting evaluation findings with your evaluator and ask for recommendations.



Sharing evaluation results with others, especially key institutional decision-makers, to raise awareness and form or strengthen partnerships.

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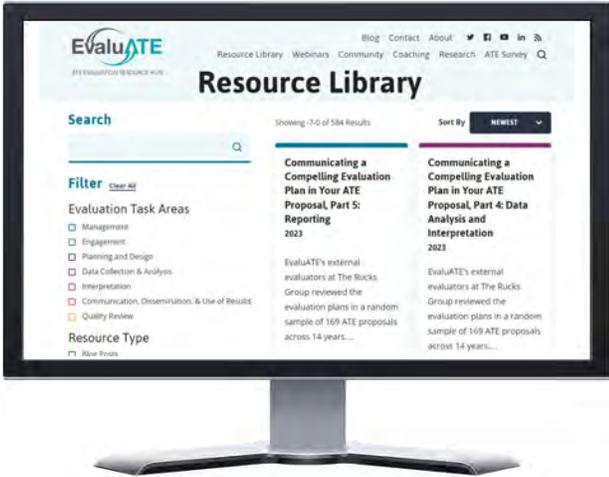
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Evaluation Resources

Link to resource library on EvaluATE's website

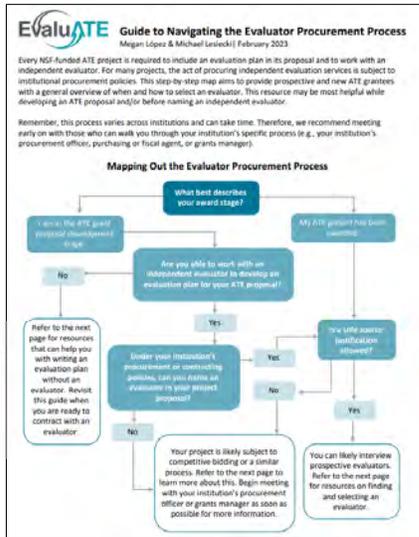


The screenshot shows the EvaluATE Resource Library website. The header includes the EvaluATE logo and navigation links: Resource Library, Webinars, Community, Coaching, Research, ATE Survey. The main content area features a search bar, a filter section with checkboxes for Evaluation Task Areas (Management, Engagement, Planning and Design, Data Collection & Analysis, Interpretation, Communication, Dissemination, & Use of Results, Quality Review) and Resource Type (All Items). Two article previews are visible, both titled "Communicating a Compelling Evaluation Plan in Your ATE Proposal, Part 5: Reporting 2023" and "Communicating a Compelling Evaluation Plan in Your ATE Proposal, Part 4: Data Analysis and Interpretation 2023".

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Evaluation Resources

Guide to navigating the evaluator procurement process.



An individual or entity external to the project who is contracted to conduct an evaluation. The person may be external to your institution or, if the person has no other role in the ATE project, is qualified for the work, and has no potential conflicts regarding project personnel or outcomes, they may be internal to your institution. This is a requirement for all ATE projects, as stated in the NSF Solicitation Guidelines (<https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2021/nsf21001.pdf>).

The formal process of identifying, selecting, and contracting for professional products or services by soliciting bids from prospective vendors (in this case, evaluators). Each institution specifies its own competitive bidding or contracting requirements, so if your project is subject to this process, contact your institution's procurement office or grants management office as soon as possible to learn more.

The policies that dictate the overarching principles and standards used to identify, select, and contract with professional products or services. The purpose of these policies is to ensure that purchasers receive products or services that are the best balance of price, quality, and service while minimizing fraud, waste, and abuse in purchasing. These policies exist in many institutions.

A statement explaining that, to the best of the purchaser's knowledge, only one supplier is appropriately qualified and can provide the necessary products or services sought by the purchaser. This justification must describe the steps taken to research potential vendors and suppliers. Reach out to your institution's procurement officer or grants management office to learn about the circumstances under which a sole source justification is applicable.

Support Your ATE Proposal Evaluation Plan

In Plan Checklist: Know what elements to include in your ATE evaluation plan (<https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2021/nsf21001.pdf>).

In Plan Template: Organize your evaluation plan (<https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2021/nsf21001.pdf>).

Del Template: Create a visual summary for your project activities and anticipated (<https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2021/nsf21001.pdf>).

Int Evaluation into Your ATE Proposal: Check out this video series to learn more (<https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2021/nsf21001.pdf>).

Crash Course for Non-Evaluators: If you're new to evaluation, this webinar is for you (<https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2021/nsf21001.pdf>).

Selecting an Evaluator: Start here if you're looking for an evaluator (<https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2021/nsf21001.pdf>).

Thanks and thank those who contributed to the review of this document: Susan Adams, Colleen Brown, Deborah, Deborah, Leah Davis, Jennifer Harris, Amy Robertson, Ann Ross, and our template.

Material is based on work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. 1841121. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

Evaluation Resources

Checklist for using evaluation findings:



EvaluATE Get the Most Out of Your Project Evaluation:
A Checklist for Using Evaluation Findings
Lysa Wilson Becho, Michael Hamar, & Lori Wingate | October 2020

Evaluation occurs when an evaluation leads to a change in the program being evaluated, the host organization, or people involved in the evaluation or the program. ATE projects are encouraged to use their evaluations for reasons beyond accountability to NSF. The ATE grant solicitation's review criteria reinforce the importance of using evaluation: "to the evaluation likely to provide useful information to the project and others?" Will the project evaluation inform others through the communication of results?" (<https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2021/nsf21001.pdf>). Below are 13 ways that project staff and other stakeholders can use evaluation findings throughout a project's lifecycle.

13 Ways to Use Evaluation Findings

For Project Improvement
Create a feedback loop so you are regularly reflecting on evaluation findings and using them to fine-tune your activities and deepen your project's impact.

- 1. Maximize the strengths of project activities.** Evaluation findings reveal which activities are working and which are not. Set aside time for project staff to review and discuss evaluation findings and their implications for project activities. Leverage findings to increase project impact in the areas that are working well, such as expanding the reach of high-impact activities or dedicating more resources to successful areas.
- 2. Assess and address any trouble areas.** Feedback from project participants, including students, faculty, or industry partners, could identify aspects of the project that are experiencing difficulties or are not making the intended impact. These insights will help you to more fully understand barriers to success and can suggest modifications to project activities, such as changes in curriculum content, training materials, or instructional activities.
- 3. Ensure reach to project's target audience.** Obtain a deeper understanding of who your project is reaching and who is benefiting from the project. Disaggregate findings by participant characteristics such as gender, race, age, discipline, enrollment status, or other factors. This can determine whether some are benefiting more from your project than others or if an intended audience is not benefiting as expected.
- 4. Add or modify industry engagements.** Evaluation findings may identify a gap in industry partnerships or business expertise. Use these insights to recruit new industry partners or find additional opportunities for collaboration.

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Resources

ATE EVALUATION COACHING

evalu-ate.org/coaching



Amy Germuth



Lola Adedokun



Keith Sturgis

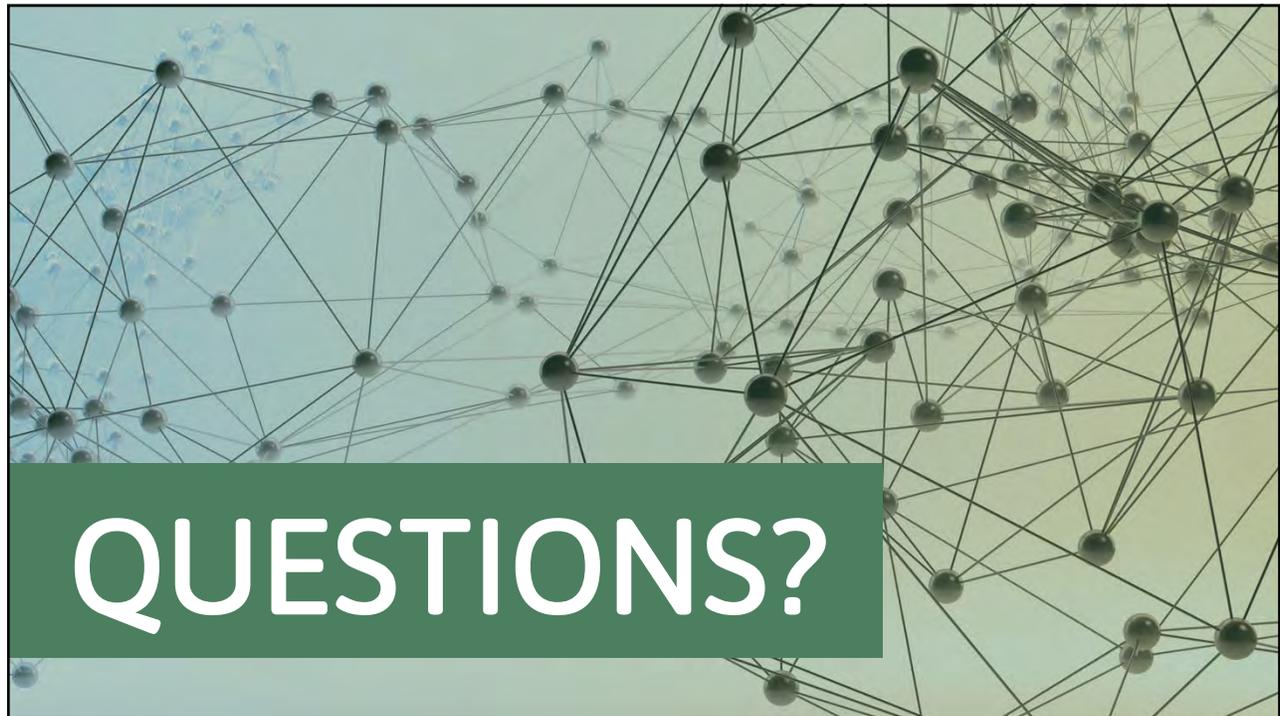
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CONNECT WITH US

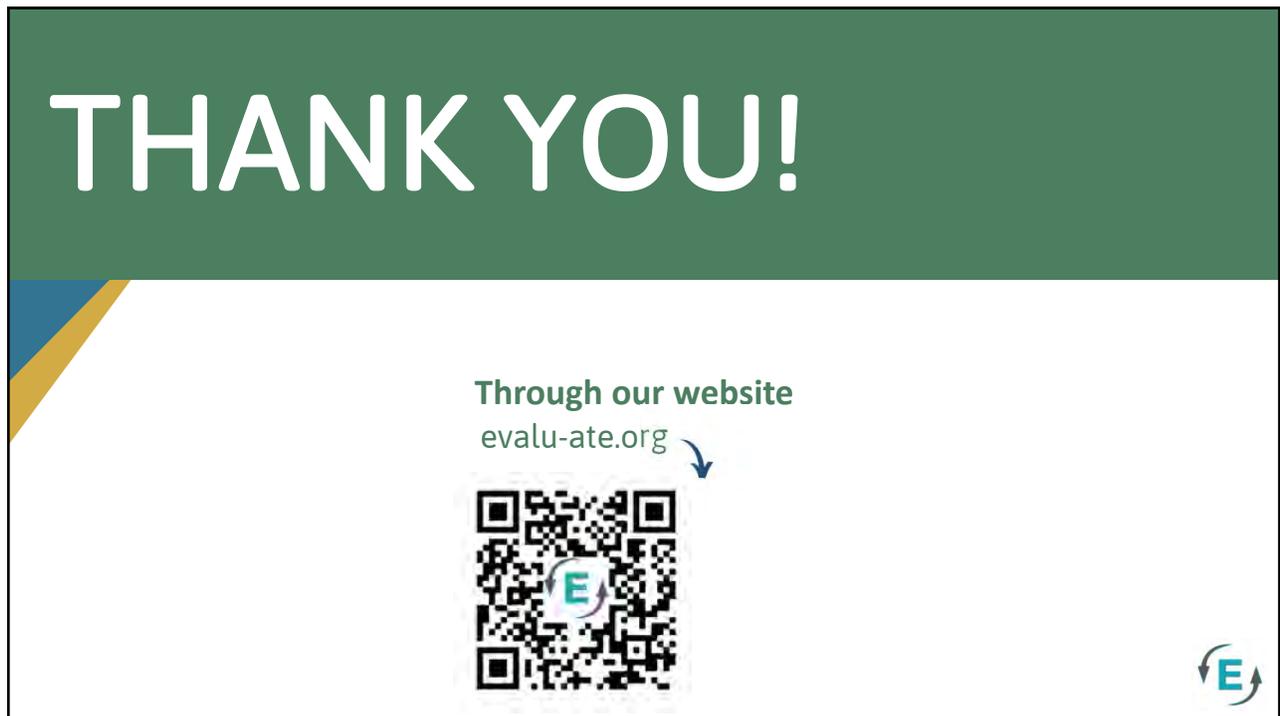
Through our website
evalu-ate.org



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