



## Critical Evaluation Questioning Guide

This guide is meant to serve as a reflection on your evaluation process, from motivation & vision through dissemination. The answers don't necessarily need to result in change, and the guide can be re-visited throughout the evaluation project. Not all questions will be applicable to every evaluation context. For instance, some questions may be more relevant for qualitative evaluation approaches and some more applicable for quantitative evaluation approaches. The guide is organized by stages in the evaluation process, but many questions are applicable to multiple stages.

Questions to ask yourself while reading the Critical Evaluation Questioning Guide:

- To what extent are you already engaging with these questions in your own work?
- Which questions do you find most challenging to address adequately?
- Which areas would you like to focus on refining/improving upon moving forward?
- How can you use these questions in the context of collaborative evaluation?
- What would you add to this list?

### The Guide

#### Motivation & Vision

- a) What are your/the evaluation teams' positionalities and identities, and how does a recognition of those positionalities inform the ethics behind the work? What are your motivations, and how should those motivations be explored to ensure that you should be embarking on this work?
- b) Who is involved in determining what to evaluate, and how? Why is that relevant?
- c) How were the evaluation question(s) constructed? Whose voices were at the table? Whose voices were not, and why? What are the implications of those choices?
- d) What are the intended outcomes of the evaluation? How were they envisioned? Why is that meaningful?
- e) What might be unintended outcomes of this evaluation? How can you mitigate negative impacts on the participants and the community? How will you/the evaluation team prepare to respond to unintended or unforeseen consequences of the evaluation?
- f) How, if at all, does the evaluation make visible, challenge, or address structural systems of oppression?
- g) How does your evaluation challenge dominant and often discriminatory ideologies, such as objectivity, meritocracy, colorblindness, and equal opportunity?

#### Project Design

- h) Who are the individuals on your evaluation team or on the project team, and how are roles and decision-making distributed? Are you cognizant of power dynamics within the group, and are you working to challenge existing hierarchies through an equitable distribution of roles?
- i) What individuals/communities will be impacted by your evaluation? How do you identify them? What are your plans to engage impacted communities? To what extent does the



timing/method of engagement require involvement of community members, and to what extent do they have interest and capacity to participate?

- j) How, if at all, is there a distinction between evaluator and participants (how involved are participants in the entire evaluation process)?
- k) How, if at all, does this evaluation incorporate interdisciplinary perspectives?
- l) How will the project budget allow for compensation of participants? How can the budget be adjusted to accommodate participant support? What other sorts of currencies (i.e. experience, access to services, access to stakeholders) are available to compensate participants and/or community members?

### **Data Collection**

- m) To what extent are you building data collection instruments with community knowledge and participation?
- n) How will you handle issues of confidentiality and protecting participant identities?
- o) How is data collection done? How can it be co-driven by community stakeholders?
- p) Is there a possibility of re-traumatization through evaluation? What are you doing to mitigate trauma?

### **Analysis & Interpretation**

- q) How do you understand the data? What data are you choosing to report, and what data are omitted/are not being emphasized?
- r) How are you involving participants or members of impacted communities in conducting the analysis? Are participants involved in validating findings to increase trustworthiness?
- s) How do you incorporate member-checking so that participants can make sure they are not identifiable in your reports and/or manuscripts?
- t) How are you incorporating participants' voices or those of impacted communities into the story you tell?

### **Reporting & Dissemination**

- u) How are you disseminating the evaluation findings and making them useful for the community?
- v) How do dissemination efforts examine next steps for participants/communities? Is the language used in dissemination accessible to a lay audience?
- w) How are you inviting participants to help share the results of the evaluation?
- x) In what ways are you inviting participants to weigh in on implications of the evaluation and directions for future investigation and practice?
- y) How might the evaluation results be shared in a way that is respectful and generative for the community involved? To what extent are the findings and results honoring participants in finding meaning?

### **References**

- Lewis, A. A. & Bryan, M.L. (2018). Bridging Culturally Responsive and Critical Race Evaluation Approaches. 2018 American Evaluation Association Annual Conference. Cleveland, OH.
- Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2002). Critical Race Methodology: Counter-Storytelling as an Analytical Framework for Education Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(1), 23–44.  
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