



INDIGENOUS EVALUATION COMMITTEE

MEETING COMMUNIQUÉ, 26 APRIL 2022

The 11th meeting of the Indigenous Evaluation Committee was held in Canberra on 26 April 2022.

Welcome to new members

The IEC has a new Chair, Associate Professor Jason Ardler PSM, and a new independent member, Ms Nattlie (Natt) Smith.

Assoc Prof Ardler is an Aboriginal man of the Yuin nation, with cultural ties to the NSW South Coast. For 20 years, Jason held senior executive roles in the NSW public sector, including seven years as the Head of Aboriginal Affairs NSW, where he led Government strategy and reform in Aboriginal economic participation, community governance, land rights, culture and heritage, community safety, environmental health and service accountability.

Ms Smith is a proud Wiradjuri woman from Condobolin/Orange NSW. She has over 20 years of experience in both government and non-government policy and operational roles across many human service areas. Ms Smith is committed to making a positive difference through culturally responsive policy development, service design, program implementation, evaluation and analysis.

Key message

It was outgoing member Dr Wendy Jarvie's final IEC meeting and members recognised her significant contribution serving on the IEC from 2018 to 2022. In her parting advice for the new IEC members Dr Jarvie noted the IEC's biggest contribution was to help the NIAA ensure there was a strong Indigenous voice in evaluation methodology and governance. Dr Jarvie urged the NIAA to consider how the IEC could help strengthen monitoring as a component of successful evaluation.

Key message

The IEC discussed the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) Evaluation Framework and principles and how the principles guide evaluation of IAS programs and activities delivered by the NIAA. Members commented that overall the current IAS Evaluation Framework was fit for purpose as a foundation document. The IEC highlighted the importance of self-determination and participation in evaluation processes and how NIAA regionally based staff were important in managing relationships and working with evaluators

Key message

As part of understanding the NIAA's operating context IEC members were briefed by the NIAA on the implementation of Local & Regional Voice (LRV) arrangements which seeks to establish a nationally consistent system for Indigenous Australians and all governments to work in partnership at the local and regional level to drive targeted local solutions and practical action plans to improve outcomes in their communities. Members were also updated on the Remote Engagement Program (REP) which seeks to develop a new approach to assisting job-seekers in remote areas of Australia and will replace the current Community Development Program (CDP) in 2024. The IEC gave feedback on some of the delivery and co-design complexities and challenges and shared principles for developing participatory and collaborative approaches to co-design based on self determination. Stronger partnerships would require support from the NIAA for stronger governance systems.

Next meeting

The IEC's next meeting will be held in Canberra on 22 August 2022.

Assoc Prof. Jason Ardler

IEC Chair