Getting Started with Your ATE Evaluation
1. Evaluation’s role in your project
2. Where to report evaluation results
3. How to learn more
Evaluation’s role in your project
It’s a Fan!

It’s a Wall!

It’s a Spear!

It’s a Snake!

It’s a Tree!

It’s a Rope!
It’s our advisory committee’s feedback!

It’s research!

It’s someone else saying if we met our goals!

It’s a survey!

It’s course evaluations!

It’s the NSF annual report!

EVALUATION
EVALUATION
the systematic determination
of a project’s merit, worth, or significance
1. **Ask important questions** about a project’s processes and outcomes.

2. **Gather evidence** that will help answer those questions.

3. **Interpret findings** and answer the evaluation questions.

4. **Use the information** for accountability, improvement, and planning.
IMPROVEMENT
EVIDENCE
ACCOUNTABILITY
“The most important purpose of evaluation is not to prove, but to improve.”

— Daniel Stufflebeam
Where to report evaluation information
Where will you use evaluation information?

• Feedback to project staff and stakeholders
• Annual report to NSF
• Annual ATE survey
• New proposals
Feedback to Project Staff and Stakeholders

- EVALUATOR
- PI
- OTHER PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS (e.g., partners, advisors, participants)
- PROGRAM OFFICER
Annual Report to NSF

- Goals
- Activities, Objectives, Results, and/or Outcomes
New Proposals: 
Results from Prior NSF Support

“specific outcomes and results including metrics to demonstrate the impact of the project”

—ATE Program Solicitation
How to learn more
Index Cards

Project Title

PI’s Name

Evaluator’s Name

Your Question about Evaluation
Make sure your evaluator’s contract is in place

Set up a meeting with your evaluator

Make appointment with college “data person”

Set up a timeline for your evaluation
Shorten the Evaluation Learning Curve: AVOID THESE COMMON PITFALLS

Lori Wingate

This EvaluATE newsletter issue is focused on getting started with evaluation. It’s oriented to new ATE principal investigators who are getting their projects off the ground, but I think it holds some good reminders for veteran PIs as well. To shorten the evaluation learning curve, avoid these common pitfalls:

Putting off dealing with the evaluation until you are less busy. "Less busy" is a mythical place and you will probably never get there. I am both an evaluator and a client of evaluation services, and even I have been guilty of paying less attention to evaluation in favor of "more urgent" matters. Here are some tips for ensuring your project’s evaluation gets the attention it needs:
(a) Set a recurring conference call or meeting with your evaluator (e.g., every two to three weeks); (b) Put evaluation at the top of your project team’s meeting agendas, or hold separate meetings to focus exclusively on evaluation matters; (c) Give someone other than the PI responsibility for attending to the evaluation—not to replace the PI’s attention, but to ensure the PI and other project members are staying on top of the evaluation and communicating regularly with the evaluator; (d) Commit to using the evaluation results in a timely way—if you do something on a recurring basis, make sure you gather feedback from those involved and use it to improve the next activity.

Assuming you will need your first evaluation report at the end of Year 1, PIs must submit their annual reports to NSF 90 days prior to the end of the current budget period. So if your grant started on September 1, your first annual report is due around June 1. And it will take some time to prepare, so you should probably start writing in early May. You’ll want to include at least some of your evaluation results, so start working with your evaluator now to figure what information is most important to collect right now.

Veteran PIs: What tips do you have for shortening the evaluation learning curve? Submit a blog to EvaluATE and tell your story and lessons learned for the benefit of new PIs (evaluate.org/category/blogs).

SURVEY SAYS

The ATE program supported nearly 1,300 programs at 2-year colleges and secondary schools across the country in 2014.

The full report of the 2015 ATE survey findings is available now, in a new and improved format. Read the full report and view the data snapshots—not off the press—at (evaluate.org/annual_survey).

In 2014, the ATE program supported...

- 720 two-year college programs
- 540 secondary school programs
# PI “To-Do” Checklist

## Evaluation 101

### Principal Investigator “To-Do” Checklist: Before Launching Your Project Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to Do</th>
<th>To/With Whom</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Announce or discuss NSF grant award.</td>
<td>Evaluator, partners and advisors/advisory groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues at your institution</td>
<td>• SRC/grant writer &amp; Data person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fellow faculty</td>
<td>• PR/Marketing Dept.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Business &amp; Purchasing Offices</td>
<td>The public— with attribution to NSF!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process contracts.</td>
<td>Evaluator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss evaluation expectations, processes, activities, and timeline</td>
<td>Partners (include providing data as contract obligation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(note IRB considerations)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Review goals/objectives and identify data capture</td>
<td>Evaluator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>needed (and by whom) for the evaluation.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Determine data definitions, time frames for data capture (e.g., by</td>
<td>Data Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semester), reporting frequency/dates for project. Don’t forget to</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>include current status or recent history for baseline data. Review data</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>management plan.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate data needs/timelines/reporting dates to partners from whom</td>
<td>Co-PIs, partner institutions/organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>you will need data.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Review/set goals for success if not specific in proposal (actual</td>
<td>Evaluator, Co-PIs, partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>numbers, not just %) with interim benchmarks for gauging progress.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan evaluation activities and discuss evaluation tools to be used.</td>
<td>Evaluator, Co-PIs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use uniform tools (e.g., surveys) across partnership and include the</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>capture of demographic data and other information that will be needed</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>for the ATE Annual Survey (if not specifically for your project).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss evaluation reports to be provided and reporting dates (align</td>
<td>Evaluator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deadlines to your reporting needs. NSF annual report, advisory meeting,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>etc.).</td>
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</table>

Mentor-Connect: Leadership Development and Outreach Initiative for ATE

Mentor-Connect@rete.edu

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Blog & Social Media

Changing Focus Mid-Project
Asa Bradley
Rebranding the 21st Century IT Technician

Breaking Up is Hard to Do
Mike Lesiecki
Maricopa Advanced Technological Education Center

ATE Small Project Evaluation
Lori Wingate
EvaluATE
RESEARCH & EVALUATION

at the ATE PI conference

THURSDAY

7:45-8:45 a.m.
Breakfast Roundtable
Table 11. Advanced Evaluation Professional Development
Lana Rucks and Lori Wingate

2:30-3:45 p.m.
Formative Assessment – Improving Your ATE Delivery and Impact
Amy Gullickson and Arlen Gullickson
(Cabinet Room)

3:15-3:45 p.m.
XCOT – Cross-Standard, Cross-Project Classroom Observation Technology
Talbot Bielefeldt
(Capitol Room)

3-4:30 p.m.
Logic Models and Evaluation Planning – Working Together
Vicky A Coulon
(Embassy Room)

4:45-5:15 p.m.
Mid-Life Project Evaluation – Setting the Stage for Continued Funding
Lori Wingate and Kirk Knestis
(Governors Room)

Leveraging Open Source Software to Support Your Project
Charlotte Forrest, Michael Lesiecki, Pamela K. Wallace, Edward Almasy
(Capitol Room)
Showcase Booth 3
Questions?