



# INDIGENOUS EVALUATION COMMITTEE

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Background and context

On 1 July 2019, the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) was established. In February 2018, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet released an Evaluation Framework to guide the evaluation of programs and activities under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS).

The IAS Evaluation Framework is intended to align with the role of the Productivity Commission in overseeing the development and implementation of a whole-of-government evaluation strategy of policies and programs that affect Indigenous Australians.

The Evaluation Framework aims to:

- generate high quality evidence that is used to inform decision making;
- strengthen Indigenous leadership in evaluation;
- build capability by fostering a collaborative culture of evaluative thinking and continuous learning;
- emphasise collaboration and ethical ways of doing high quality evaluation at the forefront of evaluation practice in order to inform decision making; and
- promote dialogue and deliberation to further develop the maturity of evaluation over time.

The Evaluation Framework is principles-based and supports an impact-oriented monitoring and evaluation system. It is intended to generate and use evidence of how activities funded under the IAS translate to improved outcomes for Indigenous Australians.



Figure 1: Core values and best practice principles guide activities of the IAS Evaluation Framework.

## Role of the Indigenous Evaluation Committee

The Indigenous Evaluation Committee (the Committee) will support transparency and ensure that the conduct and prioritisation of evaluations is independent and impartial. Its objectives will be to strengthen the quality, credibility and influence of the evaluations of policies and programs led by the NIAA through the provision of independent strategic and technical advice.

## Responsibilities and Tasks

The Committee will have the following responsibilities:

- oversee the implementation of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy Evaluation Framework;
- provide advice to the NIAA in preparing its forward program of evaluation activities and endorse the Annual Evaluation Work Plan;
- provide technical advice, guidance and quality assurance of the NIAA's cross cutting evaluations, and a selection of operational evaluations to ensure they are high quality, ethical, inclusive and focussed on improving outcomes for Indigenous Australians;
- review and provide a critical summary of cross cutting evaluation reports;
- foster leadership and assist in bringing the diverse perspectives of Indigenous Australians into evaluation processes;
- participate in relevant meetings and events to help promote the IAS Evaluation Framework and continual improvements in evaluation and its use;

- provide occasional technical advice to the NIAA on evaluation activity outside of the IAS.

NIAA will provide Secretariat services for the Committee, including coordinating and drafting papers for the Committee and preparing minutes of Committee meetings.

## **Membership**

The Committee will be comprised of at least three and no more than five independent external members (including the Chair) and a NIAA Deputy Chief Executive Officer.

Members may be based domestically or internationally.

The Indigenous Productivity Commissioner and members of the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) may attend meetings at the invitation of the Chair.

The Committee may also invite NIAA Group Heads and representatives from other relevant government and non-government organisations to attend meetings where an agenda item is relevant to their area of responsibility. They may attend in the capacity of observer or active participant at the discretion of the Chair.

Representatives of the Committee should be available to meet with the IAC once a year to discuss evaluation activity.

The Committee will meet physically three times a year in Canberra and through telephone/video conference as required by the Chair. It may also consider documents out-of-session at the request of the Chair. International members are not required to attend all meetings in person, but must attend via video- or tele-conferencing. International members must attend one meeting per year in person.

The independent external members will be appointed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NIAA for a 3 year term. Members may be reappointed for an additional term. Members cannot serve more than two terms.

## **Accountability Mechanisms**

The Committee reports through the Chair to the CEO of NIAA.

Committee members will assist the Chair to carry out the responsibilities and tasks listed and will be available to meet as scheduled.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

All Committee members must declare any actual, possible or perceived conflicts of interest in writing. NIAA will provide Committee members with a Conflict of Interest declaration to complete and return prior to their first meeting.

All Committee members must declare their outside interests (actual or perceived) at the commencement of each meeting and as they arise out of session. Members must absent themselves from any discussions and judgments that involve activities of any individual, external consulting firm, or other organisation in which they have a financial or personal interest.

All Committee members must have a sound understanding of the Australian Public Service (APS) values, set out in section 10 of the [\*Public Service Act 1999\*](#).