

Introduction to Evaluation: Measuring impact for Europlanet RI 2024

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Overview

- What is evaluation?
- Why evaluate?
- How to do it? (Logic model)
- Evaluation for Europlanet RI 2024
 - Structure
 - Your role (and mine)

What is evaluation?

- “A **systematic** determination of a subject's **merit, worth** and **significance**, using **criteria** governed by a set of standards.”
- Assessment of whether aims of [RI 2024] were reached
- Data collected and assessed against set of criteria
- Wide range of approaches used
- More specific than ‘research’ (but it’s a continuum)

Why evaluate?

- Funder [EC] demands it (and won't just accept your word for it)
 - May be needed to obtain future funding, or as a condition of existing funding
- To find out whether activity is actually meeting its aims and objectives
- To be able to argue for your activity's value
 - Advocacy within Horizon Europe
- To improve your practice/activity [**sustainability**]
- To inform the development of other activities
- It benefits you!

Starting questions

- What do I want to find out? (What do we **need** to know? What would we **like** to know? Impact?)
- How will the findings be used?
- What methods might I use? (WHO might collect the data?)
- How might I analyse the data?
- What are my resource (time/budget) constraints?

Choosing methods

- Quantitative: concerned with discovering 'facts'; measurement – numerical; better suited for 'Who?' and 'What?' questions
- Qualitative: concerned with understanding situations/experiences from the participant's perspective; in-depth, rich detail and context; better suited for answering 'Why?' questions
- Mixed methods

Evaluation: Summative/Impact

- At the end
- Establishes whether the activity has met its objectives
- May try to look at impact
- Most effective/productive when can inform future projects/activities

Logic model - overview

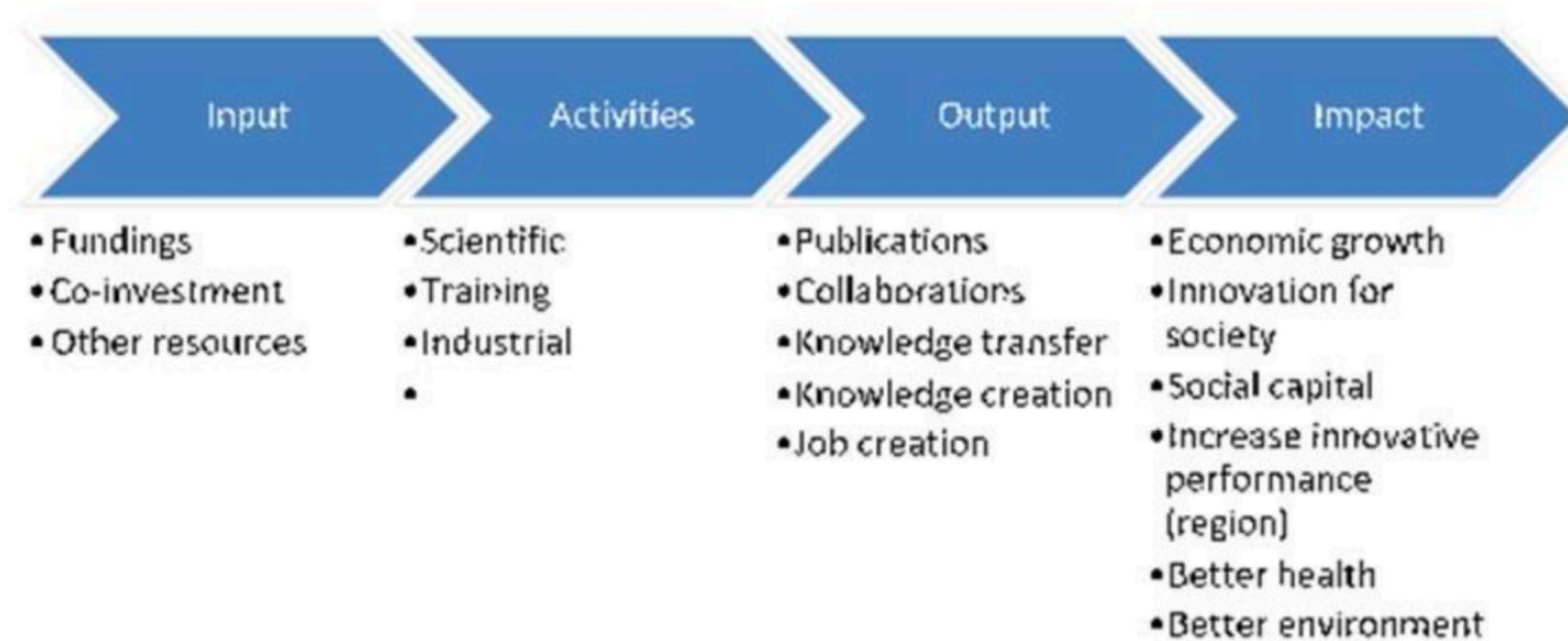
- A visual depiction of how a project (or infrastructure) works
- Logic models link outcomes with project activities and underlying assumptions
- Should be developed collaboratively
- Can evolve and change over the course of a project
- Consists of inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes/impacts

Some definitions

- Inputs – resources available to or needed for the project
- Activities – things the project does (e.g. providing visits, allowing access to data, etc)
- Outputs – products or services of the activity; QUANTIFIABLE
- Outcomes – changes to individuals, groups or communities resulting from experience

Logic model

Figure 1. The logic model – how to measure impacts



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Indicators

- Link to evaluation
- What are the (key) indicators (for TAs, VAs, NAs)?
- How do we capture them (methods)?

Evaluation for RI 2024 – overview

- Work-in-progress (comprehensive)
- Working backwards from impacts – what is the difference we've made and how did we do it?
- Attend to EC interests: working with industry, value of TA visits (are they necessary?), socioeconomic impact, role of RI in widening science base in Europe [big picture]
- Series of case studies, structured around indicators

Evaluation for RI 2024 – structure

- Series of case studies, structured around indicators
- Online templates to collect quantitative indicators/metrics
 - Organised by TA, VA, NA
 - Can be modified!
- Follow-up surveys with participants (TA, NA)
- Interviews (telephones) with subset of participants (e.g. visitors to TAs)
 - ‘Train the trainer’
- Focus groups at conferences
- Ongoing discussions with TA/VA/NA managers (collating other data sources)

Evaluation for RI 2024 – your role

- Depends on your role (TA/VA/NA)
- Filling in online templates with quantitative indicators/metrics
 - Data entry – ongoing/every six months [tbc]
 - Entry structured around timelines of activities (so likely to vary)
- Distributing participant surveys [TA/NA]
- Identify individuals to to interview (e.g. visitors to TAs)
- Feeding back on the process!

Questions?

Evaluation for RI 2024 – Today's task

- On your tables (grouped by VA/TA/NA)
- Review impacts and indicators table
- Discuss:
 - Which are applicable to your activity? (Please tag with your activity)
 - Which are priorities?
 - Are there other indicators better suited to capturing these aims?
 - ARE THERE ANY MISSING??
- Feedback