



2020 ACTION PLAN



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WASHINGTON EVALUATORS MISSION STATEMENT

Washington Evaluators is devoted to strengthening the evaluation community in the Washington, DC area. Washington Evaluators serves the evaluation community by advocating for the growth of the evaluation profession and by fostering state-of-the-art knowledge and information sharing about evaluation practice.

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Introduction

As Washington Evaluators has grown over the past 36 years and the make-up of the organization's membership has changed, we recognize that the members' goals for the organization may also have evolved. Acknowledging the value of periodic review and goal-setting as critical elements of successful organizational management, the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan for Washington Evaluators aimed to guide the future actions of the Board of Directors. This plan was intended to ensure that the top priorities of our members guide the day-to-day operations of the Board and that the overarching goals drive future planning in the organization.

Strategic plans are not intended as static documents; rather this plan is a living roadmap that will require input and action of the entire organization's membership to be successful. Through the five years of this plan, the Board of Directors outlined annual actions that helped achieve the strategic goals and objectives (designated with ►) in this longer-term plan. This year, we release the final action plan for this strategic plan. In 2021, the Washington Evaluators board will prepare a new plan appropriate for the organization as it enters its 37th year.

It is appropriate to note that as the Board prepared this plan during March and April 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, forcing the Board to consider how the organization connects and supports our community at a time when meeting in person is no longer possible. For this reason, activities and events discussed in this action plan may be virtual in format rather than in-person. What matters is that we continue to offer opportunities to nurture our community of practice and build capacity for public good.

Strategic Goals of Washington Evaluators

Washington Evaluators helps develop evaluators professionally and promotes a collaborative evaluation community through a variety of activities. In order to achieve the mission of Washington Evaluators, we have four key strategic goals: strengthen the sustainability of the evaluation community; enhance evaluation relationships and interactions; support individual evaluators' professional development needs; ensure strong administration of the organization. Each of these four strategic goals is a core component of the Washington Evaluators mission, and each suggests specific potential contributions to the evaluation community in the Washington, DC region that form the basis for objectives (►) described below.

Strategic Goal #1:

Strengthen the Sustainability of the Evaluation Community

Washington Evaluators strives to strengthen the sustainability of the evaluation community, within the DC-area and nationally and recognizes this is a fundamental role of the organization. This strategic goal denotes Washington Evaluators' unique ability and position to serve as a national leader to strengthen the sustainability of evaluation. As one of the oldest professional evaluation organizations in the United States, Washington Evaluators is well-suited to provide expertise to other organizations and individuals throughout the country, but only so long as the organization is itself sustainable (see also Strategic Goal #4). Further, by geographic proximity to the nation's capitol, many leaders in evaluation policy are located in the D.C. area. This access allows

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Washington Evaluators to serve in a vital role of providing connections to government agencies, evaluation contractors, and non-profit and think tank leaders to support the evidence movement and a vibrant evaluation community.

► **Objective 1.1: Recruit and help educate the next generation of professional evaluators in the Washington, DC area.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
1.1.1. Launch the Next Generation 2020 initiative to focus support on students of program evaluation and emerging evaluators	President; New Professional and Student Subcommittee; Community Engagement and Communications Committees	30-Mar-20	Public statement posted
1.1.2. Organize first WE career fair with area partners	New Professional and Student Subcommittee; Communications Chair	30-Nov-20	Completed event with at least 30 attendees
1.1.3. Meet with University Ambassadors to review current activities and strategize on how to improve the organization's support of local graduate students in evaluation.	New Professional and Student Subcommittee	30-Aug-20	Recommendations to Board on improving student support after meeting
1.1.4. Award the New Professional Scholarship(s)	Scholarship Coordinator, Community Engagement Committee	30-Jun-20	Awarded scholarship(s); Recipient presentation to the Board

► **Objective 1.2: Promote the field of evaluation nationally.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
1.2.1. Recruit chair for facilitating Local Arrangements Working Group (LAWG) for 2021 AEA Conference, which will be held in Washington, DC.	President Elect	31-Oct-20	Chair identified and announced to AEA and WE members
1.2.2. Curate an AEA365 week dedicated to describing Evaluation Without Borders projects	Communications Chair, Evaluation Without Borders Coordinator	31-Oct-20	Published posts

► **Objective 1.3: Provide expertise to other professional evaluation development and advocacy organizations.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
1.3.1. Contribute to the Local Affiliates Collaborative (LAC) through active participation in LAC monthly meetings and training events.	President Elect	Monthly	Participation reflected in LAC minutes
1.3.2. Promote other local affiliates' activities to WE members	President Elect; Communications Chair	Ongoing	Communication materials (tweets, posts, Digests)

► **Objective 1.4: Recruit and retain DC-based evaluators to support organizational sustainability.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
1.4.1. Reconcile DMV AEA members who are not WE members and reach out to them about the benefits of joining WE	Membership Chair	Ongoing	Increased member count
1.4.2. Encourage current organizational sponsors to sign up 5 of their employees as WE members	Membership Chair	Ongoing	Increased member count
1.4.3. Increase relationships with other member societies such as AAAS, SID-W, DC Sociological Group, etc.	Membership Chair	Ongoing	Cross-promotion posted in other societies' newsletters
1.4.4. Survey current and former members to obtain information as to preferences on communication, member fees, interest in events, etc.	Membership Chair	30-Jun-20	Recommendations for improving membership program presented to Board

► **Objective 1.5: Clearly communicate the benefits of membership and promote evaluation to the community.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
1.5.1. Utilize the weekly Digest, website, and social media to communicate member benefits, including opportunities and resources	Communications Chair	Ongoing	Communication materials (tweets, posts, Digests)
1.5.2. Update membership web pages to reflect current member benefits	Membership Chair	30-Jun-20	Updated web pages
1.5.3. Provide an accessible annual report to members and the community, highlighting annual accomplishments and activities in 2020.	President; Communications Chair	31-Dec-20	Posted annual report
1.5.4. Update WE promotional materials	Communications Chair	31-Dec-20	Updated WE templates and one-pager

Strategic Goal #2:

Enhance Evaluation Relationships, Interactions, and Resources

The goal to enhance evaluation relationships and interactions and facilitate partnerships among individual evaluators and member organizations in the Washington, DC area provides a broad means to promote evaluation generation and use through knowledge sharing. Whether through interactions with fellow Washington Evaluators members or those in other corners of the evaluation community, relationships within and across the evaluation community represent a fundamental ingredient to a successful evaluation enterprise.

► **Objective 2.1: Encourage increased communication between Washington Evaluators members about evaluation activities.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
2.1.1. Convene at least five Deep Dive (book club style) events to read and discuss short written works on the current issues in the field of evaluation	Programs Committee	31-Dec-20	5 Deep Dives held
2.1.2. Maintain existing mechanisms for facilitating communication between members and explore strategies for promoting greater use of the members-only website discussion board and the members-only directory.	Communications Chair	31-Dec-20	Increase in # of Forum posts; increased use of member directory

► **Objective 2.2: Facilitate networking and introductions of members.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
2.2.1. Convene at least 12 activity-based networking events during which social interaction is facilitated by a structured activity.	Membership Committee	Monthly	1 event per month
2.2.2. Plan and host a new members' reception	Membership Committee	30-Aug-20	1 event attended by at least 20% of new members
2.2.3. Plan and host the annual holiday party for members	Membership Committee	31-Dec-20	Holiday party attended by at least 40 members
2.2.4. Develop and post profiles of members and organizational sponsors.	Communications Chair; Membership Chair	31-Dec-20	8 profiles

► **Objective 2.3: Develop strategic partnerships to facilitate cross-organizational interactions and relationships.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
2.3.1. Co-sponsor two professional development events in conjunction with The Evaluators Institute and that organization's training sessions hosted in the DC-area.	President; Programs Committee	31-Jul-20	2 events
2.3.2. Engage organizational sponsors in program activities as speakers, hosts, and participants	President; Programs Committee	31-Dec-20	At least 25% of sponsors engaged in program activities
2.3.3. Develop and/or sustain at least two other partnerships that provide direct benefits or service to members	President; Programs Committee	31-Dec-20	2 partnerships

Strategic Goal #3:

Support Individual Evaluators' Professional Development

Even though the evaluation field in the U.S. does not require a credential, evaluators must maintain continuous learning about evaluation in order to be prepared to best serve a continually evolving field. Washington Evaluators' objective to support individual evaluators' efforts to affordably improve their expertise and knowledge about evaluation, includes knowledge of state-of-the-art approaches to methods, policies, and approaches.

► **Objective 3.1: Develop group opportunities for members and the DC evaluation community to develop professional skills.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
3.1.1. Present four brown-bag styles professional development events in partnership with the IBM Center for Business in Government	Programs Committee	Quarterly	4 events held
3.1.2. Present at least three field trips to visit and learn about local programs (e.g., non-profits, local government, Evaluation Without Borders client organizations) to support professional interaction with programs in different subject areas and with other members	Programs Committee	31-Dec-20	3 events held
3.1.3. Coordinate the Evaluation Without Borders initiative	Evaluation Without Borders Coordinator/ Community Engagement Committee	31-Dec-20	At least 12 pro bono matches

► **Objective 3.2: Develop individual opportunities for Washington Evaluators members to share and receive personalized development.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
3.2.1. Offer individualized professional development through the Mentor Minutes program	Mentor Minutes Coordinator/ Community Engagement Committee	31-Dec-20	At least 10 mentor-mentee pairings

Strategic Goal #4:

Facilitate Strong Administration of Washington Evaluators

The continued success of Washington Evaluators requires dedicated volunteers and sufficient resources for all of the activities described in this Strategic Plan. Washington Evaluators strives to facilitate strong administration of its resources, and recruiting and training volunteers for the Board of Directors and committees.

► **Objective 4.1: Maintain the financial sustainability of Washington Evaluators.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
4.1.1. Plan and secure board approval for an annual budget	Treasurer	30-Apr-20	Board-approved budget published online
4.1.2. Review organizational expenditures and revenues and make recommendations to improve financial sustainability	Treasurer	Quarterly	Quarterly Treasurer reports uploaded to Google Drive and distributed to Board

► **Objective 4.2: Recruit and retain volunteers to support Washington Evaluators operations and continuity of leadership.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
4.2.1. Establish deputy committee chair positions	President	30-Mar-20	Filled deputy chair positions
4.2.2. Issue call for new Board Members	President; Communications Chair	30-Aug-20	Website posting and Digest listing
4.2.3. Conduct on-time elections with a full slate of nominees	President; President-Elect	31-Oct-20	All 2021 elected positions filled
4.2.4. Continue the annual volunteer award(s) to recognize individuals for contributions; introduce acrylic awards	President; President-Elect	31-Dec-20	Volunteer award(s) announced at annual holiday party

► **Objective 4.3: Ensure the Board of Directors operates effectively and efficiently.**

Action Step	Responsible Person/Committee	Deadline	Milestone
4.3.1. Convene monthly Board meetings for planning, implementation, and monitoring of activities	President	Monthly	Agendas posted at least one week prior to meetings; minutes posted one week after Board approval
4.3.2. Create or update Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for all Committees and key board positions	Secretary, Treasurer, Committee Chairs	31-Dec-20	Updated SOPs
4.3.3. Maintain Wild Apricot and Zoom platforms and Network Solutions domain name for organizational business	Treasurer	31-Dec-20	Renewed subscriptions