

## Reporting and Using Evaluation Results

6.18.15

### Webinar Pre-work

#### CNCS, Office of Research and Evaluation

#### Pre-work Instructions

The Reporting and Using Evaluation Results webinar contains two facilitated examples, each using the same hypothetical AmeriCorps State and National program. To make the most of the presentation, we recommend that you:

1. Prepare for the facilitated examples by reading a summary of the example program provided below, **or**, read the program's annotated impact evaluation plan, available on CNCS' Evaluation Resources page (available at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/planning-evaluation>, under "How to Write an Evaluation Plan"). The annotated plan will give more complete context for the examples, but you will still be able to follow along if you just read the summary.
2. Prepare for Facilitated Example #1 by skimming the program's example dissemination plan Excel spreadsheet. "Tab E1.1 Partial ex." displays the facilitated example\*; "Tab E1.2 Complete ex." displays a fully completed dissemination plan, picking up where our example will leave off; and "Tab E1.3 Blank Template" displays a blank dissemination plan template that you can use to organize your own reporting work!
  - a. \*Consider pulling up Tab E1.1 Partial ex. during the presentation for easier reading of the example. The slide text is very small.
3. Prepare for Facilitated Example #2 by reading the hypothetical findings from the program's impact evaluation (below, pg. 2).

### **Example Program: Description**

Our hypothetical financial education program is an AmeriCorps State and National program that engages members in delivering a financial education curriculum to eligible clients. The program is a 10 site program in the greater Cincinnati region that places members in credit unions and local financial institutions to provide financial counseling to low-income individuals, retirees, and young people. Members also assist with financial seminars and informational fairs, and recruit experienced financial professionals to serve as volunteers in a credit counseling program. Its major funders are AmeriCorps and a small foundation, and it partners with local banks and a local social services agency.

This program has the AmeriCorps evaluation requirements for grantees receiving over \$500,000 in grant funds per year, which means they need to complete an externally conducted impact evaluation. The evaluation must cover at least 1 program year, and needs to have findings ready to report upon recompetition.

The evaluation will only focus on the program's financial counseling component, and will explore the following research questions: First, Do low-income clients exit the program with increased knowledge of personal finance concepts relevant to their needs? Do they know how to use those concepts to address their financial challenges? And second, are low-income clients that participate in member-led financial counseling through the program able to better manage their personal finances than low-income individuals who did not participate in the program's counseling?

### **Facilitated Example #1: Dissemination Plan**

See Excel spreadsheet.

### **Facilitated Example #2: Using Results of an Impact Evaluation**

The financial education program ran their impact evaluation, in this case, an RCT\*\*, and just received their final evaluation report from their external evaluator. In the findings section of the report, it is reported that there was a positive, significant difference between the treatment and control groups with regards to management of personal finances six months after the end of their participation in the program.

The program is pleased, since according to their logic model and theory of change, they expect that a medium term outcome of the program is that clients will apply the knowledge gained

through the counseling program to make significant progress towards solving a financial challenge. Since the findings show that clients in fact are making progress towards solving a financial challenge post-program, as compared to those not in the program, the answer to the research question posed at the beginning of the evaluation supports the intervention as described in the logic model and theory of change.

\*\*If you are interested in more detailed information regarding the evaluation design, you can read an annotated version of the program's evaluation plan, available on the Evaluation Resources page at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/planning-evaluation>, under "How to Write an Evaluation Plan".