

Impact Evaluation: Options and choices

SRA On-line course

The course provides a flexible opportunity for an introduction to impact evaluation. It is aimed at participants who have some experience of evaluation but are looking for a fuller understanding of the (many) different options and choices open to for fitting evaluation methodologies to different needs and circumstances of policy and interventions. The intensive course will prepare participants to:

- Be aware of a range of options and methodological choices which can be applied to different impact evaluation circumstances and needs.
- Recognise the different method of impact evaluation, and their uses, including for piloting, scaling-up and roll-out of programmes and initiatives.
- Understand how to scope and purpose an impact evaluation and managing for realistic expectations including both explicit and implicit needs of users
- Understand also key principals for customised and fit for purpose design choices.
- Appreciate the how 'counterfactual' evidence can be built into each of experimental, quasi experimental, non-experimental and alternative impact evaluation methods.

By the end of the course, participants with a basic understanding of evaluation will have been introduced to the contrasts between experimental and 'theory-based' impact evaluation and will understand a range of practical options available to them for both formative and summative approaches to impact evaluation. They will better understand recently revised national (and other) guidance to make informed decisions about how to effectively specify, combine and use sophisticated quantitative and qualitative impact evaluation methods. They will gain a practical insight into the use of 'empirical', 'non-empirical' and alternative 'assessment' approaches to impact evaluation, as well as practical pitfalls, pro's and con's..

Course schedule: The course is organised in a one-day intensive 'Zoom' format as below.

Impact Evaluation (Online): Timetable

Time	Activity/session
09.20+	Join Zoom 'waiting room' for Part 1
09.30-10.30	Session 1: Welcome and Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to course• Participants self-introductions (roundtable)• What is; why do impact evaluation• Theory-based vs empirical evaluation
10.30-11.20	Session 2: Scoping and purpose setting for impact evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effective scoping and 'SMART' objective setting• Managing for realistic objectives• Q & A; 1st plenary discussion
11.20-11.30	SHORT BREAK
11.30-12.15	EXERCISE 1 (11.30-12.00); feedback and discussions (12.00-12.15)

12.15-12.40	<p>Session 3: Better practice in cross-conceptual design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better practice design principles • Embedding analytical needs
12.40-13.15	<p>Session 4a: Chasing the counterfactual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining the counterfactual • Introduction to the 4 counterfactual toolkits • Q & A; 2nd plenary
13.15-14.00	Lunch break
14.00-14.25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toolkit 1: Fully experimental methods (RCTs)
14.25-14.50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toolkit 2: Partially (quasi) experimental methods • Q & A; plenary discussion
14.50-15.30	EXERCISE 3 (14.50-15.20); feedback and discussions (15.20-15.30)
15.30-15.45	SHORT BREAK
15.45-16.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toolkit 3: Non-experimental approaches and estimation of the counterfactual
16.10-16.35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toolkit 4: Alternative approaches to assessing the counterfactual • Q & A; plenary discussion
16.35-16.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available guidance • Cornerstones and review
16.45	Close of course