



# Evaluat|e

EVALUATION RESOURCE CENTER *for*  
*advanced technological education*

## Annual Value & Impact Report

Evaluation Resource Center for Advanced Technological Education  
The Evaluation Center • Western Michigan University

Phillips Wyatt Knowlton, Inc.  
February 2012

## Annual Value & Impact Report

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Phillips Wyatt Knowlton, Inc. is a management and measurement resource, which provides systems thinking, organizational learning, strategic planning and evaluation services in support of individual and organizational performance.

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## Executive Summary

EvaluATE's mission is to promote the goals of the Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program by partnering with ATE projects and centers to strengthen the program's evaluation knowledge base, expand the use of exemplary evaluation practices, and support the continuous improvement of technician education throughout the nation.

EvaluATE services include webinars (live and recorded), a newsletter, a website with a comprehensive resource library, a community of practice and annual survey of grantees. The main outcomes established for this project include improving the evaluation culture, knowledge, skills and practices among ATE stakeholders with an emphasis on serving principal investigators (PIs) and their evaluators.

External evaluation, in this fourth year of EvaluATE's operation, included an electronic survey and focus group follow-up of EvaluATE's constituency. The purpose of this survey and follow-up was to build on the center's first two years of primarily process information and the baseline administration of an outcomes focused survey last year (Year 3). These methods gather evidence to substantiate claims of the value and impact of EvaluATE services to date. The response rate was 38%.

Most survey respondents are PIs, staff and institutional administrators of current or expired ATE grants (70%). They represent primarily 2-year colleges (59%). Key findings follow below.

### Claims & Evidence

**INFORMATION ACCESS.** *There is good market penetration from EvaluATE outreach and emerging access to date.* 90% of ATE constituents responding to the survey reported obtaining information from at least one type of EvaluATE resource once or more in the last 12 months.

**RESOURCE QUALITY & UTILITY.** *ATE stakeholders are highly satisfied with the quality and utility of EvaluATE information resources.* Overall satisfaction<sup>1</sup> with the quality of EvaluATE information resources exceeds 90%, utility satisfaction exceeds 90%.

**EVALUATION CULTURE.** *EvaluATE has supported the emergence of more positive attitudes toward evaluation.* Overall, more than 90% of survey respondents report a strong positive attitude toward evaluation.<sup>2</sup> These attitudes include believing that evaluation is worth the time and money, contributes to a project's success,

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<sup>1</sup> Quality and/or utility ratings of good, very good or excellent.

<sup>2</sup> Attitude, knowledge, skill and behavior ratings of agree or strongly agree.

should be part of project planning, can be a positive experience and yields useful information.

**EVALUATION BASIC KNOWLEDGE & SKILL.** *EvaluATE has supported the development of improved basic evaluation knowledge specifically relevant to the goals of ATE evaluation.* 60% or more of survey respondents indicated that the information obtained from EvaluATE improved their understanding of how to incorporate evaluation into project planning, general evaluation terms/concepts/purpose, NSF evaluation expectations and where to get information about evaluation.

**EVALUATION ADVANCED KNOWLEDGE & SKILL.** *EvaluATE has supported the development of improved advanced evaluation knowledge specifically relevant to the goals of ATE evaluation.* 45% or more of survey respondents reported that the information obtained from EvaluATE information resources has improved their understanding of advanced evaluation topics. These topics include how to interpret results and draw conclusions, what to include in an evaluation report, how to use evaluation results to inform project decision making, how to capture evidence of project impact and how to develop an evaluation plan.

**EVALUATION PRACTICES.** *EvaluATE has supported the development of improved evaluation behaviors specifically relevant to the goals of ATE evaluation.* Roughly 50% of survey respondents noted that the information obtained from EvaluATE resources has prompted them to take action in ways that are likely to improve the quality and utility of ATE evaluations. These actions include taking steps to learn more about evaluation, being more effective at facilitating evaluation use among project stakeholders and having more frequent conversations about evaluation issues with project stakeholders and with peers outside the project.

**INFORMATION USE.** *EvaluATE has supported the development of improved evaluation behaviors specifically targeting the improvement of evaluation and/or project practices.* The evaluation improvement uses described by survey respondents include the sharing and exchange of evaluation knowledge, general improvements in evaluation, development of stronger evaluation plans and improvements in methods or metrics. Similarly, the project improvement uses offered include grant proposal development, improved reporting/documentation and improved project performance.



# Introduction

EvaluATE's mission is to promote the goals of the Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program by partnering with ATE projects and centers to strengthen the program's evaluation knowledge base, expand the use of exemplary evaluation practices, and support the continuous improvement of technician education throughout the nation. The main outcomes established for this grant include improving the evaluation culture, knowledge, skills and practices among ATE stakeholders with an emphasis on serving Principal Investigators (PIs).

External evaluation, in this fourth year of EvaluATE operation, focused on the repeat administration and analysis of an electronic survey and follow-up telephone focus groups. The purpose of these two data collection methods was to strengthen the evidence substantiating claims of the value and impact of EvaluATE services to date. This report offers a status snapshot of the audiences reached and progress toward desired outcomes. It serves primarily for internal use that will help improve the current and inform future work. Center staff and the National Visiting Committee (NVC) advising the grant participated in discussions that provided opportunity to reflect on the meaning and significance of these findings.

This report consists of five sections: (1) Introduction, (2) Methodology, (3) Process Findings, (4) Outcome Findings and (5) Recommendations. It includes graphic display of results and a brief narrative of key themes synthesized from findings. The quotes in the sidebar are representative excerpts of respondent comments provided in response to open-ended questions on the survey and from the focus groups. Appendices A-C provide supplementary information.

## Methodology

### e-Survey

The logic model<sup>3</sup> for the center's work defined the content areas explored by the *Value & Impact Survey*. The simplified model shown in Figure 1 below illustrates theory of change, number of items and general definitions for the survey. A copy of the survey instrument is available in Appendix B.

The external evaluators (PWK), the EvaluATE management team and the NVC closely collaborated on all aspects of the original survey design and construction (see Year 3 report for details). For this second administration, the professional network and affiliation questions were removed, no other substantive edits were made.

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix A.

EvaluATE has been a rallying point of evaluation efforts in the ATE program.

PI

Performs a needed service for NSF, ATE projects and centers.

Evaluator

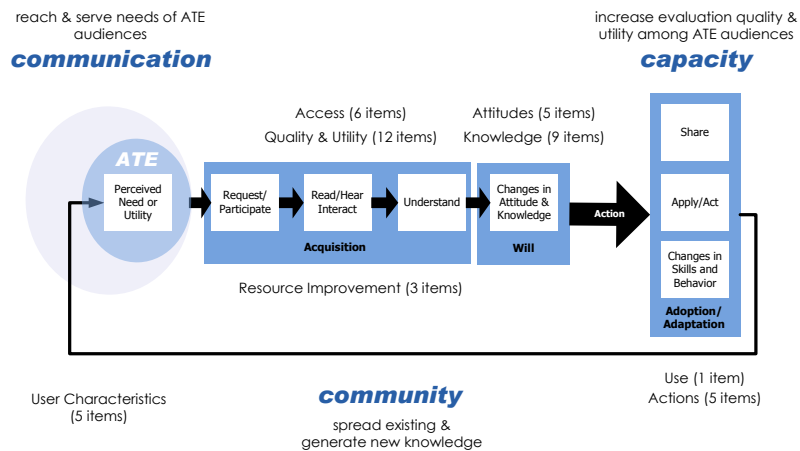


Figure 1. Survey Domains<sup>4</sup>.

EvaluATE maintains a database (their “master list”) that includes all PIs that have been funded through the ATE program since 2008, all ATE evaluators that are known to EvaluATE and everyone who has participated in an EvaluATE workshop or webinar. In November 2011 there were approximately 850 records in the list.<sup>5</sup>

A random sample of 492 individuals in EvaluATE’s master list with a valid email address received invitations to participate in the survey process. The recipient group included 281 individuals (57%) whose role within ATE was known to EvaluATE and 211 (43%) for who ATE affiliation was either unknown or known to be external to ATE. Two rounds of invitation by email included an overview of the process, its relevance and utility to the ATE community as well as explicit encouragement from EvaluATE’s NSF program officer to participate. An email from the external evaluator with an embedded link to the survey followed two days later (see Appendix E).

The Zoomerang survey remained open between November 30 and December 15, 2011. Those not yet responding received reminder emails that reiterated the information included in the initial invitations as well as link to the survey on the fourth and eighth day. An additional reminder and thank you was sent on the thirteenth day by EvaluATE. Overall, the response rate to the survey was 38%. This is within the range of average response rates reported for online needs assessments (40%) and impact

...great resources of the latest information. Good job!  
PI

<sup>4</sup> Following best practice in measurement, the psychometric properties of each section of the survey were tested. Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach’s  $\alpha$ ) for all sections was well above 0.8. This indicates that the items in each section measure a common underlying construct and that composite variables could be used. Although shared with EvaluATE, for simplicity of explanation, scale values for composite variables are not reported here.

<sup>5</sup> Because a third party (MATEC) manages webinar registration, some information about participants is incomplete including role, contact and ATE affiliation. There are some differences between Master List role designation and that reported by respondents. EvaluATE staff is working to identify a larger proportion of the evaluators associated with each ATE grant.

evaluation (51%)<sup>6</sup> and an estimate of the overall average for online surveys of 30%.<sup>7</sup> It is below the 85% response rate benchmark for incentivized paper surveys cited as optimal by the center. This is similar to the response rate for the prior administration of the survey (40%).

In an attempt to boost response rate over the prior administration, this administration of the survey offered a \$5 Starbucks<sup>8</sup> e-coupon as an incentive for participation. E-coupons were sent to the 487 respondents in the random sample as a gift. The 37% recorded as opened reflects the 38% response rate.

The main possible reason is capture by SPAM filters and this was addressed prior to administration. The incentive was mentioned in the invitation to participate and we noted that those interested in the incentive should check their SPAM for them. Two individuals reported SPAM challenges with accessing the e-coupons (these were resolved). None of the individuals included in the survey sample that did not open their e-coupon contacted us to inquire about their incentive. We conclude the incentive offered was ineffective at increasing response rate.

#### *Estimation of Survey Non-response Bias*

In addition, early survey respondents were compared to those of late responders to estimate the influence of response bias on results. The extrapolation method<sup>9</sup> was used to determine if there were different attitudes and practices reported by early and late responders—where late responders are assumed to be similar to non-responders. One statistically significant difference was noted—a higher proportion of late responders (12%) accessed the live webinars 6 times or more compared to early responders (6%). Given that nearly all of the responses compared were equivalent we can infer that the impact of non-response bias on the interpretation of these findings should be minimal. See Appendix C for additional information comparing the data provided by early and late respondents.

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<sup>6</sup> Archer, T. M. (2008). Response rates to expect from web-based surveys and what to do about it. *Journal of Extension* 46(3) Retrieved March 13, 2012 from <http://www.joe.org/2008june/rb3.php>

<sup>7</sup> Division of Instructional Innovation and Assessment (2007), *Response Rates*. The University of Texas at Austin. Retrieved September 3, 2011. <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/assessment/iar/teaching/gather/method/survey-Response.php>

<sup>8</sup> Starbucks is a very difficult company to work with. We do not recommend the use of their e-coupons. There were challenges in setting up, tracking and resending. They are not refundable once sent. Given that this is not a survey research project, follow-up will not be conducted to determine why all those sent a gift did not take action to secure it.

<sup>9</sup> Armstrong, J. J. & Overton, T.S. (1977). Estimating non-response bias in surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research* (14), 396-401.

### Telephone Focus Group Follow-up

Follow-up with selected respondents took place in January 2012 to build on these findings with additional qualitative data. 50% overall indicated that they would be willing to participate in follow-up interviews and provide additional feedback. These 64 respondents were invited in December 2011 to participate in telephone focus groups held in January 2012 (see Appendix F). Participants were sent \$25 in Starbucks e-coupon as an incentive. Table 1a below shows the composition of the four focus groups.

Table 1a. Follow-up Telephone Focus Group Composition.

	More Frequent ATE User	Less Frequent ATE Users
PIs/Co-PIs, Program Staff	6 participants/24 invited (28%)	8 participants/23 invited (28%)
Non-PIs <sup>10</sup>	2 participants/8 invited (25%)	2 participants/9 invited (22%)
Group sub-total by Use Frequency	8 participants/32 invited (25%)	10 participants/32 invited (31%)
Total	18 participants/64 invited (28%)	

### Characteristics of e-Survey Respondents

This report at EvaluATE's request focuses only on ATE-specific results (58 non-ATE respondents were excluded from the analysis). EvaluATE outreach has focused extensively on ATE PIs and their evaluators but has also drawn project/center and evaluation staff as well. Table 1b below shows the distribution of roles and Table 1c shows organizational type for survey respondents reporting ATE affiliation and for all survey respondents.

This group of respondents is generally representative of of ATE stakeholder roles and organizational types.

Table 1b. E-survey Respondents by Role ( $n=129_{ATE}$ ,  $n_{ALL}=187$ ).

Roles	ATE Survey Respondents	ALL Survey Respondents
PIs/Co-PIs	74 (57%)	94 (50%)
Project/Center Staff	13 (10%)	17 (9%)
Principal Evaluator	14 (11%)	23 (12%)
Evaluation Staff	9 (7%)	12 (6%)
College Administrators	8 (6%)	12 (6%)
Other	11 (9%)	24 (16%)

<sup>10</sup> Principal Evaluators, Evaluation Staff and Institutional Administrators.



Table 1c. E-survey Respondents by Organizational Type (n=129<sub>ATE</sub>, n<sub>ALL</sub>=187).

Organization Type	ATE Survey Respondents	ALL Survey Respondents
4-year University/College	21 (16%)	34 (18%)
2-year College or 2-year College System	75 (59%)	101 (55%)
Nonprofit Organization	13 (10%)	20 (11%)
Government	2 (2%)	2 (1%)
Private Firm	9 (7%)	15 (8%)
Other	9 (7%)	15 (8%)

This report compares current results with the first administration of the survey 9 months prior to gauge improvement.

## Process Findings

### *Respondent Characteristics*

#### **Survey respondents are mostly ATE PIs and staff from 2-year colleges.**

Table 1a above shows that the majority of ATE respondents are PIs with some staff of current and/or expired grants (n=87, 68%). ATE evaluators and evaluation staff made up 18% (n=23) of respondents. This is similar to the proportion of known roles from those with known ATE affiliation from the Master List. Thus, we are reasonably confident that the survey respondents are representative of EvaluATE's constituency in terms of their roles within the ATE program.<sup>11</sup>

#### **Survey respondents are primarily from 2-year colleges.**

As indicated in Table 1b above, 59% of survey respondents with ATE affiliation are from 2-year colleges, 16% 4-year colleges/universities, 10% nonprofit organizations, 9% private firms/independent consultants. These proportions are consistent with the findings from the ATE Annual Survey ([http://evalu-ate.org/annual\\_survey/reports/](http://evalu-ate.org/annual_survey/reports/)).

#### **Most PI and program staff respondents have substantial experience implementing federally funded grants.**

The majority (67%) of ATE PIs and program staff indicated 4 or more years experience implementing federally funded grants.

I have learned about evaluation as our grant developed... from the questions that came up...and knowledge from EvaluATE made me turn to them.

PI

<sup>11</sup> EvaluATE staff are continually updating their master list to fill in missing ATE role information for all individuals on the list.

### Most ATE evaluators and evaluation staff have substantial program and evaluation experience.

88% of all ATE principal evaluators and evaluation staff have indicated they have 4 or more years experience evaluating federally funded grants. In addition, 71% of this group has 4 or more years experience implementing federally funded grants.

### How Effective is EvaluATE's Dissemination Strategy?

Two factors are used to examine the effectiveness of EvaluATE's dissemination strategy—"reach" and "dose." Reach refers to the proportion of targeted audiences that access EvaluATE information resources at least once. Dose refers to the frequency with which ATE targeted audiences obtain information from EvaluATE.

#### Dose

Survey respondents indicated how often they had obtained information from EvaluATE resources in the last 12 months. The response set included "Never," "Infrequently (1-2 times)," "Occasionally (3-5 times)," "Frequently (6-10 times)," and "Very Frequently" (>10 times).

Access patterns are stable over the nine months since the baseline survey administration. Live webinars (39%, >2X), Newsletter (38%, >2X) and Website-General (37%, >2X) are the most frequently accessed EvaluATE resources.

The main thing I think of is the website. They have a number of resources. I have turned to the webinars and I have incorporated their information into my work.  
Evaluator

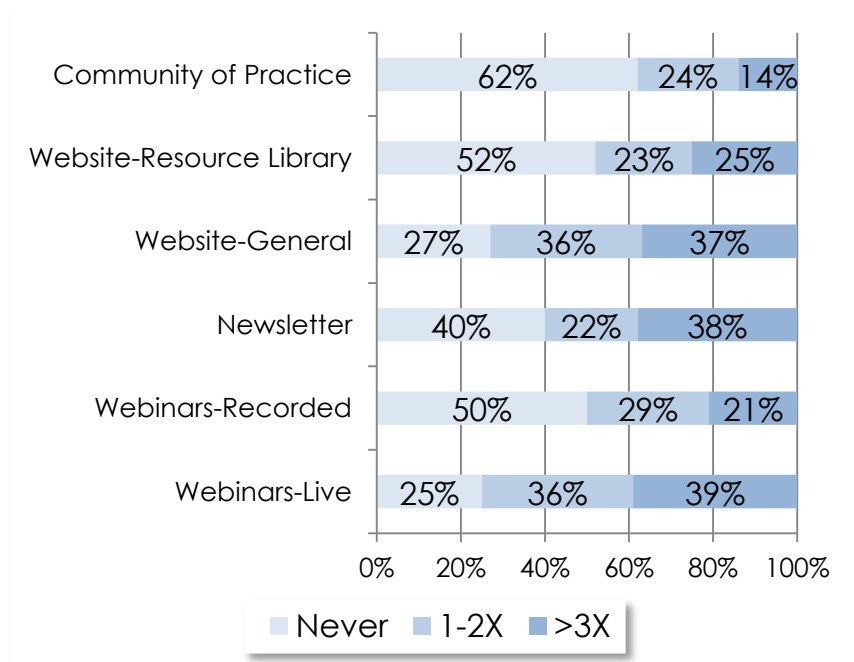


Figure 2a. Dissemination Effectiveness--Dose (n=129).

## Reach

Respondents who accessed EvaluATE resources 12 or fewer times in the past year are categorized as “less frequent” users. Those who accessed resources more than 12 times per year are categorized as “more frequent” users.” Statistically equivalent proportions of each role type fall into less and more frequent access categories ( $\chi^2$ ,  $p > .05$ ).

90% of all respondents indicated that they obtained information from at least one EvaluATE resource at least once during the last 12 months. However, nearly 60% reported less frequent access, as defined above, over the entire set of EvaluATE resources (see Figure 2b above). Both these findings are comparable to those from the prior survey administration.

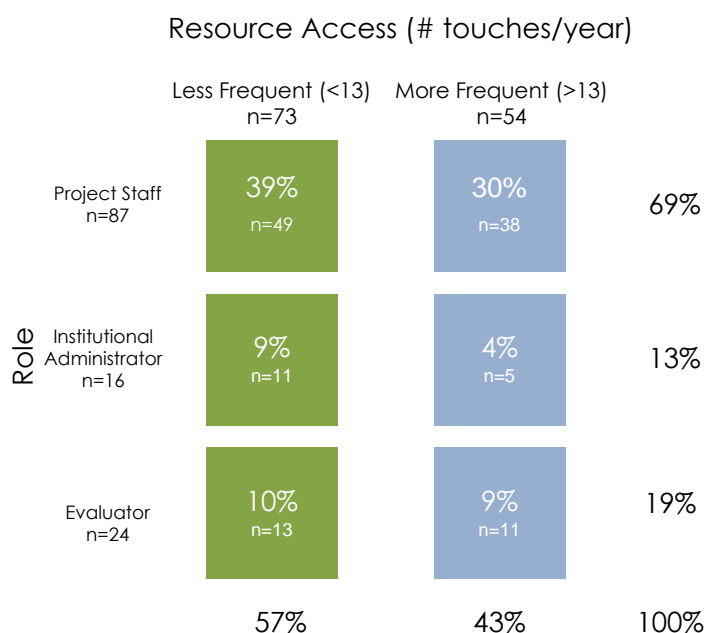


Figure 2b. Dissemination Effectiveness--Reach (n=128).

## Information Seeking Behaviors of ATE Audiences

Follow-up focus groups with ATE stakeholders explored the reasons why ATE stakeholders seek information about ATE evaluation and what prompts (or would prompt) them to turn to EvaluATE.

Focus group participants indicated two main pathways for accessing information from EvaluATE:

- (1) Most begin with their external evaluator, they rely on them to have the answers to their ATE evaluation related questions. The webinars were frequently mentioned as a starting point.

I started to follow when I read about it on the NSF website. They have a number of resources and I have turned to the webinars. I have incorporated their things in my work.

Institutional Administrator

I would start with my evaluator then go to the webinars and the website. I also look at the recorded webinars.

PI

- (2) When additional information is needed they report that they start at the EvaluATE website and move through to the resource library and also frequently identify relevant webinars. The ATE PI conference evaluation workshops were also mentioned.

ATE stakeholders are prompted to turn to EvaluATE for a number of reasons:

- (1) There is a strong desire to create "winning proposals" and participants see EvaluATE as providing a window into what NSF expects from ATE programs and evaluation. Pressing questions and/or needs for program ideas as well as best avenues for positioning proposals that arise are mentioned.
- (2) EvaluATE is noted as a valued information source, a "one-stop shop" and the NSF sponsorship is cited as supporting their opinions that EvaluATE is "state of the art."
- (3) Most have heard about EvaluATE as an information resource from NSF directly, at the ATE PI conferences or from reading about it online.
- (4) For those participants that primarily rely on their evaluator for evaluation information, they do turn to EvaluATE when the external evaluator is unable to provide the needed information

In addition to the main themes listed above, participants provided praise for the quality/utility of the information provided by the webinars and cited this as a major influence attracting them to EvaluATE as a resource provider. Although some participants expressed preference to utilize professional networks before turning to EvaluATE, all made statements attesting to their beliefs about the value of the expertise and resources made available.

### *What do survey respondents indicate about the quality of EvaluATE information resources?*

The survey provided a definition of quality---content, rigor, presentation, style/format and expertise of the presenter or author.

Survey respondents rated the overall quality of the EvaluATE resources listed above accessed in the past 12 months--response set "Poor," "Fair", "Good", "Very Good" and "Excellent."

With quality satisfaction (good or better) overall at nearly 90%, survey respondents indicated better than the 50% satisfaction threshold for quality established by the center's performance metrics for all services listed (see Figure 3 below). This is similar to prior survey administration. No differences were found for level of access or level of evaluation experience ( $\chi^2$ ,  $p > .05$  for each).

For me it is the quality and clarity of the information. The fact that I can go to one place and get an answer. It's reliable. It points me in a direction.

PI

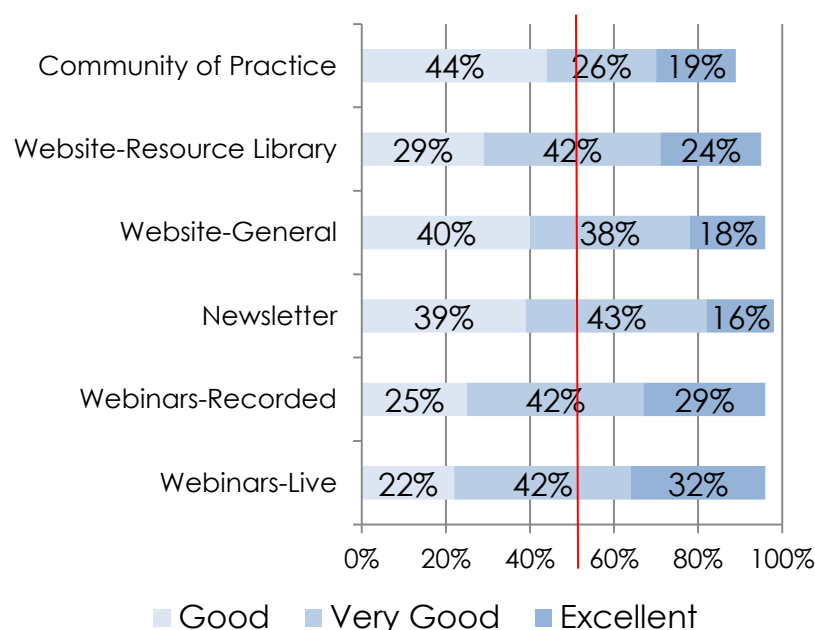


Figure 3. Resource Quality (n=64-96<sup>12</sup>).

Fewer than 10% of ATE respondents ranked quality on any resource as "fair" or "poor," except for Community of Practice (12%).<sup>12</sup> A few of these respondents (8% of respondents, 10 individuals, 12 comments) offered suggestions to improve service quality. The range of suggestions/comments follow below, number of respondents citing each is in parentheses. Additional information about quality and utility from the e-survey and focus group follow up is provided on page 10.

- Targets too novice an audience (3)
- Improve web navigation and organization (2)
- Limited time audiences have to participate (2)

### *What do survey respondents indicate about the utility of EvaluATE information resources?*

The survey provided a definition of utility that includes—relevance of information, potential for adoption/adaptation, practicality. Survey respondents rated the overall utility of the EvaluATE resources listed above accessed in the past 12 months. The response set included "Poor," "Fair," "Good," "Very Good," and "Excellent."

I get hit with so many emails per day. Most of EvaluATE material is quite good. There is information overload. I like to be able to find information when I need it.

PI

EvaluATE appears to me to be a valuable resource for people with no previous experience in evaluating projects/centers. For those with a lot of evaluation experience, it seems rather too simple and not of tremendous added value.

PI

<sup>12</sup> Overall n=129, those reported N/A and those who left an access item blank are excluded. Resource n varies. The red line indicates the 50% threshold.



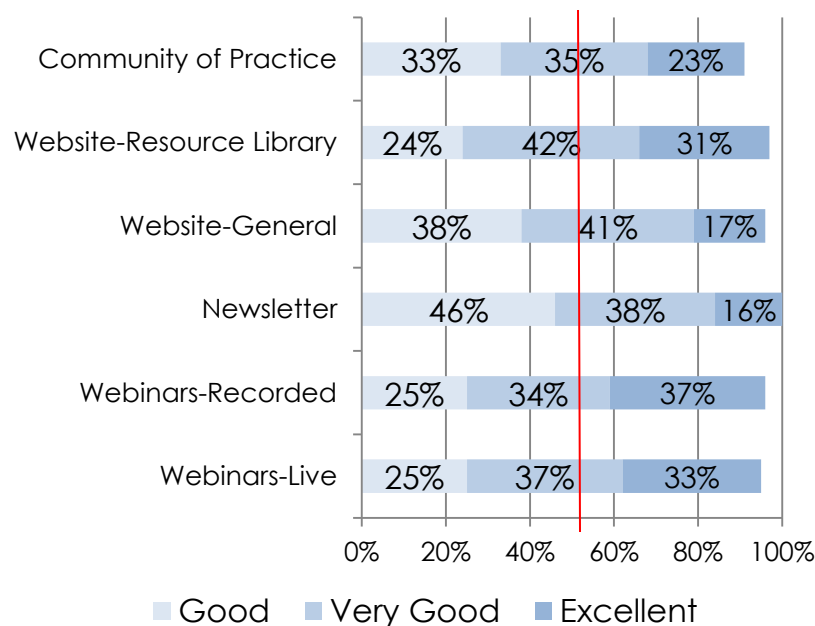


Figure 4. Resource Utility (n=40-96).

With utility satisfaction overall at greater than 90%, survey respondents indicate better than the 50% satisfaction threshold established by the center's performance metrics for utility satisfaction (good or better) for all services listed (see Figure 4 above). This is similar to the level of utility noted from the prior survey administration. For all resources except Website-General, no statistically significant differences in utility were reported by level of access ( $\chi^2$ ,  $p>.05$ ). Differences not noted by level of evaluation experience. ( $\chi^2$ ,  $p>.05$ ).

10% or fewer of ATE respondents ranked utility of any resource as "fair" or "poor." Some of these respondents (6% of ATE respondents, 8 individuals, 11 comments) suggested ways to improve service utility. The range of suggestions/comments follow below, number of respondents citing each is in parentheses:

- Participants overloaded with information (2).
- Variability in webinar presenter effectiveness, topic relevance (2)
- Focus on novice, not expert audiences (2)

### *Additional Comments on Quality & Utility Provided by e-Survey and Focus Group Respondents*

Respondents mentioned the particular value of the EvaluATE resources in the early years of their ATE grants and wove opinions about the need for a range (novice to expert) of coverage to address the variation in user knowledge across several topics. Most of those who did note the primarily novice audience

We are in different stages in our careers and knowledge. It would be interesting to consider special interest groups.

PI

I think what they are doing is highly appropriate and of great value to ATE project directors and PIs.  
Institutional Administrator

targeted by EvaluATE also make specific mention of the quality/utility of what is made available for that audience. One respondent suggested drawing more heavily from evaluation experts already involved with ATE grants. By far, the webinar is the most frequently mentioned and praised among EvaluATE resource offerings by e-survey respondents and focus group participants.

Information overload and limited time to browse and/or actively participate prevent some from accessing with higher frequency. These respondents also report that the information is of high quality and utility when they do find the time to explore or investigate a topic. The value of the recorded webinars is also mentioned as a possible time management solution. Although time is limited, particular mention was made about the value of and appreciation for EvaluATE outreach. A few respondents suggested the use of social media, podcasts, video and/ or email blasts to “push” information highlights more aggressively.

A few respondents indicated difficulty navigating the resource library when looking “in general” noting that some level of specificity is needed when searching. One focus group participant mentioned, “it’s reliable and points me in a direction.” Although praise is given for the quality/utility of information available, navigation is not seen as intuitive.

## Outcome Findings

### *What do survey respondents report about the effectiveness of EvaluATE resources and services?*

Overall, we can infer that EvaluATE products and services have continued to foster the development of a more evaluation “friendly” culture across the ATE community as measured by attitudes toward evaluation. In addition, they have consistently demonstrated progress in securing key precursors to improved evaluation quality as measured by the development of relevant knowledge, skills and evidence of information use among grantees to improve either ATE programs or their evaluation. These assertions follow as four claims with substantiating evidence.

#### Evaluation Attitudes

CLAIM 1: EvaluATE has continued to support the development of more positive attitudes toward evaluation expressed by ATE audiences.

More than 90% of all respondents report a strong positive attitude toward evaluation on 4 out of 5 the attributes tested. This represents a slight improvement (<10% higher proportion strongly agree or agree) over the prior administration. See Figure 4 below. High evaluation relevance (salience) and value (valence) holds across level of access and evaluation expertise ( $\chi^2$ ,  $p>.05$ ).

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreement with statements that evaluation...

- is worth the time and money
- contributes to a project's success
- should be a part of project planning
- can be a positive experience
- yields useful information

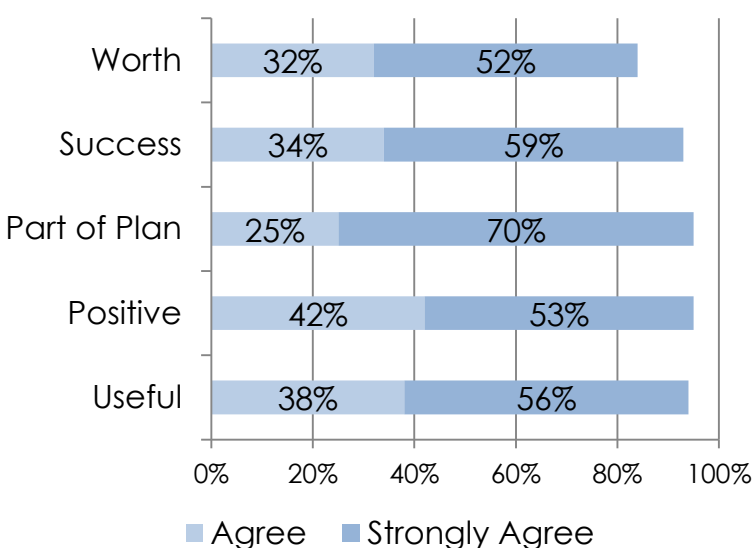


Figure 5. Evaluation Attitudes (n=129).

Survey respondents and focus group participants also noted that they are interested in and access evaluation information to a higher degree, after having had experience with EvaluATE. Users commented that they find evaluation important enough to spend time educating their staff on the topic. They also note that there is more attention on evaluation, this is mirrored by a comment made by a survey respondent, "we typically talk about evaluation at the forefront of all we do."

Last year, EvaluATE staff and members of the NVC expressed during the discussion of similar findings that this is good evidence of the presence of an evaluation "choir." This is an essential pre-condition for improving the quality of evaluations.

## Basic Evaluation Knowledge

**CLAIM 2:** EvaluATE has consistently supported to the development of improved basic evaluation knowledge specifically relevant to the goals of ATE evaluation as reported by ATE audiences.

More than 60% of all respondents reported that the information obtained from EvaluATE has improved their understanding of each of the basic attributes listed below (see Figure 5).

I have gone from being a passive consumer to active consumer in the evaluation. I will budget higher, I hold myself to a higher standard now.

PI

- how to incorporate evaluation into project<sup>13</sup> planning
- evaluation in general (e.g., terms, concepts, purposes)
- what NSF program officers expect from an evaluation
- where to get information about evaluation

This represents a slight improvement (<10% higher proportion strongly agree or agree) over the prior administration. No statistically significant differences in basic evaluation knowledge are found by level of access or evaluation expertise ( $\chi^2$ ,  $p>.05$ ).

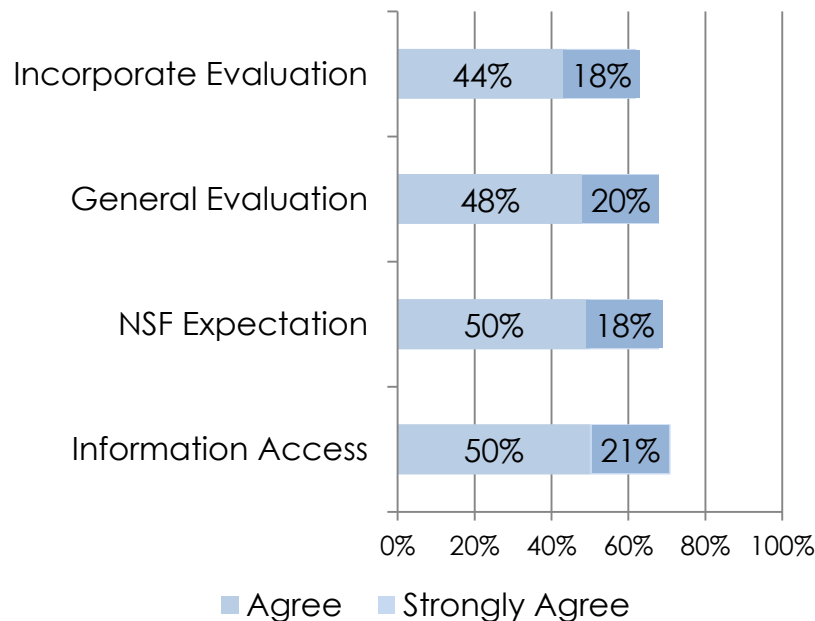


Figure 5. Basic Evaluation Knowledge (n=129).

Similar to survey findings, the focus group participants also noted changes in knowledge about how to build evaluation into the front end of ATE work from the proposal stage through implementation and improvement. A common theme through much of the qualitative data collected centers on the recognition of different levels of evaluation knowledge across PI consumers and evaluation practitioners. Those with higher self-reported levels of expertise tend to rely on EvaluATE less themselves but do indicate the value of the resources for those less experienced and often refer colleagues.

In summary, e-survey and focus group respondents see EvaluATE as a source of information; they know where to go, know NSF expectations and can incorporate evaluation into planning. Together these findings establish that this set of ATE stakeholders are aware of what they need to do more of, less of and/or

We have improved our presentations and webinars based on the model EvaluATE provides for us.

PI

<sup>13</sup> Although the word "project" is used here in a generic sense to represent any grant-funded effort large or small, we do not intend to exclude "centers."

change to improve evaluation quality. After embracing evaluation as a key management tool, knowing where change required/desired is the next step for movement away from the status quo.

Last year, EvaluATE staff and members of the NVC expressed during the discussion of similar baseline findings that this is strong evidence that EvaluATE has contributed to improvements in the knowledge base about evaluation specific to ATE and in general. Coupled with the positive attitudes reported in the previous section, this supports development of the stakeholder “will and capacity” required to make progress toward improving the quality of ATE evaluations.

## Advanced Evaluation Knowledge

CLAIM 3: EvaluATE has continued to contribute to the development of improved advanced evaluation knowledge specifically relevant to the goals of ATE evaluation.

Approximately 50% or more of all respondents reported that the information obtained from EvaluATE has improved their understanding on each of the following aspects of more advanced evaluation knowledge (see Figure 6 below):

- How to interpret results and draw conclusions
- What should be included in an evaluation report
- How to use evaluation results to inform project decision making
- How to capture evidence of project impact
- How to develop an evaluation plan

No statistically significant differences in advanced evaluation knowledge are found by level of access or evaluation expertise ( $\chi^2$ ,  $p > .05$ ).

E-survey and focus group respondents made specific mention of the relevance and value of EvaluATE resources related to improving their ability to develop evaluation plans and the utility of logic models to that end. Several mentioned stronger and better reporting. Similarly, comments were made attesting to changes in how data for decisions are planned for and used as intended to improve the projects. Several respondents expressed interest in higher level statistics resources and what one individual referred to as “more cutting edge” methodologies as ways to better document impact.

Last year, EvaluATE staff and members of the NVC expressed during the discussion of similar baseline findings that this is evidence that EvaluATE has contributed to improvements in the knowledge base about how to improve evaluation quality. Coupled with the positive attitudes and basic knowledge gains

I make sure we start planning with evaluation as we are planning the projects. In other words, writing it in early instead of as an afterthought.  
Project Staff



reported in the previous sections, this supports movement well forward in making progress toward improving the quality of ATE evaluations.

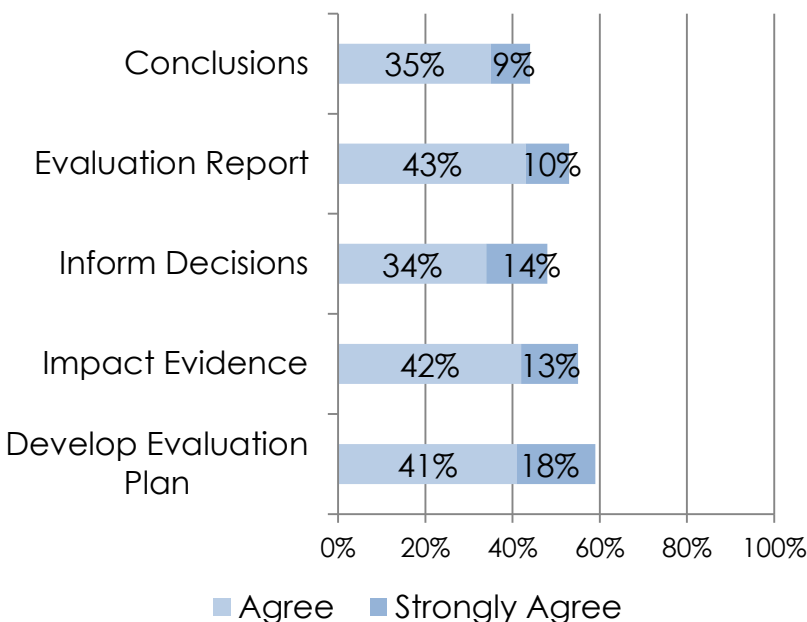


Figure 6. Advanced Evaluation Knowledge (n=129).

Respondents have the knowledge and inferred skill to develop evaluation plans, capture and report on essential impact evidence and use results to inform decisions. Together this knowledge and skill set among ATE stakeholders sets the stage for improvements in evaluation quality.

### Influence on Evaluation Behavior

**CLAIM 4:** EvaluATE has continued to support to the development of improved evaluation behaviors specifically relevant to the goals of ATE evaluation as reported by ATE audiences.

Roughly, 50% of all respondents report that the information obtained from EvaluATE has prompted them to take action in the following ways (see Figure 7 below). No statistically significant differences in advanced evaluation knowledge are found by level of evaluation expertise ( $\chi^2$ ,  $p > .05$ ). More frequent users report stronger agreement with the statements about stakeholder conversations and taking steps on their own to learn more about evaluation ( $\chi^2$ ,  $p < .05$ ). No other difference by access level noted.

- Take steps to learn more about evaluation on my own
- Be more effective at facilitating evaluation use among project stakeholders
- Have more frequent conversations about evaluation issues with peers outside my project

It has changed how I report. It has been influenced by beginning with the end in mind. I've made sure projects have models as a center point for nailing down metrics.  
Evaluator

- Have more frequent conversations about evaluation issues with project stakeholders

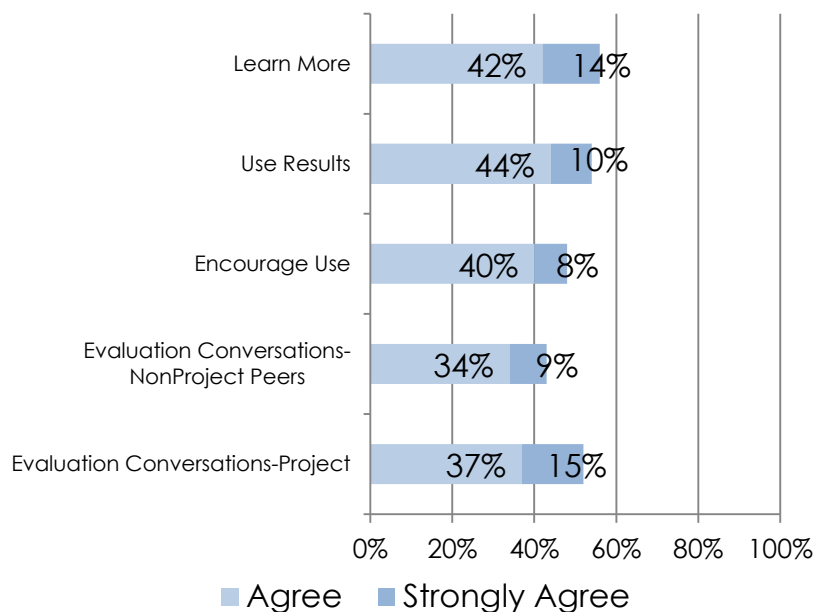


Figure 7. Influence on Behavior (n=194).

Nearly half of all ATE respondents (47%) provided a short description of the ways they have used information obtained from EvaluATE resources (61 individuals, 66 uses described). Focus group participants also shared examples of how EvaluATE has informed their ATE evaluation and program work. Findings from the open-ended questions on the e-survey and the focus groups about information use follow below.

## Improving Evaluation

### E-Survey

50% of all uses mentioned are about improving evaluation. The range of uses to improve evaluation mentioned follow below, number of respondents citing each is in parentheses:

- General evaluation knowledge improvement (7)
- Sharing and exchange of evaluation knowledge (7)
- Development of evaluation plans (6)
- Improvements in methods and/or metrics (6)
- General improvements in evaluation (4)
- Finding an evaluator (3)

Comments made by e-survey respondents about general evaluation improvement centered around more clarity about “good” or “better” evaluation practices and why evaluation is so important to program improvement. Respondents expressed a high degree of appreciation for the opportunities to interact with

It brought evaluation to the front of what we do. It is integrated in all our work.

PI

experts and peers as well as indicating that more options would be welcome. EvaluATE resources were used to improve evaluation plans, questions, data collection efforts and analysis. In addition, ATE stakeholders indicate that they share EvaluATE resources with colleagues and team members. A few specifically cited the Evaluator Directory as helpful in choosing an evaluator.

### *Focus Groups*

Focus group participants' comments about uses for evaluation improvement were nearly identical those made by survey respondents. Mention of peer-to-peer referrals and exchange (within ATE and beyond) as well as evaluation planning were most frequent. Those participants who more frequently access EvaluATE resources noted distinctly different patterns of use.

Participants that turn to EvaluATE more frequently provided specific examples of use. They mention the importance of information on logic models as central in shaping their evaluation approach. They connected logic models with better articulation of outcomes and thus better measurement. One focus group member noted that models help "nailing down" metrics and another shared that "beginning with the end in mind" leads to stronger reporting. The PIs in the groups indicated movement toward being more active evaluation consumers and that evaluation function is integrated throughout their work now.

Participants that access EvaluATE less frequently provided scenarios where either they: (1) rely more heavily on their external evaluator for information or (2) are in the early stages of evaluation planning and have not yet taken full advantage of the EvaluATE resources available. These participants do assert belief in the quality of information EvaluATE offers. Some noted their external evaluators do "connect" with EvaluATE and this association has positive impact on their work. Others expressed intent to use more resources in the future.

On the topic of improving evaluation, the focus group participants made mention of several important influences on evaluation quality—standards, evaluators and methodology. The issue of evaluator quality was the most salient.

Some of the focus group participants shared comments about being disappointed in the quality of the external evaluators they initially selected. They see having a competent evaluator as essential to ATE success. Several focus group participants in particular made negative comments, in contrast to e-survey respondents, about the evaluator directory and expressed desire for some form of quality control or vetting of those included. We understand that making specific referrals is outside the scope of the EvaluATE mission, however given the weight of the suggestion it is important to include. One, perhaps more actionable

I was underestimating what evaluation was worth. Now having experienced evaluation, the concept of 10% [of total budget] on evaluation is no longer a shock. Our quality has improved.

PI

A serious addition...is inclusion of a logic model...(because of EvaluATE). What's lacking is solid understanding of what the metrics need to look like...Models put the content in a clear, succinct display tat essential for crafting evaluation. Evaluator

suggestion was made requesting that some form of guidelines on evaluator competence/expertise and selection criteria be made available. The issue of evaluator quality is on the minds of those we spoke with at length.

Focus group participants are interested in evaluation quality and they identify EvaluATE as a remedy. One individual specifically requested EvaluATE weigh in on issues of evaluation quality related to NSF solicitations; however, this may not be within their mission parameters. Those that more frequently access EvaluATE resources describe striving toward higher standards and that evaluation quality has improved. Several in this category made specific interest in and requests for more resources on qualitative methods. Others expressed interest in conversations about exploring more “adventurous” or “forward thinking” ways of evaluating outcomes.

## Improving Projects & Centers

### *E-Survey*

33% of all uses mentioned among survey respondents were about improving projects/centers. The range of uses to improve programs mentioned follow below, number of respondents citing each is in parentheses:

- Grant proposal development (15)
- Improve reporting, documenting success (4)
- Improve project performance (2)

They clearly see EvaluATE as a source of “ideas.” EvaluATE resources (webinars are mentioned specifically several times) are used to develop grant proposals and to manage/improve existing work. ATE respondents note that they use EvaluATE resources to assure alignment of their proposed project goals/objectives and evaluation sections with NSF expectations. Respondents also indicate that they share these resources with colleagues.

### *Focus Groups*

Focus group participants made similar comments about how they are using the information obtained from EvaluATE resources to improve programs. The most prevalent theme, as was also true for survey, was proposal development specifically aspects of strategic positioning with NSF and alignment for both project activities and their evaluation.

In addition to their strong reliance on EvaluATE for support in proposal development, participants in the follow-up focus groups cited that information about evaluation benefits both evaluation and program. Increased attention to alignment with NSF expectations and stronger evaluation leads to better program performance over time.

I already have a solid understanding of evaluation practice with many years [experience]. Just because EvaluATE did not move the needle for me, does not mean the services were not great. They are, just not of value for me.

Evaluator

I want to have a winning grant...to have a strong evaluation component.

Institutional Administrator

EvaluATE's services clearly have served the ATE community as indicated by the large proportion of uses cited by e-survey respondents and focus group participants to improve evaluation as well as the use of information and/or evaluation to improve existing programs and develop new grant proposals.

## Additional Feedback

*What other comments and suggestions do e-survey and focus group respondents provide?*

### *E-survey*

One-fourth of ATE respondents (24%, 31 individuals, 31 comments) offered additional insight when asked. The range of suggestions/comments follow below, number of respondents citing each is in parentheses:

- Kudos and thanks, need/want more (11)
- Offer more advanced topics for experienced users, focus too novice (4)
- Use limitations (6)
- Evaluation quality issues (4)
- Desire to understand NSF/ATE context better (2)
- Confirm best practices (2)

Respondents offer high praise for EvaluATE staff and the information resources provided to the ATE community. The excellence of staff and the role the resource center plays to rally ATE evaluation efforts were predominant themes throughout. Some of the respondents requesting more, also acknowledge the limitations of budget and staffing.

In addressing several of the open-ended questions, a few respondents also mention interest reviving the Community of Practice. One respondent said, "that is one resource I was very excited about." Similarly, there is some appetite for special interest or affinity groups in the online community should it continue.

### *Focus Groups*

Follow-up focus group participants provided the following additional suggestions, some similar to those offered above, to improve EvaluATE quality, utility and effectiveness. A wider range of ideas surfaced—some more practical and implementable than others. We emphasize those suggestions offered that are the most actionable.

- Threaded special interest groups online
- FAQ section to the website and improve navigation
- Evaluation case studies
- Present information on multiple levels, too focused on basics

They have provided the "tip of the iceberg" of info that we need and they are willing to share.

PI

Keep up the great work—It is wonderful to have such a good resource—lends credibility to the field of evaluation in NSF work.

Evaluation Staff



- Monthly newsletter with alerts to new resources
- Expanded use of social media (e.g., blog, podcast, other)
- Highlight newer methods and more innovative approaches
- Create a *PI Handbook*, particularly addressing how to communicate effectively with external evaluators
- Offer categories of assistance, more resources

Focus group participants offered a suggestion to address the issue of “newbie” versus “expert” audiences. They offered that EvaluATE could consider a pilot effort that focuses solely on identifying and serving a specific need for those more expert in the community.

Some of the suggestions provided, although of merit, would require policy or other changes that make them less viable options for improving EvaluATE. These included requiring first time ATE grantees to use the EvaluATE’s resources, vetting of evaluator quality in the directory (mentioned earlier in the report), and eliminating the overlap between NSF Fastlane reporting with the annual survey of ATE grantees conducted by EvaluATE.

## Recommendations

*What should EvaluATE do to improve the effectiveness of its resources as indicated from the survey respondents?*

A summary of key process/outcome findings and action recommendations follow below. The findings are a summary of the results reported in the body of the report. These recommendations are a distillation of those suggested by external evaluation (e.g., e-survey and telephone focus groups) and will be tested and refined in consultation with the EvaluATE staff and NVC.

Table 1. Action Recommendations.

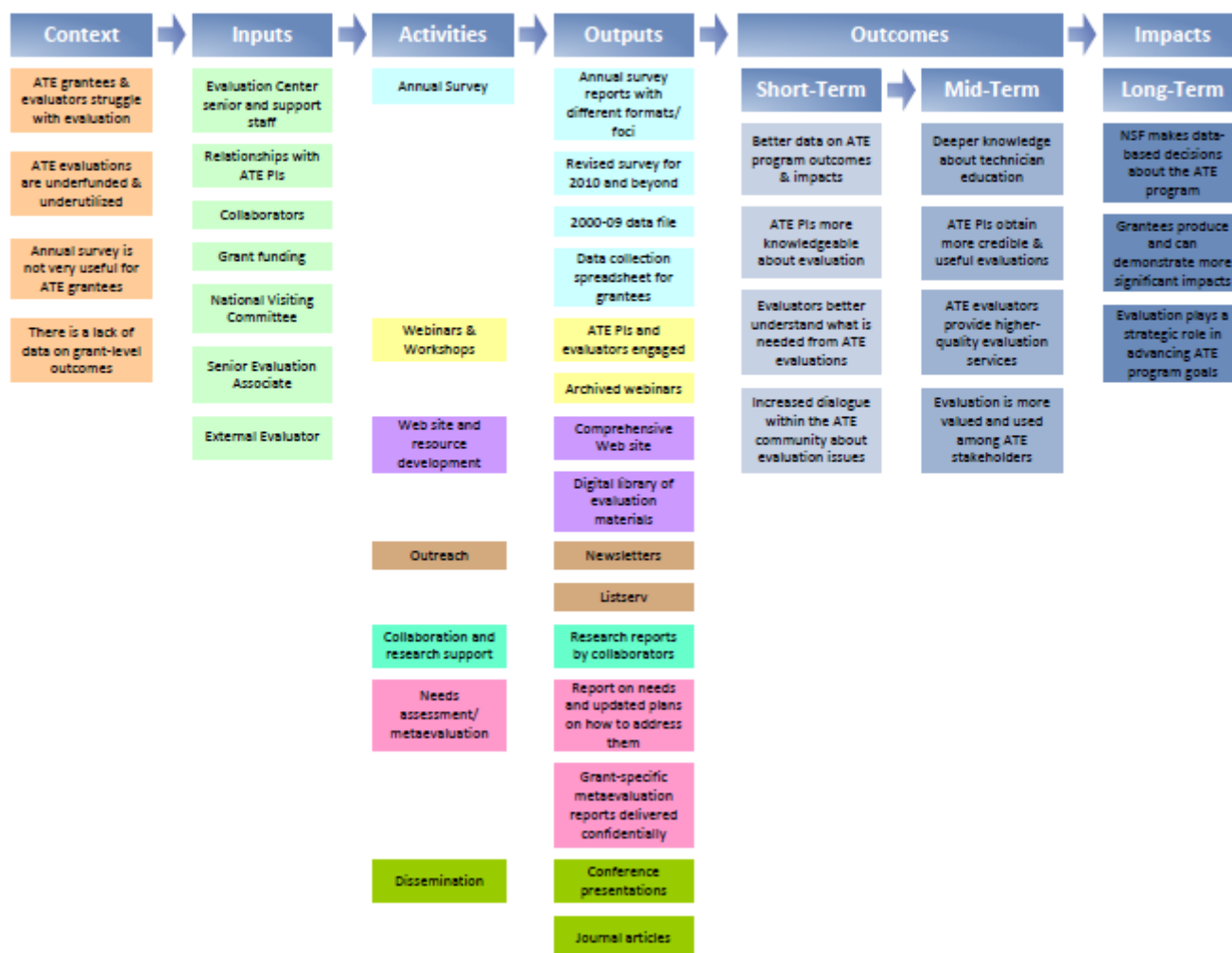
Key Findings	Actions to Consider
There is a large potential market among ATE grantees (PIs and Evaluators) with a range of evaluation experience.	Further define and segment market niche, develop marketing/outreach plan. Promote and expand reach.
PI and program staff audience is relatively novice relative to evaluation but has strong positive attitude toward evaluation.	Refine services to continue to reach and serve the evaluation novice. They are the largest audience segment.  Differentiate or prioritize services, novice/experienced users have different needs.
Basic/advanced evaluation knowledge and those practices essential to the improvement of evaluation quality have increased because of EvaluATE.	Communicate success to date.

## Appendix A

### EvaluATE Logic Model

## Working Logic Model

updated February 2010



EvaluATE Logic Model February 2010

## **Appendix B**

### *Value & Impact Survey*



[SURVEY TEXT—actual survey was conducted online]

This survey is being conducted by PWK, Inc. as part of its work as the independent evaluator for EvaluATE, the NSF-funded Evaluation Resource Center for Advanced Technological Education (ATE). The purpose of this survey is to gather evidence of the value and impact of the work of EvaluATE. All responses will be kept confidential. No EvaluATE staff member will have access to individual responses or to names of respondents. PWK will share findings from the survey with EvaluATE to help the Center assess and improve its work. Participants in the survey include ATE grant staff and evaluators as well as individuals not associated with ATE that have accessed EvaluATE resources.

### Section 1: Access & Use--EvaluATE Resources

1. About how often have you obtained information from the following EvaluATE resources in the last 12 months?

	Never	Infrequently (1-2 times)	Occasionally (3-5 times)	Frequently (6-10 times)	Very Frequently (11+ times)
Webinars, live	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Webinars, recorded	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Newsletter (Conduit)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Website, General	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Website, Resource Library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community of Practice (e.g., listserv, directory)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Rate the overall quality (e.g., content rigor, presentation style/format, expertise of presenters/authors) of the EvaluATE resources you accessed in the past 12 months. For those resources you have not yet accessed, please select N/A.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Webinars, live	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Webinars, recorded	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Newsletter (Conduit)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Website, General	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Website, Resource Library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community of Practice (e.g., listserv, directory)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. For those resources you rated as fair or poor quality, please suggest ways that EvaluATE could improve them.

4. Rate the overall utility (e.g, relevance of information, potential for adoption/adaptation, practicality) of the EvaluATE resources you accessed in the past 12 months. For those you have not yet accessed, please select N/A.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A
Webinars, live	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Webinars, recorded	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Newsletter (Conduit)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Website, General	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Website, Resource Library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community of Practice (e.g., listserv, directory)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. For those resources you rated as fair or poor utility, please suggest ways that EvaluATE could improve them?

6. Please provide a short description of how you have used information from an EvaluATE resource.

## Section 2: Outcomes & Impact

7. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<i>The information I obtained from EvaluATE resources has improved my understanding of:</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Strongly Agree
Where to get information about evaluation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What NSF program officers expect from an evaluation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluation in general (e.g., terms, concepts, purposes).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to develop an evaluation plan (e.g., logic models, evaluation questions, data collection methods, design).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to incorporate evaluation into project planning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to capture evidence of project impact.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to use evaluation results to inform project decision making.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What should be included in an evaluation report.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to interpret evaluation results/draw conclusions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<i>The information I obtained from EvaluATE resources has helped me...</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Strongly Agree
Have more frequent conversations about evaluation issues with project stakeholders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have more frequent conversations about evaluation issues with peers outside my project.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be more effective at facilitating evaluation use among project stakeholders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be more effective in using evaluation results to improve a project.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take steps to learn more about evaluation on my own.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Strongly Agree
Evaluation yields useful information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluation can be a positive experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluation should be a part of project planning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluation contributes to a project's success.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluation is worth the time and money.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. If you have other comments about EvaluATE that you would like to share, please write them in the space below.

11. Would you be willing to provide further feedback to a member of the PWK evaluation team?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### Section 3: User Characteristics

12. What type of organization do you work for?

- ☐ 4-year University/College
- ☐ 2-year College or 2-year College System
- ☐ K-12 School or School System/District
- ☐ Nonprofit Organization
- ☐ Government
- ☐ Association/Society
- ☐ Private Firm
- ☐ Other, please specify

13. What role do you primarily serve in your organization (relative to all grant funded projects)?

- ☐ Principal Investigator or Co-PI
- ☐ Project Staff
- ☐ Principal Evaluator
- ☐ Evaluation Staff
- ☐ Institutional Administrator
- ☐ Other, please specify

14. Are you currently working in any way with/on an ATE grant (e.g., PI, Co-PI, evaluator, researcher, staff, administrator)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

15. Please indicate your years of experience:

	None	Less than 1 year	1-3 years	4-6 years	7-10 years	11-15 years	16+ years
Implementing Federally Funded Grant(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluating Federally Funded Grant(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Appendix C

### Addressing Non-response Bias

## Analysis for Approximating Non-response Bias

A Chi-square test determined if there were differences in response rates for early and late responders. This method is described in the research literature as a surrogate to estimate representativeness of findings. Only one difference detected (see note at end of table).

Table 1. Comparison of Early (11/30-11/2/11) and Late (after 12/11/11) Respondents ( $\chi^2$  test).

Variable	Categories	p-value
Access	Live Webinar	.006*
	Recorded Webinar	.977
	Newsletter	.561
	Web (General)	.127
	Web (Resource Library)	.411
	Community of Practice	.667
Quality	Live Webinar	.733
	Recorded Webinar	.993
	Newsletter	.381
	Web (General)	.312
	Web (Resource Library)	.777
	Community of Practice	.124
Utility	Live Webinar	.745
	Recorded Webinar	.882
	Newsletter	.672
	Web (General)	.287
	Web (Resource Library)	.211
	Community of Practice	.245
Attitude	Useful	.526
	Positive	.687
	Part of Plan	.685
	Success	.545
	Worth	.810
Basic Knowledge	Incorporate evaluation	.124
	Evaluation (General)	.828
	NSF Expectations	.833
	Information Access	.991
Advanced Knowledge	Develop Evaluation Plan	.841

Variable	Categories	p-value
	Impact Evidence	.939
	Inform Decisions	.866
	Evaluation Report	.429
	Conclusions	.880
Behavior	Project Conversations	.196
	Non-project Conversations	.712
	Encourage Use	.990
	Use Results	.801
	Learn More	.709

\*No differences noted except for reported access frequency for the live webinars. A higher proportion of late responders (12%) access the live webinars 6 times or more compared to early responders (6%).

## Appendix D

### Open-ended Responses

Note:

All responses are provided unedited and are sorted by theme.

It is important to understand that not all the comments are relevant to EvaluATE, some are about other programs.

They are presented exactly as retrieved from Zoomerang. They illustrate the range of positive and negative statements made by respondents of each type and frequency of access.

EvaluATE staff have reviewed this set of comments and have indicated those comments not highly relevant to their work. This internal analysis had weight in the finalization of the narrative section of the report.

Some of the responses are truncated, the missing text cannot be retrieved. Size limitations in the memo fields on the electronic survey will be increased for the next administration of the survey

.



### 3. For those resources you rated as fair or poor quality, please suggest ways that EvaluATE could improve them.

12 individuals provided comments--10 individuals provided comments about quality (2 N/A deleted).

Novice Audience	the resources are not directed at professional evaluators, but rather novices. Could have drawn from the experts already involved with ate grants. (Evaluation staff)
Novice Audience	Some presenters are very good. Others seem to need more review of their materials and notes before the presentation. With this second group, I think the Webinars could use more "meat." (Evaluation staff)
Novice Audience	Try for more depth. (Grant staff)
Navigation & Organization	Mostly I see it as a problem of organization. Many good resources, but not always as intuitive as needed. (A very common problem even with ours!!) (Grant staff)
Navigation & Organization	Even though I rated it higher, I have a request about the resource library. Unless I've missed it, I'd like to see list of all the entries on the library. Sometimes I'm just looking generally for information, and don't always have the specificity n*** (Evaluation staff)
Limited Time	The live webinars are sometimes longer than I have time for. It's easier to use the recorded session and fast forward through to parts I need. (Grant staff)
Limited Time	I am just so busy that I don't have time to see a lot of what they do. I think they do a great job when I have had time to spend with their resources. (Grant staff)
Other	I've been a member of the CoP for months, but have not seen any activity. This indicates either that I have tech issues at my end, or the resource is not used. And that is one resource I was very excited about. (Grant staff)
Other	As a scientist I find the data you talk about collecting to be only half the story. There is no talk about content evaluation or student outcome in terms of time. I would expect that you would be leaders in steering towards long term outcomes. (Grant staff)
Other	Create an online space for threaded discussions that we could post to, respond to, and access for ideas (Grant staff)
Other	Some presenters are very good. Others seem to need more review of their materials and notes before the presentation. With this second group, I think the Webinars could use more "meat." (Evaluation staff)
Other	the resources are not directed at professional evaluators, but rather novices. Could have drawn from the experts already involved with ate grants. (Evaluation staff)

### 5. For those resources you rated as fair or poor utility, please suggest ways that EvaluATE could improve them?

11 individuals provided comments—8 individuals provided comments about utility (3 N/A deleted).

Info Overload	I get hit with so many emails per day - most is quite good - there is information overload. I like to be able to find information when I need it. (Grant staff)
Info Overload	too many surveys(Grant staff)
Variability & Relevance	The webinar I participated in was on evaluation (hiring an evaluator) and I did not realize that was the topic. Because of this it was not very helpful to me as we are not looking to hire a new evaluator. (Grant staff)

Variability & Relevance	See above (Evaluation Staff). the resources are not directed at professional evaluators, but rather novices. Could have drawn from the experts already involved with ate grants. (Evaluation staff)
Novice	EvaluATE appears to me to be a valuable resource for people with no previous experience in evaluating projects/centers. For those with a lot of evaluation experience, it seems rather too simple and not of tremendous added value. I have actually recom*** (Grant staff)
Novice	See above (Evaluation Staff). the resources are not directed at professional evaluators, but rather novices. Could have drawn from the experts already involved with ate grants. (Evaluation staff)
Other	See comment above. (Grant staff) As a scientist I find the data you talk about collecting to be only half the story. There is no talk about content evaluation or student outcome in terms of time. I would expect that you would be leaders in steering towards long term outcomes. (Grant staff)
Other	The website needs to be separated from WMU (Grant staff)
Other	I can always use what I find on the site. (Evaluation staff)

## 6. Please provide a short description of how you have used information from an EvaluATE resource.

72 individuals provided comments--61 individuals provided comments about use, 11 provided comments about non-use (2 N/A deleted).

Prop Dev	Support for proposal development, Preparation for NSF ATE conference Overall indoctrination to NSF. (Grant staff)
Prop Dev	I used the information when writing my recent proposal for a national center. (Grant staff)
Prop Dev	One is example is when I went back to view the recorded webinar about evaluation. I was working on a new proposal and needed a refresher on guidelines for the evaluator budget. (Grant staff)
Prop Dev	Primarily, I've used the materials to help in developing proposals and managing evaluation activities related to projects. I've also recommended the site to others who are developing proposals. (Grant staff)
Prop Dev	Writing a new grant (Grant staff)
Prop Dev	Used resource library on several occasions to garner ideas when writing grants (Evaluation staff)
Prop Dev	Writing proposals, writing eval reports, training PIs on evaluation or aspects of evaluation such as impact, logic model, claims, evidence, etc. (Evaluation staff)
Prop Dev	Information from EvaluATE has been used in preparation of NSF grant applications specifically, but has been generally beneficial to me as a new grant writer. (Institutional administrator)
Prop Dev	I used information from one of the EvaluATE webinars when I helped a PI write the next ATE grant proposal. (Institutional administrator)
Prop Dev	For federal grants and program planning. (Institutional administrator)
Prop Dev	In working with our project and in planning new projects (Grant staff)
Prop Dev	Used to improve our evaluation of our own grant and to improve future proposals. (Grant staff)
Prop Dev	We have used what we have learned in the development of evaluation sections of grant proposals and in reviewing evaluation sections of others proposals. (Institutional administrator)

Prop Dev	I used the information I learned during the webinars to formulate my thinking for the evaluation part of my NSF proposals. (Grant staff)
Prop Dev	I have used EvaluATE to seek how to develop an evaluation for an ATE proposal.
Eval Plan	I have used the resources to develop evaluation plans for grant project. (Grant staff)
Eval Plan	development of an eval plan. touch point for "course correction", as project is unfolding.source of publication,for staff use (Grant staff)
Eval Plan	Materials have been used to update evaluation plan and develop staff (Grant staff)
Eval Plan	As an evaluator, I have used resources to help me construct workshop evaluations. .As a potential grantee, I have found the information on preparing an evaluation plan and choosing an evaluator very helpful. (Grant staff)
Eval Plan	For (a) to establish relationships with new clients, (b) to developing evaluation plans, (c) to identify others in the community (Evaluation staff)
EvalPlan	Review available evaluation models and tools; insights from other evaluators to customize evaluation. (Evaluation staff)
Eval Plan	Used as template for modifying my evaluation process. (Evaluation staff)
Methods & Metrics	Improved the toolset used in developing impact metrics aligned with goals and objectives for external evaluation needs. (Evaluation staff)
Methods & Metrics	Utilized information to expand areas of evaluation and data collection for the current grant. Met more frequently with the grant external evaluator. (Grant staff)
Methods & Metrics	The information from the webinars has informed how we collect data for evaluation and construct our activities. (Grant staff)
Methods & Metrics	The information I have received on evaluation has impacted the way I think about my work -- they types of questions I ask and the evidence I try to capture. (Grant staff)
Methods & Metrics	I use the Google Analytics to enhance the value of my own evaluation efforts. (Evaluation staff)
Methods & Metrics	We have used the information to help us in working with our evaluator and how best to ask survey questions. (Grant staff)
Eval Improve	Help improve the evaluation strategies and instruments use in the evaluation process. (Grant staff)
Eval Improve	Rethinking the way we address assessment of a portion of our work (Grant staff)
Eval Improve	Added to ideas for specific conyent/process evaluation approaches and/or items. (Evaluation staff)
Eval Improve	Before EvaluATE, neither the PI nor I had much of an idea of what the best way was to conduct a project evaluation. We are both much better informed now. (Evaluation staff)
Eval Knowledge	information gathering (Grant staff)
Eval Knowledge	Utilized the various resources on evaluation of our grant. Guided our external evaluator to this site as she developed our evaluation report. (Grant staff)
Eval Knowledge	It just helps me get smarter as I work on our evaluation of our project and writing reports. (Grant staff)
Eval Knowledge	Just to become smarter as I was spinning up on the world of ATE (Grant staff)

Eval Knowledge	Read newsletter in an attempt to try to learn something new about what's happening in the evaluation world. (Grant staff)
Eval Knowledge	I went there to obtain important information about how ATE's evaluation differs from other NSF programs. Sometimes they also provide names of evaluators in my area. (Grant staff)
Eval Knowledge	Self-education to improve evaluation work or to point a client to information of interest (e.g., new requirement for a data management plan in grant proposals). (Grant staff)
Sharing & Exchange	I have accessed many of the older reports for use with my targeted research project. The conduit product is also a good way to feel connected to others working on evaluation in the ATE world. (Grant staff)
Sharing & Exchange	shared with colleagues --good resources (Grant staff)
Sharing & Exchange	Used info in working with our evaluator(Grant staff)
Sharing & Exchange	we have used the resources to help educate our staff on evaluation (Grant staff)
Sharing & Exchange	shared it with our external evaluator(Grant staff)
Sharing & Exchange	To implement strategies in grant-funded projects and proposals as well as provide information to colleagues to improve discipline areas. (Institutional administrator)
Sharing & Exchange	For (a) to establish relationships with new clients, (b) to developing evaluation plans, (c) to identify others in the community (Evaluation staff)
Find Evaluator	I went there to obtain important information about how ATE's evaluation differs from other NSF programs. Sometimes they also provide names of evaluators in my area. (Grant staff)
Find Evaluator	To hire a new evaluator for our own Center. (Grant staff)
Find Evaluator	As an evaluator, I have used resources to help me construct workshop evaluations. .As a potential grantee, I have found the information on preparing an evaluation plan and choosing an evaluator very helpful. (Grant staff)
Improve Reporting	In preparation for writing a NSF annual report(Evaluation staff)
Improve Reporting	I use it to prepare for the annual survey(Evaluation staff)
Improve Reporting	Utilized the various resources on evaluation of our grant. Guided our external evaluator to this site as she developed our evaluation report. (Grant staff)
Improve Reporting	It just helps me get smarter as I work on our evaluation of our project and writing reports. (Grant staff)
Improve Performance	Quality of program (not specified)
Improve Performance	Have improved our presentations and webinars based on the model EvaluATE set for us. Also used the Broader Impact example and Elizabeth Teles's "10 items" webinars to prepare proposals and in a workshop. (Grant staff)
Other	I often look up information on other projects when I am working on dissemination strategies. The map and subsequent list of projects and centers is very helpful for this purpose. (Grant staff)
Other	I am just learning about EvaluATE and would like more information. Should I be on a list? If so, how would one learn about the list? (Evaluation staff)

Other	Technical assistance, or direct application to my work objectives. (Grant staff)
Other	To support work on my own ATE project and to support project development. (Grant staff)
Other	Overall job functions, particularly related to NSF grant project management. (Grant staff)
Other	Grant ideas, best practices, new technology. (Grant staff)
Other	Resource and research. (Grant staff)
Other	I have participated in past webinars and utilized resources from the website. I have found all services provided by provided by EvaluATE to be extremely helpful and hope to use them more in the future. (Institutional administrator)
Other	Used for developing the data management plan for recent grant. (Grant staff)
Other	created a DMP(Grant staff)
Other	Background information on Applied Baccalaureat for future reference (Grant staff) [not an EvaluATE resource]
No use	I found it of little use. (Grant staff)
No use	Didn't. It was all well known stuff. (Grant staff)
No use	Haven't yet. (Grant staff)
No use	I have a very good evaluator that actively participates with Evaluate. I get most of my information from her so my direct participation has been low but my indirect knowledge of Evaluate is somewhat higher. I wish this survey could take this into *** (Grant staff)
No use	I have not used any. (Grant staff)
No use	I used information to generally guide me through the first year of my project, but have not used EvaluATE much since. (Grant staff)
No use	have not (Evaluation staff)
No use	Have not done so. (Evaluation staff)
No use	just received grant in Sept. (Institutional administrator)

**10. If you have other comments about EvaluATE that you would like to share, please write them in the space below.**

32 individuals provided comments--31 individuals provided comments (1 N/A deleted).

Kudos	A tremendous resource with excellent staff... (Grant staff)
Kudos	evaluate has been a rallying point of evaluation efforts in the ATE program(Grant staff)
Kudos	Great resource of the latest information. Good job. (Grant staff)
Kudos	Lori et al...wunderbar! (Grant staff)
Kudos	Thanks for all the info you provide! (Grant staff)

Kudos	Keep up the great work - it is wonderful to have such a good resource - lends credibility to the field of evaluation in NSF work(Evaluation staff)
Kudos	Performs a needed service for NSF ATE projects and centers(Evaluation staff)
Kudos	You have a great benefit to NSF projects and I wished I had more time to attend them.(Grant staff)
Kudos	The wide variety of experts presenting on the webinars have been impressive. Lots of good information shared.(Grant staff)
Kudos	EvaluATE makes available evaluation information not available elsewhere. The format, present topics followed by a question and discussion period, is particularly good. (Grant staff)
Kudos	They have only provided the "tip of the iceberg" of info that we need and they are willing to share. They need to expand their staff and budget or otherwise acquire the capacity to do more. Please please do something about the Community of Practice -(Grant staff)
Target Markets	Need to continue to "translate" academic evaluation language and processes for use by those who do not have that background and just need easily understandable strategies related to effective evaluation. Keep the target audience of 2-year college tec*** (Grant staff)
Target Markets	I do not wish to be critical of EvaluATE in any way -- the objectives and services offered are fine, and I certainly believe in the efficacy of evaluation. But EvaluATE's services seem geared primarily to newbies. (Grant staff)
Target Markets	Again, I am new to grant writing at the federal level. I had not known about the Evaluate Listserv, and recognize that I have a lot to learn about evaluation and all the resources available through EvaluATE. Since I have not used EvaluATE extensively, *** (Institutional administrator)
Target Markets	The webinars are informative but seem tailored to less experienced evaluators.(Not specified)
Use Limitations	I could not attend many of the live evaluation webinars because of the time they were offered and did not realize recordings could be accessed. More frequent reminders about recordings might have encouraged me to view the recorded webinars. I think E***(Institutional administrator)
Use Limitations	I wish I had more time so that I could make use of EvaluATE's materials and attend the webinars. Hopefully soon! (Grant staff)
Use Limitations	I would say there is much I've not explored about this resource. (Grant staff)
Use Limitations	The critical times when I needed help was while preparing the proposal, negotiating terms with NSF prior to approval and –especially—working with our IRB. All this happened before making contact with EvaluATE. (Grant staff)
Use Limitations	Again, I have a very good evaluator that actively participates with Evaluate. I get most of my information from her so my direct participation has been low but my indirect knowledge of Evaluate is somewhat higher. I wish this survey could take thi*** (Grant staff)
Use Limitations	To provide some context: I have background in evaluation and we work very closely with a number of evaluators so I have not felt the need for support in this area. (Grant staff)
NSF/ATE Context	I have questions about whether NSF evaluations within ATE projects are really bringing enough value to our students and institutions. Percentage wise, evaluation is a significant piece of project budgets. And while developing strong evaluation strate*** (Grant staff)
NSF/ATE Context	It's not clear what project officers require of evaluation; there are too many variations in what I have heard discussed and no standard; nor even a standard of who should receive the evaluation fro evaluator. (Evaluation staff)

Confirm Best Practices	I responded Strongly Disagree to questions 7 and 8 because I was already aware of the evaluation processes outlined. I primarily benefited from the EvaluATE center through learning more about how Social Media could be used to augment evaluation effort*** (Evaluation staff)
Confirm Best Practices	I selected neutral for most items under Q7 and Q8 because I already have a solid understanding of evaluation practice with many years of application and practice. Just because EvaluATE didn't move the needle for me, doesn't mean the services weren't (Evaluation staff)
Eval Quality	These statements are fairly general--depends on whether or not the evaluation is well crafted( Grant staff)
Eval Quality	I just feel that touchy feely evaluation is pretty unless. (Grant staff)
Eval Quality	I would like to make sure that the questions asked fit with the goals and objectives that we stated that we would do in our proposal. (Grant staff)
Eval Quality	I think GOOD evaluation yields useful information. I also think some evaluation lacks substance. (Grant staff)
Other	I think my evaluator should be responding to this survey(Grant staff)
Other	To many survys (Grant staff)

## Appendix E

### Invitations & Reminder



Text of Invitation sent by ATE Program Officer, David Campbell, November 29, 2011.

Shortly you will receive a brief electronic survey asking about your use and perceptions of the work of EvaluATE, the NSF-funded Evaluation Resource Center for Advanced Technological Education. This survey is being conducted by EvaluATE's external evaluators at PWK, Inc.

As an ATE program director at NSF, I strongly encourage you to complete this survey. If you're an evaluator, recipient of federal funds, or any way involved in obtaining, conducting, or assessing grant work, I am sure you are keenly aware of how important it is for grantees and their funders to find out how that work is going.

You have been selected to receive this survey either because of your connection to NSF's ATE program or because of your participation in an EvaluATE event. The EvaluATE staff and we at NSF highly value your opinion and will appreciate your candid feedback. PWK will keep your responses confidential—NSF and EvaluATE personnel will receive only aggregate results. Please keep an eye out for PWK's survey invitation—it won't take more than 10 minutes of your time to complete.

Email Zoomerang Survey Invitation sent by Phillips Wyatt Knowlton, Inc., November 30, 2011

This survey is being conducted by PWK, Inc. as part of its work as the independent evaluator for EvaluATE, the NSF-funded Evaluation Resource Center for Advanced Technological Education.

The purpose of this survey is to gather evidence of EvaluATE's value and impact. All responses will be kept confidential. Neither EvaluATE nor NSF staff members will have access to individual responses or to names of respondents; only aggregate results will be shared. Participants in the survey include ATE grant staff and evaluators as well as individuals not associated with ATE who have participated in EvaluATE's webinars or workshops.

It takes less than 10 minutes to fill out this simple survey. We'll appreciate your feedback by Wednesday December 14, 2011. **Please click the link below to begin the survey.**

*Whether you decide to take the survey or not, we'd like you to have a \$5 Starbucks e-coupon as our gift! This e-coupon will come to you directly as a link from Starbucks on Wednesday November 30, 2011. So watch for it in your inbox and any SPAM/Junk filters you employ. You click the link, print the coupon and use for the beverage of your choice at any Starbucks.*

If you have questions/concerns please call Cynthia Phillips at 269-441-1940 or contact her by email: [cynthiap@pwkinc.com](mailto:cynthiap@pwkinc.com)

Thank you!

<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/U2LN8LARFMHS>

Email Reminder and Thank you sent by EvaluATE. December 12, 2011

Dear [name]:

At the end of November, you were invited to complete a brief survey about EvaluATE, the NSF-funded Evaluation Resource Center for Advanced Technological Education. You were randomly selected to receive the survey among ATE program grantees, evaluators, and others who have participated in EvaluATE activities.

EvaluATE's external evaluator, PWK, Inc., sent all survey recipients a Starbucks \$5 e-coupon at the same time the survey invitation was issued. This was an advance thank you for your participation in the survey.

If you have already completed the survey-thank you again!

If you haven't yet completed the survey, PWK, Inc. will send you the link again today. It takes 10 minutes or less to complete. We at EvaluATE value your opinion and will appreciate your candid feedback to help us determine our effectiveness and improve our work.

Sincerely,  
Lori

Lori A. Wingate  
Principal Investigator  
EvaluATE  
[www.evalu-ate.org](http://www.evalu-ate.org)  
(269) 387-5922

Assistant Director  
The Evaluation Center  
Western Michigan University  
[www.wmich.edu/evalctr](http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr)

## **Appendix F**

### Telephone Focus Group Protocols & Transcripts

#### Follow-up Telephone Focus Group Protocol

1. Where and how do you go about seeking information about ATE evaluation?
2. What prompted you (or would prompt you) to turn to EvaluATE?
3. Is what you are doing for your ATE evaluation different because of EvaluATE? If so, why? If not, why not?
4. What changes would you suggest?

## Non PI Less Frequent Users

1	<b>Typically, when you have an information need about ATE evaluation, where and how do you go about <u>seeking information</u>?</b>
	<p>I believe I found it at NSF – ATE site – They had an announcement about a webinar. We all agreed here that evaluation would be really important. The webinar was very instructive...participants had very focused questions. It was a little bit intimidating. ONLY this.</p> <p>on webinar in Fall 2008. Have been on email distribution list.</p> <p>Have gone to website once or twice. Webinar very well run.</p>
2	<b>What would/or what has <u>prompted</u> you to turn to EvaluATE for information?</b>
	<p>Development needs....program and \$</p> <p>“I want to have a winning grant...to have a strong evaluation component.” I was really thinking about evaluation but I should have been looking for both. I have been a nonprofit and grant specialist for 30 yrs w outside eval group...to help applicants w informal education program. Having an evaluation group recognized by NSF as “state of the art” – Recon.</p> <p>I joined webinar because I wanted to find out what I could about best positioning – both program and \$. Mostly programming.</p>
3	<b>Is what you’re doing for your ATE evaluation <u>different</u> because of EvaluATE? If so, how? If not, why not? (PROBE as needed, if not much different, are they spending more time or money on evaluation, reporting differently, other changes?)</b>
	<p>looked into the site...a good evaluation source. We’re in very early stages of assembling ideas. Going forward – we’ll use the site.</p> <p>I, too, was looking for seeing what I could glean – “Clearly, a state of the art group that knows lots about evaluation. Webinars, well-run, can be a great tool.</p> <p><b>Asked if spending more time or money on evaluation.</b></p> <p>No answers</p> <p><b>Asked about different reporting.</b></p> <p>No answers</p>

4	<b>What changes would you <u>suggest</u>, that if made, would make EvaluATE services or information of greater value to you and your ATE work?</b>
	<p>As I said I just went into the current RFP – so EvaluATE is a link in the document. I don't know anyone that goes into the ATE...the link is a strong referral. I like it very much – lots of information but not overloaded when you go in. I especially like the resource link. Here's an idea. We are not research 1 – regional, public, applied science. Our member assoc is the American Assoc for state colleges &amp; universities (AASCU). Geared at our membership. The grant resource center serves</p> <p>I like the directory – we'll be looking for an evaluator. I'd like to hear some of your feedback.</p> <p>I think it's be useful to get the newsletter pushed out via e-mail with highlights. Even if a bit repetitive. If I had some selectivity in what it pushed out via social media....also using social media in intelligent ways.</p> <p>What's best practice re evaluation?</p> <p>there are tech gaps that I see all over the place in U systems. People in mgt don't have enough familiarity ...they don't think to go to a source. How to integrate better. Such a need....whether medical, education . A way to tie to content mgmt systems or learning mgmt systems? World Bank has a huge KM group...meeting of the minds can happen.</p>

I have taken Evaluate webinars. We are planning a proposal w consortium of state colleges. I am a sr. grant specialist in sponsored programs at XXX.

I was in the Office of research programs. Background in international evaluation. We are exploring different ways to push out devices...possible funding. 10 years at World Bank, USAID AID, evaluations.

## PI and Staff Less Frequent

1	<p><b>Typically, when you have an information need about ATE evaluation, where and how do you go about <u>seeking information</u>?</b></p>
	<p>I think it depends, of course we'd ask our evaluator...we'd ask WMU and we'd ask other experienced evaluators, perhaps some experienced PIs. I turn to evaluator by email .</p> <p>I contact program officer, colleagues, my evaluator (but I haven't gone to WMU for info).</p> <p>We've referred others writing proposals to WMU.</p> <p><b>All 1<sup>st</sup> grantees-?</b> No, <b>Multiple</b> (3 have multiple ATE grants) grants.</p> <p>Question goes first to ext evaluator. 2<sup>nd</sup> to NSF program officer.</p> <p>I have visited WMU site from time 2 time.</p> <p>We have people ask us about evaluators....always send them to WMU.</p>
2	<p><b>What would/or what has <u>prompted</u> you to turn to EvaluATE for information?</b></p>
	<p>As I have learned more about evaluation as our grant developed – the questions that came up – and knowledge about EvaluATE made me turn to them.</p> <p>I just send to ext evaluator.</p> <p>I regularly look forward to webinars. “ really appreciate the group discussion. The topics are really great. “ The access to past ones...is terrific.</p> <p>“we've had a relationship maybe 10 years now...w/ WMU.</p> <p>“I don't find the information really good for newbies or 1<sup>st</sup> year.” Don't find very advanced materials – in the last 1-1.5 years. Although I still refer others to the site. It provides very important information to include in your proposal.</p> <p>I would second that...If a complaint: I'd like to see more adventurous ways of evaluating outcomes of our grants. – WMU good for phrase and terms. NOT as forward thinking as I'd like it to be...”</p> <p>Rely heavily on external evaluators – they have it covered. (YEP from others)</p> <p>If you have a new evaluator – that might require WMU.</p> <p>I'd say ONLY if my external evaluator couldn't answer or gave me one I didn't like...”</p>



	If new info re qualitative ways....techniques
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Is what you're doing for your ATE evaluation <u>different</u> because of EvaluATE? If so, how? If not, why not? (PROBE as needed, if not much different, are they spending more time or money on evaluation, reporting differently, other changes?)</b></p>
	<p>It's the annual thing we do but I don't think it has had direct impact...because I've got an ext person on it. Our evaluator has done lots with WMU – this has impacted us.</p> <p>Early on, I found the reports from the annual survey helpful reading. This is still the case...but especially early on.</p> <p>Whenever we have an evaluation question – we refer to ext evaluator. It isn't possible for me to influence affect on him – some of it informed by WMU.</p> <p>We just expect WMU will be there....</p> <p>Early on , I learned lots more about methods for evaluation from WMU</p> <p><b>Asked if spending more time or money on evaluation.</b></p> <p>No answers</p> <p><b>Asked about different reporting, other changes.</b></p> <p>No answers</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>What changes would you <u>suggest</u>, that if made, would make EvaluATE services or information of greater value to you and your ATE work?</b></p>
	<p>I'd like to see some kind of monthly newsletter...which alerts me to stuff at WMU site. – via email. May be a good notice. SpaceTech sends out newsletter 1/mo</p> <p>I'd prefer more social media use – dump into a blog. Podcast and video.</p> <p>There's modern ways to disseminate content – eg; RSS feeds.</p> <p>Multiple mediums – same stuff.</p> <p>A few years ago – they had a conference in AZ – they brought several people to...face to face can help lots.</p> <p>Any spec of content needs to be accessible via mobile device</p> <p><b>What about content?</b></p> <p>Bring new stuff that's out there—eg; things to try</p> <p>I want stat info, if I want more insights re ATE – analysis</p>

	<p>I really second that...it would be great if we could get meta-analysis</p> <p>More forward thoughts re evaluation – might include data re context,</p> <p>Some evaluators are doing better than others – what, how, why? Interest in quality construct? [4 said YES affirming this statement]. (e.g., pre- and post-design. How to evaluate changes in higher order thinking)</p> <p>Could WMU aggregate &amp; convene, quality, utility, innovation – use?</p> <p>Depends on what's done w info later – disseminate</p> <p>Increase frequency but small bites</p> <p><b>Anything else?</b></p> <p>One thing I'd like to see more of...most Qs and answers relies on a model that assumes cohort of students studying something for an industry...typical.</p> <p>BUT – the XXXX [reference to a specific ATE grant] model is very different. 10 domains of XXXX [specific content areas] and our mats touch on half. We have no cohorts of students but institutions in 26 states in US. Very nebulous employer base...As time goes on – doesn't address program design. Niche orientations.</p> <p><b>Other POV?</b></p> <p>It would be nice to see different methods used....A good idea.</p> <p>Thank you – the people who joined have obvious, real interest in evaluation.</p>
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## PI and Staff, More Frequent

1	<p><b>Typically, when you have an information need about ATE evaluation, where and how do you go about <u>seeking information</u>?</b></p>
	<p>From the webinars, I've gotten lots of information...It was a little helpful to get some from NSF. I use the webinars for myself and my team.</p> <p>For me, there's two things. Things have changed since EvaluATE came on the scene. I would call WMU Evaluation Center folks – then, when EvaluATE came on , I'd ask them. Third was our OWN evaluator.</p> <p>Webinars that have been hosted have been tremendous.</p> <p>I would start with my evaluator then go to the webinars and website. I look at old webinars and email to Lori Wingate.</p>
2	<p><b>What <u>prompted</u> you to turn to EvaluATE for information?</b></p>
	<p>I'm fairly new. I rely on the webinars + hand outs. The information is a starting point. It's a great jumping off point.</p> <p>I would add that the quarterly newsletter produces has good tips.</p> <p>Things you may not think of....</p> <p>For me, it's the quality and clarity of information. The fact I can go to one place and get an answer. It's reliable. It points me in a direction. [Another seconds that]</p> <p>We were looking for a decent evaluator...and we ended up w a "clown."</p> <p>I have been very hesitant not to use other than a vetted source. A reliable resource.</p> <p>I guess one of the advantages is that the topical organization of the resource is very focused. I find that their focus areas to be "right on." useful.</p>
3	<p><b>Is what you're doing for your ATE evaluation <u>different</u> because of EvaluATE? If so, how? If not, why not? (PROBE as needed, if not much different, are they spending more time or money on evaluation, reporting differently, other changes?)</b></p>
	<p>The first thing I'd say – is I was under-estimated what evaluation was worth. Now having experienced evaluation. The concept of 10% on evaluation is no longer a shock. The quality has improved.</p> <p>I have gone from being a passive consumer to active consumer in the evaluation. I will budget higher – I hold myself to higher std now.</p>

	<p>My first exp (re reporting) was pretty much a disaster...and EvaluATE created new awareness re reporting.</p> <p>I guess, for me, it brought evaluation into the fore of what we do. The hard copy of the newsletters do get attention. We typically now talk about evaluation as part of the process...integrated in all our work.</p> <p>A student</p> <p>In our renewal process – we are placing far more emphasis on qualitative research. We needed to learn this over time.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>What changes would you <u>suggest</u>, that if made, would make EvaluATE services or information of greater value to you and your ATE work?</b></p>
	<p>It really hits first time grantees. If you could FORCE 1<sup>st</sup> time to use the services it would have helped. Somehow NSF needs to note this to grantees. They need to send those folks to the Center.</p> <p>This is what got me in trouble in my first project (2004). It had a list of evaluators. That's how I got the first evaluator...it was a self-registry w/o any vetting. I've made comments to Arlen and Lori. It probably should be vetted.</p> <p>This is sensitive. A vetted list of high quality evaluators would be great.</p> <p>Some kind of disclaimer would be important – if NOT.</p> <p>Frequently asked questions. This would be a great addition. It would be a helpful thread.</p> <p>We are in different stages in our careers and knowledge – It would be interesting to consider special interest groups. Where folks were interested in a proposal could form a group...more of a on-line community. But could offer matching up...or brokering more. Maybe a visiting expert? They have come such a long way in quality of webinars that it would be good to have it happen more often. Do more sub topics in addition to broad topics.</p> <p>If EvaluATE could interpret NSF regulations for evaluation implications. For example when new solicitation comes out. Maybe they could offer their view for evaluation but also qualify?</p> <p>If they could connect us up with grad students for mini-research that would be great. Ally with grad students at WMU.</p> <p>EvaluATE could feature latest evaluation research....</p> <p><b>Other Feedback:</b></p> <p>I really appreciate their work -- and I hope they continue to get funded.</p>

	I feel the same way, Amen. 3 others signal agreement
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## Non-PI and Staff, More Frequent

1	<p><b>Typically, when you have an information need about ATE evaluation, where and how do you go about <u>seeking information</u>?</b></p>
	<p>The main thing I think of is the website. They have a number of resources and resource library – I have turned to the webinars. I have attended some sessions at conference.</p> <p>Back at XXXX I ws co-PI for several grants. We've continued as we have grown....Every time I go to the DC – ATE conference I attend some of their sessions. I have incorporated some of those things in my work – eg; logic models.</p>
2	<p><b>What <u>prompted</u> you to turn to EvaluATE for information?</b></p>
	<p>I started to follow when I read about it. The roundtables have been great. The tools you brought are good, eg; website. It's a real nice augmentation of resources that is sep from NSF. The logic model for example has been improved on – the Baldrige criteria is good but some of the tools evaluate has brought ha been smaller subsets of improvements. I can share these holistically w others.</p> <p>Every program has its techniques and methods – each has its own distinct focus. Of course, ATE oriented website has the NSF angle...I think it's a uniquely appropriate support to project directors and evaluators. I am not currently an ATE evaluator...I am not sure I am in the directory.</p>
3	<p><b>Is what you're doing for your ATE evaluation <u>different</u> because of EvaluATE? If so, how? If not, why not? (PROBE as needed, if not much different, are they spending more time or money on evaluation, reporting differently, other changes?)</b></p>
	<p>A serious addition over the last 18 months is an inclusion of the logic model to organize inputs and outputs (because of EvaluATE). What's lacking is the solid understanding of what the metrics need to look like – to reflect what NSF funded for them. Models put the content in a clear, succinct display that's essential for crating evaluation.</p> <p>It has changed how I report. It's been influenced by beginning w the end in mind...I chair a large NVC (for a center in XX) for same. I've made sure they have models as a center point for nailing down metrics. This has been a vital tool to measure and help them measure – then to help them report!</p> <p>It's been a while.</p>

	<p><b>Asked if spending more time or money on evaluation.</b></p> <p>No answers</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>What changes would you <u>suggest</u>, that if made, would make EvaluATE services or information of greater value to you and your ATE work?</b></p> <p>It may be that it's already there...would be good to [have a ] <i>PI or co-PI Guidebook</i> how to work better w external evaluator – and to communicate regularly (at least monthly. Perhaps more often? That relationship is something we could help support.</p> <p>I think what they are doing is highly appropriate – and of great value to ATE project directors and PIs. Some of the project staff have very limited evaluation background. Right level for them. There's a lot more nuance aspects of evaluation.</p> <p>Could be good to establish a pilot to see if nano-tech or auto mftg.</p> <p>I like the ATE focus because so focused with community colleges, industry and other. Everybody else out there is working in these areas, too. They could learn from each other.</p> <p>Might be a segment focus</p> <p><b>Anything else?</b></p> <p>It occurs to me to mention that EvaluATE has more resources – the Evaluation Center – that is broader and deeper. I'm not quite sure - This COULD be more obvious to others. It might be a bit hidden. Routine communications are more about the EvaluATE site.</p> <p>I would agree ...I do not go to the website nearly enough. I'd like to make it more of a frequent stop. Perhaps categories of assistance and tools might be helpful.</p> <p>Webinar – the tech piece worked great. I thought the length, focus, content was good.</p> <p>I would concur – the few I've been on were great. Tech fine. Input and feedback on the call.</p> <p>It has been a real pain...all the PIs I work with (6 or 7) have real work load issues in prep reports in ATE – and different for EvaluATE. Would it be nice if 50-60 80% common needs were same. Some have voiced to Lori and to others in the past. Should be at least 50% core same.....</p>