



Example thematic working group proposal:

1. **Title:** Who are the evaluators and how do we work in vibrant democracies?

2. **Coordinator Information:**

- a. John Doe (Sociologists for Vibrant Democracies)
 - i. John is
- b. Jane Doe (Research Fellow at Evaluator Workforce Development)
 - i. Jane is...
- c. Thematic working group affiliation: Professionalization of Evaluation

3. **Rationale:**

- a. It is important for people that describe themselves as evaluators to have a strong understanding of themselves so they can do their work with awareness and intentionality. Evaluators, however, are as prone to making assumptions about themselves as any other person, so it is important to have structured ways to discuss who we are and what we bring to our work in vibrant democratic processes. Ethics, values, positionalities, professional identity, methodological tools, and philosophical orientations are all critical for evaluators to understand and be able to communicate with others.
- b. The key issues that this strand will address are empirical questions about evaluators themselves, theoretical frameworks drawn from other disciplines to help us understand ourselves and our community partners, and tools to help evaluators better communicate with the people and communities we serve.
- c. This strand will contribute to both theory and practice by addressing important questions about the very bedrock of evaluation itself: its practitioners.
- d. Draft call: It is important for people that describe themselves as evaluators to have a strong understanding of themselves so they can do their work with awareness and intentionality. Evaluators, however, are as prone to making assumptions about themselves as any other person, so it is important to have structured ways to discuss who we are and what we bring to our work in vibrant democratic processes. Ethics, values, positionalities, professional identity, methodological tools, and philosophical orientations are all critical for evaluators to understand and be able to communicate with others. This strand seeks contributions by evaluation scholars and practitioners that use established

frameworks to discuss topics such as professional identity, links between ethics-values-practice, preparation and support of evaluators through education and professional development, pipelines to help socialize junior evaluators, and other affiliated topics. Preference will be given to proposals that share empirical data (quantitative and/or qualitative) and explicitly link their proposal with the importance of communicating with evaluation constituents.

4. Prospective sessions:

- a.** We hope to contribute to the conference by organizing five (5) sessions.
- b.** We anticipate one session will address contemporary work on evaluator education systems across the world; a second session will likely discuss recent empirical research on values, ethics, identity, and psychology; a third session might focus on specific tools and strategies on communicating about evaluation; a fourth session might discuss contemporary work on evaluation theory with a focus on translating theory to practice; we would like to keep the fifth session flexible.
- c.** We hope to include scholars such as ...
- d.** Several of the aforementioned scholars are junior in the field and we hope this will be a way to include them in the EES community.
- e.** This proposal is important because the topics can all be discussed in a modular fashion, but they can also be conceptually linked together for EES participants that want to take a “deep dive” into topics around professionalization.