



July 6, 2021

## **Statement from the American Evaluation Association on the June 2021 White House OMB Guidance on Evaluation and Learning Agendas**

*The following is a statement from the American Evaluation Association after the White House Office of Management and Budget issued implementation guidance ([M-21-27](#)) for the evaluation provisions in the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act):*

The American Evaluation Association applauds the White House's clear and comprehensive guidance about the role of evaluation in the U.S. Federal Government and the country more generally. The newly-issued guidance effectively recognizes the field and practice of evaluation as an essential component of governance and service delivery, and its implementation will be a major step forward in the thoughtful use of evaluative evidence.

The guidance provides the most detailed direction for federal evaluation policy and practice since enactment of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act. It highlights the need for capacity and funding, identifies the critical role of senior leaders as users of evaluation, and articulates how evaluation is relevant to activities across programmatic, operational, and research needs. The guidance includes much needed definitions and rationales that clarify the role of and need for evaluation offices across government. It also details the role of learning agendas and annual evaluation plans in strategic planning and collates supplementary evaluation resources into a single document.

For new evaluation officers in the federal government, the guidance to federal agencies presents a roadmap for encouraging coherent planning processes that lead to useful evidence. For policymakers, the new guidance outlines expectations that evaluation results will be used to improve policy and program implementation. For the evaluation community outside government, including those working in other levels of government, the guidance presents a framework that builds on recommendations from the American Evaluation Association's "[Evaluation Roadmap for a More Effective Government](#)." Indeed, the American Evaluation Association enthusiastically applauds this tremendous step forward for the evaluation community, with its recognition of the critical role evaluation plays in improving implementation of policies and programs while also building a more equitable society.

*The American Evaluation Association is a professional association of evaluators. Evaluation involves assessing the strengths and weaknesses of programs, policies, personnel, products and organizations to improve their effectiveness. AEA's mission is to improve evaluation practices and methods worldwide, to increase evaluation use, promote evaluation as a profession and support the contribution of evaluation to the generation of theory and knowledge about effective human action.*