



## **Evaluation for an Equitable Society**

### **Independence, Partnership, Participation**

As the evaluation discipline endeavours to contribute to a more equitable society it will be called upon to assert its independence, reach out to partners and empower disadvantaged groups through participation. These are the overarching themes to be addressed at the Eleventh EES Biennial Conference that will take place in Dublin (Ireland) on October 1-3, 2014 (with preconference workshops on September 29-30, 2014).

*Independence* is the foundation of valid and objective evaluative processes since protection from vested interests is a prerequisite of evaluation excellence. But independence should not lead to isolation. The citizen should come to the centre stage of the evaluation process. Amplifying the voices of neglected groups and leveling the playing field of policy formation will need to be emphasized for evaluation to be legitimate.

It follows that *participation* in evaluation (as well as evaluation of participation within on-going political processes) will have to articulate the values, interests and concerns of disadvantaged communities and groups. To this end evaluation will increasingly promote inclusive decision making through agenda setting, broad based stakeholder involvement and deliberative evaluation processes. New dynamics of affirmative and inclusive evaluation will be fashioned at the intersection of diverse cultures and traditions.

Finally, without *partnerships* cutting across the public, private and voluntary sectors the evaluation community will not be able to contribute to a more equitable society. The complex and 'wicked' problems currently faced by policy makers do not respect national boundaries. Nor can they be identified, analyzed and solved without drawing on a wide variety of disciplines.

Gone are the days when evaluators could work effectively in a solo mode, without recourse to one another or to other disciplines. In the current operating environment evaluation coalitions will have to be forged to achieve results. Evaluators will have to master the new information and communication technologies in order to implement real time evaluation processes. More inclusive and reliable indicators of human progress will have to be framed.

The Conference programme will not be limited to these topics. As in past years the European Evaluation Society will offer its members a state of the art platform for evaluation managers, researchers, practitioners and commissioners to share a wide range of ideas, insights and opinions relevant to the prospects of evaluation in Europe and beyond.

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