



# EVALUATION CONSIDERATIONS

## INTERNAL

## VS.

## EXTERNAL

Nascent or not fully defined intervention structure

Intended audience(a) are primarily internal

Independence/objectivity are not critical for the findings to be useful

Existing data systems can fulfill most or all of the data collection needs

Evaluation design and data collection methods are relatively simple and straightforward

Evaluation need can generally be fulfilled through descriptive and basic inferential statistics

Internal staff possess the content and evaluation expertise to carry out the project

Well-defined and fairly stable intervention structure

Intended audience(a) include external stakeholders

Independence/objectivity are required to lend credibility to the findings

Data collection would require significant modification and/or augmentation of existing data systems

Evaluation design and data collection methods are complex

Evaluation need requires higher-level statistical techniques and analytic software

Program and evaluation design could benefit from external content and evaluation expertise



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## SELECTING AN EXTERNAL EVALUATION PARTNER

- Designate evaluator selection lead, who will engage other internal stakeholders throughout the selection process
- Issue a formal Request for Proposals articulating student design, goals, timeline, and available budget
- Be clear about how the project aligns with or builds upon previous research and evaluation conducted on the program
- Look for:
  - General understanding/grasp of program model
  - Thoughtful design, well-aligned with stated project goals
  - Ability to be on-site for visits with staff and/or data collection
  - Collaborative approach to evaluation
  - Explicit planning for communication of findings both internally and externally
  - Consider value for cost
- Calibrate project design/scope expectations with available budget
  - May be able to stretch evaluation budget by having internal staff manage project elements
- Vet candidates based on written proposals **and** interviews