Opportunity Spectrum: Possible Points of Equitable Evaluation Framework™ Interplay

These unprecedented times provide an opportunity to consider in real time what evaluation practice that holds equity as a value, embraces complexity and expands our definitions of validity might look and feel like. Given this reality and opportunity to do things differently, **we offer the following topline questions and considerations that may be useful to keep in mind** however might be helpful to you, and others you are bringing along. This guidance is gleaned from the Equitable Evaluation Framing Paper, Teaching Case, practice partner pilots, etc.

Broader Guiding Questions and Reflections:

- How can the Equitable Evaluation Principles (EEP)– **as foundational guideposts** - be lifted and kept top of mind and centered throughout? What does leading with the EEP look like? Which of these might you be able to step into at this moment?
- How might evaluation "orthodoxies," or tightly held beliefs about evaluative practice that have been shaped by the philanthropic sector over time be mitigated or eliminated?
- What does this require of us (foundations, evaluators, nonprofits) across all aspects of the evaluative process – the questions we ask, the relationship to strategy, the measures we use, the teams we assemble, and the ways we support the use of data and sense-making around findings?

The Equitable Evaluation Framework challenges and embraces new pathways for and concepts of validity, rigor, and complexity to help ensure that findings are truthful, meaningful and relevant. This entails questions and considerations across phases – at/within any point, project, or method – such as follows:

Possibilities Across Learning/Evaluation Phases			
Design/Plan	**Implementation**	**Analysis**	**Share & Use**
An intersecting, interplaying, and potentially non-sequential spectrum Stakeholder/community/target population expertise, engagement, and ownership throughout.			
VALIDITY, RIGOR, AND COMPLEXITY AS UNDERPINNINGS **Questions/Considerations** (Values, Voices, and Validity): - How can we ensure that the voice of those most impacted is not seen as separate from and different than "valid" evidence? And how can we work to ensure voice is treated as something to pay attention to *always* (as opposed to *conditionally*)? - How can we advance consideration of when and whose voice is sought and heard as a matter of standardized professional discipline and expectation? - How can we address the underlying issue - not that we don't know *how* to increase validity in this way - but rather that we *choose* not to do it? **Some questions that go unasked:** - What kind of information and knowledge, if any, is fundamentally and inherently valuable and important? And what values does that reflect, and what intention does it advance? - What are implications when we fail to embrace that there are multiple realities and truths influenced by power, context, systems, culture, history, and our own relationship to each of these? - How does this limit our ability to engage in inquiry, analysis, and sense-making that are truly valid? **What those of us who share the goal of advancing equity must do:** - Center values and intentions. How can we put our values and intentions front and center by being transparent and honest about the decisions we make and the methods we use? - Embrace complexity. How can we seek voices from all the traditional and nontraditional sources to help us make sense of what is learned and the ways in which those learnings might be used to advance the intention of the work and reflect the underpinning values? - Seek multicultural validity. How can we broaden and deepen what we mean by valid, to help us understand the past and present in more nuanced ways?			

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Possible Opportunities
Within/Among Phases, Projects, Programs, People

With a commitment to advancing the voice(s) of those most impacted as valid evidence, **what could or might you do differently in your work or sphere of influence?** In reflecting on the spectrum:

- Are there things in play or emerging - within/across phases, projects, programs, people - where simple changes come to mind that might increase validity in this shifting landscape?
- What are things to pay attention to, especially related **to relationships and power dynamics** (e.g., inequities in access to technology, increased pressures on grantees, etc.)? And what are the implications?
- Are there ways *you* might be able to adjust (e.g., expectations, processes)? And, in turn, that might influence the approaches of others you work with and they work with (other staff, evaluators, grantees, community members)?

Design/Plan	Implementation	Analysis	Share & Use
Related to issues of evaluation team, selection, diversity, composition, roles, expertise, engagement, relationships, and trust.	Related to issues of context, methods, stakeholder/ community knowledge, data collection, and data access.	Related to issues of analysis of racial and ethnic disparities; and structural and systems-level drivers of inequity.	Related to issues of interpretation and dissemination of findings, input and roles, availability, accessibility, benefits, and usefulness.
(POWER)	**(COMPLEXITY & VALIDITY)**	**(VALIDITY)**	**(RIGOR)**
Questions/Considerations: *What questions are being asked? Why? Of whom? Who decides? How? In what way(s) is stakeholder/ community perspective/voice integrated? Who is engaged and how? Who selects? What is the value-add for participants? Etc.*	*Questions/Considerations:* *What is known and not known at this moment? What is important to pay attention to (why and for whom)? Who is asking the questions? Why? How are they asking? Capturing? Whose experience/insight is deemed important? Who determines? Who gets access? Etc.*	*Questions/Considerations:* *How is data being analyzed? By whom? Are disparities being analyzed? In what way(s)? How are systems/structures and policies being assessed? Other "rules of the game?" How is validity being determined? Etc.*	*Questions/Considerations:* *What gets shared? With whom? Why? How? Who gets to preview initial findings? Weigh in? How? Who gets to decide? Who benefits from the findings? The process? How will information be used? By whom? Etc.*

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