



**TIP SHEET:**  
Costing an  
Evaluation Plan

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## Purpose of Resource

The purpose of this resource is to provide learners with tips and templates for costing a population health evaluation plan.

Trainers may choose to provide this resource as additional supplementary information to support learners understanding of evaluation principles and completion of relevant assessments.

## Units of Competency

This resource supports learning and completion of assessments for the following units of competency:

- HLTPOP503C Plan a population health project
- HLTPOP504C Evaluate a population health project

## Acknowledgement

This resource has been adapted from a range of existing resources of which have been referenced at the end of this guide.

## Developing an Overall Evaluation Budget

It is generally recommended that agencies spend approximately 5-15 per cent of the total program budget on evaluation. It is important to consider the scope of the evaluation when deciding on a budget for the evaluation.

If the program is new, innovative, or being implemented in a new setting it may be necessary to evaluate it more intensively, using a stronger study design. This may be particularly important if you want to use the evaluation results for future advocacy or to obtain additional funding to ensure sustainability.

If a program has been implemented a number of times and the impact evaluation has been shown to be effective it may not be necessary to conduct an extensive evaluation. It would be sufficient to undertake process evaluation to ensure the program has been implemented as planned and undertake an impact/outcome evaluation periodically.

When developing a budget, you may need to consider costs for the following individual evaluation activities:

- Designing the evaluation.
- Developing collection tools.
- Pilot testing data collection tools.
- Revising data collection tools.
- Collecting data.
- Processing the data (coding/data entry, etc.).
- Analysing the data.
- Writing the report.
- Disseminating your results.

## How to Determine Costs for Individual Evaluation Activities

When determining how much individual evaluation activities would cost, it is useful to review evaluation budgets from previous projects your organisation has undertaken. Previous projects are often a good reference point for approximating costs of individual evaluation activities.

When identifying a budget for activities you plan to out-source, ensure that you seek at least two quotes and include the cost for the highest quote within your budget action plan.

Tips for getting the most out of your evaluation budget:

- Combine pre-test and post-test data collection tools. For example you can combine the uses of a survey for collecting baseline data and testing out the materials you plan to use during your project.
- Utilise students and volunteers where possible. Ensure that volunteers and students are adequately trained.
- Consider utilising as much in-house skills and expertise as possible.

- If budget is available, out-source expertise when you need objectivity or if there is a lack of necessary skills, time and interest among staff with in your organisation.

## Developing your Evaluation Action Plan

It is helpful when designing a budget for an evaluation to develop a detailed action plan. An action plan is different to an evaluation plan as detailed in 'A Guide to Evaluating a Population Health Project'. An evaluation plan outlines what needs to be evaluated (objectives/strategies), what data needs to be collected (indicators), and how the information will be gathered (data collection methods). Whereas, an evaluation action plan includes all the tasks, the persons responsible, the costs and expected completion dates for the evaluation plan.

Below is a sample template for an evaluation action plan that can be easily adapted for your own project.

Strategies	Activities	Person Responsible	Costs/ Staff Time	Expected Completion Date/Timeframe
Designing the evaluation	•	•	•	•
Developing data collection tools	•	•	•	•
Pilot testing data collection tools	•	•	•	•
Revising data collection tools	•	•	•	•
Collecting data	•	•	•	•
Processing the data (coding/data entry, etc.)	•	•	•	•
Analysing the data	•	•	•	•
Writing the report	•	•	•	•
Disseminating your results	•	•	•	•

Below is a sample compiled evaluation action plan:

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Costs/Staff Time</b>	<b>Expected Completion Date/Timeframe</b>
<b>Designing the evaluation</b>	Develop draft evaluation plan	Project Coordinator	4 hours	1 week in total
	Steering Committee meeting to seek input on evaluation plan	Steering Committee	1 hour meeting	
	Amend and finalise evaluation plan based on feedback	Project Coordinator	1 hour	
<b>Developing data collection tools</b>	Develop draft post focus group facilitator guide including questions	Project Coordinator	8 hours	3 weeks in total to allow feedback to be received from Steering Committee and finalise content
	Seek input from Steering Committee (via email) on facilitator guide and questions	Steering Committee	2 weeks provided for Steering Committee feedback	
	Amend and finalise focus group guide	Project Coordinator	2 hours	
<b>Pilot testing data collection tools</b>	Recruit one small focus group of the project target audience (10 people) to provide feedback on focus group questions	Project Coordinator	8 hours	2 weeks in total to allow for recruitment of participants
	Undertake and record focus group discussion using an in-house meeting room	Project Coordinator	2 hours Catering - \$100 (tea, coffee, juice and sandwiches)	
<b>Revising data collection tools</b>	Revise and finalise focus group questions based on feedback from pilot testing	Project Coordinator	2 hours	2 hours
	Print and bind focus group facilitator guide and questions	Project Coordinator	4 colour guides (\$4 per guide) = \$16 - in-house printing	1 hour

<b>Collecting data</b>	Recruit focus group participants (40 maximum – 10 per group)	Project Coordinator	40 hours	3 weeks in total
	Book and pay for venue and catering (4 separate rooms required)	Project Coordinator	2 hours Venue - \$400 for 4 rooms Catering - \$400 (tea, coffee, juice and sandwiches) for 40 people	
	Facilitate 4 focus groups	Project Coordinator + 3 other internal staff members	2 hours	
<b>Processing the data (coding/data entry, etc.)</b>	Enter and collate qualitative and quantitative data into Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word	Project Coordinator	40 hours	1 week
<b>Analysing the data</b>	Analyse qualitative data and identify common themes and trends	Project Coordinator	40 hours	1 week
	Analyse quantitative data to determine changes in measures	Project Coordinator		
	Compare data against project objectives to determine outcomes	Project Coordinator		
<b>Writing the report</b>	Develop draft report	Project Coordinator	40 hours	3 weeks in total to allow for development, feedback and finalising report.
	Seek input from steering committee on report	Steering Committee	2 hours	
	Revise and finalise report based on feedback	Project Coordinator	2 hours	
<b>Communicate findings</b>	Email full report to all stakeholders involved	Project Coordinator	1 hour	1 week in total
	Develop a summary	Project	2 hours	

	report  Print and disseminate the evaluation summary to participants via email and post	Coordinator Project Coordinator	4 hours Printing: \$50 Postage: \$20	
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## References and Additional Reading

Flinders University 2008, *Planning and Evaluation Wizard*, Adelaide, South Australia  
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Prevention and Population Health Branch 2010, *Evaluation framework for health promotion and disease prevention programs*, Melbourne, Victorian Government  
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