

March 22, 2021

Statement on President Biden’s Prioritization of Evidence-Based Policymaking and Evaluation

The American Evaluation Association appreciates President Biden’s statement that it is United States policy to pursue evidence-based decisions, including the use of evaluation in government policymaking. The [memorandum](#) issued by the President on January 27, 2021, establishes a strong framework for using evaluation, evidence, and science to promote trust in our government. It builds on legal requirements established by the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act (Evidence Act) by recognizing the important role of federal evaluation officers and by prioritizing the use of learning agendas and annual evaluation plans for enhancing the national evidence ecosystem.

The American Evaluation Association believes evaluation is an essential function of an effective government to understand implementation and effects of programs and policies. Evaluation requires a range of appropriate methods to answer decision-makers’ important policy questions. The acknowledgment in President Biden’s memo for methods ranging from quantitative and qualitative techniques is well-aligned with the practices used by the members of our association. Additionally, our organization views integrity – carrying out these methods with honesty and transparency – as core to the field of program evaluation.

The clear statement from the President provides an opportunity for federal agencies and the evaluation community to collaborate and to advance inclusive, meaningful, and equitable public engagement in federal evaluation. The American Evaluation Association and its members have the relevant knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm to support federal agencies as partners in advancing evidence-based policymaking.

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.