



AWRAE Training Project Evaluation

Evaluation of the Aboriginal Women's Research Assistant and Evaluation (AWRAE) Training Project

20 January 2022



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Developed by the Cultural & Indigenous Research Centre Australia 2021

All research conducted by CIRCA for this project was in compliance with ISO20252

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) wishes to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters in which we work and the knowledge-holders of the oldest continuous cultures in the world, and pay respects to Elders past and present.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) was commissioned by Aboriginal Biodiversity Conservation (ABC) Foundation to evaluate the pilot program of the Aboriginal Women's Research Assistant and Evaluation (AWRAE) Training Project in Karratha. This involved interviews and a focus group with Implementation Team members and AWRAE participants, to understand the effectiveness of implementation and outcomes achieved by the program.

Overall, the program is achieving the initial intended outcomes for the participants, including knowledge and skills gain around research and evaluation, increased confidence, increased aspiration and a change in attitude. However, these outcomes are still considered short-term, and for these outcomes to be established, ongoing mentorship and support for the women is recommended. Further, outcomes achieved differ greatly between participants, dependent on various factors including the length of time spent in the program, and previous experience in research and evaluation.

While some outcomes have been met, there were a range of issues in the implementation of the program in Karratha that have affected the overall delivery of the program. These include not enough lead time between the decision to hold the pilot in Karratha and the start of the course, a lack of clarity around recruitment criteria, and limited Professional Development or supports available for Implementation Team members.

The evaluation specifies several recommendations that are suggested to ABC Foundation and other program stakeholders, which we advise are addressed prior to undertaking future iterations of the program in Broome and Derby.

2. INTRODUCTION

Aboriginal Biodiversity Conservation (ABC) Foundation commissioned the Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of the pilot program of the Aboriginal Women's Research Assistant and Evaluation (AWRAE) Training Project in Karratha. The AWRAE Program is a 13-week training course for Aboriginal women, teaching them about research and evaluation and is implemented by ABC Foundation, Clear Horizon, and other partners.

The first three months of the program (August, September, and October 2021) has the following curriculum:

- Introduction to research and evaluation
- Understanding of political and cultural issues affecting research and evaluation
- How to conduct a literature review
- Preparing research and evaluation questions
- Developing a theory of change/program logic
- Developing research and evaluation questions and tools
- How to manage a research or evaluation project
- Doing data collection
- Analysis of data
- Sharing findings
- Writing short reports
- How to advocate for doing evaluation and research.

Following the training, the program focuses on work placements and implementation of community-based research projects by the women over the ensuing seven weeks.

This evaluation explored perspectives from the Implementation Team and women participants about the implementation and outcomes of the project. The evaluation provides early indications of project successes and areas for improvement, to inform the ABC Foundation, Clear Horizon, and

other partners with insights for use for the design and implementation of the next AWRAE project in Broome, Derby, and beyond.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Evaluation Framework

CIRCA identified two overarching questions to guide this evaluation. The first relates to implementation of the program, see Table 1 below. The second question relates to the intended initial outcomes for participants of the program, listed in Table 2 below. To address these questions, domains for exploration and potential indicators for each domain were also identified.

The indicators were used to develop discussion guide questions. They may also be used in the future to develop a logic framework for the program to guide its development.

Table 1: Overarching question 1: How was the project delivered? What key barriers and enablers emerged, what was effective, and what requires redesign? (Implementation)

DOMAIN	POSSIBLE INDICATORS
Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Team readiness for the course, in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ communications between team members ○ training spaces/online facilities ○ trainer & facilitator preparation ○ training materials & lesson plans • Participant readiness for the course, in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ time available ○ projects they wanted to work on in mind ○ perceived utility of course training • Community readiness for the course, in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ facilities for training ○ ability to participate in work placements and community-based research projects <p>How did these factors contribute to effectiveness and what requires redesign?</p>
Reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effectiveness of participant recruitment processes • numbers of participants recruited, and sufficiency of numbers given retention rates • appropriateness/usefulness of criteria for recruitment • participant satisfaction with the recruitment approach

	<p>How did these factors contribute to effectiveness and what requires redesign?</p>
Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehensiveness of course subject coverage (i.e. were there gaps in topics covered)? • depth of course subject coverage (i.e. was more information needed on core concepts or skills) • participant satisfaction with the structure of the course <p>How did these factors contribute to effectiveness and what requires redesign?</p>
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quality of the training and instruction (e.g. concepts explained, depth, opportunities to practice) • community co-facilitator relationship and communication between program team and participants • participant satisfaction with the way the course was delivered • positive and negative actions by trainer and facilitators • level of support provided by facilitators for the course <p>How did these factors contribute to effectiveness and what requires redesign?</p>
Acceptability <i>(Relevance, appropriateness, and feasibility)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course relevance to participants and their needs • appropriateness of course material, model and delivery to ensure cultural safety • practical applicability of information and skills for participants' use • participant satisfaction with the program overall <p>How did these factors contribute to effectiveness and what requires redesign?</p>
Fidelity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fidelity of implementation to the course model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ course topics ○ teaching methods (e.g. examples, case studies, activities) ○ delivery mode (e.g. face to face, online and placement components) ○ intensity (hours per week) & duration (number of weeks) <p>How did these factors contribute to effectiveness and what requires redesign?</p>

Table 2: Overarching question 2: What are the project's initial outcomes for participants? (Immediate Outcomes)

DOMAIN	POSSIBLE INDICATORS
<i>Changes in knowledge and skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase in participant research, evaluation and advocacy skills • increase in participant understanding of quality in research and evaluation (e.g. concepts of rigour, validity) • increase in participant knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and evaluation approaches • participant view that the knowledge they gained will endure <p>What were barriers and avenues to uptake of skills and knowledge?</p>
<i>Confidence changes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase in participant confidence to use the skills they learned in the course • increase in participant confidence to talk with their communities and advocate for culturally appropriate research and evaluation • barriers and avenues to participant confidence <p>What were barriers and avenues to increased confidence?</p>
<i>Aspiration changes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change in participants' aspirations to conducting research and evaluation themselves • change in participants' aspirations to being employed in research and evaluation • change in participants' aspirations to undertaking further training or study in research and evaluation <p>What were barriers and avenues to changes in aspirations?</p>
<i>Attitude changes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change in participants' views about constitutes culturally appropriate research and evaluation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities • change in participants' views about the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in leading and delivering research and evaluation <p>What were barriers and avenues to changes in attitudes?</p>

3.2 Participant recruitment

The recruitment for the evaluation aimed to engage all four Implementation Team members and approximately 8 Aboriginal women who were participating in the AWRAE project. Implementation Team members were first identified by the ABC Foundation, contact details were provided to CIRCA research team members, and CIRCA followed up with Implementation Team members to invite them to participate and schedule times to meet. To recruit AWRAE participants, the program co-facilitators were provided with information about the project and a flyer to socialise the purpose and details of the evaluation to the participants. The flyer contained the contact details of a CIRCA research consultant, who, once contacted by participants, organised the logistics for the in-person

interviews. In addition, the CIRCA Research Consultant directly emailed and phoned all of the AWRAE participants to tell them about the evaluation and to invite them to meet with her for an interview. At the time of the interview, participants were further explained the research and had an opportunity to ask any questions, before providing their consent to participate and be audio-recorded.

3.3 Data collection

Data was collected through interviews and a focus group during October and November 2021. Ethics approval through AIATSIS was confirmed prior to data collection taking place.

3.3.1 Interviews and focus group with Implementation Team

Interviews were conducted with the Implementation Team to gain an insight into the implementation and effectiveness of the program. In interviews, Implementation Team members were asked to comment on the implementation of the project and to comment on their observations of knowledge, skill, confidence, aspiration, and attitude changes among the AWRAE program participants. Asking Implementation Team members to comment on participant outcomes was done to provide the evaluation a triangulated viewpoint on the impact of the program on participants, as the perceptions of Implementation Team members were combined with direct reports from AWRAE participants about the impact of the program. A focus group was also facilitated with the Team toward the end of the program, to understand the changes the program had undergone since initial design, as well as proposed changes that were already in discussion for the next iteration of the program.

Two phases of data collection were conducted with members of the AWRAE Implementation Team. Over the course of the two phases, all four members of the Implementation Team participated. These one-on-one interviews and the focus group were facilitated over the phone or via Zoom. Implementation Team members were provided with a Participant Information Sheet (Appendix 1: Implementation Team - Participant Information Sheet) and asked to sign a form (Appendix 2: Implementation Team - Consent Form) to confirm their consent. A copy of the Discussion Guide for the Implementation Team is also provided in Appendix 3: Implementation Team – Discussion Guide.

3.3.2 Interviews with program participants

One-on-one, in-person interviews were also conducted with AWRAE program participants. A mix of participants who were still currently engaged with the program at the time of the interviews, and those that had disengaged, were included. A total of 7 program participants were interviewed. A breakdown of their engagement in the program is provided in Table 3. Participants were provided with a Participant Information Sheet (Appendix 4: AWRAE Participant - Participant Information Sheet) and asked to sign a form (Appendix 5: AWRAE Participant - Consent Form) to confirm their

consent. A copy of the Discussion Guide for the participants is also provided in Appendix 6: AWRAE Participant – Discussion Guide.

Table 3: Breakdown of research participants’ engagement in the AWRAE program

Currently engaged	Disengaged in the 5 weeks prior to interviews commencing	Disengaged after 5 weeks into the AWRAE course	Total
4	1	2	7

4. FINDINGS

4.1 How was the project delivered? What key barriers and enablers emerged, what was effective?

The following section describes aspects of the AWRAE program in terms of delivery, and how these factors impacted on the overall effectiveness of the program. The enablers and barriers to effectiveness in each of these areas are also discussed. Recommendations for redesign for the program in line with these findings are presented in Section 5 of the report.

4.1.1 Program design evolution

Consultation with Implementation Team members illuminated that the AWRAE program went through a significant number of changes from its original design, shortly before delivery in Karratha.

- A.** Karratha was decided on as the location for the pilot program of AWRAE just one month prior to the start of the course.
 - i. The original plan had been for the program to be piloted in Carnarvon.
- B.** The delivery mode in Karratha had to be changed from fully in-person to hybrid remote and in-person, immediately prior to the start of the course, due to COVID-19 restrictions.
 - i. The structure of the program was such that a lead trainer/facilitator delivered the majority of the course, but was based in Melbourne and therefore had to join via video to facilitate the classes. As part of the facilitation team, there was also an Aboriginal co-facilitator who attended the classes in-person, and an Aboriginal mentor who also attended the classes in-person. The intention was for the lead facilitator to visit the community for a portion of the training, though COVID-19 restrictions prevented this.
- C.** The course materials had to be re-designed for facilitation by a non-Aboriginal evaluation expert, one or two months prior to the start of the course.
 - i. The original course material, which focused on the core aspects of research and evaluation with an Indigenous lens, was originally designed by an Aboriginal evaluation expert at Blak Impact, a team within the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE). The original course materials were developed in a way to be co-designed and co-created further with the women participating in the AWRAE program. Due to changes in the staffing of the AWRAE Implementation Team only a few months prior to the start of the course, the course could no longer be delivered by the individual who originally designed

the course material. As a result, the individual who picked up the task of finishing the course material and delivering the course had to re-design the materials to make them appropriate for delivery by a non-Aboriginal evaluation expert and better aligned with their evaluation expertise and experience. This re-redesign occurred prior to and during the facilitation of classes.

4.1.2 Readiness

The readiness of the program to be delivered in Karratha was explored in the consultations with Implementation Team members and AWRAE participants. Specifically, the evaluation looked at the readiness of the team and facilitators to deliver the program, the readiness of participants to take part, and readiness of the community to accommodate the program.

Overall, the program was not ready to be delivered when it was, which ultimately led to some issues with implementation. In terms of resources, there were some delays in providing the participants with laptops and welcome packs, which affected the participants' ability to engage from the beginning, feel ownership with the laptops, and become familiar with the technology.

"The equipment should have been set up beforehand and not setting up the computers 10 minutes before the class group arrives." (AWRAE Participant)

There were also reports from some Implementation Team members and participants that the room was not ideal for the course, with expectations that it would be larger, and with less of a formal classroom layout. However, the space being in a tertiary education institution meant that there were appropriate facilities available, with good feedback on the technology and Zoom capacities of the room. Implementation Team members reported in interviews and focus groups that this will be considered for future iterations, and a room with more comfortable seating and outdoors access will be sought.

"It was set up as a classroom. At the beginning they had 14 people packed into a school room. It should have been a big room with a big window, bean bags, to make people more comfortable." (Implementation Team member)

"The group was shown into the classroom and people were not happy with the space because it was too small." (AWRAE Participant)

Another aspect of the program which was not ready prior to the course beginning was the Implementation Team's access to training, course materials, and support. There were reports that the Implementation Team were not provided enough Professional Development or external support

to effectively facilitate the course. Additional comments from the Implementation Team in interviews and groups indicate this is intended to be addressed before the next course.

Implementation Team members and AWRAE participants reported that access to the training notes and content by AWRAE participants was also delayed.

“I want to be able to duck in and pick up materials and go home [before the course starts] ... A professional responsibility is to make sure that we had all the stuff we needed”.
(AWRAE Participant)

Implementation Team members also reported the original training notes were not ready to be delivered appropriately, which meant much of the content needed to be rewritten. They also reported **not having enough time to effectively prepare for the lessons before the course began.** While this may have negatively affected the quality of the content, it also speaks to the need for flexibility and adaptability in design, where the Implementation Team must feel empowered and supported to adapt the content to the needs of the participants.

Implementation Team members reported that communication among them was good.

Implementation Team members reported communicating with each other regularly, at least weekly and often more frequently, throughout the duration of the program, which enabled everyone to stay connected. But this frequency of communication during program implementation could not make up for lack of communication in the pre-implementation planning phases.

“Communication was good... but we didn’t have enough lead time to nail down the who and why of the program.” (Implementation Team member)

Implementation Team members also reported **there were not enough structures in place at the start specifying roles, responsibilities, and overall aims of the program.** Interview and focus group participants explained that management lines and position descriptions were not clear enough to provide all team members the guidance they needed to work together toward a clearly understood set of goals for the program. Further, according to some participants, this lack of structure around roles and responsibilities of team members as well as lack of clarity around the feasible aims of the program presented barriers to successful implementation and may have ultimately affected program effectiveness.

“In the beginning there was a little confusion about people’s roles. The students did not know who did what... in every other workplace you have an induction, then you must have an organisation chart to show the people the roles that they are in... This should have been explained in the start and it wasn’t.” (AWRAE Participant)

According to Implementation Team members, **there was also not enough planning around contracts and legal stipulations relating to intellectual property of the course material that was created**, and what aspects of the course materials will be used in future programs and the ongoing intellectual property rights of that material. Consultations with the Implementation Team confirm that this aspect of the course was not ready in time for the delivery of the program and must be addressed prior to upcoming courses.

According to Implementation Team members as well as AWRAE participants themselves, the program participants varied in their readiness to take part in the program, due to their differing levels of literacy, computer skills, and experience in research and evaluation. Due to lack of recruitment criteria, last minute recruitment, and limited information about the program shared with prospective participants (explored further in Section 0), **some participants were not ready to participate, and further, did not have a clear idea of what the program consisted of and what they wanted to learn. There were others, however, who came to the program with a stronger idea of things they wanted to gain from the program, and had better overall readiness.** This was particularly true for participants who had prior experience in research or similar fields and speaks to the need for clear recruitment criteria, so that participants can be better matched to the program and so participants' needs can be anticipated and planned for. **The participants who were not ready to engage in the program or unsure of the program goals may have contributed to the low retention rate.**

“Making sure that the recruits know what they are getting into is important, and that didn't happen last time. Readiness is something we're really trying to work on for next time so that people understand what they'll be doing in the course and to assess their skills beforehand so that we can understand how to work with them.” (Implementation Team member)

“It took weeks to really catch on and realize what the importance was. It wasn't explained properly and this got lost in translation.” (AWRAE Participant)

As the AWRAE pilot was only confirmed to take place in Karratha a month prior to commencement, there was also patchy community readiness to engage with and host the program. Implementation Team members noted some consequences of the community not being ready for the AWRAE project, including: a lack of connection to Elders, lack of engagement to, and limited involvement of workplaces to collaborate either through nominating employees for the program, or through being a host organisation for work placements. However, at the time of data collection for this evaluation (just prior to the commencement of work placements), Implementation Team members reported that the work placements in community organisations had been

established, and as a result of continued communication between ABC Foundation and the organisations, the work placements were likely to be retained and successful with the remaining AWRAE participants. This suggests that the readiness of the community early on in the pilot was limited, but with time and engagement the organisations hosting participants have been cultivated and prepared.

“It would have been nice to have connections to Elders as part of the course.”
(Implementation Team member)

“Initially the local community was very engaged. When we first met up with individuals at organisations everyone was really excited. We did interviews at the local radio station... We engaged with the local Aboriginal corporation – however unfortunately it turned out that it was too time consuming for them to continue to be involved.” (Implementation Team member)

4.1.3 Reach

The reach of the program to be delivered in Karratha was explored in the consultations with Implementation Team members and AWRAE participants. Specifically, the evaluation looked at the numbers of participants recruited, and sufficiency of numbers given retention rates, the effectiveness of participant recruitment processes, the appropriateness and usefulness of criteria for recruitment, and participant satisfaction with the recruitment approach.

14 participants were initially recruited into the AWRAE program, but by Week 13 (the final teaching week of the course) the number of active participants had decreased to just 6 participants who were still somewhat engaged. **Participants who had disengaged reported doing so due to external commitments, because of conflicts and disruptions in class, personal or family responsibilities such as Sorry Business, and because of limited in-person support and contacts available to them.** Due to the low retention rate, this suggests that either initial recruitment numbers were not high enough, or the process of recruitment was not targeting appropriate people.

“[I stopped coming to class because of the escalating conflict] ... It was like Swiss cheese; you make enough holes then eventually something is going to fall through it.” (AWRAE Participant)

“The students had limited contacts, and this might be one factor to attend the classes... Some people cannot cope with learning and logging into Teams.” (AWRAE Participant)

The recruitment process and criteria for involvement in the program is an area in need of redesign, with evidence suggesting that the process implemented during the pilot was not effective. Due to the last-minute decision to hold the program in Karratha, there was limited time to recruit, and ultimately only a month to advertise and engage participants before the program began. **As a result of this lack of time, a few participants stated that they felt they were merely “making up numbers” so that the program could meet its target quotas, that the process was rushed and disorganised, and that the people who were recruited were not all suitable for the program.**

“The course was advertised in a way as to ‘Hey if you got nothing to do, then come along’.”
(AWRAE Participant)

More time is required to allow for advertising to ensure adequate numbers, to assess the capacity and needs of applicants prior to the program, and to allow the places of employment of participants to organise replacements for the time their employees will be participating in classes. This was echoed by the Implementation Team members, who recognised the need for more time for recruitment in future programs.

“Recruitment was rushed and we didn’t spend enough time thinking about who should be recruited and we didn’t give the women enough information about the training. That’s a shared thing we didn’t think about. A lot of women didn’t know what they were being recruited for.” (Implementation Team member)

According to the Implementation Team, the criteria for who was considered for participation changed only a month before the program began. It was initially intended to target people who were long-term unemployed through the Community Development Program (CDP), though the mutual obligations requirements to complete work changed during COVID-19, and so the recruitment criteria for AWRAE opened to a broader range of people.

Interviews with participants revealed that they represent women from a range of ages and with a range of past experiences with research and evaluation, digital and technology skills, and numeracy and literacy levels. Participants commented that the diversity of their experiences sometimes had a negative impact on their experience in the program, as they felt they either needed to slow down to accommodate others in the group, or that it went too fast, and they could not follow much of the content.

“There were other people who might have been able to go over something and half an hour and this would take time... sometimes it was a delay by couple of hours they would go backwards and forwards other things... it was the level of understanding of the group that actually caused the delay and... not the delivery itself.” (AWRAE Participant)

An Implementation Team member did comment, however, that with differing experiences and skills, participants could support each other.

“One thing that did work well was that for those with limited tech skills, they were able to buddy up with someone who had stronger skills. This worked really well.” (Implementation Team member)

In terms of how they were recruited, some participants spoke of seeing a post on social media about the program, and others were approached while out in the community. **Generally, despite being provided an information leaflet, many of the participants were unaware about the details of the program or its purpose** and suggested in the interviews that they were not satisfied with this process. This is partially because the program outline had not yet been completely formalised, which limited the information that could be provided to the women. Some interviewed participants who had more experience in research and evaluation, however, were more satisfied with the recruitment approach as they had a greater understanding of what would be involved in the course because they could connect the dots with limited information up front. **Most participants agreed that there should be an increase in advertising the program in future, as the right people were not always given the opportunity to participate.**

4.1.4 Format

The format of the AWRAE program was also explored. The evaluation looked at the comprehensiveness of the subjects covered, whether there were gaps in content that should have been covered, the structure of the course, and participant satisfaction with these aspects.

For the most part, participants reported that course coverage was comprehensive and appropriate for the program length, and they were satisfied with the topics taught. There were some gaps, however, particularly in teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research methods, research ethics, and intellectual and cultural property rights. Implementation Team members explained in interviews and AWRAE participants voiced in the course itself, that they felt for this to be implemented appropriately, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers should be brought on to facilitate these topics. Implementation Team members indicated that this has started being considered and implemented for future projects.

“... they said they wanted an Aboriginal person to teach Ethics. So we’re making that happen.” (Implementation Team member)

“[I] would like to see more said about Ethics, intellectual properties, data Sovereignty, and data governance and this should be covered in the program.” (AWRAE Participant)

Further gaps were not explicitly referenced by other AWRAE participants, perhaps due to their limited existing knowledge of research and evaluation, which could inhibit their ability to know and articulate the things they are not being taught.

“[I can’t] think of any gaps at this stage... [I am] only learning and everything is new...” (AWRAE Participant)

While participants reported that most topics were well explained and covered most things that they wanted to know, sometimes the classroom dynamics and disruptions prevented all topics from being fully explained in-depth. Further, some participants expressed that others in the group would show up late and delay lessons, which impeded the group as a whole to effectively engage.

“[I am satisfied with the topics covered] ... But there seem to be so much else happening in the classroom that sometimes we didn't cover the topics going through... When you have people that don't turn up to the program and it is nearly morning tea-time, we as a group don't have a chance to have that deep conversation because the course program didn't start until everyone was there.” (AWRAE Participant)

“...time was wasted and nothing was getting done in the classroom. Several days ago they canned the class, either the computers were not working or people were mucking around and waiting for the class to actually start.” (AWRAE Participant)

In terms of the structure, both Implementation Team members and participants reported that the course was too intense, and the number of days per week should be reduced from three days to two, or shifted to block training. According to some Implementation Team members, the structure of the program led to exhaustion among the Implementation Team and participants, impacting the effectiveness of the program. In general, however, participants’ satisfaction with the class and capacity to commit to attending all lessons depended on their other external commitments.

“Three days a week, in the middle of the week from 9am to 2pm is such a huge chunk of time out of the day.” (Implementation Team member)

“It’s too intense...so the trainees are probably exhausted. 5 hours per day, 3 days per week. 15 hours per week... [one participant] will Zoom in from home a lot. [Another] doesn’t

come all the time. It's just not a realistic request to ask people to come in 3 days a week for this." (Implementation Team member)

"The course should have gone a little shorter and a few weeks off." (AWRAE Participant)

4.1.5 Implementation

Aspects of implementation were explored through the evaluation, including the quality of training provided to the participants, the communication and relationships between the Implementation Team and participants, as well as participant satisfaction with the way that the course was delivered.

Overall, AWRAE participants report that the training is good quality, and they are satisfied with the way it is delivered. The participants reported in interviews that the communication with the facilitator was positive, and they reported having a constructive relationship with the facilitator which enabled them to remain engaged and more effectively achieve the outcomes intended by the program. Participants also stated that they felt supported by the facilitator and felt comfortable asking questions and giving feedback.

"If I have any issues about any topics that was covered, and I have a question then I would ask [the facilitator]." (AWRAE Participant)

"We all participated and we were all heard. Some people may have more vocal than others but in saying that everyone listened and everyone had an equal say throughout the whole course." (AWRAE Participant)

However, **there needs to be more structure in place for all Implementation Team members to better support the group as a whole, particularly when there are disruptions or confrontations in class.** While AWRAE participants reported that the general support and communication from the co-facilitators on the ground was adequate, both participants and Implementation Team members suggested that there is a need for the entire Implementation Team to have more skill and training on how to manage disruptions and interpersonal conflict in class.

Communication between the Implementation Team was reportedly quite productive, though external commitments sometimes limited the amount of time some team members could dedicate to the program. Due to the complexity and intensity of the program, continuous communication was required. The Implementation Team suggested in interviews that more rigorous debriefing among the team, such as scheduled meetings, needs to be built into the structure of the program.

There was some evidence from the participants that the delivery of online facilitation was difficult and may have been a barrier to their learning. The original design was intended for the facilitator to visit the community for a period of time and, depending on COVID-19 restrictions, this will be encouraged for future iterations of the program. While it may not be necessary for the facilitator to be on-site during the whole program, for certain components (and with the support of the co-facilitators on the ground) it is recommended. In-person facilitation would also improve the cultural appropriateness of the program as some participants stated:

“We are face-to-face and hands-on people.” (AWRAE Participant)

“Face-to-face contact and conversation is key” (AWRAE participant)

Across the participants, there was a mix of those who thought the pace of the training was too fast, too slow, or just right. This reflects the differing levels of readiness to attend the course and speaks to the need to improve on the recruitment criteria and assessment of needs of the participants prior to starting the course.

4.1.6 Acceptability

The evaluation explored the acceptability of the program; that is, the relevance of the course to the participants and their needs, the appropriateness of the course material, model and delivery to ensure cultural safety, the practical applicability of the skills learnt, and the overall participant satisfaction with the program.

Despite the issues with readiness and recruitment, the participants who remained engaged in the program at the time of data collection felt that the content that they learnt was generally useful to them. There was feedback, however, that they would have appreciated some more relevant examples that were contextualised to their community or region. Some Implementation Team members also suggested that this could come in the form of on-Country excursions, possibly being led by local community Elders.

“[A lot of the examples being used are from] Eastern States and very white.” (AWRAE Participant)

“There needs to be room for going out of the classroom and get into Country to reflect on things.” (Implementation Team member)

“A few on-Country excursions with Elders so that the participants could talk about what they’ve been learning would be good and meaningful. Would also connect Elders to the course.” (Implementation Team member)

Course content which was delivered in an interactive, collaborative, and hands-on way was perceived to be the most appropriate and most liked among the participants. Those interviewed reference the story-based methods and explaining research and evaluation in visual ways (such as the “tree of knowledge” and the “evaluation river”) as memorable and effective ways of teaching. Using examples of fishing, camping, and family were raised as familiar topics by the participants, which helped them understand the process of research.

“The tree of knowledge and the river story... explained better about research evaluation and made sense.” (AWRAE Participant)

“Aboriginal people are visual learners and they understand teaching and learning visually.” (AWRAE Participant)

“It was great and it was done in a simplistic language that most of us found much more easy to understand.” (AWRAE Participant)

Overall, most participants reported that they were satisfied with the program overall, but there were some issues regarding cultural and personal safety which will need to be addressed in later iterations of the program. The course model and delivery should have cultural safety built in from the beginning, with clear protocols around how to ensure this is provided for the participants and Implementation Team. According to both the Implementation Team and AWRAE participants, the lack of protocol meant that disruption and conflict in class was not appropriately managed, which impeded the achievement of outcomes as well as at times placing women in a culturally unsafe situation. The Implementation Team and participants recognised this and suggest that all staff and facilitators, including those on-the-ground, should be trained appropriately and have the supports available to them to handle any issues that may arise.

“There should have been cultural sensitivity built in. We needed to build that into the HR.” (Implementation Team member)

“There needs to be clear cultural protocols put into place. Our people thrive on structures and teaching and learning need to be structured in a way where students do understand. There should have been a team building exercises in the beginning or in the middle of the program, just to make sure that everyone is on the same page.” (AWRAE Participant)

“[The program] needs strong facilitation from someone who has experience in handling community conflict and managing those processes.” (Implementation Team member)

Some Implementation Team members also suggested the involvement of an Aboriginal advisory committee for future iterations of the program, which would help ensure the cultural safety of the participants as well as the co-facilitators and mentor.

“We have been discussing the development of a local advisory group that sits outside of the program that can provide cultural supervision... This means that if there is a conflict, it goes to the advisory group to manage so the co-facilitator and mentor are not put into a difficult position. They would go to this external body, perhaps comprised of a group of Elders, and they would talk through the issue with them.” (Implementation Team member)

As this course intends to provide lessons in and increase knowledge of Indigenous data sovereignty, culturally appropriate research, and ways to ensure cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the lens of research, it is imperative that these topics are planned for appropriately. When discussing these topics, there is a high likelihood of sensitive issues being raised, and so appropriate measures must be taken to ensure those involved are granted safety throughout the program.

4.1.7 Fidelity

In the consultations with the Implementation Team, the fidelity of the course implementation to the initial model was also explored. The evaluation sought to understand any changes to the course topics, teaching methods, delivery mode, and intensity, and how these changes contributed to the overall implementation and effectiveness of the program.

In part due to the challenges experienced during initial implementation, many of the course components were adapted from the original design. According to interviews with the Implementation Team members, **most of the course material and training notes were modified, both prior to the program beginning and then also during the program**, as participants gave feedback and responded to different topics. As a result of the course topics being adapted, activities and case studies included in the curriculum were also changed. These changes are expected in a pilot program, with flexibility required to adapt materials based on participant needs, though appropriate and established training notes and materials should be finalised before the next course begins, with co-design from appropriate stakeholders.

The Implementation Team reported in interviews that the delivery mode was also changed from the initial model. There was a plan for the facilitator to be in the community for some parts of the course and teach face-to-face, however this was adapted due to COVID-19 and the travel restrictions still in place in Western Australia. The mode of the work placement, however, was still running true to the initial design (i.e. in-person, and the same structure), though at the time of data collection this component had not yet started, and changes may occur later. According to the Implementation

Team, the structure of the course (number of weeks, days per week and hours per day) also remained the same as the original design.

As mentioned in a previous section, **the target participants changed shortly before the program began, meaning the recruitment process needed to be adjusted.** The initial plan was to deliver the program primarily to CDP participants experiencing long-term unemployment. While long-term unemployment is still a consideration with regard to recruitment, the Implementation Team reported that the plan has now shifted to prioritise people who are active in the community, such as volunteers or community leaders. Further to this, a significant change is the addition to future recruitment criteria that participants are “work-ready”, and more likely to engage in the program.

4.2 What are the project’s initial outcomes for participants?

Initial outcomes achieved for the AWRAE participants were also explored through the evaluation. Evidence of these changes are described below, as well as any barriers to achieving these outcomes and avenues that allowed for a greater increase.

4.2.1 Changes in knowledge and skills

A primary target outcome of the AWRAE program is to increase participants’ understanding of quality research, evaluation, and advocacy, as well as improve their knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and evaluation approaches. Gaining skills in research and evaluation is also an anticipated outcome, with the goal that these skills and knowledge endure over time.

In general, the sense among Implementation Team members is that **there has been an improvement in these areas, though with some gaps.** Participants also discussed their knowledge gain in the areas of research and evaluation, with reference to the foundations of research and data collection techniques.

“Research is about pulling information apart and bringing them back all together and form this into a research conversation. Collecting information together and breaking it down into groups is important.” (AWRAE participant)

“There were some amazing women who... have learnt, for example, some yarning skills that they can take with them out in community and that is really important.” (Implementation Team member)

For some participants, taking part in the course made them realise that they had undertaken aspects of research and evaluation before, in other roles or within community. They discussed how learning these skills again helped them contextualise these prior experiences and add to their knowledge and skill base.

There was **less reference by the participants to an increased understanding of quality research and evaluation**, however. This is perhaps because many of the women were new to these topics, and so learning the foundations of research and evaluation, and how to conduct this appropriately, was prioritised.

Some barriers that emerged for participants increasing their skills and knowledge in these areas included lower levels of numeracy and literacy and a lack of computer skills. According to some participants who were interviewed, this inhibited the gaining of skills, as they did not have the initial background knowledge required to complete some tasks. Further, those who came to the course with higher levels of computer skills expressed some frustration at needing to slow the course down and believed this may have impeded their own learning. Some participants also reported that there were often words used throughout the course that they did not understand, though with support, patience, and understanding from the Implementation Team and other participants, they were willing to and enjoyed learning new words and adding to their vocabulary.

“For some students they did not understand some of the big words that was talked about and it can become difficult for some of us. Put this in an easy language and break it down.”
(AWRAE Participant)

Some participants also discussed the lack of relevant or community-based examples used during the course as a barrier to increasing their skills and knowledge. A number of participants stated that they would have benefitted from hearing about research projects which were relevant and familiar to them and based in their own regions or communities.

The existing limitations of a non-Aboriginal facilitator teaching Aboriginal research methods is also a barrier to achieving this outcome effectively, which was acknowledged strongly by the Implementation Team and speaks to the need for greater inclusion of Aboriginal researchers and guest facilitators to deliver certain topics. Although, it is important to note that the program facilitator did engage several Indigenous researchers that facilitated some sessions. **Facilitating the class remotely was also raised by both the Implementation Team and participants as something that may have affected the participants ability to gain new knowledge and skills effectively.**

However, the ability for participants to join classes via Zoom was also raised by some participants as an enabling factor in achieving this outcome. If they had other commitments to attend to, for example, they still had the flexibility to join and not miss out on an entire session. Other participants also reported joining via Zoom occasionally to avoid the distractions of the classroom.

4.2.2 Confidence changes

Another area investigated by the evaluation was the change in participants confidence. The AWRAE program aims to improve the confidence of the participants – not only to use the skills and apply the

knowledge that they learned in the course, but also to confidently engage with their communities to facilitate and advocate for culturally appropriate research and evaluation.

Increases in confidence appear to have varied among the participants, with some women reporting greater improvements than others. Some participants expressed that they were already confident people, so while the program may not have improved their overall confidence, it did improve their belief in themselves to undertake research and evaluation in the future. An Implementation Team member also reported that the participant's confidence to speak to others and with their communities has increased as a result of the program.

"[The Program has given me] the confidence to look at and work in this area more than what I was felt doing before." (AWRAE Participant)

"I think it's increased their confidence to talk with their community." (Implementation Team member)

Collaborating in a group environment, where participants are supported and encouraged to work together and ask questions, was considered an enabling factor in gaining confidence through the program. Some participants who saw themselves as quiet and shy people discussed the importance of being provided a safe space to speak up, which led to an increase in confidence for them.

Though this increase in confidence was reported by some participants, others suggested that the mishandling of some conflict that occurred in the classroom was a barrier for their confidence gain, and ultimately placed them in a culturally and physically unsafe position. There was a lot of disruption and tension in the class, which some participants referred to as a factor in hindering some gains to confidence and was also referenced by the Implementation Team.

"There was tension in the classroom and it was quite vocal. This behaviour has made it hard to gain... confidence." (AWRAE participant)

Cultural sensitivity and not embedding that into the course at the start, I think that prevented the confidence. It could have been quite damaging. (Implementation Team, interview)

4.2.3 Aspiration changes

Along with an increase in knowledge and skills, and the confidence to apply these, the AWRAE program aims to inspire participants to conduct research and evaluation themselves, and potentially become employed in the field or undertake further training or study.

An increase in aspiration was reported for some of the participants, and in different ways. The perception of one Implementation Team member is that some participants will likely integrate some things they learned in the course into the work they are already doing, and a smaller number will go on to do further training or find work in research. Ultimately, however, the sense among the Implementation Team is that it is too early to assess whether these things will take place. There were reports from participants who were interviewed, though, that they are more inspired to implement their learnings into working with their communities.

“A couple of participants in particular definitely seem more motivated – they’ll take it into everything they do from now on.” (Implementation Team member)

“... those skills such as collection of data, theory of change and little bit on literature review. It would be great to get out there and practice this and follow research and evaluation through.” (AWRAE Participant)

"Participating in the AWRAE training program pushed [me] more... to do things for the community. If [I] could get something out of the course maybe I could do research work in the future." (AWRAE Participant)

To enable structured and formal application of the skills and further training, ongoing support or mentoring for participants is recommended. Further, more of a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and evaluation approaches will encourage the participants to take these relevant skills into further work they are doing.

"The course on its own was never going to be enough. There needs to be a structured pathway beyond the work placement. From the course though, a good first job would be as an RA [Research Assistant] on another job working as part of a team." (Implementation Team member)

“There should have been more time on Aboriginal based research. This way we can look at this process again in the future when we are actually doing it.” (AWRAE Participant)

4.2.4 Attitude changes

Through empowering the participants to conduct research and evaluation confidently, the AWRAE program also intends to change the way that participants recognise their role as Aboriginal women in leading and delivering research and evaluation.

The evidence from participants and Implementation Team members is that there has been some gain in this area, mostly by demystifying research and evaluation, and demonstrating to the participants that they can engage in this work. Further, some participants mentioned that they did not know that there were people engaging in this work, but they now know that it exists, and it is possible for themselves as Aboriginal women to facilitate it.

“This kind of research and evaluation is about us and it involved us and learning something new is a great opportunity.” (AWRAE Participant)

“I think it’s demystified it a lot for them. Removed the scary language and made it feasible to do.” (Implementation Team member)

From the interviews with AWRAE participants, there were apparent **increases in knowledge of what constitutes appropriate research in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and as a result, what is regarded as inappropriate practice.** This is mostly evident in a broad understanding, with participants stating that they recognise that Indigenous Australians are the most researched people in history and have been historically mistreated through this practice. Some participants also discussed learning about how research can benefit a community and make a positive difference, but that it also has the potential to do harm.

“[I] learned what not to do in a cultural context, not what to do as much as what to do.” (AWRAE Participant)

“You can make or break a research project or break relationships with community if we have the wrong people on board.” (AWRAE Participant)

“As Aboriginal Researchers or any researchers, we go in and do no harm, and make sure that our community is safe... We follow the rules and protocol and really be careful about who we choose to go in and do research or evaluation. Especially when you're dealing with vulnerable people like Aboriginal communities. We have to be particularly careful.” (AWRAE Participant)

There is room, however, to expand on teaching the actual methods and ways of ensuring research is conducted appropriately, which would require input and mentoring from Indigenous researchers.

“Culturally appropriate research – that’s been a weakness of the course that requires more mentoring from Indigenous researchers.” (Implementation Team member)

“It wasn’t focused on Indigenous research as such.” (AWRAE Participant)

As is to be expected, participants who spent less time in the program and left before completion reported less benefit in these outcomes. **However, among those who were interviewed, even those who attended for just a few weeks report some positive impacts from the program.** Overall, ongoing mentorship will be required to solidify these positive outcomes that have occurred, with a single course unlikely to create long-term outcomes.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our evaluation of the AWRAE pilot project in Karratha has found that the program experienced a number of implementation challenges. These challenges appear to have contributed to high levels of attrition, some interpersonal conflict among participants, and some threats to the cultural and personal safety of participants. Despite these challenges and negative outcomes, the women who completed the program reported improvements to their knowledge, skills, confidence, aspirations, and attitudes toward and about research and evaluation. This suggests that AWRAE program shows promise, but that there are serious design and implementation hurdles that need to be overcome before it can be successful in other communities. We have identified a range of concrete recommendations for the ABC Foundation and its implementation partners to consider, for the future, and we commend and support the Implementation Team's early identification of changes to be incorporated into the design of the program for Broome and Derby.

The evaluation data collected and reported here provide insights into aspects of the program that should be maintained as well as insights into how the program can continue to be adjusted and honed to better deliver on its implementation and outcome goals.

5.1 Recruitment

- Ensure there is more time for recruitment, with a greater lead time between the decision to deliver the program in a community and the start of the course.
- Define clear recruitment criteria, aligned to the program mission and goals to ensure there is a strategy behind who the program is aimed at.
- Articulate a solid Program Outline which is provided to the potential participants when recruiting. Include in the course an overview session to provide more information before starting the program.
- Include a pre-screening process for participants prior to the program commencement to assess numeracy, literacy, and computer skills and determine participant capacity to engage in the program. Where possible, consider providing pre-course workshops to upskill prospective participants in MS Excel and MS Word, if needed.
- Seek out information early-on from prospective participants about their needs and the barriers they may face to attending or participating, and then provide appropriate supports. This may include providing some participants flexibility around attending online from home or meeting in-person, providing childcare, or providing assistance with transport.

5.2 Material resources

- Make sure that all course materials (including course notes, laptops, etc.) are ready for participants to start using well before the first day of the course.
- Food and drink (including lunches where lessons run throughout the day) should be provided for the days when participants are in the classroom.
- Consider an appropriate classroom for the course, with comfortable seating that encourages interaction between participants and with facilitators, access to outside spaces, and enough room for everyone. Considerations for facilitator and/or participants attending online should continue to be made, ensuring everyone can be seen on camera and technology is appropriate and high quality.

5.3 Human resources

- Establish an Aboriginal advisory/reference group
- Articulate and distribute clear Position Descriptions for co-facilitators and mentors, with an interview process occurring before hiring to ensure appropriate skills and qualifications.
- Facilitators, co-facilitators, and mentors should be chosen appropriately. For example, it may not be appropriate for a co-facilitator to be from the same community as the program is running, so some objectivity and neutrality can remain when dealing with potentially culturally sensitive issues.
- Ensure there are clearly defined roles and responsibilities for co-facilitators and mentors, with transparent reporting lines and supervision. An organisational chart should be provided to the participants so that they understand who does what, and who they go to for different kinds of support.
- Provide training in Mental Health First Aid and Conflict Resolution for all Implementation Team members.
- Establish structured debrief times and weekly course planning sessions among all Implementation Team members, with this expectation transparent from the beginning of the program, to improve and increase communication among the team during implementation.
- Explore involvement with more Aboriginal facilitators to deliver certain topics, particularly around ethics, data sovereignty, and Indigenous methodologies.

5.4 Content and Training

- Expand the use of relevant examples during coursework which are more culturally relevant to the community, including case studies from the local region for example (acknowledging that obtaining this data may have implications with ethics).
- Consider providing ongoing workshops/mentorship for the graduated participants, to support those who intend to do research or evaluation or apply the principles in the future.
- Continue offering flexibility in how participants take part in the program, to encourage consistent attendance for all sessions. For example, if participants need to join via video for the occasional class due to external commitments, make sure this is supported. And if participants need to miss sessions or parts of sessions due to external commitments, make-up sessions should be offered to allow them the opportunity to catch up with the rest of the class.
- Consider On-Country excursions with Elders for participants.

5.5 Implementation

- Identify and embed a shared vision and mission among all stakeholders
- Secure earlier engagement with community, Elders, and organisations well in advance to implementing the course in each community
- Ensure there are established conditions around the intellectual property of training notes, stipulated in a contract between ABC Foundation and Clear Horizon and whether this constitutes Creative Commons, for example. The intellectual property rights of the participants as co-creators of much of the material should also be considered and established.
- Ensure cultural safety protocols and a Code of Conduct are embedded into the program design, and understood and reiterated consistently across all stakeholders, Implementation Team, and participants.

APPENDIX 1: IMPLEMENTATION TEAM - PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: Evaluation of the Aboriginal Women’s Research Assistant and Evaluation (AWRAE) Training Project

Researcher(s): Alison Sentance, Skye Trudgett, Quinton Veave, Elizabeth Axel, Cherie Sibosado, Lena Etuk, Isabella Saunders, Anna Dwyer

Organisation(s): ABC Foundation, National Centre for Indigenous Excellence (NCIE), Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA), Clear Horizon.

What is the project about?

The aim of this research project is to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of the Aboriginal Women’s Research Assistant and Evaluation (AWRAE) Training Project. We are gathering stories to understand how the program is being implemented, what is working, and what can be improved. We also want to understand the outcomes for participants, and what changes they report after finishing the course.

The information collected in these interviews will be used to tell the ABC Foundation, Clear Horizon, and other partners what is working and what isn’t, so they can look at improving the program and consider the design for the next AWRAE projects.

CIRCA will NOT include your identity and personal details in the report that we make to the ABC Foundation. CIRCA takes the confidentiality of its interview participants seriously.

Who is involved in the project?

This research project is being conducted by Research Consultants who work for CIRCA, for the period of August 2021 to February 2022.

The research is supported by ABC Foundation, NCIE, and Clear Horizon.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate because you are a part of the implementation team for the AWRAE Project, and we would like to hear your opinions about the project, and your ideas on how it can be improved. We believe it is important to hear from AWRAE participants as well as the AWRAE Implementation Team about their experiences with and perceptions of the AWRAE Program. The feedback from these interviews will inform improvements to the program and the design of future implementation.

You can pull out at any time and it won’t change your relationship with the researcher(s) or anyone else. If you do decide to pull out of the project, you will need to do this by 10 December 2021.

What will the researcher(s) do and when?

The researcher(s) will hold two 60-minute one-on-one interviews with you. The interviews will be conducted online or via phone.

To make sure that we gather all the points that you make, we will ask for your permission to audio-record the discussion. If you agree to the audio-recording, we will not share your audio-recording with anyone outside of CIRCA. The recording will be transferred to CIRCA's computers and will be destroyed after we have made notes and written our issues-based report..

The interviews will happen once in October, and once in December 2021.

It will require the following time commitments from you: Approximately 60-minutes, at two separate time points, to take part in the interviews.

What will happen to my information?

Your information will be used to create a report with the evaluation findings and recommendations for program improvement or maintenance.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this research project and that can be identified with you will remain confidential unless otherwise permitted by you, or as required by law. The procedures for ensuring the confidentiality of your information during the collection phase and the later publication of results are ensuring that data is reported in a summarised and aggregated manner, and in no instance will any data be attributed to an individual. Illustrative interview quotes may be used in reporting, but these will not be identifiable to the individual who said it.

You will retain any Intellectual Property from your own personal interview recordings.

Copyright of the report we write will be owned by ABC Foundation.

The researcher(s) will provide you with a copy of the report.

What are the potential risks?

The possible risks or discomforts associated with being in the study include you experiencing discomfort as a result of discussing your experiences with the AWRAE project; or your voice being recognised on the audio-recording of this interview, if there is a security breach and someone outside of the project team gets access to the recording before we destroy it at the end of the study.

If you experience any discomfort during the interview, you can ask the interviewer to move on to another topic, to take a break from the interview, or to end the interview completely.

The likelihood of there being a security breach is very low, as all recordings and data from this study are securely stored during collection, analysis, and reporting phases (see information below).

Data storage and giving materials to AIATSI

During the project, the data will be stored in a password protected data system and only the evaluation team involved with the project will have access to these files.

The information will be kept for five (5) years after study completion, after which time, electronic files will be deleted, and hard copy consent forms will be shredded. If you decide to withdraw from the study, your data will be deleted (if it can be identified, see section 5) and the consent form destroyed within five (5) business days of receiving the request in writing.

Culturally restricted information

No culturally restricted information will be collected.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria for participating in this research includes:

- Those who are involved in the AWRAE project
- People over the age of 18

Contact

I know that if I have queries about the research I can contact Lena Etuk, Research & Evaluation Director at CIRCA: (02) 8585 1330, lana@circaresearch.com.au.

Complaints

I know that I can complain to:

- Lena Etuk, Research & Evaluation Director at CIRCA: (02) 8585 1330, lana@circaresearch.com.au
- The Executive Director of Research, AIATSIS, 51 Lawson Crescent, Acton ACT 2601, (e) ethics@aiatsis.gov.au
- The Chair of the AIATSIS Research Ethics Committee, AIATSIS, 51 Lawson Crescent, Acton ACT 2601, (e) ethics@aiatsis.gov.au
- If I think there has been a breach of my privacy I can write to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, GPO Box 5218 Sydney NSW 2001 or call 1300 363 992.

Ethics Committee Clearance

The ethical aspects of this research project have been approved by the AIATSIS Research Ethics Committee.

APPENDIX 2: IMPLEMENTATION TEAM - CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Evaluation of the Aboriginal Women’s Research Assistant and Evaluation (AWRAE) Training Project

Researcher(s): Alison Sentance, Skye Trudgett, Quinton Veavea, Elizabeth Axel, Cherie Sibosado, Lena Etuk, Isabella Saunders, Anna Dwyer

Organisation(s): ABC Foundation, National Centre for Indigenous Excellence (NCIE), Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA), Clear Horizon.

1. I understand what this project is about	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. I voluntarily agree to my participation in this study	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. I understand that I can withdraw from the project by 10 December 2021	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
4. I understand what will happen to me during the research project as explained to me	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5. I agree that the researcher(s) can interview me for the research including in a group of people (or ‘focus group’)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
6. I consent to this interview/focus group/workshop being audio taped and/or filmed at any time	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
7. I agree to photographs being taken of this interview/focus group/workshop	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
8. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation as explained to me	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
9. I understand the potential risks and possible benefits of participating in this research as explained to me	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
10. I understand that the results of this research may be published in a public or other forum	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
11. I agree that my name and other personal information may be mentioned in the report that comes out of this research.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
12. I understand that all information gathered in this research that is confidential will be kept secure for five (5) years.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
13. If the researcher(s) keep(s) a record of what I said with my name on it, or which could be used to identify me, I:	<input type="checkbox"/> give permission for my information to be shared <input type="checkbox"/> don’t give permission for my information to be shared	
14. I want the researcher(s) to give me a copy of the report that is produced as a result of this research.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
15. I understand that I will retain any Intellectual Property from my personal interview recordings.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

<p>16. I understand that the researcher(s) will SHARE copyright in the report produced as a result of this research with ABC Foundation.</p> <p>This means that the researcher(s) cannot reproduce the information that is in the report in other places or for other purposes without first getting permission from ABC Foundation.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Signatures

Participant to complete:

- I am 18 years or over.
- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form (or someone has read it to me in language I understand) and I agree with it.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: / /

Email (to send a copy of this form): _____

Researcher to complete:

- I have described the nature of the research to the Participant and I believe that he/she understood and agreed to it.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: /

APPENDIX 3: IMPLEMENTATION TEAM – DISCUSSION GUIDE

28 September 2021

(To be read aloud to interview participants at start of interview)

The Study

The Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) has been contracted by the ABC Foundation to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of the Aboriginal Women’s Research Assistant and Evaluation (AWRAE) Training Project. We are gathering stories to understand how the program is being implemented, what is working, and what can be improved. We also want to understand the outcomes for participants, and what changes they report after finishing the course.

The information collected in these interviews will be used to tell the ABC Foundation, Clear Horizon, and other partners what is working and what isn’t, so they can look at improving the program and consider the design for the next AWRAE projects.

Your Participation

Participation in the interview is voluntary and you can choose not to participate in all or part of the interview. You can also choose to withdraw your participation at any time.

If you don’t want to or can’t answer any question, we will move on to another question. All comments are welcome – there are no right or wrong answers.

Confidentiality

Your personal information will remain confidential. Anything you say in this interview will not be linked directly to you and all of your comments will remain anonymous. Only the CIRCA research team will have access to this information.

Audio recording

To ensure that we capture all the points that you raise, we would like to audio-record the discussion. However, our discussion will be kept confidential. The recording will be transferred on to CIRCA’s computers but will be destroyed once we have made notes and completed an issues-based report. I will ask you in a moment if you consent to recording this conversation.

Avenue for addressing concerns

If you have any concerns about the research, please raise them with any member of the CIRCA research team in the first instance, and we will be happy to try and address them for you. We can be reached on (02) 8585 1353 or via e-mail: info@circaresearch.com.au

In case of any serious concerns, please contact Lena Etuk, Research & Evaluation Manager at CIRCA:
(02) 8585 1330, lena@circaresearch.com.au

Questions

Do you have any questions about this interview? *(If Yes, answer questions)*

Now that I've explained the study and answered any questions you had, in just a moment I'll ask you if you agree to do the interview. Before I do that though, I'll start the audio recording just to document your consent or refusal, and I'll stop the audio recording if you decide not to do the interview or do not wish to be recorded.

Record consent

(Start the audio-recording)

Do you agree to do this interview? Yes/No

Are you happy for the interview to be audio-recorded? Yes/No If no, I will take notes.

If yes, continue recording

If no, stop recording and take notes instead

! Field researcher to check:

- Participants have been read the consent form and consent of each participant has been audio-recorded
- Participants each have a copy of the Participant Information Sheet

AWRAE Implementation Team Discussion Guide

Note to interviewer: Please adjust the verb tense depending on the phase of the program when you are interviewing people.

Reach

OBJECTIVE: Understand the effectiveness of recruitment process, numbers of participants recruited and retention rates, appropriateness of recruitment criteria and satisfaction with recruitment approach

- A. Overall, how many participants were recruited into the program in Karratha? How many are still in the program?
- B. How were Karratha participants recruited into the program?
- C. How well do you think the recruitment process worked?

Probe, if necessary:

- i. Do you think the criteria for recruiting participants was appropriate?
 - ii. Do you think the participants who were recruited are a good fit for the program?
 - iii. Any suggestions for improvement?
- D. How satisfied do you think participants have been with the recruitment process?

Readiness

OBJECTIVE: Understand participants' and Implementation Team readiness for the course

- E. How easy or hard has it been to run the AWRAE program in Karratha with the resources available?
 - i. Why?
 - ii. What have you learned from the Karratha pilot that you'd like to see put into action for later programs?

Probe, if necessary:

- iii. Do you feel there was adequate **communication** among the Implementation Team at the start of the Karratha pilot?
 - i) How about now?

- ii) What impact has that had on how you run the program?
- iii) Any suggestions for improvement?
- iv. Do you feel there were adequate **resources and facilities** in place at the start of the Karratha pilot? Things like rooms, online facilities, and training materials.
 - i) How about now?
 - ii) What impact has that had on how you run the program?
 - iii) Any suggestions for improvement?
- v. Once the program began, how **ready did you feel the participants were to engage** in the program? For example, readiness might mean they had enough time to fully participate in the program, they had ideas for projects, they had a sense of the skills they wanted to learn, and they had a good foundation of knowledge to build from.
 - i) How about now?
 - ii) What impact do you feel that initial readiness of participants had on how you run the program?
 - iii) Any suggestions for improvement?
- vi. How has the broader Karratha **community** engaged with the AWRAE pilot?

Probe, if necessary:

- i) Are there enough work placement and research projects available in Karratha for the participants to engage with?
- ii) What impact has community engagement had on how you run the program?

Format

OBJECTIVE: Understand how well the course subjects covered appropriate topics, and whether there were any gaps.

F. How well do you think the course is covering all relevant topics? Are there any gaps?

G. How satisfied do you think the participants are with the topics covered?

- i. Any suggestions for improvement?

H. How is the pace and structure of the training working for participants and co-facilitators?

Probe, if necessary:

- i. What impact has that had on how you run the program?
- ii. Any suggestions for improvement?

Implementation

OBJECTIVE: Understand the overall quality of how the course was run, including training, communication, and participant satisfaction with the way it was delivered

- I.** Overall, do you think the program is delivering quality training to the participants? In which ways?
 - i. Any suggestions for improvement?
- J.** How well do you think the relationships are working among the co-facilitators, other members of the Implementation Team, and the participants?
 - i. What impact has that had how you are running the program?
 - ii. Any suggestions for improvement?

Acceptability

OBJECTIVE: Understand the relevance of the course to participants, whether the material and information was appropriate and practical, and the overall participant satisfaction with the course

- K.** Do you think the participants like the AWRAE program? Why or why not?
- L.** Which topics and activities are the most useful for the participants? Which are the least useful?
- M.** In which ways do the materials and program delivery demonstrate sensitivity, empathy, and respect to the cultural identity of the women taking part in the program? Can you give any examples?
 - i. Any suggestions for improvement?

Fidelity

OBJECTIVE: Understand how well the implementation of the course fits with the design of the model? Including topics, methods, mode, and intensity?

- N.** To what extent has the program gone to the original plan?

Prompt, if necessary – In terms of:

- i. Topics
- ii. Teaching methods (co-facilitation, utilization of training offered by remote facilitator)
- iii. Delivery mode (like online and in-person)
- iv. Hours per week
- v. Duration (total number of weeks of the program)

Probe:

- vi. If changes were made along the way, why were they made and what changed?
- vii. Any suggestions for further changes?

Knowledge & skills

OBJECTIVE: Understand to what extent the participants in the program gained knowledge and skills around research and implementation

- O.** At this point in the program, to what extent do you think the program has increased participants' research, evaluation, and advocacy skills?
- P.** At this point in the program, how effective do you think the program has been in increasing participant's knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and evaluation approaches?
- Q.** Were there any barriers to participants gaining knowledge and skills? What were the things that helped them?

Confidence changes

OBJECTIVE: Understand to what extent the participants in the program increased their level of confidence to use the skills they learned, to talk with their communities and advocate for culturally appropriate research, and understand the barriers

- R.** At this point in the program, how much do you think participating in the program has increased participants' levels of confidence?
 - i. Has it increased their confidence to use the skills they learned?

- ii. Has it increased their confidence to talk with their community and advocate for culturally appropriate research and evaluation?

S. Were there any barriers to participants increasing their confidence? What helped them?

Aspiration changes

OBJECTIVE: Understand to what extent the participants in the program increased their aspirations to conduct research and evaluation, work in this space, and conduct further study in research and evaluation

T. At this point in the program, are participants more motivated to conduct or work in research and evaluation in the future?

- i. Why or why not?

U. At this point in the program, does the program appear to be encouraging any of the participants to do further study in research and evaluation?

- i. Why or why not?

Attitude changes

OBJECTIVE: Understand to what extent the participants changed their views about appropriateness in research and evaluation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research, and the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples leading and delivering research and evaluation

V. Have you seen any changes to participants' attitudes toward research and evaluation?

- i. If so, what types of changes?
- ii. Has anything stood in the way of participants' attitudes changing?
- iii. Has anything really helped participants to shift their attitudes?

Prompt, if necessary:

- iv. Have you seen any changes in participants' understandings of what is culturally appropriate research?
- v. Have you seen any changes in participants' views about the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in leading and delivering research and evaluation?

Summary

- W.** How satisfied have you been with being part of the Implementation Team and with running the program overall?
- X.** Are there any ways you think the program could be changed to make it better, other than those we've already discussed?
- Y.** Did you have anything else to add today?

APPENDIX 4: AWRAE PARTICIPANT - PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: Evaluation of the Aboriginal Women's Research Assistant and Evaluation (AWRAE) Training Project

Researcher(s): Alison Sentance, Skye Trudgett, Quinton Veavea, Elizabeth Axel, Cherie Sibosado, Lena Etuk, Isabella Saunders, Anna Dwyer

Organisation(s): ABC Foundation, National Centre for Indigenous Excellence (NCIE), Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA), Clear Horizon.

What is the project about?

The aim of this research project is to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of the Aboriginal Women's Research Assistant and Evaluation (AWRAE) Training Project. We are gathering stories to understand how the program is being implemented, what is working, and what can be improved. We also want to understand the outcomes for participants, and what changes they report after finishing the course.

The information collected in these interviews will be used to tell the ABC Foundation, Clear Horizon, and other partners what is working and what isn't, so they can look at improving the program and consider the design for the next AWRAE projects.

CIRCA will NOT include your identity and personal details in the report that we make to the ABC Foundation. CIRCA takes the confidentiality of its interview participants seriously.

Who is involved in the project?

This research project is being conducted by Research Consultants who work for CIRCA, for the period of August 2021 to February 2022.

The research is supported by ABC Foundation, NCIE, and Clear Horizon.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate because you are taking part in the AWRAE Project, and we would like to hear your opinions about the project, and your ideas on how it can be improved. We believe it is important to hear from AWRAE participants as well as the AWRAE Implementation Team about their experiences with and perceptions of the AWRAE Program. The feedback from these interviews will inform improvements to the program and the design of future implementation.

You can pull out at any time and it won't change your relationship with the researcher(s) or anyone else. If you do decide to pull out of the project, you will need to do this by 10 December 2021.

What will the researcher(s) do and when?

The researcher(s) will hold an approximately 60 minute one-on-one or paired-depth interview with you. A paired-depth interview is an interview conducted with two AWRAE participants interviewed by one interviewer. The interview will be in-person (COVID restrictions permitting).

To make sure that we gather all the points that you make, we will ask for your permission to audio-record the discussion. If you agree to the audio-recording, we will not share your audio-recording with anyone outside of CIRCA. The recording will be transferred to CIRCA's computers and will be destroyed after we have made notes and written our issues-based report..

The research will happen around early December 2021 in Karratha.

It will require the following time commitments from you: Approximately 60-minutes to take part in the interview. We will provide you with \$80 to thank you for the time you have taken to participate in this research.

What will happen to my information?

Your information will be used to create a report with the evaluation findings and recommendations for program improvement or maintenance.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this research project and that can be identified with you will remain confidential unless otherwise permitted by you, or as required by law. The procedures for ensuring the confidentiality of your information during the collection phase and the later publication of results are ensuring that data is reported in a summarised and aggregated manner, and in no instance will any data be attributed to an individual. Illustrative interview quotes may be used in reporting, but these will not be identifiable to the individual who said it.

You will retain any Intellectual Property from your own personal interview recordings.

Copyright of the report we write will be owned by ABC Foundation.

The researcher(s) will provide you with a copy of the report.

What are the potential risks?

The possible risks or discomforts associated with being in the study include you experiencing discomfort as a result of discussing your experiences with the AWRAE project; or your voice being recognised on the audio-recording of this interview, if there is a security breach and someone outside of the project team gets access to the recording before we destroy it.

If you experience any discomfort during the interview, you can ask the interviewer to move on to another topic, to take a break from the interview, or to end the interview completely.

The likelihood of there being a security breach is very low, as all recordings and data from this study are securely stored during collection, analysis, and reporting phases (see information below).

Data storage and giving materials to AIATSIS

During the project, the data will be stored in a password protected data system and only the evaluation team involved with the project will have access to these files.

The information will be kept for five (5) years after study completion, after which time, electronic files will be deleted, and hard copy consent forms will be shredded. If you decide to withdraw from the study, your data will be deleted (if it can be identified, see section 5) and the consent form destroyed within five (5) business days of receiving the request in writing.

Culturally restricted information

No culturally restricted information will be collected.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria for participating in this research includes:

- Those who are involved in the AWRAE project
- People over the age of 18

Contact

I know that if I have queries about the research I can contact Lena Etuk, Research & Evaluation Director at CIRCA: (02) 8585 1330, lena@circaresearch.com.au.

Complaints

I know that I can complain to:

- Lena Etuk, Research & Evaluation Director at CIRCA: (02) 8585 1330, lena@circaresearch.com.au
- The Executive Director of Research, AIATSIS, 51 Lawson Crescent, Acton ACT 2601, (e) ethics@aiatsis.gov.au
- The Chair of the AIATSIS Research Ethics Committee, AIATSIS, 51 Lawson Crescent, Acton ACT 2601, (e) ethics@aiatsis.gov.au
- If I think there has been a breach of my privacy I can write to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, GPO Box 5218 Sydney NSW 2001 or call 1300 363 992.

Ethics Committee Clearance

The ethical aspects of this research project have been approved by the AIATSIS Research Ethics Committee.

APPENDIX 5: AWRAE PARTICIPANT - CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Evaluation of the Aboriginal Women’s Research Assistant and Evaluation (AWRAE) Training Project

Researcher(s): Alison Sentance, Skye Trudgett, Quinton Veavea, Elizabeth Axel, Cherie Sibosado, Lena Etuk, Isabella Saunders, Anna Dwyer

Organisation(s): ABC Foundation, National Centre for Indigenous Excellence (NCIE), Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA), Clear Horizon.

1. I understand what this project is about	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. I voluntarily agree to my participation in this study	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. I understand that I can withdraw from the project by 10 December 2021	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
4. I understand what will happen to me during the research project as explained to me	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5. I agree that the researcher(s) can interview me for the research including in a group of people (or ‘focus group’)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
6. I consent to this interview/focus group being audio taped and/or filmed at any time	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
7. I agree to photographs being taken of this interview/focus group	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
8. I understand that I will be paid for my participation as explained to me	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
9. I understand the potential risks and possible benefits of participating in this research as explained to me	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
10. I understand that the results of this research may be published in a public or other forum	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
11. I agree that my name and other personal information may be mentioned in the report that comes out of this research.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
12. I understand that all information gathered in this research that is confidential will be kept secure for five (5) years.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
13. If the researcher(s) keep(s) a record of what I said with my name on it, or which could be used to identify me, I:	<input type="checkbox"/> give permission for my information to be shared <input type="checkbox"/> don’t give permission for my information to be shared	
14. I want the researcher(s) to give me a copy of the report that is produced as a result of this research.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
15. I understand that I will retain any Intellectual Property from my personal interview recordings.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

<p>16. I understand that the researcher(s) will SHARE copyright in the report produced as a result of this research with ABC Foundation.</p> <p>This means that the researcher(s) cannot reproduce the information that is in the report in other places or for other purposes without first getting permission from ABC Foundation.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Signatures

Participant to complete:

- I am 18 years or over.
- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form (or someone has read it to me in language I understand) and I agree with it.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: / /

Email (to send a copy of this form): _____

Researcher to complete:

- I have described the nature of the research to the Participant and I believe that he/she understood and agreed to it.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: /

APPENDIX 6: AWRAE PARTICIPANT – DISCUSSION GUIDE

28 September 2021

(To be read aloud to interview participants at start of interview)

The Study

The Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) has been contracted by the ABC Foundation to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of the Aboriginal Women’s Research Assistant and Evaluation (AWRAE) Training Project. We are gathering stories to understand how the program is being implemented, what is working, and what can be improved. We also want to understand the outcomes for participants, and what changes they report after finishing the course.

The information collected in these interviews will be used to tell the ABC Foundation, Clear Horizon, and other partners what is working and what isn’t, so they can look at improving the program and consider the design for the next AWRAE projects.

Your Participation

Participation in the interview is voluntary and you can choose not to participate in all or part of the interview. You can also choose to withdraw your participation at any time.

If you don’t want to or can’t answer any question, we will move on to another question. All comments are welcome – there are no right or wrong answers.

Confidentiality

Your personal information will remain confidential. Anything you say in this interview will not be linked directly to you and all of your comments will remain anonymous. Only the CIRCA research team will have access to this information.

Audio recording

To ensure that we capture all the points that you raise, we would like to audio-record the discussion. However, our discussion will be kept confidential. The recording will be transferred on to CIRCA’s computers but will be destroyed once we have made notes and completed an issues-based report. I will ask you in a moment if you consent to recording this conversation.

Avenue for addressing concerns

If you have any concerns about the research, please raise them with any member of the CIRCA research team in the first instance, and we will be happy to try and address them for you. We can be reached on (02) 8585 1353 or via e-mail: info@circaresearch.com.au

In case of any serious concerns, please contact Lena Etuk, Research & Evaluation Manager at CIRCA:
(02) 8585 1330, lena@circaresearch.com.au

Questions

Do you have any questions about this interview? *(If Yes, answer questions)*

Record consent

Do you agree to do this interview? Yes/No

If yes, have participant(s) sign the consent form. If no, ask participant(s) to leave the interview.

Are you happy for the interview to be audio-recorded? Yes/No If no, I will take notes.

If yes, **start recording**

If no, stop recording and take notes instead

! Field researcher to check:

- Participants have been read the consent form and consent of each participant has been recorded
- Participants each have a copy of the Participant Information Sheet
- Participants have received their incentive

AWRAE Participant Discussion Guide

Opener and introductions

OBJECTIVE: Get to know participants a bit and give them a chance to get to know the interviewer a bit. Build rapport.

- A. Tell participants a little bit about yourself - where you're from, your mob, how you've come to be involved in the evaluation, and anything else.
- B. Ask the participants about themselves

Reach

OBJECTIVE: Understand the effectiveness of recruitment process, numbers of participants recruited and retention rates, appropriateness of recruitment criteria and satisfaction with recruitment approach

- C. How did you come to take part in the AWRAE program?

Probe, if necessary:

- i. How'd you find out about the program?
- ii. Who did you yarn with to see if it'd be a good thing to do?
- iii. Why did you decide to do it?

- D. Were you happy with this process?

- E. Is anybody from the community missing from the program? Anybody you think should have been in the program who wasn't?

Readiness

OBJECTIVE: Understand participants' and Implementation Team readiness for the course

- F. When you started the program, how ready did you feel to fully engage?

Probe, if necessary:

- i. Did you have enough time to fully participate in all components of the program (e.g., in the classroom work, homework, community research project, etc.)?
- G. Did you come to the program with any ideas for projects you wanted to work on, or skills you wanted to learn? Were those things listened to by the facilitators?

- H. How much did you know about research or evaluation before you started with AWRAE?
- I. Doing the program, have you felt like you've had everything you needed – like course materials, online programs etc.?

Format

OBJECTIVE: Understand the how well the course subjects covered appropriate topics, and whether there were any gaps.

- J. What do you think about the topics that were covered in the course?

Probe, if necessary:

- i. Did the course cover all the topics you wanted? Were there any **gaps** of things you wanted to learn but didn't?
- ii. How **satisfied** were you with the topics covered?
- iii. What topic(s) did you **like the best**? Which did you like the least?

Implementation

OBJECTIVE: Understand the overall quality of how the course was implemented, including training, communication, and participant satisfaction with the way it was delivered

- K. Did you feel like you had good communication with the co-facilitators?

Prompt, if necessary:

- i. Did you give any feedback on the course? Did you feel like your opinion was listened to?

- L. How satisfied were you with the way that the course was delivered?

Prompt, if necessary:

- i. What did you think about the pace of the training? (Too fast, too slow, or just right?)
- ii. What did you think about where it was held and how it was facilitated?

Acceptability

OBJECTIVE: Understand the relevance of the course to participants, whether the material and information was appropriate and practical, and the overall participant satisfaction with the course

- M.** Do you feel that the course materials and the way it was delivered was appropriate, and did it meet your cultural needs?
- N.** Do you feel like you learnt things that you wanted to learn, and things that were relevant to you and your community?
 - i. What were the most useful things you learnt? Which were the least useful?
 - ii. Which activities were the most useful? Which were the least useful?

Knowledge & skills

OBJECTIVE: Understand to what extent the participants in the program gained knowledge and skills around research and implementation

- O.** What did the program teach you about research, evaluation, and advocacy?

Prompt, if necessary:

- i. Political and cultural issues affecting research and evaluation
 - ii. How to conduct a literature review
 - iii. Preparing research and evaluation questions
 - iv. Developing a theory of change/program logic
 - v. Developing research and evaluation questions and tools
 - vi. How to manage a research or evaluation project
 - vii. Doing data collection
 - viii. Analysis of data
 - ix. Sharing findings
 - x. Writing short reports
 - xi. How to advocate for doing evaluation and research.
- P.** Did the program help increase your knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and evaluation approaches?
 - i. **PROBE:** If so, in what ways and why?

- Q.** Was there anything that made it hard to gain knowledge and skills in research, evaluation, and advocacy? Were there things that made it easier?

Confidence changes

OBJECTIVE: Understand to what extent the participants in the program increased their level of confidence to use the skills they learned, to talk with their communities and advocate for culturally appropriate research, and understand the barriers to this

- R.** Did participating in the program increase or change your confidence at all? If so, how?

Prompt, if necessary:

- i. Do you feel confident now, that you can use the skills you learned in the training? Did you feel like that before the training about your ability to do research?
 - ii. Do you feel confident now, that you can talk with your community about research or evaluation? Did you feel like that before the training about your ability to talk to community about research?
 - iii. Do you feel confident now, that you can advocate for research and evaluation that is culturally appropriate? Did you feel like that before the training about your ability to advocate?
- S.** Were there any things that made it hard to gain confidence during the program? Were there things that made it easier?

Aspiration changes

OBJECTIVE: Understand to what extent the participants in the program increased their aspirations to conduct research and evaluation, work in this space, and conduct further study in research and evaluation

- T.** Do you feel like you want to do research, or work in research and evaluation, in the future?

Probe:

- i. Why or why not?
 - ii. Did you feel that way before the AWRAE program? If not, how have your feelings changed and why?
- U.** Do you want to keep learning more about research and evaluation?

Probe:

- i. Why or why not?

● **Attitude changes**

OBJECTIVE: Understand to what extent the participants changed their views about appropriateness in research and evaluation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research, and the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples leading and delivering research and evaluation

- V.** Did the program change your views at all, about research and evaluation? If so, in what ways and why?

Prompt, if necessary:

- i. Did it change your views on who can do research?
- ii. Did it change your views on the purpose of research?
- iii. Did it change your understanding of what 'culturally appropriate research' is?

● **Summary**

- W.** How satisfied are you with the AWRAE program overall?
- X.** Are there any ways you think the program could be changed to make it better?
- Y.** Did you have anything else to add today?



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