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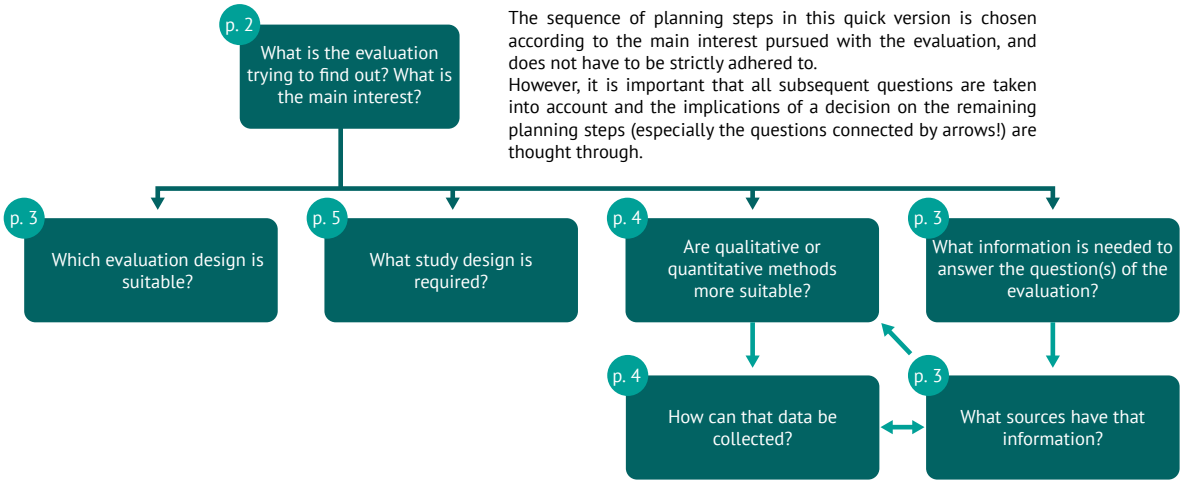
Evaluating Science Communication: A Planning Template

This template offers a run through a simplified version of the Decision Tree for Evaluation of Science Communication on the Impact Unit website, a tool developed to help science communicators in planning the evaluation of their projects. The detailed version of this Decision Tree is in German, a translated summary can be found here.



The sequence of planning steps in this quick version is chosen according to the main interest pursued with the evaluation, and does not have to be strictly adhered to.
However, it is important that all subsequent questions are taken into account and the implications of a decision on the remaining planning steps (especially the questions connected by arrows!) are thought through.

My name

My project

My activity to be evaluated

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What is the evaluation trying to find out? (Main interest)

Motives for the evaluation

- ☐ **documenting success**
  measure and evaluate the achievement of goals and objectives
- ☐ **further development**
  identify potential for improvement, increase efficiency/effectiveness
- ☐ **generating knowledge**
  mechanisms for generating impact, reactions (to), understanding the context of the project

What questions should be addressed by the evaluation?

Q 1:

- ☐ **explorative**
  little / no prior knowledge
- ☐ **explanative**
  ideas / prior knowledge

Hypotheses:

Q 2:

- ☐ **explorative**
  little / no prior knowledge
- ☐ **explanative**
  ideas / prior knowledge

Hypotheses:

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What questions should be addressed by the evaluation?

Q 3:

☐ **explorative** little / no prior knowledge ☐ **explanative** ideas / prior knowledge	**Hypotheses:**

Which evaluation design is suitable?

formative	**summative**
ongoing analysis of the project, investigating processes and structures	summarise results, check goal achievement, rate success

Notes:

What information is needed to answer the question(s) of the evaluation?

What sources have that information?

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What sources have that information?

Which option is the most accessible? Which one seems highly reliable?

How can that data be collected?

☐ **direct data collection**	
☐ **indirect data collection**	
What kind of data will be collected? ☐ **numerical data** outreach figures, approval ratings, etc. ☐ **textual data** quotations, media articles, press releases, etc. ☐ **graphical data** drawings, pictures, etc.	**Notes:**

Are qualitative or quantitative methods more suitable?

The question of my evaluation is:

☐ explanative	☐ explorative

The data of interest is:

☐ countable	☐ not countable

The goal of the evaluation is:

☐ to observe general trends	☐ to gain an in-depth understanding of individual cases

Quantitative method	Combination	Qualitative method

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Which study design is needed?

Number of measuring points:

☐ I want to capture a snapshot → one-time measurement	☐ I want to assess the impact or a development → multiple measurements

The measurement's points of time: The following data I collect

☐ before the start of the project:	
☐ during the project:	
☐ immediately after the project is finished:	
☐ a while after the project is finished:	

Will there be comparisons?

☐ pre-post comparison
within comparison of the participants with their own data measured at an earlier measuring point

☐ with control group
comparison of the participants with individuals that did not participate

☐ with external group, namely:
comparison with individuals that participated in a similar activity

Scope of data collection:

☐ exhaustive sample survey	☐ partial sample survey ☐ sample drawn: randomised ☐ sample drawn: not randomised