

OMB Circular A-11 - Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget

Section Synthesis

Section 290- Evaluation and Evidence-Building Activities

- Evidence plans (learning agenda, annual evaluation plan, capacity assessment, etc.) should reflect agency-wide activities. Sub-agencies, bureaus, and divisions should be actively engaged in the process of developing them.
- The Evidence Act emphasizes the need for collaboration and coordination among agency staff.
- The Evaluation Officer is the senior contact on evaluation for agency-wide and cross-cutting evaluation efforts for interested parties and other stakeholders and in coordination with the CDO, CIO, Statistical Official, Performance Improvement Officer, and other relevant agency officials.
- Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge can and should inform federal decision-making.

290.15 What are the requirements for engaging interested parties on the Learning Agenda and Annual Evaluation Plan?

- Agencies are expected to engage diverse stakeholders from the start while developing learning agendas and annual evaluation plans.
- Internal staff to be engaged include agency leadership, those that oversee design, process, operations, or programs being discussed as well as those working on other evaluations, statistics, analysis, data, risk management, performance, policy, regulatory, privacy and information law.
- The Evidence Act requires engagement of the public, state and local governments, and non-governmental researchers for the learning agenda. Additional partners for engagement include OMB, federal award recipients, Congress, the private sector, academics, NGOs, tribal governments, and communities.

- Agencies should consider the best ways to identify and engage stakeholders so that both parties gain value. Stakeholder mapping exercises are one approach to identifying them.
- Engagement methods should be transparent, trustworthy, and meaningful. They should rely on existing activities and requirements to the extent possible. Some approaches to engagement include: RFI's in the Federal Register, sustained community engagement, participatory research, listening sessions/focus groups, technical working groups, bilateral consultations.

- Engagement should not be limited to development of the learning agenda and annual evidence plans.

Benefits of engagement through the lifecycle of evidence generation and use include transparency, relevant evidence, and broader use of findings.

- Engagement approaches used should be described in the Annual Evaluation Plan and updates to the learning agenda.