

# Evaluation Challenges and Innovations in NSF-Funded ATE Centers

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## Agenda

- Mainstreaming Evaluation
- Research Process
- Challenges
- Common Historical Factors
- Integrating Evaluation
- Conclusion
- Questions



# Mainstreaming Evaluation

The integration of systematic evaluation  
into organizational  
culture and practices

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## Mainstreaming Evaluation

Continuous engagement\*

Owned organizational value\*

Internal and external

Varied purposes and uses

\*Sanders, 2002

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## The Research

Step	Purpose	Data Source
1	Identify ATE centers likely to be mainstreaming evaluation	ATE survey responses
2	Explore leadership, culture, capabilities, systems, structures, history, and practices related to evaluation in those centers	In-depth case studies

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## Common Historical Factors

- ✓ External requirement\*
- ✓ Data use → data valuing†
- ✓ Evaluation champion

\*Katz, Sutherland and Earl, 2002; Sutherland, 2004

† Cousins, Goh and Clark, 2006

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# Integrating Evaluation

Successful strategies and innovations

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Project mapping

Collaborative relationships

Parsimonious design

Web-based platforms

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## Project mapping

Evaluation questions and responsibilities mapped alongside project goals, objectives, and milestones

Evaluator conducts quarterly implementation audit with staff

Evaluation efforts prioritized based on program needs

Staff members work with evaluator to ensure evaluative data is specific and useful in their areas of responsibility

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## Collaborative relationships

Schedule regular communication to get ideas and feedback

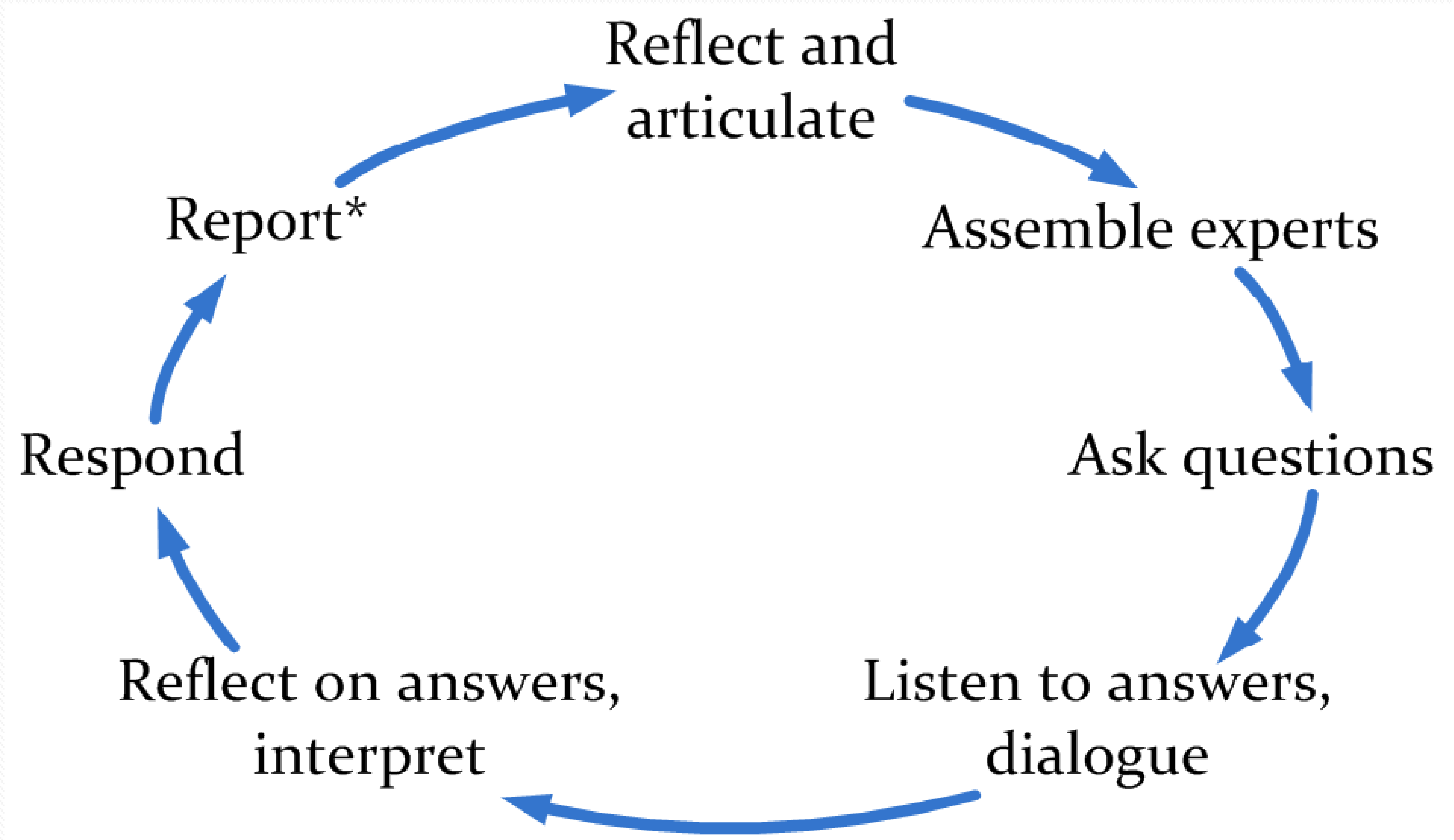
Piggyback advisory committees onto other professional events

Shorter, more frequent surveys

Use the Listening-Learning Loop

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# Listening-Learning Loop



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## Parsimonious design

Systems and Processes

Identify skills and knowledge at the core of industry trends

Guiding principles

Acquire, summarize, analyze and disseminate evaluative information

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## Parsimonious design

### Instruments

Items for improvement (specific) and outcome (general)

Use the same outcome items across programs and years

Pre-test items on course/workshop applications  
(i) place participants appropriately,  
(ii) create high performing teams, and  
(iii) serve as baseline data

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## Web-based platforms

Rapid feedback during events

Materials dissemination

Participant and advisory committee surveys

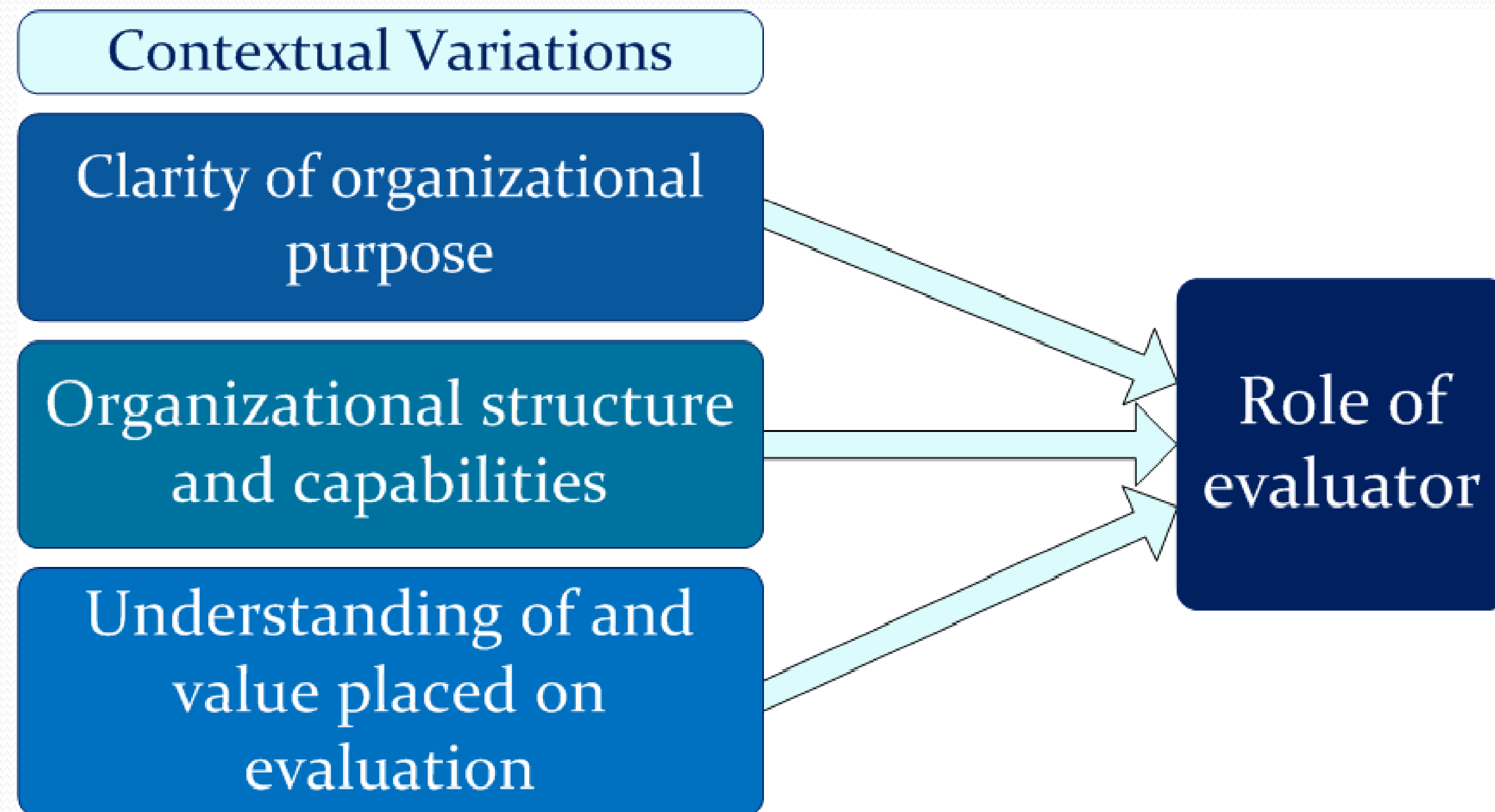
Paper responses entered into web-platform to centralize data cache

Survey forms and responses in a single location, accessible via internet

Registration for web-based services enables long-term tracking for follow-up

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# Challenge and Opportunity



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# Questions



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