

Project Design Document

Randomized Evaluation

Project Name: [Title] | Project Code: [XXXX]

How this document is to be used:

This document is associated with the Design Review gate in the OES project process, specifically for projects involving randomized evaluation. For a step-by-step guide to Design Review and a summary of roles and responsibilities, see the internal resource: Project Process Technical Notes and Step by Step Guide.

When you have completed this document and are ready to submit it to internal peer review, please ensure that it is stored in the top level of your project folder. Do not leave any sections blank; record “NA” if a section is not relevant to your project design.

Project Objectives

Briefly describe the project objectives (copied or updated from the Project Initiation Document). Include any secondary objectives, such as improvements to data collection or other program processes.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Intervention Design

Behavioral Barriers:

Identify the specific behavioral barrier(s) the intervention will address, as well as a description of methods used to identify these barriers. Briefly describe the target population, and note whether barriers are specific to certain segments of the population. A preliminary behavioral map should have been included in the Project Initiation Document; here is where you can provide an update to that behavioral map, providing more detail and additional layers and where your intervention fits into the existing process, as appropriate. For guidance, see the internal resources Introduction to Behavioral Mapping and Behavioral Mapping and Discovery.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Intervention and Theory of Change:

Describe the intervention. Be sure to include documentation in the project folder. Explain the theory of change, or the mechanism by which the intervention is intended to work, in sufficient detail to support later inferences about its scalability and generalizability to other populations/contexts/programs. See the internal resource Checklist for Ensuring a Strong Intervention and Actionable Results. Include a brief review of literature to support this theory of change. The goal here is to describe the intervention only; a later section will cover whether and how individuals or other units will be assigned to the intervention or to different versions of the intervention.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Intervention Pretesting:

Describe any pretesting of the intervention that has been or will be done, including quantitative and/or qualitative metrics that will be used. Distinguish between true pretesting and piloting.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Evaluation Design

Population and Number of Observations:

Define the population. Will a sample be drawn from this population? If so, how? What will be the total number of observations?

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Test Arms/Treatment Conditions:

Describe the control condition and all treatment conditions, including the expected number of observations in each.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Randomization/Assignment:

Describe level/unit of randomization or assignment, how assignment works, and who will implement it.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Outcomes:

What is the primary outcome of interest? Are there any secondary outcomes of interest?

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Data:

Describe the dataset(s) that will be generated, the time period(s) they will cover, and the key variables that will be included, including both outcome(s) of interest and any covariates.

Insert text here, and delete the gray prompt above when the document is final

Power:

Describe the power of the primary statistical test(s) to be conducted, explain how this was calculated. Note whether a correction for multiple inferences will be applied and, if so, how. See the internal resource Checklist for Ensuring a Strong Intervention and Actionable Results.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Minimum Actionable Effect Size:

What is the smallest effect that would justify action (adoption, scale-up, etc.), from the perspective of the agency partner? Try to specify this as precisely as possible. If a numerical estimate is not feasible, describe in qualitative terms the agency's criteria for actionability.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Likely Effect Size:

Roughly how large an effect would be expected based on literature or previous work? Leave this blank if there is no empirical basis for predicting a likely effect size.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Interpreting a Null Result:

How would we interpret a null result? What level of precision would be needed in order for a null result to be actionable? Do we expect to have this level of precision?

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Quality Control Checks:

Describe any quality control checks that will be incorporated.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Anticipated limitations:

Briefly describe any anticipated limitations associated with the design, as well as any steps that will be taken to mitigate or manage these limitations.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Anticipated Utilization of Results and Findings

Action supported by positive result:

How does the agency partner plan to make use of a positive result (that is, if the intervention is found to be at least as effective as the Minimum Actionable Effect Size specified earlier)?

Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.

Action supported by null or unexpected result:

How does the agency partner plan to make use of a null or negative result?

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Required stakeholder involvement/notification:

How do results need to be documented or shared within the agency to facilitate use? Which stakeholders need to be involved in or informed about the project to support the use of results?

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]

Timing requirements:

What deadlines must be met in order for the results to be utilized, shared, and/or published? Does the agency partner have a timeline for decision making? Does the program operate on an annual or other cycle within which there are windows of opportunity for making changes? For longer projects and projects involving formal deliverables, consider including a detailed project timeline or Gantt chart.

[Insert text here, and delete the red prompt above when the document is final.]