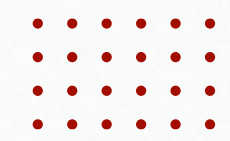




DESIGNING FOR SUCCESS:

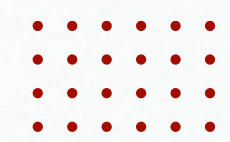
BUILDING EVALUATION AND REPORTING READINESS INTO YOUR PROPOSAL



Description: Essential evaluation-related elements to build into your proposal now so your project is easier to implement, improve through feedback, and report on once funded.

Presented by:

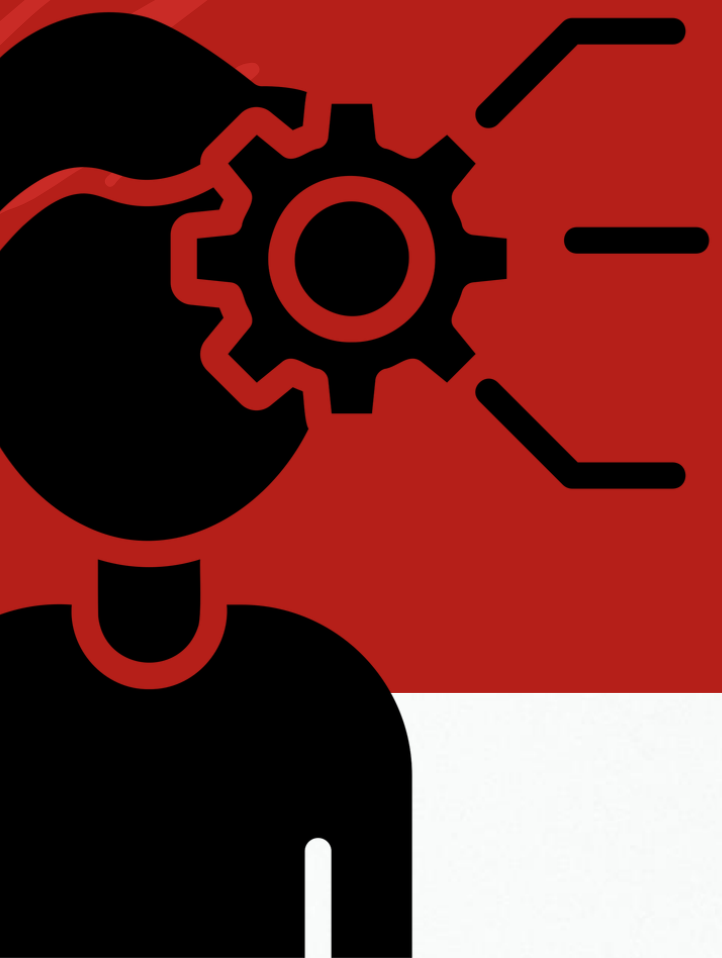
Dr. Frankie Harriss, Co-PI



Date: May 30, 2026



UNITED TRIBES
TECHNICAL COLLEGE



Why This Matters

- Reviewers look for clarity, feasibility, and accountability.
- Weak evaluation can lead to unclear impact.
- Strong evaluation design leads to smoother implementation and easier reporting.
- Design now and strengthen proposal or struggle later.

Session Outcomes



- Identify essential proposal evaluation elements
- Write clearer, measurable goals and SMART objectives
- Align activities, outcomes, and evaluation methods
- Design projects that are easier to report on post-award (mimimizing compliance challenges)

Start with Design

Design with the End in Mind

Before writing activities, ask:

- What will change?
- For whom?
- How will we know?
- What evidence will demonstrate impact?



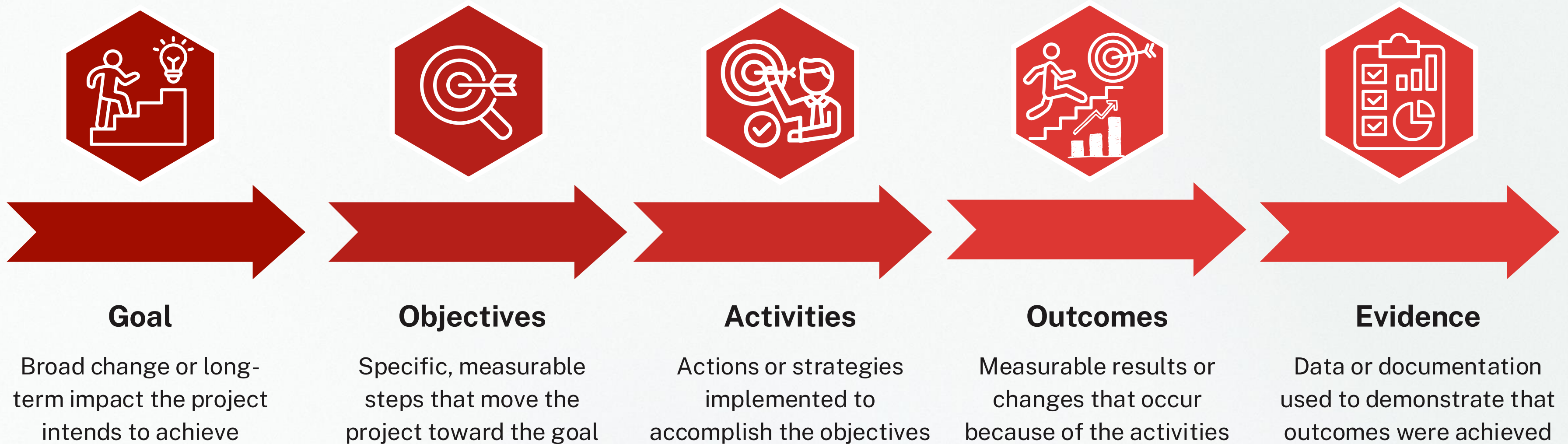
Potential Proposal Weaknesses



- **Goals too broad**
- **Objectives not measurable**
- **Activities not aligned to outcomes**
- **Data collection unclear**
- **Evaluation treated as an afterthought**

Clear Goals & Objectives

From Goal to Evidence



Writing Strong Objectives

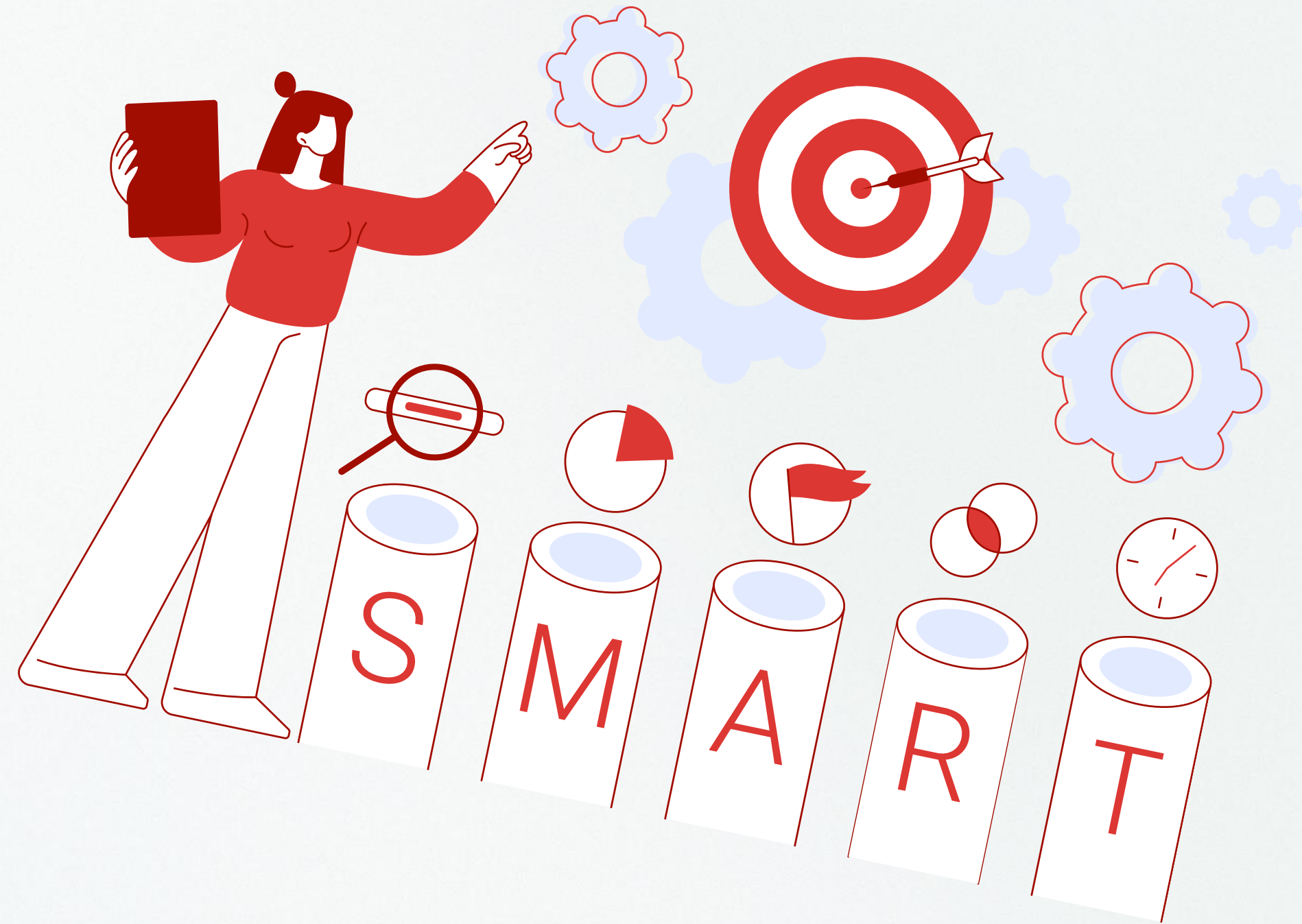
SMART Framework

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Time-bound

Example:

Weak: "Improve STEM success."

Stronger: "Increase first-year STEM course completion rates by 10% over three years."



Participant Activity:



Step 1: Select one draft goal or objective from your proposal.

Step 2: Apply the SMART test.

Step 3: Revise for clarity and measurability.

Debrief:

What changed?

Did the revision clarify what data you will collect?



- **Specific:** Is the change and population clearly defined?
- **Measurable:** What observable indicators would increase confidence that progress occurred?
- **Achievable:** Is the scale (magnitude of change) realistic given resources and timeline?
- **Relevant:** Does this clearly connect to/directly support your overall project goal?
- **Time-bound:** Is there a clear timeframe?



Alignment

Alignment Matters

Ask:



**Does each activity map
to an objective?**



**Does each objective
have measurable
outcomes?**



**Does each outcome
have data tied to it?**

**Misalignment leads to review
concern**

Example of Alignment

Goal: Increase first-year STEM student Persistence.

- Clear population
- Defined change
- Time-bound target
- Activity directly linked to objective
- Specific data sources tied to the outcome

Category	Example
Goal	Increase first-year STEM student persistence.
Objective (measurable)	Increase fall-to-fall persistence of first-year STEM majors from 62% to 72% within three years.
Activity	Implement a structured first-year STEM mentoring program with bi-weekly faculty and peer mentoring sessions.
Expected Outcomes	Improved first-year retention rates among participating STEM students.
Data/Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Institutional enrollment and persistence data (fall-to-fall tracking)• Participation logs for mentoring sessions• End-of-year student survey on academic support and STEM confidence

Example of Alignment

Goal: Strengthen STEM instructional capacity and student engagement

- Clear population
- Defined change
- Time-bound target
- Activity directly linked to objective
- Specific data sources tied to the outcome

Category	Example
Goal	Strengthen STEM instructional capacity and student engagement
Objective (measurable)	Increase the number of STEM faculty implementing place-based instructional strategies from 2 to 7 within two academic years.
Activity	Provide a faculty development cohort focused on integrating locally relevant data sets, field-based experiences, and regional industry applications into STEM coursework.
Expected Outcomes	Expanded use of applied, place-based instructional strategies in STEM courses, leading to increased student engagement.
Data/Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Faculty participation and completion records for the development cohort.• Syllabi and assignment reviews using a defined instructional rubric.• Pre/post faculty implementation surveys.• Student engagement survey results.• Comparative course completion or pass-rate trends in redesigned sections.

Alignment Table

Goal			
Objective	Activities	Expected Outcome	Data Source
Objective 1	Activity A	Outcome	Metric

Tables can help you as much as they can reviewers.

- Easy way to ensure budget alignment and justification with resources allocated to support articulated activities.
- Can expand the table to include who is responsible and when the activity will occur.
- Be sure these are useful to your program, department, institution, etc. and not busy work.
- Be sure these are reasonable.

Building the Evaluation Plan

What Reviewers Expect

Using tables can be a helpful way to organize this information for both yourself and the reviewers.

Should align with and support budget justification.



Clear evaluation questions



Defined data collection methods



Timeline



Roles/Responsibilities



Use of findings

Formative vs. Summative Evaluation

Formative: Improve during
implementation

Summative: Assess overall
impact

Strong proposals include both.



What Data You will Collect and Why?

Examples:

- Participation counts
- Course completion rates
- Credential attainment
- Surveys (self-efficacy, engagement)
- Workforce placement

Tie every data point to a purpose.

Examples

Formative Evaluation

Improvement During Implementation

- Mid-semester faculty reflection surveys
- Classroom observation feedback
- Review of draft revised syllabi
- Student engagement pulse surveys

Purpose: Inform adjustments to professional development and instructional support during the project.

Summative Evaluation

Overall Impact Assessment

- Number of faculty fully implementing redesigned strategies
- Comparison of student course completion rates before/after redesign
- End-of-year student engagement survey results

Purpose: Assess whether project objectives were achieved.

Reporting Readiness

Design for Reporting Now



Reporting Requires:

- **Accomplishments**
- **Products**
- **Participants**
- **Impacts**
- **Evidence of progress**
- **Changes/Problems**

Designing your data systems early means straightforward reporting

Due vs. Overdue Reporting

Project Reports

What is the difference between an Annual, Final Annual, Interim and Project Outcomes Report?

- Download a project report template
- Example Project Reports (Demo site)

Reports Due

Reports Due < 12 Months

All Awards

Show 25 per page

PAGE: 1 of 1

Export options: CSV | Excel | XML

Award Number	Award Title	Report Type	Status	Calendar Days Until Overdue	Report Overdue Date	Action
2437447	Unlocking Opportunities by Expanding STEM Capacity and Networks through the TCUP...	Annual	Not Yet Due	● 108 days	06/01/2026	Create/Edit

PAGE: 1 of 1

Export options: CSV | Excel | XML

Show 25 per page

Impact & Sustainability

Evaluation Supports Sustainability

Strong evaluation design aids reporting requirements and positions your project for continuity and future funding.

- Demonstrates measurable progress toward stated objectives;
- Produces credible data to support continuation or expansion;
- Strengthens future proposals with documented outcomes;
- Provides institutional leadership with evidence for sustained investment; and
- Reduces reliance on anecdote by generating decision-quality data.



Projects that generate usable evidence are easier to justify, scale, and re-fund.



Broader Impacts & Dissemination

Broader impacts should not be general statements and should be tied to observable outcomes.

Instead of: “We will strengthen workforce pathways.”

Clarify:

- **Who benefits?** (students, faculty, employers, community)
- **What changes?** (completion rates, credentials, instructional practices)
- **How will results be shared?** (presentations, reports, toolkits, data briefs)
- **What evidence demonstrates impact?**

Tie dissemination to measurable outcomes. If broader impacts are measurable, they are easier to evaluate, report, and replicate.



Closing Key Takeaways

Start with measurable goals
and objectives

Align activities,
outcomes, data, and
budget



Build evaluation into
design, not after award

Design now to simplify
reporting later

Reflection

What is one change you will make to your proposal design to strengthen evaluation clarity?

