**WRITING THE PROGRAM EVALUATION**

The Program Evaluation section describes how both the grant applicant and the funder will be able to tell how well the program succeeds at what is proposes to achieve. The best evaluation plans entail gathering both objective and subjective data that will contribute to learning by everyone involved in the program. The evaluation plan should match the scope and complexity of the program. It should provide details on specific mechanisms that will be used to determine whether the methodology described in the proposal will achieve the stated goals and objectives and have the desired measurable outcomes. Evaluation as an activity should be ongoing.

The evaluation plan should be written alongside the program objectives. In other words, each program objective should be written with its measure or performance indicator, how often or when the data will be collected, who will be responsible for collecting this data and the methods by which the data will be collected. A key point to also keep in mind when writing the evaluation section of the proposal is that it should proceed in a linear fashion, from the objectives and activities of the program s or product, there are two types of data to gather. Most sound evaluation plans include both types.

**Qualitative Evaluation Methods – How people think or feel about a program** - Include interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, surveys, and/or notes compiled by objective observers. From these multiple perspectives, a picture of the whole should emerge. For example, an evaluation of a campus-based swimming program for toddlers (2 & 3 year olds) might include a parent questionnaire to understand the need for the program, formal observation and written notes regarding the instructional activities that comprise swimming lessons for this age group at other facilities and a survey to understand how the techniques used affected the child’s learning experience.

**Quantitative Evaluation Methods – Visual and Auditory Observations and/or Testing Assessments** - Are more formal in their execution and numerical in their output. Quantitative data is used to generate statistics that demonstrate the program’s effectiveness, i.e., metrics as test scores or numbers of participants. For example, an evaluation of the same swimming program for infants and toddlers might include age and number of children participating and how many passed the swimming test.

**Who should conduct the Evaluation?** Funders usually leave this decision up to the applicant. The evaluation plan must go beyond simply tracking program outcomes to determining the actual outcomes of the program project and the ultimate impact on the beneficiaries. The Evaluator brings credibility, objectivity, research and analytical skills and expertise to the program by developing the evaluation design, conducting data analyses, and selecting or developing questionnaires and performance indicators.