



EXPANDING
the Bench
An initiative by CHANGEMATRIX

Year in Review

Building the ETB Community

2022

For the [Expanding the Bench® \(ETB\) Initiative](#), 2022 was a year of major changes and successes. ETB not only refined and strengthened its existing programming, but it debuted new services to further deepen the knowledge and practice of [culturally responsive and equitable evaluation \(CREE\)](#), expanded its membership bases, and laid the foundation for an even stronger 2023.

Our work is based upon the belief that the field has suppressed the perspectives and voices of Indigenous and racially and ethnically diverse communities who have been and are currently marginalized in the United States. ETB asserts that Funders of Evaluation and organizations supporting evaluation may harm individuals and communities when they do not use a CREE approach, and we envision a field where evaluators have reclaimed the power necessary to influence social and racial justice in collaboration with Funders and community members.

We invite you to recall this year's highlights, reflect upon the goals we set for 2022, and join us in looking ahead to a bright new year.

12 Achievements in 12 Months

January

Kicked Off the Pricing Model

February

2022 Practicum Host Site Launch

March

Began the Evaluator Engagement Consultation (EEC)

April

Debuted Rolling Applications for Advancing Culturally-responsive and Equitable (ACE) Evaluation Network

May

Updated ACE Evaluation Network Database User Experience Online

June

Started the Funder Community of Practice (CoP)

July

Exceeded 100 ACE Evaluation Network Members

August

Culminated 12 LEEAD Program Scholars

September

Hosted the Best-Attended CREE Learning Series So Far

October

Hosted First Event on Culturally Responsive Indigenous Evaluation© (CRIE)

November

ETB Met In-Person for the First Time in Two Years at the ETB Gathering

December

Developed Two New Service Offerings to Debut in 2023

About ETB

ETB's programming centers the three core priorities of people, practice, and field. We uplift these elements in our work when:

- we look to engage and partner with evaluators who come from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds;
- we promote CREE as best practice; and
- we support a field that applies CREE to its own practice and seeks to collaborate with CREE-focused evaluators.

Join us as we review all of ETB's programmatic highlights from 2022.



Meet the Team

From left to right:

Top row: ACE Evaluation Network Associate Project Director Angel Villalobos, Content Manager Chyenne Mallinson, LEEAD Project Director Sandra Silva, Content Manager Eve Kucharski.

Bottom row: Co-Director Elizabeth Waetzig, Administrative Assistant Ciara Collins, Project Manager Nancy Vang, Co-Director Rachele Espiritu.

Advancing Culturally-responsive and Equitable (ACE) Evaluation Network

The [Advancing Culturally-responsive and Equitable \(ACE\) Evaluation Network](#) was created to increase equitable opportunities and support for racially and ethnically diverse Evaluators who have been historically underrepresented or marginalized in the U.S. and sovereign Tribal nations. In 2022, ETB welcomed nine new Members to the ACE Evaluation Network, bringing membership to over 100. Every ACE Evaluation Network Member holds at least seven years of evaluation experience and is skilled in the practice of CREE.

The ACE Evaluation Network has offered me the chance to establish relationships and, hopefully, do business with foundations outside of the current sphere of my business. The Network has also served as a space for engaging and connecting with evaluators of color in partnership in work. The networking and learning opportunities available through the Network have been valuable components of the program.

ACE Evaluation Network Member

Each ACE Evaluation Network Member has a featured Evaluator profile on the ACE Evaluation Network Database — a free-to-use tool that allows CREE-supportive Funders or Partners of Evaluation to easily view the profiles of any Network Member and make professional connections. ACE Evaluation Network Members make use of the Database too when they connect with fellow Members to collaborate on evaluation work.

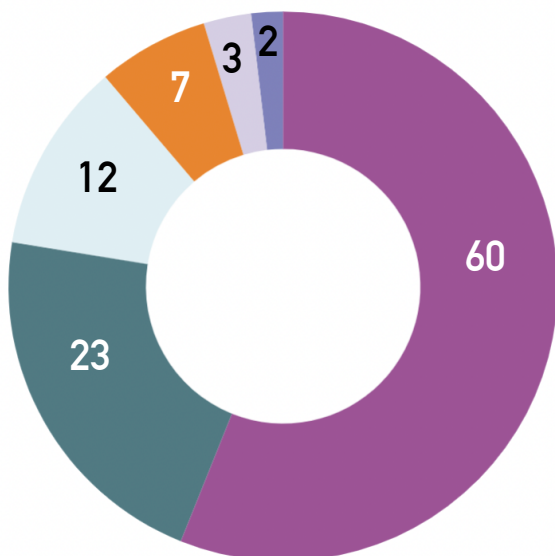
In 2022, ETB also launched a new interface to improve the user experience on the Database for both Funders and the featured Evaluators themselves. The new format allows users to search for Evaluators across geographic locations, racial and ethnic identities, project capacities, populations of focus, and much more.

ACE Evaluation Network Highlights

100+
CREE-practicing Evaluators are part of the ACE Evaluation Network.

232
People have used the ACE Evaluation Network Database since launch in 2019.

ACE Evaluation Network Member Demographics



- Black, Sub-Saharan African, African American, Afro Caribbean, of the African Diaspora
- Hispanic, Latinx/a/e/o/@, Afro Latinx/a/e/o/@
- Biracial or Multiracial
- Asian, Asian American (including South, Southeast, and East Asian)
- Native American, American Indian, Alaska Native (Indigenous to land that shares geography with the continental U.S.)
- Arab, Middle Eastern, Southwest Asian, North African

I hadn't planned to join the Open Mic and simply needed to be among kind, thoughtful people. It was a delight to discover soon after I logged on that (ACE Evaluation Network Member) Carlos Romero would be the presenter. I think he's a great thinker and (I) have learned something from him whenever we've met. His presentation was an unexpected bonus! I was open to something that was not so structured given the deadlines and timelines I'd been working with earlier in the month and up until prior to the Open Mic...

ACE Evaluation Network Member

A notable quarterly offering was the ACE Open Mic series. It was launched for ACE Evaluation Network Members to convene and share CREE-focused work, ideas, and creative skills while being their whole selves. Attendees didn't need to prepare anything in advance and the space was intended to be informal.

The ETB Initiative has benefited from partnerships with ACE Evaluation Network Members in many areas of our own programming. ETB selected ACE Members to serve as consultants for our Evaluator Engagement Consultation (EEC, see page 8), to serve on ETB's Advisory Team, collaborate on proposal writing, and subcontract both within ETB's work and in work with Change Matrix — the managing organization of the ETB Initiative.



Carlos Romero, MBA
ETB Advisory Team Member
ACE Evaluation Network Member

The Database was very helpful in identifying potential consultants for a project and sharing the RFI with directly. It has been an important tool for us to deliberately cast a wide net to try and get outside our usual bubble of consultants and engage with new and more diverse partners. We are very appreciative of ETB's important work in the evaluation field.

Funder of Evaluation

Leaders in Equitable Evaluation and Diversity (LEEAD)

[Leaders in Equitable Evaluation and Diversity \(LEEAD\)](#) is a 15-month evaluation pathway program for diverse early to mid-career evaluators who will advance CREE in the field of evaluation. Upon joining the program, Scholars go through an in-depth course on CREE practice and participate in Practicum Site placements to apply their knowledge as CREE thought partners. Since it began in the fall of 2015, 62 Scholars have completed the LEEAD Program, 12 of whom culminated in November 2022 as Cohort 4 at the American Evaluation Association (AEA)'s annual conference.

The LEEAD Program has been instrumental in enhancing the way I think about sharing power with community partners and equipped me with skills to more meaningfully engage with communities throughout the evaluation process. I am especially grateful for the friendships and connections that I've made through the LEEAD Program. I look forward to building these relationships and partnering together to create more equitable systems.

Cohort 4 Scholar

Scholars are also paired with Mentors — experienced CREE practitioners who provide insights and support to Scholars through the Program. Mentors support them in a variety of areas, including opportunities for career development and advancement in the evaluation field; navigating the field of evaluation; CREE; and building a professional network. Learn more about the value of relationships born out of the Program in the [latest LEEAD Brief](#).

I've never looked at mentorship as a relationship between someone who has more or less expertise, but, rather, a way that mentors can support mentees with resources, help with critical decisions, and provide space for reflection on where a mentee is and wants to be. The LEEAD program has helped facilitate a mutually trusting and beneficial relationship, with the best interests of the mentees at the center. It's refreshing to see so many upcoming and veteran evaluators of color working together to diversify the field.

Cohort 4 Mentor

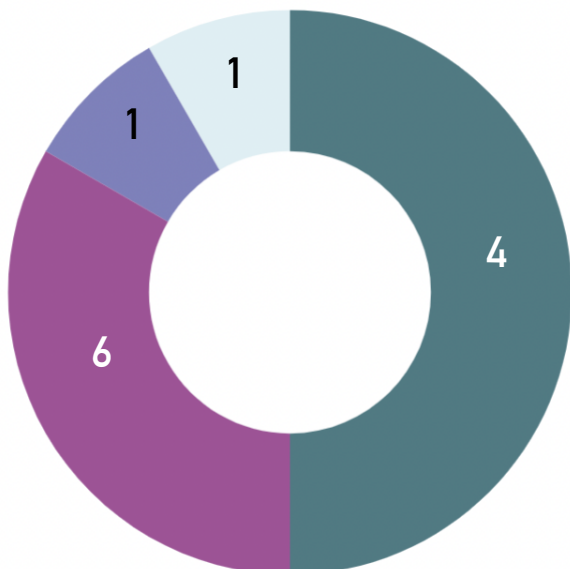
In 2022, ETB offered Practicum Site, Mentor, and Scholar affinity calls to build shared learning and community. Based on Alumni feedback, the ETB Team was also more intentional about Practicum Site partnerships this program cycle. Team members had individual discussions with potential host sites to gauge their readiness to incorporate CREE into their work, placing less burden on Scholars to educate, allowing them to focus on being thought partners. Sites also participated in the first-ever Practicum Site Community of Practice, creating a space for questions, CREE thought partnership, and support.



Tanisha Tate Woodson, PhD
 LEEAD Scholar, Cohort 3
 ETB Advisory Team Member
 ACE Evaluation Network Member
 EEC Consultant

Based on feedback from Cohort 4 Scholars, the LEEAD curriculum will be redeveloped in 2023 in partnership with LEEAD Alum, [Tanisha Tate Woodson](#), who will also serve as the instructor for Cohort 5. ETB is dedicated to consistently growing and creating programs that are responsive to evaluators’ needs. LEEAD applications will open in the spring of 2023 for Cohort 5.

LEEAD Program Cohort 4 Demographics



- Hispanic, Latinx/a/e/o/@, Afro Latinx/a/e/o/@
- Black, Sub-Saharan African, African American, Afro Caribbean, of the African Diaspora
- Arab, Middle Eastern, Southwest Asian, North African
- Biracial or Multiracial

ETB's Fundraising and Field-Building Highlights

ETB is financially supported by funding partners and subscribers, primarily in philanthropy. We offer them opportunities to learn about CREE, build relationships with and partner with CREE-practicing Evaluators, and engage in a community of peers who are advocating for increasing CREE practice in their own organizations.

To expand and sustain these services, ETB implemented a subscription and pricing model in 2022. ETB is dedicated to continuing programming for ACE and LEEAD free of charge, and support through grants and subscriptions á la carte makes that possible.

ETB's Services



Coffee Breaks

ACE Evaluation Network Members and Funders have the opportunity to virtually network and build 1:1 relationships while focusing on the practice of CREE. Matches are made four times a year.



Evaluator Engagement Consultation (EEC)

This service is for Funders who want to know that they are engaging Evaluators in an equitable manner. Upon request, ETB will convene a team of consultants with experience in equitable engagement to provide consultative support to Funders.



CREE Learning Series

The CREE Learning Series is a three-part learning tool that includes a combination of video content by CREE learning guides and virtually facilitated live discussions to support the application of learning into practice.



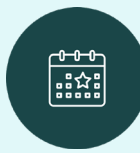
ETB Gathering

ETB gathers annually during the American Evaluation Association's conference for a night of celebrating, socializing, and dancing with everyone in the evaluation ecosystem who makes up or contributes to the Initiative!



New for 2023: Funder Community of Practice

In monthly meetings, Funders present their challenges, pose questions, and discuss specific approaches and solutions to implementing CREE in their organizations. Sign-up will begin in January 2023.



New for 2023: "So You Need an Evaluator?" Grantee Event

Increasingly, grantees funded by philanthropy are conducting evaluations of their work. To support their capacity to partner on CREE, ETB will offer three, two-hour sessions in 2023 that will provide overview information about its practice and application.



Coffee Breaks

ETB Coffee Breaks were designed to connect ACE Evaluation Network Members and Funders of Evaluation interested in CREE while building relationships in an informal, get-to-know-you setting. Four times a year, the ETB Team matches pairs of either Funders and Members or fellow ACE Evaluation Network Members for a 1:1 chat based on focus areas and interests.

Reviews of Coffee Breaks have been consistently positive, with those matched sharing it deepened their understanding of CREE and widened their networking circles.

Coffee Break Highlights

155

matches were made in 2022. Of the matches made, 127 were between Funders and ACE Evaluation Network Evaluators, and 28 matches were made between fellow ACE Evaluation Network Evaluators.



Evaluator Engagement Consultation (EEC)

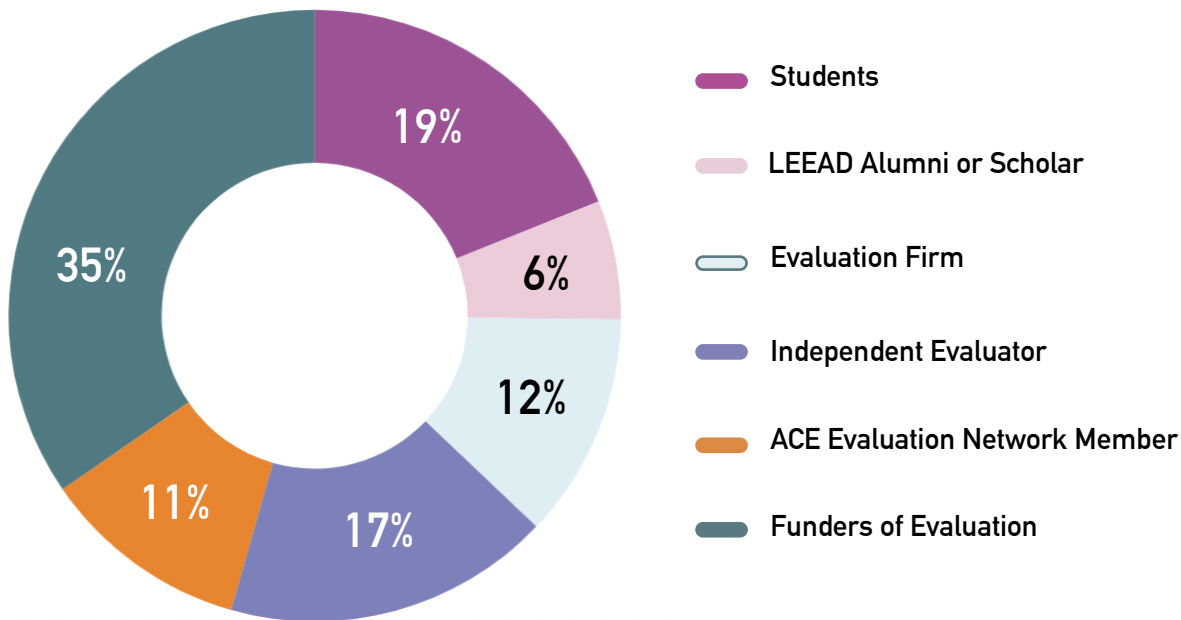
In 2022 ETB also debuted its EEC service. Designed to help Funders ensure that when they are engaging evaluators at any stage that they are doing so equitably, ETB convened a group of eight CREE-practicing Evaluator Consultants to offer support to Funders upon request. Each consultant can offer up to three hours of support for a specific request.

While there was only one EEC request last year, ETB is confident that the EEC is a worthwhile and needed service, particularly after positive reviews from participants and anecdotal affirmations of value during 1:1 Funder calls and feedback from this year's match.



CREE Learning Series

CREE Learning Series Attendee Breakdown



Since debuting it in 2021, over 200 learners have taken part in the [CREE Learning Series](#). This three-part video course educates learners about CREE and follows up with live discussions that are supported by featured learning guides and subject matter experts. The Series is designed to reach a diverse audience of Evaluators, Funders, evaluation partners, students, and others interested and invested in CREE.

For those looking for something more tailored, ETB also offers Elevating CREE, a customized version of the CREE Learning Series to organizations based on specific goals and needs educational needs.

CREE Learning Series Highlights

50%
more people attended 2022's CREE Learning Series than the inaugural events in 2021. In total, there were 127 attendees in 2022. ETB also debuted a workbook for participants this year to help them deepen their CREE practice and application.

“I plan to use the information from this virtual series to: “Consider how, as a Funder, the evaluators we work with and the evaluations we fund are using or could be using tenets of CREE more than they are currently.”

CREE Learning Series Participant



ETB Gathering

On November 9, 2022, ETB held the first annual ETB Gathering at AEA’s conference in New Orleans, LA. This event marked the first time the ETB Team and community members have gathered in person since 2019. Our Team was excited to offer the opportunity for LEEAD Scholars, Mentors, and Alumni; ACE Evaluation Network Members; Funders of Evaluation; and evaluation partners to come together in celebration of CREE. With New Orleans cuisine and drinks in hand, ETB community members mixed and mingled — some seeing each other beyond a computer screen for the very first time.



World Cafe networking activity.

During the Gathering, ETB celebrated the culmination of Cohort 4 LEEAD Scholars. The Gathering also offered an opportunity to introduce and celebrate the newest ACE Evaluation Network Members — ETB accepts new Members twice a year. During the Gathering, ETB community members networked and mingled with one another during the “World Café” networking activity.



Cohort 4 Scholars and Mentors

From left to right: Pictured, from left to right: LaJoy Spears, Leah Neubauer, Margaret (Meg) Hargreaves, Brittany Marshall, Paula Caffer, Sharon Brisolara, Ozen Guven, Diana Serrano, Chloé Green, Geri Lynn Peak, Elidé Flores-Medel, Arthur (Art) Hernandez, Erika Gaitan, Janelle Armstrong-Brown, Natalia Ibañez, Noemi Avalos, Rucha Londhe.

Upcoming Series: Culturally Responsive Indigenous Evaluation© (CRIE)

In October, ETB hosted a Culturally Responsive and Indigenous Evaluation (CRIE)© event presented by Michelle M. Jacob, PhD (Yakama) of [Anahuy Mentoring, LLC](#). CRIE is a term coined by [ACE Evaluation Network Member Nicole R. Bowman, PhD \(Mohican/Lunaape\)](#) of [Bowman Performance Consulting, LLC](#).

Michelle summarized elements of CRIE, drawing from the published work of Indigenous experts, particularly Waapalaneexkweew Nicole R. Bowman, PhD and Carolee Dodge-Francis, EdD. Michelle practices “The Auntie Way,” a kind and fierce educational approach, so that learners feel both invited in and understand they are expected to reach high standards of practice.



Michelle M. Jacob, PhD (Yakama)
CRIE Inaugural Event Presenter

As part of ETB’s ongoing efforts to promote CREE, the ACE Evaluation Network Database, and the Initiative’s various programs, this presentation was held as a free public access event, open to diverse learners curious about CRIE. While ETB centers racially and ethnically diverse Evaluators who have been historically underrepresented or marginalized in the U.S. and sovereign Tribal nations, we recognize that Indigenous evaluators — and those who practice CRIE — have not been uplifted in ETB’s programming and events in an equitable way. In recognition of our own gaps in equity work, ETB is committed to supporting CRIE-practicing professionals by promoting and engaging in the education of CRIE.

With more than 300 registrants, ETB was thrilled to learn that this was the biggest and best-attended virtual event the Initiative has held to date. Plans are currently underway to co-create a multi-part series centered around CRIE for 2023 in partnership with several Indigenous presenters.

We must conduct ourselves in a way that is honorable and respectful. We have built-in accountability, love, and generosity we learn as values that guide what we do, how we think, and how we go about conducting ourselves in this world. These values are grounded in our stories and in our rich relationships with place.

Michelle M. Jacob, PhD (Yakama) on CRIE

CRIE Event Highlights

300+

people registered to attend the CRIE event. ETB is eager to continue work with Indigenous communities to spread awareness of CRIE.

2023 Growth Goals

Create an ETB Community of Inclusion and Belonging:

- Refine the ACE Evaluation Network Database based on user feedback.
- Implement disability-friendly website functionality to be more equitable for all users.
- Increase the number of Evaluators in the ACE Evaluation Network Database.

Promote CREE Practice:

- Roll out a refined version of the CREE Learning Series in 2022.
- Develop an additional “CREE Learning Series 2.0” for advanced learners.
- Continuously innovate in other CREE-focused programming like [Evolving Evaluation](#).

Center Racially and Ethnically Diverse Evaluators:

- Use feedback from programmatic participants to refine current services and offerings.
- Consistently re-evaluate content to ensure that the intended audience is being served by ETB’s programming.

Cultivate Knowledge:

- Host informational sessions and webinars to meet people at all levels of CREE understanding.
- Connect with Funders of Evaluation to spread the knowledge and use of CREE at all levels of the Evaluation Ecosystem.
- Implement, and learn from, strategies to achieve financial sustainability for ETB.

Make the Case for Power Shifts in the Evaluation Ecosystem:

- Challenge Funders to reimagine how they apply CREE in their work through services like the Funder CoP and EEC.
- Advocate for CREE Evaluators through the promotion of the ACE Evaluation Network Database.

Thank You
for Your Support in 2022!

Want to learn more about ETB or how to support the Initiative?
Visit expandingthebench.org or contact us at team@expandingthebench.org.