Information and data have the power to shape policies, programs, and practices. Expanding the Bench™ (ETB) was created to increase the diversity in the evaluation and research fields based upon the belief that the inclusion of evaluators from diverse and historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups increases the likelihood of methods, analyses and interpretation benefiting the communities they serve. ETB includes 3 main components - expanding a new pipeline for evaluators of color through the Leaders in Equitable Evaluation and Diversity (LEEAD) program; promoting the practice and inclusion of excellent evaluators through the Advancing Culturally-responsive and Equitable (ACE) Evaluation Network; and increasing field demand among funders/commissioners of evaluation.

LEEAD is an evaluation training program designed to develop a pipeline of diverse leaders in culturally responsive and equitable evaluation (CREE) who will advance the field of evaluation and improve the life outcomes of children, families, and communities. The LEEAD program includes: a 4-month online evaluation curriculum administered through American University with a focus on CREE; ongoing mentorship from senior evaluators in the field; and a 6 to 9-month opportunity to apply knowledge with an evaluation Practicum Site.

Since the program began in the fall of 2015, 35 Scholars have completed the LEEAD program representing fields such as sociology, public health, economics, psychology, and nursing. Cohort 1 Scholars continue to pursue equity through evaluation 2 years following their culmination (see figure to the right). In fact, 6 of the Cohort 1 Scholars (40%) have obtained a position in the field of evaluation.

The ACE Evaluation Network promotes the practice of CREE by supporting excellent, diverse evaluators from historically underrepresented racial and/or ethnic groups. Diversity, when paired with inclusivity, elevates creative thinking by expanding a group’s capacity for viewing issues or problems with different perspectives and through multiple lenses. Connecting diverse evaluators to funders and each other through the Network expands the practice of CREE in the evaluation field.

The ACE Evaluation Network members represent a wide range of methodological backgrounds and possess the substantive skills required to design, produce, or direct evaluation activities to work with those who share a desire for a more diverse and inclusive sector. Some highlights on the ACE Evaluation Network since its beginning in 2015 from available data:

- Since the program began in the fall of 2015, 35 Scholars have completed the LEEAD program representing fields such as sociology, public health, economics, psychology, and nursing. Cohort 1 Scholars continue to pursue equity through evaluation 2 years following their culmination (see figure to the right). In fact, 6 of the Cohort 1 Scholars (40%) have obtained a position in the field of evaluation.

We envision a world where evaluators partner to drive social change & equity.

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“Core evaluation skills are critical for an evaluation’s success. A second key ingredient is the evaluator’s understanding of context. Finally, evaluators need to be flexible – balancing rigorous and systematic analysis while understanding grantees’ capacity, interests and needs. Finding an evaluator through the ACE Network meant I did not have to make tradeoffs among these three qualities. That led to a stronger evaluation.”

- Jackie Williams Kaye, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund

92 diverse evaluators in the ACE Evaluation Network
36 foundations or other entities used the ACE Evaluation Network
61 times we received requests for referrals or RFPs were shared with the Network

updated 8.20.19
Join our journey to transform the field
Ways you can choose to engage with ETB if you are a...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financially invest to grow and sustain ETB</th>
<th>Foundation</th>
<th>Evaluation firm, university, think tank, nonprofit, etc.</th>
<th>Seasoned, diverse evaluator</th>
<th>Emerging, diverse researcher</th>
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<tr>
<td>Donate to support ETB activities</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide or sponsor meeting spaces for networking events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Become a Practicum Site for LEEAD Scholars</td>
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<td>Become a LEEAD Mentor</td>
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<td>Become an ACE Network member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Become a LEEAD Scholar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Send us job openings or RFQs to share with the ACE Network</td>
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<td>Share with peers in your network the merits of ETB</td>
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Moving forward
Some of the things you can expect in this year as we work within our mission to provide a platform and support for diverse evaluators and consumers of evaluation to value, practice, and promote CREE:

- New cohort of 15 Scholars selected for the LEEAD Program, including a curricula revision in partnership with American University, and a kick-off event hosted at the Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Call for applications for ACE Evaluation Network membership, expanding to more states, territories, and tribal nations
- Access to the ACE Network Database, an online resource that evaluation funders can use to search for diverse evaluators to support learning, strategy, and evaluation efforts
- Community building with ACE Evaluation Network members through a virtual community of practice, networking opportunities, and an in-person ACE Evaluation Network convening
- Continued learning and dialogue with members of our new ETB Advisory Team
- A strong focus on diverse and engaged financial investors to build and sustain ETB

Get in touch with us
Want to learn more about the role you can play? Visit us at expandingthebench.org or email us at team@expandingthebench.org.

Expanding the Bench™ is led by Change Matrix and funded by a generous group of investors. Additional investors always welcome.