

<b>Rochester Effectiveness Partnership (REP)</b>	
<b>Project History &amp; Context</b>	Over 150 people in Rochester, NY participated in this collaborative initiative designed to build individual and organizational evaluation capacity using a participatory model. REP was a self-governing partnership of funders, nonprofit service provider organizations and evaluation professionals committed to systematically building evaluation capacity (theory, design, and methods). The partnership used extensive training and participatory processes to help local nonprofits measure program impact.
<b>Duration</b>	Long-term: 18 month cycles – Basic + Advanced training 12 month Alumni cycles
<b>Participants &amp; Selection process</b>	A team of REP partners created an application and interview process for each phase of the project. This process led to the selection of new non-profits for each of the seven different REP ‘classes.’ Each class included 4 to 6 partner organizations, with 2 to 4 staff per partner organization.
<b>Project Design</b>	Each Class (40 hours total)  First 6 months (30 hours total) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation design training (ten 3-hour sessions + homework)</li> <li>• Representation on a governance team for REP management decisions and to discuss areas of community concern</li> <li>• Reporting and sharing (final conference – presentation of evaluation designs)</li> </ul> Last 12 months (10 hours total) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of evaluation design (a total of 10 hours coaching for required participatory evaluation projects specific to each non-profit service provider’s needs)</li> <li>• Representation on a governance team for REP management decisions and to discuss areas of community concerns</li> <li>• Completion of evaluation project</li> <li>• Reporting and sharing results (final presentations by each organization to Partnership and community)</li> </ul>
<b>Alumni Study Group</b>	Program alumni from each of the first five classes met for 10 2-hour sessions. Sessions focused on advanced evaluation topics. Alumni opted in, and were required to have an active evaluation project.
<b>Funders</b>	A total of 11 public and private funders (see report for list). Opportunities for regular monthly study, coaching or technical assistance as funding partners took on their own evaluation projects.
<b>Costs</b>	Approximately \$800,000 (in 2003 dollars) of pooled community resources for the 7-year project (~\$155,000/year). Administrative support for meetings, communications and logistics were shared by the funding collaborative.
<b>Key Capacity Building Components</b>	<b>Basic Evaluation Training, Advanced Evaluation Training, Applied Learning: Evaluation Design or Implementation, Technical Assistance and Coaching, Networking, Alumni Study Groups, Funding Collaboratives &amp; Shared Governance</b>
<b>Evaluation Consultants</b>	<i>Anita Baker, Evaluator</i> and Kim Sabo, Evaluator
<b>Prior Experience with Evaluative Thinking</b>	Individual exposure to evaluation varied but was mostly limited. Agencies that continued with alumni study had to include members who had completed REP basic and advanced evaluation training.

## Rochester Effectiveness Partnership (REP)

<b>Key Results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initiative demonstrated that it is possible to systematically build evaluation capacity in both the funding and provider communities: REP partners knew more about participatory evaluation, they did better evaluations, and they commissioned better, more useful and user-friendly evaluations.</li><li>• Funders and service provider organizations were able to work together and learn from each other.</li><li>• It is possible to make data-driven program decisions that benefit service delivery to clients. REP partners demonstrated clear changes to their programs – terminations, expansions, alterations – based on evaluation data.</li><li>• Participants generated more than 4 dozen rigorous evaluation projects.</li><li>• It is possible to sustain a funding collaborative over time using pooled community resources.</li></ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mastering new paradigms and skills as adults is intense and expensive.</li><li>• The specifics of how to expand REP (i.e., how many provider and funder partners could be meaningfully involved and who they should be), and how long to sustain it could not easily be decided in advance, so a great deal of dialogue, trust and emergent learning was required among partners.</li><li>• The issue of charging fees was raised in each year following the pilot however, data showed that without fees, participation was high, training valued, and skills used and passed on to others.</li><li>• While REP successfully integrated many partners, connections with local evaluators proved more elusive. The evaluation partners both came from non-Rochester locations, and they brought needed participatory evaluation expertise and commitment. Meaningful roles for other evaluators, including some locally-based evaluation consultants were not developed.</li><li>• Alliances between REP and the higher education community in Rochester were not made. The fit and connection with the Rochester Grantmakers Forum continued to make sense throughout REP.</li><li>• During each phase of REP, the partners grappled with how and whether to involve external evaluators in the REP evaluation process. Because REP was a project firmly committed to self-governance and meaningful participatory evaluation and building evaluation capacity rather than evaluator dependence, the Partnership ultimately decided to use more internal strategies. For the first and third phases the REP funder and provider partners worked together with the REP evaluation partner(s) to do the evaluation. In the second phase, the REP funder and provider partners worked together to hire an external organization (InnoNet) with participatory evaluation expertise to conduct the evaluation. REP partners were satisfied with the accuracy and utility of each evaluation.</li></ul>
<b>Evaluation Products</b>	Read <a href="#">REP FINAL EVALUATION REPORT</a> Read <a href="#">REP FINAL REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</a>
<b>Related Resources</b>	Read <a href="#">PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION ESSENTIALS: A Guide for Nonprofit Organizations and Their Partners</a> . See <a href="#">BUILDING EVALUATION CAPACITY</a> : A Powerpoint Presentation to be used in conjunction with our guide. Read our Five Guidebooks for Grantmakers: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <a href="#">BASIC CONCEPTS FOR GRANTMAKERS</a></li><li>2. <a href="#">USING LOGIC MODELS</a></li><li>3. <a href="#">EVALUATION DATA COLLECTION</a></li></ol>

**Rochester Effectiveness Partnership (REP)**

- 4. EVALUATIVE THINKING FOR GRANTMAKERS*
- 5. SUPPORTING GOOD EVALUATION*