



EVALUATION
CAPACITY
NETWORK

DECOLONIAL EVALUATION LEARNING TEAM ANNUAL REPORT

- 2024 / 2025 -



Decolonial Evaluation Learning (DEL)

Note of Gratitude



This year, we have learned a lot from each other, from experts, from fellow evaluators, and from conferences. Our team started off our goal-planning in September of 2024, and since then, we have accomplished a lot of firsts: first international conference for the Decolonial Evaluation Learning (DEL) team, first webinar series, and first draft manuscript for submission.

We are so grateful to all those who joined us in our learning journey this year. We have been so fortunate to share knowledge and stories together!

A big thank you to all our guest speakers for taking the time to help us grow in our learning and practice our reflexivity. We are forever grateful for the time, energy, and expertise you shared.

Lastly, to our supervisors (Drs. Rebecca Gokiart, Melissa Tremblay, and Michelle Searle). Thank you for supporting our work this year. Your guidance and expertise is not taken for granted, and our student team is incredibly grateful for the conversations and reflections that we've been encouraged to have.

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Our 2024-2025 Team

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2024-2025: The Year of Learning, Reflecting, and Mobilizing

The Decolonial Evaluation Learning (DEL) team has grown throughout the past few years! Our team has deepened our commitment to building relationships with communities, learners, and experts. We've supported the co-creation of knowledge and commitments, and we've provided spaces for further reflection and continued learning. Our team continuously strives to learn how to foster more equitable and relational approaches to evaluation, further encouraging a shared mindset rooted in reciprocity, cultural responsibility, and care.

In 2023-2024, we used collaborative processes to generate a set of the **Evaluation Capacity Network (ECN) commitments** that our team refers to as we organized capacity-building resources and other initiatives. The commitments are:

1. **Promoting evaluation practices that are respectful and responsible to the needs and values of communities.**
2. **Building the capacity of individuals and organizations, through ECN resources and supports, to integrate intersectional evaluation thinking that utilizes diverse knowledge systems.**
3. **Centering community experience and expertise in co-creating evaluation processes and knowledge generation.**

With the commitments in mind, in the 2024-2025 year, we amended our name to "*Decolonial Evaluation Learning*," emphasizing a continual learning journey that focuses on decolonial practices and education.

This year, we focused on the mindset of continuous learning, reflecting, and mobilizing. The DEL team curated a five-part webinar e-learning series, "*Widening our Worldview*," to support relational and capacity-building goals. We participated and presented at conferences on an international and national scale - furthering our relationship building and opportunities to share knowledge. After each webinar session and conference, the student team published DELBytes reflections (reflective blogs available through the ECN website) to share our reflexive learning journey. Our final initiative for the 2024-2025 year was submitting a research practice note to the Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation (CJPE).

Our approach is unique not only because of what we focus on, but in how we open spaces for learning and sharing. The DEL team strives to co-create a shared learning environment where multiple forms of knowledge are honored. Whether through storytelling, discussion, arts-based methods, or other processes, we've made it a priority to ensure people feel seen, heard, and valued. The DEL team's efforts are not just sharing tools with others; we are supporting a shift in evaluation mindset that encourages reciprocity, responsibility, and reflection. We aim to examine and help others as we rethink and commit to evaluation as a practice *with* community.

DEL Team 2024–2025 Initiatives



1 DELByte Reflections

The DEL student team created reflections based on their learning and experiences while presenting the team's work at conferences. These reflections also included recaps from our webinar series.

2 Indigenous-informed Evaluation Webinar Series

A total of five sessions were curated and facilitated by a diverse set of Indigenous professionals. This served as a space to explore decolonial evaluation practices together and exchange knowledge with others in the virtual field.

3 Mobilization of Knowledge

The team participated and presented in a variety of conferences this year. Our team was fortunate to learn from others through both in-person and online options, and meet other evaluators and community members.

4 Research Practice Note

The team has worked on a Research Practice Note for the Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) Journal. The Practice Note outlines our work and reflections.

5 Repository Curation

The repository of resources continues to expand! Each webinar facilitator offered a resource of their own to add, and our team continues to share the resource hub with others.

Webinar Series

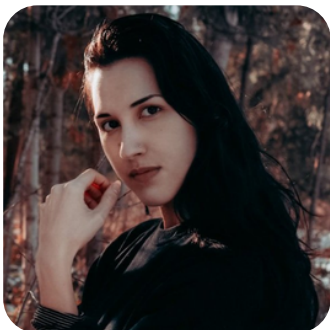
“Widening Our Worldview”

This year, we brought together learners, evaluators, academics, and community members from across the country through a curated free-to-attend webinar series titled “Widening our Worldview” ([recordings can be found under the title “Widening our Worldview”](#)).

This five-part series was curated with the understanding that Indigenous peoples are not monolithic, and therefore, we recognized that we could only capture some of the heterogeneity of Indigenous peoples, their worldviews, and experiences. In our efforts to support the mobilization and education of Indigenous Knowledges and decolonial evaluation practices, our webinar sessions were facilitated by a diverse set of Indigenous professionals of Tahltan-Kaska, Swampy Cree, Anishinaabe, Plains Cree, and Blackfoot descent.

Each session aimed to offer a safe space to explore decolonial evaluation practices together. Conversations with attendees were thoughtful, rich, challenging, and deeply affirming. Alongside our attendees, we created a community of learners that stemmed from a place of meaningful and reciprocal learning.

Session 1: Cultivating Safe Spaces



Jen Greenway

In December, the DEL team launched the webinar series with “Cultivating Safe Spaces” facilitated by Jen Greenway. She introduced us to the Syilx people’s “Four Perspectives” framework and explored how these Indigenous ways of knowing can be meaningfully applied to the field of evaluation. Jen emphasized how adopting such perspectives can support decolonial evaluation and foster more relational, culturally grounded practices. For our student team, this session was particularly impactful. It prompted us to reflect on our own group dynamics through the lens of the Four Perspectives. We recognized that we each align with different perspectives, which influences how we approach and engage in our work. This realization not only deepened our understanding of each other but also highlighted the importance of identifying where community partners may sit within this framework. Such awareness can guide us in adapting our collaboration styles to better align with the values and working preferences of the communities we work with.

Session 2: Co-Creation of Evaluation Plans

Gladys Rowe, a Swampy Cree evaluation consultant, shared the presentation she and her colleagues created for the American Evaluation Association (AEA) conference, “Crafting an Anishinaabe Evaluation Framework: Co-creation, Iteration, and Community Alignment in Evaluation Practices”. This webinar explored inclusive and decolonial strategies that are essential when co-creating evaluation plans in collaboration with communities, especially Indigenous communities. One of the central tools we explored was the use of sharing circles and the role of the evaluator in facilitating these respectful, relationship-centered conversations. Gladys also touched on the importance of arts-based data when collaborating with Indigenous communities, and the meaning it could have on community members. Attendees left equipped to make decolonial changes in their own practice.



Gladys Rowe

Session 3: Indigenous-Informed Logic Models/ Theories of Change



Andrea Johnston

Andrea Johnston, the CEO of Johnston Research Inc., facilitated such a thought provoking conversation on Indigenous-Informed Logic Models/ Theories of Change. She explored the distinctions between Western logic models and Indigenous ones, offering critical insights into how Indigenous worldviews can reshape evaluation frameworks. In fact, she even provided a follow-up resource so attendees can continue their learning journey after the webinar session. Additionally, Andrea shared insights on Indigenous ways of knowing, which is crucial when collaborating with Indigenous communities. Attendees learned about cultural perpetuity, community actualization and self actualization (key elements of the First Nations’ perspective of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs). Overall, Andrea facilitated a rich conversation highlighting the importance and value of Indigenous-Informed frameworks and models.

Session 4: Arts-Based Data Generation

In April, Dr. Lana Whiskeyjack, a Nehiyaw author and multidisciplinary artist, facilitated a powerful session on Arts-Based Data Generation. She introduced participants to a variety of arts-based methodologies that support data generation grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Through thoughtful examples and personal storytelling, Dr. Whiskeyjack illustrated how art can serve as a meaningful and valid form of data. She also shared her artwork, offering insight into the rich layers of meaning it carries and demonstrating how creative expression can reflect lived experience, cultural knowledge, and community values. Additionally, attendees received further insight by asking questions and figuring out ways in which arts-based data can be incorporated into their own practice.



Dr. Lana Whiskeyjack

Session 5: Data Sovereignty



Amber Bedard

The final webinar session was held in May. The “Data Sovereignty in Evaluation” was facilitated by Amber Bedard, which focused on data collection, ethical considerations, and how “data is a gift” and that it should be held with intention, respect, responsibility, and mindfulness. Amber is a member of the Piikani First Nation of Alberta and Montana’s Blackfoot Confederacy, and has a diverse background in Indigenous research and consultation, primarily working within program evaluation in the public and private sectors. Throughout this session, she shared her passion about ensuring that research and evaluation is done in a culturally responsive, safe, and reciprocal manner. She also emphasized the importance of advocating for deep learning and creating space for Indigenous knowledge. Our team, and fellow learners who joined us, learned the responsibility we have to ensure ethical frameworks prioritize the voices, needs, and traditions of Indigenous peoples in data practices.

Conferences

American Evaluation Association (AEA) 2024

On October 23, 2024, the DEL team facilitated a roundtable discussion at the AEA 2024 Conference, presenting our submission, “Walking Alongside: A Reflective Conversation About an Evaluation Capacity Network’s Journey Towards Decolonization.” This opportunity allowed us not only to share our ongoing work in decolonial evaluation but also to learn from other organizations and practitioners who are embedding decolonial approaches into their practices. Aligned with the conference theme (Amplifying and Empowering Voices in Evaluation), we gained valuable insights from workshops and sessions, many of which have since informed and enriched our work with DEL. AEA 2024 also marked a meaningful moment of connection: it was where we first encountered Gladys Rowe, who later facilitated a webinar. Overall, the conference was a powerful space for learning, growth, networking, and professional development.



Photo of ECN and DEL team members taken at AEA 2024. From left to right: Lauren Alston, Dr. Rebecca Gokiart, Cheryl Lee-Yow, Abigail Gallimore, Aaliyah Jafarian-Oshtbin, Dr. Michelle Searle.

Community-Campus-Exposition (C2UExpo) 2025

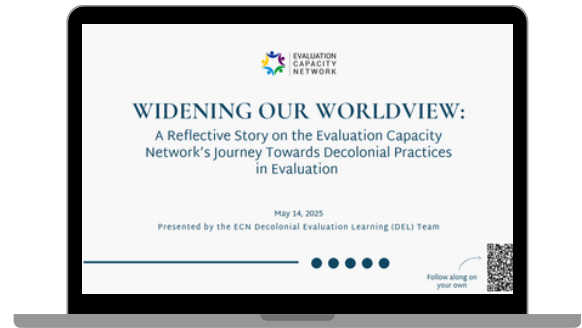
The DEL team had the honour of facilitating another roundtable at the C2UExpo, held at MacEwan University on May 14, 2025. This discussion provided valuable insight into the resources and tools that evaluators and other experts in the field are seeking, needs that the DEL team may be well-positioned to assist with. It was also a meaningful opportunity to share and mobilize our work, including our webinar series, stylized guides, and other knowledge products. The conversations that emerged during the roundtable inspired our student team to consider new initiatives for the upcoming academic year that could better support both practicing evaluators seeking to integrate decolonial approaches, as well as the capacity-building efforts of Indigenous organizations and community groups. In addition to facilitating the roundtable, we attended several other presentations, which deepened our understanding of how university-based initiatives like the ECN can more effectively serve and collaborate with communities.



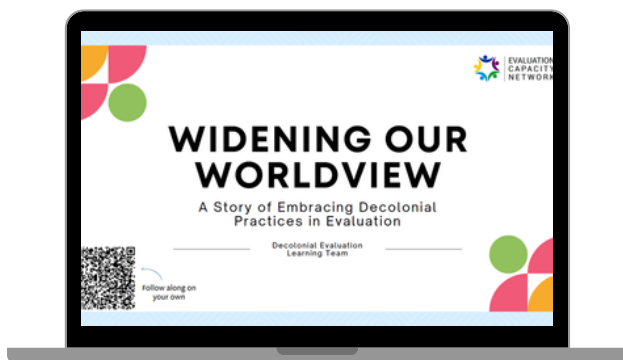
Photo of DEL team members in front of their presentation slides taken at the C2U Expo. From left to right, Cheryl Lee-Yow, Abigail Gallimore, Dr. Melissa Tremblay, Dr. Rebecca Gokiert.

Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) National Conference 2025

On May 14, 2025, the DEL team participated in the CES' virtual storytelling session - an engaging opportunity to share our work in a creative and meaningful format. Many attendees were unfamiliar with the ECN, making this session a valuable platform to introduce our initiative and highlight the resources we have developed over the past year. In addition to connecting with evaluators from across Canada, we were excited to engage with international attendees who identified meaningful parallels between our work and their efforts in Indigenous evaluation globally. These connections allowed for rich conversations and learning.



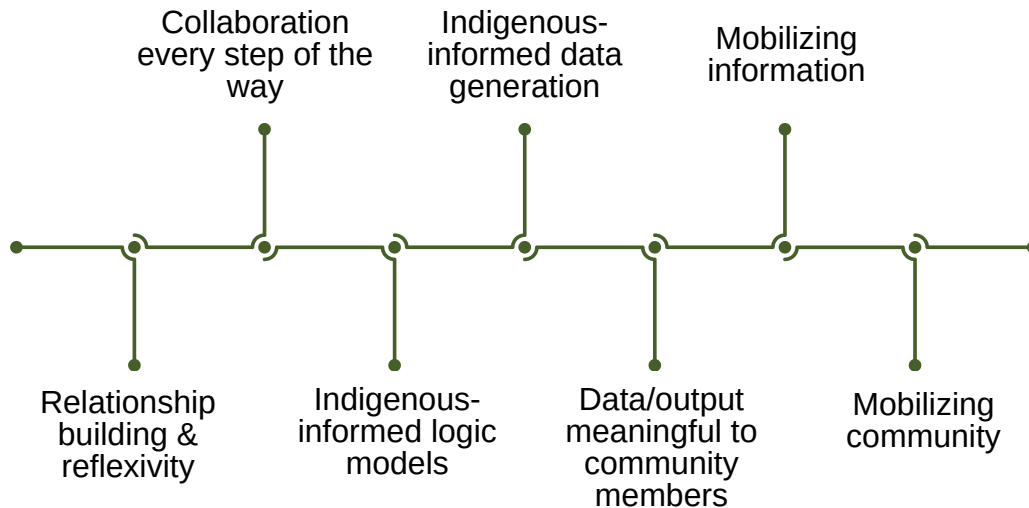
Canadian Sociology Association (CSA) Conference 2025



On June 11, 2025, the DEL team virtually presented at the Canadian Sociology Association (CSA) Conference. This was an incredible opportunity to make connections across faculties and disciplines, especially as we start considering what the following academic year could look like for the DEL team. This conference is also part of the larger Congress Conference (one of the largest across Canada), which allowed us to make connections and learn from others from various places. We had meaningful conversations and were able to learn alongside others in our session.

2024-2025 Learnings

THEMES FROM THIS YEAR'S INITIATIVES



WEBINAR INSIGHTS



Relationally Grounded Practices:

Importance of relationship building, listening, and engaging in culturally responsive ways.



Reciprocity, Responsibility, Reflection:

It's our responsibility to foster iterative engagement and ensure reciprocity and reflection on our part.



Arts-based Modalities:

Supporting data generation grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.



Cultural perpetuity, Community actualization, Self actualization:

A reminder that we are learning alongside our fellow attendees and those that engage with our work.

Looking Forward

2025-2026 is our year to put our learning into action!



01.

Continued learning opportunities:

Offering co-learning sessions where students, practitioners, evaluators and researchers can deepen learning through guided activities to consider and practice aspects of DEL.



02.

Bridging connections & building relationships:

Connecting student evaluators with Indigenous community evaluation organizations to encourage learning alongside as well as support for Indigenous communities.



03.

Resource creation & knowledge mobilization:

Continued resource mobilization through the repository. Ongoing reflections through a DELByte, conference, and/or publications.



04.

Community & organization support

Supporting existing community partnerships and potential research grants with organizations looking to integrate decolonial evaluation practices.



Photo credits: Oko_SwanOmurphy from Getty Images

Resources

Either scan the QR codes to access our resources, or click the hyperlinks.



[ACCESS THE DEL
REPOSITORY HUB](#)



[ACCESS RECOMMENDED
RESOURCES](#)



[ACCESS THE WEBINAR
RECORDINGS](#)



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REFLECTIONS](#)



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2024-2025

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