

Editor's Remarks

As the new Editor of the *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation (CJPE)*, it is an honour to be addressing you and introducing my first volume of the journal. I have been with the journal since 2009, first as the Book Review Editor and then, more recently, as Associate Editor (and Editor of Practice Notes). During this time, I worked with three *CJPE* Editors, Brad Cousins, Robert Schwartz and Isabelle Bourgeois, all of whom have left a lasting impact on the journal in so many different ways. I especially want to thank outgoing Editor Isabelle Bourgeois for her leadership of the journal over the past five years. Working with her on the journal (and with the editorial team) has been an incredible learning experience. Under Isabelle's guidance, we now have gender parity on the Editorial Board; a new Roots and Relations section selected and edited by Indigenous scholars and practitioners that highlights Indigenous evaluation stories; and the journal is now open access, which means that everyone now has equal access to the journal. I clearly have big shoes to fill! Fortunately, we have a very strong editorial team that includes Stephanie Maltais, Larry Bremner, Nicole Bowman, Leslie Fiero, Jane Whynot, Naima Bentayeb, and Tiffany Tovey, as well as Christine Vandenberghe and the Editorial Board, whose input and suggestions are encouraged and welcome.

I did not make the decision to become Editor of *CJPE* lightly. We are living in what I believe are unprecedented and challenging times affecting us locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. The pandemic has underscored the need for a strong, committed and democratic public service operating at home and abroad. I believe that evaluation can play an important and critical role in addressing the challenges that lie ahead. As the only bilingual evaluation journal, my vision for *CJPE* is to expand its reach to French African countries and French Caribbean nations, and to increase our geographic reach to ensure that we include the voices and perspectives of the many who are not yet part of the evaluation conversation. I, along with the Editorial Team, aspire to build a community of evaluation scholars and practitioners who together contribute to expanding the democratic potential of the field. I encourage everyone to share their thoughts about the journal, including ideas for future special volumes or special thematic sections.

As I read through the articles, practice notes and the book review in this volume, I am reminded that no matter how diverse the field of evaluation, no matter the theories we use or the technical expertise we feel is needed, we all aspire to a more meaningful application of our work in the world. Dave Guyadeen, Daniel Henstra and Hanna Holman bring their analysis to evaluator competencies, noting that despite the varied skills and competencies identified in the literature by the Canadian Evaluation Society, employers continue to show a strong preference for technical skills. Francois Royer (French article) builds on our understanding of evaluator competencies necessary to ensure that evaluation capacity building is occurring. As a counterbalance, Gretchen Leuthaty and Gerard Prinsen use an

Indigenous perspective to demonstrate the importance of trust in cross cultural relationships. Sarah Heath brings focus to youth engagement in empowerment evaluation and the factors that might facilitate or hinder their involvement.

The four practice notes in this volume shed light on key aspects of practice. Nicole Augustine and I describe a challenging evaluation context involving an equity-focused community coalition, where the complexity of the problem far outweighed the resources available. Michelle Anderson-Draper looks at use through a policy evaluation framework that she developed. Renger and colleagues engage in a reflection on the need to report and track milestones in evaluation. Hans Ferronato and colleagues focus on the centrality of relationships and the value of listening as an essential practice in evaluation, particularly in Indigenous contexts. We also have two book reviews, one by Kenza Bennani on photovoice for social justice and the other by Elizabeth Snow on essential skills for qualitative researchers. These contributions all provide insight into the many varied aspects of evaluation practice that are often overlooked in our work. A huge thank you to all of the authors for their excellent contributions and for challenging our thinking about evaluation theory and practice. Please reach out to share your ideas, thoughts and evaluation inspirations with me and with the other members of the Editorial Team. Our collective effort can make a difference to the field and to the many communities in which we work.

Jill A. Chouinard
Editor-in-Chief, *CJPE*