

The President's Budget for fiscal year 2024 demonstrates the Administration's commitment to evidence and evaluation priorities with new and sustained investments necessary for agencies to establish and staff the evaluation function, plan and execute evidence-building activities that employ high-quality evaluation methods, and deliver on evidence-based policymaking. The Budget makes targeted investments to support these activities and for agencies to build in evaluation planning and execution from the start as they implement new and existing programs, policies, and operations. [Chapter 12 of the Analytical Perspectives volume](#) highlights how the President's Budget will:

BUILD CAPACITY FOR AN EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNMENT

- **Advance a newly established evaluation function at agencies.** The Budget includes funding for an additional FTE to further enhance OPM's capacity to build evidence around the federal workforce and personnel policies. OPM now has a full-time Evaluation Officer and two full-time FTE supporting evaluation across the agency.
- **Elevate the evaluation function where needed.** The Budget includes two full-time evaluation specialized positions at NASA in order to have dedicated evaluation staff with expertise to support high quality, enterprise-wide program evaluation planning and execution. The Budget includes an investment in dedicated staff to support the Evaluation Officer at SSA, and includes modest investments to advance professional development opportunities for DOL's and SSA's research and evaluation staff.
- **Fill critical gaps in the evaluation function.** At EPA, the Budget includes an additional \$6 million and 5 FTE above the base request for evaluation work to support the duties of the Evaluation Officer in implementing Title I of the Evidence Act. The Budget also supports much-needed investments at the Department of the Interior, including funding for three qualified program evaluators and \$4.5M for an independent program evaluation fund. At the Department of Treasury, the Budget also provides new FTE to increase capacity to support the Evaluation Officer, as well as funding for new data and evaluation staff at the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, the Bureau of Fiscal Service, and the CDFI Fund.
- **Advance evaluation capacity to inform homeland security priorities.** For DHS, the Budget includes program evaluation specialists to support the DHS enterprise-wide evaluation function, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, and the preparedness and response program areas at FEMA.
- **Invest in qualified evaluators.** The Budget ensures all major agencies have at least some dedicated staff that have specialized evaluation experience to support the Evaluation Officer. To meet this need, the Budget includes new evaluator positions to support the Evaluation Officer at the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, and Veterans Affairs as well as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
- **Invest in Evaluation Officer leadership.** The Budget underscores that agencies should fill vacancies in Evaluation Officer leadership positions and reiterates OMB Memorandum M-21-27's expectation that agencies fill the role of Evaluation Officer with someone who brings superior skills and demonstrated expertise, and who has the time and resources needed to lead and execute the Learning Agenda and evaluation activities across their agency.

- **Sustain or enhance long-standing evaluation functions.** The Budget sustains or enhances funding for evaluation offices or units that pre-date the Evidence Act, including for evaluation personnel and/or evaluation activities at the Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences; several parts of the Department of Health and Human Services, including the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research; the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service; the Department of Labor's Chief Evaluation Office; the General Services Administration's Office of Evaluation Sciences; the Millennium Challenge Corporation; and AmeriCorps.

ADVANCE EVIDENCE-BUILDING THROUGHOUT AGENCIES

- **Invest in agencies' capacity to execute their Learning Agenda and Annual Evaluation Plans.** The Budget includes significant support for HUD's research, evaluation, and demonstration activities. The Budget continues investments at USAID for implementation of Title I of the Evidence Act and associated evidence-building activities, including evaluation. The Budget includes an investment at SSA to conduct an evaluation of the agency's outreach efforts with individuals potentially eligible for benefits, and further builds on the 2023 proposal for a cross-agency Equity in Procurement evaluation at the Small Business Administration by providing \$1.25 million for this project.
- **Accelerate capabilities to evaluate programs in order to serve our veterans effectively and to build more evidence where it is critically needed.** The President's Budget includes a direct investment to build the capacity within the Veterans Benefits Administration to build and use evidence, including program evaluation, to ensure that VBA is effectively delivering benefits to our Nation's veterans. The Budget also includes substantial investment in VA's Office of Enterprise Integration to further VA's commitment to building and using evidence across the Department.
- **Use a variety of funding sources available across an agency for evaluation.** The Budget continues to allow the Department of Education to set aside funding for evaluations of higher education programs. This pooled evaluation authority, first provided in fiscal year 2022, would continue to permit ED to expand its ability to evaluate higher education programs, analogous to the evaluation set-aside in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for K-12.
- **Continue and expand essential authorities for evaluating Federal programs.** The Budget maintains the authority for DOL to set aside up to 0.75 percent of appropriations so that there may be sufficient funds for conducting significant and rigorous evaluations. The Budget also provides DOL's Chief Evaluation Office and Bureau of Labor Statistics and HHS's ASPE and OPRE the ability to use funds over a greater period of time to support strategic, long-term, and flexible evaluation planning and statistical purposes.

ACT ON AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

- **Expand evidence-based home visiting and continue to build evidence for vulnerable groups.** The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program provides funding for States, territories, and Tribal entities to implement evidence-based home visiting programs. MIECHV includes funding for evaluation to continue building the evidence base. MIECHV is a

critical program serving expectant and new parents with children up to kindergarten age who live in communities at higher risk for poor maternal and child health outcomes.

- **Incentivize evidence-based postsecondary grants.** The Budget includes \$165 million at the Department of Education to expand an existing postsecondary retention and completion grants program that provides competitive grants to States, Tribal colleges and universities, and institutions of higher education to implement or expand evidence-based, statewide, and institutional level retention and completion reforms that improve student outcomes, including retention and completion rates, transfers from 2- to 4-year institutions, and employment outcomes. The requested increase would more than triple the number of grantees and would strengthen evaluation of the projects by executing the program as a tiered-evidence competition, under which interventions with a higher level of evidence could be scaled up with larger grants.
- **Increase investments in evidence-based job training and reemployment strategies.** The Budget includes \$335 million for DOL to expand investments in Registered Apprenticeship programs that have been shown to improve employment outcomes and will provide greater opportunities for women to enter Registered Apprenticeship and nontraditional occupations. In addition, the Budget includes \$550 million for Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA). By law, States are required to use no less than 25 percent of RESEA funds for interventions or service delivery strategies with strong causal evidence showing a demonstrated capacity to improve employment and earnings outcomes for program participants.

PROVIDE GOVERNMENT-WIDE STRATEGIES FOR EVALUTION

- **Institutionalize cross-cutting staffing solutions.** Even when agencies have open positions for evaluation experts, they face many barriers to hiring qualified staff. OMB and OPM continue to explore options for accelerating hiring through processes such as Subject Matter Expert Qualification Assessment and central hiring actions.
- **Launch the Program Evaluation Fellowship.** The Budget establishes a \$1 million cross-governmental Program Evaluation Fellowship Program to be housed at the Administration for Children and Families at HHS. The Fellowship would place specialized evaluation experts at agencies that need support to accelerate implementation of the evaluation function.
- **Recruit skilled evaluators into public service.** The Administration also supports efforts by the Evaluation Officer Council for a Program Evaluation Corps to recruit program evaluators into the civil service and place them in agencies that lack sufficient evaluation capacity.

###