

Resource E Making evaluation designs proportional

Influences and considerations in different evaluation circumstances

Making 'proportional' choices in evaluation design will involve balancing the nature and context of the intervention with decision-making needs.

Influence or context	Considerations in evaluation choices
High-profile interventions	High-profile responsible gambling interventions may be expected to have a transformative or high impact. They are likely to require thorough and probably large-scale evaluation evidence, conducted independently, to build a sufficient evidence base to demonstrate effectiveness, value and sustainability and transferability (to other contexts).
High level of innovation in intervention	Highly innovative interventions, even at pilot scale, are likely to require very high standards of evidence robustness (analysis and demonstrable validity) to show how well they are working in practice, their impacts and the scale of returns/added-value. High innovation may also be high risk (for the funder or implementers) which will place added demands on the transparency of the evaluation and how it is conducted and reported.
Short duration of intervention (or required evaluation)	Fast turn-around and intensive interventions provide more limited opportunities for data capture, comparison analysis over time or for longitudinal review. This will need to be reflected in the scale and depth of the evidence collection and review. Interventions which only have the need for an evaluation added part the way through will also have constraints on design, and the likely reliability of evidence.
Large-scale or complex interventions	Larger-scale responsible gambling interventions are those with substantial investment which will probably require a more extensive and engaged evaluation to demonstrate the money is well spent. They also provide opportunities for formative designs or longitudinal analysis and comparisons which need to be exploited if the evaluation is to optimise its usefulness.
Small-scale or pilot/trial interventions	Pilot, trial or other small-scale interventions will have proportionality influenced more by the evidence needs and requirement for fairly immediate decision-making to inform repetition, scale-up or roll out.
Need for wide generalisability of evidence from the interventions	Specific interventions may also be looked to for wider lessons or transferability; an extensive evidence base may be needed to ensure that the results can be generalised with greater confidence.

<p>High level of complexity of interventions (e.g. multiple inter-related activities)</p>	<p>Multi-faceted interventions (e.g., multiple activities) or those addressing a variety of 'needs' or user/beneficiary circumstances mean effectiveness or effects may be more difficult to isolate. Complexity means proportionate approaches are more likely to need to be extensive and sensitive to different user, social or geographical groups or application contexts.</p>
<p>Weak (no) pre-existing evidence base for interventions</p>	<p>Where the existing evidence base is poor, baselines are lacking or comparative evidence is thin, an evaluation is likely to require more extensive evidence-gathering to fill these gaps and to retro-fit 'benchmarks' to contrast how well the intervention performs.</p>