# Annex 2: Abstract submission template (to be uploaded to the submission portal)

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| Title of the abstract | Rethinking and Reshaping Evaluation Criteria: Lessons in Inclusion, Contexts and Culture from the Pacific Islands |
| Conference session  | □ Stream A. Responsive National Evaluation Systems xxx Stream B. Inclusive National Evaluation Systems□ Stream C. Future Driven Systems and Approaches  |
| Name(s), title(s) and institutional affiliation(s) of all other authors/contributors (if applicable) | Sanjeev SridharanProfessor of Health Policy EvaluationUniversity of Hawai’I at Manoa |
| Preferred format:  | xx Formal presentation (maximum 10 minutes)xx□ Participation in a panel discussion where the experience can be shared□ Participation in an interactive session where the example can be shared, without a formal presentation□ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  |
| I will need to apply for bursary support, if selected. | xx□ Yes□ No |
| Language to be used for presentation | □xx English □ French □ Spanish □ Chinese |

**Abstract Text (max. 500 words)**

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| Building on Patton's (2021) call for a more transformative evaluation approach, we raise reflective questions on the relationships between evaluation criteria and local contexts by learning from evaluations conducted in the Pacific Islands. We seek to surface ideas from evaluations conducted in the Pacific Islands that might help shape an agenda for future discussions on learning from evaluation criteria at the system-level. Key areas of focus of the presentation include: 1. the need to define system-level capacities and how they can be sustained,
2. the importance of clarifying models of system-level learning in a congested project landscape,
3. the need for criteria for transformation, and the need to help organizations develop differentiated strategies.

The presentation raises questions to help plan and evaluate interventions and systems to promote contextually-sensitive practice and connect this to evaluation criteria. Evaluation as a field has not always been sensitive to the heterogeneities of cultures and contexts; it has often preferred to focus on ‘best practices’ and universal truths, rather than on contextually-situated insights. There is a need for evaluation as a field to more seriously incorporate an understanding of contexts in valuing frameworks. The OECD DAC criteria were refined in 2019 with a sixth criterion added – namely, coherence. While such criteria have undoubtedly served as a reference, it is less clear whether they have served the learning needs of communities across contexts and geographies (Ofir, 2017). We are interested in learning from evaluation reports from the Pacific Islands about the types of issues that can help us better understand the local context of the programming initiatives (and the connections of local context to evaluation criteria). We review evaluations conducted in multiple Pacific Islands to explore what we can learn about invigorating dialogue around criteria. *Our view is that OECD DAC framework should be seen as a useful but incomplete framework of valuing. We need to embrace opportunities to learn from other cultures and broaden our views of valuing.* As an example of our ongoing work to consider ideas from another culture, we will also discuss concepts from Hawaiian epistemology that will describe other approaches to valuing that are more inclusive and more explicitly address challenges of varieties of discrimination including gender, disability etc. These concepts can be useful to keep evaluations accountable to communities. As an example of the rich language that is possible, consider the concept of *ho’oponopono*. This concept can help explore if the evaluation process contributes to the overall wellbeing and harmony of the community. Many other concepts from indigenous Hawai’ian epistemology will also be discussed Important questions raised nclude: *What is evaluation’s role to address the dire prognosis for islands like Palau? How can thinking about evaluation criteria help shine a light on the capacities of multiple scales needed for systems to address problems like climate change? Can criteria help shed light on the intersections of problems of health and climate? Further, how can criteria help disrupt mutually reinforcing processes between climate change and worsening health?*  |