

Choosing SEEC as Your Evaluator

Why Choose SEEC

With a focus solely on STEM education, SEEC's evaluation work builds on TERC's extensive experience developing and researching innovative curriculum, technologies, and professional development programs. Our work is on the cutting edge of disciplinary, curricular, instructional, and methodological practices in STEM education.

Various Roles: SEEC's evaluation work is tailored to meet your specific needs at any project stage:

- Conducting front-end evaluation to assess the interests and preferences of future learners, or to identify potential obstacles to address in a project
- Providing formative feedback about an innovation as it is being developed or implemented
- Offering oversight for complex projects through process evaluation
- Assessing the impact of a finished (or nearly finished) product or intervention through summative evaluation

Project Support: Throughout a project, we can help you clarify the logic model for your innovation: identifying its core components, and key intended outcomes, goals, and strategies. Once these are clarified, we can develop rigorous and creative ways to gather information to assess them.

Multiple Methods: We use a range of methods in our work including rich, qualitative descriptions of program activities and outcomes, as well as varied quantitative analyses. When appropriate, we also develop and implement experimental and quasi-experimental designs to test impact. Data might come from observations, individual and group interviews, surveys, logs and journals, artifacts, tests and assessments, automatically generated log files or transcripts of online interactions, and existing records and documents.

"Critical Friends": SEEC Evaluators all have experience working in STEM education. As a result, we can serve as "critical friends" to our clients: we provide thoughtful and relevant feedback based on our own expertise, while maintaining enough distance to identify assumptions and perspectives that might interfere with a rigorous evaluation. We listen carefully to clients, helping them think creatively and offering alternative views, to encourage a generative and collaborative relationship. Our evaluators often work in teams, adding availability and a diversity of perspectives to our work.

Send an email to [SEEC](#) explaining your situation and how best to reach you. If available, attach your Letter of Intent or a short project summary. We will be in touch with you to gather more information about your project's goals, budget for evaluation, and timeline. All this will inform a discussion about whether or not the SEEC is a good match for your project.

In addition to wanting background information about the project itself, we're likely to ask you questions like:

- What are the intended goals and outcomes of the project? What do you want to learn about the project during each phase?
- What kind of evaluator role do you have in mind for SEEC? Design consultant? Needs assessment? Process or research oversight? Formative? Summative?
- What's the timeline for the project? When would SEEC be involved?
- What's the timeline for proposal submission?
- What budget do you have for evaluation?

There are general guidelines, but the ultimate cost for SEEC's evaluation will depend on the nature and scope of the work proposed for us. The biggest determining factor may be the type of evaluation:

- An external summative evaluation of a project's impact requires some work all along to develop and test appropriate methods and instruments, and a lot of work towards the end of a project to conduct the evaluation. This will typically cost 8-15% of the total project budget.
- Process evaluations and more advisory roles may be less expensive, costing less than 10% of the total budget.
- Large scale evaluation research, or projects in which impact evaluation is one of the primary goals, can require half or more of the budget.

Beyond that, the ultimate cost will be affected by numbers of participants, types of data and analyses, extent of measure and instrument development required, amount of travel, and other factors. SEEC evaluation budgets typically include costs for travel and stipends for evaluation participants as appropriate, as well as our own indirect overhead costs. SEEC Evaluators will work with you to develop a scope for our evaluation work that matches your needs and budget. Generally, we will *not* charge you for the cost of our time in developing the proposal with you.

"TERC Evaluators are timely, well organized and thorough. The quarterly and annual report documentation provided by TERC has been invaluable to the program's development and improvement. The quality of documentation and care in analysis are hallmarks of the work provided by TERC. Not only have they evaluated our program in depth and with great integrity they also have assisted us in growing and clarifying our mission and direction. They are astute listeners and careful advisors. I recommend them with full confidence."

—Robert Ross, BioTeach Program
Director

It depends on your proposal, and particularly on the role of the evaluator in developing your research plan. If your project is very well-defined and the role you have in mind for your evaluator is already clearly articulated, it may take as little as a week after our phone conversation (though we prefer more lead time if possible.)

On the other hand, we may find places where your project plan is less clear than you thought, or aspects of your research that would be very difficult, invasive, or expensive to evaluate as the proposal is currently written. In those cases, we may have suggestions for changes to your project model that would make the project clearer, and the evaluation more easily or inexpensively quantifiable. This would likely involve a few additional weeks of discussion and correspondence.

If you're interested in having SEEC evaluators co-develop the research plan, you might start a conversation with us before you've even drafted a proposal. Depending on the complexity of the project, this might begin a few months or more before the proposal is due.

See [Projects](#) for examples.