Checklist for EAAT Organization Research Readiness

An honest assessment of organizational capacity is essential prior to being successful on the research journey. This assessment should be a collaborative effort between the executive leadership, key personnel (potentially including key volunteers) and the board of directors. An additional assessment tool is one on stages in the nonprofit lifecycle.

I.   EAAT Center Capacity

A.   Mission/ Strategic Plan, By-Laws

1.   Governance and guidance documents do not preclude/prevent research and potentially support the Organization's participation in Research

YES   NO   UNSURE

B.   Culture

1.   The Organization supports implementing evidence-based best practices and embraces being a "Learning Organization". A learning organization is an organization skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights (Harvard Business Review, Garvin, D. July-August 1993)

YES   NO   UNSURE

   a)   The first piece is acquiring evidence-based knowledge
   b)   Second Piece is making modifications based on new knowledge

2.   A history of successful collaborations with other organizations

YES   NO   UNSURE

C.   Standards

1.   Organizational policies and procedures comply with a set of standards

YES   NO   UNSURE

2.   Policies, procedures that comply with Federal Government regulations, if federal grant funds will be used (includes personnel policies)

YES   NO   UNSURE

II.   Infrastructure

A.   Executive Leadership

1.   The executive director and program coordinator must agree to incorporate research projects, as well as the other key staff members (staff "buy-in")

YES   NO   UNSURE

2.   Key staff members must have the time and knowledge of proper research practices and be committed to the project

YES   NO   UNSURE

   a)   If staff are close to "burn-out" or are already overwhelmed, now is not the time

   b)   Executive staff have sufficient literacy in research methods and terms

       (1)   Prior experience/education

       (2)   On-line or community classes are good options

B.   Financial Management

1.   Restricted funds are kept separate and accurate financial records following Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAP) are used by Organization

YES   NO   UNSURE

2.   Project based accounting practices are in place

YES   NO   UNSURE

3.   Organization accurately collects in-kind donation information (including volunteer time), and can do so specifically for any project

YES   NO   UNSURE

C.   Communications

1.   Clear and consistent communication with staff, volunteers and participants

YES   NO   UNSURE

a)   What can and should be said about the research may be governed by the researchers

2.   Clear and consistent communication with funders, donors and other key stakeholders

YES   NO   UNSURE

III.   Organization has Sufficient Resources

A.   Staff Time

1. How many staff, how many hours, will the project need?
    a.   A needs analysis of staff time has been completed prior to engaging in research

YES   NO   UNSURE

B.   Staff Skills

1.   Current staff have the credentials, knowledge, skills, and experience to provide services in a research project

YES   NO   UNSURE

a)   Not for newly credentialed professionals, unless that is the research focus

C.   Equines

1.   Enough capacity in the current herd to meet research obligations, even if a horse becomes unsuitable

YES   NO   UNSURE

D.   Volunteers/time

1.   Organization has a sufficient number of volunteers and volunteer hours to meet Program Needs

YES   NO   UNSURE

E.   Financial Resources

1.   Sufficient unrestricted funds to address unfunded research associated expenses are available

YES   NO   UNSURE

2.   Not all expenses will be supported by research funding

3.   Sufficient "up front funds" exist if research funding is paid at mid and/or final points are available

YES   NO   UNSURE

F.   Facility Capacity

1.   Programs/services can be delivered in inclement weather, if needed

YES   NO   UNSURE

2.   Meeting space (not necessarily on-site) exists

YES   NO   UNSURE

3.   Secure data storage (including electronic security) is in place

YES   NO   UNSURE

G. **Program Evaluation Experience**

1.   Organization has conducted a Program Evaluation (experience with objectively looking at the impacts of services is a great step towards research)

YES   NO   UNSURE

1.   Organization has Experience with Creating and Implementing a Logic Model

YES   NO   UNSURE

H. **Additional Questions**
1. What project/s will you have to delay or give up by doing this one?
2. Will the research findings be relevant to your Organization and Services?

    YES   NO   UNSURE

3. If you answered "Yes" to the above question; what will you do with the results in terms of improving effectiveness and/or efficiency?
4. Does the Researcher have the credentials to conduct research?

    YES   NO   UNSURE

5. Is the Researcher affiliated with a college or university?

    YES   NO   UNSURE

6. Is the Researcher/university assisting with or providing funding for this project?

    YES   NO   UNSURE

7. How will this project be funded?
8. Will the Researcher submit the findings to a peer-reviewed academic journal?

    YES   NO   UNSURE

9. Is your Organization "ok" if the findings are: a) inconclusive, b) show that there are no positive outcomes?

    YES   NO   UNSURE

10. Will the Researcher provide a "lay" article you can share with participants, donors, and other EAAT Centers?

YES   NO   UNSURE

   a. Research publications are often not owned by the researcher, but instead by the publisher, and cannot be reprinted without permission or a fee. Make sure that the Organization has enough information, in terms of hand-outs, a lay-article, and/or a community presentation on the findings to make it useful to the Organization, and the EAAT industry.

Notes