

IOCE EvalPartners profile survey of Voluntary Organizations of Professional Evaluators (VOPEs)

I. Basic profile information

1. Name and acronym of organization (VOPE)	DeGEval - Gesellschaft für Evaluation e.V.
2. Geographic scope of organization	National (Germany and Austria)
3. Contact Details	Name of main contact person: Haydée de Rivo E-address: info@degeval.de Postal address: Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz c/o Zentrum für Qualitätssicherung und -entwicklung (ZQ) Forum universitatis 4 D-55099 Mainz Telephone: +49 (0) 6131 / 39-26869 VOPE website URL: www.degeval.de
4. Current membership – numbers of individuals, by their affiliation (if known; please at least give total)	Government: 152 NGOs/CSOs: 88 Academics: n/a Private sector (consultants): 58 Other: 30 Total membership: 722 (577 private members, 145 institutional members) (These numbers do not equal 722, but we have not further information in our database for the missing members.)
5. Year VOPE was founded	1997
6. Current status (identify which)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal network • Charter and bylaws adopted • (Legally recognized by government): registered as an incorporated society
7. Information about growth : evolution of the number of members or financial resources in the last 5 years.	September 2007: 534 members (452 p.m., 6 s.m., 82 i.m.) September 2008: 594 members (489 p.m., 8 s.m., 96 i.m.) September 2009: 633 members (526 p.m., 11 s.m., 107 i.m.) September 2010: 644 members (530 p.m., 11 s.m., 114 i.m.) September 2012: 722 members (577 p.m., 12 s.m., 145 i.m.) p.m.: personal member, s.m: student member, i.m.: institutional member
8. Purpose and mission of VOPE	<p>Both internationally and in German speaking countries evaluation has gained vital importance. Moreover, evaluation activities have been established in very diverse fields such as development policy, schools and higher education, vocational education and training, structural policy, urban and regional development, media, environmental issues, health care, research and technology, administration, business sector, and social services. Hence, over time diverse evaluation approaches and methods have been developed. Whereas only a few decades ago evaluation was limited to assessing programs and their respective effectiveness, today it is intertwined with quality management and organizational development.</p> <p>The significance of this topic and its constant development require a continual dialogue on the theories, models, and methods between professionals involved in evaluation research and teaching, evaluation implementation, and commissioning of evaluation. With the foundation of the DeGEval – Gesellschaft fuer Evaluation in 1997 these developments have been taken into account, building a continuous communication platform for all those involved or interested in evaluation.</p>
9. Current strategy and emphasis	<p>Aims and Areas of Work</p> <p>Professionalization of Evaluation:</p> <p>The growing demand for evaluation offers many opportunities, but also implies certain risks. These are related firstly to evaluation quality and secondly to the professionalism of evaluators and the framework of evaluation. Despite a great interest in evaluation, there is a clear need for information regarding the possibilities and the limitations of evaluation and</p>

	<p>regarding its benefits and costs.</p> <p>Therefore, DeGEval is strongly committed to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to promote binding quality standards for evaluation laid down in the ‘Standards for Evaluation’ and the subsequent ‘Guidelines for Implementation of the Standards in the Field of Self-Evaluation’; • to communicate the importance of qualitatively sophisticated evaluation to evaluation clients, evaluators, and to the evaluated themselves; • to support evaluation clients from regional authorities, public bodies, publicly funded institutions, and churches, foundations and associations, and to contribute to their professionalization via the ‘Guidelines for Evaluation Clients’; • to support high quality training programs according to DeGEval’s ‘Guidelines for Training in Evaluation’; • to make information concerning evaluation publicly available. <p>Aims and Areas of Work</p> <p>Consolidation of Different Perspectives:</p> <p>In order to consolidate differing perspectives, experience and expectations regarding evaluation, DeGEval has set itself the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to promote a dialogue between evaluators both within and beyond singular fields of evaluation, this being an especial achievement of the DeGEval work groups; • to gather together the experience and expectations of clients, evaluation researchers, evaluators, and the evaluated; • to form a network of the providers of training programs in evaluation; • to uphold and expand contacts to the relevant national and international organizations that are active in various fields of evaluation <p>Promotion of Information Flow and Dialogue:</p> <p>The continual differentiation in the field of evaluation demands a constant flow of information and dialogue and a cooperative discourse. The following are some of DeGEval’s contributions to this goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the organization of annual conferences as a platform for critical discussions concerning evaluation approaches, designs, and methods; • its presence in the German Journal of Evaluation (ZfEv) which offers a qualified discussion forum regarding evaluation; • via the column DeGEval...Info within the ZfEv offering information concerning current activities of the DeGEval board and work groups; • via email services (DeGEval...Mail) offering an informative forum that reports on evaluation activities and the need for evaluation in various fields; • support of the mailing list forum-evaluation that allows a continual dialogue regarding evaluation experience and gives the opportunity to discuss questions about the field of evaluation.
<p>10. Organizational capacity: Please describe your governance structure, leadership, services provided, finances, human resources, linkages with other organizations, etc.</p>	<p>The DeGEval – Gesellschaft fuer Evaluation is registered as an incorporated society. In accordance with DeGEval’s aims its board internally has an integrative function and externally represents the society. The board members are elected by the general assembly for a period of two years.</p> <p>In order to meet the specific demands made of evaluation in its diverse fields of application the DeGEval is organized in work groups that are independently directed by respective work group speakers and offer a platform for an intensive field-specific dialogue. The work groups play a decisive role in the organization of DeGEval’s annual conferences.</p> <p>The work groups’ activities are supplemented by ad-hoc-groups which</p>

	<p>address topical matters from the field of evaluation.</p> <p>DeGEval's administrative office acts as contact person for DeGEval members and work groups as well as for anyone interested in the activities of the DeGEval.</p> <p>Information concerning the work groups and the current board members can be found on the DeGEval homepage (www.degeval.de).</p>
<p>11.Means of communication with members, e.g. newsletter, listserv, publication, website</p>	<p>DeGEval members are recruited from renowned economic and social scientific research institutes, institutes of higher education, consulting and political consulting agencies, ministries, administration departments, and federal research institutes. All the relevant disciplines and professions are represented and the number of members is increasing continually (for the current status see www.degeval.de).</p> <p>The DeGEval differentiates between two types of membership: institutional and private membership.</p> <p>DeGEval members benefit from the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they receive the twice yearly released Journal for Evaluation (Zeitschrift fuer Evaluation – ZfEv) free of charge containing peer-reviewed original articles, a variety of information, and the DeGEval...Info; • they receive the booklets edited by DeGEval free of charge; • they receive regularly the DeGEval...Mail that informs on current developments in the world of evaluation; • they gain access to the protected internal area of the DeGEval web server containing various information about all areas of evaluation and a commented register of members; • in the internal area they can view current job offers, tenders for evaluation, and training programs; • they can participate in DeGEval activities at a discounted rate and so have easy access to opportunities of further training and networking; for institutional members the discount applies for up to five people; • in sum, DeGEval membership offers the opportunity to play an active role in the development of DeGEval and, hence, in the future of evaluation in German speaking countries.
<p>12.Past events (e.g. during past year)</p>	<p>14th Annual Conference in Linz, Austria, in 2011. The conference focused on advantages and limitations of participatory evaluation.</p> <p>15th Annual Conference in Potsdam, Germany, September 19th – 21st, 2012. Under the theme “Evaluation – Evidence – Effects” the conference will focus on evidence-based policy.</p>
<p>13.Forthcoming key events/conferences – dates, location</p>	<p>16th Annual Conference in Munich, Germany, September 11th – 13th, 2013 under the theme “Evaluation and Complexity”</p> <p>17th Annual Conference in Zurich, Switzerland, September 10th – 12th, 2014, together with the Swiss Evaluation Society SEVAL</p>
<p>14.Name and e-address of person submitting this information</p>	<p>Dr. Christiane Kerlen and Haydée de Rivo E-address: kerlen@degeval.de, info@degeval.de</p>
<p>15.Date of this update</p>	<p>27.11.2012</p>

II. Experience with Evaluation Capacity Building

<p>1. Background: Please provide a brief history of the formation of this organization (VOPE).</p> <p>1.1 Who were/are the key players?</p> <p>1.2 How many members do you have on your governing board/</p>	<p>1.1</p> <p>1.2 There are five members of the board.</p> <p>1.3 We have a strong community of engaged members (evaluators) that are willing to share their knowledge with persons new in the field to establish standards and assure high quality of evaluations.</p> <p>1.4 We are continuously trying to address “evaluation” as a topic in the public debate. Unfortunately there is almost no recognition of evaluation</p>
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<p>committee? 1.3 What are the main existing strengths that your VOPE is trying to capitalize on? 1.4 What are the main challenges that your VOPE is trying to address?</p>	<p>and its effects in the public media.</p>
<p>2. Organizational motivation: What were/are the driving forces of the VOPE and its historical development?</p>	
<p>3. Evaluation Capacity Building: What has your VOPE done to promote evaluation (M&E) capacity?</p>	<p>Our yearly conferences are an important platform for learning and capacity building. There are always pre-conference workshops addressing different levels of evaluation expertise. Next to the information sharing activities (newsletters, journal, website, etc, see above), we have published several documents that are directed at capacity building and quality improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to promote binding quality standards for evaluation laid down in the 'Standards for Evaluation' and the subsequent 'Guidelines for Implementation of the Standards in the Field of Self-Evaluation'; ▪ to support evaluation clients from regional authorities, public bodies, publicly funded institutions, and churches, foundations and associations, and to contribute to their professionalization via the 'Guidelines for Evaluation Clients'; ▪ to support high quality training programs according to DeGEval's 'Guidelines for Training in Evaluation';
<p>4. Context / target entities: More specifically, who are the persons or institutions your organization seeks to influence (to strengthen evaluation capacity)? For example:</p> <p>4.1 Technical capacities to <i>supply</i> quality evaluations, partnering with experts, local universities or others to provide training for members, etc.;</p> <p>4.2 Strengthening VOPE organizational capacity itself;</p> <p>4.3 Enhancing the enabling environment for evaluation, including strengthening the <i>demand</i> for and use of evaluations by policy makers;</p> <p>4.4 Influencing governmental policies related to evaluation, evaluation designs and implementation of M&E systems, etc.</p>	<p>4.1 We are organising pre-conference workshops for evaluators and publish the offers of other training programmes. At the moment one of our groups (Arbeitskreis) is building up an online-database which will include all trainings and other means of capacity building.</p> <p>4.2</p> <p>4.3 Enhancing the enabling environment is a key area of our work: we try to include the perspective of the contracting authority or client in our VOPE by addressing them as members also. We also try to address "evaluation" and its benefits in the general public/media.</p> <p>4.4 Influencing governmental policies extends so far as we try to qualify the acting persons to tender quality evaluations. We are not influencing governmental policies in a way of lobbying certain political worldviews.</p>
<p>5. Public accountability: Is your VOPE helping to strengthen oversight and transparency of government programs? If so, in what ways? Can you share any success stories of evaluators or others promoting public accountability?</p>	
<p>6. More specifically, what are some of the key themes for which you advocate? For example, are you promoting issues related to cultural sensitivity, equity, social justice, empowerment, transformation,</p>	

gender, environment, poverty? If so, please describe or attach relevant documents.	
<p>7. Methods: Experiences in strengthening skills of individual members, by (for example):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organizing workshops led by local experts; • organizing webinars with international speakers; • designing and delivering e-learning programmes; • administering mentoring programmes; etc. 	
<p>8. Standards: Has your VOPE developed professional standards/ ethical codes/ competencies (or adheres to those developed by others)? If so, please provide documentation.</p>	
<p>9. Job opportunities: Do you share employment/ consultancy opportunities with evaluators on your database?</p>	In our newsletter we regularly post job opportunities
<p>10. Progress and results: What progress has been achieved so far in any of the above or other domains? What are expected and unexpected results achieved?</p>	
<p>11. Lessons learned: Recommendations/ tips to others for good practices on how to organize and sustain VOPEs like yours.</p>	
<p>12. Next steps: What does your organization plan to do next?</p>	
<p>13. Willing to share with other VOPEs? For example, would you be interested in forming peer-to-peer partnerships with one or more other VOPEs to share lessons learned, advise each other? If so, describe what you would be willing to share / advice you would seek.</p>	
<p>14. Suggestions: What ideas do you have for what should be included in activities of the EvalPartners Initiative?</p>	
<p>15. Want to be actively involved? Does your VOPE want to be actively involved in EvalPartners? If so, in what ways?</p>	
<p>16. Would you be willing to write up a case study providing more detailed analysis of your VOPE's experiences?</p>	