RESULTS FOR AMERICA

INVEST IN WHAT WORKS FEDERAL INDEX (March 2015)

Better Results for Young People, Their Families, and Communities

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	U.S. Department of Education	U.S. Department of Labor	U.S. Agency for International Development	Administration for Children and Families (HHS)	Corporation for National and Community Service	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
TOTAL SCORE (5 Possible Points Per Criteria)	**28 OUT OF 35**	**30 OUT OF 35**	**30 OUT OF 35**	**25 OUT OF 35**	**25 OUT OF 35**	**22 OUT OF 35**
Evaluation Office / Senior Evaluation Officer: Did the department / agency have an office for research, development, dissemination, and evaluation and a senior staff member with the authority and budget to evaluate its major programs in FY15?[1]	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)
Data: Did the department / agency have an office that made updated, accessible, and user-friendly data related to its core missions publicly available in FY15?[2]	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)
What Works Clearinghouse: Did the department / agency gather and make publicly available scientific evidence-based standards of what works in the field in FY15?[3]	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (4 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (4 points)
Common Evidence Framework: Did the department / agency use a common evidence framework in FY15 to inform its funding decisions and to communicate its standards for research and evaluation methods to potential grantees?[4]	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	YES (5 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 points)
1% of Program Funds for Evaluations: Did the department / agency invest at least 1% of program funds in evaluations and make the results of those evaluations public in FY15?[5]	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (3 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (4 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (3 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (3 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (2 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (2 points)
Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Competitive Grant Programs: Did the department / agency allocate funds from its five largest competitive grant programs based on demonstrated evidence of success in FY15?[6]	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (2 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (4 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (4 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL ACTION (3 points)
Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Non-Competitive Grant Programs: Did the department / agency allocate funds from its 5 largest non-competitive grant programs based on demonstrated evidence of success in FY15?[7]	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESIONAL ACTION (2 point)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (4 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (3 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESIONAL ACTION (2 point)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (3 points)	NEEDS DEPARTMENTAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTION (0 points)

* These scores are based on information provided by the 6 federal departments and agencies included in this index. This information can be found at http://results4america.org/policy/invest-in-what-works-indexes/

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. <u>Evaluation Office / Senior Evaluation Officer</u>: Did the department / agency have an office for research, development, dissemination, and evaluation and a senior staff member with the authority and budget to evaluate its major programs in FY15?	<u>ED</u>: The U.S. Department of Education's Evidence Planning Group (EPG), which is comprised of cross-agency representatives from the Institute of Education Sciences, the Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII), and the Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development (OPEPD), work together to identify and invest in high quality, coordinated evidence-building activities that are aligned with Department priorities. Both IES' National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (<u>NCEE</u>) ($81.4 million in FY15) and the Policy and Program Studies Service (<u>PPSS</u>) in OPEPD carry out and disseminate results from the Department's program evaluations, which include both quicker-term, descriptive evaluations (PPSS) as well as longer-term impact <u>evaluations</u> (NCEE). Sample program evaluations funded in FY15 include PPSS' implementation evaluations of the ESEA Title I, Part D Neglected and Delinquent program and ESEA Title I, Part A school-wide models as well as NCEE evaluations of teacher and leader evaluation systems, Race to the Top, School Improvement Grants, the Teacher Incentive Fund, and Title I and Title II.
	<u>DOL</u>: The U.S. Department of Labor's Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) received $8.4 million directly through the FY15 Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act. CEO is estimating that it will oversee an additional $25 million in evaluations in FY15 provided through the Secretary's evaluation set-aside authority described below. Another $10 million is being allocated in FY15 to evaluate Employment and Training Administration (ETA) pilots, demonstrations and research and evaluations of large grant programs, including the Performance Partnership Pilots (P3), National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Job ChalleNGe program, American Apprenticeship Initiative, the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant Program, and the Workforce Innovation Fund. In addition, $3-5 million is being allocated in FY15 to evaluate worker protection programs in other DOL agencies, including the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Wage and Hour Administration, the Employment Benefits Services Administration, Veterans Employment and Training Services, and the Office of Disability Employment Policy. The U.S Department of Labor's multi-year RCT evaluation of the Workforce Investment Act (the WIA Gold Standard Evaluation) will be completed in 2016. Other RCT evaluations continuing or expanding in FY15 are the Youthbuild Evaluation which will be completed in 2017 and two rounds of Reentry Programs for Ex-Offenders Evaluations. Initial results from the Youth Opportunity Pilot Project, which is testing innovative strategies for disconnected youth using RCT concept testing and designing a full demonstration based on the evidence results, will be available in 2015.
	<u>USAID</u>: Established in 2010, the U.S. Agency for International Development's Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning's (PPL) Office of Learning, Evaluation and Research (PPL/LER) provides guidance, tools and technical assistance to USAID staff and partners to support monitoring, evaluation and learning practices. The office collaborates within the PPL bureau and across USAID to support the implementation of the program cycle (strategic planning, project design and implementation, monitoring, evaluation and learning) as part of the discipline of development. LER works with others in PPL and throughout USAID to develop and share guidance and tools related to monitoring, evaluation and learning. These can be found at <u>usaidlearninglab.org</u> (link is external) (available to staff and partners). LER holds several contracts that USAID missions and offices can use for building staff capacity in monitoring, evaluation and learning, and for commissioning evaluations and monitoring services directly. The U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research Director's budget is approximately $17.5 million in FY15.
	<u>ACF</u>: The Administration for Children and Families' (HHS) <u>Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation Director's budget</u> (OPRE) is $100 million in FY15. In 2014, OPRE released 88 publications related to <u>child welfare</u>, <u>child care</u>, <u>Head Start</u>, <u>Early Head Start</u>, <u>strengthening families</u>, <u>teen pregnancy prevention and youth development</u>, <u>home visiting</u>, <u>self-sufficiency, welfare and employment</u>. Examples of recent publications include findings from <u>Head Start CARES</u>, an evaluation of three approaches to promoting socio-emotional development in Head Start; an evaluation of a low-cost, behaviorally informed approach to helping incarcerated parents apply for child support order modifications as part of the <u>BIAS project</u>; multiple reports from the first nationally representative <u>study of early care and education</u> in over 20 years; <u>early findings</u> on the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting program; and <u>a report on challenges and opportunities</u> in using administrative data for evaluation.

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
1. <u>Evaluation Office / Senior Evaluation Officer</u>: Did the department / agency have an office for research, development, dissemination, and evaluation and a senior staff member with the authority and budget to evaluate its major programs in FY15?	<u>CNCS</u>: The Corporation for National and Community Service's <u>Office of Research and Evaluation Director's Budget</u> is $5 million in FY15. ORE conducts and supports extensive social science research designed to measure the impact of CNCS programs and shape policy decisions; encourage a culture of performance and accountability in national and community service programs; provide information on volunteering, civic engagement, and volunteer management in nonprofit organizations; and assist in the development and assessment of new initiatives and demonstration projects. <u>HUD</u>: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's <u>Office of Policy Development & Research</u> (PD&R) ($94.7 million in FY15) informs HUD's policy development and implementation by conducting, supporting, and sharing research, surveys, demonstrations, program evaluations, and best practices. This mission is achieved through three interrelated core functions: (1) collect and analyze national housing market data (including with the Census Bureau); (2) conduct research, program evaluations, and demonstrations; and (3) provide policy advice and support to the HUD Secretary and program offices. Established in 1973, PD&R is led by an <u>Assistant Secretary</u> and comprises <u>six offices and initiatives</u>, including a team of <u>field economists</u> that work in the 10 HUD regional offices across the country.

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
2. Data: Did the department / agency have an office that made updated, accessible, and user-friendly data related to its core missions publicly available in FY15?	**ED:** The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics ($266.6 million in FY15) serves as the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and other nations. With the 2014 addition of EDFacts to NCES, almost all of ED's K-12 statistical and programmatic data collections are now administered by NCES. NCES also collects administrative institutional data and statistical sample survey data for postsecondary education and collaborates with the Federal Student Aid Office (FSA) to include their programmatic data in the sample survey data sets. These data are also made available to the public through the ED Data Inventory and all NCES data products and results from national and international assessments and longitudinal studies are available online. In addition, the Department's Office for Civil Rights' Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) data tables and reports are available online. **DOL:** The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics ($592 million in FY15) serves as the principal Federal agency responsible for measuring labor market activity, working conditions, and price changes in the economy. **USAID:** All U.S. Agency for International Development's evaluation reports are available to the public through USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse, which includes technical and program documentation from more than 50 years of USAID's existence, with more than 155,000 documents available for viewing and electronic download. The Foreign Assistance Dashboard provides a view of U.S. Government-wide foreign assistance funds and enables users to examine, research, and track aid investments, including those Administered by USAID, in a standard and easy-to-understand format. USAID publishes its core datasets, as well as program specific data, in API formats. In 2014, USAID also began sharing data files and its open data plan through its new Open Government website. as part of the U.S. Government's open data initiative. **ACF:** The Administration for Children and Families (HHS) makes data for secondary analysis available through Research Connections, the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, healthdata.gov, and the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect. Comprehensive reports describing findings and methods of ACF-sponsored research and evaluation studies are available on the website of the ACF Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, and detailed information on performance measurement for ACF's programs is available in annual performance reports. Research Connections also catalogues and disseminates research and evaluation related to ACF's early childhood programs, while the Self-Sufficiency Research Clearinghouse does the same for topics related to economic well-being. ACF makes extensive data on program services and participants publicly available, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families caseload and spending, adoption and foster care statistics, child welfare spending and outcomes, child care subsidies and characteristics of children in care, and more. **CNCS:** The Corporation for National and Community Service's Office of Research and Evaluation makes publicly available (1) state profiles that depict national service resources (grant funds, members, volunteers, grantees) and program performance metrics across the country and (2) volunteering statistics at the local, state, and national levels collected for CNCS by the U.S. Census Bureau through an interagency agreement.

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
2. <u>Data</u>: Did the department / agency have an office that made updated, accessible, and user-friendly data related to its core missions publicly available in FY15?	<u>HUD</u>: At the core of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy, Development, and Research's (PD&R's) dissemination work is <u>HUDUser.org</u>., a clearinghouse for housing, sustainable communities, and community development research and data. HUD USER, which is updated regularly, is designed for a diverse audience of stakeholders including researchers, policy makers and analysts, practitioners, and the general public. The site is part of a larger HUD USER Clearinghouse effort, which includes a Help Desk, <u>warehousing and fulfillment</u> functions, and outreach to stakeholders. In FY14, 16.9 million files were downloaded from HUD USER and the help desk responded to over 300 inquiries per month on average. HUD USER also <u>provides</u> interested researchers with access to the original data sets generated by PD&R-sponsored data collection efforts, including the <u>American Housing Survey</u>, HUD median family income limits, as well as microdata from research initiatives on topics such as housing discrimination, the HUD-insured multifamily housing stock, and the public housing population. To help users identify which data are useful to them, two reference guides are provided — one for <u>PD&R data sets</u> and a second that lists <u>other available data</u> from HUD. In these reference guides, each data set is rated by its relevance and usefulness for research in designated categories. PD&R has the authority to enter into a <u>Data License Agreement</u> with research organizations for the explicit purpose of conducting innovative research projects that inform HUD's policies and programs. Details on how to obtain a data license are easily accessible via HUD USER and PD&R has a dedicated subject-matter expert available to answer questions for those seeking a license.

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
3. What Works Clearinghouse: Did the department / agency gather and make publicly available scientific evidence-based standards of what works in the field in FY15?	**ED**: The U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse™ (WWC) ($9.3 million in FY15) identifies studies that provide credible and reliable evidence of the effectiveness of a given practice, program, or policy (referred to as "interventions"), and disseminates summary information and reports on the WWC website. The Department's evidence requirements for competitive programs, as outlined in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), build on WWC evidence standards. The WWC has reviewed more than 10,600 studies that are available in a searchable database. To improve communication and dissemination efforts, the WWC has released a series of special features including themed content for Back to School, Early Childhood Instruction, and for tips for College Bound students. New videos were added to the WWC website in FY14 and FY15, including four archived webinars, videos from the Doing What Works project (see here for an example), and a video about how to use WWC resources when choosing a math curriculum. This video is part of a larger enhanced landing page combining relevant WWC materials to help answer the question "What Works in Math." In addition, as a first step in a larger long term effort to provide exportable open data of all study findings, the Find What Works tool was enhanced in FY15 to include filters for study population and region.

DOL: The U.S. Department of Labor's Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research (CLEAR) makes research on labor topics more accessible to practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and the public more broadly so that it can inform their decisions about labor policies and programs. CLEAR became fully operational in 2014 (CLEAR.dol.gov), and it identifies and summarizes many types of research, including descriptive, implementation, and impact studies. In addition, CLEAR assesses the quality of research that looks at the effectiveness of particular policies and programs. Evaluations in seven policy areas are currently included in CLEAR (behavioral finance, career academies, community college, disability employment services, reemployment services, opportunities for youth, and OSHA enforcement). Future topics include employment and training, labor standards compliance assistance, and training for women in STEM. CLEAR publishes its process, as well as its guidelines for reviewing causal, implementation, and descriptive studies. In addition, the Department's Employment and Training Administration's Workforce System Strategies helps improve outcomes for job seekers and employers by identifying potential strategies that are informed by research evidence or peer expertise. Further, the Department's Employment Training Administration's Research Publication Database provides access to research and evaluation reports commissioned by ETA to help guide the workforce investment system.

USAID: The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) provides evidence of "what works" by sector through its technical bureaus. The Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), for example, includes the Center of Excellence on Democracy, Rights, and Governance which publishes evidence based standards for what works in this field. USAID is also a member and provides funding along with other donors for the International Initiative for Impact Evaluations (3ie) which funds impact evaluations and systematic reviews that generate evidence on what works in development programs and why. USAID commissioned two systematic reviews from 3ie in 2012. The results of the first review, which will be completed in July 2015 and considered the question, "What is the effectiveness of a) parental, b) familial, and c) community support for student learning outcomes (e.g. community libraries, parental support of students at home, other forms of community engagement in reading instruction or practice) in developing countries?" will be available here. The results of the second review, which should also be completed in July 2015 and addressed the questions, "What are the predictive factors for youth involvement in gang violence? What is the effectiveness of interventions intended to reduce youth involvement in gang-violence in developing countries?" and will be available here. Both are rigorous reviews of all the impact evaluations around their respective issue areas. USAID has also commissioned gap maps on extreme poverty which examined systematic reviews and impact evaluations to determine where there is strong, weak, or non-existent evidence on the impact of development programs focusing on extreme poverty. The gap maps also link to the existing evidence and rate the quality of existing systematic reviews. They were completed in December 2014 and can be accessed here. |

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
3. What Works Clearinghouse: Did the department / agency gather and make publicly available scientific evidence-based standards of what works in the field in FY15?	**ACF:** The Administration for Children and Families maintains a clearinghouse of evidence reviews of human services interventions, available on the internet for practitioners, policy-makers and the public. These reviews rate the quality of evaluation studies using objective standards vetted by technical experts, applied by trained, independent reviewers, and similar to those used by other agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse and the U.S. Department of Labor's CLEAR. The clearinghouse includes results of the reviews in a searchable format as well as comprehensive details about the review standards and process. Reviews to date have covered teen pregnancy prevention, home visiting, relationship education and responsible fatherhood, including both ACF-sponsored and other studies. ACF expects to begin disseminating results relevant to employment and training for low-income people in late 2015.
	CNCS: In March 2015, ORE released the CNCS Evidence Exchange, a virtual repository of reports intended to help CNCS grantees and other interested stakeholders find information about evidence- and research - based national service and social innovation programs. CNCS has initiated a planning and development phase in FY15 to support this new online repository which builds off of existing structures at the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services. CNCS anticipates at least two phases of development and implementation in FY15: Phase 1 will include a database of single study reports with some additional descriptive information about the study; and Phase 2 will add studies (e.g., as grantees complete their independent evaluations and submit reports to CNCS) and reviews of bodies of evidence (e.g., CNCS is working with a contractor to conduct a systematic search and review of the national service and SIF research).
	HUD: In addition to creating evidence through its research and demonstrations, the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) provides evidence of "what works" primarily through HUD USER, which houses program evaluations, case studies, and policy analysis and research; the Regulatory Barriers Clearinghouse; periodicals such as online magazine *The Edge* which features evidence-based effective practices regularly, *Evidence Matters* and *Cityscape*; and through initiatives such Innovation of the Day, Sustainable Construction Methods in Indian Country, and the Consumer's Guide to Energy-Efficient and Healthy Homes. This content is designed to provide current policy information, elevate effective practices and synthesize data and other evidence in accessible formats. The case studies featured on HUD USER are based on federal, state and local strategies that increase affordable housing opportunities, apply sustainable features and practices, and increase access to public transportation. Through these resources, researchers and practitioners can see the full breadth of work on a given topic – rigorous established evidence, case studies of what's worked in the field, and new innovations currently being explored – to inform their work.

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
4. Common Evidence Framework: Did the department / agency use a common evidence framework in FY15 to inform its funding decisions and to communicate its standards for research and evaluation methods to potential grantees?	**ED:** The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences and the National Science Foundation 2013 joint report describes six types of research studies that can generate evidence about how to increase student learning, which are reflected in the Request for Applications for IES's National Center for Education Research (NCER). NCER also communicates these standards to potential grantees through webinars and funding opportunity presentations that are archived on our website and available to all applicants. Additionally, evidence standards for competitive programs as outlined in EDGAR align to WWC standards, and are used to direct funds to applications that have an evidence-base (as available and appropriate) and/or build evidence through evaluation, increasing the likelihood funds will have an impact and building knowledge about what works.

DOL: The U.S. Department of Labor collaborates with other agencies (HHS, Ed-IES, NSF, CNCS) on refining cross-agency evidence guidelines, developing technological procedures to link and share reviews across clearinghouses. The Interagency Evidence Framework is accepted Department-wide and in 2013 a Department Evaluation Policy Statement was established and announced, formalizing the policy of requiring evaluations in all discretionary grants programs and the evidence principles of rigor, independence, and transparency. In addition, the Chief Evaluation Office publicly communicates the standards and methods expected in all DOL evaluations, and the standards are incorporated into formal procurement statements of work, with scoring for awards based on the standards.

USAID: The U.S. Agency for International Development's Evaluation Policy lists evaluation best practices and criteria for quality reports. USAID's Scientific Integrity Policy provides a foundation for maintaining the integrity of USAID's scientific and scholarly activities. USAID released a new Scientific Research Policy in December 2014. USAID has also released its Policy Framework and Program Cycle that will be updated every 4 years. Feed The Future has an evidence-based framework that informs funding decisions.

ACF: The Administration for Children and Families (HHS) has established an evaluation policy that addresses the principles of rigor, relevance, transparency, independence, and ethics in the conduct of evaluations.

CNCS: The Corporation for National and Community Service's Office of Research and Evaluation has developed a draft evaluation policy which is currently being reviewed by agency leaders. Office of Research and Evaluation leadership and staff are actively involved in the interagency Common Evidence Framework working group described above. CNCS also adapted the evidence framework used by the Social Innovation Fund and included it as part of the AmeriCorps State and National program's FY15 grant competition requirements described below.

HUD: In an effort to be more transparent and inclusive in the research agenda setting process, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development & Research (PD&R) developed the Research Roadmap, a strategic, five-year plan that details priority research for HUD for FY14-FY18. The projects identified and prioritized in the Research Roadmap were generated through a multifaceted, inclusive planning process that included extensive stakeholder engagement. In addition, PD&R is regular engaged with each HUD program office to ensure that metrics and evidence inform program design, budgeting and implementation. HUD also employs its role as convener to help establish frameworks for evidence, metrics and future research. One specific example are Expert Convenings, organized by PD&R, which allow HUD to seek expert input that can help HUD improve policy and manage programs more effectively. Recent convenings have explored the different gender outcomes revealed in the Moving to Opportunity study and the evidence-base for assessment tools utilized to allocate homelessness assistance. |

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
5. 1% of Program Funds for Evaluations: Did the department / agency invest at least 1% of program funds in evaluations and make the results of those evaluations public in FY15?	**ED:** The FY14 and FY15 Omnibus Appropriations Acts include a provision allowing the Secretary to reserve up to 0.5% of ESEA funds - except ESEA Title I funds, ESEA Title III funds, and funds for programs that already have an evaluation provision - for evaluations of ESEA programs without respect to the source of those funds. In FY15, the Department solicited ideas from Department leadership, the National Board for Education Sciences and the public for use of its pooled evaluation funds. FY15 pooled funds will build substantial new evidence about the following programs: ESEA Title I, Part A, the migrant education program, and the Indian Education LEA Grants Program, and will also provide continued support for program evaluations on ESEA Title I, Part A; ESEA Title I, Part D; and ESEA Title III, which began with FY14 pooled funding. The Administration's FY16 budget request seeks authority for the Secretary to be able to set-aside up to 0.5% of all ESEA funds, including 0.5% of ESEA Title III and 0.1% of ESEA Title I, for evaluations (see pages 15 and 65). The Administration's FY16 budget request also seeks authority for the Secretary to be able to set-aside up to 0.5% of higher education, student financial assistance, student aid administration, career and technical and adult education, and rehabilitation services funds for evaluations.
  DOL: The Administration's FY14, FY15, and FY16 budget requests recommended allowing the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor to set-aside up to 1.0% of all operating agencies' budgets for evaluations coordinated by the Chief Evaluation Office. The U.S. Department of Labor's FY12-15 budgets allowed the Secretary to set-aside up to 0.5% of operating funds from operating agencies for departmental evaluations coordinated by the Chief Evaluation Office, in addition to the separate evaluation funds that exist in many DOL agencies. In FY15, an estimated $25 million will be transferred under this authority to CEO for evaluations. The Chief Evaluation Office directly funds evaluations and also combines its own funds with agency funds to jointly sponsor some evaluations (e.g., Employment and Training Administration, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Wage and Hour Division, Office of Federal Contract Compliance, Veterans Employment and Training Program, Office of Disability Employment Programs, Office of Workers Compensation, and the Women's Bureau). In addition to the CEO and transfer funds, many large competitive grants allow up to 10% of grants funding to be devoted to evaluation. For example, three separate rounds of grants (funded by H1-B worker visa fees totaling $450 million in FY14) support training particular populations, such as high school students transitioning to work and college, long-term unemployed workers, and apprenticeship programs. Between 3% and 7% of these grant funds (at least $25 million) was invested in evaluations in FY14.
  USAID: The U.S. Agency for International Development's Evaluation Policy states: "On average, at least 3 percent of the program budget managed by an operating unit should be dedicated to external evaluation." In FY13, USAID missions and offices completed 243 evaluations with resources totaling approximately $39 million, a 22% increase in resources over FY12. This amount is in addition to the Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research Director's budget.
  ACF: In FY15, the Administration for Children and Families (HHS) is planning to spend $100 million on evaluations , representing 0.2% of ACF's $51.6 billion budget in FY15 (in addition to investments in evaluations by ACF grantees). The Administration's FY16 budget request seeks authority for numerous new investments in learning, including evaluation set-asides of up to 1% of the Social Services Block Grant and the Community Services Block Grant programs.
  CNCS: The Serve America Act authorizes the Corporation for National and Community Service to invest up to 5% of funds from its Social Innovation Fund in a range of activities, including evaluation. Up to 1% of funds from Senior Corps programs can also be invested in evaluations. The Social Innovation Fund invested .02% of its funds in evaluations in FY14 ($1,185,000) and Senior Corps invested .04% of its funds in evaluations in FY14 ($760,000). CNCS's AmeriCorps State and National Program also requires organizations receiving a grant of $500,000 or more to conduct independent evaluations every three years. CNCS released the results of a national randomized control trial of one of its largest grantees, Minnesota Reading Corps, in March 2014.

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
5. 1% of Program Funds for Evaluations: Did the department / agency invest at least 1% of program funds in evaluations and make the results of those evaluations public in FY15?	HUD: In FY10, Congress enacted the Transformation Initiative (TI) which made up to 1% of HUD program funds available for: (1) research, evaluation, and program metrics; (2) program demonstrations; (3) technical assistance; and (4) information technology. In FY14, Congress reauthorized TI while directing that not less than $15 million be allocated toward research with the remainder invested in HUD-wide technical assistance. While the Transformation Initiative was not reauthorized in FY15, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development & Research (PD&R) is receiving $72 million through HUD's Research and Technology (R&T) account including a $22 million set-aside for technical assistance.

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
6. Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Competitive Grant Programs: Did the department / agency allocate funds from its largest competitive grant programs based on demonstrated evidence of success in FY15?	**ED**: While FY15 competition decisions are still being made, the U.S. Department of Education's Evidence Planning Group (EPG) seeks to use the highest level of available evidence for the Department's competitive programs, as appropriate, and scale-up use of evidence across programs over time so each program receives sufficient support to use evidence in a meaningful way. Use of evidence in the FY15 competitions have focused on: (1) the Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund ($120 million in FY15), the Department's signature tiered evidence program that provides competitive grants to local school districts and non-profit organizations that have demonstrated positive impacts to innovate, expand, and scale evidence-based activities to improve student achievement; (2) the Student Support Services Program (SSS) within TRIO (approximately $297.5 million in FY15) which will allocate competitive preference priority points for evidence-based counseling activities (SSS provides grants to IHEs to assist low-income and first generation college students in completing postsecondary education); and (3) Grants for the Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Schools (up to $75 million of the $253 million) for grants to non-profit charter management organizations to help them expand student enrollment at charter schools with demonstrated records of success and to open new charter schools based on models that have significantly increased academic achievement for all students. The Administration's FY16 budget request also seeks $50 million to provide School Improvement Grants to States that encourage their school districts to implement evidence-based strategies to turn around their lowest performing schools.

DOL: The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant Program ($2 billion in FY12-14 available through FY 2017) provides grants to community colleges and other higher education institutions to develop and expand evidence-based education and training for dislocated workers changing careers. Up to 10% of each grant can be spent on evaluation. DOL has awarded $11 million for technical assistance and a national evaluation of the program.

USAID: The U.S. Agency for International Development has rebuilt its planning, monitoring, and evaluation framework to produce and use evidence through the introduction of a new Program Cycle, which systematizes use of evidence across all decision-making regarding grants and all of USAID's work. In addition, USAID's procurement practices include consideration of past performance of an applicant prior to making an award. In 2013, USAID reformed its policy for awarding new contracts to elevate past performance to comprise 20 to 30 percent of the non-cost evaluation criteria. This represents an increase from previous policy. For assistance, USAID does a "risk assessment" to review an organizations ability to meet the goals and objectives outlined by the Agency. This can be found in ADS 303, section 303.3.9. Finally, USAID instituted a policy called the Acquisition and Assistance Review and Approval Document (AARAD) process where all contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements over $75 million are reviewed by the Administrator prior to being awarded and all awards over $25 million are reviewed by the relevant Assistant Administrators. Included in the AARAD review are several key factors that include: Policy Relevant, Commitment to Sustainable Results, Feasibility, and Value for Money. This policy ensures that results, evidence, and long-term strategies are incorporated in to all of USAID's major programs. In addition, it ensures senior level accountability on USAID's biggest programs. This policy is outlined in ADS 300 (http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/300.pdf).

ACF: In FY12, the Administration for Children and Families established the Head Start Designation Renewal System requiring Head Start ($8.6 billion in FY15) grantees to compete for grants moving forward if they failed to meet criteria related to service quality, licensing and operations, and fiscal and internal controls. The Administration's FY16 budget request seeks $25 million to continue implementing this system. The Personal Responsibility Education Program ($75 million in FY15) includes three individual discretionary grant programs which support evidence-based competitive grants that teach youth about abstinence and contraception to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. The Administration for Children and Families has also updated its template (Attachment C) for all grant announcements. The template now includes two options, requiring grantees to either 1) collect performance management data that contributes to continuous quality improvement and is tied to the project's logic model, or 2) conduct a rigorous evaluation for which applicants must propose an appropriate design specifying research questions, measurement and analysis. |

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
6. Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Competitive Grant Programs: Did the department / agency allocate funds from its largest competitive grant programs based on demonstrated evidence of success in FY15?	CNCS: The Corporation for National and Community Service is operating three competitive grant programs in FY15: AmeriCorps State and National program (excluding State formula grant funds) ($216 million in FY15); Senior Corps RSVP program ($49 million million in FY15); and the Social Innovation Fund ($70 million in FY15). The Social Innovation Fund (SIF) provides competitive grants to non-profit grant-making organizations to help them grow promising, evidence-based solutions that address pressing economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development issues in low- income communities. The FY14 and FY15 Omnibus Appropriations Acts allowed CNCS to invest up to 20% of SIF funds ($14 million in FY14 and FY15) in Pay for Success initiatives; the Administration's FY16 budget request seeks this same authority in FY16. In FY14, SIF awarded $12 million to Pay for Success (PFS) grantees. SIF also supported the Performance Partnership Pilot program ($2 million in FY14 and $1 million in FY15). The AmeriCorps State and National Grants Program (excluding State formula grant funds) ($335 million in FY15), which supports local and national organizations and agencies committed to using national service to address critical community needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment, is awarding up to 25 points out of 100 to organizations that submit FY15 applications supported by performance and evaluation data. Specifically, up to 17 points can be assigned to applications with theories of change supported by relevant research literature, program performance data, or program evaluation data and up to 8 points can be assigned for an applicant's incoming level of evidence with the highest number of points awarded to strong levels of evidence. These categories of evidence are modeled closely on the levels of evidence defined in the Social Innovation Fund. In FY15, the Foster Grandparent Program and the Senior Companion Program, which are funded by CNCS's Senior Corps RSVP Program, are also moving toward implementing research- and evidence-based interventions such as Reading Partners and CAPABLE. HUD: Decisions regarding the design, funding, and implementation of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's competitive grant programs are evidence-based as specified in one of the five funding criteria in HUD's FY15 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). HUD gives funding priority to applicants that demonstrate effective use of evidence in identifying or selecting the proposed practices, strategies, or programs proposed in the application, and requires all grantees to cooperate in HUD-funded research and evaluation studies. More specifically, HUD's FY15 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) states: "In evaluating applications for funding HUD will take into account an applicant's past performance in managing funds, including, but not limited to…. meeting performance targets as established in Logic Models or other performance evaluation tools approved as part of the grant agreement…" (See pages 22 and 23.)

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
7. Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Non-Competitive Grant Programs: Did the department / agency allocate funds from its 5 largest non-competitive grant programs based on demonstrated evidence of success in FY15?	**ED**: While FY15 competition decisions are still being made, the U.S. Department of Education's Evidence Planning Group (EPG) seeks to use the highest level of available evidence for the department's competitive programs, as appropriate, and scale-up use of evidence across programs over time so each program receives sufficient support to use evidence in a meaningful way. Use of evidence in the FY15 competitions have focused on the Supporting Effective Educator Development Program ($54 million in FY15), which provides funding for grants to national not-for-profit organizations for projects that support teacher or principal training or professional enhancement activities and that are supported by at least moderate evidence of effectiveness. The Administration's FY16 budget request also seeks authority for the Secretary to be able to invest $15,000,000 of IDEA Preschool Grants and Infants and Families program funds in Pay for Success initiatives.

DOL: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) authorizes the three largest federal workforce development programs: Youth Workforce Investment program, Adult Employment and Training program, and Dislocated Workers Employment and Training program. WIOA includes new provisions which: (1) increase the amount of WIOA funds states can set aside and distribute directly from 5-10% to 15% and authorize them to invest these funds in Pay for Performance initiatives; (2) authorize states to invest their own workforce development funds, as well as non-federal resources, in Pay for Performance initiatives; (3) authorize local workforce investment boards to invest up to 10% of their WIOA funds in Pay for Performance initiatives; and (4) authorize States and local workforce investment boards to award Pay for Performance contracts to intermediaries, community based organizations, and community colleges. For FY15, up to $240 million worth of WIOA funds could be available for Pay for Performance initiatives at the state level and up to $240 million at the local level if state and local workforce investment boards use their full authority to do so. The WIOA funding levels in the Administration's FY16 budget request would allow for up to $405 million for Pay for Performance initiatives at the state level and up to $270 million at the local level.

USAID: The U.S. Agency for International Development's largest non-competitive grants go to multilateral institutions also known as Public International Organizations (PIOs). A formal listing of organizations that USAID categorizes as such can be found here. Awards to PIOs are governed by USAID's ADS chapter 308. which provides the Agency's guidance on the due diligence required prior to awarding grants to PIOs. A negative assurance is required that there is nothing significant that calls into question the PIO's ability to perform based upon past history. This due diligence takes into account past performance that a given institution has demonstrated for the U.S. Government and for other governments that have engaged with the institution.

ACF: The Administration for Children and Families' Foster Care program ($4.6 billion in FY15) authorizes waivers that give states the flexibility to use their foster care maintenance payment funds to support evidence-based practices to address the needs of high-risk families. Waiver recipients are required to include an evaluation that is "the most rigorous and appropriate approach to determine the impact and effectiveness of the program intervention(s)".

CNCS: The Corporation for National and Community Service is operating one formula grant program in FY15: AmeriCorps State formula grants program ($119 million in FY15). CNCS is also operating four direct grant programs in FY15: NCCC ($30 million in FY15), VISTA ($92 million in FY15), Senior Corps Foster Grand Parents ($108 million in FY15), and Senior Corps Senior Companion Program ($46 million in FY15). At least six State Service Commissions (CA, FL, IA, MA, NY, TX) are awarding points for evidence-based or evidence-informed applications for their AmeriCorps State formula grant funds in FY15 similar to the AmeriCorps State and National Grants Program applications. |

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
8. Other Evidence/ Evaluation Efforts	ED: While FY15 competition decisions are still being made, the U.S. Department of Education's Evidence Planning Group (EPG) seeks to use the highest level of available evidence for the department's competitive programs, as appropriate, and scale-up use of evidence across programs over time so each program receives sufficient support to use evidence in a meaningful way. Use of evidence in the FY15 competitions have focused on the First in the World Program ($60 million in FY15), which provides grants to institutions of higher education to implement innovative strategies shown to be effective in improving educational outcomes and making college more affordable for students and families. The Administration's FY16 budget request also seeks $100 million for a new "Leveraging What Works" competitive grant program to reward school districts that invest their federal education funds in evidence-based activities and $30,000,000 for Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) program evaluations of higher education act programs ($29 million to conduct research, evaluations and demonstrations and $1 million to improve the collection of higher education data.)

USAID: The U.S. Agency for International Development's Development Innovation Ventures ($21.6 million in FY14) supports breakthrough solutions to the world's most intractable development challenges by finding and testing bold ideas that could change millions of lives at a fraction of the usual cost. The Administration's FY16 budget request seeks $35 million for this program. [FY15 figure is not available at this time].

ACF: The Administration for Children and Families collaborates with the Health Resources and Services Administration in administering the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program ($400 million in FY15) which allows collaboration and partnership at the federal, state, tribal, and community levels to improve health and development outcomes for at-risk children through evidence-based home visiting programs. This program uses a tiered-evidence structure that reserves the majority of funds for models that have been determined to be evidence-based through a systematic review. The Administration's FY16 budget requests $500 million in FY16 and $15 billion over the next 10 years to extend and expand this program.

CNCS: CNCS's AmeriCorps School Turnaround Program ($5 million in FY14) was jointly operated with the U.S. Department of Education in FY14. In FY15, this program is being solely funded and operated by CNCS and is being integrated as part of its Tier 1 Education focus area. Consistent with all AmeriCorps applications, up to 25 points out of 100 will be awarded to organizations that submit FY15 applications supported by performance and evaluation data. Specifically, up to 17 points can be assigned to applications with theories of change supported by relevant research literature, program performance data or program evaluation data and up to 8 points can be assigned for an applicant's incoming level of evidence with the highest number of points awarded to strong levels of evidence as defined in the Social Innovation Fund. CNCS is also leading a national evaluation of the AmeriCorps School Turnaround program ($706,326 in FY14) and will be investing additional resources in the evaluation's second year (FY15). CNCS is also partner in the national evaluation of the justice AmeriCorps program, a partnership between CNCS and the U.S. Department of Justice. The justice AmeriCorps program application provides 19 points for performance and evaluation data – 12 for including a theory of change and corresponding logic model and 7 for incoming levels of program evidence. CNCS has invested $125,000 in the first year of the evaluation (FY14) of this program and will invest additional money in the evaluation's subsequent years. |

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
8. Other Evidence/ Evaluation Efforts	HUD: HUD is actively engaged in testing the impact of certain HUD-funded programs through randomized controlled experiments including but not limited to The Family Options Study, where HUD is testing three Federal options for homeless families with children (vouchers, rapid rehousing, and transitional supported housing) for their impacts on housing stability and family cohesion; Family Self-Sufficiency, where HUD is testing this program's impact on earnings and savings in a large number of markets; and Pre-purchase housing counseling, where HUD is testing the impact of education and advice provided either in-person or online among potential first-time low to moderate-income homebuyers. Additionally, HUD is: (1) preparing a cluster-randomized controlled trial of the impact of assisted housing projects on the health care utilization of low-income elderly; (2) conducting a cluster-randomized controlled trial of the Small Area Fair Market Rent, to determine whether rent subsidy ceilings set at the zip code rather than the metropolitan level result in greater household mobility or unacceptable cost increases for the voucher program; (3) leading an active program of paired testing to determine the incidence of housing discrimination in the US; (4) conducting pilot programs for how to test for rental discrimination against families with children, same-sex couples, transgender persons, families using housing vouchers; and (5) finalizing a time-and-motion study on the cost of administering the public housing authorities' (PHAs) voucher program at high-performing and efficient PHAs.

EVIDENCE / EVALUATION CRITERIA	
8. Other Evidence/ Evaluation Efforts	**ED/DOL/ACF/CNCS**: The FY14 and FY15 Omnibus Appropriations Acts authorized up to ten Performance Partnership Pilots (P3) to test innovative, outcome-focused strategies to achieve significant improvements in educational, employment, and other key outcomes for disconnected youth using new flexibility to blend existing federal funds and to seek waivers of associated program requirements. P3 pilots will receive start-up grants to support ongoing planning, streamlined governance, strengthened data infrastructure, improved coordination, and related activities to help pilots improve outcomes for disconnected youth. Successful pilots will use cost-effective strategies to increase the success of disconnected youth in achieving educational, employment, well-being, and other key outcomes. The following federal departments and agencies were authorized to participate in the P3 program in FY14 and FY15: the U.S. Departments of Education, Justice, Labor, and Health and Human Services; the Corporation for National and Community Service; and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). **DOL/ACF/HUD**: The Administration's FY16 budget request proposes a new Evaluation Funding Flexibility Pilot which would allow funding for research, evaluation and statistical purposes that is unexpended at the completion of a contract, grant or cooperative agreement to be de-obligated and re-obligated (in the fiscal year in which it was de-obligated or the subsequent fiscal year) for additional research, evaluation or statistical purposes. The planning, research, and evaluation offices at the following federal departments and agencies listed here would be included in this proposed pilot program: the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation and Office for Planning, Research and Evaluation in the Administration for Children and Families; the U.S. Department of Labor's Chief Evaluation Office and Bureau of Labor Statistics; the U.S. Department of Justice's National Institute of Justice and Bureau of Justice Statistics; the U.S. Census Bureau; and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development & Research. **ACF/HUD**: The FY16 budget request seeks $1.5 billion over 5 years in new funding and flexibility for an Upward Mobility Project that would allow up to 10 communities, states or consortia of states and communities to combine funds from 4 existing block grant programs (Social Services Block Grant and Community Services Block Grant administered by ACF, as well as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships Program) to promote opportunity and economic development. Upward Mobility Projects must utilize evidence-based strategies, track program performance, and evaluate intervention effectiveness.

About the Results for America Invest in What Works Index

Results for America's Invest in What Works Index (March 2015) highlights the extent to which the U.S. Department of Education; U.S. Department of Labor; Administration for Children and Families (within HHS); U.S. Agency for International Development; Corporation for National and Community Service; and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development are currently building the infrastructure necessary to use data, evidence and evaluation in budget, policy, and management decisions. It is important to note that:

- Results for America developed the criteria and scoring structure in the attached index in close consultation with more than two dozen policy experts and practitioners in evidence-based policy from all across the country.

- The purpose of the attached index is to educate members of the general public as well as public, private, and non-profit sector leaders on how federal departments and agencies are currently using data, evidence and evaluation to invest taxpayer dollars in what works.

- Results for America gave the federal departments and agencies included in the attached index multiple opportunities to review and comment on the presentation of the information included in it. We greatly appreciate their willingness to help us develop this document and their continued commitment to making the federal government as effective and efficient as possible. Since we recognize that it is very difficult to distill complex practices, policies, and programs into a single cross-agency scorecard, we exercised our best judgment and relied on the deep expertise of leaders both within and outside of the federal government during the development of the attached index.

- Results for America has released three previous versions of this Invest in What Works Index; June 2013, September 2013 and May 2014.

The attached index assesses six federal departments and agencies against seven data, evidence and evaluation criteria. Each criteria is equally weighted and scored on a scale of 0-5 resulting in a total possible score of 35 points. Federal departments and agencies were given one point if they have demonstrated an intent to meet the stated criteria; two points if they have demonstrated some initial internal progress toward meeting the criteria; three points if they have made some initial public progress toward meeting the criteria; four points if they have made some meaningful public progress toward meeting the criteria; and five points if they have fully and successfully met the criteria. These scores are based on the information and links provided by these six departments and agencies.

About Results for America

Results for America is committed to improving outcomes for young people, their families, and their communities by helping drive public resources towards results-driven solutions. Now more than ever, government spending at all levels – local, state and federal – needs to be spent more effectively and efficiently.