

Clear Horizon

CURRICULUM VITAE

Dr Jess Dart, Chief Evaluator / Founder



Overview of Expertise

Receiving the 2018 Award for Outstanding Contribution to Evaluation from the Australian Evaluation Society (AES), Dr Jess Dart is a recognised leader with over 25 years' experience in strategy, design and evaluation for organisations in Australia and overseas. She specialises in collaborative evaluation and the design of initiatives with complex, intangible outcomes. As part of her PhD she adapted the 'Most Significant Change (MSC) Technique' and co-authored the User Guide with Rick Davies – now translated into 12 languages. She is passionate about ensuring that organisations deliver better and more equitable outcomes. In 2005, Jess founded Clear Horizon Consulting, a rapidly growing and successful company with over 40 employees. Today she is Founding Director, Chief Evaluator and Chair of the Board.

Qualifications & Training

2000 PhD in program evaluation at the Institute of Land and Food Resources, Melbourne University. The thesis focused on developing a new qualitative approach to evaluation.

Career Highlights

- **Substantial experience in developing large scale evaluation strategies.** Led three large scale organisational evaluation and capacity development processes. This included helping to build an internal evaluation capacity and outcomes framework for a large organisation (7,000 plus people) that won two prestigious awards for its evaluation work.
- **Highly experienced in impact measurement frameworks.** Jess has developed impact measurement frameworks for over 20 organisations and over 200 programs in a wide variety of topics and sectors from community initiatives to large scale international development programs.
- **Innovator of new techniques and approaches in evaluation.** Developed 'People-centred Program Logic', the 'Evaluation Summit Technique', and 'Collaborative Outcomes Reporting (COR) Technique'. Co-author of the Most Significant Change (MSC) User guide, Author of the "what else tool" for contribution analysis and 'Place-based Evaluation Framework' and 'Toolkit', commissioned by DSS and the Queensland Government (2019).
- **Highly experienced evaluator.** Led multiple developmental evaluations, partner-led evaluations as well as conducting over 30 external evaluations in both public sector and non-Government sector environments, both nationally and internationally. Oversight responsibility for another 100+ evaluations conducted by Clear Horizon.
- **Experienced design facilitator.** Jess brings a wealth of experience to design. Jess works in the capacity of "design facilitator" – designing the process to be used; leading a team; developing engagement plans and working in a collaborative and facilitative way to create great innovative designs with clear and measurable theory of change.

- **Highly demanded facilitator.** Having facilitated the development of over 200 strategic planning process (including the use of Theory of Change/ program logic) for programs and organisations, as well as numerous large group workshops, Jess is a highly demanded facilitator. She has led workshops in a wide variety of cultural settings from Ministers to grassroots community groups.
- **Solid academic grounding in social science and the natural sciences.** PhD in program evaluation, an MSC in sustainable systems agriculture. A multidisciplinary background as well as a solid grounding in systems thinking and qualitative and quantitative research.

Project Experience

Organisational / National Measurement Frameworks



- Organisational impact measurement framework for Junction Australia (2020-ongoing)
- Organisational impact measurement framework for Fay Fuller Foundation (2020 ongoing).
- Organisational social impact measurement framework for YMCA Victoria (2020).
- Organisational impact measurement for the Front Project and nested plans for all workstreams (2020). The Front Project is a complex systems-change initiative aiming to transform the early childhood sector workforce in Australia.
- Organisational impact measurement framework and capacity building for the Ross Trust. (2020)
- Lead evaluator for the evaluation framework for the federal government-funded, Stronger Places, Stronger People, a 40-million-dollar investment funding 10 placed-based Collective Impact initiatives across Australia.
- Project Leader and author of the place-based evaluation framework and tool kit. Commissioned by the Department of Communities, Disability Services, and Seniors and Department of Social Services, in partnership with Logan Together (2018, Clear Horizon in partnership with TACSI). The framework was built using co-design with over 150 stakeholders.
- Leading the partnership between Clear Horizon and The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI) and led the work to clarify their organisational outcomes and build a social impact measurement framework for the organisation and all their initiatives (2016-2022).
- Expert advice and facilitation to develop an outcomes model and organisational measurement framework for VicRoads corporate plan. This has involved facilitating 5 workshops with the Senior Leadership team and guiding the internal strategy team to develop a set of strategic KPIs and reporting products for the Vision and Governance Committee (2015-2016).

Developmental Evaluation



Jess has led over 10 large scale developmental evaluations and is co-authored the e-learning course on developmental evaluation for the Clear Horizon academy. Recent examples include:

- Lead Developmental Evaluator for a 12-year initiative named “Our Town” which is funded by the Fay Fuller Foundation and implemented by the Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI). Our Town is a ground-breaking community-led mental health initiative operative across six rural towns in South Australia aiming to create transformational change with regard to mental health and wellbeing. (2019-2031). The developmental evaluation role includes developing and implementing the overarching evaluation framework as well as episodic process evaluations, playing the role of

critical friend, and supporting the towns to demonstrate impact and learn and adapt as they implement.

- Lead developmental evaluator for Connect Well, a partnership of service delivery agencies working collaboratively to address mental health outcomes in East Gippsland post fires (2020-2021).
- Lead developmental evaluator for the Menzies Foundation School leadership development Incubator (2019-2020).
- Lead Evaluator for a 5-year developmental evaluation for the Collective Education Project, implemented by the Beacon Foundation, and funded by Paul Ramsay Foundation to develop a 'living lab' to transform 6 Tasmanian school communities through human-centred design and collective impact (2017-2021).
- Developmental Evaluator with the Commonwealth Department of Employment to provide developmental evaluation services in partnership with the Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI) to support a user-centred design process to improve Indigenous Employment Outcomes (2017).
- Developmental Evaluation inputs for the Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI) for 6 of their designs including: evaluating and developing theory of change for three prototypes for alternatives to fostering, development of an evaluation framework for Family-by-family pilot.

External Evaluations



- Jess has led over 30 external evaluations including 2 large-scale multi-country evaluations that spanned 72 countries as well as overseeing over a hundred evaluations.

Design facilitation and strategic planning



Jess has facilitated over 200 strategic planning and design processes for a wide variety of sectors, from community groups to high-level planning organizations in large programs. She is experienced in: Human-centred design, World Café, Scenario planning, Open Space Technology, Appreciative Inquiry, Future Search, Evaluation Summit Technique and general strategic planning processes. A sample of her recent national and international work includes:

- Facilitation of an online ideation workshop with school leaders across Australia as part of developing the Global Education and Learning strategy, Dept. of education and training (DET), Victoria, 2021
- Facilitating a co-design workshop with stakeholders from landlord and tenant groups to develop policy options to address split incentives associated with reducing barriers to energy efficiency upgrades. Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW (2017).
- Facilitating three design and program logic workshops to develop the Victorian Biodiversity strategy, including logic for the legislative elements and the marine component (2016).
- Design specialist working with a team to develop the design of a multi-country program "Women in Asia" which seeks to increase women's economic participation in Indonesia, Philippines, Myanmar, and Vietnam, DFAT (2015).
- Led the design for Plan Australia's 5-year PRAAC program (promoting rights and accountabilities in African communities) in Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe. Consulting with over 250 people, holding three in-country workshops for four days duration in 3 countries. Funded by AusAID (2010-2016).



- Jess has developed over 200 monitoring & evaluation frameworks for a wide variety of topics and sectors: from community placed-based initiatives to large scale international development programs.

Memberships

Australian Evaluation Society

Selection of Academic Publications

Dart, J. and Roberts, M. (2016) Invisible and Unbound: the challenge and practice of evaluating embedded facilitation in the case of Landcare in Australia, *New Directions for Evaluation*.

Davies R.J and Dart J.J. (2005) A User Guide for the Most Significant Change Technique. Available at www.clearhorizon.com.au

Dart, J. J. & Davies R.J. (2003) A dialogical story-based evaluation tool: the most significant change technique, *American Journal of Evaluation* 24, 137-155.