

# Resources Available for Implementation: Support for Your Journey

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# Scope of Presentation

1. Background
2. Challenges faced by the Social Service Sector
3. 8 Steps to adopt when conducting evaluation and research



## CONDUCT RESEARCH & EVALUATION (R&E)

- Research to build knowledge
- Evaluate the impact of the social service sector and programmes
- Sense-making on perceptions and attitudes

## CAPABILITY BUILDING

- Initiatives to build research capabilities
- Input to research training programmes for R&E (SSI/SSR)
- Channel SSAs and staff to appropriate training

## RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT

- Engage with NCSS divisions to support their work
- Engage with SSAs to encourage R&E
- Engage with external experts

## KEY FUNCTIONS OF THE TRANSLATIONAL SOCIAL RESEARCH DIVISION (TSRD), NCSS

## REVIEW & COORDINATE RESEARCH/RESOURCES

- Review research by NCSS members
- Ensure methodological rigour in R&E projects
- Review R&E funding process
- Match resources to SSAs (e.g. funding, researchers)

## KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT & DISSEMINATION

- Translate research
- Ensure findings are accessible and applicable for policy and services
- Create sharing and dissemination platforms



# Research and Evaluation (R&E) Promotes More Effective and Efficient Services

- Globally, there has been a greater interest in evaluating and demonstrating impact. As we move towards that direction, our social service sector is increasingly looking at “What works” through research and evaluation of our programmes.

## 1. Validate Programmes and Services

- **Understands the impact effectiveness** of our programmes and services.
- **Public services providers:** in establishing how best to deliver public services and how to improve their service.

## 2. Impact Decision Making


- **Provides greater accountability** for funders and policy makers.
- **Funders, Donors:** on how best to spend public money.
- **Policy makers:** coming to an informed view of what is and is not cost-effective in public services.

## 3. Prioritise Needs and Interest of Service Users

- **Promotes sector to be person-centred** in its service design and delivery, and towards a quality of life, ecosystem or lifespan approach.
- **Practitioners:** on *which* and *what* and *how* to implement.

The 2021 Social Sector Survey revealed three broad challenges that social service agencies face in evaluation and research:

1. Manpower constraints
2. Insufficient financial resources
3. Limited knowledge, skills and know-how
4. Lack of platform to cross-share best practices

A 3D illustration of a person standing in a maze, symbolizing challenges. The person is a small, dark blue figure standing on a light gray path that leads into a complex maze of dark gray walls. The maze is composed of many interconnected rectangular blocks, creating a labyrinthine structure. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights, emphasizing the depth and complexity of the maze. The overall tone is somber and challenging.

**There are  
challenges faced in  
Performing E&R.**



# Many may have limited Knowledge, Skills and Resources when Conducting R&E



# NCSS is Committed to Providing Resources at Every Stage of Your Journey

## Define Scope and objectives

- NCSS Repository
- Free Access to Journal Database
- Online Dashboard

## Determine Sample and Design

- Training on Ethics
- Ethics Review Committee
- Research Consultation

## Translation & Application

- Roundtable Discussion
- Sharing Platforms
- Community of Practice

## Data Analysis and Report Writing

## Data Collection

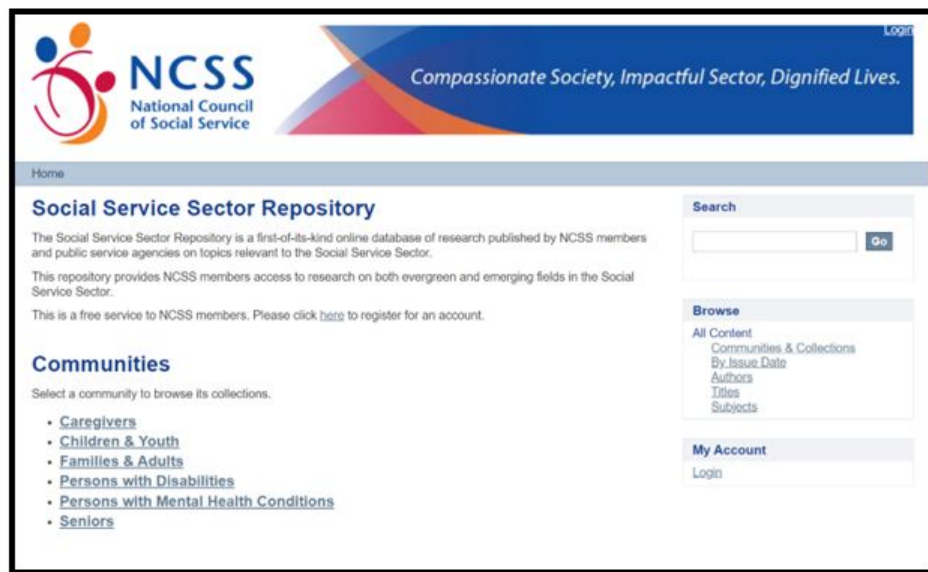
- Volunteer Researcher Matching Services
- Research Pulse
- Seminar/Training Workshops

## Evaluation

- Sector Evaluation Framework

# #1 Register for NCSS Repository Now

Local platform for greater access to knowledge and evidence.



- A first-of-its-kind online database of research on the local social service sector, for NCSS members' use.
- The repository houses rigorous research (e.g., persons with disability or mental health issues, caregivers, children and youth, seniors, families) by NCSS member organisations and public service agencies.
- Free service for NCSS members.



**Register for the  
Repository!**



# #2 Sign Up for Free EBSCO Journal Database

International platform for greater access to knowledge and evidence.

The screenshot displays the EBSCOhost search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'New Search', 'Subjects', 'Publications', 'Images', and 'Indexes'. Below this, the search bar contains the text 'Searching: Criminal Justice Abstracts with Full Text, Show all | Choose Databases'. To the left of the search bar is the EBSCOhost logo. To the right are buttons for 'Search', 'Create Alert', and 'Clear'. Below the search bar, there are three rows of search criteria, each with an 'AND' dropdown, a text input field, and a 'Select a Field (option...)' dropdown. To the right of these fields are '+' and '-' buttons. Below the search criteria, there are links for 'Basic Search', 'Advanced Search', and 'Search History'. The 'Search Options' section is expanded, showing 'Search Modes and Expanders'. Under 'Search modes', there are four radio button options: 'Boolean/Phrase' (selected), 'Find all my search terms', 'Find any of my search terms', and 'SmartText Searching' (with a 'Hint' link). To the right of these options are three checkboxes: 'Apply related words' (unchecked), 'Also search within the full text of the' (unchecked), and 'Apply equivalent subjects' (checked).

- NCSS members can access quality research content in the EBSCO database.
- Houses e-journals in the areas of Social Work, Psychology & Behavioural Sciences, Education Research and Nursing.
- Free service for NCSS members; **one shared account per agency.**
- Email [research@ncss.gov.sg](mailto:research@ncss.gov.sg) for an account today .

# #3 Apply for Ethics Review Committee (ERC) and Ethics Training

Ethics review committee set up to guide researchers in steering clear of ethical quandaries

## NCSS ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

The NCSS Ethics Review Committee (ERC) reviews research studies conducted by social service agencies to ensure that the welfare and rights of human study participants are protected. Staff and agencies are encouraged to have their research studies undergo ethical review and approval before commencing.

### CALL FOR APPLICATIONS



**ERC Board Members**  
Applications will be reviewed by a committee of independent members, consisting of academics and senior representatives from the social service sector.

**Ethics Review Timeline**  
For studies that involve no more than minimal risk, applicants can expect to receive reviewers' comments within ten working days.  
For studies that involve more than minimal risk, applicants can expect to receive reviewers' comments within two months.

**Eligibility**  
The ERC is open to research studies  
(1) conducted by NCSS members  
(2) conducted, sponsored or commissioned by NCSS or PSF  
A \$200 application fee is required for SSA applicants.

**Submissions**  
Interested parties may contact the NCSS ERC secretariat at [research@ncss.gov.sg](mailto:research@ncss.gov.sg). Please note that the ethics approval does not replace the existing internal processes for approval of research funding, publication of findings or data sharing.

The NCSS Ethics Review Committee (ERC) reviews research studies conducted by social service agencies to ensure that the welfare and rights of human study participants are protected.

- Provide free online training on research ethics
- Meet existing demand for research ethics reviews
- Provide guidance and advice for research projects
- Applicants can contact ERC Secretariat at [research@ncss.gov.sg](mailto:research@ncss.gov.sg)

# #4 Consult our Volunteer Researchers!

Volunteer Researchers to guide SSAs on research design and methodologies.

- NCSS manages a pool of volunteer researchers and helps to match Social Service Agencies that require assistance with research projects.
- These volunteer researchers (6-month commitment period as default) are from Institute of Higher Learning and the public sector in the following:
  - Designing methodologies
  - Crafting questionnaires
  - Discussion/interview guides and analysing results



Matching

Social service agencies with  
potential research projects



Volunteer Researchers  
(Govt, Academics)



**SSAs may  
Apply here!**



**Academics/  
Researchers can  
volunteer here!**

# #5: Find out More about NCSS Research

Data and reports to help SSAs in identifying new areas of needs or concerns.



The Research Pulse is a new initiative that consolidates and highlights key announcements/ research findings from the National Council of Social Service (NCSS). These issues aim to keep readers updated, with content ranging from bite-sized articles on the latest research findings to research resources developed for NCSS members.



Access our reports at:

<https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research>



To visit the website



# #6: Adopt the Sector Evaluation Framework (SEF) for Your Programme Evaluation

A tool and common language to help evaluate and validate programmes.

- Tool and common language
- Helps us understand effectiveness of our programmes
- Allows us to validate best practices and programme design, potentially influence policies, for service users' benefit
- Helps us ensure programmes are effective and resources are allocated appropriately, leading to better service quality and outcomes for the service user
- Tentative plans to include Environment Social Governance (ESG) indicators in SEF

Do approach the evaluation team for more information.



## #7: Stay tuned for Online Dashboard on Quality of Life Study

Data and reports to help SSAs in identifying new areas of needs or concerns. Having sights of subsector trends allows SSAs to plan ahead strategically.

- NCSS regularly conducts studies on the quality of life of various population groups (e.g. caregivers, adults with disability, children and youth).
- New and innovative modes in which our findings can be released on NCSS website.
  - Dashboard gives a **holistic view of impact**.
  - Data are **aggregable at different levels** (programme, fund, sub-sector).
  - Assess the **needs of their clients** holistically, and compare against NCSS' population benchmarks.



### Mock-up Dashboard of QOL findings

# #8: Join Other Platforms to Cross-share best practices

Other external platforms for SSAs to connect with one another.



Seminar and Talks



Roundtable Discussions on  
Sector Evaluation



Community of Practice on  
Research and Evaluation

**For more information, please email us at**  
**[research@ncss.gov.sg](mailto:research@ncss.gov.sg)**

**Browse through  
our research now**



**Sign up for  
repository now**



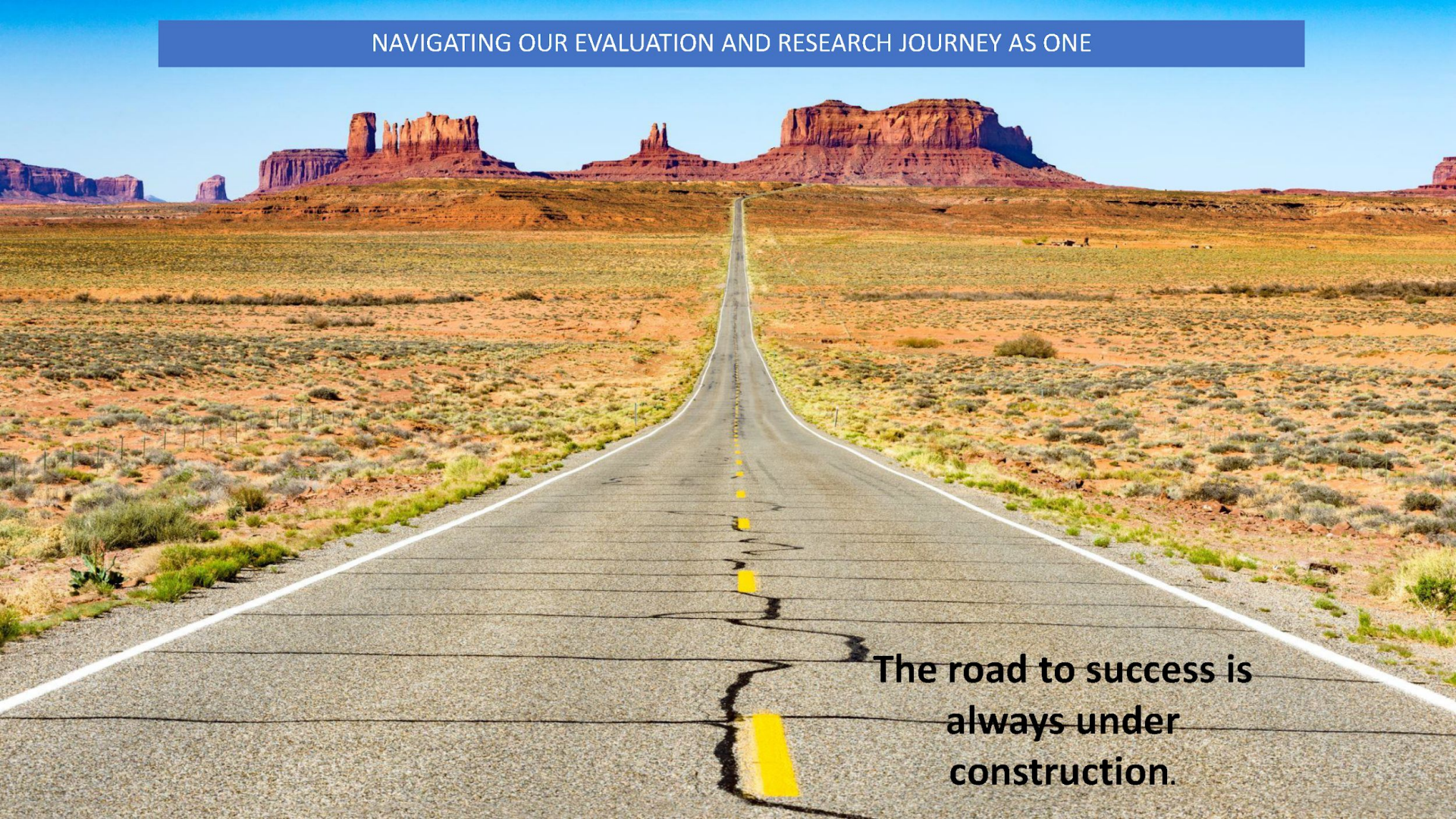
**Sign up for volunteer  
researcher services today**



**Thank You**



## NAVIGATING OUR EVALUATION AND RESEARCH JOURNEY AS ONE

A wide-angle photograph of a two-lane asphalt road stretching straight into the distance. The road has a yellow dashed center line and white solid edge lines. The surrounding landscape is a dry, arid desert with sparse green and yellow shrubs. In the background, there are large, flat-topped red rock mesas under a clear blue sky. The road appears to be in good condition but has some visible wear and tear, particularly a large crack in the center line near the foreground.

**The road to success is  
always under  
construction.**