



The following is a set of questions that organizations can ask themselves to see if they are in an appropriate space to apply developmental evaluation.

What's driving the innovation?	Developmental evaluation is particularly appropriate if a nonprofit organization expects to develop and modify a program over the long term because of constantly shifting needs and/or contexts. It's helpful to discern between innovation taking place within an organization and the adoption of an external innovation, which may not need a developmental evaluation.
Are the proposed changes and innovations aimed at deep and sustained change?	Organizations often fine-tune their programs and having an evaluative lens on those changes can be helpful; however, the intensity of developmental evaluation may not be warranted in every instance.
Do we have a collaborative relationship with another organization in which there is innovative potential in combining our respective talents?	Developmental evaluation may help different organizations work together through the effort to innovate. In this situation, the developmental evaluator can help the organizations through some of the inevitable tensions of collaborating and can provide a measure of transparency about the experiment.
Under what conditions does the organization currently innovate?	If innovation is already part of the culture, then the developmental evaluation role may be one that people within the team already play. If there isn't a culture of innovation but there is a commitment to build one, then developmental evaluation may be helpful in stimulating that.
What are some core elements of what we do that we don't want to change?	There may be elements of an initiative that are known to work or are expected to stay the same. Evaluation requires resources, so if something is not going to be adapted but there is interest in finding out if it works or not, a summative evaluation may be more appropriate.
Is it clear for whom the evaluation is intended?	Vital for any evaluation, developmental or otherwise, it's important to have key decision makers interested in and open to using evaluative feedback to shape future actions. If the only user of the evaluation is external to the innovating team (such as a funder), then developmental evaluation is probably not the best approach.

Adapted from: J W McConnell Foundation: <https://mccconnellfoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/A-Developmental-Evaluation-Primer-EN.pdf>

