

The Ceres Institute

After five years of dreaming and planning, Ceres Policy Research has created the Ceres Institute as an educational extension of our research firm.

While Ceres Policy Research will continue to lead research and community facilitation projects out of our Oakland, California office, the Ceres Institute seeks to rethink the role of research and program evaluation as a practice that empowers community. This institute will offer a series of certificate programs to organizations, agencies and foundations who are interested in using radical research to more effectively affect change and better align their culture with their respective missions. Our goal is to support change-makers by bolstering their research and evaluation skills in order to reclaim their stories and advocate on behalf of their communities and marginalized groups.

We are also offering one certificate program for community-based organizations and government agencies on how to decolonize leadership. Our goal is to offer a set of tools and assessments that will help center the knowledge of leaders from Black, indigenous, and colonized communities.

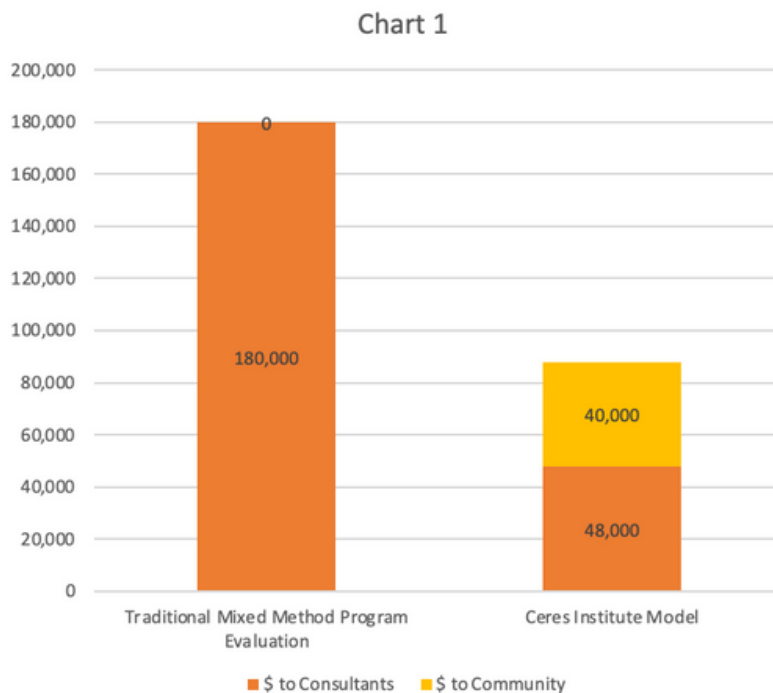
The Ceres Institute is located in Lisbon, Portugal. We have located ourselves in a region that is closer to Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Latin America, Europe, and Asia so that we can easily partner with organizations from around the world.

Why has Ceres developed this institute?

Ceres has developed this new structure in order to build research capacity within communities that experience multiple oppressions, expand the number of organizations that can learn these skills each year, while ultimately reducing the cost for each organization.

Each class will offer a boutique learning experience as classes will be taught in small cohorts of 6-8 organizations. This will create a peer-to-peer support network of relationships with similar groups that will outlast each class.

This approach is also cost effective. Chart 1 shows that if an organization takes both the survey and storytelling certificate program and gets funding to support their own time, they will leave with two sets of skills, pay consultants less than 1/3 their normal fee, and resource themselves for their time—all for a cost that is less than half the normal cost of a full one-year mixed method program evaluation.



Offerings

We are offering the following four certificate programs:

Program Evaluation to Empower Community Change.

This program is designed to bolster organizations' * internal capacity to design and conduct their own evaluations, to reflect their own definitions of success, and develop data collection strategies that reflect the unique cultures of their workplaces and the communities they serve. Participants will leave with a list of organizational outcomes, a survey that measures those outcomes, and a plan to collect stories from program participants. This course is taught from May through July each summer in a way that combines online sessions with an intensive week of classes in Portugal.

*An organization might be a community-based organization, an NGO, a philanthropy, a funders network, or a government agency.



Surveys for Social Change.

This program will lead participants through the process of completing a rigorous program evaluation of their organization using advanced statistics. Participants will leave the class with a list of outcomes, a survey that measures those outcomes, a plan for collecting survey data over time, a handbook on how to complete advanced statistical analysis of survey data, a report based on survey findings collected during the course, and a plan to disseminate that report to stakeholders and funders. This class is taught in a seven month online course format from September to March each year.

Collecting Stories for Social Change.

This course will introduce participants to creative means for collecting qualitative data. Participants will learn the cultural significance of storytelling and how to analyze stories to extract outcome data that resonates and moves various audiences to action. Participants will understand how and when to use qualitative data and make-meaning of the findings. Participants will leave this course understanding the necessity and legitimacy of storytelling, tools for data collection via story-telling, a plan to collect and analyze those findings and a report on the outcomes. This class is taught in a seven month online course format from September to March each year.

Decolonizing Leadership.

This course will share the key insights, lessons and strategies we have gleaned over the past twenty years on how to successfully lift and center the leadership of people who have been most impacted by systems of oppression and historically excluded from decision-making. Participants will leave with a wide range of tools for hiring and retention of staff, an assessment of their organization, and a strategic plan for successfully centering Black, indigenous, and colonized people. This class is taught in two different formats. It is offered as a summer intensive from May to July that combines online classes and an in-person week in Portugal. It is also offered each year as a seven month online course from September to March each year.

Who are the certificate programs for?

We have over 25 years of experience supporting nonprofit and community-based organizations, public youth and adult-serving agencies, and philanthropic organizations. We believe these courses would be best suited for:

- Community-based and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) interested in building internal capacity to collect data and evaluate outcomes of their program and services.
- Program officers who want to more intentionally develop relevant and successful funding strategies and better interpret the outcomes of their funding portfolios.
- Government agencies who are required to collect and report on outcomes to their governing bodies, funders and the public.

For more information

For more details about each class, please visit www.cerespolicyresearch.com/institute.