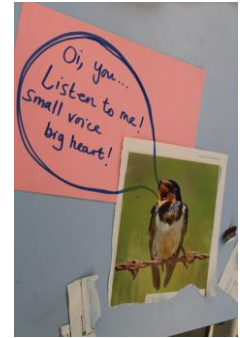# Creative & INCredible Aotearoa

evidencing the value of arts in communities

Evaluating community based arts in Aotearoa: an introductory guide

Created by

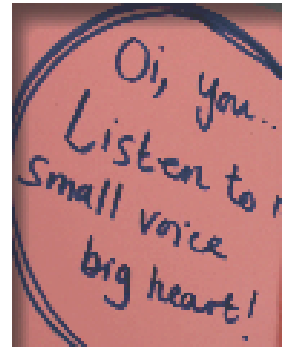Rachael Trotman weavingchange.nz

Amber Walls creativecollaborative.co

Free download Arts Access Aotearoa https://artsaccess.org.nz/

Contents

About this resource

Kia ora tatou

This resource aims to support artists and arts organisations in Aotearoa New Zealand to demonstrate the value of their work. This is a basic '101' level resource for people new to evaluation. It helps you to explore:

… What evaluation is and how it relates to your context
… Your evaluation needs
… What counts as data and evidence
… Some ideas for gathering data and evidence
… Some ways to tell a powerful story about your work
… How to access support and links to further resources

Why arts evaluation is important

Creative and INCredible aims to help grow the perceived value, recognition and resourcing of the arts in Aotearoa.

The role the arts play in society is poorly understood, and attracting support for the arts to thrive can be a struggle. In an environment of stretched resources, producing good evidence of value and being able to tell compelling stories about why this work matters is important.

As arts practice evolves, we need to understand, show and grow our full potential. We hope this resource will help you to navigate your way and tell *you*r story *your* way with knowledge, confidence and credibility.

What is evaluation?

Evaluation assesses the quality, value and importance of something in a planned and structured way.

It involves having a clear purpose, asking good questions, collecting relevant data and making sense of that data to answer those questions.

Some basic questions underpin most evaluation

… What are we doing?

… How are we doing?

… What is changing, for whom, why and in what contexts?

… What is effective, for whom, in what contexts?

… What are we learning?

… How can we improve?

Two of the most common evaluative questions are:

What difference are we making?

How do we know?

Evaluation tells a story

Evaluation generally covers these things:

… This is our **intent** (purpose and goals)

… This is **what** we do and **how** we do it

… Here are the **questions** we ask ourselves about quality, value and impact

… This is how we generate **data** to respond to those questions

… This is our **evidence**

… Here is our **story**, based on the evidence

Intent ▸ Activity ▸ Questions ▸ Data ▸ Evidence ▸ Story

A way to think about evaluation

E – valu - ation

Evidence – Value – Action

Head – Heart – Hand

Evaluation is the skillful bringing together of head, heart and hand to identify value and contribution

Why evaluate?

… For accountability - to yourselves, to those you serve, and to funders

… To learn and improve

… To understand the needs and perspectives of the people you work with

and how you can serve them better

… To see what is effective and what is not

… To channel precious energy and resources

… To make a greater difference in the world

Evaluation should energise and assist, not be a burden

Foundations for evaluation

To evaluate something you need:

1. Something clear to evaluate
2. A clear evaluation purpose and key questions
3. Clarity on data and information needed to answer those questions
4. Methods that will deliver that data and information
5. Strong communication of findings
6. Applying findings to change and improve

What is evidence?

Evidence is data and information that answers evaluative questions

(for example what did we do, who with, how much, how well, what changed as a result)

Evidence comes in many forms

As a rule of thumb any evaluation should include:

… **head** - analytical, quantitative data (such as numbers, statistics)

… **heart** - qualitative data (visual images, stories, perceptions)

… **hand** - implications for action and decision making

Quantitative and qualitative data

Quantitative data is information you can count or measure, such as numbers, statistics or percentages. This kind of data provides breadth and can tell you a little about a lot.

Qualitative data is information about qualities, how people feel about something, why something happens, including descriptions, perceptions, stories and case studies. It can help provide detail and depth, for example how people experienced something and what they think could be improved.

Evidence funders (for example) like to see

Ask your key 'audiences' what they want to know

Type of evidence	Examples	Some common tools
Purpose and need (funders want a good rationale)	X% of people experience this issue Our participants/clients tell us that… Research literature indicates that…	Statistics and statutory data Client/participant interviews Literature review
Your activity	We did X programmes over X weeks, involving these activities, with these many people in these areas	Numbers, profile of participants, narrative, tables, graphs, photos
Quality of delivery	Participation and retention rates Participant and staff feedback Quality indicated by X, Y, Z	Feedback at key stages Anonymous online survey De Bono's six hats method
Effectiveness, results, outcomes, effects, impacts	Participant identified change Progress against identified indicators Tangible changes	Assessment against indicators Impact stories Participant feedback
What has been learnt?	This was in/effective, the unexpected, what you will start, stop, keep doing	Staff and participant debriefs Session with funder/s

Some ideas for collecting quantitative data

… Statistics www.stats.govt.nz

… Structured surveys using rating scales, multiple choice or closed (eg yes/no) questions

… Programme information – numbers involved, who participated, how many, how often, what happens when, who's involved, tickets sold etc.

… http://creativeandcredible.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/CreativeCredible_Quantitative-evaluation.pdf

Questionnaires don't have to be dull forms… get creative

Presenting quantitative evidence - example

YEAR AT A GLANCE

VISITORS 2,935
PEOPLE ENGAGED 97,036
VOLUNTEER HOURS 32,500
VOLUNTARY HELP $975,000

PAGE LIKES 5,700
FB POST CLICKS 51,035
FB ORGANIC VIEWS 83,927
WEBSITE VIEWS 28,223

PEOPLE GIVEN SPECIALIST ADVICE 12,324
EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS 1,066
WEEDS COLLECTED 800,865kg
STREAMSIDE RESTORED 32km
230,570kg WASTE DIVERTED FROM LANDFILL
TREES PLANTED 10,775

http://www.ecomatters.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/EcoMatters_Annual_Report_2015-16_web-1.pdf

Some ideas for collecting qualitative data

… Focus groups

… Film short stories

… Observation

… Graffiti walls, diaries

… Online feedback (a few questions or a survey)

… Bus stop method – put questions up on the walls and ask people to respond

… Reflective session/s for participants and staff

… 1:1 interviews or group discussion

… Literature review

… Participants interview each other – pairs or groups

… Photovoice, photo essays or narratives of change at the start, during or end

Ethics

At least three ethical standards apply when you collect evidence:

… Your own values, beliefs and tradition
… The ethical values of the people you collect evidence from and with
… Institutional requirements prescribed by your funder, organisation and/or ethics committees

Informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity are all important to consider.

Check these Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Standards for guidance
http://www.anzea.org.nz/evaluation/evaluation-standards/

See also the New Zealand Ethics Committee http://www.nzethics.com/

Techniques to tell a compelling story
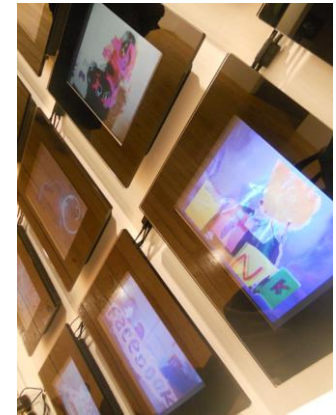
… Think of your evaluation report as storytelling

… Use graphs, charts and infographics

… Try dashboards, a summary sheet, a findings table, a short youtube or a photostory to summarise main points

… Presenting findings visually or in person can increase emotional response, understanding and retention of messages

… Try using a slide doc (duarte.com/slidedocs/)

See http://whatworks.org.nz/share/ for more tools and examples

Project dashboard - example
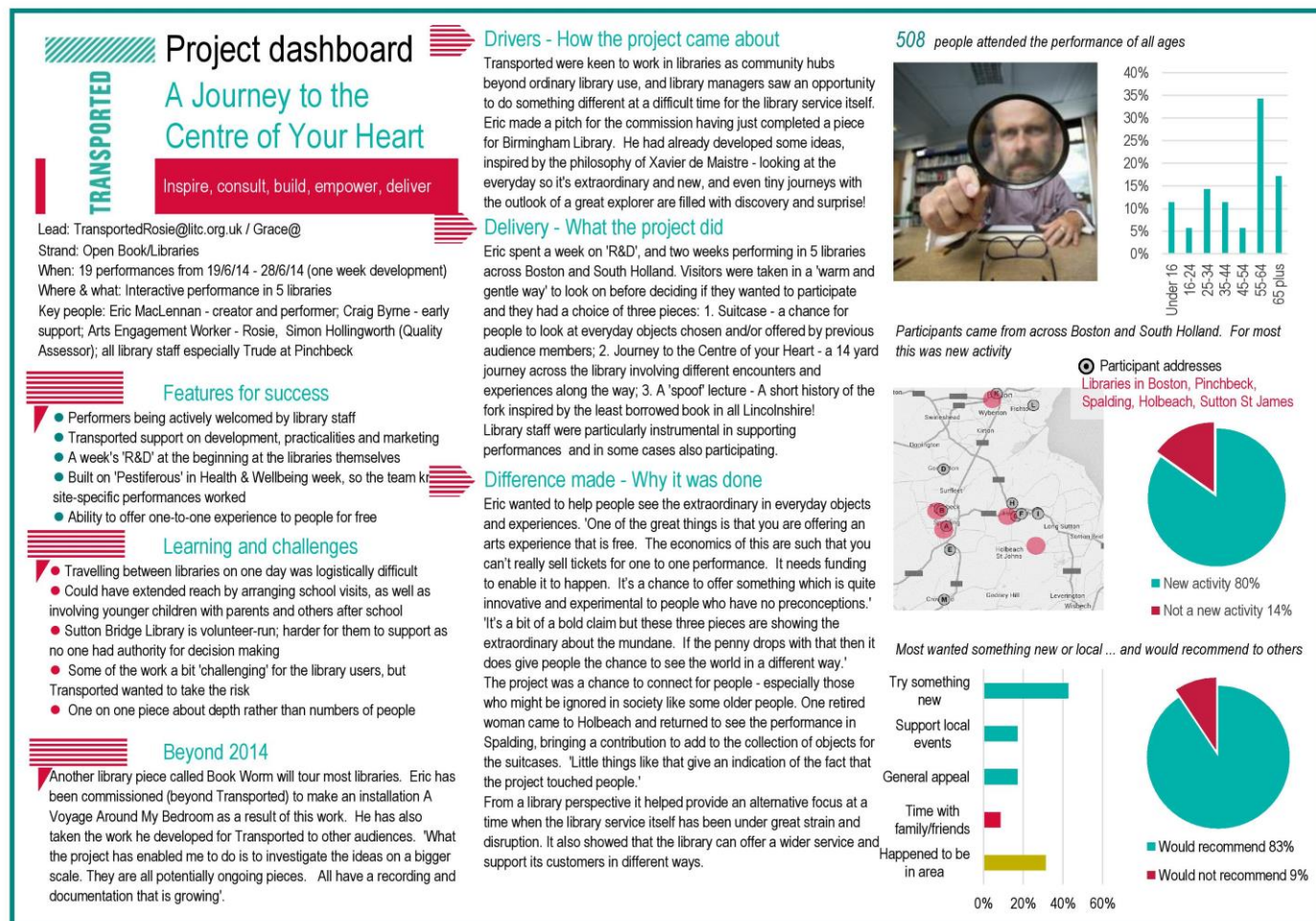
Source: Evaluation in Participatory Arts Programmes: A selection of approaches, models and methods developed across Creative People and Places 2013-2016 (see resources section)

Aotearoa Evaluation Resources

What Works

http://whatworks.org.nz

Online resource supporting great evaluation practice in Aotearoa. Lots of useful advice, guidance and resources specific to New Zealand, plus links to international resources.

The case study section walks through different evaluation methods in practice, and their pros and cons http://whatworks.org.nz/case-studies/.

The Kaupapa Māori section highlights important practices and principles relating to evaluation with Māori http://whatworks.org.nz/kaupapa-maori/.

SuPERU

http://www.superu.govt.nz/tools-resources

SuPERU is a NZ government agency set up to develop quality evidence in the social sector. The website houses a useful collection of guidance, tools and case studies.

See for example Making sense of evaluation: A useful guide to evaluation for everyone http://www.superu.govt.nz/resources/handbook.

ANZEA (Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association)

http://www.anzea.org.nz/

Our very own professional evaluation association, ANZEA hosts regular evaluation training, seminars, networks and runs conferences. It is low cost to become a member.

Aotearoa Evaluation Standards set out the expectations of the evaluation process, practices and products. The Standards provide guidance on what should occur at all stages of a quality evaluation. http://www.anzea.org.nz/evaluation/evaluation-standards/

ANZEA Pasifika Fono aims to build an evaluation community dedicated to carrying out rigorous and culturally responsive evaluation for, with and by Pacific communities.
http://www.anzea.org.nz/communities/anzea-pasifika-fono/

Mā te Rae - Māori Evaluation Association

Established in 2015, Mā te Rae seeks to mobilise evaluation as a tool for transformation for Iwi Māori. https://www.facebook.com/pg/MaTeRae/about/

Community Research (go to Webinars)

http://www.communityresearch.org.nz/

This site contains useful webinars of between 15 and 60 minutes on evaluation, including Results Based Accountability, measuring outcomes and meeting funder needs around evidence.

See also http://whanauoraresearch.co.nz/ for Māori and Pasifika related evaluation resources.

Arts specific evaluation resources

Creative and Credible
http://creativeandcredible.co.uk/
Supporting practitioners to evaluate arts initiatives with health and wellbeing goals. The resource offers user-friendly advice on how to approach your evaluation, terminology and methods, with links to further resources and information.

Arts Council England
http://www.artscouncil.org.uk
Access to a range of searchable tools, research, case studies and current thinking in the UK about evaluation in the creative/cultural field. Includes a self-evaluation toolkit, see http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/self-evaluation-toolkit.

Evaluation in Participatory Arts Programmes: A selection of approaches, models and methods developed across Creative People and Places 2013-2016
Valuable insight into different evaluation methods, and creative and accessible tools trialled by projects involved in Creative People and Places, a participatory arts community development programme in the UK.
http://www.culturehive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Evaluation_in_participatory_arts_programmes.pdf

Creative Victoria

http://creative.vic.gov.au/funding-and-support/resources/a-guide-to-evaluating-community-arts-and-community-wellbeing

Three useful guides including a 'how to' section on planning evaluation which looks at process, outcome and impact; key terms and what they mean; plus some templates (questionnaires, planning sheets etc.).

Cultural Development Network Australia

http://www.culturaldevelopment.net.au

Valuable guidance and resources supporting evaluation of creative and cultural practices. The resources are organised around a 'schema' of measurable outcomes designed to help cultural organisations evaluate their impact.

Accessing support: top tips

… **Build evaluation support into funding applications**, for example to hire an evaluation mentor to help you evidence your work. Find an evaluator in the (ANZEA) Evaluator Directory http://www.anzea.org.nz/directory/

… **Look for evaluation training and professional development**

… **Look to organisations you admire** to see what they do around evaluation

… **Support each other** via CAN Creative Arts Network and Arts Access Aotearoa

… **Join** (ANZEA) http://www.anzea.org.nz/, Mā Te Rae

https://www.facebook.com/pg/MaTeRae/about/ and/or the Pasifika Fono

http://www.anzea.org.nz/communities/anzea-pasifika-fono/
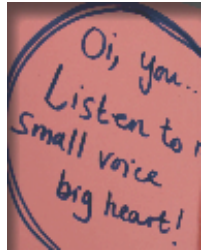
Final messages

Be authentic

Do evaluation your way

Build evaluation in from the start

Make it about improving, learning and making a difference

With thanks to

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Our designer Asha Munn
All photos courtesy of Amber Walls and Asha Munn (Creative Collaborative)
Our host Arts Access Aotearoa http://www.artsaccess.org