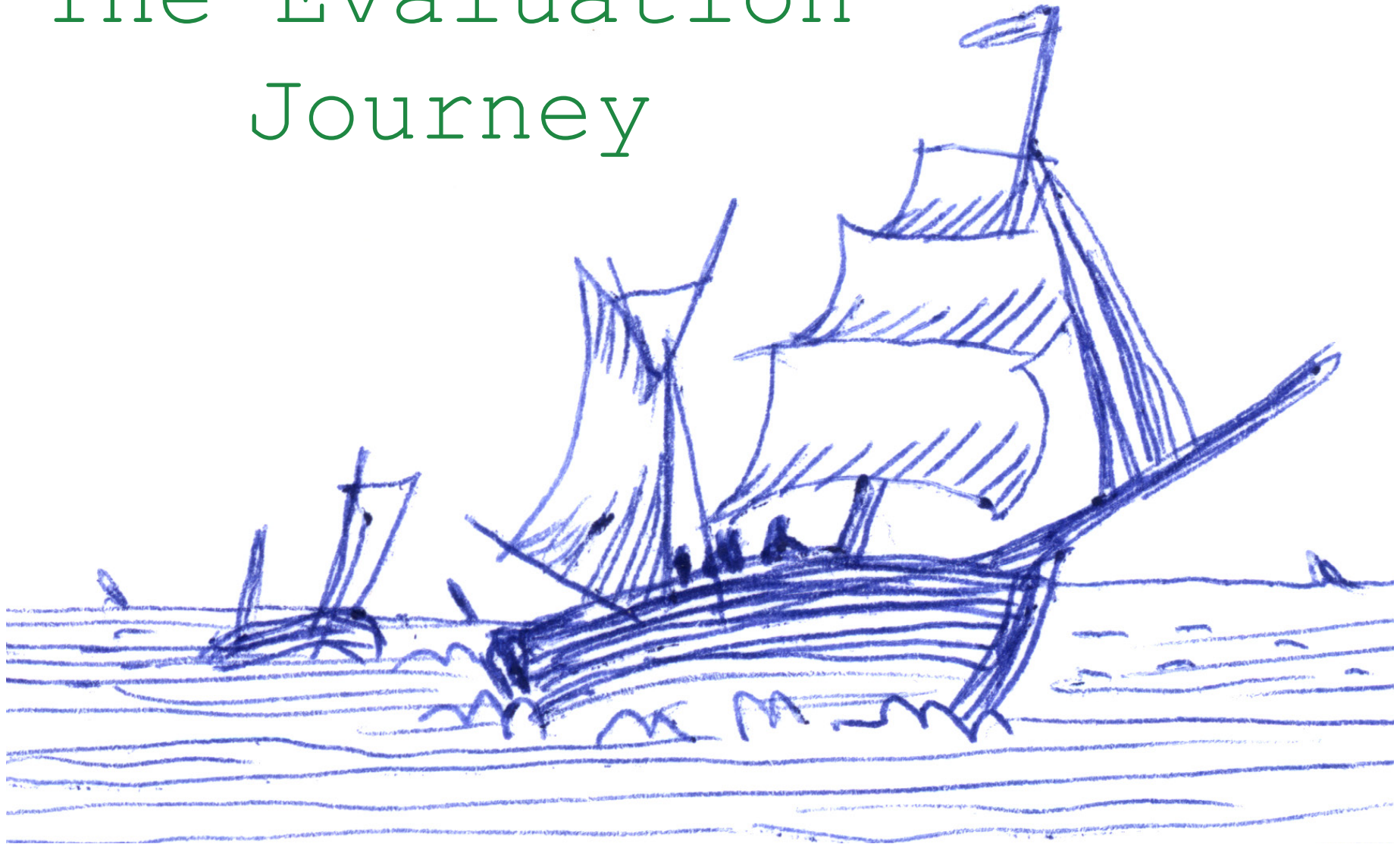


# The Evaluation Journey



A Toolkit for Cultural Operators

# The Evaluation Journey: A Toolkit for Cultural Operators

by Dagna Gmitrowicz and Marie Le Sourd  
with a foreword by Jordi Baltà

## Green advice

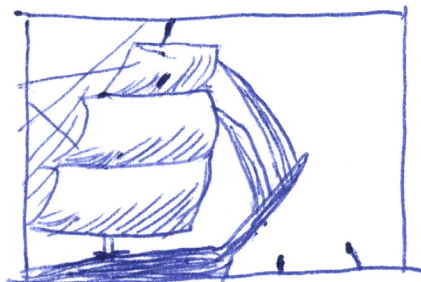
We encourage you to print this document only if you deem it necessary.

As there are many web references, online reading seems more appropriate.



Co-funded by the  
Creative Europe Programme  
of the European Union

# Foreword



Evaluation is a frequent topic in cultural management conversations, but also one which raises doubts and is treated with caution. Very often, while being aware that evaluation matters, it is difficult to identify suitable, valuable models and methodologies and integrate them in everyday work.

At the core of evaluation lies a set of fundamental human needs – determining value, comparing, learning, communicating the relevance of our actions – which are often implicit in personal and professional activities. We regularly discuss the value of activities and events, but this may be done in an implicit, informal way, which somehow limits the ability for the underpinning reflections to inform subsequent work.

The Evaluation Journey Toolkit aims to help address these initial obstacles, by presenting a set of key background questions that should allow staff in cultural centres, and other cultural professionals as well, to define an evaluation model and methodology suited to their specific needs and context. While there are no universal evaluation methods, evaluation should be of interest to everyone – the questions raised in this guide should enable readers to make evaluation effectively work for them.

Closely related to this is the understanding that, whereas evaluation can address technical aspects (e.g. works produced, audience make-up, cost-effectiveness), it also refers to the profound meaning of cultural work – its expressive, diverse, participative aspects, as well as those that connect cultural practices with social, economic, environmental and other political agendas. Evaluating involves reflecting on the value of what we do and what we observe. And, when addressing cultural practices, it often requires connecting a range of dimensions and themes, and combining quantitative and qualitative aspects.

As the title of this toolkit suggests, evaluation should indeed be understood as a journey. It gains relevance when it is integrated in and informs regular work, rather than seen as a separate chapter, done for extrinsic purposes. Evaluation also becomes more useful when performed as an iterative process, which allows for long-term learning.

I would like to commend the ENCC for addressing this theme, and the team of authors for presenting it in an accessible language and useful format. I hope this will enable many cultural professionals to address evaluation with confidence.

Jordi Baltà - October 2017

# Introduction

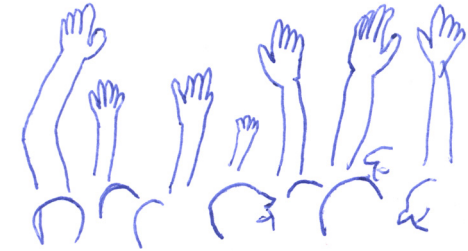


Evaluation seems to attract more and attention in the arts and cultural field, especially if we look at cultural networks' recent publications and at the discussions that arise during their meetings<sup>1</sup>. Though evaluation seems too often perceived negatively and/or with a feeling of fear (of inspection), waste of time and/or obligation, particularly towards funders, there is also an increasing – and much-needed - movement in the sector to build one's own approach and tools to evaluate.

1. The [network ENCATC](#) has in particular started a series of workshops and meetings related to evaluation of EU funded projects. [The 2016 RESEO conference](#) also dealt with the issue of evaluation. See also the [list of publications](#) compiled by On the Move in relation to projects, organisations with a social impact and/or with a multi-disciplinary/multi-countries' dimension.

As this toolkit is supported by the European Network of Cultural Centres (ENCC), we target in particular people working in cultural centres (directors, project managers and others) who wish to carry out an evaluation of their project, programme and/or organisation. These centres work with local communities and neighbourhood but also in connection with other cultural centres and/or artists/organisations at a European level. The ENCC wishes this toolkit to be used by its members and enriched with their evaluation practices potentially inspired by this Evaluation Journey toolkit. We also wish this toolkit to be open to all art and cultural professionals interested in evaluation, and welcome feedback as well as examples which can help us to continue this Evaluation Journey ([office@encc.eu](mailto:office@encc.eu)).

In general, this Evaluation Journey aims to reach out to people working within organisations with limited budgets and human resources for evaluation. It also focuses mainly on approaches and tools that can be developed and implemented internally and/or together with specific communities via a more participative approach.



We are humble about this toolkit as we are in the process of developing our own tools and strategies for evaluation in a context where resources – both human and financial - are scarce.

In this Evaluation Journey, we try as much as possible to refer to existing toolkits, articles and case studies, in order to avoid duplicating existing materials while cross-sharing information and resources that are useful for us... and hopefully for you as well. Explanatory links and page-numbers are provided to facilitate your search for information.

Last but not least, we do not provide THE answer to evaluation because there is no such answer. Instead, we suggest a series of approaches and ideas to make evaluation more reachable, relevant, participatory, and, why not, enjoyable!

Let's now embark on our evaluation journey!

# Who are the people behind this Evaluation Journey?



**Marie Le Sourd**, Secretary General of the cultural mobility information network On the Move, started to be interested in evaluation as a way to build argumentation and collect narratives and stories (of impacts) that could help advocate for artists' and cultural professionals' mobility. For this Evaluation Journey, Marie Le Sourd received feedback and contributions from On the Move's colleague Maïa Sert, as well as suggestions from Fanny Bordier, founder of M-topia, and Elena Di Federico, IETM Project Manager for Research and Publications.

**Dagna Gmitrowicz** is a visual artist, facilitator, coach, therapist and process designer who creates meaningful learning spaces at conferences, workshops and in her studio. She strongly believes in and supports a collaborative work culture – one that uses the potential and strengths of everyone and taps into the collective creativity of the group. For her, evaluating cultural actions within our communities is important if we want to achieve a truly participatory dimension and a state of shared responsibility in society.

**Jordi Baltà**, special adviser for this toolkit, works as researcher and trainer in cultural policy and international affairs. He has provided training on evaluation of cultural projects and policies, and their impact on development, and has worked as an evaluation consultant for UNESCO and others.

# Table of contents

doubts & questions before starting

evaluation = empowerment!

+/- pros and cons of different stakeholders

I. Distance is needed. p.7

to-do list

II. How to pack your evaluation suitcase? p.9

III. Whom to embark on your journey? p.12

how to involve them

A stop in our journey: two examples p.15

- logframe?
- significant change?
- case study?
- autoethnography?
- freestyle?

TWO EXAMPLES

IV. Which evaluation paths? (methodologies and indicators) p.19

V. How to navigate the waters of evaluation? (data collection and analysis) p.24

what to do with the data?

VI. How to share and use your evaluation? How to plan your next journey? p.28

VII. The bonus of your travel: tools and exercises p.31

practical section (by Dagna Gmitrowicz)

- the way of Council
- focus groups
- appreciative inquiry
- outdoor interventions
- artistic approaches

PLAN AHEAD  
IMPLEMENT  
DISSEMINATE



# I. Distance is needed.

*If you decide to be proactive and to construct your own evaluation, you will step into a stronger position to define what is of value and what can be considered an impact in connection to your work. You will be able to choose the paradigm, the approach, the logic which fits your needs best. You will be empowered to set your own agenda.*

- Vassilka Shishkova

When you start talking about evaluation, you don't usually get a lot of positive feedback, especially since the evaluation topic is often raised towards the end of a project and/or when a programme or an activity is not functioning very well. Evaluation is too often suggested even though time is too limited to produce good analysis and/or frustration on a difficult programme has already been felt for quite some time. Last but not least, let's be honest: we also think that we are so special in the arts and cultural field that evaluation cannot translate into impacts – be it through quantitative or qualitative

methods – the societal value of what we wish to create in a middle or long term perspective.

The reactions can also usually be that people/ organisations do not have the time or human resources to conduct and/or facilitate evaluation. Or that when project managers are ready to do it - when they feel the importance of it -, they don't get support from their team, their Board and/or from their hierarchy. When organisations obtain a budget for evaluation, they may also sometimes think that this budget could rather be reallocated to other parts of the project, considering the overall limited budget for the said action. Lastly, people often have the tendency to think that evaluation is about control, and that may place the evaluator(s) in the uncomfortable position of being seen as the 'checker'.



Here are a few arguments we offer to deal with those types of reactions, or at least to formulate a more positive understanding of evaluation:

**Yes,** evaluation can be expensive and heavy-going in terms of human resources, but everything depends on the scope, tools and approaches that are chosen. Using them from the start of the project, for instance, can facilitate the process and reduce the overall cost and human involvement. Note that on average, evaluation cost can be about 2 to 10% of the total budget of the said action, project or programme.

**Yes,** evaluation is useful, as long as the final results and recommendations are taken into consideration, and that the materials produced (reports, videos, exhibitions etc.) are further used to communicate on the project/the organisation and/or support the follow-ups of the said evaluated programme/organisation. Planning a reasonable budget to continue supporting evaluation results after the process is therefore important.

**Yes,** you can do it! In fact, we practice evaluation in our everyday life without realizing it (while comparing prices, making decisions, etc.). You do not need to be an expert on evaluation to delve into it for yourself, your project or your organisation, even though it can always be relevant to work – when time and funding allows – with external evaluators. This is also important to consider if you wish to conduct a community-based, participatory research/evaluation.

**Yes,** evaluation is about empowerment and in that sense, the abovementioned quote by Vassilka Shishkova is key for us: we, in the arts and cultural sector, need to strengthen our capacity to develop our own evaluation approaches and appropriate frameworks of references and values that are not driven only by economic forms of consideration.

→ See also Pierre Bourdieu on The Economy of Happiness

Finally, to pick up on our travel metaphor, travel for holiday is a way to take distance towards yourself, your context, your environment. Evaluation also allows you to take this distance and to consider an issue, the impacts of your work, or your whole

### How to go further?

#### Survival kit: Managing multilateral projects in the lifelong learning programme

The introduction to evaluation can clarify a lot of questions related to evaluation (for instance the definitions of ‘formative evaluation’ which takes place throughout the project while engaging different stakeholders, and ‘of summative evaluation’ which happens at the end of a project): pages 99-109

#### Goethe Institut- MOOC: Evaluation as a matter of changes

The first video introduces definitions of evaluation, quality management system, controlling and monitoring. The second video is more about defining the ‘cultural impact’ of a project.

These videos are short and worth watching.

organisation from a different perspective – for instance from the ‘eyes’ of the specific communities you work with. This can also help highlight the innovative dimension of your project.

#### Ása Richardsdóttir and Lene Bang Henningsen: It starts with a conversation: A guide for artists who wish to work collaboratively

See page 37: ‘Evaluation and feedback are an integrated part of the project practice’.

#### V. Shiskova, Look, I’m priceless! Handbook on how to assess your artistic organisation, IETM toolkit

See page 8 for the abovementioned quote by Vassilka Shishkova.

#### Basic guides for evaluation

These are basic guide handouts designed as an introduction to evaluation for those without technical backgrounds.

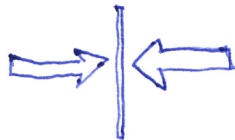


## II. How to pack your evaluation suitcase?

### TO-DO LIST :

- limit the scope
- draft
- define

### 1. LIMIT THE SCOPE



**Be flexible in your 'packing':** evaluation is not a fixed science but a practice dealing with evolving issues and human forms of impacts. Even if the most intensive period of evaluation may happen in the final stage, the evaluation should be planned as much as possible from the start of the action/programme.



**Make a diagnosis of the situation with the organisation/s behind the project/programme to be evaluated.** Questions could be, for instance: *Why do you need this evaluation (internal requirement/funders' requirement, etc.)? Where are we/you now in the project? Where can we/you project ourselves/yourselves in 5 or 10 years? What are the values we/you want to promote/nurture?*

This time of reflection – both if you do the evaluation internally or externalise even part of it – is important to clarify the situation. It also helps to define what the evaluation can focus on and subsequently the methodological approach/es. In that sense, evaluation becomes a useful tool to help to conduct your project, hence the importance of planning and reflection from the start of the project or programme process. This is particularly the case if you wish the evaluation to be participative and involve specific communities' representatives.

One or two intensive meetings of three hours each with the evaluator(s) are often necessary. We also highly suggest one or two internal meetings with the team (and/or the board) simply to prepare for/follow-up on the exchange with the evaluator(s). This of course requires additional time from the overall team, which should be taken into consideration.

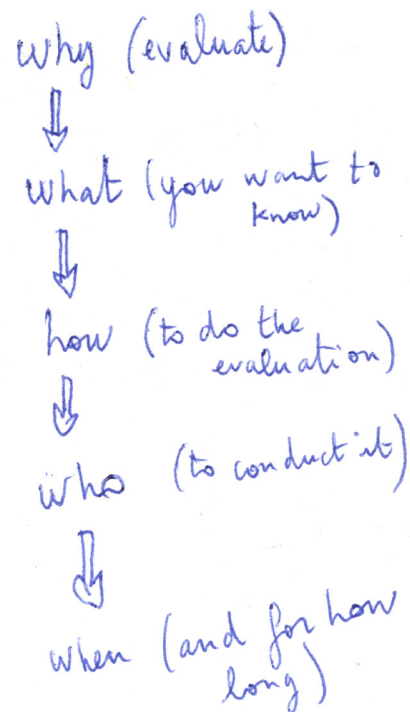


**Know your role in this evaluation process:** are you the initiator/facilitator of the evaluation? Who are the colleagues involved in the evaluation process? What are their roles? If you work with an external evaluator, what is your role in the process (contact person, facilitator, intermediary, etc.)? If you work with local communities, plan to 'recruit' your evaluators through a culturally sensitive language and avoid jargon.



**Know what and when you need to evaluate:** yourself, a group, a project, an organisation. This is

important to define the scope of your evaluation in terms of a time frame. While engaging in evaluation, you need to make choices: if you evaluate a three-year programme, you may need to decide which projects or which form of artistic practices to focus on within the overall programme.



For instance, On the Move is in charge of the evaluation programme of [IN SITU ACT](#), a four-year

project funded by the Creative Europe programme (2016-2020). On the Move, after consultation with IN SITU members decided to have a threefold evaluation focus:

- 1) Partnership development
- 2) IN SITU artists' mobility impacts throughout four years
- 3) Focus on one artistic creation in public space (out of the seven supported by the partnership).



**Plan ahead:** the evaluation time-frame can vary from one or two months (for instance at the end of a project) to three or four years (when embedded in the project, as for the IN SITU ACT project we mentioned above). The planning should also include a phase for implementation of the evaluation results.

Note that evaluation can also be commissioned to an external expert at first, and then embedded into the organisation's own regular activities (e.g. by developing a framework that fits and can be implemented by the staff through regular monitoring). It may therefore require an initial investment but then become a regular part of the normal workflow.

## 2. DRAFT



Draft your evaluative questions which will be subsequently linked to indicators.

Remember these are not written in stone and can be subject to later revisions.

While drafting you may keep in mind whether:

- 1) The questions are asked at the right time, worth asking, technically possible to answer (by your community members for instance and/or time-wise in terms of data collection), and ethical in terms of the issues they raise.
- 2) The questions relate to key dimensions of the object(s) of the evaluation in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impact and sustainability.

For an example of a table linking questions, objectives and indicators, you could refer to pages 18-21 of the [International Opportunities Fund by Wales Arts International](#) evaluated by On the Move.

### 3. DEFINE

Your package can include a reference framework to values and domains of change.

You may decide to work on the key issues you would like to deal with through evaluation: this seems particularly important if you wish to highlight the social impacts of your programme and/or the societal contribution of your project.

You can for instance choose key topics and domains of change you would like your project, organisation and/or programme to impact on: social inclusion, environmental awareness, participation, self-confidence (for the audience, the community, the team?), etc.

Linking your evaluation to key topics, issues or competencies may also help to tackle the very specificity of what you do or aim to reach through cultural and artistic projects and programmes. This is another way to consider an evaluation approach, which is to focus more on the process than on the end results (How it has happened vs. What has happened) and to show the innovation dimension of the said process.

Evaluation can indeed help shed light on the societal innovation dimension of your project or programme/organisation, which seems particularly relevant for cultural centres. This requires taking into consideration the overall political, social, economic context in which the project is being

#### How to go further?

Migros Culture Percentage and Pro Helvetia Swiss Arts Council: [‘Evaluation in the creative sector: why, what, when, and how?’](#)

The chapter on asking ‘key questions’ with examples is on pages 79-84.

On defining values: [IXIA the Public Art Think Tank in England: ‘Public Art, A Guide to Evaluation’](#), pages 19-21. The ‘Matrix’ developed by IXIA is a tool to facilitate discussion and debate amongst a range of stakeholders in projects involving artists in public space. It is designed to help identify the values (economic, artistic, social, environmental...) specific to those stakeholders that may need to be taken into account in assessing outcome and impact. This set of values can also be relevant for other sectors and activities.

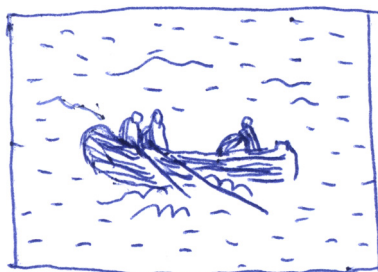
developed. Domains of change in this regard can mean for instance:

- Co-creation, collective approach, creative process
- The notion of links - between people, communities -/the idea of the ‘commons’ (and how it can be created).

On defining areas of competencies: another way to look at evaluating your projects is to think in terms of competencies and skills particularly if your project/organisation deals with youth and/or learning programmes. See in particular the [C-stick tool developed by JES, a Belgian NGO](#), to identify key competencies for employment: cooperating, speaking, listening, being flexible, planning and organising, learning, giving feedback, handling feedback, self-reflecting, networking, handling authority, respecting rules, dealing with clients, taking initiatives, empathising.

[The Community Tool Box](#) is a free, online resource for those working to build healthier communities and bring about social change. It offers thousands of pages of tips and tools for taking action in communities.

# III. Whom to embark on your journey?

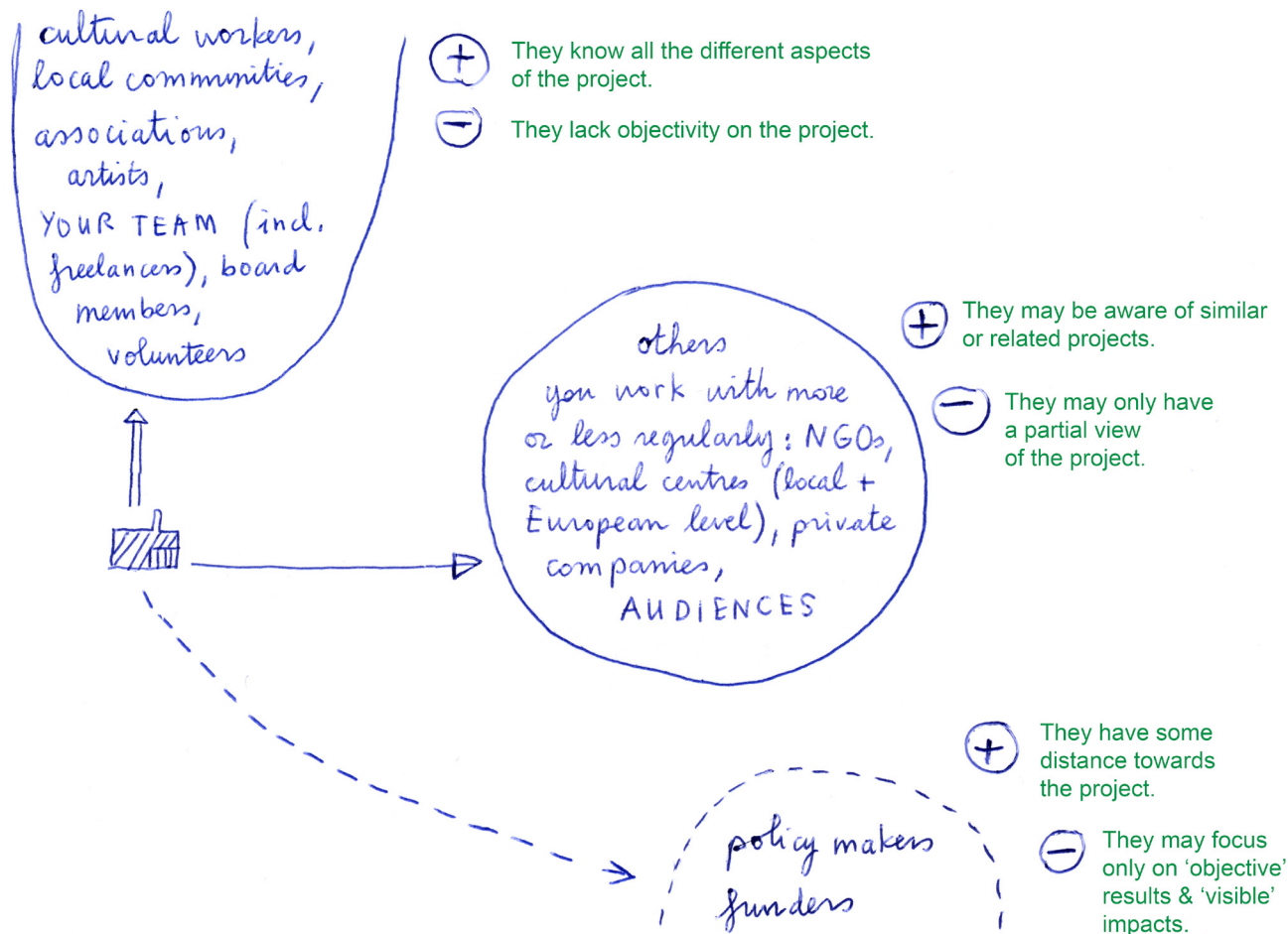


As for any trip, you need to carefully consider whom you go with. Evaluation is not a lonely journey and the earlier you include the people/organisations you want to include, the more insights, contributions and involvement you may get – and consequently the more support and commitment for the follow-up of the recommendations/suggestions and further developments of your project/organisation.

A collaborative approach may also counterbalance the fact that in the arts and cultural sector in particular, we most frequently use summative types of evaluation (conducted after the action or project is over), which are too often considered as a final administrative burden.

## THINGS TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN PLANNING YOUR EVALUATION

Whom to embark as part of a project/programme (internal)-evaluation?





Which choices to make in order to select the people/organisations to embark on your journey?

You can definitely not embark everybody on your evaluation journey, at least not to the same extent. Think in terms of key stakeholders and people, and remember to value the contribution of each one of them: people can feel honoured to be part of the journey and share their views and opinions in one way or another (particularly when their voices are not often heard or recognised). Note that the more participatory your approach, the longer the process will be. When involving communities' representatives, for instance, you may need more time to assess their skills (referring to evaluation processes we use in our everyday life) and subsequently train the 'fresh' evaluators. For your 'fresh' community-based evaluators, you can interest them while clarifying the objectives of the evaluation, explaining the resources you have, the areas they can influence as a group, making their presence appreciated and relevant for the overall process. It is important to identify their needs as a group and then on a more practical basis, provide them with minimum competences (interview

methods, Internet research, story-collecting, etc.) and shared responsibilities in the process.



How to involve these various stakeholders and/or interest them in the evaluation process?

Consider the time they can allocate to the evaluation and how they can contribute to it (e.g. written/oral feedback, individual/collective sessions). Your evaluation journey could embark the same key (primary) stakeholders throughout the overall journey and include at some moments/stops additional (secondary) stakeholders.

"EVALUATION IS A  
HUMAN ACTIVITY  
INVOLVING SOCIAL  
INTERACTION"  
—Marvin C. Alkin,  
Evaluation Essentials:  
from A to Z (Guilford Press)

Last but not least, do not forget that your evaluation questions may change based on the feedback you will have from your different stakeholders. The more you involve your stakeholders at the start of the process, the more chances you have to see the evaluation results be implemented, as a sense of ownership will be nurtured. The same principle applies to an in-house evaluation with your teams and colleagues: changes can be more rapidly implemented - even though you'll have to remain aware of the necessity of being self-critical, in order to stay as neutral and objective as possible. The recognition of shortcomings and mistakes can help develop future areas of stronger development for yourself or your organisation.

More than being about information, then, evaluation is about co-creation - both of the process and of the 'working together' on the follow-ups of the evaluation results. Community-based participatory research/evaluation can in that sense be very enlightening as it is a process by and for the people that may provoke more significant benefits for the community in the long run. Throughout the process, people may speak/react more freely to their peers, particularly those they know personally.

Researchers who are members of the community usually have better knowledge of the history and relationships surrounding a programme or an issue, and are therefore in a better position to put them in context.

## How to go further?

[Goethe Institut: 'Culture Works: Using evaluation to shape sustainable foreign relations'](#)

We particularly like the network analysis for the stakeholders' mapping of the Goethe Institut of the Netherlands (pages 20-21)

[Guide pratique, Fondation Daniel & Nina Carasso: 'Auto-évaluer l'impact social de projets artistiques'](#)

The stakeholders' introduction is page 6 (in French).

[Migros Culture Percentage and Pro Helvetia Swiss Arts Council: 'Evaluation in the creative sector: why, what, when, and how?'](#)

See in particular the section related to the choice of the evaluation team (both for internal and external types of evaluations: pages 85-100).



# A Stop in our Journey: two examples

These examples are just provided as an illustration of how to embed the different steps of implementation of your evaluation.

## EXAMPLE 1: ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN BY A CULTURAL CENTRE

### Focus of the evaluation

References to the Evaluation Journey steps	Evaluation process and issues to consider
<p>To be checked beforehand:                      - Situation of the project before the evaluation starts &gt; diagnosis (subsequent to meetings with the staff/organisation/related stakeholders) to clarify starting point (see questions pages 9-10) and/or consider doing a <a href="#">SWOT analysis</a>.</p> <p>The diagnosis should include a precise contextualisation of the project (for instance, recent migration wave in said city/region compared with past migration histories).</p>	<p>Results and impacts of a 3-year programme on developing artistic activities for refugee children by a cultural centre</p> <p>Evaluation requested by the funders to decide whether or not to continue the project – evaluation as a tool for strategic decision</p> <p>Future plan to implement the results of the evaluation (including related budget and related partnerships/funders).</p>

### Delimitation of the evaluation's scope: Limit, Draft, Define

References to the Evaluation Journey steps	Evaluation process and issues to consider
<p><b>Limit</b>                      Timeframe (in this case to be decided according to funders' request)</p> <p>Focus aspect to evaluate</p> <p>Points to be taken into consideration: budget for the evaluation, level of neutrality needed, level of follow-up required, related engagement of the team</p> <p><b>Draft</b>                      Importance of the diagnosis and the aim of the evaluation</p> <p><b>Define</b>                      Setting the values of reference of the project to evaluate</p>	<p>Two months after the project ends.</p> <p>Decision on the focus of the evaluation: the overall project/one or two specific activities/ project's capacity to develop new forms of partnerships in the city/etc.</p> <p>Decision on who is the evaluator: internal/external or mix</p> <p>Evaluative questions related to the project                      For instance: Have the artistic activities reinforced the social capacity of the children?</p> <p>Domain of changes: self-esteem, educational improvement, creative skills, well-being, etc. And to go further on a societal/innovative level: links (between historical communities and very recent settlers in the said city/region)</p>

**Organisations/People involved and their roles**

References to the Evaluation Journey steps	Evaluation process and issues to consider
<p>Questions to take into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Briefing of the external evaluator (who may focus on only one part of the evaluation)</li> <li>- At least one month internal work agenda re-organisation for the of the evaluation managers who are internally in charge of collecting data (as they may be less efficient on part of their usual duties)</li> <li>- Involvement of beneficiaries' part of the process (take into consideration intercultural differences, language issues, time allocation, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p>Agents involved and their roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- External evaluator (coordinates the evaluation, collects data, elaborates final report);</li> <li>- Project managers/assistants (provide data to external evaluator, liaise with other relevant stakeholders, implement evaluation recommendations);</li> <li>- Beneficiaries/refugee children and their families/other collaborators (are interviewed, participate in focus groups, receive final evaluation report) ;</li> <li>- Partners (e.g. associations involved with refugees' integration) role</li> <li>- Funders (are interviewed, receive final report)</li> </ul>

**These questions and points may definitely help select the relevant methodological approach and the related tools of collect.**

## EXAMPLE 2: ARTISTS' RESIDENCY PROGRAMME HOSTED BY CULTURAL CENTRES FOR ARTISTS WORKING ON ISSUES RELATED TO SOCIAL CHANGE (FOUR-YEAR PROGRAMME)

### Focus of the evaluation

References to the Evaluation Journey steps	Evaluation process and issues to consider
<p>To be checked beforehand: Baseline data: where did the centres start? Are there any other experiences by one of the centres? How did the project come about?</p> <p>External eye? Expert working on art and social change, researcher on societal innovation, etc.</p>	<p>Mid-term evaluation of the pilot programme carried out by 3 centres in Poland, Italy and Croatia (total of 18 artists/ 3 per year/per centre)</p> <p>Evaluation to learn/to improve</p> <p>Plan to embed the results of the evaluation in the two remaining years of the programme</p>

### Delimitation of the evaluation's scope: Limit, Draft, Define

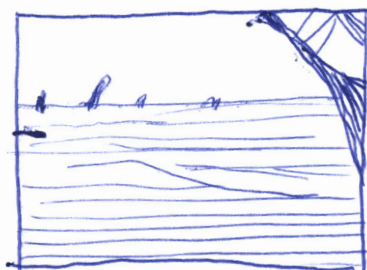
References to the Evaluation Journey steps	Evaluation process and issues to consider
<p><b>Limit</b> Timeframe</p> <p>Focus aspects to evaluate</p> <p>Evaluation embedded in the project from the very beginning</p> <p><b>Draft</b></p> <p><b>Define</b> Setting the values of the project to evaluate: cultural diversity, co-creation, change of artistic paradigms, interest in art events, etc.</p>	<p>2 years + one month</p> <p>For instance: artists' mobility impacts on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local communities</li> <li>- local cultural organisations</li> <li>- artists' professional development</li> <li>- artists' own context when back in their country</li> </ul> <p>Internal evaluator (appoint one dedicated staff member based in one of the centres)</p> <p>Evaluative questions For instance: does physical mobility within Europe modify the artists' understanding of the role of art in social change?</p> <p>Domain of changes: for the artists (career development in Europe, new participative approaches to artistic projects, etc.); for the local communities (co-creation, interest in artistic events, etc.); for the cultural centres (new partnerships, greater diversity of programmes/audiences, etc.)</p>

**Organisations/People involved and their roles**

References to the Evaluation Journey steps	Evaluation process and issues to consider
Questions to take into consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Level of time availability for the different people involved in the evaluation process</li><li>- Period for feedback (for instance: just after the event, 6 months after, 1 year after etc.)</li><li>- Complementarity of objectives between locally related projects and this European project</li><li>- Etc.</li></ul>	Agents involved and their roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Internal evaluator and contact persons' teams in other cultural centres</li><li>- Beneficiaries: local communities' representatives, local associations, artists</li><li>- Cultural centres</li><li>- Funders/policy makers</li></ul>

**These questions and points may definitely help select the relevant methodological approach and the related tools of collect.**

## IV. Which evaluation paths?



Some methods are more global than others, some are more useful to provide light/new perspectives on a particular issue. Ideally, a mix is encouraged (for instance, the case study can complement another more comprehensive method).

### METHODOLOGIES AND INDICATORS

The choice of methodologies depends on your evaluation goals and on the preliminary work done to limit/define your evaluation scope and your group of evaluation stakeholders.

Evaluation can be in particular about learning, improving process and results, communicating, advocating... and the types of methods and related tools you'll want to use are related to what you want to achieve through evaluation.

The following pages mention a few methodologies that can be worth considering.

Evaluation goals	Types of methods/tools	Remark
To learn/improve	Qualitative methodologies can be appropriate to check to what extent the goals of the project are reached and/or whether/how some amendments need to be made to the overall process.	The specificity of the arts and cultural sector in creating values that are not directly economic-driven should encourage us to develop as much as possible an evaluation approach embedding qualitative tools.  This, of course, helps capture the value(s) (societal, social, environmental, educational and others) that artistic practices can nurture and that numbers cannot translate.
To evolve (towards new strategy orientations)	A hybrid quantitative/qualitative approach may be used, for instance, to better understand the needs of the beneficiaries and to refine argumentation presented to new funders/partners.	For instance, for the section 'to advocate/ to communicate', case studies or visual mapping could also help grasp the impacts of a project in a more focused and narrative manner. Stories can also have a lot of power in advocacy and communication, for instance regarding the social innovation dimension of your project.
To advocate/To communicate or disseminate	Quantitative forms of data may be more appropriate as figures may be more convincing or convey a more neutral dimension.	
Any other objective you can think of	Your choice of tools/methods	The use of transversal/hybrid methods and tools will help reflect the qualitative dimension of your evaluation.

## CHOOSING METHODOLOGY/IES

### METHOD FOCUSED ON RESULTS AND LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (OR LOGFRAME)

A logical framework is articulated around inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts of a project, a programme, an organisation, etc. The logframe approach is generally used in this toolkit through the two examples provided.

#### How to go further?

All toolkits and reports mentioned in this guide include explanations on this approach. See for instance pages 41-57 of the guide by Migros Culture Percentage and Pro Helvetia Swiss Arts Council: [‘Evaluation in the creative sector: why, what, when, and how?’](#)

### MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

It involves collecting ‘stories’ of change brought through and by the project. The method – complementary to other tools – helps highlight

unexpected changes through participants/audience and/or communities’ stories.\* Different steps of elaboration should be taken into consideration, including identifying the domains of change; defining the collection frequency; collecting; selecting the most significant stories; verifying their validity; and making the final analysis.

#### How to go further?

Survival kit: [Managing multilateral projects in the lifelong-learning programme](#)  
Pages 104-106: methodologies such as the Most Significant Change but also Action Learning are introduced as an interesting way to collect narratives.

\* See also chapter VII for more tools for evaluation within a community.

### CASE STUDY

The case study approach can be a great way to enrich an evaluation while giving a practical ref-

erence example in context. It can also be a good tool for further communication. It can focus on a person, a specific subject, a group of people, a community. There are different types of case studies: illustrative, explanatory, critical instance, programme implementation, programme effects and cumulative (combination of the findings of different case studies).\*

#### How to go further?

V. Shishkova, [‘Look, I’m priceless! Handbook on how to assess your artistic organisation’](#), IETM toolkit: pages 72-77

\* The website [‘Better Evaluation’](#) is a useful resource in general and for the case study focus in particular.

### CRITICAL INCIDENTS LOG

A critical incident can be described as one that makes a contribution – either positively or negatively – to an activity or phenomenon. Usually partners/beneficiaries are asked to tell their own



story and how this incident may impact the overall project/ecosystem.

### How to go further?

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical\\_Incident\\_Technique](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_Incident_Technique)

[TCBL evaluation toolkit](#) (Textile & Clothing Business Labs), page 26

## OUTCOME MAPPING

‘Outcome mapping is a methodology for planning, monitoring and evaluating development initiatives in order to bring about sustainable social change’. This method can be used as a stand-alone or as a complement to others. It is an interesting method to capture behavioural changes in the context of a project or a programme.

### How to go further?

[http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome\\_mapping](http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome_mapping)

## AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

This method uses first-person narrative and personal experience as a prism for research. Despite some shortcomings to be aware of, it has the advantage of capturing ‘what the methods struggling for objectivity would omit: the subjective, the individual, the intrinsic, the emotional and the evasive’. This can also be a good method to start the evaluation process and for team building.

### How to go further?

V. Shiskova, ‘[Look, I’m priceless! Handbook on how to assess your artistic organisation](#)’, IETM toolkit, pages 61-62

## FREE STYLE?

Develop your own methodology and do not forget that some of the techniques that you know can also be used with an evaluation flavour. The publications below can inspire you: for instance check the ‘world café’ technique and also the GROW problem-solving method (Goal, Reality, Obstacles, Option, Ways Forward).

### How to go further?

Goethe Institut: ‘[Culture Works, Using evaluation to shape sustainable foreign relations](#)’. The world café technique is page 19. The other examples provided can also be a source of inspiration for refreshing examples of evaluations for the arts and cultural sector (to evaluate artists in residence, work in changing regions, networks etc.)

Survival kit: [Managing multilateral projects in the lifelong learning programme](#)

For the GROW method, refer to the page 105

## WORKING ON INDICATORS

The indicators should be defined to answer the evaluative questions and shed light on criteria/values that are important for you. They can be quantitative and/or qualitative. The great challenge but also opportunity of our sector is to develop more quality-based type of indicators, particularly for the actions which are more process-oriented.

### How to go further?

Migros Culture Percentage and Pro Helvetia Swiss Arts Council: [‘Evaluation in the creative sector: why, what, when, and how?’](#) Check the pages 63-70 for precise reference examples.

Let’s now go back to our exercise for the project, ‘Artistic activities for refugee children by a cultural centre’ and list a few indicators, which should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Accessible, Reliable and Time-bound. These are just examples; as a general rule, try to have less indicators but as focused and linked to the evaluative questions as possible.

Indicators <i>Methodology</i>	Examples	Responsibility
<b>Impact indicators</b> (longer-term and/or indirect consequences of the project) <i>Logframe</i>	Examples: boost of children’s social, interaction and language skills (with the language/s of the host country)	External evaluator
<b>Outcomes’ indicators</b> (short-term effects for the beneficiaries/direct stakeholders) <i>Most significant change</i>	Examples: self-confidence built for the children, self-esteem gained by the parents (who can be for instance better equipped to find other opportunities for their children and/or better connected to other parents)*	External evaluator**
<b>Indicators of direct outputs</b> (delivered services and products) <i>Logframe</i>	Examples: production of new interactive methodologies, development of a set of inclusive artistic activities for refugee kids	Team***
<b>Indicators of activities</b> (process of implementation of the projects) <i>Logframe</i>	Examples: number of workshops with artists, number of participants, regularity of participation (children and parents when required)	Team
<b>Indicators of resources</b> (financial, HR, materials means) <i>Logframe</i>	Examples: funding allocation for the project, number of staff, number of workshop rooms and availability in the week, translation support, etc.	Team

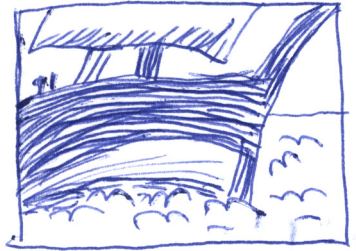
- \* There are different ways to evaluate progress: children may not be able to handle the language of the host country but may exchange and develop projects with other children without translators. This can be particularly seen through the selected methodology.
- \*\* You can also consider having your team and/or the external evaluator bring in an ‘external eye’, e.g. an expert on the subject, at a particular moment (first diagnosis meeting, focus group, observation, etc.). For example, On the Move is using ‘external eyes’/experts on new media and performing arts for Open Labs organised as part of the evaluated project, [European Theatre Lab](#) (two ‘external eyes’ throughout the two-year project). ‘External eyes’ can help you to clarify your current situation, the challenges linked to your sector, how your project answers them through its specific objectives... This can potentially help you refine the tools and evaluation approach you have embarked on.
- \*\*\* Which of course in the case of community-based research/evaluation, includes members of your community.

Note that the indicators can be related to the different levels of policy/programme/project planning, as expressed in the logical framework and can be articulated around objectives.

<b>Impact indicators</b>	<b>Strategic objective</b> To develop a new artistic programme for refugee children
<b>Outcome indicators</b>	<b>General objective</b> To organise a set of workshops in 3 months for children (5-10 years old) from refugee families (less than 1 year on the territory)
<b>Output indicators</b>	<b>Specific objectives</b> To involve artists used to working with children from diverse social backgrounds To involve the families in some of the activities To connect with other centres/associations working on refugees issues
<b>Indicators of activities</b>	<b>Internal planning and resourcing necessary to achieve the above objectives</b> Project content development, preparatory meetings (internally + with artists/ other associations, etc.) Budget allocation per workshop, human resources, selection of the artists, venues

→ See also these diagrams to help differentiate outputs/outcomes/impacts.

# V. How to navigate the waters of evaluation?



## DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Consider first- and second-hand types of resources for your data collection:

> **'baseline data'** – the preliminary data which allows you to track progress from where the project started (e.g. for the exchange project for artists working on social change, map whether such projects have been already been developed by the centres for the past five years).

> **primary data** – books, materials, reports from other/former projects, statistics about the issue

you are dealing with, photos and videos, etc. (e.g. for the projects related to refugees' inclusion, [the list of publications, projects and mappings compiled by On the Move](#))

> **secondary data:** data which can relate to the object of your evaluation (national or regional statistics about the issue you are dealing with, report about a similar project in another country, for instance through the ENCC network).

The list below is inspired by Eval – a France-based resources and training organisation.

<http://www.eval.fr>

### Observation

- Informal: with no observation sheet/framework. Writing of random thoughts, reflections, ideas etc.
- Organised: with an observation framework/[observation sheet](#)

- Programmed: with a timeline of observation moments throughout the project
- On the spot: Unplanned/spontaneous (linked for instance to an interesting/unusual situation)
- Peer-based: articulated around a homogenous or diverse group (for instance an audience-based group or a group composed of artists and representatives of their audiences)

### Interviews

- Informal: Open with some key questions or at least one to open the discussion
- Structured: Based on a interviewers' guide/protocol
- Free: Open exchange
- Framed: Questions with closed answers
- Semi framed: Questions with closed and/or open answers

Interviews allow more spontaneous comments and feedback; they can help to identify areas of change, innovation and improvement in the project.

The role of the evaluator, whatever the chosen format, is to refocus the interview, go into depth on certain points and/or help reformulate. The evaluator should also remind interviewees of the context of the interview (evaluation scope, method of restitution, etc.).

Points to keep in mind: Targeted sample? Frequency of the interviews? Choice of language (if dealing with a linguistically diverse group of people)?

### Focus group

Points to keep in mind: Targeted sample? Frequency? Who will moderate? Type of group (same type of stakeholders or diverse group)? Choice of language (if dealing with a linguistically diverse group of people)?

### Questionnaire

Points to keep in mind: Targeted sample? Online (for instance via Google Forms)? By writing at a specific moment (after a workshop)? What ratio of answers will be considered satisfactory?

Considering the important number of questionnaires (particularly online) that people receive nowadays (on both professional and personal

levels), try to ask the important questions first and to keep the questionnaire concise. A bit of humour is always good to encourage users to participate.

### Freestyle

Other forms of data collection: photos or drawing made by children, exhibition, videos, diaries, etc.

**The analysis phase of data is key**, especially when data is collected from various sources. A few tips – gathered from our experience and reading – to help you with this phase:



There are ways to turn qualitative magnitudes into quantitative indicators (e.g. asking participants to describe their satisfaction on a 0-5 scale, and similar ways of measuring the innovative nature of a programme, the aesthetic pleasure derived from it, etc.). This type of progressive scale can help identify key moments of change (in a behaviour change, a learning process, etc.);



Progressive scales also help evaluate qualitatively the evolution of an action, a project, a behaviour while cross-sharing

data from different stakeholders (beneficiaries, funders, centres, etc.);



Numbers as such take a meaning in a particular context and when compared with other numbers (initial situation, average number for the same issue at a national level, etc.);



You may need to code the data you collect while relating them to key issues, which may then allow you to draw causalities between fact and information and highlight 'domains of change';



You may need to collect more data to confirm an assumption. This may imply using extra data collection tools;



Contextualising data is highly important, particularly when referring to different types of stakeholders. For instance, there may have been fewer participants than expected for the workshops (see above example) but their regularity and level involvement may have had stronger impacts on their lives and connections to other artistic practices.

# Sample observation sheet

Observation sheet of <input type="checkbox"/> meeting <input type="checkbox"/> performance <input type="checkbox"/> workshop <input type="checkbox"/> etc..... Date..... Venue.....	
General objectives (of what you observe):  <input type="checkbox"/> active observer <input type="checkbox"/> passive observer	
Balance of exchanges (e.g. diversity of voices heard, ways to facilitate learning, etc.)	Overall impressions (interpersonal relations, conflict management, possible tensions)
New ideas/issues (which shed light on your evaluation/research)	Key words/thoughts/sentences/ideas shared
Other thoughts	Issues to follow up on (e.g. with your team, with key actors of your evaluation, format of meeting...)



Let's go back to our example exercise, the artists' residencies programme hosted by cultural centres for artists working on social change (four-year programme – mid-term evaluation).

Indicators/ Methodology	Examples/ Means of collect	Responsibility
<b>Impact indicators/</b>  <i>Case study (focus on artists with no prior European experience)</i>	Examples: Increase of opportunities at a European level for projects related to social changes  Questionnaires/interviews	Internal evaluator
<b>Outcomes indicators/</b>  <i>Most significant change (focus on local communities/people with few access to artistic events)</i>	Examples: % of people going to artistic events/ activities after the workshops/activities  Focus group/videos (by the beneficiaries)	Internal evaluator + teams in other centres (for instance for translation purposes)
<b>Indicators of direct outputs/</b>  <i>Logframe</i>	Examples: New contextualised methodological approaches and tools  Interviews	Internal evaluator + teams in other centres
<b>Indicators of activities/</b>  <i>Logframe</i>	Examples: Number of workshops, number of venues associated to the workshops, number of participants,  Statistics tables	Internal evaluator + teams in other centres

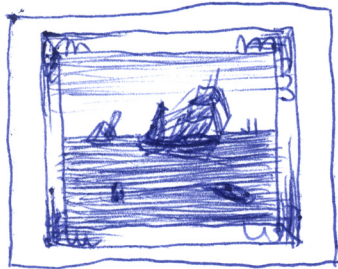
### How to go further?

V. Shishkova, ['Look, I'm priceless! Handbook on how to assess your artistic organisation', IETM toolkit](#)

We strongly encourage you to read the 'Tools' section which defines each of the abovementioned tools (pages 43-83). We particularly find interesting the part on the 'focus group'.

Guide pratique, Fondation Daniel & Nina Carasso: ['Auto-évaluer l'impact social de projets artistiques'](#)  
See page 13 'Un exemple de référentiel': an example of a framework to evaluate the social impact of your project (in French but easily understandable).

# VI. How to share and use your evaluation? How to plan your next journey?



This last chapter has somehow been implied from the start of our evaluation journey. If people get discouraged with evaluation, it's often because they do not see the results of it and/or are not associated to/directly involved in the overall process.

What can be the results of evaluation...

- For yourself?
- For the project's stakeholders/your organisation?
- For the sector at large?
- For the funders (whether they requested the evaluation or not)?

How to plan ahead to implement the evaluation's suggestions and recommendations - whatever the aims of the evaluation are (improvement, strategic decisions, advocacy or others)?

## TICK BOX

This set of suggestions is inspired by Eval – a France-based resources and training organisation.

<http://www.eval.fr>

Plan before the evaluation starts whether there will be :

- An internal report
- A public report
- A final public/semi-public restitution
- An internal feedback session (workshop, staff/board retreat etc.)

Timing-wise, consider whether the stakeholders who participated in the evaluation will be able to give feedback on the report before its final public and/or internal presentation.

A final public/semi-public restitution can give the members of your evaluation team – particularly in a more participatory process – a chance to share their learning in terms of their own development and collect remarks on the process.

Plan a schedule to follow up on evaluation recommendations (including a retreat, a workshop where the results can be discussed with stakeholders and/or the organisation's staff, hierarchy, etc.). This schedule should be linked to a budget dedicated to implementing the recommendations.

Throughout the evaluation process, produce concise mid-term reports (for your partners/stakeholders) and if necessary organise review meetings.

Think of ways to support the restitution: video, photography, mapping, graphics, a press article and/or other artistic forms of support: theatre, an exhibition, etc. It could be also a market stand or an outdoor poster campaign (particularly to highlight a participative community approach).

Identify the most appropriate media to disseminate the report: social networks, newsletters, annual reports etc.

Don't forget to think about offline forms of dissemination and multilingual feedback, when required by the nature of the project and the linguistic diversity of the group.

As far as final restitution is concerned, here are some ideas we would like to share:



We advise the evaluator/evaluation team to choose restitution and dissemination methods based on the goals of the evaluation (is it about learning? improving? helping make decisions? supporting communication? maintaining quality? working on sustainability?, etc.).



It is important for the evaluator/evaluation team to have a critical reading of the results (particularly in the case of internal forms of evaluation) and observe the values created by the project, the organisation or the programme based on the evaluation criteria. The evaluator should report on what she/he knows through the data collection and not more. An evaluation should strive neither to cover everything nor to collect more information than is really needed.



The evaluation report should generally include: an executive summary, an introduction to the objectives of the evaluation, the chosen methodology/ies, the results/findings, the conclusion and recommendations, the annexes.

However, as far as recommendations are concerned, and as stated by Marvin C. Alkin in 'Evaluation essentials' (page 198), the evaluator may be not the most appropriate person to formulate the recommendations. This task can be assigned instead to stakeholders to make implementation more direct and efficient. This can also help avoid misuse of the report and the findings and suggestions provided for future actions.

## How to go further?

On the Move for Wales Arts International: ['Evaluation of the International Opportunities' Fund and its impacts on the mobility of artists and cultural professionals' \(2013\)](#)

There was an internal report but also an external report for public online viewing as a way to share the multiple impacts of artists' mobility from Wales.

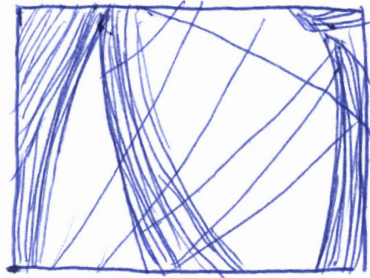
[Connected Action for the Commons](#) is an action-research programme and network with six cultural organisations from across Europe and the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) as collaborating hubs. The visual mapping to illustrate the growth and interconnectivity of the network is a great tool to get inspired by.

[The IN SITU Platform](#) for artistic creation in public space shared a chart of its activities four months before the end of its funding by Creative Europe. The graphic representations highlighted key reached objectives and numbers (supported artists, audiences, etc.) as well as more qualitative elements from artists, members and audience which will be used in the final report with other data.

## SUMMARY TABLE OF YOUR EVALUATION JOURNEY

Phases	Prepare yourself	Build your tools	Collect	Analyse	Report and co-implementation
<b>Steps for each phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aims of the evaluation</li> <li>- LIMIT (diagnosis, timeframe, team and responsibilities towards evaluation, choice of external evaluator, external eye/s, focus)</li> <li>- DRAFT (evaluation questions)</li> <li>- DEFINE (values/references, also taking account of the societal dimension)</li> <li>- Plan ahead for further implementation</li> </ul>	<p>Methodologies: Logframe, Most Significant Change, Case Study, Freestyle, etc.</p> <p>Indicators: Qualitative/quantitative Linked to evaluative questions</p> <p>Choice of related tools</p> <p>Note: the more participative your approach, the more time the process may take, with the advantage of adding strength to the qualitative dimension of your data.</p>	<p>Tools of collect: questionnaires/interviews/ focus groups/observation/ others (diaries, exhibition, etc.)</p>	<p>Contextualise data</p> <p>Name/code data</p> <p>Look for more data to confirm an assumption, but analyse only the data related to evaluation topics</p> <p>Evaluators: Internal Mix External &gt; coordination for the data analysis</p>	<p>Choice of report format: - Public - Internal - Unusual formats: video, computer graphics, mapping, etc.</p> <p>When possible, get some feedback from stakeholders before finalising the report.</p>
<b>Stakeholders</b>	<p>Team + volunteers + Board Beneficiaries Partner organisations Funders Policy makers. &gt; Who to involve and how?</p>	<p>Calendar of involvement of stakeholders based on the choices of methodologies/ availability /relevance of stakeholders</p>	<p>Tools of collect adapted to specific stakeholders (e.g. drawing/diaries for children/ focus group for partner organisations)</p>		<p>Retreat/workshop to discuss the results and the implementation of the follow-ups and/or strategy paper</p>
Evaluation process: from information to co-creation with the stakeholders					
<b>Timing basis (minimum)</b>	15 days	1-2 months	Project phase + 1 month	1 month	1 month ++++

## VII. The bonus of your travel: tools and exercises



This section brings you insights on some practical approaches to feedback and data collection that can nourish your evaluation. They can be used with your team, your stakeholders and your communities at various stages of development of your project, programme and more generally with regards to the focus of your evaluation.

### STRATEGIC QUESTIONING

Strategic questioning is an approach to creating personal and social change through learning to ask

questions that will make a difference. This implies asking the right types of questions about a problem, in the right order, in order to uncover answers that may emerge later. This empowers people, as they develop a sense of ownership about the answers.

Strategic questions can:

- **find where the attention is focused:** *What are you most concerned about after this experience?* (e.g. workshop with an artist)
- **clarify what is seen or known:** *What effects of this situation have you noticed?* (Note: do not refer to the situation as a problem, as it may work against creative thinking.)
- **clarify what is felt:** *What body sensations do you have when you think or talk about this situation/experience?*
- **identify ideals, dreams and values:** *What about this situation do you care so much about?*
- **identify a view change:** *What will it take to bring the current situation towards the ideal?*

- **evoke personal involvement:** *What do you like to do that might be useful in bringing about these changes?*
- **get something started:** *Who do you need to talk to?*

Note: Questions are often related to a process/event that people took part in.

Things to avoid:

- 'why' questions - which tend to rationalize the present rather than explore options
- disguised suggestions (*Have you considered...*) which may be manipulative
- 'yes/no' questions - which wrap up without generating real exploration
- closed questions - which limit our sense of possibility.

Source: '[Strategic Questioning: An Approach to Creating Personal and Social Change](#)' by Fran Peavey

## THE WAY OF COUNCIL

Council is a compelling communication method that cultivates empathic listening and heartfelt dialogue. Practiced around the world in communities, organisations and educational settings, Council helps nurture the deep, authentic connections that are often neglected in our ever-faster, multi-tasking culture.

Council is a non-hierarchical form of communication that creates space to examine the field of enquiry from many perspectives, and can, in this regards, be useful for evaluation. One can for instance invite an audience before a performance to voluntarily join a Council session afterwards. It can also be used as part of a workshop series to gather impressions that are not usually captured through classic feedback forms.

The basic practice of Council is simple. A group of people sits in a circle. A 'talking piece' is passed from person to person and people speak one at a time. Each one has a voice, everybody is heard.

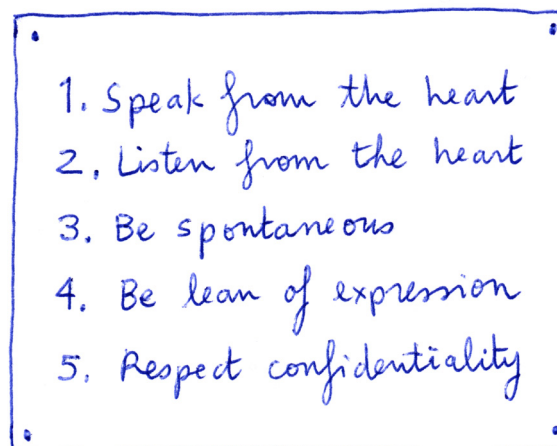
### Step-by-step process:

Participants are invited to sit together in a circle, so that everybody can see and be seen by the rest of the group. People should feel comfortable. If they are sitting on the floor, for instance, pillows can be provided. A centre point is designated within the circle where a number of objects chosen by the facilitator will be placed.

#### A. INTRODUCTION:

The facilitator proceeds to introduce the rules of Council, which implies:

##### 1. Presenting the intentions of Council:

- 
1. Speak from the heart
  2. Listen from the heart
  3. Be spontaneous
  4. Be lean of expression
  5. Respect confidentiality

These intentions represent guidelines for the participants to follow during the session in order to create a safe space in which stories can be shared.

##### 2. Presenting the 'talking piece', its function and its use:

Those who hold the talking piece will be allowed to speak, while the others will be invited to direct their full attention on that person. The 'talking piece' can be piece of wood, a ball, a stone or anything else.

##### 3. Clarifying the form and the setting of the session:

A Council session is defined by a timeframe which is set up by the facilitator or by the end of the stories: it can therefore have a variable length.

#### B. OPENING CEREMONY

It has the function of inviting participants to focus as much as possible on the Council intentions and the core subject of the discussion.

The facilitator introduces the 'sharing prompt' and opens the space to participants.

The prompt is often an invitation to share a personal story on a specific topic, usually introduced by the formula 'Participants are invited to speak using the first person, focusing as much as possible on their

own point of view, their own feelings, sensations and experiences’.

### C. STORY-SHARING

The simplest and most popular form used for sharing is the circle (the talking piece is passed from person to person until a full clockwise round has been made). Then the talking stick is placed in the centre of the circle, and anyone who wants to add something may take it to talk.

### D. CLOSING CEREMONY

Once the timeframe has reached its limit, the facilitator will guide the group to the end of its sharing (which often includes an extra round of repeating the word or sentence shared by another participant which resonates the most in you, or simply a round of sharing feelings and sensations) and will mark in a clear way the end of the process, as he/she did for the opening.



Despite its simplicity, Council is a practice that requires precise preparation which cannot be left to chance. The sharing prompt, the form of implementation, the presentation of intentions, the style

of facilitation, the timeframe management and the group dynamics are all elements that need to be carefully structured according to the aim of the session and to the participants’ backgrounds. Council has a huge potential which can quite easily be jeopardized if one of those elements is neglected, especially emotion management within the group. The practice is not suitable for practical discussions, debates, general sharing, voting and large groups – unless the facilitator decides to use the specific forms of the Council that can facilitate that type of process.

This introduction to Council is extracted from a presentation by Mafalda Morganti whose full contribution is available [here](#).

### How to go further?

[Council In Schools](#)

[Ojai Foundation](#)

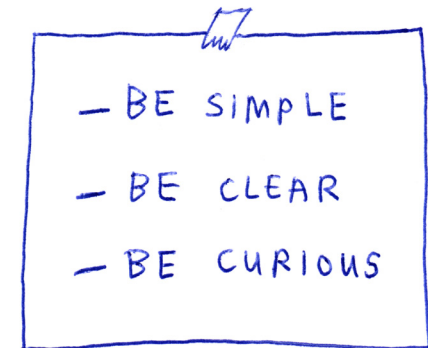
[The Power of Listening - An Ancient Practice for Our Future: Leon Berg at TEDxRedondoBeach](#)

## FOCUS GROUP

Focus groups gather a small group of people to discuss themes or questions you want to address in your evaluation. Focus groups can reveal a wealth of detailed information and provide a deeper understanding of phenomena being studied.

Here are some elements that can help you to implement focus groups which are self-facilitated.

Focus groups are structured around a set of predetermined questions, but the discussion is free-flowing. Ideally, participants’ comments can stimulate and influence the thinking and sharing of others. Some people even find themselves changing their ideas and opinions in the course of the discussion.





## SUGGESTED ROLES

**Timekeeper** - person who is in charge of timing (The session can be limited, for instance, to 45 minutes, including discussion and final conclusions/analysis).

**Facilitator** - person who makes sure that every voice is heard and that all 3 categories of questions are addressed.

**Reporter** - person who takes notes.

**Contributor** - everyone is a contributor.

## PROCESS:

One clear question/topic for the meeting. Make it simple, open-ended, and allowing multiple responses. Write it down in a visible place.

Phase 1: Discussion - supported by 3 main categories of questions:

- a. Engagement questions: introduce participants to the topic of the discussion:
  - *How would you describe the topic?*
  - *Who is involved?*
  - Etc.
- b. Exploration questions: get to the core of the discussion:

- *What are the most important aspects of this topic?*
- *What is the root of this topic? Who was responsible for this situation? Where does it come from?*
- *How was it created?*
- *How do you feel (about yourself) when you observe what is going on?*
- Etc.

Further questions that can support the exploration of ideas:

- *Could you talk more about that?*
  - *Help me understand what you mean.*
  - *Can you give an example?*
- c. Exit question: check to see if anything was missed in the discussion
- *Is there anything else you would like to say?*

Phase 2: Analyze. When all comments have been taken into consideration, look for common categories or themes across the entries for each question. Arrange categories, write them on separate papers and mark them from those with the largest number of entries to those with the smallest.

Phase 3: Final conclusions. Once the focus group findings are organised in a synthesis format, you are ready for final conclusions and report.



As focus groups are limited in terms of timing, take care to inform participants early enough about the place and time, in order to gather the whole group. Make sure that people feel comfortable in the space and reward them with a small gift (snacks, drinks, a notebook, etc.).

You may decide to bring together a quite homogeneous group (for instance with only representatives of associations working on refugees' inclusion) or a more mixed group (e.g. representatives of different stakeholders related to your evaluation subject).

## How to go further?

If you are living in a bigger city, a focus group approach can also be used in the context of [MEET UP](#), which is a virtual platform for offline meeting.

See also [section 5](#) of this publication for other useful tips for focus groups.

## APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Envisioning positive images of the future grounded in the best of the past has much greater potential to produce deep and sustaining change and inspire collective action than deficit-based analysis.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) leverages the most positive possibilities in communities and organisations. Unlike traditional problem-based tools and models that focus on what is not working well, AI focuses on what is working well (appreciative) by engaging people through questions and storytelling (inquiry). Through constructive dialogue, new possibilities are imagined and new partnerships created to bring the desired future into being. (Source: [Bliss W. Browne, Imagine Chicago](#))



AI could be a good approach to evaluate, for instance, the annual programme of a cultural institution.

This could be done through interviews, questionnaires in local newspapers, or a poster campaign on the streets of your town.

## How to go further?

The [AI Commons](#) is a worldwide portal devoted to the sharing of resources and practical tools on Appreciative Inquiry and the rapidly growing discipline of positive change.

## FEEDBACK FORMS

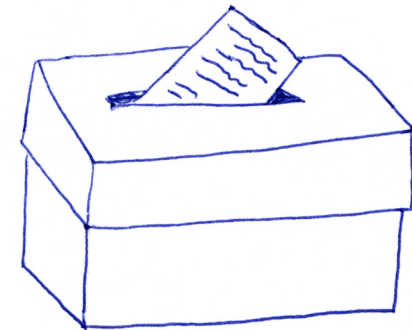
You can find out whether people have found your show or other event interesting/useful by asking them to fill out a short form. Ask, for example, what they found most and least useful/interesting; what they might do differently, what could be improved.



Be concise. Do not overuse such forms (there are other ways to collect information). Provide pens.

Give the form before the event/performance starts and try to get it back just afterwards.

## BOX OF COMMENTS



It could be just a nice box placed at the entrance of your venue, in which everyone can put different types of comments/feedback, be it by writing/drawing, etc. It could also be a 'recording corner' where everyone interested can record his/her comments.



What is important is to value the comments and feedback and provide information (through newsletters, announcements, etc.) on how some of the feedback/suggestions have been integrated to your venue's actions. To get inspired, take a look, for instance, at [Story Corps](#).

## DIARIES



Ask key people to keep diaries of their involvement in the project, or encourage people to leave comments under your blog or Facebook posts.



A Facebook group specially dedicated to your project may help deepen the contents of the feedback.

## PRESS REPORTS

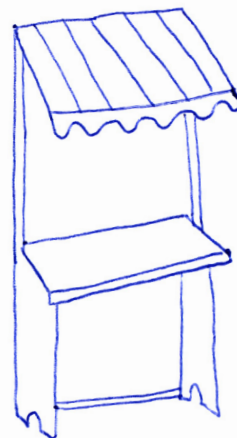
Gather and review press reports not only on your project but also on the subject you are dealing with in your city/region.



This can help define the impact of your action in a broader context of actors.

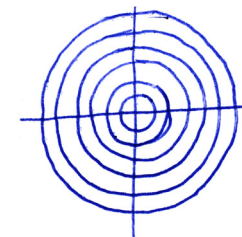
## OTHER INTERVENTIONS IN PUBLIC SPACE

### MARKET STAND



Use an evaluation stand during a market or a public event to share the outcomes of your project and invite people to take part in its evaluation. Try to make it as interactive as possible. Responders can be invited to take part in different games as ways to collect feedback and information.

## TARGET



In the centre of the target, put a clear statement – for instance, ‘The performance changed my point of view on the refugees’ situation in my city.’

Responders are asked to make a ‘dot’ with a black marker or to write a comment.

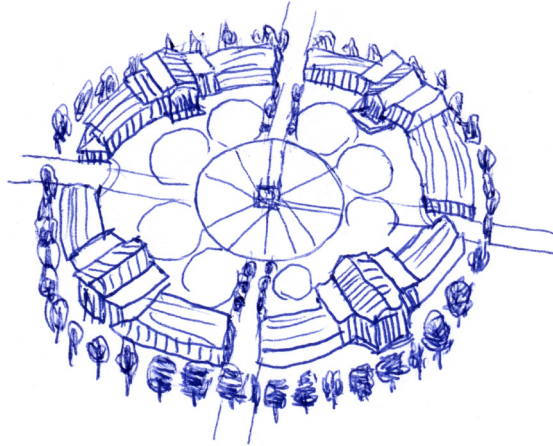
The closer dot is to the centre, the more the responder agrees with the statement. The further the dot is, the less the responder agrees with it.

It is possible to offer several targets with different statements. In that case, organisers should also be encouraged to leave one blank target, so that responders can add their own statement and check the others’ opinions about it.

*Materials:* paper and markers/whiteboard and magnets/blackboard and chalk.

## MY PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE

This is an easy tool to get feedback on the emotions and basic needs of responders after specific events/performances.



- Create a map. This could be just a drawing on large format paper or a 3D installation representing different rooms, or different houses in the plan of an imaginary city.

- What is important is that the symbolic places people use are clearly visible: kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, terrace, garden, meeting place, TV room, office, staircase, sauna, etc. The different spaces could also be restaurants, schools, parks, shopping malls, clubs, etc...

- Write down a clear question such as *Where would you like to be now?* Ask people to choose one figure to represent them and to place it on the map. Make sure that once placed the figures remain untouched until the evaluation is over.

*Materials:* Map of a house or a city, boxes of different little figures representing people, animals, plants.

## PUBLIC /PROJECT GARDEN

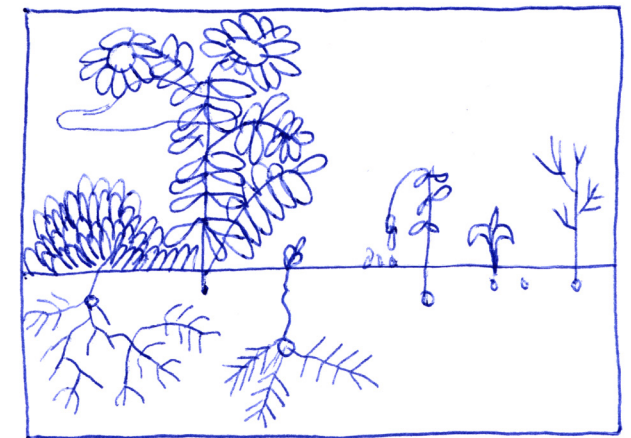
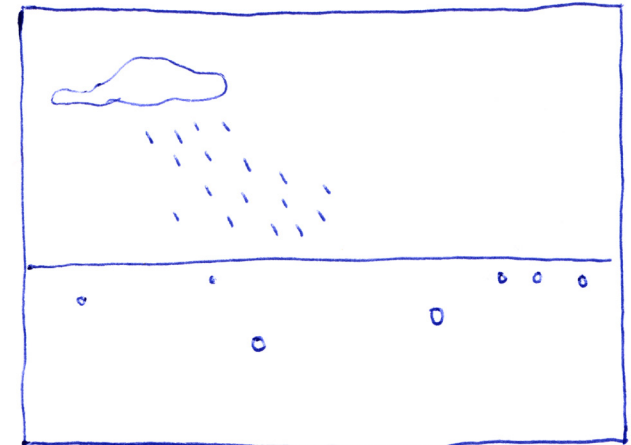
This tool may help for a process-based project evaluation (such as the artistic workshop for refugee children described in our example).

Participants are asked to visualise the aims of a particular project through seeds planted in an imaginary garden. This usually takes the form of a giant poster to draw on.

Throughout the course of the project, responders are asked to visualise the evolution of seeds into plants as a way to illustrate the growing components of the project.

At the end, there is a final image representing the project's state of achievement.

The image-in-progress of the project garden could be regularly published on a Facebook page, or could be discussed in a public discussion/focus group.



## OUTDOORS FEEDBACK FORM

We are back to the abovementioned feedback form, which can also be used for a silent discussion in public space. For instance, with the authorisation of local authorities, you could paint an easily accessible wall with blackboard paint and add a title encouraging people to write comments in chalk about a project, a performance, etc.

*How to go further?*

[‘Evaluation Approaches: An Introductory Toolkit’,  
Miranda Cobb & Gabrielle Donnelly, 2015](#)

*The Evaluation Journey: A Toolkit for Cultural Operators*  
by Dagna Gmitrowicz and Marie Le Sourd,  
with a foreword by Jordi Baltà

This toolkit was created by the ENCC in partnership with [On the Move](#) in the context of the [Bridge Between European Cultural Centres](#) (BECC) mobility and staff exchange programme.

Coordination & editing: Kasia Skowron, Ioana Crugel, Marie Le Sourd and Lucie Perineau

Graphic design: Lucie Perineau & Marine Domec

Illustrations: Lucie Perineau

The cover and chapter header illustrations are inspired by Marcel Broodthaers' *Bateau-Tableau* (1973), a slideshow of 80 photographs that zoom in and out of a 19th-century seascape painting.

March 2018



This publication is distributed free of charge and follows the Creative Commons agreement Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives (CC BY-NC-ND). You are free to reuse and share this publication or parts of it as long as you mention the original source.

This publication should be mentioned as follows:  
Dagna Gmitrowicz and Marie Le Sourd, *The Evaluation Journey: A Toolkit for Cultural Operators*, ENCC, Brussels, March 2018. <https://encc.eu/resources/database/evaluation-journey>

The ENCC and BECC are supported by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union.



European Network of Cultural Centres  
Van Overbekelaan 164  
1083 Ganshoren, Brussels, Belgium  
+32 2 422 00 00

[office@encc.eu](mailto:office@encc.eu)  
encc.eu

In partnership with  
[on the move](#)



Co-funded by the  
Creative Europe Programme  
of the European Union