Evaluating Event Impact

A brief journey from design to data collection

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Today's agenda

Evaluation takes some planning, but not a fortune or a PhD.

Introductions

Why evaluate?

Creating Outcomes

Collecting data & choosing methods

Additional Resources

Reasons to evaluate

Evaluation generates improvements, judgments, and actionable learning about your event.

Evaluation purposes and timing

- Before the event: seeking out and digesting relevant, useful information to shape a plan

- At mid-course: testing, observing, iterating, and improving on an experience

- Between events: documenting a process for future reflection or duplication

- After event: determining the success of an experience

How evaluation can be used

Source: ottobremer.org

EXAMPLES OF DIFFERENT INTENDED USERS WITH DIFFERENT INFORMATION NEEDS	EXAMPLES OF DIFFERENT USES OF EVALUATION
Event/Festival staff	to improve a program.
Event/Festival director	to decide whether to expand a model to new sites.
Government policymakers and funders	to determine if funds were spent appropriately as intended, or to determine whether to invest in the program more broadly.

Outcomes

Events and festivals require huge investments of time and resources.

Why do we do them? OR: What is your intended outcome?

Outcomes con't

Answering the "so what?" question

An **outcome** is a condition we desire to see as a result of something we do.

- Suggests change

- Affects specific group(s)

- Results from an activity

- Intentional

- Measurable

- Short, medium, long-term

Example: "The Selby Ave JazzFest will positively change perceptions of the Selby Ave corridor among outlying attendees."

Outcomes vs. outputs

Outputs – "what was done?"

Relate to the action being taken:

- Our event presented 50 music groups

- Revenue of $150,000

- Sold 500 tickets

Show how much work is being done

Outcomes – "so what? What difference was made as a result of that project/program?"

Effects that you hope to achieve through some action:

- Musicians gained new audience members

- local businesses saw increased revenue as a result of the event

- Audiences built relationships with friends and neighbors at the festival

What outcomes result from our festivals and events? What's possible?

FOR INDIVIDUALS

Emotional response

Awareness or understanding

Skills or knowledge*

Attitudes, motivations, aspirations

Behaviors, actions, practices

FOR COMMUNITIES OR GROUPS

Social bonds, perceived community**

Vitality or vibrancy***

Institutions' roles in community

Economic/community development

Policy or practices

Your turn: Part one

Part One: Fill out questions 1-5

- What is the festival/event? When it is happening, what goes on?
- What needs or goals do you think inspired the festival/event?
- Who is the festival/event intended to benefit? Be as specific as you can and name as many different groups/populations as you need to in order to capture the various stakeholders.
- What will be different for that person or group if the festival/event "works" or is successful?
- How will that difference look or feel? How would you know it was happening? What might it look, sound, or feel like to an observer? To the person who benefits?

Your turn: Part two and three

- summarize your notes and create 1- 3 outcome statements.
- use the checklist to make sure they are strong outcomes.
- Form groups of three people and quickly share your responses
- 1-2 brave volunteers share back?

Planning your evaluation: Indicators

Indicators are the specific kinds of data that show whether your outcome is happening

- Related to your outcome

- Suggests* cause and effect

Indicators are often described in terms of sensory information

- What would success look like?

- How would it feel to experience this outcome?

- What would participants do or say?

More about indicators

An indicator might be:

- Something we can notice as an outside observer, OR

- Something we must ask participants about

Like outcomes, indicators are more than just a number! Indicators might be:

- Either concrete or abstract ideas

- Either objective or subjective experiences

- Documented using either quantitative or qualitative methods

What "measure" really means

When you hear "measure," don't panic about math!

Instead, think about **making observations**.

Indicators you can observe that show whether your outcome is happening

- Can you see, hear, touch, taste, smell, infer, or ask someone about it?

- Will it show you something about your outcome?

Indicators you can observe in a **systematic** way

- Similar process from one time, setting, or data collector to the next

Practice: Outcomes & indicators

Example outcomes

- Develop awareness

- Knowledge or skill gain

- Attitude change

- Relationship development

Possible indicators

- Ask "what do you know about X?"

- Comparison to a rubric

- Strength of agreement, openness

- Reports of closeness, shared interests, collaboration, fairness

Evaluation methods

More than just a survey

What methods are best for gathering data?

Let your activities and questions guide you.

Select methods based on:

- What you need to know (outcomes and indicators)

- Where you will gather evidence (from whom, in what settings)

- The context of the activity (e.g., within a workflow, cultural appropriateness, etc.)

It depends!

Evaluation methods

More than just a survey:

artifact / product review

photos or video

audience talkback / interviews

card sort

peer critique

concept mapping

team reflection

observation

talk-aloud

storytelling

journaling

attendance data

audience reviews

program statistics

survey / questionnaire

voting

interview / focus group

portfolio review

Match your questions and context to appropriate methods

Where to go for evaluation help

You may need help clarifying your activities or outcomes, focusing your evaluation plans, designing and using data collection tools, or making sense of your data.

Other organizations or associations that offer technical assistance:

- In evaluation, arts education, non-arts education, human services, museums & informal learning, community development, regional planning, etc.

- Look for groups who care about the same kinds of outcomes or programs or populations as you.

Evaluation experts in the community: consultants (maybe), other grant makers, university offices, etc.

Evaluation resources: Guides

Evaluation Handbook. W.K. Kellogg Foundation. https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2010/w-k-kellogg-foundation-evaluation-handbook.

Getting Started with Program Evaluation: A Guide for Arts Organizations. Georgia Council for the Arts and National Assembly of State Arts Agencies. https://nasaa-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Getting-Started-with-Program-Evaluation.pdf.

Principal Investigator's Guide: Managing Evaluation in Informal STEM Education Projects. Center for the Advancement of Informal Science Education. http://www.informalscience.org/evaluation/pi-guide.

Team-Based Inquiry Guide. National Informal STEM Education Network. http://nisenet.org/catalog/team-based-inquiry-guide.

YouthARTS: Evaluation. Americans for the Arts. http://youtharts.artsusa.org/evaluation/approach.html.

Evaluation resources: Inspiration

ArtsEdSearch. Arts Education Partnership. http://www.artsedsearch.org.

Arts Policy Library. Createquity. http://createquity.com/arts-policy-library/

Creative Placemaking Library. ArtPlace America.
http://www.artplaceamerica.org/library

Grantmakers in the Arts. Grantmakers in the Arts. http://www.giarts.org/

Informal Science. Center for the Advancement of Informal Science Education.
http://www.informalscience.org.

Knowledge Center. The Wallace Foundation.
http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Pages/default.aspx

Evaluation Guides for Arts and Social Impact. Callahan Consulting.
http://www.forthearts.org/publications/social-eval

Any final questions?

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