

Belfast



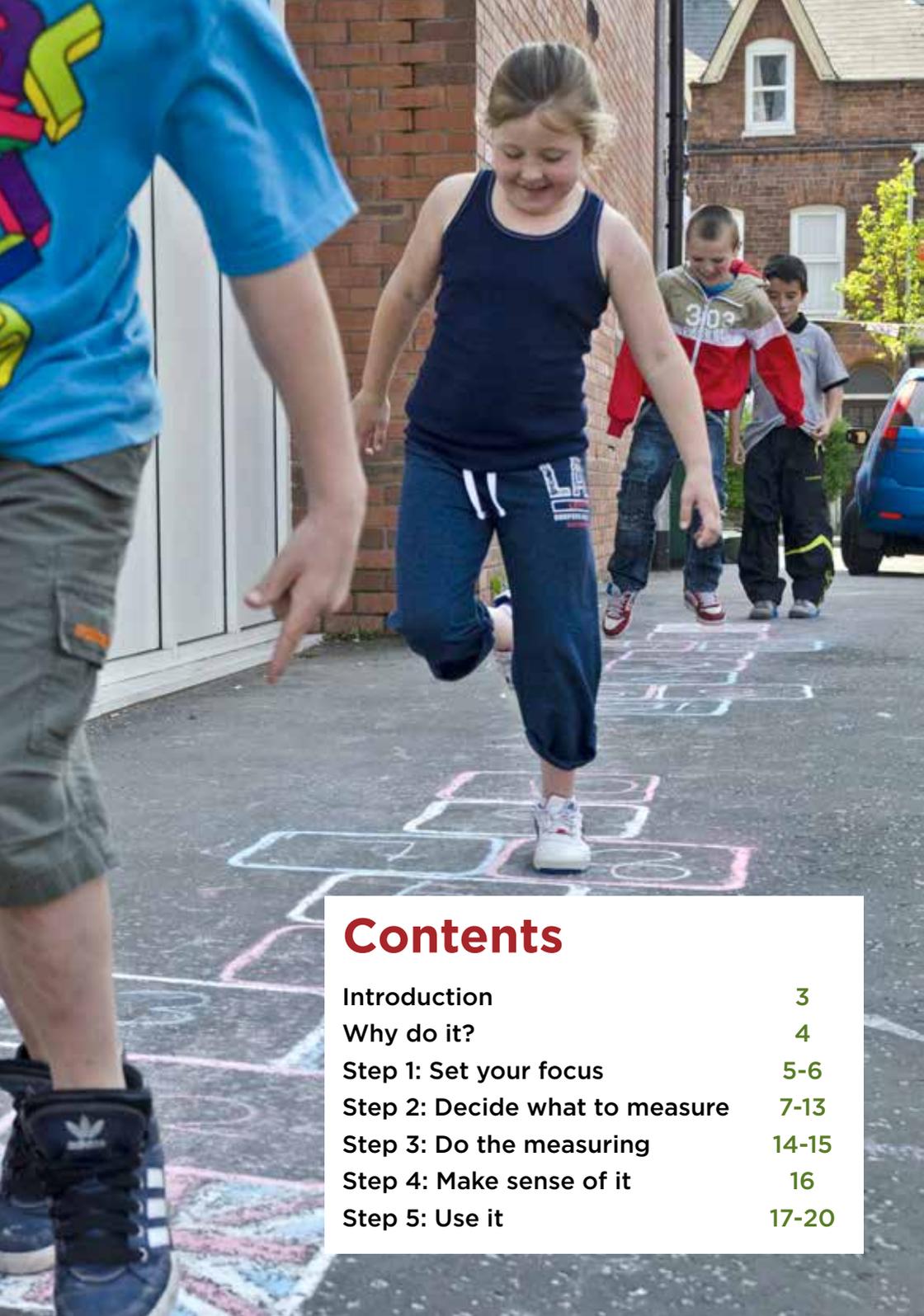
eVALUEation

Five steps to making value more visible

Especially for festivals run by
volunteers or a small team



www.belfastcity.gov.uk/culture



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Introduction

Different people value your work for different reasons. Perhaps:

Local people value it because you offer them fun and occupy their children.

Artists value it because you give them work.

Businesses value it because you bring tourists into the area.

Your committee values it because you stay within your budget.

Funders value it because you connect with people they find difficult to reach.

Do your funders know how local people feel about your festival? Does your committee know what businesses value? How do you know what people really think?

To evaluate means to determine the value of something. In this case, we want to show the value of your work. To make that value clearly visible to specific people, you need two things:

- proof that you have made changes that matter to them
- a way to share this evidence that means something to them.

Even a simple evaluation and a short report will deliver both.

There are five steps from start to finish.

1. Set your focus
2. Decide what to measure
3. Do the measuring
4. Make sense of it
5. Use it.



Why do it?

Evaluation doesn't just measure value – it also adds value.

Evaluation involves building relationships with your stakeholders, who are people affected by or interested in your work, such as local people, businesses and funders. This improves understanding and support.

Evaluation shows you what you do well, what you could do differently, and what you could stop doing altogether. This helps you to focus your resources on what you really want to achieve.

Evaluation gives you clear evidence of your impact to present to current and potential funders. This helps you to secure resources.

Evaluation shows volunteers and employees what they've achieved. This raises their morale and motivation.

Evaluation gets you to think about collecting information and setting up methods to collect it. This makes reporting to funders easier and better.

Evaluation sets clear outcomes and measures progress against them. This helps you to build and monitor plans against good evidence.

Before you start your evaluation

Assemble an evaluation team of workers, committee members and volunteers who will support you, do some of the work, share their skills and expertise and make sure you connect with stakeholders.

1 - Set your focus

There's no point doing an evaluation if:

- You measure things no one really wants to know about.
- You put more effort into it than any benefit you get out.

Deciding what you will and won't cover means balancing what you want to know against the time and resources you have available.

An evaluation should be:

Effective: *have intended effect; make an impression.*

Efficient: *done with least waste of time or resources.*

The secret to being effective is simple – ask the people you want to read the report to help you shape the research. Perhaps invite them to join the evaluation team or come along to all or some of your meetings.

Being efficient means recognising that **you can't do everything.**

Plan your research around your resources. Use the focus grid on page 6 to plot out your needs and your funder's priorities. Then pick an area, age group or theme to focus on this time round. Getting good evidence about one thing is better than having very little about everything.

You may be able to attract new funding or resources specifically for the evaluation. Some funders fund evaluation. Others like to strengthen groups by funding people to learn research skills. Businesses or colleges might be able to offer you a volunteer or student researcher. Ask your current funders to point you to their networks for ideas.



Focus grid

Work with your evaluation team to complete this grid and to decide your focus. Refer to it throughout to keep you on track. You'll make a better job of filling the grid in if you read this whole short guide first.

Effective	Funders	Committee	Workers	Users
Who is the evaluation for?				
What do they want to know?				
How would they like the information?				
Efficient	People	Skills	Money	Material
What have we got to hand?				
Who can we ask to help?				

Think about timing for the evaluation work too. When will you be able to gather information? When do you have time to analyse it? When do you need the results to put into reports and funding applications?

2 - Decide what to measure

Effective evaluation means measuring outcomes that have meaning to your key stakeholders. **Efficient** evaluation means picking outcomes that you can afford to measure.

Deciding which outcomes to pick is easier when you have a clear picture of what they all are. **An outcome map is the key.**

You need three things to make your own outcome map:

1. Your focus grid, funding agreements and plans.
2. Your evaluation team.
3. Pens, a big sheet of paper, sticky notes, cake (optional!)

Read pages 8 to 11 on inputs, outputs and outcomes. Start with the basic map and discuss how one thing leads to another. Don't overdo it – simple is good – but do remember to include the things you promised to deliver.

Write headings on the sticky notes and move them about until you have something which shows the relationships between the work you do and your intended results.

This is **your outcome map**. It helps you in two ways:

- It shows how the changes you'll measure are a result of your work on your project.
- It helps you to decide exactly what you will measure.

Inputs for your map (describe mostly in numbers)

People Paid workers; volunteers

Things Equipment; office; cars; venues

Money Earnings; grants; gifts; savings

Examples

- We employ five dancers and ten stewards.
- We rent five community halls.



Outputs for your map (describe in numbers if you can)

Activities *What you do*

Events Gigs, workshops

Services Training; research

Products Arts; media coverage

Examples

- A two-hour street carnival
- Three steward training-days
- One new dance performance
- Five articles in the papers

Participants *Who you reach*

People Customers; participants

Groups Groups; partners

Others Business; agencies

Examples

- One hundred people bought tickets
- Ten volunteers trained as stewards
- Four youth groups took part
- Three businesses sold snacks

Outcomes for your map (describe in words, use numbers only if known)

The changes you make to people, communities, organisations or systems can appear in the short, medium (one year) or long term (five years). Read the next three pages with your evaluation team before filling in the outcomes boxes. Start by capturing all their ideas, then select the outcomes which are going to be most useful for your report.

Different sorts of outcomes

Your stakeholders are probably most interested in economic or social changes. Here are just a few examples:

Economic

- Has the local economy improved?
- Has employment risen?

Social

- Has wellbeing improved?
- Is the community stronger?

These are big questions. One festival cannot change everything, but it can make a contribution. For example:

Economic outcomes – did you:

- encourage visitors to spend in local shops?
- pay people to perform or facilitate events?

Social outcomes – did you help people:

- feel more satisfied with life?
- develop skills or confidence?
- improve their sense of belonging?
- feel better able to connect to others in their own community, in external communities or in positions of power?

The first three social measures add up to “wellbeing”. The last is a measure of community strength or “social capital”.

Remember you may have promised to deliver specific art or health outcomes for funders. Check your funding application or letter of offer or call your funder if you're not sure. They should be happy to advise!

Examples of social outcomes

Short-, medium- and long-term outcomes for evaluation focused on teenage boys at a literary festival.

People outcomes Local teenage boys:

- S** are more aware of the links between song writing, rap and poetry.
- M** go to the literary club in greater numbers and more often.
- L** are proud of the literary club and value it as part of the community.

Community outcomes In this community:

- S** there is a place where young men can socialise in safety.
- M** young men are more able to express their feelings in words.
- L** young men are less likely to engage in violence or attempt self-harm.

Organisational outcomes The literary club:

- S** was re-launched as Rap-a-Tap, a male only debating club.
- M** increased its membership and gained new skills on the board.
- L** is sustainable, award winning and a source of community pride.

If you find outcomes overlap, it means you can use one measure to show change in a number of things. You can also extract and regroup outcomes to show changes in broader concepts. For example:

Wellbeing outcomes Better wellbeing because those taking part:

- S** feel more satisfied with their life.
- S** developed skills or confidence.
- M** improved their sense of belonging to a community.

Social capital outcomes Increased social capital because young men:

- M** feel more connected to their community.
- M** are more open to new and different ideas.
- L** are more likely to vote when they turn 18.

Examples of economic outcomes

- S** Artists added rap and communication skills to their CVs.
- S** Local facilitators were employed for a month.
- S** Local businesses earned more money in festival week.
- M** Local businesses take on casual staff for festival week.
- M** Participants have improved language and employment skills.
- L** Members of the club are more likely to be in employment.

Outcomes	Short	Medium	Long
Note all ideas. Sort them into your map later.	Experiences Awareness Learning/skills Attitude/intent	Actions Habits Behaviour Decisions	Conditions Social Economic Environmental
People			
Communities			
Organisations			
Systems			
Economic			

With the evaluation team, fill in the outcomes for your festival. Keep it simple and stick to what you agreed to focus on. You might not have something in every box.

Outcome map

Now, on your big sheet of paper, draw your map with your evaluation team. Write down your inputs, outputs and outcomes on sticky notes. Arrange these to show how the investment you make and the work you do has beneficial outcomes. Add boxes and arrows as you need, but stick to the project and the aspects you decided to focus on. Keep it straightforward and aim to complete each summary box with just two sentences.

Inputs	Outputs		Map of main outcomes		
Investment	Activities	Participants	Now	1 year	5 years
Total invested	Summary (what we do and who we reach)		Summary (the changes we make that matter to our key readers)		

Pick which outcomes to measure

Be effective. Pick outcomes that have meaning to stakeholders.

- Ask the evaluation team which ones they think are vital.
- Show the map to funders and key readers in your focus grid.

Your discussions will build your relations with the people who support you and create a shortlist of outcomes for you to focus on.

Be efficient. Choose outcomes that you can afford to measure.

- 1) Look at your shortlist of outcomes and decide which ones you can measure. If any are vague (e.g. better wellbeing), you will need indicators. These are things you can measure and that change when your outcome changes. Select one, two or more indicators per outcome depending on your resources and how much evidence you need.

Example indicators for: "Wellbeing is improved for young men."

- How satisfied they feel with their lives.
- How they rate their ability to learn new skills.

Example indicators for: "The local economy is boosted."

- The amount spent in four shops near the festival venue.
- The number of local people who gained work skills.

- 2) With your list of measurable outcomes and indicators, read the next section. Consider how you might collect data on them. This will help you finally decide which ones you can afford to measure.

3 - Do the measuring

Ask four questions of each measurable indicator or outcome.

1. What sort of data do we need to collect?

Qualitative data tells you what, how and why in words.

Quantitative data shows the size of change in numbers.

Some outcomes need figures, e.g. audience size; money spent. Others could be words or numbers, e.g. explain how satisfied you are with life or rate from 1 to 5 how satisfied you are with life.

Remember your readers. Check your focus grid for the sort of information that they respond to best.

2. Who has the data?

Some information will already be recorded – by you, your funders or other agencies. Other information, you'll need to collect yourself.

Example sources

Data on feelings: from the people taking part.

Data on food sales: from a sample of local shops.

Data on transport spend: from local taxi drivers.

3. When should we collect it?

To show change, you need a 'before' and an 'after' measure. You'll need to gather some information before your festival starts, as afterwards people may not accurately recall how they felt beforehand. Some changes don't show up for a while, so you may need to wait and measure again. Think about when you have easy access to people.

4. How can we collect the data?

This depends on your answers to the first three questions above, on the resources you have and on how many people you need for a fair sample size. Here are a few examples:

- Interviews** Face to face, by telephone or Skype.
- Focus groups** Bring people together in one place to ask them questions.
- Surveys** At the event, online, through the post or by telephone.
- Self-recording** Ask shop keepers or taxi drivers to record sales during your festival. Ask participants to keep diaries of their experiences.
- Observation** Watch and note behaviour and changes over time.
- Photography** Time-lapse photography or video to show changes and demonstrate audience size.

If you don't have volunteers to do surveys or money for postage, then try email and self-recording. Run a competition to encourage people to return surveys. Make sure some data is collected at the box office or registration (before) and at the end of events (after). If you collect contact details, it'll also help with marketing next year.



4 - Make sense of it

When you've gathered all your data, you can start to analyse it.

Calculate numerical changes, then focus on big or very small ones. These indicate outcomes achieved and those needing attention.

Look through qualitative data for themes and repeated comments. See if there are quotes that capture the feelings expressed by many.

Don't get lost in figures and case studies which will be of little interest to the key readers in your focus grid. Stay focused on answering "how did we do on delivering the outcomes which are important to our stakeholders?".



5 - Use it

The most important part of evaluation comes after you've found the stories and figures that show how you did – telling other people.

Think what people ask you when they're trying to work out the value of your work and then make sure you answer these questions in your report. The five 'A's' below should cover the most common questions.

Activities	What you did	Outputs
Aims	What you planned	Outcomes
Assess	How you measured	Indicators
Analyse	How well you did	Impact
Apply	What you'll do next	Learning

Use a mix of ways to present the information to keep it interesting:

- Graphs to illustrate the size of changes or trends over time.
- Before and after photos.
- Letters or diaries from local people or participants tracking change.
- Case studies from individuals about their experience.

Include conclusions so people know exactly what you're saying. And make sure that you have a call to action. Be clear about what you want that reader to do – and then tell them! That way, your evaluation report will make an impact.

Presenting economic impact in your report

Evaluating how well you delivered your planned outcomes will also show your impact on people and communities. If you had economic aims, it will show how well you met these too. Your total economic impact, however, is more than meeting such aims. It is made up of what your festival spent (organisational spend) and what you caused others to spend (visitor spend).

Organisational spend is also known as your cash inputs – for example, what you paid to performers, staff, volunteers, venues, printers, marketers, insurers, accountants and other suppliers.

The next page shows how to work out two interesting figures to show what value your festival adds to its funding. You can have a go at these using your own records, accounts and funder reports.

Visitor spend is what audiences and artists might spend on:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1) Your festival | tickets, art, workshops, programmes |
| 2) Accommodation | B&Bs, hotels, campsite fees |
| 3) Food and drink | cafés, restaurants, pubs, shops, stalls |
| 4) Other leisure | cinema, shows, museums |
| 5) Transport | taxi, bus, petrol, car hire, flights |
| 6) Shopping | any associated visitor spend that's not covered elsewhere |

You may not have all this information, but you could gather some in your evaluation. If you're interviewing or sending out a survey, add a question about what your audience spent and where.

Work it out: Input leverage on your grant

1. Work out a cash value for all inputs, for example:

Total hours given by all volunteers x £ hourly rate.

+ Cost if you had to pay for gifts in-kind and using things you own.

+ The total cash you spent.

2. Calculate your input leverage

Total input value - grant ÷ grant

Example

Volunteers	£2,000	$\frac{£14,500 - £5,000}{£5,000} = \mathbf{£1.90}$
Gifts in-kind	£2,000	£5,000
Use of our rooms	£500	
Cash spent	£10,000	Every £1 your funder invests
Total input	<u>£14,500</u>	releases another £1.90
Grant	£5,000	

Work it out: Output leverage on your grant

1. Work out a cash value for all outputs, for example:

Income from sales of products and services.

+ Income if you had charged for free services or experiences.*

+ Income to any intended beneficiaries paid for their work.**

2. Calculate your output leverage

Total output value ÷ grant

Example

Ticket sales	£500	$\frac{£10,000}{£5,000} = \mathbf{£2.00}$
Art sales	£500	£5,000
Free services	£5,000	
Income to artists	£4,000	For each £1 your funder invests,
Output value	<u>£10,000</u>	you create £2.00 in outputs
Grant	£5,000	

* What you could have charged if the event or crèche wasn't free.

** For example, if your aim is to employ local artists, then add any salaries you paid to them.

Finally, get your report out there to people who matter.

Print it out

Don't leave it on the shelf!

Hand it out

Meet funders and hand it to them as part of your agenda

Web it

Link to funder sites; email it to people

Launch it

Invite funders and key readers along to a seminar

Present it

Take it to AGMs and conferences and talk about it

Release it

Share the key findings of your evaluation via a media release with supporting quotes from funders and audience members

Discuss it

Use it at committee or board meetings to guide new work.

Enjoy doing and using your evaluation. The more you use it, the more it will deliver rewards and help you to build your festival.

Evaluation: because you want to show that you are worth it.

For further information, please contact:

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