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Myths

- Evaluation is all numbers.
- NO
- It is about learning and telling stories

- Evaluation is only for funders.
- NO
- The most effective evaluation is designed to answer your own questions

- Evaluation is about PROVING the value of your work and advocating it.
- NOT QUITE
It can help you to advocate but it is more neutral and may also focus on what didn't work.

- Evaluation is negative, time consuming and is about filling in forms.
- NO
- It is a positive process and can be designed to 'fit' your constraints and resources

- Evaluation is done at the end of a project - retrospective.
- NO
- It is more effective if it runs alongside and is built into your work

What is Evaluation?

- A process through which you can establish whether what you planned and did produced the expected change(s) you anticipated.
- A process that establishes a link between what you did and good outcomes showing they were intended.
- A process that entitles you to claim success through evidence.
- It is:
 - The art of asking good questions;
 - Reflective;
 - Formative - influencing project development;
 - Useful and leading to improvement
 - About learning - what works, what doesn't work and why was that?
 - Multi faceted - it gathers different perspectives - participants, artists, partners, funders

“Evaluation involves gathering evidence before, during and after an activity and using it to make judgements about what happened. The evidence should prove what happened and why, and what effect it had. The evaluation should help you to improve what you are doing during the activity and inform what you do next time.”

Arts Council England

Why Evaluate?

- Learning and continuous improvement - evaluation helps you to adapt/change as you go;
- Process is as important as product;
- Mapping a change journey and identifying outcomes - evaluation helps with planning, as it makes you think about what you're aiming to do, how you will do it and how you will know if you've succeeded
- Providing management information that can inform project development;
- Increasing effectiveness and confidence in the processes you use by testing what works and what doesn't work;
- Generating evidence to prove value and demonstrate impact, support reporting and applying for funding;
- Evaluation is a good way of dealing with 'quality assurance' you're keeping an eye on things to make sure quality is maintained - it keeps you on track and helps to avoid disasters;
- Your learning can help others and inform the field you work in.

Who do you evaluate for ?

- **You** - from a planning and learning perspective;
- **Your participants** - what you learn can be fed back to them;
- **Your commissioner/ funder/ employer** - accountability and reassurance that you care about ongoing quality and review;
- **The wider community of practice** - they can learn from what you learn, it contextualises their work, can develop new ideas and your contribution to the field is evidenced.

Ethical Issues

- Ethics are moral principles or values generally governing the conduct of an individual or group;
- Protect all groups involved in research: participants, institutions, funders and researchers throughout the lifetime of the research and into the dissemination process;
- It is not a one-way relationship as all parties are responsible for maintaining and fostering ethical standards and conduct;

Trust, Truth and Integrity

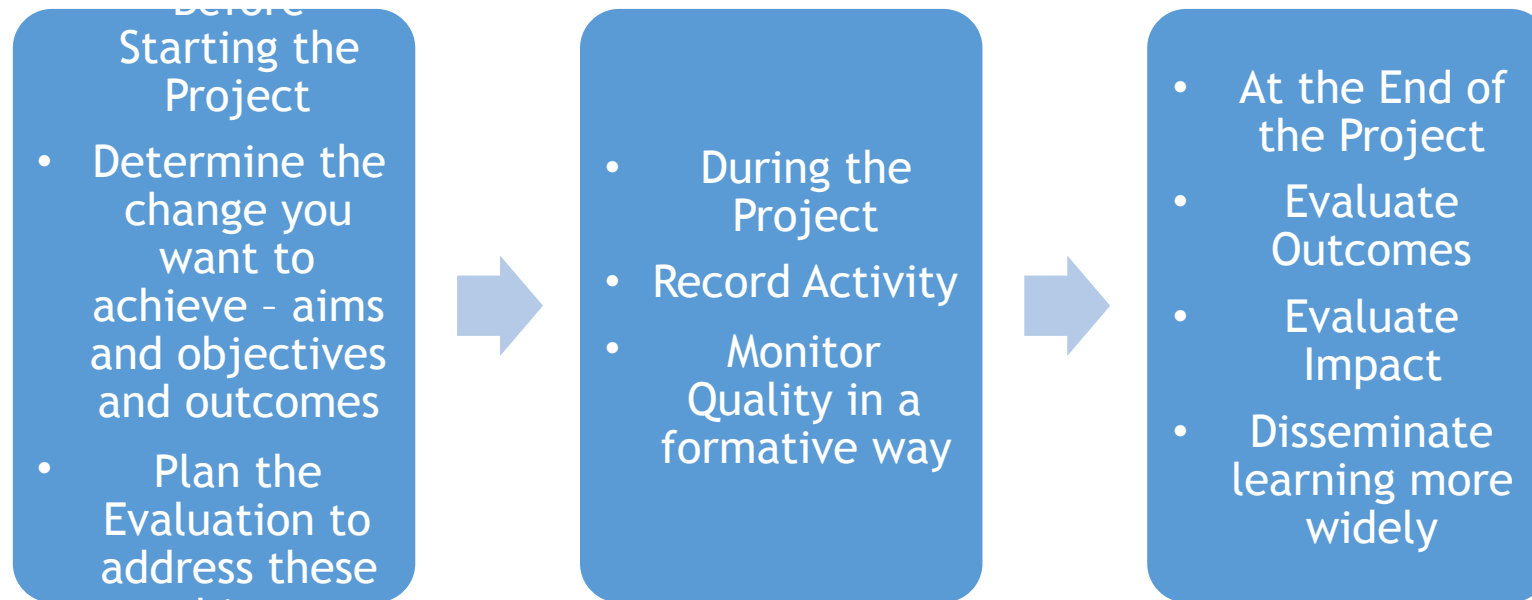
- **Participants Rights:**

- Choose whether to participate in the research
- Be in a safe environment during the research
- Be informed as to what the research is about
- Be granted privacy of the research results if promised
- People should not be coerced into participating in research. This is especially relevant where researchers rely on 'captive audiences' - schools, prisons, universities etc

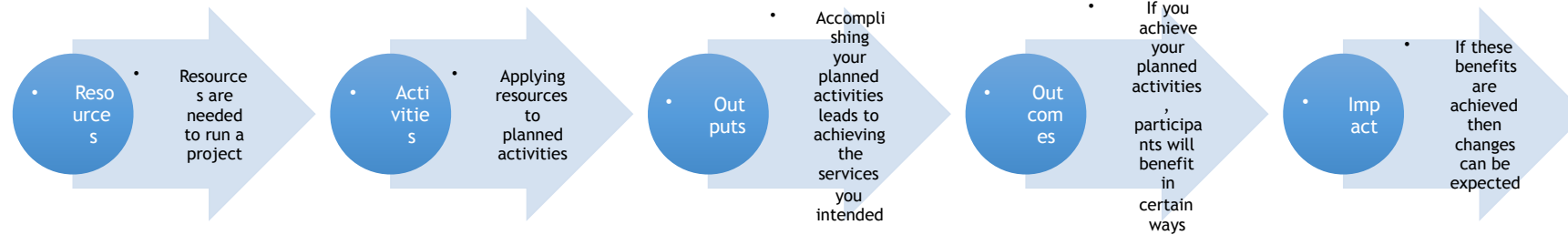
- **Approaches:**

- Integrity and Transparency
- Free and Informed consent
- Voluntary and without coercion
- Anonymity and permission
- Accuracy and Honesty

Stages in Evaluation



A Logic/ Change Model



Understanding your Baseline

- What was the starting point?
- Who are the participants and what were their expectations and experiences?
- What was the starting point for the organisation?
- What was your own starting point?

Collecting Information

- Collect good data about 5 or 6 key aspects of your project rather than collecting inconsistent data about 15;
- Data can be quantitative or qualitative and you need a mix of both;
- You need to do two principal things:
 - Think about what you need in advance including how you can get it and who will collect it
 - Collect information consistently and at the right time because inaccurate or incomplete data is worse than none at all

Qualitative v Quantitative

A balance between the two methods creates a deeper and richer evidence base.

- Qualitative evidence comprises narrative descriptions, images, stories, case studies of participants etc
- Supports interpretation

They are not discrete categories but different ends of a spectrum and are complementary data gathering methods.

- Quantitative methods gather evidence that can be represented numerically
- Supports generalisation.

Data Collection Methods and Sources

- Surveys - assisted completion, self completion, online or paper based;
 - Interviews - structured and semi structured;
 - Focus Groups - involves dialogue and consider key questions;
 - Diaries and logs - useful for artists working on projects as well as participants;
 - Observations;
 - Conversations;
 - Immediate feedback - vox pops, writing walls, postcards.
- You
 - Participants
 - Audience Members
 - Artists
 - Project Staff
 - Partners
 - Commissioner/ Funder

No one size fits all

- Design the evaluation framework to fit with your project, your resources, budget, capacity and focus on the issues you are concerned with;
- Consider how formal/ informal it needs to be;
- You can self evaluate or commission someone to work with you as an external evaluator;
- Design methods of data collection that are appropriate to those you want to speak to - young children will need a different approach to your artistic collaborators.

A good evaluation process is....

- **Useful** - informing the project, future projects, other artists, your work;
- **Meaningful** - it says something clear about the project's achievements;
- **Accurate** - it doesn't mask the less effective parts of the project but reflects accurately what was achieved;
- **Fair** - respecting the people involved and reflecting in a balanced and honest way on the project.

Practical Workshop/ Guided Tour

- As you take part in your chosen activity consider the following questions:
 - **Why** do you think these activities took place? What were they trying to achieve and how could you assess the success or otherwise of this?
 - **Who** should be involved when evaluating this activity? (eg Artist/ tour guide, participants, conference organisers)
 - **How** could you gather data that would engage those people and gather data from them? (eg what format would you use, when would you do it?)
 - **What** could be done with the learning and how might it help others?

Resources

- Arts Council England Guidance Note: [http://
www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/
Self_evaluation_and_Grants_for_the_Arts_Jan2016.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Self_evaluation_and_Grants_for_the_Arts_Jan2016.pdf)
- Arts Council England Self Evaluation Framework: [http://
www.artscouncil.org.uk/selfevaluation/framework/](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/selfevaluation/framework/)
- Big Lottery Guidance on Self Evaluation: [http://
www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index/evaluationandresearch-uk/
understanding_self-evaluation.htm](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/index/evaluationandresearch-uk/understanding_self-evaluation.htm)