

CultureCounts



**REDUCING STRESS
AT REPORT TIME.**

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Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Reporting.

Reducing Stress at Report Time

You received funding to support your activities and now it's time to report back. Most funders whether government, corporate, trust or foundation will want a description of your project and how it met your objectives. To do this effectively necessitates an evaluation of how the money was spent and the impact of your project, including things like attendance figures, community impact and outcomes.

Measure extent to which you are achieving your objectives

Cultural organisations work towards a range of important objectives, such as inspiring audiences and connecting communities, however our experience shows these objectives are not often measured in any formal way.

- Link the data you collect in your program evaluation to your key objectives as an organisation - Cheat Sheet One contains expert tips for formulating an evaluation strategy that will provide the data you need when it comes to reporting time
- Determine how effectively your objectives have been met, assess how closely the opinions of your peers and audiences compare to your own expectations for your program
- Compare your results to your other internal events, programs or investments to see the areas where you are excelling and identify areas for improvement
- Collect data for your projects throughout the year, so you're not scrambling for evidence at the last minute
- Prepare evaluation and reporting templates so that you can easily collate data from across your different projects and save time evaluating new projects

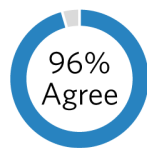
Celebrate your impact and outcomes using evidence

Capturing data to substantiate anecdotal evidence means you can make a stronger case for the outcomes your organisation generates.

- Identify the outcomes achieved by your program and the value generated for audiences and participants, for example: did your work inspire others to be creative or provide an important addition to the cultural life of your city?
- Give thought to the full range of domains where your work has impact including Cultural, Social, Civic, Economic and Environmental

- Prepare your reports using data to substantiate anecdotal evidence
- See your reports as an investment – they can both be used for acquitting your activity, or as leverage for additional support
- Be proactive and set aside a reporting budget for each event so you have evidence to support them, rather than reacting to budget cuts or financial stress
- Include clear snapshots of key statistics that support your impact – see below

Social Impact



It made me feel safe and welcome



It helped me to feel connected to people in the community



It has a positive impact on my physical health and mental wellbeing

Use peer feedback to your advantage

Asking peers to evaluate your events and programs generates significant insights that can be used at reporting time with minimal effort.

- Capture advice and opinions from respected peers in a coordinated way
- Compare the results of your peer assessment to audience response as well as your own expectations for the program. This adds rigour and can create additional insights into the impact of your work and artistic outcomes
- Include the transparent peer assessment in your reporting to illustrate the extent to which you met your objectives and the impact of your program

Use comparison data to show how you improved over time

Maintaining some of the same measures in all evaluations allows you to find out and report on how your events or programs compare.

- Compare programs over time to gain important insights into your own progress
- Include charts using consistent measures in your reporting to highlight the ways you have improved based on prior learnings
- Check whether or not any interventions or changes to programming have been successful – continue to monitor your performance over time and use it to allocate resources more effectively

Tap into global benchmarks and share with others

Standardising measurements across multiple organisations enables accurate and objective comparison to take place, which can lead to new insights and learnings.

- Identify collegiate organisations with common objectives – this could include partners co-producing a show, international counterparts, other consortium members
- Embrace the use of standardised metrics. Using common questions when gathering audience and peer feedback across multiple organisations enables direct comparison
- Work as a team. Share your evaluation approaches and results – if you find other organisations are getting better results in some areas find out what they are doing differently to achieve your desired outcomes. Collaborate with meaningful peers and generate greater insights for yourself and the sector
- Utilise benchmarking. Compare your results to sector led averages across common metrics
- Give your results context. For example '87% agree it had a positive effect on my health and wellbeing' may be an exceptional result - highlight this by using benchmark comparisons in your report

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