Arts & Humanities
Research Council

Understanding Your Project: A Guide to Self Evaluation

Contents

The Benefits of Self Evaluation

Evaluation is a valuable tool for learning and involves critical analysis of your activities. There are likely to be clear benefits to you from evaluating your work:

- Evaluation helps with planning a programme/project, as it encourages you to think about what you are aiming to do, how you will achieve it, and how you will know if you have been successful;
- Ongoing feedback helps keep a programme/project on track and can highlight potential difficulties or issues;
- Ongoing feedback allows you to identify potential new directions or opportunities at an early stage, and provides 'quality assurance';
- Evaluation helps to prove the value of the programme/project, and records the contribution you have made to your field;
- Your evaluation can be used for reporting back to funders, and for telling others about the value of the work you have completed.
- The evaluation can help inform the development of future programmes/projects.

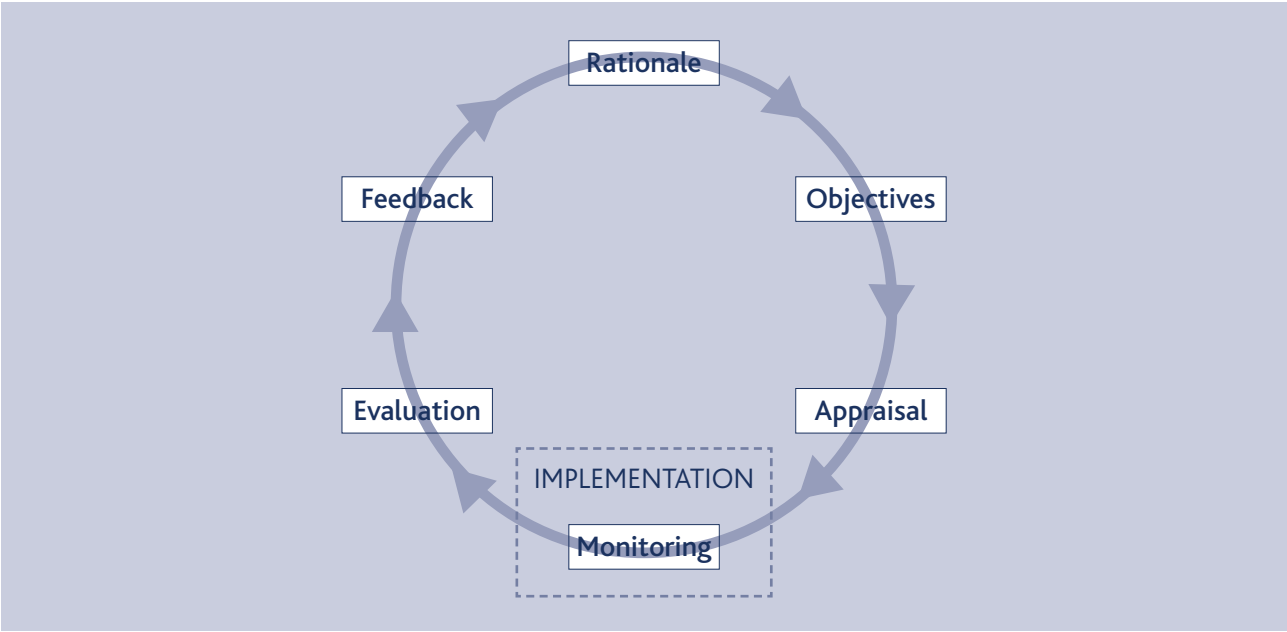
Evaluation takes place before, during and after a project. It includes looking at the quality of the content, the delivery process and the impact of the project or programme on the audience(s). Knowing what, if anything, has changed as a result of a project is not enough. It is also important to know why something has changed and how a project can be improved.

The objectives of an evaluation should be to:

- Establish whether the objectives of a project or programme have been met;
- Identify whether anything has changed as a result of the project or programme (often termed *summative evaluation*);
- Identify how the project could have been more effective;
- Identify whether there have been unintended outcomes and what these were.

The Evaluation Cycle

Appraisal, monitoring and evaluation form stages of a broad policy cycle, often recognised under the acronym **ROAMEF** – Rationale, Objectives, Appraisal, Monitoring, Evaluation, Feedback (see *The Green Book: Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government,* HM Treasury 2003):



Once the **rationale** for the programme/project has been agreed, it is important to set out clearly its desired **outcomes** and **objectives**. Where appropriate, targets should be set to help progress towards meeting objectives. Objectives and targets should be **SMART**: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound.

Appraisals provide an assessment of whether a proposed programme/project is worthwhile, usually undertaken as a cost-benefit analysis. As options for delivering the programme/project are developed it is important to review the impact of risks, uncertainties and inherent biases. This helps to ensure that the chosen option remains best value for money, even in conditions of change.

Once the options have been appraised and a decision has been taken on delivery, the programme/project can be implemented. It is essential at this stage that **monitoring** procedures are put in place to ensure that information is collected on progress towards meeting objectives. Such information might include **outputs**, **outcomes** and **impact**.

Evaluation is similar to appraisal, except that it uses historic rather than forecast data. Its main purpose is to ensure that lessons are widely learned, communicated and applied when assessing new proposals.

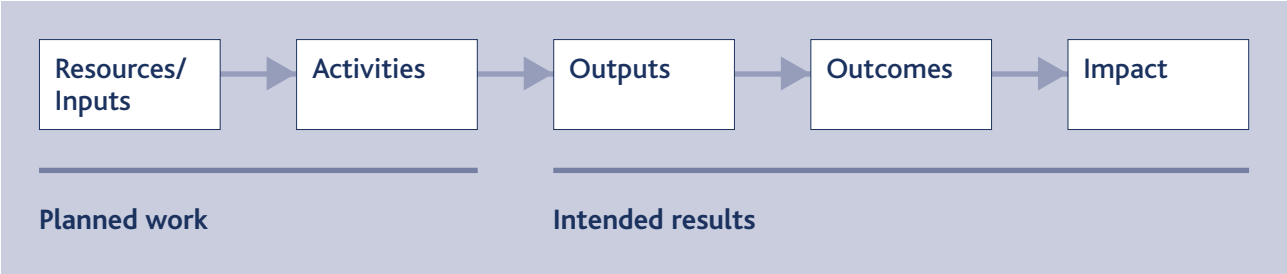
> *When any policy, programme or project is completed or has advanced to a pre-determined degree, it should undergo a comprehensive evaluation (The Green Book,* HM Treasury 2003)

Evaluation examines the outcomes of a policy, programme or project against what was expected. It is designed to ensure that the lessons learned are fed back into the decision-making process for future policies, programmes or projects.

Planning a programme/project

You may find it useful to use a programme logic model in planning your programme/project. This will enable you to appraise the work you have planned and its intended results, and also to consider the resources/inputs required to deliver it.

A logic model is basically a systematic and visual way of presenting and sharing understanding of the relationships among the programme/project resources, the planned activities, and the anticipated changes or result:



Planned work – describes what resources are needed to implement the programme and what activities are intended.

Resources/inputs – include human, financial, organisational and community resources a programme has available to direct towards doing the work.

Activities – what the programme does with the resources; the processes, tools, events, technology and actions that are an intentional part of the programme implementation. These interventions are used to bring about intended changes or results.

Intended results – all of the programme's desired results (outputs, outcomes and impact)

Outputs – direct products of programme activities and may include types, levels and targets of services to be delivered by the programme.

Outcomes – specific changes in programme participant's behaviour, knowledge, skills, status and level of functioning.

Impact – the fundamental intended or unintended change occurring in organisations, communities or systems as a result of programme activities.

In creating a logic model, you will address the following planning and evaluation issues:

- Cataloguing of the resources and actions needed to reach intended results;
- Documenting connections among available resources, planned activities and expected results;
- Describing the results aimed for in terms of specific, measurable, action-orientated, realistic and timed outcomes.

A basic template for gathering the required information for the logic model is given below. An example of a completed logic model is provided at Annex 1:

Issues	Resources	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
The aims/ objectives of the programme are:	In order to achieve the set of activities to fulfil these aims/ objectives we need the following:	In order to address the aims and objectives we will accomplish the following activities:	We expect that once accomplished these activities will produce the following evidence/service delivery:	We expect that if accomplished these activities will lead to the following changes in knowledge, skills, behaviour etc:	We expect that if accomplished these activities will lead to the following changes in service, organisation or community:

Setting Aims

Aims are the areas of change you intend to achieve with your programme or project. You may have an overall aim or mission statement, which you will need to break down into a series of specific aims. You can then check how well your programme/project is doing by monitoring and evaluating each separate aim.

It is important to take time to discuss and decide your aims. You will find it difficult to set the right objectives and to evaluate the programme/project if your aims are unclear. It is helpful to consider the following when setting aims:

- *Language* – use verbs that describe change: *to increase, to promote, to improve, to reduce, to develop, to enable*.
- *Target groups* – who are you working with? Which group/s will change or benefit as a result of the programme/project?
- *Cohesion* – make sure everyone involved in the programme/project is clear about its aims.

Setting Objectives

Objectives are the practical activities you carry out to achieve your aims. There should be a direct link between each aim and its objectives. In order to achieve some aims, it may be necessary to carry out several activities so each aim may have multiple objectives attached to it. It is helpful to consider the following when setting objectives:

- *Language* – use verbs that describe action: *to organise, to produce, to conduct, to set up, to run, to provide*.
- *Realistic* – don't be over-ambitious. Make sure you have sufficient financial resources, enough staff and enough time to run each activity.
- *Limits* – don't have too many aims and objectives, and make them as focused as possible.

Setting Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators help you to assess the progress and success of your programme/project. Output indicators help you to assess the work generated by the programme/project and to show how you are meeting your objectives. Outcome indicators help you to assess the changes which take place as a result of your programme/project, and show how you are meeting your aims.

Once objectives are set, you will be able to start thinking about the intended outputs for your programme/project. Outputs describe the activities, services and products achieved by the programme/project, and each objective will have related outputs.

Once the outputs for an objective are identified, indicators can be developed for them. Output indicators will include:

- The number of activities, services or products – e.g. the number of workshops held.
- The number of people/organisations using them – e.g. attendance figures for each workshop.
- The type of people/organisations using them – e.g. the number of public, private and international organisations represented at each workshop.

Outcome indicators will measure whether the programme/project is achieving the desired changes/benefits identified in its aims. In setting outcome indicators, you will need to think about the specific changes or benefits you want to achieve, and identify indicators to show that these changes/benefits have actually happened. For example, you may want to raise the profile of your programme/project with the wider community. You could measure this by looking at things like the number of website hits, attendance at events by individuals from your target communities, or media coverage of your programme/project. You could also consider conducting some case studies of exemplary work for circulation to a wider audience.

Indicators are usually quantitative, but can include a mix of qualitative and quantitative information:

Focus Area Individual aim/objective	Questions Key questions or issues within aim/objective	Indicators Data/information required to measure the success in answering questions or issues	Information needed List of specific data or information, and its location
e.g. To generate research findings and outcomes of international significance and quality, to disseminate these to an international research audience, and to develop networks of researchers in and beyond the UK.	Were the findings/outcomes of international significance/quality? Were they disseminated to an international audience? Were networks created in and beyond the UK?	Count of events with an international element Count of number of international people attending International elements included in End of Award Reports (EARs) International representation on steering committees and commissioning committees Case studies of notable events	List of networks, workshops, conferences and details of content/focus Attendance lists with addresses Access to EARs for awards List of membership of steering/commissioning committees Information on notable events, access to key people

Don't be tempted to set too many indicators. It is better to have a small number of relevant and achievable indicators which will inform the evaluation of your programme/project.

Monitoring

There is often confusion between monitoring and evaluation data. In essence, monitoring is about counting things and ensuring your project is on track. Evaluation is about the impact of your project and ensuring it is well designed to make the maximum impact. The same basic tools for gathering and analysing data can be used for evaluation and monitoring information, often achieving both at the same time.

Monitoring your programme/project allows you to check on its progress against aims, objectives and indicators. It is useful to monitor progress as it will allow you to see how your outputs and outcomes are developing, and to ensure that you are delivering your aims and objectives. It can be seen as a regular 'health check'; it will highlight any potential issues or difficulties, and provide some 'good news' stories for reporting back to your funders.

Once you have set your indicators, it should become clear what types of monitoring information you should be collecting across the life of the programme/project. Monitoring information can be collected in various ways: for example, by questionnaires or feedback forms; keeping databases of attendees at workshops; keeping a log of new contacts made across the life of the project.

Monitoring should become a routine part of the programme/project. You should be clear about who is collecting the information and when – e.g. who will take responsibility for distributing exit questionnaires at the end of a workshop and logging responses. It should be clear to participants why you are collecting the information and what it will be used for, and it should be easy for them to provide it – questionnaires should be short and relevant, and it should be easy for them to be returned promptly, preferably at the event itself. Records held on databases should be completed fully and accurately, and stored safely and confidentially in observance of data protection laws.

Gathering data

Quantitative research

Quantitative research answers questions about how many people did or thought something. You can also ask 'how much', 'to what extent' and other 'measure' type questions. There are two underlying principles to quantitative research:

- every respondent should be asked the same questions in the same way so that the answers can be added together; and
- the information collected is representative of all the people that took part in or used your project.

When drawing a sample to be representative of 'users', everyone you reach with your project should have an equal chance of being asked to respond in order to avoid bias. The types of sampling techniques used to collect quantitative data representative of users are:

- *Census* – collecting information from everyone who engaged with the project.
- *Systematic sampling* – taking every 'nth' person who passes a particular spot or accesses a website, requests a pack etc.
- *Quota sampling* – if you know that 50% of your audience will be female then you set a quota of 50% of your sample to be female. Which females you ask will then be random.

You can also use simple methods to create a sample, like those born on a certain date in the month – e.g. in larger projects, taking those born on three random dates for every month of the year generally yields a 10% sample.

Some people you ask to take part will not do so. The main difficulty is that those who enjoyed the project will be more likely to respond than those who didn't. Using interviewers usually means that you get a more representative sample than relying on self-completion as there is more pressure on people to take part. If you cannot be sure that those who didn't respond are no different than those who did, make sure you include the limitations of your data in your report.

There are four basic quantitative data collection techniques:

- Face-to-face interviews
- Telephone interviews
- Self-completion on paper
- Self-completion electronically.

For small events, the most likely method will be self-completion on paper, where questionnaires are distributed and attendees are encouraged to complete and return them at the end of the event or post them back later. Face-to-face interviews with a sample of attendees is another option for larger events. These are tools for immediate feedback, but a more considered response can be gained from using follow-up interviews, questionnaires etc.

Qualitative research

Qualitative methods enable you to address deeper questions, such as why people did or didn't like a project, why they thought it was good or bad, and what you could change about it. As it is about depth of understanding, samples are usually small – you don't need to talk to many people before you stop getting new information. Qualitative research is usually conducted via individual in-depth interviews or group discussions/focus groups.

Discussion groups usually have a facilitator to set out issues to cover, follow up issues raised, and ensure that the key issues are covered. This approach allows respondents to add in things you might not have thought to ask by letting them take the lead rather than being led by structured questionnaires. A tape-recording of the session is useful to provide direct quotes for reporting to funders.

Observational research

Observation involves the planned watching, recording and analysis of behaviour as it occurs in a 'natural' setting: usually people interacting with your project. It is particularly useful for understanding how people use websites and CD-ROMS or flow through an exhibition, as well as to explore how to get people to actively engage with talks and discussions.

Other tools for qualitative research

- *Visitors book* – a way of capturing the thoughts of visitors and getting feedback.
- *Record keeping* – self observation. It can be a useful resource when looking at how you could do things better in the future.
- *Media impact* – measuring the impact of this can be difficult. Some people measure column inches and use the sales/readership figures of the publication to estimate the numbers reached. However, not everyone reads every page of a newspaper or magazine and the impact on readers is generally unknown. With TV and radio, viewing and listening figures may be available but data on impact is unlikely to be available.

Designing questionnaires for self completion quantitative surveys

Length

Keep it focused, simple to complete, and as short as possible – definitely no more than two pages. The longer the questionnaire, the less likely people are to fill it in and the more likely that you will have missing answers. It will also take you longer to analyse and process the information.

Issues to consider:

- You should make sure that the respondent finds the questionnaire straightforward and useful.
- If using pre-coded questions, you need to be confident that the categories chosen reflect the spectrum of actual experience. You should always have an 'Other' category to capture anything you have missed.
- Make sure your language is appropriate to your audience.
- Make sure your respondent has the chance to say what is on their mind with a general open-ended question at the end of the form.
- Pilot the questionnaire on a few people before circulating it widely; this will help identify any difficulties with wording or concepts.

Structure

- Move from simple, non-sensitive questions to those that require more thought and maybe more personal information.
- Most questionnaires will benefit from a mix of closed (pre-coded) and open questions, where people enter their response in their own words.
- Avoid long batteries of scales, as respondents will drift.
- Sensitive and demographic data (age, sex, ethnicity etc) are usually best placed at the end.
- Do not request information that you do not plan to use – it wastes everyone's time.

Analysis

- Plan the time and resources needed for coding, data entry, analysis and reporting. This will help you decide whether to handle it yourself or pass it to a third party.
- A simple spreadsheet will allow you to do quite a lot of analysis of the data.

Maximising response rates

- Distribute questionnaires at the start of the event, and ask people to complete it before they leave.
- Make it short, simple and relevant.
- Consider providing an incentive to complete the questionnaire, such as a free gift or prize.
- Use pre-paid envelopes to increase responses when asking respondents to post back replies.
- Follow-up by telephone can be relatively quick and can improve the response rate significantly.

Using scales

The 1 – 5 'Likert' scale is the most commonly used form of rating. The scale is usually anchored descriptively: 5= agree strongly, 4=agree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 2=disagree, 1=disagree strongly. Another option is to present respondents with statements to choose between, asking them to tick the one that best fits their view. You can then present the percentage of respondents who agree with each statement.

Reluctance to give feedback

The key is to ensure that people understand that their feedback is important and can help you. Emphasise that critical feedback is useful and as welcome as positive feedback. Leaving questionnaires for the audience to complete on leaving the event will provide you mainly with extreme views: those who had a good time are most likely to fill it in, and those who hated it are more likely to complete it than those who just had an OK time. You must be aware that the results will not necessarily be representative of your whole audience; taking into account the proportion of responses, the higher the response rate the more representative the results will be.

Data handling – tools and techniques

Quantitative data

Coding – the open questions in your questionnaire will need to be coded for data entry. Read through all the responses for each open question, looking for similar responses to allow you to draw up a 'code frame' for each question. This allows you to add together similar responses, giving each code a number. You will then read each questionnaire and put the appropriate code(s) by the side of the question – it is this number that will be entered on spreadsheets, not verbatim comments.

Data entry – if you are using paper questionnaires, you will need to input your data. If you only have a small number of respondents, you could do your analysis by hand by just counting through the questionnaires. However, if you want to do any analysis beyond total counts of how many people gave each answer, or you have more respondents, the simplest way to analyse small datasets is to use spreadsheets.

Qualitative data

This is gathered by recording discussions. Recording may be literal (audio/visual) or via note taking to record key points. You can also use flip charts, which allows respondents to confirm that you have accurately recorded what they meant. This approach also means that some analysis is being undertaken during the discussion, as key points are identified and recorded by the group.

Analysis of recorded conversations can be undertaken by making transcripts or by making notes and recording quotes. Key points to look for include:

- Main and sub-themes and issues across groups and individuals
- Ideas from participants that will support the development of your project
- Tracking individuals through the discussion, exploring how and why views change, and any preconceived or hyperbolic views
- The context and interpretation of comments
- Illustrative quotes for the final report
- The language used – this will help with the design of quantitative questionnaires.

The table below may help you think about the type of information you want to collect depending on the delivery method you are using, and how you might obtain information to see whether you have met your objectives:

	Discussion meeting/talk	Website	Products (eg CD ROM)	Exhibition/ open day	Show/Play	Competition
Monitoring Data						
Number of people	Count people on entry	Count hits	Number distributed	Count people on entry	Count audience	Count entries
Types of people	Categorise people at registration, by observation or questionnaire	Pop-up questionnaires on site, or registration procedures	Use of order/ request forms and questionnaires	Categorise people on entry by registration or questionnaire	Ticket sales or booking mechanisms to gather information	Use entries to gather data on types of entrants
Evaluation Data						
Baseline	**To measure change, you need a baseline from before the audience engaged with your project, and another set of data taken after they took part. You will need to ask the same questions before and after.**					
Change views/ attitudes	Ask people for baseline views on a questionnaire when register to attend	Registration questionnaire on the site	Distribution methods will affect the ability to collect initial data. An ordering mechanism allows data to be gathered	Ask for baseline views on a questionnaire when they register to come or buy tickets	Ask for baseline views on a questionnaire when they register for tickets	Building in an initial data gathering exercise will allow baseline data to be gathered
Change behaviour						
Increase interest						
Increase knowledge						
Quality/Fit for purpose						
Strengths/ Weaknesses	Observe the event. Exit questionnaires, follow up focus groups or questionnaires	Include questions on this in a questionnaire hosted on the site	Follow-up questionnaires and focus groups	Exit/follow-up questionnaires. Short face-face interviews during event. Observation	Follow-up questionnaires. Group discussions	Use entry mechanisms to gather feedback
Interaction with project	Observation of dynamics will help you plan better events in the future	Record the order in which pages are accessed, and dwell time on each page	Observations of users and questionnaires	Observation. In-depth interviews, focus groups or questionnaires. Feedback from staff or colleagues	Observation. Questionnaires	Implicit in taking part, use entry numbers as a measure
Dialogue						
Obtain views on issue	Listening to conversations, record key points	An interactive email facility will allow this	Not a good medium for getting people's views. Can use these as stimulus for group discussions and questionnaires	Comment books and exit questionnaires. Build in opportunity for staff/ colleagues to engage with visitors	Not usually designed for giving feedback. Can use debate after the performance	Can build this into the entry process, but not a normal mechanism for getting people's views

Evaluation

Evaluation involves looking at the information gathered and making informed judgements about the programme/project in relation to its aims and objectives. You will usually be asking the following type of questions:

- Did the project achieve its aims? Did it achieve its objectives? If not, why not? What worked well, what didn't?
- Did the activities run as planned? Were the outcomes and outputs of an acceptable quality? Did it reach its target groups? Has the programme/project advanced knowledge in the area?
- What added benefits did the programme/project achieve? Was it greater than the sum of its parts – did the participants and/or staff gain e.g. new skills or knowledge from their involvement; did the programme/project bring new collaborations (e.g. interdisciplinary, international) which would otherwise not have happened; has it had unexpected outcomes?

The emphasis is likely to be on numerical data but depth of understanding is important at this stage. Qualitative data can be crucial in explaining what lies behind your quantitative data.

Impacts must be measurable if they are to be evaluated. You will need to think about the realistic level of impact that you can make and the practicalities of identifying that impact. A broad outline of the AHRC Impact Strategy is given at Annex 2. The full version is available at: http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/files/about_us_files/impact_strategy.asp?SourcePageID=1&popup=1#1

The Kirkpatrick Model – four levels of potential impact

- *reaction* – the initial response to participation
- *learning* – changes in people's understanding, or raising their awareness of an issue
- *behaviour* – whether people subsequently modify what they do
- *results* – to track the long-term impacts of the project on measurable outcomes.

Reaction

You may want to set objectives regarding things like perceived levels of enjoyment and usefulness. You can assess reactions in three main ways: by getting people to write down their response (usually by questionnaire); by talking to them one-to-one or in focus groups; by observing them.

If you want to know whether people enjoyed the project/found it useful/learnt something, you can also find out what they particularly did or didn't enjoy, what was most and least useful and what they would change and why. You can also get information on the environment; e.g. comfort of the venue, quality of refreshments.

The easiest time to get initial reactions is when people are taking part in the project. It may also be worthwhile to get a more considered response a short time after the actual interaction when people have had time to reflect.

Funders appreciate evaluation strategies that provide feedback on lessons learned, good practice, successful and unsuccessful approaches. If you understand why something went wrong, it can help improve things for the future – a 'lessons learned' section will enable better practices to evolve.

Learning

You can find out quite easily what, if anything, people think that they have learnt from your programme/project within the reaction data: you can ask them to tell you what they think they have gained, and whether they have a more complete view or understanding of the issue.

Behaviour

Tracking and measuring changes in behaviour is resource-intensive: you'll need to know what the baselines were and will need some sort of ongoing contact to monitor change. You might rely on self-evaluation, but you may want independent verification. Either way, you will need resources and expertise capable of delivering this sort of evidence.

Results – long-term impact

Tracking people with whom you have engaged over an extended period is the most straightforward way of assessing long-term impact. However if you only track the people you engaged with, there is no 'control group' to allow you to ascribe changes to your project rather than to other influences. The resource implications for this are considerable – it is only practical for large scale projects with budgets to match.

Reporting results

You should carefully consider the evidence you have collected, thinking about what it tells you. Negative outcomes should not be ignored – they may be helpful in providing 'lessons learned' for future programmes/projects. The positive and negative findings from an evaluation should be fed back into the decision-making process for future programmes/projects. An example template for reporting back to funders is given at Annex 3.

In addition to providing a report for your funders, you may also consider reporting your findings in other ways to a wider public. Perhaps you could put highlights from the evaluation on your website, or publish some case studies of exemplary work conducted during the programme/project.

Once the evaluation is completed, you may also like to consider the process itself. There may be things you have learnt from the process and things you would like to change for future evaluation cycles – perhaps your aims were too vague so you would like to think about making them more measurable in the future; or a monitoring tool worked particularly well, and you now have a questionnaire template to adapt for future use.

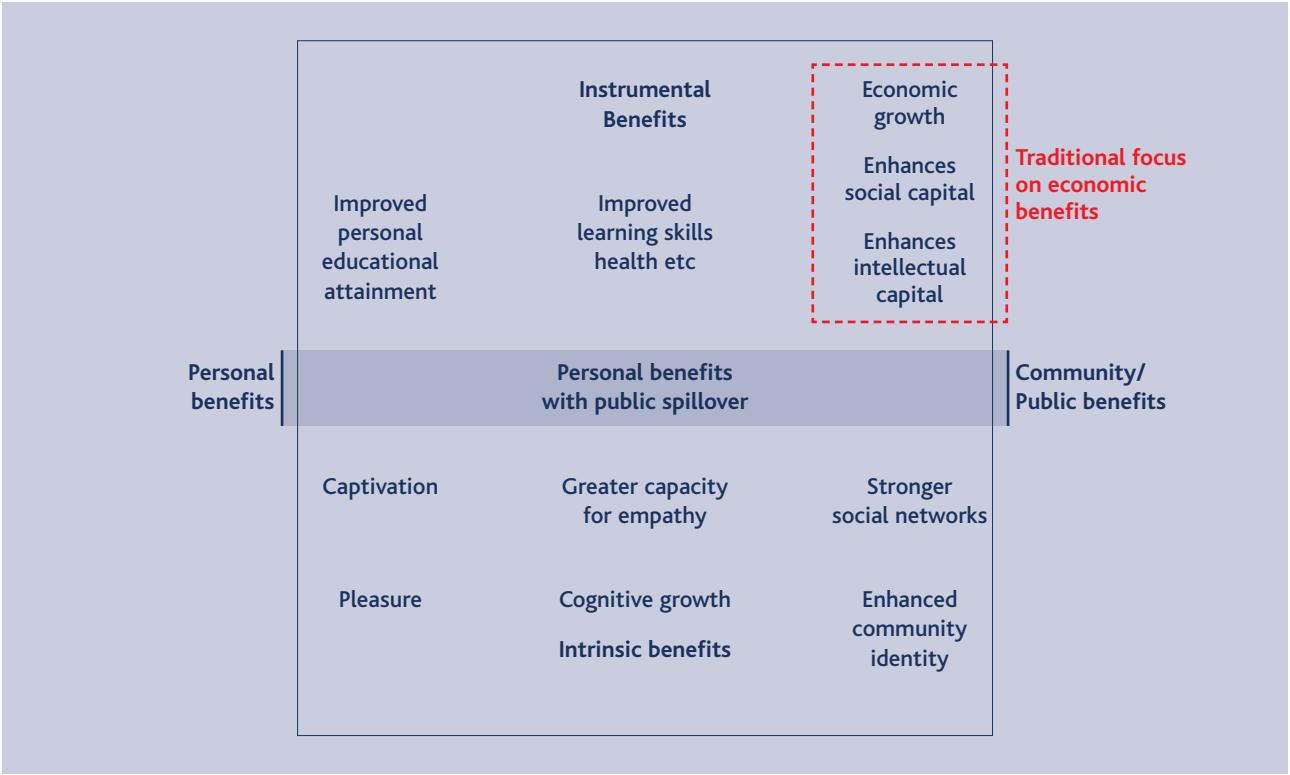
Annex 1 – Example Logic Model

This logic model was provided by Annabel Jackson Associates for the AHRC as part of a social impact case study of Translations, an exhibition by Jim Pattison supported by an AHRC Small Grant in the Creative and Performing Arts. The exhibition consists of a series of digital artworks interpreting the experiences and language of dialysis and kidney transplantation. Translations shows how art can be an important medium in the communication of medical terminology between practitioners and patients, and how it can help scientists to innovate by looking beyond the aesthetic constructs that are taken for granted in images. It also gives insights into medical conditions.

Assumptions	Resources*	Processes/Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
That images are affected by the image maker: person and method	AHRC grant	Image making	Images	Feelings of comfort for renal patients from seeing shared experiences	Scope to encourage scientists to look beyond the current aesthetic of digital images
That multiple interpretations help to reveal the filters used by different image makers and methods	Carnegie grant	Contact with hospitals and other organisations	Visitors:	Possible clarification of thoughts and feelings around dialysis and transplants	Scope to help patients to communicate and interpret their experiences individually and collectively
That patients are active seekers after meaning and diagnosis, rather than passive	College grant and help in kind	Exhibitions	* Renal patients	Appreciation that people see things differently and different interpretations are valid	
That information is power.	Help in kind from galleries		* Staff in renal units	Understanding of the subjectivity of images, including medical images, and the way the method affects the image	
Those pictured have rights over their information including a right to personal interpretation			* The general public	Understanding of the information overload of medical experiences and, for staff, a direction of attention towards the responsibility in giving that information	
That visual images can provide insights into information additional to those provided by words and text e.g. conceptualisation, linkages, context and emotional meaning			Catalogue	Conceptual understanding of the experience of dialysis and kidney transplant e.g. in terms of filtering and displacement	
				Link to other experiences of filtering and displacement	

Annex 2 – A broad outline of the AHRC Impact Strategy

There are a wide variety of pathways through which arts and humanities research can create value. The arts and humanities create social and economic benefits directly and indirectly through improvements in social and intellectual capital, social networking, community identity, learning and skills and quality of life. The AHRC has sought to develop a framework to understand the benefits of arts and humanities research, which considers 'instrumental' values as well as the 'intrinsic' elements (see below). This framework categorises benefits to the individual and to the wider community.



The traditional argument for public sector investment in research is to drive innovation by funding research that is 'far from market' but which has the capacity to deliver direct economic benefits e.g. those that result from the arts as an economic activity and thus are a source of employment, tax income, and expenditure. The DIUS has been using the following measures to assess the value of the research base in the UK that reflect these benefits:

- the creation of new businesses;
- the development of new products and processes;
- the attraction and retention of investment in the UK; and
- the training of people.

DIUS recognises that capturing these impacts is necessary but not sufficient. There are many routes and pathways through which research leads to 'impacts'. These include:

- The positive learning and skills impacts on the research team;
- The impacts research can have on government policies, standards, objectives and guidelines;
- The commercialisation benefits which can arise from research leading to spin out companies or being the source of content for the cultural industries, and the development of new curricula and courses leading to educational and commercial benefits;
- The impact and benefits to further research activities which can then build upon the results; and
- The benefits to society at large which in economic terms can be categorised as direct, indirect and public good values.

This broader understanding of economic impact, which includes contribution to GDP, is more comprehensive. But it does not lend itself as easily to the development of metrics. The AHRC's core approach is to develop a narrative, supported by metrics where they are appropriate. Arts and humanities research can make an enormous contribution to the economic prosperity and social fabric of the UK. Many of the fastest growing parts of the UK economy sit within the AHRC's subject domains including new media, computer games, music, textiles and fashion, design, film and television. There are a wide variety of pathways through which arts and humanities research can create value. In some cases it is possible to assign a market value and in others not. The arts and humanities create social and economic benefits directly and indirectly through improvements in social and intellectual capital, social networking, community identity, learning and skills and quality of life. Such benefits can be assigned 'public' values based on assessments of 'willingness to pay' through contingent valuation. The AHRC has sought to develop a framework to understand the benefits of arts and humanities research which considers 'instrumental' values as well as the 'intrinsic' elements (see illustration above). This framework categorises benefits to the individual and to the wider community.

> *Intrinsic values are better thought of as the capacity and potential of culture to affect us…Instrumental values relate to the ancillary effects of culture, where culture us used to achieve a social or economic purpose…culture does have significant value, but that instrumental value on its own does not give an adequate account of the value of culture, and that, moreover, better methodologies need to be found to demonstrate instrumental value in a convincing way. (Capturing Cultural Value,* Holden, J., Demos 2004)

Measuring 'Outputs' and 'Outcomes'

In measuring the impact of research it is essential to draw a clear distinction between 'activities' or 'outputs' and 'outcomes' or 'impacts'.

> *'Outcomes are the eventual benefits to society that proposals are intended to achieve…Outputs are the results of activities that can be clearly stated or measured and which relate in some way to the outcomes desired' (The Green Book,* HM Treasury 2003)

This model demonstrates, in a necessarily simplified way, that impacts will accrue over a long period of time and that any assessment of impact needs to take a long term view. The measurement of inputs, outputs and outcomes becomes more difficult as they move from being tangible and objective to become less tangible and subjective.

> *'The impact of a project is the sum of the outputs and outcomes, an overall analysis of its results: unlike the outcomes, the impact of a project may change over time as subsequent events unfold' (The Belgrade Theatre, A first social audit 1998-9,* a study supported by Arts Council England 1999)

In undertaking any impact assessment it is important to use the most appropriate focal unit. Specific research projects are often interrelated, making the research team or group the most appropriate unit of measurement in many cases. In addition, any assessment of research impact should take account of the different types of research and consider the impacts of the research process itself, for example in shaping the researchers of the future.

> *"In any assessment of research impact it is important to take account of the different types of… research. This is not just a matter of making the familiar distinction between basic and applied research but also entails acknowledging that different forms of research lead to different types of knowledge, for example: 'knowing what works'; 'knowing how things work'; and 'knowing why things happen'. Assessment approaches need to be able to capture the impact of all these forms of research knowledge; they should not be designed with only 'what works' research findings in mind." (Approaches to assessing the non-academic impact of social science research,* Davies, H., Nutley, S. & Walter, I., Report of the ESRC symposium on assessing the non-academic impact of research, 2005)

Annex 3 – A sample template for reporting to funders

Section	Contents
Executive summary	Some people, especially more senior figures, will only read this section. It should pull out the key points, and the structure should mirror that of the main report so that anyone who wants more information on a certain section can easily find it. This section should be written last.
Introduction	Sets out: ● The background to your programme/project ● Why you wanted to run the programme/project ● What you hoped to achieve and why ● The aims and objectives of the programme/project ● The aims and objectives of the evaluation ● The structure of the remaining report.
The programme/project	A brief description of the programme/project.
Objective 1	The objective and data relating to whether it was met, with some discussion as to why the actual outcome occurred.
Objectives 2,3 etc.	As above.
Unexpected outcomes	Describe any unexpected outcomes and whether they are positive or negative.
Conclusions	A summing up of the key achievements of the programme/project, its strengths and weaknesses.
Lessons learnt	● What you would do differently and why ● Key learning points for others ● Include discussion of unexpected outcomes and how to ensure they either occur again or not, as appropriate.
Annexes	Include: ● Full details of your methodology ● How you selected your sample ● Copies of questionnaires and topic guides ● Some information on how you analysed your data.