

CREATE EFFECTIVE DOCUMENTATION, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Documenting/recording, evaluating and reporting on your projects simply and effectively will:

- help participants reflect on their own progress
- help you reflect on whether a project has achieved its goals
- improve processes and outcomes for future projects
- demonstrate the outcomes of the project to funders and partners (current and future).

WHAT CAN YOU EVALUATE?

Consider which parts are relevant to your project, your organisation and your resources. Below is an overview taken from [‘Evaluating Community Arts and Wellbeing’ \(Creative Victoria\)](#).

You probably won’t be able to consider all the factors outlined below on every project because of time and resources, so consider which parts are relevant to your project, your organisation and your resources.

	participants	project/ organisation	community	
process	how participants are involved in the project	how the project is managed	how the community is involved in the project	process
impact	what happens to, or for, participants through the project	what happens as result of the project	what happens to or for the community through the project	impact
outcome	what happens to, or for, participants in the long term as a result of the project	what happens in the long term, as a result of the project	what happens to, or for, the community in the long term as a result of the project	outcome
	participants	project/ organisation	community	

CHARACTERISTICS OF QUALITY DOCUMENTATION, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

I. EVALUATION AND DOCUMENTATION ARE BUILT INTO THE PROJECT FROM THE BEGINNING

Evaluation needs to be built in from the start of the project. Identifying intentions of participants and partners is the first step. This will help you to identify specific outcomes to measure against. You can reflect upon these measures to help you assess and improve the project while it’s underway and at the end.

Tips:

- *Involve the community in setting the success measures.*
- *Be clear about who needs to see or use the evaluation by:*
 - *making sure you know who your key audiences will be and what they want to know*
 - *checking your funders’ report form requirements*
 - *making sure you capture all relevant information.*
- *Establish SMART objectives – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.*

- Budget and allow time for your evaluation and documentation.
- Plan when to use the intentions and outcomes during the project to reflect on progress.
- Be clear about whose responsibility it is to do the evaluation.

2. QUALITY PROCESSES ARE USED FOR COLLECTING AND ANALYSING THE INFORMATION

Good evaluation processes are simple, clear and easy for people to use.

Evaluation needs to be:

- quantitative (measured with numbers, e.g. participants, audience members, artists, workshops, media mentions)
- qualitative (what people feel and think about things, e.g. the quality of the process, the quality of the outcome).

Tips:

- Keep it simple.
- Evaluate the processes as well as the outcomes.
- Capture the perspectives of participants, arts practitioners/facilitators and project workers, stakeholders and the wider community.
- Think creatively about how you gather information and document your project. Use a range of formats and media (if you video people you'll need to get permission from them to use the footage).
- Keep it positive. Constructive feedback is useful but destructive criticism can undermine your project's intentions.
- Be honest about what the results tell you.
- Bring in an objective outside person to help evaluate, if resources allow.
- Some ways to capture information:
 - verbal feedback
 - surveys
 - journals
 - focus groups

- creative processes e.g. graffiti walls or participant photo essays
- interviews
- strategic conversations
- debrief meetings

3. SUCCESSES AND LEARNINGS ARE SHARED

It is important to tell the story of your project. There are a range of ways you can do this. Use reports, celebratory events, social media and other platforms.

Tips:

- Share your story with a range of people.
- Be honest – you can learn more from the mistakes than the successes.
- Include information on process, impacts and outcomes.
- Keep your reports concise and relevant to the recipients.
- Use creative ways to tell your story. Think of your evaluation as storytelling and use images, graphics, dashboards, and infographics.
- Archive and share your documentation, evaluation and reports so that they can be used in the future.

MORE INFO

For more resources on documenting, evaluating and reporting, see our Community Arts Toolkit > [Tools to develop your project](#)

Is something missing from these tipsheets? Email us: website@creativenz.govt.nz