

Evaluation

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GOAL Youth Workshop Series

The Grassroots Organizing and Leadership (GOAL) Youth Capacity Building Workshop Series was developed in 2007 by youth-led organizations, funders and other partners to provide access to learning opportunities that can enhance the work of young people, artists and youth-led groups. Through different strategies and in different spaces, young people are working to make change and to have an impact on communities across the city of Toronto. To take this passion and commitment and channel it into a project, individuals or organizations often require training, tools and supports that are not always available to emerging, youth-led groups.

This workshop series provides facilitators (many of whom are young people, or those that have been involved in grassroots organizing and project development) to share their insights and resources. Many groups have struggled to find a financial template that works for them, decode grant guidelines or define what structure works for them as an organization. Accordingly, past topics have included financial management for nonprofits, fundraising, grant-writing, and models of youth work. These free sessions provide an accessible and safe learning space for young people and groups to ask questions, receive support and demystify process.

The workshops are developed based on needs identified by young people in Toronto. Participants who attend 5 or more workshops in the series receive a certificate.

The GOAL Youth Workshop Series is implemented by ArtReach Toronto, in partnership with various organizations and youth groups including; Grassroots Youth Collaborative, Laidlaw Foundation, City of Toronto, Schools without Borders, For Youth Initiative and Toronto Community Foundation.

Special thanks go to the facilitators for sharing their knowledge and expertise, as well as the following partners that have provided funding for the workshops, resource guides and online toolkit:

Canadian Heritage

City of Toronto Cultural Services

Laidlaw Foundation

The Lawson Foundation

Toronto Community Foundation

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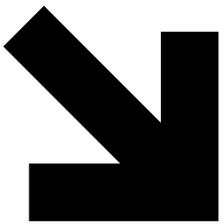


Part One: The Journey





The Beginning



Industrial Design is all about the beauty of objects. Objects can range from unique and handmade to mass produced, digital and precise; but no matter what the form, the common thread for Tactile Design Collective (TDC) was the idea of tools for living, things that were useful products. What had always inspired Tactile Design Collective founder Veema was the desire to merge form and art.

Veema began furniture building at a DIY sustainable level, reusing and up-cycling found objects into new life. Through gallery exhibits of her work and general networking, she met and formed bonds with other up-and-coming designers, eventually inviting three others to form a group with her: a domestic ceramic artist, a trained carpenter and a fiber maker. Through a shared love for tactile objects and design, they together continued in furniture making. Their collaboration sparked interest through the design world and a small wildfire of press ignited from a show they did at a local café.

As time passed, they became a truly recognizable presence within the design world. Students of design and other youth began seeking them out for apprenticeships and skills development, and TDC developed workshops and training.

Getting To The Next Level

* Click to jump to associated tool



As their training program progressed, Veema and the team realized that if they were going to take it to the next level they would need more resources. With heavy overhead costs and money being tight, they decided to seek out funding and sponsorship. They put together a professional portfolio, put on their best outfits and set out to attend a meeting with a funder they hoped could provide financial support.

At the meeting, they were asked questions about the impact of their apprenticeship program. The funder used evaluation jargon that they didn't understand, such as [quantitative and qualitative data*](#), [indicators*](#), and asked questions about [planning](#) that they couldn't answer. They left feeling frazzled, upset and confused and realized they needed to better communicate the value of their work. But in order to do that they needed to assess that value and they weren't sure how. Through friends and other community members, they heard about an evaluation workshop provided by ArtReach Toronto and decided to sign up to find out [how evaluation could help them*](#).

Testing The Waters

* Click to jump to associated tool



Guided by what they had learned through the ArtReach workshop, they developed an **evaluation plan*** to fit the work of their collective. Although they worried that doing evaluation would add more work and possibly change what the collective was about, they accessed resources used by other youth-led groups to help them get started and learn about other approaches.



Owning It

[* Click to jump to associated tool](#)



When it came to developing a new six-month long training and mentorship program, TDC created an **evaluation plan*** to capture as much information as possible, reflecting the **creativity** and openness of their group. As part of this plan, they identified **outcomes*** that would show the **impact** of their program to funders, **stakeholders***, and supporters.

Jumping In

* Click to jump to associated tool



The collective adopted and adapted the tools they heard about at the ArtReach evaluation workshop including [surveys*](#), [interviews*](#) and [creative approaches*](#) to evaluation. They used these at the beginning, middle and end of their youth mentoring program. They even held a [learning circle discussion*](#) to help them shape their future programs. When they were finished they had a lot of information – numbers, stories, photographs, videos and even participant drawings – that expressed the impact of the project.

Making It Work

* Click to jump to associated tool



The last step was organizing all this feedback into tangible forms of information, which TDC did by looking for themes within the responses, as well as critiques that were encouraging or constructive. Out of this work emerged a wealth of information which TDC used to create reports for funders as well as promotional packages that fully reflected the work of the collective.

Evaluation also allowed the collective to sit down together and realistically **reflect*** on where they could go from here. In the end, Veema and the TDC team realized that evaluation was a process and a way of thinking that examined a variety of complex questions, and that it could be incorporated into any work they were already doing. They also realized that an evaluation plan lends credibility to their work and, by tracking successes and weak points, leads to a stronger program which in turn can lead to funding and sponsorships.



Part Two: Methods and Tools



Why Organizations Hesitate To Get Involved In Evaluation

Here are some common myths about evaluation:

- **It's not very useful. What will we do with the results?**
- **We have to do it to meet the needs of funders.**
- **It makes people feel uncomfortable.**
- **It's a waste of time! We're too busy and don't have enough staff.**
- **It's complicated! Too many words and processes we don't understand**
- **It's expensive because we'll have to hire outside experts.**

Why Evaluation Is A Good Idea

- **It's not an activity but a way of thinking.**
- **Finding out what's working and what does not will make your programs more effective.**
- **Getting feedback is a way to strengthen and build your organization.**
- **It's a holistic process that will develop skills at all levels of your organization.**

Where To Begin

Evaluation isn't as complicated as you might think. We use evaluative thinking whenever we wonder if there is something else we should be doing, or when we chat with co-workers about how a project is going.

An evaluation process captures those thoughts and conversations and opens them up to a larger audience.

Maybe you've started thinking about evaluation or started collecting data, such as, attendance or retention numbers (how many people signed up and how many are still there at the end), or perhaps you end each program by distributing a questionnaire to get some feedback from participants. All of that is great! These are some of the building blocks for an evaluation plan. Having a plan in place will help you get the most out of the information you collect.

How Evaluation Can Reflect Your Values

Arts projects generally focus on building skills, empowering participants, and delivering a message of hope and change. You can design an evaluation process that embraces these values.

- Evaluation doesn't have to be top down
- Evaluation can be designed to encourage participation of all stakeholders
- Evaluation can help build skills by involving project participants in designing and implementing the evaluation plan
- Evaluation results can be given back to the community



Step One: State Desired Outcomes

Start by naming the desired outcomes for your project. What do you want your project to achieve? How will you know if you have achieved your goals? In order, to better see where you are at along the way, it is good to know where you started. A benchmark is a measurement or standard that serves as a point of reference so you know how far you've travelled towards your goals.

For example a desired outcome might be to increase enrollment by 25%. Keeping track of attendance will let you know if you are meeting that goal. Another goal might be to increase the confidence of participants. Conducting interviews or surveys at the beginning, middle and end of a project will reveal if there has been an increase in skills and development of confidence.

Step Two: Assess Evaluation Resources

Figure out when and how you can schedule evaluation activities, and who will take on the responsibility to collect information. Remember that participants and community members are resources.

Much of this planning depends on your group and the scope and length of your project: are you running one project or many; are you just beginning or do you have some experience; is your project happening in one neighbourhood or throughout the city; is your project running for a few months or for several years.

Step Three: Develop Questions

At the heart of evaluation are good questions. Develop questions that will help you know if you are meeting your desired outcomes. These are often stated in your organizations goals or in funding proposals.

Step Four: Gather Data, Analysis and Reporting

With the first three steps in place you are now ready to decide what tools you will use to collect the information. You can ask questions in a variety of ways:

- Questionnaires
- Surveys
- Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Creative Methods

After you have collected the information you are then ready to analyze it:

- Read through all the information collected and pick out trends and themes
- Highlight good quotes and significant comments
- Interpret the information statistically, for example, *“Most of our participants wanted...”*
- Compare answers from different groups or over different time periods (e.g.: the spring group and the winter group)

After the analysis you are ready to create a report. You might want to consider:

- Writing in a clear easy to understand language
- Design for print and on-line copies
- Full versions and condensing the information into shorter bulletins
- Using audio visuals to capture the feel of the project

Step Five: Collective Strategy and Next Steps

Evaluation can help your organization create a plan and strategy to move forward. This is true for large or small groups. Use evaluation results to:

- Promote your programs to funders and the media
- Seek more supporters
- Seek more participants
- Find others who share your goals and interests

Five Evaluation Planning Tips

- **Evaluation is not about what we do but how we do it.**
- **Don't leave it to the end.**
- **Think about your goals before you choose your tools.**
- **Involve participants.**
- **Think about how to report and share your results.**

Quantitative and Qualitative Data: “No Numbers Without Stories and No Stories Without Numbers”

Quantitative

Quantitative data (numbers and statistics) is often used to convince us of something or to make us buy a product (e.g. 4 out of 5 dentists recommend a certain kind of toothpaste), and qualitative data (stories) is also used to convince us by telling us what these numbers mean.

It is helpful for potential funders, when reading a report of a program, if there is information about the statistics of the program, but also comments and stories from participants to bring the report to life. Ideally you would collect quantitative data, and use qualitative data to back it up.

- How many youth participated in the program?
- How many people attended events?
- How many other community members were involved? (e.g. staff, facilitators, presenters, partners, collaborators)
- How many jobs does the program provide (e.g. how many people work for the program or how many people got jobs as a result of participating?)
- How many skills did the people gain? Which ones?

Qualitative

Qualitative data can be collected from open-ended questions through questionnaires, interviews, conversations, and focus groups.

Some examples of qualitative information to collect include:

- What do the participants think about the project? What does it mean to them?
- What did they like best about the project?
- What did they like least about the project?
- What do they think are the benefits of the project?
- What do they think would make the project better?

Outcomes: What are they? How do I get them?

Outcomes are what happen as a result of your program. These can be changes in behaviours, attitudes, beliefs, skills, knowledge, or any other benefit. Your expected outcomes should relate to the aims of your program or project and it is therefore important that your goals and aims are clear, concise and accurately reflect what your program is setting out to do.

- Is your program helping people learn new skills?
(e.g. event planning, budgeting, I.T. skills, photography)
- Is your program providing support for young people to achieve their goals?
(e.g. do you offer support and/or advocacy for young people)
- Is your program helping people find jobs?
(e.g. links with employers, help with resumes and job interviews)
- Is your program enabling young people to form new friendships, relationships and connections? (e.g. by organising events and activities that bring young people together?)
- Is your program helping people finish school? (e.g. by providing tutoring)
- Does your program get more youth involved in community engagement?
- Does your program help young people with housing issues?
- Once you are clear on what you are trying to achieve, you can identify what the main outcomes of your program are. You then need to work out what kind of information you could collect in order to show that your program is achieving those outcomes (see sections on quantitative and qualitative data, and indicators).

Outcomes & Indicators

Outcome	Indicators
<p>The program/event was successful</p>	<p>The number of youth who attended or participated. If it was a series of events, or an annual event, you could show an increase in the number of people who attended or participated</p> <p>Feedback from people about what they gained from attending or participating</p>
<p>The program/event helps youth develop skills, e.g. grantwriting, teamwork, leadership, budgeting, event planning, marketing, social media</p>	<p>Questionnaire/survey that asks youth about specific skills</p> <p>Identify the skills that young people learned and demonstrate how they have learned these skills</p>
<p>The program provides social support/positive role models</p>	<p>Indicate the number of social supports that youth can access through the event or program, e.g. program leaders, mentors, staff, facilitators or others who work with the program</p> <p>How many referrals to other services? What services?</p>
<p>The program helps improve educational achievement (by providing alternative learning programs, tutoring etc.)</p>	<p>The number of people who have graduated from an education or alternative learning program, or improved their education as a result of the program. For example they received a certificate, passed their GED, went back to high school or post-secondary, or received some other qualification</p>
<p>The program/event promotes positive mental health</p>	<p>Questionnaire or interview with youth about whether or not the program or event has helped them increase confidence, self-esteem and/or hope for the future. Indicate the number of youth who feel that the program helped them in these ways</p>

Outcomes & Indicators

Outcome	Indicators
<p>The program/event helps youth find jobs/ access employment opportunities</p>	<p>Indicate the number of youth who have found work experience or employment through the program</p> <p>Indicate the number of youth who were employed by the project</p>
<p>The program connects youth with people and opportunities</p>	<p>Indicate the number of connections made and how e.g. through events, referrals, etc.</p>
<p>The program increases awareness</p>	<p>The number of publications, meetings, events etc that were used to raise awareness</p> <p>The number of people who attended events or accessed resources</p> <p>Feedback from people who attended events or accessed resources</p>

Nine-Question Evaluation Matrix

This matrix has nine questions.
Use some of the tools to gather information for your evaluation.

Evaluation Areas	Plans	People	Achievement
PLANNING & RESULTS OF YOUR PROJECT (over one year or longer?)	1. What goals did we have for the program? (activities and involvement of people) <i>Use Questions for Project Funded Organizations</i>	2. How many people were involved in the program? Who were they? (age, location) <i>Use Questions for Project Funded Organizations</i>	3. What did the program achieve overall? (activities, involvement of people, results) <i>Use Interview or Focus Group Questions and Questions for Project Funded Organizations</i>
	Who uses this? <i>Project Leaders</i>		
PROCESS ON HOW YOU RUN THE PROJECT	4. How did we want to run the project? (classes, regular meetings, festival, events, etc) <i>Use Questions for Project Funded Organizations</i>	5. What did we do to attract people to the program? (word of mouth, online advertising, etc). <i>Use Participant Feedback Survey and Group or Project Survey</i>	6. What did we achieve for our group or organization? (our learnings and satisfaction of participants) <i>Use Participant Feedback Survey</i>
	Who uses this? <i>Project Participants</i>		
MEASURING YOUR RESULTS	7. What did the funder expect us to do with the grant? (How much and terms of the grant) <i>Use Questions for Project Funded Organizations</i>	8. Do we have records showing who was involved and how often? (applications, attendance records, etc) <i>Use Questions for Project Funded Organizations</i>	9. Was the grant used to do what we intended and do we have records to prove this? (spending on staff, supplies, food, etc) <i>Use Questions for Project Funded Organizations</i>
	Who uses this? <i>Project Leaders</i>		

Who Are Stakeholders?

Stakeholders are everyone who cares about what you are doing. Think circles within circles from the closest to the project to those further away. How can each layer be involved in evaluation?

Project Team

If you are running a group take time to think about what happened in your session. Keep a journal where you jot down notes and ideas. Write for yourself and decide what information you would like to pass on to other members of the team and what information could go into an evaluation report.

If you work as part of a team, get into the habit of having a team debrief right after each session where you share your impressions about what happened in the session. Rotate the responsibility for running the debrief; make sure everyone participates; share what worked and what didn't; discuss what has to adjust for the next session; and take notes so you won't forget your ideas and insights about the group. As a team decide what parts of the debrief could go into an evaluation report.

Participants

Without participants there is no project. Checking in with participants is very important but you can also go a step further. You can involve participants in designing the evaluation by asking them what questions you should be asking. Participants are a valuable resource and with some training they can conduct elements of the evaluation such as interviews or video stories. This helps the evaluation and also provides important skill development.

Organization Or Group

If you are responsible for running the organization or program then you need to know what is working and what isn't. The content, the approach, the time, the location might need to change – completely or just a bit. Without feedback from the participants and the program leaders it's hard to know if you are making the right decisions about program needs or how to frame your next grant proposal or donor pitch.

Community

A community is a place or a group of people who share a common concern, background or interest. This is the location and circumstances in which a project takes place. Communities are frequently heavily invested in what goes on. Arts programs can have an impact on a community. Checking in with community leaders and key resource persons will give you a better idea of how your program or organization is affecting the community.

Funders, Supporters, Businesses

This group has invested money or in-kind support in your project or organization because they liked what they heard when you approached them for assistance. At the end, they want to know how things turned out. They don't all want the same information: some funders require formal reports, while others welcome innovative formats; local businesses want to know how the work has made the community better, while corporations want to know why their name should be connected to your project.

Make sure you know who your audience is and then you will know what elements of the evaluation to forward to them. This might be a combination of numbers, anecdotal stories, artistic responses to the project, or information on most significant changes that have occurred as a result of the project.

Participant Feedback Survey

We would like to know what you think about your experience. The information you provide us will be used to help improve the quality of future programs. This survey is confidential. Your name will be removed from the survey before it is reviewed.

How much do you agree with the following statement? (choose one answer for each statement)

The arts project you were involved in...	I Agree A Lot	I Agree A Little	I Do Not Agree
1. Had clearly defined expectations for participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Helped participants live up to those expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Had someone who can answer my questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Had people who are not too busy to help me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Had several people who have arts knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Was fun and exciting to be part of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Had people who are positive role models	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Had people who can give meaning full arts training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Had people who are interested in my problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Helped me learn how to produce art	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Helped me feel more interested in learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Participant Feedback Survey (cont'd)

How much did the program help you (improve) in the following areas?
(choose one answer for each statement)

	None	A Little	Some	A Lot
12. Thinking about job/career opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Setting personal goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Talking about and learning about my art interests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Doing good things on my own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Thinking about how my actions affect others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Showing concern for others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Working towards educational plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Working towards doing better in school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Living a healthy lifestyle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Expressing myself more effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Participating in safe and fun recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Exploring creative opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Participant Feedback Survey (cont'd)

How much did the program help you (improve) in the following areas?

(choose one answer for each statement)

	None	A Little	Some	A Lot
24. Participating in activities to improve my community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
25. Overall, how would you rate this program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Very Useful
26. How useful was this program to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Very	Somewhat Interesting	Not Very Interesting
27. How interesting was the material presented to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. What did you like best about this program?

Participant Feedback Survey (cont'd)

29. What did you like least about this program?

30. What would you change about this program to make it better?

31. How has this program helped you in other areas of your life?

Participant Feedback Survey (cont'd)

	Yes	No	Maybe
33. Would you continue to participate in this program, if possible?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No	Maybe
34. Would you continue to pursue () outside of this program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have any other comments about your experience with this program, please write them in the space below.

Thank you for completing this survey.

Group Or Project Survey For Leaders Of The Project

(To be completed by the project leaders. This will help you gather all the key information that funders will be asking you for. Leaders should complete this survey together.)

1. Please give the name of the project you are evaluating.

a) Please describe (arts learning classes, festivals, meetings, events, other)

b) What records did your group or organization keep?

c) What did the funder expect you to use your grant for?
(salaries, supplies, meeting space, other)?

2. What were the goals of the project? Please describe.

Goal #1:

Goal #2:

Goal #3:

If there are other goals, please add:

Group Or Project Survey For Leaders Of The Project

3. To what extent did you achieve the goals of the project?

Goal #1: _____ %. What evidence can you provide?

Goal #2: _____ %. What evidence can you provide?

Goal #3: _____ %. What evidence can you provide?

If there are other goals, please add and indicate % of achievement and evidence.

4. How many youth were involved regularly in the project? _____

5. How many youth were involved occasionally in the project? _____

6. Overall, how would you rate this project?

Excellent Good Poor Terrible Not Relevant

7. How would rate the support provided?

Excellent Good Poor Terrible Not Relevant

Group Or Project Survey For Leaders Of The Project

8. How would you rate your project management team?

Excellent Good Poor Terrible Not Relevant

9. How would you rate your learning experience in this project?

Excellent Good Poor Terrible Not Relevant

10. Please state what you liked the most about the project.

11. Please state what you liked the least about the project.

12. Would you change anything about the project?

Yes No

What? _____

Interview or Focus Group Questions

For Evaluating Your Project

Questions For Youth

(to be asked in an individual interview session or in a small group)

1. Overall, how satisfied do you feel with your whole arts Project experience?
2. Now that your arts Project is (at mid-point/completed) and you can think back about it, what did you like best?
3. Funders are always wanting to improve on what they do in the Funded Projects. Are there any things you like funders to:

a) Stop Doing, b) Start Doing or c) Continue Doing with Projects?
4. How proud are you of your artwork in the Project? Why?
5. Were any of your family members able to come to the presentation or performance?
6. What about your friends? Did you have any friends who could come to the presentation or performance?
7. Now let's talk about your experience and learning. When you started your arts Project, did you believe then that you would do as much as you did, or were you surprised to have actually accomplished that much?
8. What new arts skills did you learn in the Project that you didn't know before?

Interview or Focus Group Questions (cont'd)

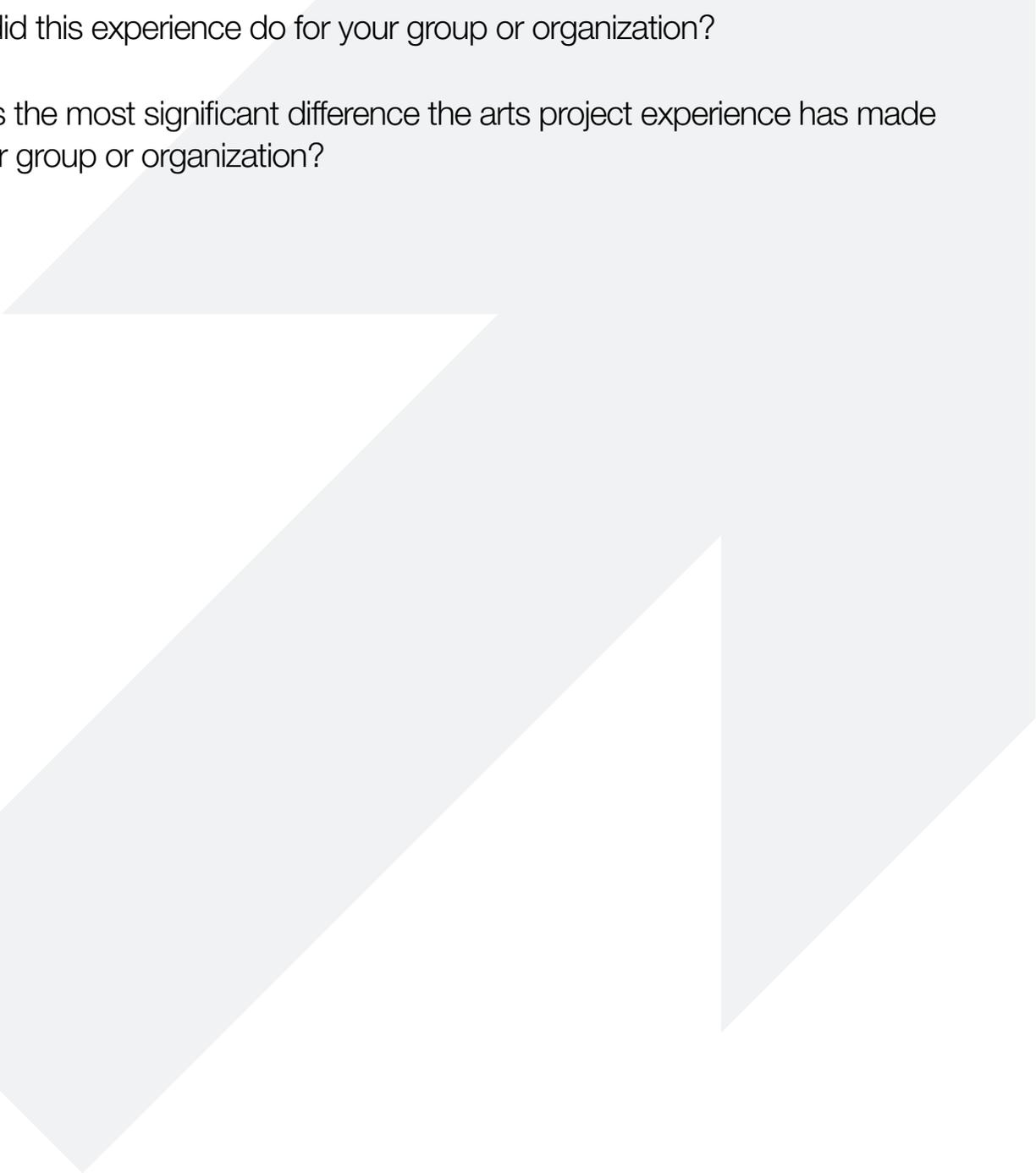
9. Were there any art skills you wish you could have gotten a chance to learn about in this project, other than the skills you did get to use?
10. Do you have more confidence now in your ability to make your art?
11. Do you feel more confident in yourself in general?
12. The experience of participating in an arts projects can make a difference for young people. What significant difference has this experience had for you?

Questions for Project Funded Organizations

(interview of leaders, coordinators, board members or a small group of them using a focus group format)

- 1.** Overall, how satisfied do you feel with your whole arts project experience?
Any comments?
- 2.** Now that the project is (at mid-point/completed) and you can think back about it, what did you like best about the project?
- 3.** Project funders are interested in improving the project for the future. It would help to know about anything you didn't like about the project. What would you have funders:

a) Stop Doing, b) Start Doing or c) Continue Doing with Projects?
- 4.** What one thing, in particular, could arts project funders do differently in the future to improve a project's operation?
- 5.** Let's talk about pride in the youth's artwork – dance, drama, poetry, graphics, fashion design, music, etc. Describe how did you feel about the work that the youth did and the final artwork produced?
- 6.** How did it work for you, as an individual, to be part of the actual project program – supporting the youth in their artistic efforts?
- 7.** Did any of the youth's family come to the orientation, a performance/presentation?
Would you have liked more involvement from the family?
- 8.** If you had a chance for your group/organization to take part in an arts project again in the future, would you do it?

-
9. What has been the most challenging aspect of leading/coordinating the project for your group?
 10. What did this experience do for your group or organization?
 11. What is the most significant difference the arts project experience has made for your group or organization?
- 



Part Three: Creative Approaches



Creative Approaches To Evaluation

Creative activities when combined with more traditional evaluation approaches, such as interviews and questionnaire, are an innovative and effective way to evaluate a program.

Art-based evaluation (ABE) uses creative activities such as visual arts, sound, photography, media arts, cartoons, movement, creative writing, to explore the impact of a project or program. Participants are asked to express their experiences through art-making.

ABE should be part of an evaluation tool kits because this method:

- Helps a group share what is meaningful to them
- Provides an opportunity for reflection
- Triggers memories that can lead to a group discussion
- Helps build a sense of accomplishment
- Uses the power of imagination
- Uses the power of metaphor
- Helps express complex concepts and feelings
- Provides a non-verbal way to share ideas
- Helps express emotions that might be difficult to encapsulate in a questionnaire
- Provides expressive materials that can be shared with stakeholders
- Allows everyone to participate not just those who are brave enough to speak up in a group

Select ABE activities that are different from the art-making used in the project. For example, if the project focused on photography consider using painting as an evaluation activity; or a dance project can use poetry. You can even mix it up by starting with movement, adding poetry and then layering in some drumming. Use your imagination. The whole idea is to help participants be expressive.

An ABE activity is a great way to start an evaluation. After the activity a group discussion or questionnaire will help participants give the program organizers input into how a program worked, what can be improved, etc.

ABE can be used throughout a project. Don't wait until the end to evaluate. Find time to touch base with participants throughout the project.

Examples of ABE Activities

ABE activities at the beginning of a project can:

- Help the group get to know each other and the group leader(s) to get to know the group
- Provide an opportunity to express concerns, questions and reactions at the beginning of a project
- Be something to go to back at the end of the project to see what has shifted, for example, a collage or group drawing can be brought out at the end to spark a discussion about what has changed

Found Poetry

This activity shares project objectives with participants and transforms one kind of text into another.

Steps:

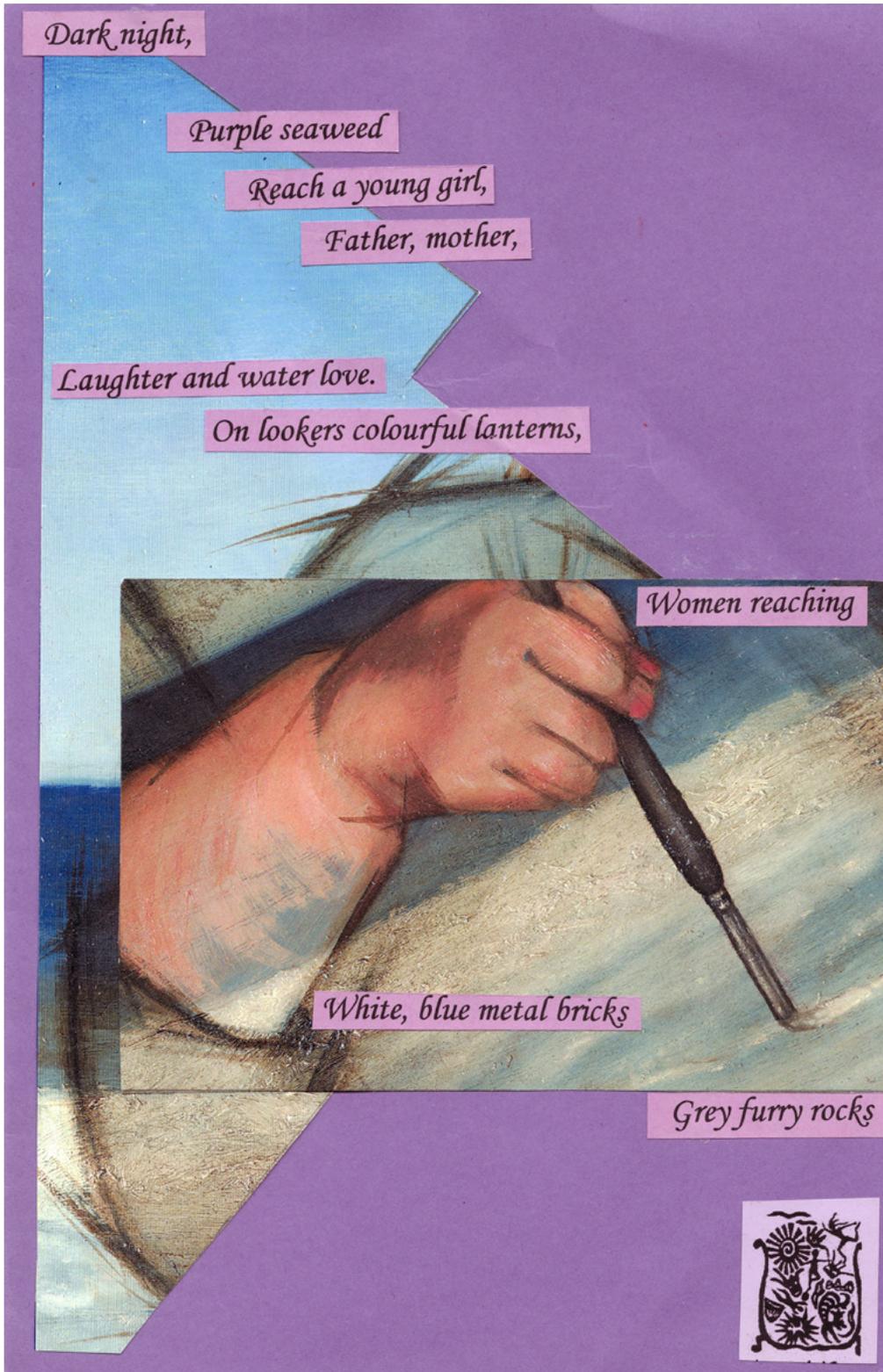
- 1. Hand out copies of the mandate and objectives of the project taken from the grant application or funding pitch. Ask group members to select words that stand out, confuse, intrigue, anger or interest them. For example: *empower, transform, collective, priority neighbourhood, reporting.***
- 2. Take one word at a time and brainstorm the first words that come to mind when they hear the word.**
- 3. Ask participants to select some of the words from the brainstorm list and to create short phrases or sentences. Participants may want to add a few joining or connecting words or change word endings.**
- 4. Share the phrases and sentences. Write each of them on a separate sheet of paper. As a group or individually, select a number of lines and arrange them into a poem.**

Tips and Variations:

- Revisit the poems at the end of the project and discuss whether or not the project objectives were met.
- Try putting the poems to rhythms or beats.
- Cut interesting words out of magazines and create a group word box. Use some of these words in the poems. A word box can be built up during the project and the words used for check ins or other writing activities.
- Use the same process but work with photos and images from projects; brainstorm what participants see and then work with the words to create poems.

Found Poetry (cont'd)

Example:



Memory Boxes

This activity helps participants recall moments in the project and think about what might have changed.

Steps:

- 1. Provide each participant with a small box. The boxes can be painted, written on, collaged or decorated in whatever form the participant chooses. The outside of the box represents the community, group or project (external) and the inside of the box represents their experience and feelings (internal).**
- 2. At the beginning of the project decorate the outside of the box. During the project urge the group to place things in the box that capture their feelings about the project or are connected to the activities of the project.**
- 3. Revisit throughout the project to add or remove things from the outside or inside of the box.**

Tips and Variations:

- Record the making of the boxes at different stages during the project.
- View the images at the end so the participants can see how their boxes changed.
- Give the option to keep the contents of the box private

Example:



ABE activities in the middle of a project can:

- **Acts as a check-in**
- **Build group communication skills**
- **Give group leaders a sense of how individuals and the group as a whole are finding the process**
- **Help group leaders see if they need to adjust their planning for the rest of the project**

Collage

This activity helps participants recall moments in the project and think about what this activity helps participants check in with each other and flags problems.

Steps:

- 1. Ask participants to cut or rip out images and words from magazines that express how they are feeling about the experience of participating in the project.**
- 2. Use glue, crayons, markers, etc to create a collage.**
- 3. Each person shares their collage.**

Tips and Variations:

- Do this as a large group adding pieces and discussing the project while the collage is being created.

ABE activities in the middle of a project can:

- **Help the group to reflect and share experience**
- **Celebrate achievements**
- **Provide feedback to the program**
- **Help participants see they are not alone in their reactions**

Evaluation activities at the end of a project need time. Try to set aside at least one workshop for evaluation.

Group Quilt

Steps:

- 1. Give each participant the same size square of cardboard.**
- 2. Ask participants to create a small collage on the square that expresses their feelings about the program; use images and words from magazines plus use crayons and markers.**
- 3. When each person has finished their square; put it together like a quilt; use a large piece of paper, draw around each square to create the effect of stitching it in place.**
- 4. Meet as a group around the “quilt” and discuss what they see and how that relates to their ideas and memories about the project.**

Group Quilt (cont'd)

Examples:



Journey Drawing

Steps:

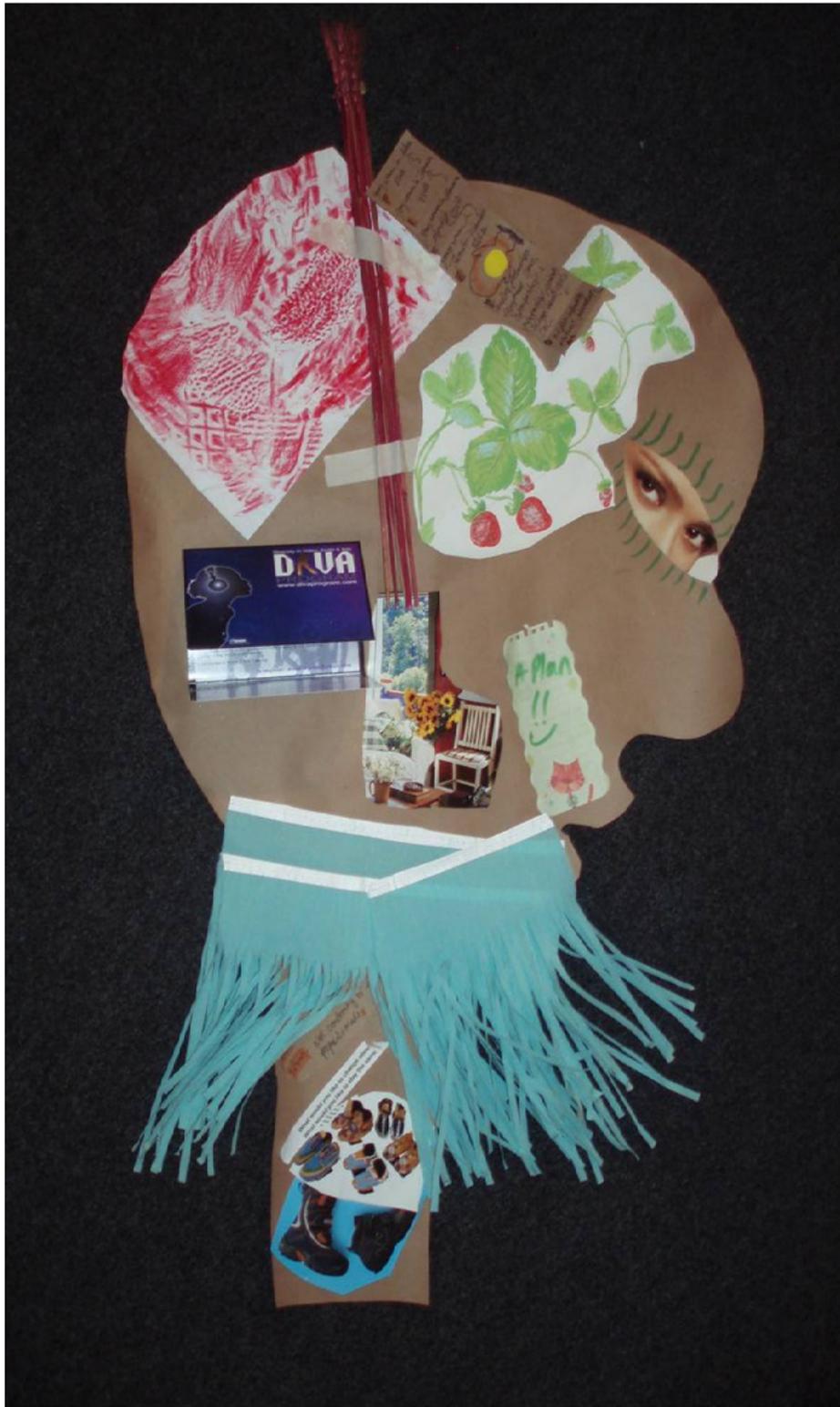
- 1. Brainstorm words or phrases that come to mind when they think of a journey. Ask them to think of what they have gone through the project as a journey.**
- 2. Ask participants to draw a road on the page then add potholes and bridges and other journeying metaphors. Side-coach and suggest they use words or phrases and not to forget to put themselves and others on the path. Encourage them to explore both the ups and downs of the project.**
- 3. Ask participants to share their pictures with each other. Discuss what they see and feel.**

Tips and Variations:

- Do this as a large group. Facilitator draws a long road on the mural paper and asks the group to work together to draw a collective journey. Discuss while creating the journey map.
- After each person has created their own picture; break into pairs and each person expresses the major parts of the journey through a gesture. The gestures are then put together like a “movement sentence.” Each person learns the others person’s movement sentence (should be no more than three or four movements). Each pair then works with another pair until all four have shared and learned each other’s movements. The group then works with the movements to create a presentation. After the presentation, the group discusses the highlights of the project, what they saw in the presentation, and what resonated for them.

Journey Drawing (cont'd)

Example:



Creative Approaches: Appreciative Inquiry

This is a discussion/brainstorming approach. To be used with a group of participants. Start by working in pairs and then as small groups and then in the large group.

1. Inquire Into Our Past

(in pairs, interview each other for 5 minutes and make notes)

Identify the “best of what is” using Paired interviews. Tell each other stories using these questions:

1. What was **your best experience** in your project?
2. What has **worked very well** in the project?
3. If you had **3 wishes** for the project, what would they be?

2. Imagine Our Future

(for 15 minutes, in small groups of up to 6 share the interview stories)

Identify images of a future you want with the project:

1. Identify themes of what worked well from the stories. What have we learned from each other? Record this information on paper.
2. Small groups **imagine the future based on what worked well and wishes** people have - record notes
3. Record all thoughts about the future in written words and/or pictures

3. Imagine Our Future

(for 30 minutes in a large group discuss each group's ideas about the future)

Translate the visions into “**possibility statements**” (the future that could be):

1. Groups share their thoughts about the future with the large group
2. Ask for “possibility statements” about your project or you group for the future (perhaps four or five “possibility statements”)
3. Take a vote on which “possibility statement” is most desired by the majority of

members.

4. Implement

(for 20 minutes, in the large group discuss what the “gap” between what the project is and what you would like it to be?)

Making the “possibility statement” become reality:

1. What (people, resources) would it take to implement the “possibility statement”?
2. How could we measure progress toward achieving the “possibility statement”?

Your Evaluation Report is made up of the following items:

1. What worked well in the project
2. What people wished for about the project (that is, what didn’t work and was needed)
3. What the project should look like ideally in the future (“possibility statement”)
4. How much “gap” there is between what the project has been and the “possibility statement”.
5. How you would implement action to close the “gap” and how you would measure/monitor progress toward your goal.

