



Evaluating outreach and engagement Workshop

Royal Society of Biology Outreach and Engagement Symposium
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Why?

Session aim



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To clarify the many purposes of evaluation

To understand evaluation as an integral part of any public engagement or outreach activity

To change mind sets about evaluation: from last to first

Why evaluate?



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To prove impact -> demonstrate success, attract funding

To improve practice -> highlight good practice, scope for improvement and lessons learned

To help clarify objectives and identify audiences

7 pillars of (evaluation) wisdom



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1. Agree aims and objective of PE activity
2. Agree aims and objectives of evaluation
3. Choose evaluation methodology
4. Devise data collection
5. Collect data
6. Analyse data
7. Report results and findings

7 pillars of (evaluation) wisdom



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1. Agree aims and objective of PE activity

What do you want to achieve? (outcomes, impact)

Be SMART about objectives

SMART objectives



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S	Specific	Straight forward, focused and well defined with emphasis on action and the required outcome
M	Measurable	Visible progress to help you to know when you have achieved your objective(s)
A	Achievable	Objectives that stretch you, but not so far that you become frustrated and lose motivation
R	Realistic	Realistic means that you have the resources to get it done
T	Time-bound	Must have deadlines but they need to be both achievable and realistic

Activity leading to Impact



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Type of impact		Outcomes	Indicators
Conceptual	Communicating the meaning of research beyond academia	Enlightenment: inspiring wonder, curiosity and learning; meaning and sense making Criticism: provoking challenge, scrutiny and debate; holding to account	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Challenge conventional wisdom• Challenge professional orthodoxies• Change understandings• Stimulate learning and reflection• Influence public debate
Instrumental	Influencing policies, products and services to better reflect public interests	Innovation: new ways of thinking and acting; new products and knowledge; creating, galvanising change Reflexivity: prompting dialogue and deliberation; exploring risk; informing decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change standards/regulation• Change accountability regimes• Influence new products and services• Change policies• Change planning processes• Influence the public realm
Capacity building	Influencing individual and collective behaviour and skills to realise public benefit	Connectivity: building networks; encouraging participation and involvement Capability: building skills; influencing behaviours and practices; empowering	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspire participation and progression• Teach new skills• Change behaviours, including participation and involvement• Influence practitioner and policy makers' behaviour/practice/standards• Foster collaboration

Based on ESRC and NCCPE

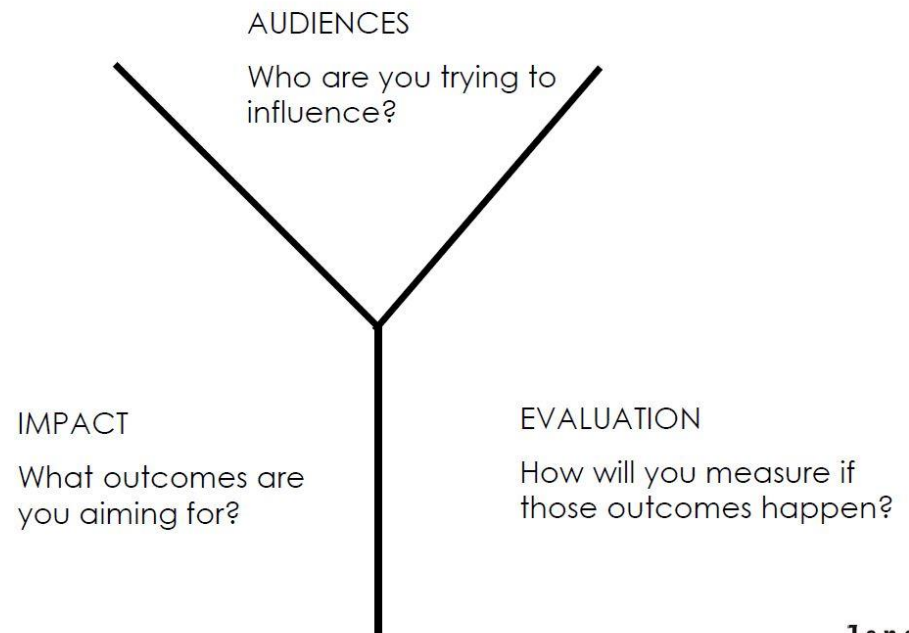
Available at <https://comms.leeds.ac.uk/public-engagement/pe-impact-evaluation/>

The Y-diagram



- Who is your audience? What is important to them?
- What specific outcomes do you want to evidence?
- Outcomes need to be SMART (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound)
- How can you assess if your outcomes have been achieved?

Y- Diagram





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The Y-diagram – an example



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Audience

Parents, grandparents, children 0-17

Local interested Leeds adults

Wider public from Yorkshire

Local alumni

Staff, students

The Y-diagram – an example



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Overall Impacts

Share that a university does more than educate students

Research at UoL is promoted and share with the local community in a hands-on way

Visitors have a positive experience of UoL

All ages are inspired/interested by activities

Staff are enjoying PE experience and want to do more

1st time visitors come to UoL campus

Specific Outcomes

Visitors use words like 'inspired', 'fun', 'interesting', 'great' etc.

Visitors return from last year

New visitors are attracted

Visitors have learned something/seen something of value to them

Research is viewed as something of value

Staff enjoy experience and feel job satisfaction

PE team gains insight into success of event promotion

The Y-diagram – an example



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Evaluation

Visitors:

Age group, postcode, map, 1st time

Cohort info

Data about experience and enjoyment

What attracted them

Staff:

Satisfaction of event organisation

Perceptions of usefulness of event for career/research

Likelihood to do more PE

Gained skills, confidence

Organisers:

Workload

Realistic planning



Exercise – Making your own Y diagram (15 mins)

Using the research idea you have for a public engagement activity....

- Dream up a potential PE activity
- Use the Y diagram to plan your objectives and how you would evaluate to demonstrate impact



2. Agree aims and objectives of evaluation

- Who is your evaluation for? (funder, partners, audiences, yourself)
- Does it prove something (summative)?
 - Measurement of success
 - Backward looking
- Does it want to improve (formative)?
 - Feeds into and shapes activity
 - Forward looking



Exercise – Evaluation aims (5 mins)

Using your Y diagram....

- For whom are doing the evaluation? Have you forgotten someone?
- Which elements indicate success? Which are geared towards improvement?

7 pillars of (evaluation) wisdom



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3. Choose evaluation methodology

What data can you collect?

Qualitative, quantitative, both

Who is your audience?

What is the environment?

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4. Devise data collection

Ask for both positive and negative

Think about wording (non-leading, respective of audience)

Is it a relevant question?

Compare across events and activities

Make it easy to complete (it can be fun!)

Test it first



Exercise – Data collection (10 mins)

Using your Y diagram....

- What data do you need for your evaluation?
- If a survey/questionnaire is not a possibility, how else could you collect that data?

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5. Collect data

A sample

Work that needs resource

Be aware of error, bias, self-selection

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6. Analyse data

7. Report results and findings

- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Evaluation methodology
- Description of activity/project
- Description of evaluation sample
- Descriptive and analytical results
- Conclusions
- Recommendations



Have clear aims and objectives

Design activity to meet objectives

Evaluation is part of activity – it might need resource

Many methods to do evaluation – be creative

Without evaluation no evidence for impact and learning

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