

# The Art, Science and Art of Program Evaluation

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1

art

- Articulate Theory of Change
- Build Logic Model
- Define Outcomes and Measures

2

science

- Plan Ahead
- Select Methods
- Collect Data
- Understand Results

3

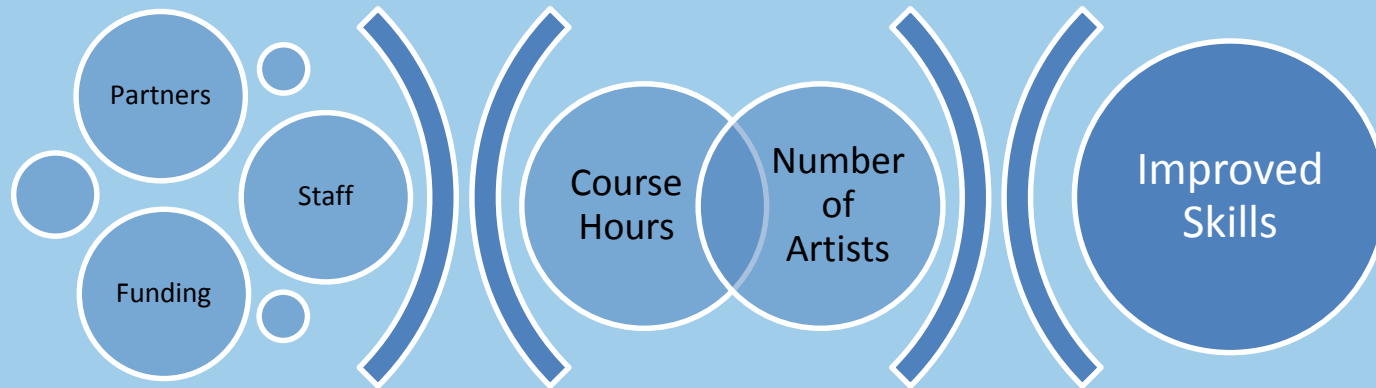
art

- Select Info to Share
- Assemble Quotes and Data
- Write the Story

# 1

## Articulate Your Theory of Change

“This project aims to make art a viable living by teaching artists management practices.”



Inputs

Outputs

Outcomes

Measures

3 Partners  
Meeting X/Month

2 Managers &  
4 Instructors

\$100,000

20 Artists  
(5 new)

15 Course Hours  
per Month

5% increase among  
participating artists  
who “strongly agree”  
they intend to make a  
living from art

# 2

## Measures Outputs vs Outcomes

- ▶ Outputs | project results
  - ▶ Immediate | Exposure
    - ▶ Attendance
    - ▶ Participation
    - ▶ Website Traffic
    - ▶ App Downloads
    - ▶ Installations
    - ▶ Courses Offered

- ▶ Outcomes | results for people/communities
  - ▶ Short | Learning | Awareness, Skills, Knowledge, Attitudes, Intent
    - ▶ Surveys
    - ▶ Tests
    - ▶ Qualitative Interviews
  - ▶ Medium | Action | Behavior, Decisions
    - ▶ Purchase & Investment
    - ▶ Repeat Attendance
  - ▶ Long | Conditions | Well-being, Economic, Civic
    - ▶ Quality of Life
    - ▶ Jobs
    - ▶ Community Development



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# 2

## Surveys



- ▶ **Sampling**
  - ▶ Frame: Total (hypothetical) list of possible respondents
  - ▶ Randomize: Try to randomize in order to limit bias
  - ▶ Size: As many as you can with as little bias as possible
- ▶ **Questionnaire Design**
  - ▶ Length: Standardize with scales, only ask what you need to
  - ▶ Clarity: Often questions are pretested for interpretation
- ▶ **Collection**
  - ▶ Autonomous: Distribute survey and participants return it (paper/web)
  - ▶ Interview: Can approach participants and verbally ask questions
- ▶ **Analysis**
  - ▶ Nonresponse: Understand how much of the frame responded
  - ▶ Report: Use percentages and means, compare subsamples if possible

Fowler, Floyd J. (2014) Survey Research Methods. Sage Publishing. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition.

NECN | September 29, 2015

## 2

# Measuring Economic Impacts



- ▶ Gold standard for funders and public officials but *always* challenging
- ▶ Full studies require careful design, data collection, analysis and presentation
  - ▶ Need for careful interpretation and publicizing results
  - ▶ Impact of events vs tourism / placemaking
- ▶ Use existing calculators early on in a project
  - ▶ E.g., Americans for the Arts
- ▶ Early on, identify long term indicators for pre/post analysis



# 2

## Backward Research

- ▶ Begin with the End in Mind
  - ▶ What are the bullet points you want to be able to say at the end?
  - ▶ Will the methods measure the outcomes in your logic model?
- ▶ Timing
  - ▶ How will you incorporate formative data?
  - ▶ Do you need summative data?
- ▶ Keep it Manageable
  - ▶ Outsourcing can lead to misunderstanding
  - ▶ Try to spend more time interpreting the data than collecting it





# 3

## Telling the Story

- ▶ Customized based on the audience: Board, Funder, Staff
  - ▶ What few key points you want to get across?
- ▶ Share enough information to make it believable
  - ▶ Include highlights of the method for collection
  - ▶ What did you learn about what worked?
  - ▶ What did you learn about what didn't work?
  - ▶ Demonstrating learning process
- ▶ Don't forget the people in your projects!
  - ▶ Statistics are necessary to demonstrate the scope of impact
  - ▶ Qualitative quotes, anecdotes, testimonials make it real

