

EVALUATION TOOLKIT

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INTRODUCTION

There are several reasons why the Council developed this toolkit. The primary one being that we all, as humanities organizations and individual researchers/practitioners, need to improve our use of evaluative measures. Robust evaluation plans are important. Evaluating helps us make the case for our impact, helps us tangibly measure our growth, and helps us strategically improve our work. By building evaluation into program planning, we are better able to understand community needs and the strengths of our staff, models, and missions.

Why a toolkit?

Toolkits are helpful. Whether you're working on your car, or learning a new language, you need a framework to advance your skills. With this toolkit, the Council provides a framework to improve evaluation plans and measures. The toolkit shares best practices, encourages applicants and humanities practitioners to improve their projects, and provides everyone with pathways to advance their evaluative skillsets.

How does this toolkit relate to the Council's grants program?

The Council carefully considers every proposal and weighs each project on its unique impact, opportunities, and merits. We acknowledge and consider all the various limitations of a project, including staffing, project finances, experience, and bandwidth, during our decision—making processes. We also believe that a robust evaluation plan is a core pillar of a strong public humanities project.

Reviewers at the Council seek thoughtful evaluation plans but understand that they should reflect your organization's capacity to evaluate: bandwidth, staffing, experience, finances, etc.

In our grant applications, we ask you to present an evaluation plan. An evaluation plan structures the evaluative measures of a project. We encourage you to go through this Toolkit as you construct your grant application. **Remember:** it is essential that an evaluation plan is established at the onset of a public humanities project. It should never be an afterthought.

Why does the Council ask you to evaluate?

Evaluation helps to guide your public humanities project's development and enables you better learn from its implementation. "Did the project go how I expected? How would I plan differently next time? What worked well?" Answering questions like these will help you understand what you achieved with your project, how you achieved it, and ways you can improve future work. Considering evaluation as you design your project will strengthen your proposal to the Council. Ultimately, evaluation will help you improve your programs and make better organizational decisions.



TIP: WHAT TO INCLUDE IN AN APPLICATION?

The Council does not have a set format for an evaluation plan, because grant-funded projects (by design) are all so varied. However, the **Worksheet found in the Supplement** can help you create your plan. If you keep notes and answer questions we pose in the Toolkit, you are well on your way to completing the grant application's sections that focus on evaluation. If you still have questions after working through the toolkit, please feel free to call Council staff. We're happy to discuss your project and ways we can help improve your evaluation plan!

USING THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit provides a broad introduction to evaluation and will help you devise a plan for meeting the Council's evaluation expectations in your application and final reporting requirements. The toolkit takes you through the steps of evaluation, poses key questions, and provides worksheets and examples to help you think through evaluation from beginning to end—all to ensure you feel capable and inspired to evaluate your work! The toolkit is for those both new and experienced in evaluation. If you are more experienced with evaluation, the document provides a helpful overview, especially as you consider what the Council is specifically looking for in a strong evaluation plan.

In the next section, we introduce foundational ideas about evaluation, considering the question: Why do we evaluate? Then, the guide takes you through four standard steps in preparing an evaluation plan:

- 1. Focus Your Project: Reaffirm Project Goal, Outcomes, and Outputs
- 2. Frame and Prepare: Set an Evaluation Goal
- 3. Set Benchmarks: Develop your Evaluation Questions and Indicators and choose an Evaluation Method for collecting data
- **4. Analyze Data and Communicate Impact:** Share your results and engage stakeholders

Although the Toolkit is targeted for public humanities practictioners in Rhode Island who plan to apply to the Council for funding, it does include general best practices applicable to all public humanities projects.

KEY:

Throughout the Toolkit, specific colors are used to call attention to the standard components of developing a robust evaluation plan.

- PROJECT GOAL is orange
- OUTCOMES are purple
- OUTPUTS are green
- EVALUATION QUESTIONS are blue
- INDICATORS are pink

Reminders about setting your **EVALUATION GOAL** and determining **EVALUATION METHODS** for collecting data are highlighted throughout. You will also find **TIPS** throughout the Toolkit in breakout boxes. Tips offer additional insight and address common questions.



EVALUATION 101

You already evaluate:

You might not know it, but you already evaluate your work; you just may not call it "evaluation." In your practice of program planning, do you: reflect on your work; change aspects of your project; revise your budget for next year's resources; change communication strategies to reach people who were missing at your last event; or overhear visitors discussing what they liked about your program and adapt it accordingly? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you are already evaluating your work. Evaluation helps us get to 'how' and 'why' something is working or not working and provides concrete data of the function and outcomes of your project. This is the core of evaluation!

Evaluation is a way to learn:

Evaluating your project is an opportunity for you to grow with each decision you make. Professionals and academics agree that evaluating your project can help you:

- Understand your project Evaluation answers questions like: What does your program or project actually do? What happened or did not happen? Was it what you expected? Why or why not? Evaluating your project can show how stakeholders experience your project.
- Improve your project Evaluation helps to answer questions like: So what? and Now what? It asks: What do my findings mean? What part of my project was successful? What do my findings suggest for future projects? Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of your project through evaluation helps you with future decision making.
- Test the theory underlying your program Your project is probably based on a
 certain theory you have: children become more engaged citizens through active learning activities, or a more innovative tour attracts new audiences. Evaluating your project will help you understand if your assumptions are correct.
- Work towards your organization's mission If you have an organizational mission, an evaluation plan will help you align the goals of your project to this charge. Evaluating your project helps you understand and articulate how you work toward the realization of your mission, and how you can improve your efforts.

- Tell your organization's story You collect both analytical and anecdotal information with evaluation. Numbers demonstrate your impact and reach. Stories introduce the humans behind the numbers. Together, this information paints a full narrative of your organization's impact. With strong evaluation practices, you are a better advocate when sharing your work. Let the numbers and stories do the talking!
- Share best practices You can help colleagues across the state and the country grow from what you have learned through evaluation.
- Support fundraising efforts The better you know your work, the better you can advocate for it. The data you acquire through evaluation demonstrates the impact of your work. Funders and/or donors are excited to see concrete examples of your methods. An in-depth knowledge of your work highlights your expertise and experience. Stories and numbers from your evaluation are a great fundraising tool!

Begin evaluation at the start of your project:

By asking you to write an evaluation plan, the Council encourages you to **evaluate** your work from the onset of your project. Doing so will enable you to improve your project—even during the planning process. This type of *formative evaluation*—observing your process and evaluting its implementation—helps you keep track of allocated resources and stay in touch with the changing needs of the community.

TIP: Creating an evaluation plan using the Supplemental Action Plan and Worksheet simply allows you to be more intentional in reflecting on and improving your work.

CREATING AN EVALUATION PLAN

Steps to take and questions to answer:

On the next few pages, we go through all the different steps to consider when creating an evaluation plan. Throughout the document, we refer to examples and worksheets that you can find in the appendices of the Toolkit. If you are new to evaluation, or writing an evaluation plan for the first time, take a close look at the steps below. Take notes in preparation for your application to the Council.

Step 1: Focus Your Project

- Reaffirm Project Goals, Outcomes, and Outputs.
- Think big!
- Connect the dots.

pp. 7 - 10

Step 2: Frame and Prepare

- Set an Evaluation Goal that is drawn from items in Step 1.
- Who are your evaluation plan's stakeholders?
- What are your resources?

pp. 11 - 12

Step 3: Set Benchmarks

- Generate Evaluation Questions.
- Determine Indicators.
 Choose Evaluation Methods.
- Keep track of and organize the data you collect.

pp. 13 - 17

Step 4: Analyze Data and Communicate Impact

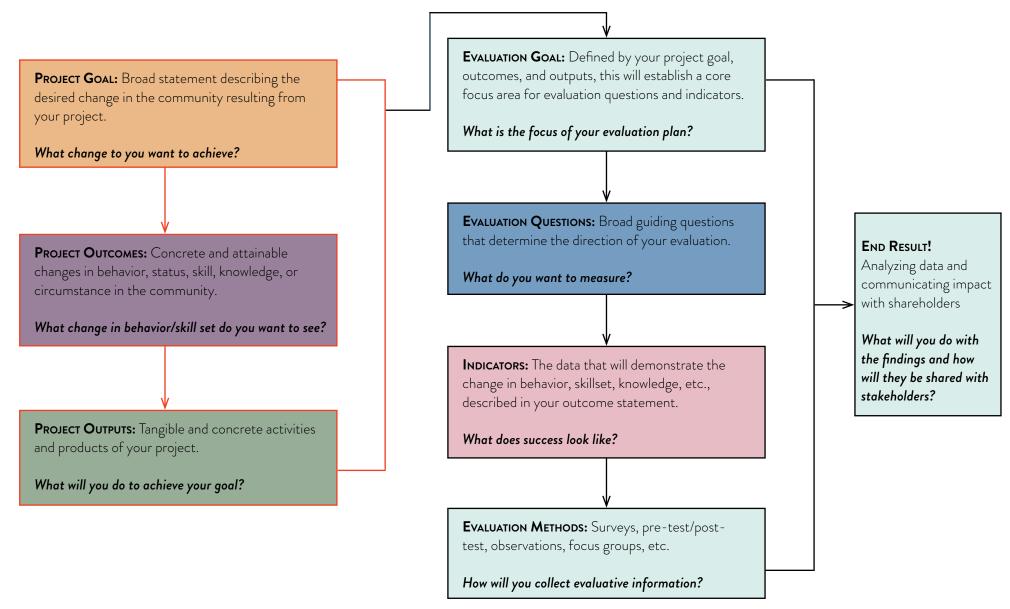
- Review and interpret your data.
- Share the impact of your project with stakeholders.
- Use findings to inform the planning of your next project.

pp. 18 - 19

TIP: Use the Supplemental Worksheet for your notes. When complete, the worksheet will be a great foundation for answering the evaluation questions in your application for funding from the Humanities Council.

Step 1 - Focus Your Project: Reaffirm PROJECT GOALS, OUTCOMES, and OUTPUTS

Let's start at the beginning. In this step, we guide you through affirming your project goal, outcomes, and outputs. Having a clear project goal and strong outcomes and outputs will help you devlop a productive evalution process.



PROJECT GOAL

Most likely, you have an idea of what change you ultimately hope to achieve through your project. Those ideas can be abstract and hard to pin down, so it can help to look at your organization's mission to determine your project's goal. Basing your project's goal on your mission helps you to make it more specific and directly related to your organization's charge. At the Council, we define a goal as a broad statement that describes the change you want to achieve in the community.

A goal establishes the overall direction for your project and defines the scope of what can be achieved. See the following examples:

Example 1: For a civic education project about race relations in Rhode Island, the goal might be to reduce racist attitudes and misconceptions in Rhode Island.

Example 2: For a documentary about local youth organizers in Providence, the goal might be to increase civic agency of youth in Rhode Island.

Example 3: For an exhibit about Pablo Neruda's trip to Rhode Island, the goal might be to elevate Rhode Islander's appreciation of bilingualism and celebrate Spanish-language poetry.

Example 4: For research on local musicians of color in Woonsocket, the goal might be to inspire new creative practices and create a historical basis for contemporary musicians of color in Northern Rhode Island.





TIP: The goal can be big, but should be specific to the audience and project it serves!

PROJECT OUTCOMES

As you can imagine, a large and abstract goal can be difficult to measure. After all, how do you combat racist attitude and how do you know if you're succeeding? Developing your goal into outcomes can help you narrow down the scope of your project's evaluation. Outcomes are measurable and attainable changes you aim to achieve on the path to longer-term goals. They are often changes in behavior, status, skills, attitude, knowledge or circumstance of your community or organization.

Outcomes are what you will measure with your evaluation. The examples below show various outcome statements. A project might have one goal but several outcomes.

Example 1: For a civic education project about race relations in Rhode Island, with the goal to reduce racist attitudes and misconceptions in Rhode Island, outcomes might be:	 Students' knowledge of systemic and historic racism in the nation and state is increased. Students' capacity to stand up against racism on an individual, community, and national level is strengthened. The participating school increases relationships with local organizations whose mission is aligned with the project goal.
Example 2: For a documentary about local youth organizers, with the goal to increase civic agency of youth in Rhode Island, outcomes might be:	 Public knowledge about local youth organizers is increased. Young activists in Rhode Island are more empowered to continue their work. Youth interest in participating in political events and afterschool programs is increased.
Example 3: For a traveling exhibit about Pablo Neruda's trip to Rhode Island, with the goal to elevate Rhode Islander's appreciation of bilingualism and celebrate Spanish-language poetry, outcomes might be:	 Rhode Islanders' knowledge of and engagement with Spanish-language poetry is increased. More bilingual speakers in Rhode Island are empowered to do public speaking. Awareness of and respect for bilingual speakers in Rhode Island is increased. Knowledge of translation work and practice is increased. Spanish-language collections in local libraries are expanded.
Example 4: For research on local musicians of color in Woonsocket with the goal to inspire new creative practices and create a historical basis for contemporary musicians of color in Northern Rhode Island, outcomes might be:	 Historical narratives of Woonsocket are expanded and diversified. Public knowledge of local music and its varied historical traditions is increased. New audiences are engaged with local Woonsocket history.

PROJECT OUTPUTS OR ACTIVITIES

Outputs are the tangible activities you will do, or content you will produce in order to achieve your outcomes. They are literally the products of your project: the exhibit, the field trip, the documentary, etc.

Example 1: For a civic education project about race relations in Rhode Island, with the goal to reduce racist attitudes and misconceptions in Rhode Island , outputs might be:	 Produce high school curriculum around the book <i>The New Jim Crow</i>. Host four guest lectures led by multicultural organizations. Organize a direct-action workshop at the school with a local organization. Set up post-grant meetings with local organizations and the school to discuss continuing work.
Example 2: For a documentary about local youth organizers, with the goal to increase civic agency of youth in Rhode Island, outputs might be:	 Produce a documentary film. Host three public screenings at local high schools. Create direct action guides to distribute at screenings. Host one public panel about local politics and youth engagement.
Example 3: For a traveling exhibit about Pablo Neruda's trip to Rhode Island, with the goal to increase Rhode Islander's appreciation of bilingualism and celebrate Spanish-language poetry , outputs might be:	 Produce a traveling exhibit. Host three translation workshops at libraries. Organize an open mic for readings of English and Spanish poetry. Create Spanish-language acquisition guides for libraries.
Example 4: For research on local musicians of color in Woonsocket with the goal to inspire new creative practices and create a historical basis for contemporary musicians of color in Northern Rhode Island, outputs might be:	 Write and publish an article about musicians of color in Woonsocket. Host a public lecture in partnership with the Woonsocket Historical Society. Invite three local musicians to play music composed by the researched musicians at the lecture. Publish columns in "The Call" about the research process.

Step 2 - Frame and Prepare: Set Your EVALUATION GOAL

To start planning, consider the following questions: Why do you want to evaluate? Who are the stakeholders and what are the stakes? What resources do you have?

Why set an EVALUATION GOAL?

Evaluating 'everything' is not feasible, nor is it necessary. Critically consider what you want to reflect on in your project by asking yourself: What do I want to do with my findings? Why do I want to evaluate? Are there particular worries, theories, or questions that my organization or my partners are specifically interested in? Knowing why you want to reflect on something will keep you interested and invested during the evaluation process.

As a first step toward an evaluation plan, articulate your own evaluation goal. Your evaluation goal will clarify why you want to evaluate (e.g. plan for a next exhibit; reaching new audiences; understand how you work toward your mission). Consider the following examples:

Example 1: For a civic education project about race relations in Rhode Island, with the goal to reduce racist attitudes and misconceptions in Rhode Island, an evaluation goal might be:	•	I want to better understand the effectiveness of wrap-around program- ming that engages students, teachers, and administrators, so that we can improve future program offerings.
Example 2: For a documentary about local youth organizers, with the goal to increase civic agency of youth in Rhode Island, an evaluation goal might be:	•	I want to better understand the the impact of my documentary film and its effect on local individuals and organizations connected to the subject matter, so that I can improve outreach and engagement efforts.
Example 3: For a traveling exhibit about Pablo Neruda's trip to Rhode Island, with the goal to increase Rhode Islander's appreciation of bilingualism and celebrate Spanish-language poetry, an evaluation goal might be:	•	I want to better understand my audiences in order to improve programatic partnerships, so that we can broaden our impact.
Example 4: For research on local musicians of color in Woonsocket with the goal to inspire new creative practices and create a historical basis for contemporary musicians of color in Northern Rhode Island, an evaluation goal might be:	•	I want to better understand the impact of new research and public engagement methodologies on my work, so that I can better plan and budget my next project.

TIP: When creating your evaluation goal statements, consider using the structure provided above: "I want to know X, so that Y."

These statements function as a general guideline for your evaluation plan. In STEP 3, your evaluation plan will become more focused.

Who are the stakeholders and what are their stakes?

Your project has a lot of moving parts with different people involved. Even if you conduct individual historical research, you still collaborate with archivists, funders, community members and varied audiences. All these different stakeholders have an interest in the success of your project and insights to share. Reaching out to your stakeholders for evaluation shows that you value their input. This will only help to strengthen your relationship with them.

Think ahead about **who** you want to engage in evaluation and **how** they are best involved. Consider all of your project's potential stakeholders: participants or audience members, community members, your staff, board, volunteers, partners and collaborators, humanities scholars, artists, and even funders.

What resources do you have? Be practical!

If you have not implemented evaluation in your projects before, it can seem daunting to add an extra task to your timeline. By planning for evaluation up front, you will know what to expect.

- Look at your resources carefully and ask yourself: what can I evaluate with what I have?
- Be realistic with how much time, money and labor you can put into evaluating your project.
- Decide who will be responsible. What does the expertise and support we have allow us to plan for?
- · We encourage you to include a line item for evaluation in your budget.

And of course, you can always reach out to the Council for perspective; we do not want you to feel burdened by the task.





Step 3 - Set Benchmarks: Develop EVALUATION QUESTIONS and INDICATORS

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

With the goal, outcomes, and outputs of your project on paper and your evaluation goal set, you can determine what you want to evaluate. We ask you to write **evaluation questions**, which will solidify the boundaries and scope of your evaluation plan. These questions are overarching and guide the evaluation plan, but they are not ones you would include in a survey or interview. **Ensure that the questions align with your project goal, outcomes, outputs, and evaluation goal.**Simply ask yourself: What do I want to evaluate? What is critically important to learn? What do I want to know this time next year that I don't know today?

You will probably have several evaluation questions; **they should be answerable.** Importantly, both you and your stakeholders should be interested in the answers. As always, it's critical to be realistic in your expectations and considerate of the resources required to answer the questions. Example evaluation questions are below.

Example 1: For a civic education project about race relations in Rhode Island, with the goal to reduce racist attitudes and misconceptions in Rhode Island , evaluation questions might be:	 Was there evidence of an increase of change in knowledge about racism as a result of taking part in this program? For which participants: students, school administration, and anti-racism organizations? What was the value of participation in our program for the students? What were the particular parts of our project that made a difference in the school as a whole?
Example 2: For a documentary about local youth organizers, with the goal to increase civic agency of youth in Rhode Island, evaluation questions might be:	 What audiences did we reach, and was it as intended? What particular features of our project (guidebook, documentary screenings, panel) made the biggest impact? What was the value of participation in this project for the local youth organizers?
Example 3: For a traveling exhibit about Pablo Neruda's trip to Rhode Island, with the goal to increase Rhode Islander's appreciation of bilingualism and celebrate Spanish-language poetry, evaluation questions might be:	 What particular features of our project were effective for libraries? What features were importnat to the audience? What features made a difference for bilingual speakers? What lessons can we draw from collaborating with libraries and workshop facilitators? What did collaborating libraries learn from involvement in our project?
Example 4: For research on local musicians of color in Woonsocket with the goal to inspire new creative practices and create a historical basis for contemporary musicians of color in Northern Rhode Island, evaluation questions might be:	 What audiences did we reach? Is there any evidence of an increase in knowledge of local musicians of color in Woonsocket? What aspect of the project was particularly important? How did our project change the perceived narrative of local history in Woonsocket?

EVALUATION INDICATORS

Now that you know what you want to achieve with your project, and what you want to measure with your evaluation plan, the next step is deciding which results indicate your project's success. **Indicators are the ways you measure progress**, thereby demonstrating you achieved your project outcomes. With indicators, the more exact you can get, the easier it is to analyze your findings.

Example 1: For a civic education project about race relations in Rhode Island, with the goal to reduce racist attitudes and misconceptions in Rhode Island, indicators might be:	 70 students read and refelcted on the effects and racial problems of mass incarceration as discussed in <i>The New Jim Crow</i>. 70 students are introduced to four different anti-racism organizations doing work in their communities. 70 students attended a direct-action workshop. Two local multicultural organizations met with the school at least once after the program ended. Instances of insensitive comments, hate language, and confrontations rooted in race-based misconceptions are reduced in school.
Example 2: For a documentary about local youth organizers, with the goal to increase civic agency of youth in Rhode Island, indicators might be:	 Documentary film is finished by the set deadline; portrayed youth express excitement about the finished product. Three different local high schools hosted public screenings, each with at least 35 people attending. Within the two months after the first screening, the portrayed youth organizations experienced an increase of people signing up or following their websites by three-times the normal rate. Youth organizers participated on a panel with two politicians discussing local politics. 100 people attended the panel.
Example 3: For a traveling exhibit about Pablo Neruda's trip to Rhode Island, with the goal to increase Rhode Islander's appreciation of bilingualism and celebrate Spanish-language poetry, indicators might be:	 Three libraries hosted the exhibit, with 500 people visiting in total. 10 people performed at an open mic for readings of English and Spanish poetry, 75 people attended. Created Spanish-language acquisition guides for libraries and distributed them to three local libraries. Organized follow up meetings with all libraries.
Example 4: For research on local musicians of color in Woonsocket with the goal to inspire new creative practices and create a historical basis for contemporary musicians of color in Northern Rhode Island, indicators might be:	 Published an article about musicians of color in Woonsocket that had a run of 500 copies. Hosted a public lecture in partnership with the Woonsocket Historical Society, with 80 attendees. 25% of attendees indicated never having attended a WHS event before. Invited three local musicians to play music composed by the researched musicians at the lecture. Distributed 25 free copies of the composition. During the research process, published three columns in "The Call."

TIP: See Appendix 2 for a list that includes useful examples of standardized indicators for youth development, performance art, and after-school programing. If you have any questions about what could indicate a specific change instigated by your project, the Council's staff may be able to help.

Choose Your EVALUATION METHODS

Now that you know what your evaluation goal, questions, and indicators are, it's time to select your evaluation methods.

Rather than pointing out the best evaluation methods, we want to share the process of how you can come to decide on methods of evaluation yourself. The following table includes a host of evaluation methods that are relevant to public humanities projects. With each method, it is important to consider external factors that might account for the change you are measuring. In other words, your project is not the only change instigator.

Don't forget to decide up front who will be in charge of collecting and keeping track of the data. Maintaining an organized system will help you once it is time for analyzing and sharing what you accomplished! Note: Active hyperlinks in the Resources column can be found in the online version of the toolkit.

Method	Measures/Collects	Useful for	Consider	Resources
Participant or Audience Surveys	 Self-indicated change of behavior or knowledge - short term. Demographic data 	 Public projects: exhibits, lectures, one-time events Civic education projects: workshops, lesson series, guests lecture, field trip Documentary: public screening, pre-screen event Research: public event 	 Handing out a survey right after your project, or sending out emails with an online survey afterward. When you are mainly interested in the long-term effects and knowledge, consider sending the survey, or calling participants with survey questions, after a couple of weeks. 	 How to make a survey that measures a change in behavior. This Reading Agency Toolkit includes extensive examples of survey questions connected to project outcome statements. This website provides an overview of how to build a survey from the start.
Pre-test/Post-test	Measures changes in knowledge, skills, or behavior, by comparing answers of the same questions before and after completion or participation in the project.	 Civic education projects: workshops, lesson series, guest lecture, field trip Public projects: series of events with a consistent group of participants, youth programming Curricular development projects 	 These types of tests take up more time for the participants: it includes filling out a survey before and after taking part in the project. However, you are able to use the same survey questions for the pre- and post-test. When using this method, take into account other influences on the changes that you measure, outside of participating in your project. 	This is an example of a survey that was used for both pre- and postassessment, measuring change in behavior.

Method	Measures/Collects	Useful for	Consider	Resources
Retrospective Post-then-Pre Design	Measures self-reported changes in knowledge, skills or behavior, asking participants to determine what they learned from the project, looking back to their knowledge preparticipation	 Civic education projects: workshops, lesson series, guest lecture, field trip Public projects: series of events with a consistent group of participants 	It is very similar to the pre-post assessment but asks participants after completion of the project to compare their knowledge now to what they (think they) knew before.	 This document gives a helpful overview of retrospective post-then-pre design. These are tips for designing questions for a post-then-pre test
Program/Event Observation	 Implementation of project Witness level of skill/ability, program practices, behaviors Determine changes over time (in implementation or in behavior) 	Any project with an event, or series with an indicated change in skill or ability as part of a: Public projects, Civic education projects, or Documentary projects	 If you are involved in the running of the event or program, ask someone else to observe! Make sure to discuss together what to look for when observing: look back at your evaluation questions and indicators! 	 This document talks you through the merits and aspects of program observation. The Activation Lab created an Observation Protocol. It is specifically made with informal science projects in mind, but it can be a helpful model.
Interviews	 Detailed descriptions of project's processes Personal understanding of effect of project, by participants, staff, and other stakeholders 	 Public projects: participants, audience, collaborators, volunteers, staff Civic education projects: students/participants, teachers, administrators, partners Documentary: viewers, subjects, collaborators Research: audience, archivists, partners 	 Can be conducted in person or over the phone. Consider recording the interviews on video. Questions are often open-ended, and answers are anecdotal or descriptive. You can conduct a structured or unstructured interview. 	 Don't know where to start? Consider this overview about conducting interviews. BetterEvaluation has a very extensive online overview of what to consider when conducting interviews for evaluative measures.
Document or Records Review	 Basic data on number of participants or the costs Attendance rate change over time (if applicable) Implementation of project 	Public projectsCivic education projectsDocumentary projectsResearch projects	Documents to include in your review: grant ap- plications, meeting notes, ticket sales, attendance records, outreach materials, and financial records.	Here is an 'evaluation brief' on Document Review, explaining when to use it.

Method	Measures/Collects	Useful for	Consider	Resources
Focus Groups	Perceptions, views, anecdotes, and opinions about your project or about the implementation process	 Public projects: participants, audience, collaborators, volunteers, staff Civic education projects: students/participants, teachers, administrators, partners Documentary: viewers, subjects, collaborators Research: audience, archivists, partners 	 Consider placing together people with a similar investment or role in your project: participants, volunteers and staff. In 1.5 hours you can generally expect to address 5-7 questions. Consider how you can compensate the participants for their time! Limit participation to groups of 6-10 people. 	 These are some quick tips about how to organize focus groups. This document by the Applied Research Center gives some very concrete tips on how to conduct focus groups. This is a step-by-step guide for designing and facilitating a focus group, by Richard Krueger. This document gives facilitation strategies for leading stakeholders in a focus group.
Journals or Portfolios	 Skill, knowledge, or thought development Self-reflective tool 	Programs with regular/ consistent participants: Public projects, Civic education projects	Consider using a journal for a public humanities project that aims to teach a certain skill or knowledge: invite participants to reflect on their learning. If participants in your project create and accumulate certain products consider reviewing participants' portfolios	If you have any questions about using portfolios as an assessment tool, take a look here.

Step 4 - Analyze Data and Communicate Impact

After you have collected all the information you need through your evaluation methods it is time to make sense of it all. Here, we lay out options for you to share the results of your evaluation with your various stakeholders: your participants, funders, volunteers, and partners. We also provide questions to help you consider what to do with the findings within your organization.

What to share with whom:

People are interested in your findings! Sharing evaluation results can help raise awareness of public humanities initiatives, they help attract volunteers and participants, and can be included in larger advocacy efforts for policy or political change.

Depending on your stakeholders' stake, there are several ways you can share findings with them. Ask your stakeholders what methods of communication and scope of reporting are preferred. Your board might want to hear an extensive report, but your event volunteers prefer a more distilled version of your evaluation. Preferably, all these stakeholders have been included in your evaluation as well.

Some ideas for sharing your findings:

- Share a written report with your funders. The Council has a format for your final report and encourages you to base the report on your findings. Most likely, your other funders have formats they would like you to use.
- Depending on the preferences of your board, consider preparing a written report with an executive summary or a verbal presentation of your most important findings. Schedule time to discuss your findings in depth.
- Naturally, your staff has a large interest in your findings, and hopefully they
 have been involved in evaluating the project. Consider keeping them updated
 on your findings throughout the course of your project, and prepare a presentation with ample time for discussion once you have completed your evaluation. Take a look at the next page for guidelines on such a meeting with your
 staff.
- A distilled version or important aspect of your findings can easily be shared with your volunteers. A thank you note becomes all the more interesting with an anecdote from a participant!

- It is very likely that participants, audience members, or readers have participated in your evaluation. Consider sharing the most important findings, either in a final meeting or via email. Summarize the evaluation in a letter to the participants or, if possible, use graphs or tables to bring across the significant results.
- Make sure that your collaborators receive a summary of the findings as well, especially findings that are relevant to their role in the project.
- Write up your findings in a post on your website or highlight them in your newsletter. In that way, you will reach community members that might not have participated but are still invested in your success.
- Anecdotes and explicit data can be used in your fundraising efforts, either in your letters of appeal or in grant applications.
- In general, quotes, graphs and anecdotes are great marketing tools for communications!
- You might also consider sharing your findings with colleagues in other organizations, with local politicians for advocacy efforts, or with businesses for future partnership or sponsorship.



How to use your findings for your organization:

Using your findings to tell the story of your project is very important, but it is crucial to decide: What's next? Get your board, staff, volunteers or committee together and consider the following points:

1.

Ask orienting questions, ensuring everyone is on the same page:

- What do we see in our evaluation? What do the findings say?
- Was it what we expected? How is it different or the same?
- How does it compare to earlier findings or similar projects?

2.

Ask about the meaning of your findings. Have everyone consider:

- What do the findings say about our project? Did we succeed with our set indicators? Why or why not?
- What do the findings say about our set goals and outcomes - were they attainable, did they fit our project? Did the inidcators measure what we wanted to know?
- How did we work together? Did the implementation of the project go as planned?

3.

Direct the Conversation. Discuss next steps:

- How should we budget for our next project?
 What were the gaps in our resources, or what was unnecessarily allocated?
- What extra training or resources do we need for our next project? Do we need training or technological assistance or advancement? Where can we find that?
- How can we better evaluate next time?
- What should we change about our project implementation?
- What part of our goal or mission did we not address in our project, this time?

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

You made it!

This document provides a strong foundation for the evaluation of your Council-funded project, as well as your other funding pursuits. Of course, the Council's staff is here as a resource for you should you have further questions.

Want more?

The information we provide in this evaluation toolkit is our condensed approach to the extensive field of evaluation research. We based what is represented here on a mix of outcome, summative, and formative evaluation: what we think are the most straightforward ways to evaluate public humanities projects. If you are interested in learning more about these and other evaluation methods, or in doing further research into evaluation yourself, see the resources provided in **Appendix 2**.



CREDITS AND THANKS

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Pr	Evaluation Plan - Civic Education ROJECT: Schoolwide civic education project about race relations in Rhode Island	
Project Goal	To reduce racist attitudes and misconceptions in Rhode Island	
Outcomes	 Students' knowledge of systemic and historic racism in the nation and state is increased. Students' capacity to stand up against racism on an individual, community, and national level is strengthened. The school increases relationships with local organizations whose mission is aligned with the project goal. 	
Оитритѕ	 Produce high school curriculum for the book The New Jim Crow. Host four guest lectures led by local multicultural organizations. Organize a direct action workshop at the school with a local organization. Set up post-grant meetings with local organizations and the school. 	
EVALUATION GOAL	I want to better understand the effectiveness of wrap-around programming that engages students, teachers, and administrators, so that we can improve future program offerings.	
Evaluation Questions	 Was there evidence of an increase or change in knowledge about racism as a result of taking part in this program? For which participants: students, school administration and anti-racism organizations? What was the value of participation in our program for the students? What were the particular parts of our project that made a difference in the school as a whole? 	
Indicators	 70 students read and refelcted on the effects and racial problems of mass incarceration as discussed in The New Jim Crow. 70 students are introduced to four different anti-racism organizations doing work in their communities. 70 students attended a direct-action workshop. Two local multicultural organizations met with the school at least once after the program ended. Instances of insensitive comments, hate language, and confrontations rooted in race-based misconceptions are reduced in school. 	
	<u> </u>	
EVALUATION METHODS	I will make use of observation methods, interviews, and retrospective post-then-pre design assessments.	



	Evaluation Plan – Documentary Film PROJECT: Documentary film featuring local youth organizers in Providence
Project Goal	To increase civic agency of youth in Rhode Island
Outcomes	 Public knowledge about local youth organizers is increased. Young activists in Rhode Island are empowered to continue their work. Youth interest in participating in political events and afterschool programs is increased.
Оитритѕ	 Produce a documentary film. Host three public screenings at local high schools. Create direct action guides to distribute at screenings. Host one public panel about local politics and youth engagement.
EVALUATION GOAL	I want to better understand the the impact of my documentary film and its effect on local individuals and organizations connected to the subject matter, so that I can improve outreach and engagement efforts.
Evaluation Questions	 What audiences did we reach, and was it as intended? What particular features of our project (guidebook, documentary screenings, panel) made the biggest impact? What was the value of participation in this project for the local youth organizers?
Indicators	 Documentary film is finished by the set deadline; portrayed youth express excitement about the finished product. Three different local high schools hosted public screenings, each with at least 35 people attending. Within the two months after the first screening, the portrayed youth organizations experienced an increase of people signing up or following their websites by three-times the normal rate. Youth organizers participated on a panel with two politicians discussing local politics. 100 people attended the panel.
EVALUATION METHODS	I will make use of surveys, interviews, and event observations.



Evaluation Plan – Public Program PROJECT: Traveling exhibit about Pablo Neruda's trip to Rhode Island		
Project Goal	To elevate Rhode Islander's appreciation of bilingualism and celebrate Spanish-language poetry	
Оитсомеѕ	 Rhode Islanders' knowledge of and engagement with Spanish-language poetry is increased. More bilingual speakers in Rhode Island are empowered to do public speaking. Awareness of and respect for bilingual speakers in Rhode Island is increased. Knowledge of translation work and practice is increased. Spanish language collections in local libraries are expanded. 	
Оитритѕ	 Produce a traveling exhibit. Host three translation workshops at libraries. Organize an open mic for readings of English and Spanish poetry. Create Spanish-language acquisition guides for libraries. 	
EVALUATION GOAL	I want to better understand my audiences in order to improve programatic partnerships, so that we can broaden our impact.	
Evaluation Questions	 What particular features of our project were effective for libraries? What features were importnat to the audience? What features made a difference for bilingual speakers? What lessons can we draw from collaborating with libraries and workshop facilitators? What did collaborating libraries learn from involvement in our project? 	
Indicators	 Three libraries hosted the exhibit, with 500 people visiting in total. 10 people performed at an open mic for readings of English and Spanish poetry, 75 people attended. Created Spanish-language acquisition guides for libraries and distributed them to three local libraries. Organized follow up meetings with all libraries. 	
Evaluation Methods	I will make use of surveys, focus groups, and observation to collect evaluative data.	



	Evaluation Plan – Individual Research PROJECT: Research on local musicians of color in Woonsocket
Project Goal	To inspire new creative practices and create a historical basis for contemporary musicians of color in Northern Rhode Island
Outcomes	 Historical narratives of Woonsocket are expanded and diversified. Public knowledge of local music and its varied historical traditions is increased. New audiences are engaged with local Woonsocket history.
Оитритѕ	 Write and publish an article about musicians of color in Woonsocket. Host a public lecture in partnership with Woonsocket Historical Society. Invite three local musicians to play music composed by the researched musicians Publish columns in "The Call" about the research process.
EVALUATION GOAL	I want to better understand the impact of new research and public engagement methodologies on my work, so that I can better plan and budget my next project.
Evaluation Questions	 What audiences did we reach? Is there any evidence for an increase in knowledge of local musicians of color in Woonsocket? What aspect of the project was particularly important? How did our project change the perceived narrative of local history in Woonsocket?
Indicators	 Published an article about musicians of color in Woonsocket that had a run of 500 copies. Hosted a public lecture in partnership with the Woonsocket Historical Society, with 80 attendees. 25% of attendees indicated never having attended a WHS event before. Invited three local musicians to play music composed by the researched musicians at the lecture. Distributed 25 free copies of the composition. During the research process, published three columns in "The Call."
Evaluation Methods	I will make use of online analytics data, a personal research journal, and observation methods.



Resource	URL	Content Area	Program Design & Logic Models	Evaluation Planning	Indicators & Outcomes	Data Collection Instruments	Evauluation Results
How Do We Select the Right Evaluation Approach for the Job: This downloadable PDF from Grantmakers for Effective Organizations offers a matrix to guide thinking about evaluation and what tools and methods to use.	https://www.geofunders.org/resources/ how-do-we-select-the-right-evaluation- approach-for-the-job-665	Any					
Community Toolbox: Evaluating the Initiative: Produced by University of Kansas Center for Community Health & Development, this has easy-to-understand tools for evaluating community-based projects.	http://ctb.ku.edu/en/evaluating-initiative	Community Building					
Institute of Museum and Library Services Evaluation Resources: This IMLS resource includes program planning tools, evaluation definitions, methodologies, and a tutorial on evaluation design.	https://www.imls.gov/research-evaluation/ evaluation-resources	Museums, Libraries, and Cultural Institutions					
Program Development and Evaluation at University of Wisconsin-Extension: This resource has templates, tutorials, and 'quick tips' about many aspects of evaluation.	https://fyi.uwex.edu/programdevelopment/	Any					
Practical Guide for Engaging Stakeholders in Developing Evaluation Questions: This is a webinar and printed toolkit from FSG consulting firm.	http://www.fsg.org/tools-and-resources/ practical-guide-engaging-stakeholders-devel- oping-evaluation-questions-0	Any					

KEY TO CHART HEADERS	
Program Design & Logic Models	These resources help you think about the design of your project and how to use logic models to inform your process.
Evaluation Planning	Evaluation is easier and more effective if it is carefully planned. These resources will walk you through the steps of creating an evaluation plan.
Indicators & Outcomes	Need help selecting indicators that will measure progress? Want to better understand how to set attainable and measureable outcomes for your project? These resources will help you.
Data Collection Instruments	These sites have samples of surveys (and other instruments) as well as tips for creating your own.
Evaluation Results	Want to see what other people have done in your area of interest? A number of sites public studies (evaluation results) from their projects.

Resource	URL	Content Area	Program Design & Logic Models	Evaluation Planning	Indicators & Outcomes	Data Collection Instruments	Evauluation Results
Humanities Indicators: The American Academy of Arts & Sciences provides overviews of humanities data in the United States. This resource is helpful for further reference, advocacy, and placing your project and evaluation in a national context.	http://www.humanitiesindicators.org/default. aspx	Humanities					
Urban Institute: Outcome Indicators Project: A joint project of the Urban Institute and The Center for What Works, this resource provides an overview of outcome indicators for 14 program areas.	http://www.urban.org/policy-centers/ cross-center-initiatives/performance-man- agement-measurement/projects/nonprofit- organizations/projects-focused-nonprofit- organizations/outcome-indicators-project	Adult Ed, Community Organizing, Prisoner Re- entry, etc.					
IssueLab: This collection of free research from social sector organizations around the world is compiled by the Foundation Center. The "Measure Results Collection" has reports on Evaluation Planning.	https://www.issuelab.org/	Arts/Culture, Education, Judicial Re- form, Race/ Ethnicity, etc.					
"How-To" Guide for your Significant Changes Process: Michigan Humanities Council created a guide for an evaluation approach that focuses on "stories of change" told by project participants or audiences.	http://www.michiganhumanities.org/docu- ments/grants/heritage/16HG%20Signifi- cant%20Changes%20Evaluation%20Guide. pdf	Community Building					
Evaluating Participatory Projects: This chapter from "The Participatory Museum" addresses the unique considerations of evaluating process and results of projects, where participants are actively engaged in contributing ideas and objects.	http://www.participatorymuseum.org/chap- ter10/	Community Participation Projects					
CIRCLE Tools for Practice: Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) has extensive resources about evaluating civic engagement.	http://civicyouth.org/tools-for-practice/	Civic En- gagemnt, Youth					



Resource	URL	Content Area	Program Design & Logic Models	Evaluation Planning	Indicators & Outcomes	Data Collection Instruments	Evauluation Results
Informal Science: This searchable database of project, research, and evaluation resources is designed to support the informal STEM education community in a variety of learning environments. In the search tool, select "Resource Type" to find research and evaluation resources.	http://www.informalscience.org/	STEAM					
From Soft Skills to Hard Data: Measuring Youth Outcomes: The Forum for Youth Investment has published 10 instruments on how to measure youth development.	https://fhop.ucsf.edu/sites/fhop.ucsf.edu/files/ custom_download/Measuring%20youth%20 program%20outcomes%202011.pdf	Youth					
PerformWell: Developed by the Urban Institute, Child Trends, and Social Solutions, this resource provides measurement tools and practical knowledge that human services professionals can use to manage their programs' day-to-day performance.	http://www.performwell.org	Child & Youth Develop- ment, Educa- tion, Civic Engagement					
Rhode Island Program Quality Assessment Tool (RIPQA): Providence After School Alliance uses this tool to assess after-school programs.	https://www.uwri.org/take-action/join-us/ rhode-island-afterschool-network/profes- sional-development/quality-tools/	Afterschool					
Center for International Media Action: Process is Powerful Evaluation Guide: Page 35 of this toolkit shows examples of indicators.	https://www.actknowledge.org/resources/ documents/Process-Is-Powerful.pdf	Media Justice					
Museum Exhibit Design – Evaluation: This resource gives a brief overview of considerations for evaluating exhibits.	https://museumplanner.org/museum-exhibi- tion-design-part-vi/	Exhibits					

Online Survey Tools:

- Google Forms
- <u>SurveyMonkey</u>
- SurveyGizmo
- Qualtrics
- Questionpro



Find the EVALUATION TOOLKIT Supplemental Action Plan and Worksheet at rihumanities.org/grantmaking.

Questions? Contact Council staff at 401-273-2250