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ARTS IN WALES

Artis Community and Proper Design

Can an online portal for sharing data on social impact help community arts organisations to become more effective and more fundable?

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—— **Artis Community** believes in the transformational power of creativity to make a real difference to people's quality of life. We create opportunities to take part in creative dance and visual arts programmes across the South Wales Valleys and beyond. We work in partnership with local community organisations, professional arts organisations, schools and higher education, developing provision to inspire people of all ages and abilities.

—— **Proper Design** builds and manages websites that solve business problems. We're pretty handy with branding, web development, e-commerce and digital marketing.

—— **The Digital Innovation Fund for the Arts in Wales** is a strategic partnership between Arts Council of Wales and Nesta. It is the successor to the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Wales that ran from 2013-2015. The fund has supported arts organisations to experiment using digital technology to enhance audience reach or to develop their business model.

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Introduction

Can an online portal for sharing data on social impact help community arts organisations to become more effective and more fundable?

There are two driving forces behind community arts. The first is offering high quality artistic participatory activity. The second is for that experience to be transformative for the lives of the people and communities taking part, often by providing people with a voice or a means of expression in the face of disadvantage.

But transformational impact on individuals is not always easily measured – sometime the most powerful impact is 'soft' or immeasurable, the benefits may be realised long after an intervention has taken place, or it may not be possible to separate out the influence of other factors that have brought about that change.

Yet in our challenging funding environment it is more important than ever to be able to demonstrate the impact of our work in a robust way. The resources available for community arts from traditional sources is diminishing in absolute terms, and an increasing number of arts organisations are delivering socially engaged practice, meaning there is greater competition for what is there.

We have come to the view that there is now a need for a central database on the impact of community arts activity in Wales. We believe this is a necessary step in the journey towards raising the standards of evidence of the sector. Through this process of research and development we have begun to establish what this might look like and what the attitude of the sector is towards the idea.

Our working title for this project is the Arts Impact Portal.

We have created a prototype and tested it with community arts organisations. We are now in the process of increasing the volume of data available on the portal so that we can begin to test the idea with funders and other stakeholders to secure their backing. Even in the short time since we have started this project, we have facilitated many conversations about how we bring together the evidence necessary to clearly demonstrate the unique power of community arts to transform lives.

Our strategic challenge

This project is being hosted by Artis Community, and is being delivered in partnership with Artworks Cymru, a sector initiative involving most community arts organisations in Wales.

Artis Community is a community arts organisation based in Pontypridd. We work with artists, communities and individuals throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf and beyond, including professional and community organisations, schools, local authorities and health boards. We aim to inspire people of all ages and abilities to take part in a wide range of artforms. Our work demonstrates the importance of the arts in improving wellbeing, developing communities and in improving skills and educational attainment

ArtWorks Cymru is a two year programme based in Wales funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Arts Council of Wales. It brings together a consortium of partners made up of artists and arts organisations delivering participatory arts across Wales. It aims to develop practice and support continued professional development in the sector.

Our shared long-term strategic aims in relation to this project are:
— To provide stronger evidence of participation in community arts activities leading to transformational results in individuals and communities.
— To create a critical mass of data that can underpin business development in arts organisations particularly in terms of accessing 'non-arts' funding.
— To support project commissioners and arts organisations to design and deliver better projects by providing evidence of good practice and real outcomes.

Although there is academic evidence that exists around the impact of community arts activity, there is limited capture, analysis and sharing of data by community arts organisations as part of their routine operations. They may not have access to the resources or expertise to conduct robust research into the impact of their work, or in some cases an intensive study on a small-scale community arts intervention would distract from the core activity. This portal must be able to provide a quick and simple resource for sharing and interrogating the data about the social impact of community arts that is being gathered, to enable us to raise the standards of evidence over time.

For Arts Impact Portal to be successful it will need to create a critical mass of data. This would enable the study of the data being gathered across the sector, which in turn would help provide a basis for improving it. It will also help to secure buy in from community arts organisations and funders, as a valuable source of information and ideas to which they will want to contribute. With a greater awareness of where and how the community arts sector is achieving social impact, we believe that community arts organisations can become more effective and more fundable.

Research Questions

We developed the following overarching research question:
Can an online portal for sharing data on social impact help community arts organisations to become more effective and more fundable?

To answer this broader question we investigated the following:

How can our social impact portal meet the needs of the community arts sector? What features does it need to do this effectively?

What technical specifications are required for us to create a portal that is sufficiently flexible to allow data entry and reporting to be simple and quick?

What attitudes exist in the community arts sector towards sharing data on social impact, and interrogating the data of others?

Project Delivery

We carried out the following activities as part of our research and development report:

Project initiation workshop

We held a workshop with ArtWorks Cymru members to gather initial feedback on our ideas and to recruit organisations for our user testing workshops.

Creation of prototype

We created a working prototype of the portal using Wordpress to test our data model and the basic portal functionality.

First user testing workshop

We held a half day workshop to test the prototype with community arts organisations, focussing initially on data entry, to identify any improvements and further development needed.

Second user testing workshop

At our second half day user testing workshop we presented a more developed prototype, this time with data management and data analysis capability.

Community arts survey

In parallel to our user testing workshops, we ran a survey of the wider community arts sector to understand their practice in relation to gathering and sharing data on the social impact of their work, and their attitudes towards the idea of the Arts Impact Portal.

We made the following changes to project delivery:

We originally planned to build a prototype data management and analysis capability. While this functionality would be important for the success of the final 'commercialised' portal, we realised that, once we began work on the project, that building this functionality into this phase would need more development and testing time than we had available.

We had hoped to directly engage a larger number of community arts organisations and commissioners. We would have preferred to have had around twice as many community arts organisations involved, and whilst we recruited many more than we needed we still had lower levels of attendance at user testing sessions than we had hoped. We found that although many community arts organisations were enthusiastic about the idea, they had very little spare capacity to dedicate staff time to it at this early development stage. Engaging public bodies as potential commissioners of community arts activity also proved to be more difficult than we had anticipated. We believe that as we increase the volume of data available on the portal, and as the functionality becomes more fully formed, then it will become easier to secure the engagement of stakeholders in the development process.

Project initiation workshop

How can our social impact portal meet the needs of the community arts sector? What features does it need to do this effectively?

Early in the process we convened a workshop for community art practitioners and funders to gather initial feedback on our ideas.

The aims of the workshop were to:
— Understand the range of social impacts and outcomes the sector aims to achieve through its participatory arts provision, and how these are recorded.
— Propose a scoring system to cover all projects and outcomes relevant to the community arts sector.
— Identify community arts organisations who would be willing to join our user testing group to test our prototype of the portal, and share their data on the social impact of their work.

We identified a longlist of social impacts, some of which are easy to measure and some which would be far more complex to measure in a meaningful way. The social impact categories we identified, and the longlist from this workshop on which they are based, are included **as an annex**.

All participants agreed that it would be possible to introduce a simple five-point scoring system to give an overall sense of how effective any community arts intervention had been in achieving social impact.

At the workshop we discussed the ways in which the portal would need to be flexible to meet the needs of the community arts sector. Workshop participants told us that the portal would need to:
— Align with key legislation – for example the social outcomes covered by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.
— Align with the reporting requirements of multiple funders who require reporting against set templates.
— Allow for the recording of outcomes that were unanticipated at the start of the project.
— Accommodate both project-based work, ongoing programmes of activity, and multi-year projects.

The prototype portal

What technical specifications are required for us to create a portal that is sufficiently flexible to allow data entry and reporting to be simple and quick?

The technical development of the portal during this research and development project was focused on developing an open data model to show how successful different community arts projects had been in achieving social impact. To do this, our portal would need to:

— Allow for easy upload of project and participant data by community arts organisations and public agencies.
— Allow for the uploaded data to be shared, by feeding automatically into other platforms and through exporting the data in traditional open data file formats that are easily read by people and computers.

Ultimately, the platform needs to provide a reporting and analysis web application for artists, funders, researchers and others to be able to query the data that arts organisations supply. The development of these features would be beyond the scope of this current R&D.

We undertook three phases of technical development, with each phase building on the previous one:

Phase 1 – Prototype using off-the-shelf services
We built a prototype of the data model using AirTable to allow for quick iterations.

Phase 2 – A platform to serve the data model
We then built a platform to serve the data model developed in Phase 1 with manual data entry by a system administrator. At this stage, we held the first user testing workshop.

### Phase 3 – Add front-end input form and 'my data' portal
We then took the Phase 2 model and added an easy-to-use front-end form so that individual arts projects can upload their own data. We also added a 'my data' portal to allow arts organisations to manage their own data. At this stage, we held the second user testing workshop.

A simplified data model
We have assumed for the purpose of this R&D that each community arts project has a single social outcome. Although we recognise that projects may have multiple objectives, this solution assumes that they have a primary objective against which their success can be measured (e.g. reduction in unemployment, improved life satisfaction, reduced obesity etc.). This assumption is critical as it allows a vastly simplified data model that doesn't depend on the data model describing every permutation and combination of objectives.

Further development
Although out of scope for this project, the wireframes below represent the eventual goal of this platform – an easy-to-use tool for artists and funders to understand the efficacy of community arts projects.
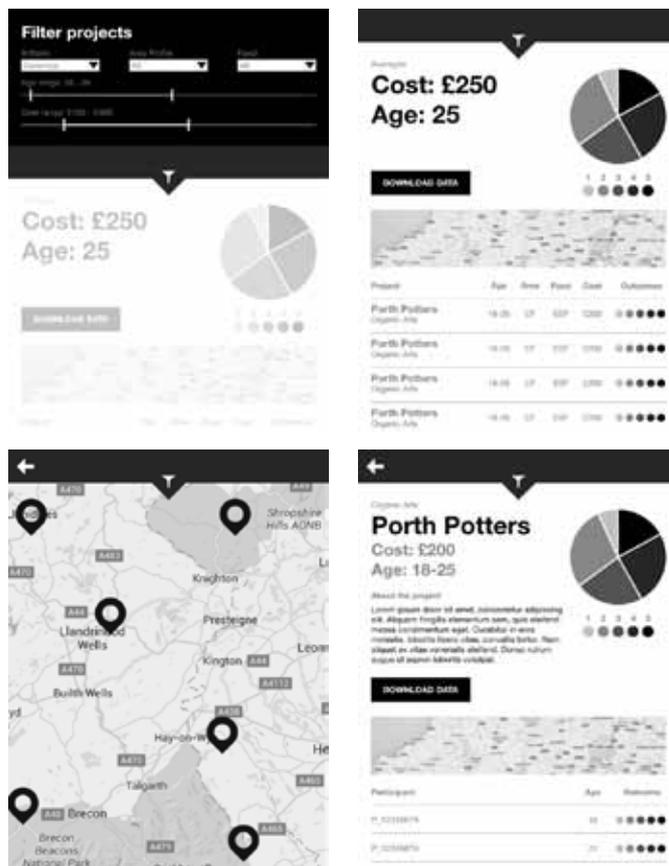
User testing workshop 1

Once we had developed the first wordpress prototype of the portal, we ran our first user testing group on 15 December 2016. The half day workshop was attended by four representatives from community arts organisations. We presented the prototype and invited the participants to try to input data from real projects using the fields provided. We discussed whether the model was sufficiently flexible to meet their reporting needs.

The full user testing group report is included as an annex.

Where minor adjustments were needed, changes were made during the workshop itself. Where changes were clearly needed but too complex to address during the workshop, they were noted for incorporating into future development of the portal. We also captured wider discussion points form the workshops.

Minor changes
Some of the minor changes implemented during the workshop include:

— Addition of a 'postcode' field to allow users to find an organisation based on its location.
— Addition of 'project partner' field.
— Creation of banding for the project cost and project duration fields.
— Creation of a taxonomy of artforms.

Future development
More substantial developments proposed for future development of the portal include:
— Explanatory notes and examples throughout the portal to avoid ambiguity.
— The ability to upload supporting information, as a means to support the data being provided and to allow the addition of qualitative data.
— Clarification around the categories of social impact defined by the portal. The idea of allowing tag clouds to be included within each category was proposed as a means of giving greater flexibility.

Areas for further investigation
Some of the wider discussion points at the workshop included:
— The need for greater standards of evidence across the sector and the difficulties of achieving consistent reporting.
— The wide range of reporting requirements faced by community arts organisations reporting to multiple funders.
— The importance of in-depth analysis of attendance and participation data to demonstrate the work of the sector in securing the engagement of individuals and communities across time.
— The challenges of accurately and consistently describing the 'costs' of community interventions, which by their nature often involve significant non-financial contributions.

User testing workshop 2

Following further technical development of the portal based on the outcomes of the previous workshop, our second round of user testing was held on 27 January 2017. Six representatives of community arts organisations attended, and were guided through the process of data entry using the portal. As with the previous workshop, we made minor adjustments, identified areas for future development, and captured wider discussion points.

The full user testing report is included as an annex.

Minor changes

Minor changes implemented during the workshop included:
— Full contact details for organisations – in addition to the postcode field added previously.
— The organisational website address field to auto-populate 'http://' before the rest of the address.
— 'Submit query' button changed to 'submit project' for clarity.

Future development

More substantial developments proposed for future development of the portal included:
— The ability to match and merge entries where projects or organisations have been duplicated – for example, where slightly different names or spellings have been used.
— Clear and consistent terminology in relation to objectives, achievements, outcomes and impact. There was also further explanation needed of the five point scoring system to be used to rate the performance of each community arts intervention included in the portal.
— The ability to use the system for users whose internet access is behind a firewall over which they might have little control (for example, those accessing the internet via local authority systems).

Areas for further investigation

Some of the wider discussion points at the workshop included:
— The challenge of assuring the integrity and credibility of the information held.
— The potential role for an administrator to query or amend the information that had been uploaded, and who might be willing to fund it.
— The need to ensure that information would be shared about projects that did not meet their aims as well as those that were considered to be successful.

Community arts survey

What attitudes exist in the community arts sector towards sharing data on social impact, and interrogating the data of others?

We conducted an online survey of community arts organisations to develop our understanding of what data community arts organisations are currently capturing and publishing, and the attitudes that might exist towards the idea of a social impact portal to make that data more widely available. The survey was not anonymous and respondents were asked to give their name, job title and organisation. This allowed us to track the proportion of the community arts sector that this survey would cover.

We received 26 unique responses, which can be categorised as follows:
— 16 community arts organisations.
— 1 local authority arts department.
— 3 network organisations.
— 1 museum.
— 2 individual artists.
— 1 arts consultancy.

One incomplete response was received from an anonymous respondent who queried whether the survey was available in the Welsh language.

Whilst the number of respondents to the survey was small, they cover a considerable proportion of the community arts sector in Wales. They include more than half of the organisations involved in the ArtWorks Cymru programme, as well as community arts organisations outside of this initiative.

The organisations represented broad range of community arts activity. We received responses from:
— Organisations working in every region of Wales, from very local groups to national organisations.
— Organisations delivering in a wide range of settings, including arts venues, schools, care settings and businesses.
— Organisations funded in a wide variety of ways, from those relying largely on Arts Council Wales or local authority funding to those securing income through trusts, philanthropy, crowdfunding and from other public sector funds, such as health boards.

What do community arts organisations publish about their impact?

The survey looked in detail at the different outcomes that organisations and artists were expecting to be delivered by the projects and programmes they ran, and asked which outcomes were expected, recorded, reported to funders and published on their websites.

Across the responses to this survey there is a clear correlation between the outcomes recorded and the outcomes reported to funders. We believe that this reflects the fact that the need to report social impact is driven by funding requirements.

The survey responses also suggested that community arts organisations report much more to funders than they make publicly available. Whilst there may be good reasons why some of this data is not published, it does demonstrate that there is a great deal of data relevant to the social impact of community arts which is not easily available in the public domain.

We presented the 11 categories of social impact we had devised, based on our project initiation workshop and invited respondents to indicate which of these were relevant to their work. Most respondents were able to categorise most of their social impact into our 11 categories. However, we also invited respondents to indicate if there was any social impact that they measured which they did not feel was covered by our categorisation. They gave the following responses:
— Diversity measures.
— Inclusion – increased participation from LGBT participants.
— Digital engagement figures via social media, mailouts and websites.
— Levels of enjoyment.
— Progression – how participants connect with other arts projects.

Community arts survey

What data from monitoring and evaluation do organisations hold?

Respondents were asked about how they collected their data, the formats in which they held it and who was responsible for monitoring and evaluation on their projects. A range of methods were used to collect data, with most popular methods being video/photography, forms filled out by staff, interviews and surveys. In terms of formats that data is held in by respondents, excel spreadsheets, word documents, photographs and video files were the most popular methods. This suggests that the sector as a whole could hold considerable amounts of data about the impact of their work, though the quality and comparability of that data is likely to be varied.

When it came to who was responsible for monitoring and evaluation on projects and programmes, most of the respondents told us that it was mainly staff members leading the project who undertook this responsibility. This in itself is indicative of the limited capacity that is available to be dedicated to gathering robust evidence of impact.

Artists were also sometimes expected to undertake evaluation and monitoring, and in some cases an external evaluator was employed. The practice of using external evaluators could be an opportunity to drive up the quality and consistency of the data captured by community arts organisations, by supporting training and professional development, or supporting joint commissioning of external evaluators to work across a range of similar community arts interventions.

Respondents were given an opportunity to make further comments on data capture and the following comments were received:
— Different methods are used for different projects.
— You need to adapt approach to target users/change the process to fit the project.
— What you do depends on the intensity and duration of the work undertaken.
— Quantitative data is hard to collate and separate from qualitative data.
— It's important to standardise and make data capture systematic for longer-term comparison.

Attitudes towards the impact portal

Finally, respondents were asked about whether they would use the portal to access information about the social impacts of the work of other arts organisations, and whether they would use the portal to share information about the social impacts of their work. It's important to note that at this stage respondents had not seen or interacted with any prototypes of the portal and so were answering in theory. As the sample is small we cannot generalise based on the responses to these questions – even staff within the same organisation might have quite different attitudes – but they do represent a broad range of views that can help us to consider how to make sure that the portal is well suited to the needs of different organisations within the community arts sector.

Positive comments

Many positive comments from respondents focussed on best practice – they indicated an interest in learning about best practice by others, and sharing their own best practice with the wider sector. There were also comments from respondents that echoed our own principal interest – a conviction that by creating a shared way of reporting on the social outcomes of our projects we can help provide the basis for more robust evidence of the impact of community arts activity to improve access to funding.

— To look at benchmarking, effective and best practice and evidence.
— Would be interesting as a benchmark and get ideas of how other people are doing it.
— A lot of artists and creative workers work in isolation and need to share good practice and learn from others.
— Contribute to the sector in building a strong evidence base connected to planned outcomes.
— Help to assess benchmarks and best practice to share.
— To support my commissioning work, (and other organisations) as a tool to validate/learn/improve outputs, and identify which arts interventions are best placed to address impact across a matrix of social policy.
— The current need for measurable outcomes and data to get funding and to see what works best to get those measures.
— To convince non arts funders of the value of our work.
— We all need to find as many avenues as possible to share our findings and tell our stories.

Community arts survey

Cautious comments

Some respondents were more cautious about the idea of a portal, including some respondents who still responded 'yes' when asked if they would use the portal to access or to share data. Some said they would not draw firm conclusions on the basis of evidence that was not externally validated. Instead they suggested they would be more likely to draw on academic research, or in some cases on their own internal monitoring and evaluation processes.

— Most likely to look at validated academic research. Would not hold out impact of our work publicly without external validation and longevity of research.
— Not sure if the social impact of other projects would inform how we do things.
— Unsure of benefits from portal.
— It may be useful, but we have a fair amount of expertise in this area.
— Not sure if social impact of other projects would inform how we do things… Our organisational ethos is to be transparent with our data. Our funders may not allow us to publish some data.
— Depends on the cost. If it's a free service, the answer will be yes.
— Would be happy to share - time and resources permitting.
— We would not share information that was personal or could cause distress to participants.

In both the positive and the more cautious responses, it is possible to identify two needs in relation to measuring social impact.

On the one hand the need to continually adapt what is measured and how – to the specific focus of each new initiative or strategic priority, and the changing priorities of different funders.

"We have just been successful in obtaining three year funding from [Health Board], in partnership with a number of mental health charities. This new contract starts on 1 December and we are having to restructure our Monitoring and Evaluation to fit in with their recognised mental health mechanism. Our previous systems were geared towards Results Based Accountability, which were also recognised by the Health Board. Whichever means we use to gather the information, the way we record it has to be in line with the sectors that we work with in partnership, e.g. in our case, Health."

On the other hand there is a desire to have a more consistent and long-term approach to measuring impact, in order to demonstrate value more clearly in the longer term. Having better evidenced methods and validated tools can help organisations to consider what activities might most effectively achieve impact in their particular circumstances.

"Important to standardise [reporting] and make systematic for longer-term comparison. We've done a lot of work around diversity data involved particularly across our work, but also to adapt approach to target users, e.g., young participants respond to a more playful approach."

We would like our shared social impact portal to be able to address both of these needs in order to be as useful as possible to the sector. To achieve the greatest possible buy-in from funders and other stakeholders we will need to show how we will address their needs in both of these respects.

What we've learned

At the point of this survey, the Arts Impact Wales portal was just a theoretical proposal and this survey was designed to explore the practices and attitudes amongst the community arts sector.

The feedback we have received suggests to us that data capture is often being driven by the reporting requirements that are set up through funding agreements. It appears to us that much of the data being collected, whilst being reported to funders, is not then shared publicly. As one respondent commented, it reveals "the complex balance of maintaining consistent community engagement whilst following the shifting priorities of funding bodies and social directives."

The results of the survey suggest that the community arts sector is already capturing a wide range of data on social impact. In general, respondents were positive about the concept of the portal, whilst some were more cautious and raised valid concerns – around resource requirements and data quality, for example – that deserve our further consideration.

Next steps

Can an online portal for sharing data on social impact help community arts organisations to become more effective and more fundable?

We believe that the feedback that we have gathered demonstrates the need and the potential for a shared data portal on the impact of community arts activity in Wales. We are determined to seek further funding to continue its implementation, and to deepen our understanding of how the portal can be accessible and useful.

Our first priority to engaging more stakeholders, particularly from the public sector. We believe that in order to increase engagement we will need to achieve a critical mass of data, and to ensure its quality. There is a need to achieve clarity and transparency around way the data is gathered, shared and presented.

We need to further develop our understanding of the needs of all of the potential user groups for the portal, in the community arts sector, in government, in research communities and civil society. We want to engage as wide a range of stakeholders as possible directly in the development process.

We have been working with our board and with a consultancy firm to outline our next steps. These include the following:
—— Determine costs for further prototype development and wider consultation with the community arts sector.
—— Set clear expectations of what the portal can and should achieve.
—— Further develop the framework around the data model to achieve flexibility and consistency.
—— Develop a fully working model of the portal.
—— Involve a wider range of public sector bodies in the development of the portal.
—— Consider how the portal can be made sustainable, for example through advertising, sponsorship, or membership fees.

More broadly than the development of this portal, there is a need to improve the quality of data capture around the impact of community arts activity in Wales. By enabling the sharing of the data that currently exists, we believe that this portal can contribute significantly to that improvement. It can increase understanding of the work of the sector, and can help to provide the basis for higher standards of evidence.

Annex

Project team

Richie Turner, Artis Community
Project Manager
Highly experienced in developing new partnerships; delivering new initiatives; devising new business growth and new business models; and bringing the latest thinking from innovation and entrepreneurship into new and existing businesses and public sector organisations.

Kate Broadhurst, Artis Community
User Testing Workshops
Kate has five years' experience working in digital communications, first as a Project Manager and then as a Consultant. She has worked across social media marketing, interaction design, user experience and digital strategy. Her clients span a number of sectors including non-profit, healthcare, finance and higher education.

Rhian Hutchings, ArtWorks Cymru
Partnership Manager
Rhian has been involved in ArtWorks Cymru since 2011, when she was Director of Youth & Community at Welsh National Opera. In 2014 she left WNO to become the ArtWorks Cymru Partnership Manager for the 2015-2017 programme. Rhian is also Creative Director at Operasonic - a new company that makes participatory opera with young people, and a Creative Agent for the Arts Council Wales Lead Creative Schools Scheme.

Marc Heatley, Proper Design
Designer
With a background in the performing arts, appearing on and building stages, Marc is the most experienced designer on the Proper team and has worked in print, motion graphics and the web since the turn of the century.

Ben Jones, Proper Design
Developer
After developing a career in the outdoor industry by building and then managing a busy e-commerce site, Ben moved on to start Proper Design with Marc and Andrew in 2014. Ben is now a big fan of interactive web applications.

Andrew Shankie, Proper Design
Developer
Andrew worked as a consultant in the City specialising in IT solutions before moving to Cardiff and setting up shop as a web developer in 2012. Andrew likes JavaScript (both on server and in browsers), web APIs and improving development tools.

Lorna Scurlock, Proper Design
Business Manager
The newest addition to the Proper team, Lorna worked in environmental policy development for both the public and charity sectors. With experience in strategic planning and lobbying for policy and legislative changes, Lorna's new challenge is translating what is said in the office into something humans will understand.

Timetable and budget

Date	Description / Outcome	Who	Expenditure
Jul-Sep 2016	Phase 1 Development		
	Development of Airtable prototype	Proper Design	£3,840
	Project initiation workshop, stakeholder engagement, project management	Artworks / Project Manager	£3,200
Sep-Nov 2016	Phase 2 Development		
	Development of data model	Proper Design	£9,600
	User Testing Workshops	Proper Design	£600
	Stakeholder engagement and project management	Artworks / Project Manager	£1,536
Nov-Jan 2017	Phase 3 Development		
	Building Data Model	Proper Design	£13,920
	User Testing Workshops	Proper Design	£913
	Stakeholder engagement and project management	Project Manager	£5,880
Jan-Mar 2017	Phase 4 Evaluation		
	Further prototype development and UI testing: public sector	Proper Design	£7,320
	Write up, evaluation, proposal writing for further funding	Project Manager	£7,536
	Total Budget		£54,345

Social impact categories

For the purposes of this project, we created a set of social impact categories as the basis for our data model.

1. Arts Outcomes (arts skills, creativity, entertainment, self-expression).
2. Personal Development Outcomes (confidence, communication, teamwork, sense of achievement).
3. Mental Health Outcomes (tackling social isolation, depression, dementia, parkinsons, etc).
4. Physical Health Outcomes (improved fitness, mobility, weight loss, etc).
5. Environmental Outcomes (improved green spaces, less littering or vandalism, etc).
6. Skills, Employment & Enterprise Outcomes (routes into work, further education or training).
7. Community Outcomes (community cohesion, community identity, social integration, etc).
8. Educational Outcomes (improved attendance, literacy and numeracy, curriculum links).
9. Political Outcomes (policy change, issues based).
10. Language Outcomes (Welsh language).
11. Digital Outcomes (digital skills and inclusion).

This shortlist is based on the longlist that we compiled at the project initiation workshop in September:

— Higher participation in the arts
— Increased confidence
— Improved mental health
— Environmental impact
— Decreased isolation
— Sharing of knowledge
— Improved fitness
— Reduction in NEET levels
— Improved money management
— Greater use of community facilities
— Improved skillset
— Improved attendance rates in schools
— Routes into employment
— Better communication skills
— Community cohesion
— Routes into training
— Improved literacy
— Improved numeracy
— Family cohesion
— Increased partnerships
— Further training and qualifications
— Reduction in teenage pregnancies
— Drugs: Smoking: Alcohol awareness
— Improved health
— Reduction in antisocial behaviour
— Helping dementia or Parkinson's sufferers
— Increased volunteering
— Wider social network
— Sense of safety
— Introduction to work
— Improved quality of life
— Improved mobility
— Weight loss
— Increased civil activity
— Shared understanding across community
— Learn about the arts
— Mental wellbeing
— Increased play
— Motivation
— Sense of achievement

Social impact categories

- Leadership
- Engagement
- Building aspiration
- Welsh language development
- Self-worth
- Confidence to make a difference
- Influence policy
- Enhance community identity
- Increase opportunities
- Creativity
- Learn technical skills
- Teamwork
- Opening doors to new experiences
- Expanding horizons
- Increased economic activity
- Enabling self-expression
- Increase demand for local facilities and services [to be improved] e.g. longer opening hours
- Social integration
- Better take up of local education opportunities
- Increased use of public/green spaces
- Meet local businesses
- Reduce hospital admissions
- Reduce vandalism and littering
- Making spaces safe
- Digital inclusion
- Enhanced autonomy
- Strengthening achievements
- Jobs
- Tackling social isolation
- Giving people a voice
- Individual networking
- Celebration of diversity
- Giving people an identity
- Entertainment
- Re-engagement with education
- Behavioural change
- Better diet
- Pleasure
- Increased control
- Better planning
- New communities talking to old communities
- Digital engagement
- Self-sufficiency, e.g. mobile allotments
- Transferable skills

- Improving relationships
- Fitness
- Quicker recovery from illness
- Distance travelled
- Progression to professional training/career in the arts
- Sense of belonging
- Improved physical mobility
- Improved sector workforce capacity
- Employment
- Increase in Welsh language delivery

Arts Impact Wales
User Testing Group - Workshop 1

Report by Kate Broadhurst, Consultant

15th December 2016
10am - 2.30pm
IndyCube Newport, The Loft, High Street, Newport NP20 5DD

Led by: Kate Broadhurst, Andrew Shankie, Richie Turner, Lorna Scurlock

Participants:
—— Sarah Goodey, Gwent Arts in Health
—— Richie Turner, Artis Community
—— Rhian Hutchings, Operasonic
—— Christian Hoad, Head4Arts

Overview

Workshop Aims:
— To test and discuss whether arts organisations can input their project outcomes into fields defined in portal prototype.
— To discuss how organisations might use and interrogate data through the portal.
— To identify a set of input fields which are sufficiently flexible to accommodate the needs of arts organisations.

Research questions:
— How does our social impact portal meet the needs of the community arts sector?
— What features does it need to do this effectively?

Process:
— Proper Design presented the portal prototype in stages. At each stage, input fields were discussed and interrogated by participants.
— Participants tested the portal with real outcome data from their projects to assess whether the fields provided were useful and flexible enough to meet their needs.

Outcomes:
— The arts organisations that attended the workshop were able to input their project outcomes into the fields defined in the prototype and agreed the fields were sufficiently flexible to accommodate their needs.
— The way organisations might interrogate data through the portal was discussed but further exploration of this is needed in future workshops.
— Feedback resulted in a series of small iterations made during the workshop. These have been recorded in the full notes.
— Some larger changes, such as adding categories as defined during the workshop, will be made during the next phase of development and tested in future sessions.

Full session notes

Organisation information

Participants requested an explanation of how the organisational data would be used. Agreed that there must be clarity on this, with an explanatory note to be added to this section.
Participants asked for an optional postcode field to be added to this section so that organisations could be found by location. This was implemented during the session.

Project Description

There was some difficulty understanding what was required in the Project Description field. Needs explanatory note, or an example.

Social Impact Categories

Richie Turner presented the set of proposed Social Impact Categories, devised as a result of previous workshops:

— Digial
— Language
— Political
— Educational
— Community
— Skills, employment and enterprise
— Environmental
— Physical Health
— Mental Health
— Personal development
— Arts

Participants tested whether they could fit their projects into these topline categories.

There was some confusion over Community outcomes. Agreed that people's interpretation of the category meanings might vary and that either explanatory text, suggestions or a tag cloud would be needed to clarify what fits into each banner.

CH asked whether it would be possible to differentiate between hard and soft outcomes. This was discussed but it was agreed not to split as this categorisation is to enable simple querying of projects.

SG suggested Criminal Justice outcomes could be a topline category. This is to be given further thought.

SG asked about artist outcomes as it is likely more projects will build in the impact on the practitioner as an objective. This was discussed again later in the workshop, and it was agreed that practitioner outcomes would not fit with the 'social impact' focus of the portal so at this stage would not feature.

Attendance vs. Attendances

The difference between Attendance and Attendances was raised. This differentiation was felt to be very important. The difference between a project participant attending every week vs a participant attending only once is significant for evaluating impact and the journey of travel for participants. It was felt that overall attendance had little meaning unless it was evaluated in more depth.

Arts organisations will be used to putting in cumulative totals of participant numbers for funding reports, so it needs to be made clear that we are asking them to report the number of individuals who took part in the project.

Agreed this was important feedback and needed further thought.

Artform Categories

Proper Design presented a number of options for the artform categorisation:

— A freeform list where users can add whatever they want
— Set top level categories with a free text option for sub categories
— Hierarchical category levels
— The option to submit a request for a new category

It was agreed that the best solution would be a combination of these options. Set hierarchical categories but with the ability to request a new second level category and a free text description to add more detail.

The ability to select more than one artform would be essential. The option to add primary, secondary and tertiary artforms - but it must be clear users do not have to select all three if this is not relevant. Users will be required to pick at least one category.

It was suggested that smart suggestions or a tag cloud would make this categorisation easier for the user.
The workshop group carried out a categorisation exercise to establish top level and sub level artform categories:

1. Design
2. Architecture
3. Applied arts
   a. Horticulture
   b. Jewellry making
   c. Craft
   d. Textiles
   e. Ceramics
   f. Sculpture
   g. Ecological art
   h. Land art
   i. Costume making
   j. Environmental
4. Visual arts
   a. Mix/cross-media
   b. Photography
   c. Mural
   d. Film
   e. Len arts
   f. Murals
   g. Graphics
   h. Animation
   i. Curatorial
   j. Painting
5. Performing arts
   a. Dance
   b. Music
   c. Clog dancing
   d. Ballet
   e. Street dance
   f. Singing
   g. Rap/hip-hop
   h. Orchestral
   i. Drama
   j. Puppetry
   k. Theatre design
   l. Community dance
   m. Physical theatre
   n. Circus
   o. Opera
6. Literature
   a. Poetry
   b. Writing
   c. Graphic novels
   d. Glogging
   e. Play writing

Cross-form categories

— Digital arts
— Public arts
— Socially-responsive practice
— Outdoor arts

These categories will be added to the prototype and tested in future sessions.
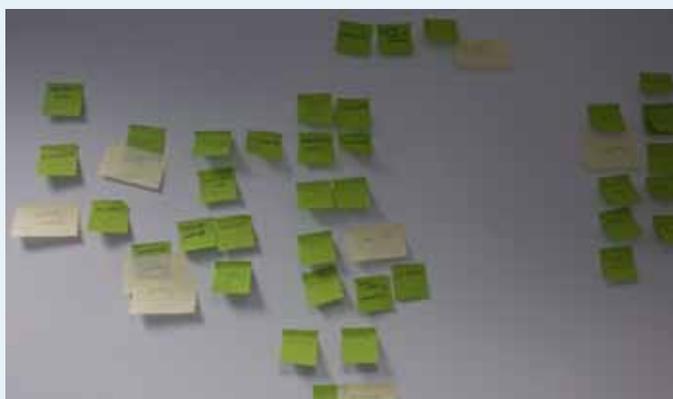
Longer-term programmes

A question was raised regarding longer-term programmes. It was agreed that individualprojects within longer-term programmes should be added as separate projects. This would need to be made clear at the start to prevent organisations entering a whole year of data under one project. This discussion re-emphasised the need for a guidance section.

Attachments

This field was agreed to be important and useful to allow organisations to upload more qualitative supporting data. Agreed to make a mandatory field so that organisations have to provide some supporting evidence and proof of their project outcomes.

Agreed to add the option to provide a link here as well as an upload so organisations could link to websites or videos as supporting evidence. This is to be implemented during the next phase of development.

Discussed the importance of enforcing a file size limit and need to think about the front-end of this section to get best results.

Project cost and Project Duration

SG suggested it would be better to have bands for the cost field as it would be easier to calculate and organisations would feel more comfortable.

The group discussed the ambiguity of funding streams and how to factor in staff costs, in kinds, partnership contributions etc. Agreed that this field needs to capture the total project cost including these aspects, not just how much funding was granted. Suggestion was to create a tool that would help to calculate this cost but this would be at a later stage in development. For the prototype, guidance notes would be created.

Agreed to use bands for project duration.

These changes were implemented during the session and will be re-tested.

Project location

CH requested the ability to add multiple postcodes if organisations deliver a project in different areas. This was implemented during the session.

Agreed this field is crucial to contextualise the data and to create future opportunities to link with external data sets.

There was a need for some project locations to remain confidential (e.g. Pupil Referral Units). Agreed to add a check-box to opt out of providing a postcode which would open a wider location selector in these cases. This was implemented during the session.

Suggested Primary, Secondary and Tertiary locations. SG asked what would happen if you are reporting against different locations. Could you create separate sub projects? RH raised a situation of a national company touring a project around different schools - primary, secondary, tertiary would not work in this scenario. The group said that reporting participation in different locations would be important to compare like for like in different areas. Agreed this would be a potential area for expansion in the future.

Partners

SG asked whether it was possible to capture partners on projects such as Healthboards. Agreed to add a partner selection field. This was implemented during the session.

Individual and Cohort data

Participants fed back that this would need some explanatory text.

The group felt the difference between fields for individual and cohort data worked well.

There was some confusion over the scoring system and different interpretations. This would need to be explained so that every organisation understands the scale in the same way.

Cohort categories were discussed, whether it would be helpful to add more than just age range, such as disability. Overall the group agreed that the more information that is asked

for, the less people will want to fill it in and it would be better to keep this simple to maximise the number of projects reported. The group found self-defining objectives to score against helpful.

RT did not have access to exactly how many people participated, but did have the qualitative report from the artist. The group agreed that in these cases it would be best to make educated guesses than for projects to be excluded and that this should be stated in explanatory notes.

CH agreed that the fields provided were easy to use and flexible enough.

Quality of data

Testing the data raised some interesting discussion points. RH did not track individuals on projects because of the time this would take. But inputting the data into the portal prototype made her question what could be done better to provide more useful data. Testing showed that the quality of the data organisations are capturing needs improvement. Best practices, tools and templates to help with this would be very useful and improve consistency of data collection across organisations. This could form a future funding bid.

Querying data

Participants were asked how they might query the data as arts organisations - whether on an individual project basis or as aggregate figures. They agreed that the ability to compare individual projects would be the most useful, with the ability to filter down to the most relevant. The querying of data is something to explore further in the survey and future workshops.

Arts Impact Wales
User Testing Group - Workshop 2

Report by Lorna Scurlock, Proper Design

27 January 2017
12am - 4.30pm
Chapter Arts Centre, 40 Market Road, Cardiff, CF5 1QE

Led by: Marc Heatley, Andrew Shankie, Lorna Scurlock

Participants:
—— Richie Turner, Artis Community
—— Sarah Goodey, Gwent Arts in Health
—— Kathryn Williams, Rubicon Dance
—— Adam, Rubicon Dance
—— Christian Hoad, Head4Arts
—— Rhian Hutchings, Operasonic

Overview

Workshop Aims:
— To test and discuss whether arts organisations can input their project outcomes into fields defined in portal prototype.
— To discuss how organisations might use and interrogate data through the portal.
— To test whether the portal effectively meets the needs of the community arts sector.

Participants
— Representatives from the community arts sector.

Process:
Participants will be asked to input data into the portal using the defined input fields through a series of tasks. Proper Design assessed how intuitive the portal is to the participants and collect feedback on the usability and effectiveness of the portal.

Outcomes:
— Participants were able to input their organisation and project information in the portal.
— A number of minor errors were incurred and highlighted amendments needed.
— Extensive feedback was given and detailed in the full session notes below.
— Changes resulting from the feedback will be made during the next phase of development and tested in further user testing sessions.

Full session notes

Task 1 - Adding Organisation

Objective: to assess how intuitive and effective the 'add your organisation' page is.

Participants were presented with the first page of the portal and asked to add their organisation for the first time. All participants successfully input their organisation information, with the organisation accurately represented in the summary list of organisations.

All participants were able to read the page quickly, complete the page quickly using a clear path to completion.

A number of minor errors were incurred as follows:

— List of Organisations page
  — Most participants input their organisation name, then pressed 'Add Organisation' - expecting the organisation name to appear in the next page.
  — The 'Add Organisation' button below the list of organisations - makes it hard to find when more than three organisations in the summary list as have to scroll down to find it - needs to be moved up to top of page.
— Add Organisation Page
  — Organisation website address needed 'http://' - participants highlighted that this needs to be auto populated.

Feedback:

— Different contacts in organisations - it was noted by a number of participants that an organisation may have different contacts for different projects. However, currently the portal only allows for one contact per organisation. This may lead to a number of duplicate organisations being set up.
  — This has been noted and discussed at previous user testing sessions and agreed that this is an issue to be looked at if funding allows for a continuation of the project.
— Data Integrity - There is a further risk of organisations being duplicated through different spellings, letter cases etc.
  — It was discussed that explanatory notes would be used to encourage users to search and check for an existing organisation before adding a new one.
  — The need for a quality assurance/administrator role was discussed - at least for a short period of time after the portal is launched.
— Address of organisation (currently just postcode) may be useful for others wanting to contact the organisation from the portal.

Task 2 - Adding Project

Objective: to assess how intuitive and effective the 'add project' page is once participants had successfully added in their organisation information, they were asked to add details of a project for the first time.

On average participants scored as following:

Measure	Time to Read	Errors	Time to Complete	Path
Score	2/3 - reads moderately slowly	2/3 - some errors	2/3 - succeed a little slowly	2/3 - some diversion from path

One participant was unable to complete the task in the time allocated. However, all other participants were able to complete the task and successfully input project information into the portal.

Participants queried a number of points, leading to errors and a slower time to complete. Queries/errors encountered included:
— Start/end date field to be moved above 'project costs' to put project cost in context
— Definitions/explanatory copy needed throughout:
  — Project cost
  — Cohort vs individual scores
  — Objectives/achievement/outcomes/success criteria
    — Objectives and Outcomes different, yet seem to be used interchangeably. Outcomes not known until project end, objectives set at beginning.
  — Scoring 1-5 needs clarity/further explanation
    — This wording also needs amending for whether individual/cohort is selected.
  — Project sessions offered (not clear, assumed to be attendance. Example shows attendance)
— Project overview needs qualifiers
— 'Submit Query' button should be 'Submit Project'.

Feedback:
— Ability to attach files to a project
  — Arts organisations capture a lot of qualitative data to support projects, it would be beneficial to have the ability to attach files to a project to support/ add further information that cannot be captured through the portal.
— Saving
  — The portal will update in real time, however it was highlighted that a lot of organisations using the portal will be restricted by firewalls (Local Authorities, Health boards etc). The ability to manually save is required for security.
  — Portal needs testing within appropriate firewall.
— Data Integrity
  — Projects are often known by different names and could be duplicated - Ability to merge/match projects needed.
  — Scoring system subjective, data not comparable.
  — Training/onboarding of organisations needed
  — Permissions for adding organisations, and associating organisations to projects.

— Number of participants may be variable throughout a project.

— 'Project sessions offered' confusing - may be better as daily/weekly/monthly with frequency i.e. 2 x per week, 1 x per month etc.

Overall/General Portal Feedback

— Responsibility/Data Integrity
  — Who will be responsible for inputting data/assuring data integrity/making any amendments?
  — Different access levels within organisation i.e. local administrator with ability to amend projects?

— Project failures
  — One participant highlighted that Arts Organisations are not going to be willing to spend time inputting data from a project that has failed to meet objectives if they are not obliged to do so. If the portal is to be a tool to raise the profile of participatory arts, what is the incentive for sharing 'failures'? Although not a tech issue for Proper Design, this issue needs serious consideration. The sector needs to be encouraged to record all projects, not just those that have done well, or risk the credibility of the tool.
  — E.g. Attendance vs participation fields only serve to show project failures.

Amendments

Re-coding requirements for Proper Design
—— Add org button to be moved (higher)
—— http:// to autopopulate/no requirement
—— Start/end date field to be moved above 'project costs' to put project cost in context
—— Objective/Outcome clarification
—— Project overview qualifiers