Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Culture and the Arts**

Public Value Measurement Framework

Measuring the Quality of the Arts

Department of Culture and the Arts

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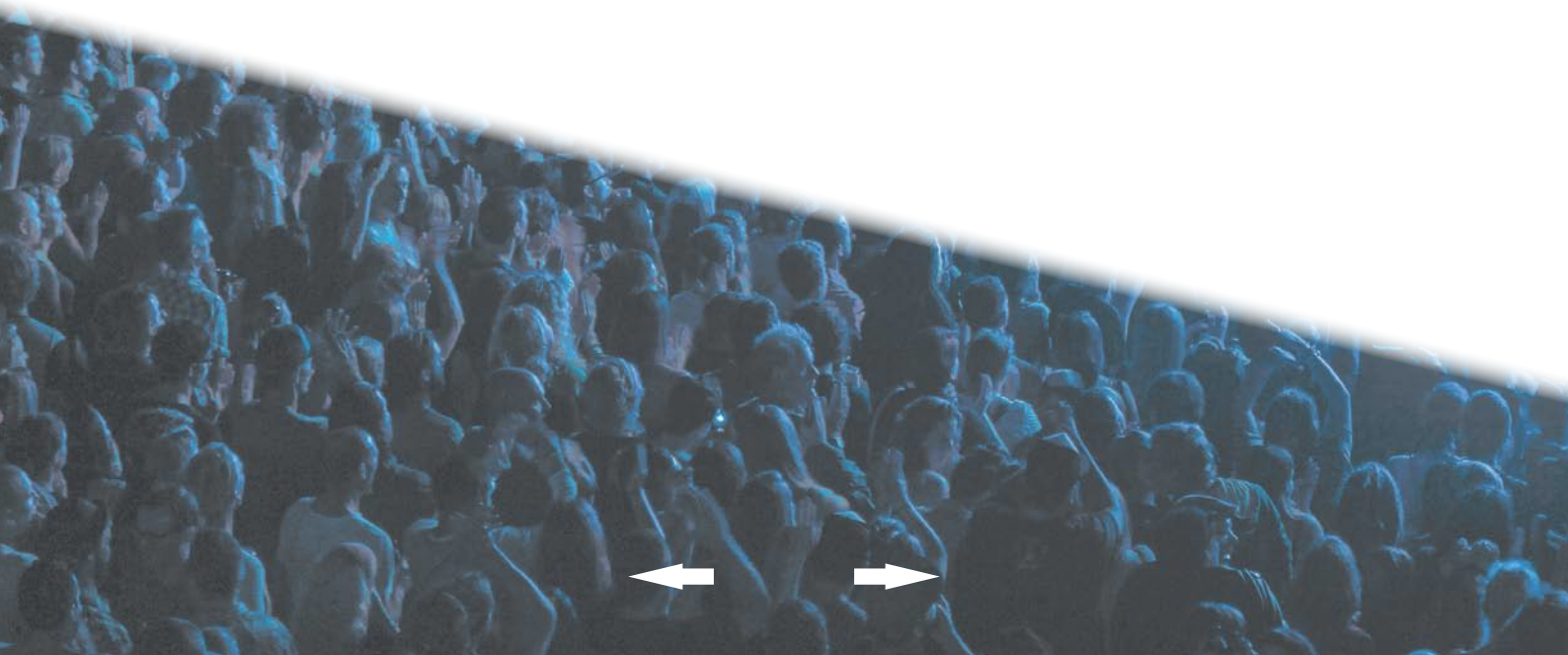
About DCA

The Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA) guides the delivery of culture and arts for Western Australia through the provision of policy development, coordination and support services to the Culture and Arts portfolio. DCA also supports the culture and the arts sector.



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Foreword

Western Australia is rightly proud of the many ways in which our cultural activities enrich our lives and enhance our shared experience. The Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA) is charged with the responsibility of helping to nurture and support WA's arts, cultural and creative industry who make our cultural life so rich and distinctive.

Our challenge as public investors, willingly shared by our arts and cultural partners, is to be able to provide a clear public account of the quality, reach, impact and value of the arts and cultural sector in WA.

Over the last three years we have been working closely with our project partners and industry to develop new and better ways to capture, measure and explain the value of the cultural activities we support. Our aim from the outset has been to produce data and insights that not only tell a better story, for both Government and the public, of the full value of arts and cultural activities to the public, but which is also regarded as relevant, credible and useful to artists and cultural practitioners across the State to plan and develop their practice.

This report explains how we have actively involved the arts and cultural sector in WA in meeting these ambitions, as they have worked with us to shape how we can best measure the quality and full value of the work they do. A project that began in WA has now extended internationally with our approach attracting significant interest from other countries, creating additional insight and support for the model we present in this report.

We are confident that the resulting metrics that we are now in position to put in place with our funded organisations will provide a credible and compelling account of the value of the arts, and will secure the confidence of the West Australian public, and of all public and private investors seeking to ensure the State's creative talent flourishes now and in the future.

Duncan Ord
Director General
Department of Culture and the Arts

1. Introduction

In March 2010, the Department of Culture and the Arts (DCA) launched 'Creating Value; An Arts and Culture Sector Policy Framework' and began a new conversation with the arts and culture sector in Western Australia, national and international arts agencies, the research community and government partners about how collectively we can deliver the best possible value for all through the support of cultural and arts experiences.

'Creating Value' emphasised the delivery of this public value as the driving principle of DCA's work and by extension the outcomes of its investments through the 'Creating Value' policy.

Following sector consultation in October 2011[1], DCA developed a 'Public Value Measurement Framework' (PVMF) to better understand and measure the public value it creates through its investments in arts and culture, and its role as a development agency for the sector. For DCA, public value is the cultural, social and economic benefits created by arts and culture for the Western Australian community. DCA contracted Pracsys Economics (WA) and the Intelligence Agency Ltd (UK) to undertake this ground-breaking research.

Extensive consultation and benchmarking was undertaken and in May 2012, DCA released its initial report[2] exploring the concept of the PVMF, including the challenges of creating such a system. This work resulted in the development of a new logic model that placed the full range of value created by the arts in a whole of government policy context, but with clear opportunities for the artists and the public to contribute. The report outlined the recommended logic framework model, its component parts and the views of the national and international stakeholders consulted.

Since that time, DCA and its project partners have been working to create a system that would collect, measure and analyse the value range implied by the new logic model. This report is a summary of that work and the progress DCA has made in developing a new way of defining, measuring and capturing the public value of the arts.

[1] DCA, Sector Development, <www.dca.wa.gov.au/DCA-Initiatives/sector-development/measuring-public-value-seminar/>.

[2] DCA, 'Public Value Measurement Framework: Valuing and Investing in the Arts – Towards a New Approach', 2012.

2. Operationalising the Public Value Measurement Framework

At the core of the PVMF is the logic model (Figure 1), which considers the full value of arts and cultural experiences as part of the government cultural funding process.

This model has been updated from the one detailed in the initial report to better outline the three areas of impact (Instrumental, Intrinsic and Institutional) and how they contribute to delivering public value.

This draws on the cultural value work of John Holden for Demos in the UK[3], which provides a strong anchor point in outlining the three areas of value that the PVMF logic model focuses on:

Intrinsic value relates to the value of culture to individuals, centred on how experiencing arts and culture affects us in an emotional sense. How individuals value culture is subjective and involves making judgements about quality based on how it makes us feel. This can include our feelings of connection to the artwork and our own personal subjective opinions of its quality based on the way it makes us feel.

Instrumental value is a more objective measurement and relates to the contribution that culture makes to specific economic and social outcomes or policy goals, such as creating employment, attracting tourism, increasing educational outcomes, benefiting health and wellbeing, etc. Instrumental value can be seen as delivering both direct and indirect value. Direct value derives from economic and social benefits measures such as income generated and levels of public engagement. In-direct value is often measured through a combination of broader social and economic impact assessment approaches.

Institutional value relates to the value that society collectively places on culture, now and for future generations. Holden describes institutional value as the contribution of culture to producing a democratic and well-functioning society[4]. This value area includes both use and non-use value, often captured through contingent valuation and social return on investment approaches.

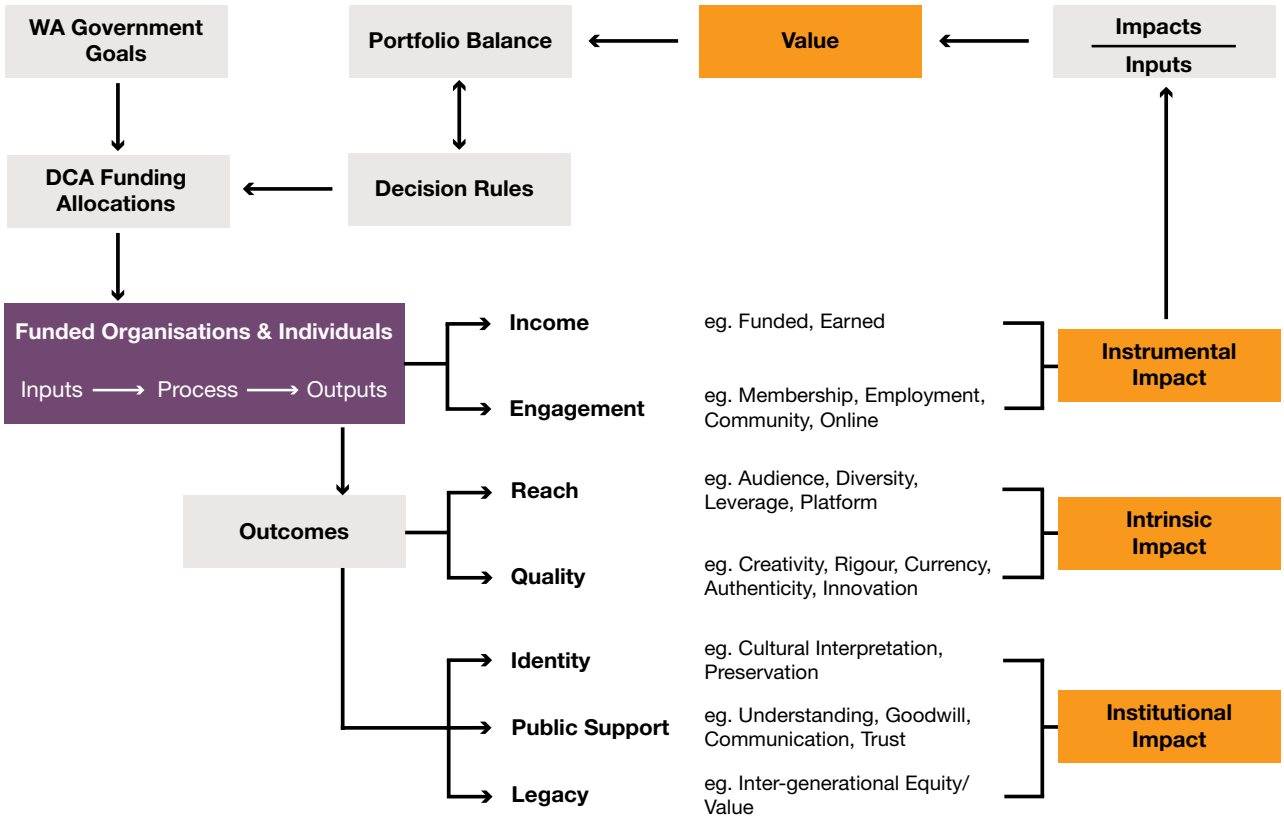
[3] Holden, J, 'Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy - Why culture needs a democratic mandate', DEMOS, 2006.

[4] Holden, J, 'How we value arts and culture', Asia Pacific Journal of Arts & Cultural Management, Vol 6, No 2, 2009.

To operationalise the PVMF, DCA focused the first phase of work on understanding and developing ways to measure the intrinsic value of the arts and cultural experiences – that is, the quality and reach of the work created - as it is the intrinsic value that is considered to be the most challenging to quantify for both government and the sector.

Work on measuring the instrumental and institutional impacts of arts and culture will become the focus of the next stage of development of the PVMF.

Figure 1: DCA's PVMF Logic Model



In developing a workable system DCA, with its project partners, sought to:

- Create a standardised and aggregatable intrinsic value metric system acceptable to all stakeholders;

- Incorporate self (practitioner), peer (critic or artistic peer) and public feedback across the standardised intrinsic metrics;

- Use contemporary data and communication technologies which would provide the possibility of low cost, real time reporting against the intrinsic metrics;

- Ensure that the metrics were conceived to be a holistic value platform that enables large-scale public input to the overall public value framework;

- Examine whether intrinsic metric inputs as well as instrumental data inputs could be automated through a single digital platform; and

- Create a system that can deliver comprehensive value analysis and reporting on a continuous basis, with data from artists, peers and the public; and combining it with traditional monitoring data on attendances, funding, box office and secondary demographics of audiences and relevant communities of interest.

DCA's approach to creating public value through the PVMF has been informed by a number of key principles that are vital to its relevance and credibility to the arts and cultural sector, the public and other public and private investors:

- Alignment with public value theory;
- Co-creation of standardised intrinsic value metrics; and
- Creation of a learning system.

DCA commissioned reviews of its policy framework and the key literatures on public and cultural value and subjected its model to early and continuous peer review[5].

The aim has been to ensure that DCA's creative ambitions, policy frameworks and desire to demonstrate public value through its investments could be fully reflected in a credible PVMF model.

While the reviews and research indicated a consensus about the importance of measuring the value of arts and cultural activity, no arts funder or public agency had managed to operationalise a rigorous, coherent and standardised approach to measurement across all potential value measures, but particularly in relation to intrinsic value and the quality of the arts.

DCA worked across the sector in WA to identify what aspects of the quality and reach of their work could and should be measured. This was the first time that DCA had directly involved artists and organisations in defining what quality aspects of their practice and business should be measured.

The co-creation of the metrics respects that artists are best-placed to know what they want people to experience from their work so that any data collected not only reflects the true value of the art, but is also useful for the artists expected to collect and use the data.

The final principle was that the system needed to enable learning across the sector. A significant weakness of existing metric or assessment systems is the lack of standardisation of quality metrics and that data gathered lacks the capacity to be compared before and after the arts or cultural activity, which would facilitate learning. This is because there is no systematic checking of what the artist (as themselves or applicant to a funding system) and peers think after the output is produced.

These three principles have guided DCA's work to date.

[5] Chappell, M & Knell, J, 'PVMF: Issues Paper 2: Benchmarking', 2011;
DCA, 'Public Value Measurement Framework: Valuing and Investing in the Arts – Towards a New Approach', 2012;
Carnwarth, J & Brown, A, international review of cultural experience measurement for Arts Council England – 'Understanding the Value and Impacts of Cultural Experiences: A Literature Review', 2014.

3. The metrics

Through co-creation of standard metrics with the arts and cultural sector in WA, DCA was able to produce a framework that sensitively reflected artists' understanding of how best to foster and measure artistic quality, which could work effectively in different settings and across different art forms.

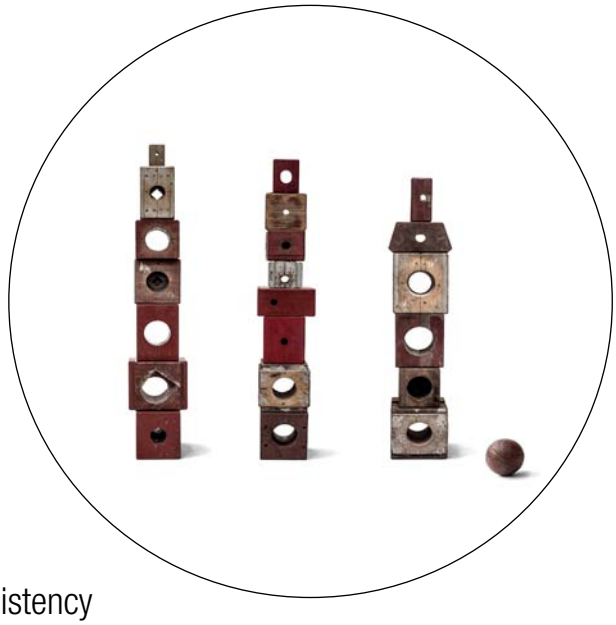
Quality

Dimension	Definition
Inquisitiveness	The extent to which the work promotes curiosity in artist and audience
Imagination	The extent to which the work explores new possibilities or views
Originality	The extent to which the work breaks new ground (modes of practice or content)
Risk	The extent to which the artist is fearless and negotiates new artistic approaches
Rigour	The extent to which the work has undergone thorough research and development
Currency	The timeliness of creative idea in relation to contemporary events
Authenticity	The extent to which the work respects cultural tradition or is unique to WA
Innovation	The extent to which the work is able to realise creative ideas to real world outcomes
Excellence	The extent to which the work is widely regarded as best of its type in the world

Reach

Dimension	Definition
Diversity	The extent to which the work engages a broad cross section of society
Connection	The quality of the connection of the work with communities of interest
Number	Number of people in communities of interest who directly engage with the work
Leverage	The ability of the work to attract investment from a range of non-DCA sources
Platform	The capacity of the work to have long term influence and importance to communities of interest and practice
Collaboration	The extent to which the work connects with communities of practice

The metrics:



- Allow the measurement of what artists do in a way that reflects their artistic ambitions and intentions;
- Create better alignment between the data artists need to inform their own creative programming and audience development activity and the data needed for public accountability purposes;
- Create a measurement and evaluation system that could diminish the reporting demands on them as funded clients, whilst increasing the quality and consistency of the evidence base; and
- Build a stronger shared understanding of the sector's collective aims and ambitions.

The work of DCA and its project partners was picked up by arts organisations in Manchester, England, where Pracsys Economics and the Intelligence Agency worked with 13 organisations in Manchester to co-create quality metrics.

Adopting a blank sheet of paper approach, the Manchester Metrics group independently established a set of dimensions of which eight were essentially core to artists in Manchester and Western Australia. This lent weight to the theory that artists could standardise elements of the quality of their work. More information about the Manchester Metrics Pilot is detailed in section 5 of this report.

DCA and its project partners aim to work with a set of core quality dimensions, but to remain open to subsequent refinement and development as the metrics are tested across different artforms, locations and settings.

These core quality dimensions are based on the original definitions outlined on page 10 or have been negotiated (i.e. Captivation) and are paired with their respective statements, which are the survey questions directed at the self, peer, and/or public.

Core Dimension	Statement (survey question)	Self	Peer	Public
Relevance (Currency)	It had something to say about today's world	✓	✓	✓
Captivation	It was absorbing and held my attention	✓	✓	✓
Originality	It was ground-breaking	✓	✓	
Distinctiveness (Originality)	It was different from things I've experienced before			✓
Excellence - global	It was amongst the best of its type in the world	✓	✓	
Excellence - national	It was amongst the best of its type in Australia	✓	✓	✓
Risk	The artists/curators really challenged themselves with this	✓	✓	✓
Rigour	It seemed well thought through and put together	✓	✓	✓

In the longer term it may be feasible to develop a small number of artform and sub-artform level standardised metrics particularly for the artist and their peers use. For example, dance professionals could work together to develop shared quality metrics that directly relate to the experience of a dance performance[6].

This approach would create flexibility for cultural organisations in choosing how they evaluate a particular work and enable effective benchmarking in artform and sub-artform level, while still allowing for consistency and comparability over time and across companies through the core metric set.

[6] See Bunting, C & Knell, J, 'Measuring Quality in the Cultural Sector: The Manchester Metrics Pilot: Findings and Lessons Learned', 2014, for a more detailed discussion of future metric development options that could exploit the full potential of the CultureCounts system.

4. The system - CultureCounts

Once the metrics were created, the next challenge was to develop a digital application and web portal to collect and measure standardised metrics from audiences, organisations, peers and funders.

That system, CultureCounts, was developed by DCA's project partners to capture feedback on the quality of an arts or cultural experience.

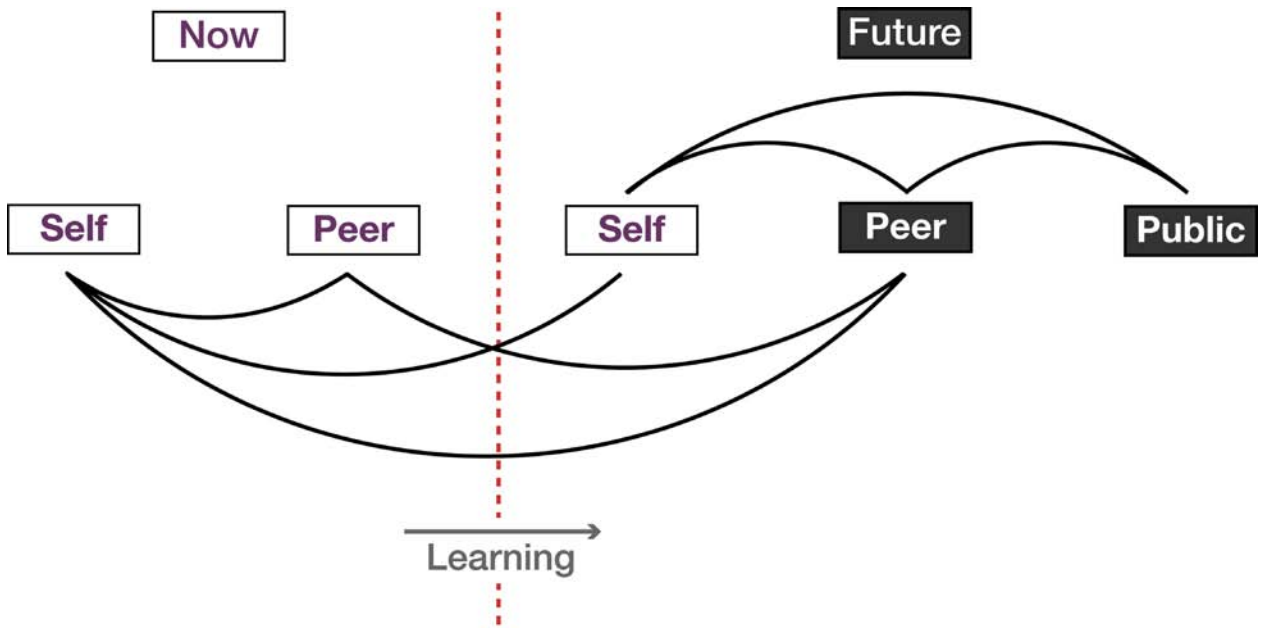
Using the learning system approach (Figure 2), CultureCounts allows for both the artists and peers to establish a pre-activity assessment then compare a post activity response that includes the public on exactly the same criteria.

The analysis of their 'before' and 'after' judgments on a particular piece of work gives cultural organisations, their peers and potentially funders or investors the opportunity to learn how the output was different from their expectation, equipping them to make better judgments in the future.

By factoring in large-scale public data against the same metric dimensions it becomes possible to generate five sets of observations between self, peer and public before and/or after an event.

It is intended that the number of observations will therefore grow quickly once CultureCounts is introduced, providing a rich source of public value data in a vibrant learning system process for all involved.

Figure 2: The PVMF Learning System

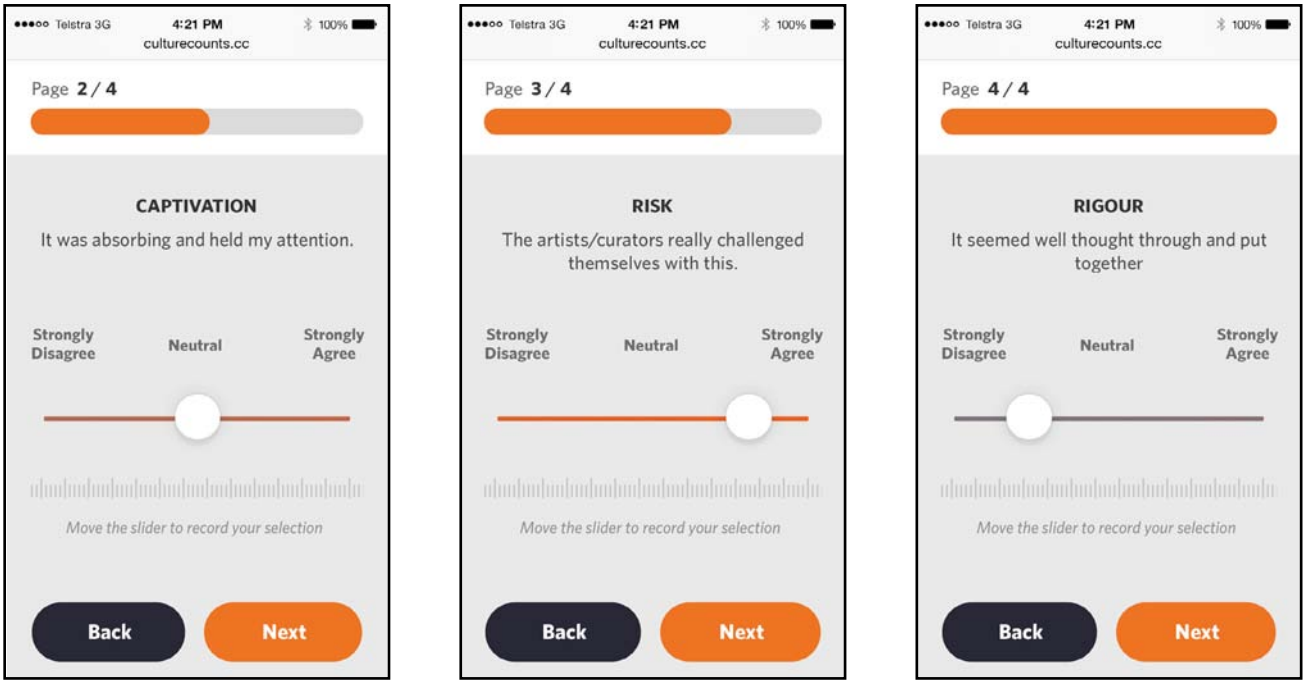


CultureCounts can be used on a mobile device or on a computer. Quality is assessed by asking respondents to rate the piece of work or event against a number of quality dimensions. As well as rating the event against the quality dimensions, CultureCounts can collect useful optional data on gender, age and postcode and integrate real time instrumental data, like attendance and event costs, to allow instant comparisons to relative quality. CultureCounts also allows for bespoke questions additional to the metrics offering the additional feature of a very flexible general survey tool.

Self and peer assessment is carried out both before and after an event to explore how perceptions shift and the extent to which the event matches up to expectations.

Public assessment takes place during or just after the event itself and captures 'real-time' feedback on how the audience is responding to the work. A selection of screenshots from CultureCounts can be seen in Figure 3 to show how the questions will appear to members of the public in WA.

Figure 3: Screenshots of the metric interface on a mobile device



Note the appearance of CultureCounts may change due to ongoing development and refinement of the system.

DCA will make CultureCounts available free to its funded organisations who will be able to use their data from the CultureCounts system to better understand how their work is perceived and experienced by audiences and their peers. Initially in WA, DCA will collate the data on behalf of each funded organisation before enabling organisations to input and analyse the data themselves.

The data produced by CultureCounts can be presented in reports to inform the artistic and business decisions of an artist or organisation.

CultureCounts' value is in the ability to aggregate information and identify variations and trends simply, within a single system.

Artists, curators and other arts organisations locally, nationally and internationally, will be able to subscribe to CultureCounts.

For arts and cultural organisations, CultureCounts will provide them with:

- The analytical value of the insights created by using standardised metrics that allow for the triangulation of self, peer and public feedback. CultureCounts is a sophisticated measurement tool to capture and assess the artistic intentions and merits of a particular piece of work and the complicated dynamics of audience response;

- The ability to connect more directly with key communities (peers, the public and specific communities of interest) and use technology platforms to create a rich real-time dialogue around the quality of what they do and to generate large scale data relevant to artists' creative intentions and practices;

- The availability of immediate feedback on artists' work as well as the system providing the basis for long-term comparisons of quality and reach outcomes, enabling them to embed data in both strategic planning and day-to-day decision making;

- The ability to build up a bank of peer reviewers who can offer feedback and insight on the quality of their cultural product and experiences. Testers to date suggest that cultural peers should embrace the expectation that they take part in widespread peer review rather like the system of academic peer review that operates across higher education;

- The ability to combine intrinsic and instrumental impacts in a single measurement system; and

- The ability to run public value metrics alongside traditional market research initiatives.

DCA's project partners have continued the further development of CultureCounts in the United Kingdom where the tool has been tested extensively with very positive feedback from those involved.

The adoption and use of CultureCounts in different countries creates a new and unique opportunity to create a globally recognised standardised approach to the benchmarking of quality for arts organisations and funders.

This has the potential to significantly change the way in which arts and culture is created, delivered and consumed.

For the public, CultureCounts creates a rigorous, universal feedback mechanism that will give West Australians a much greater opportunity to provide feedback on the quality of their cultural experiences.

Further development could see social media features embedded in CultureCounts which would allow the public the opportunity to compare their views and opinions with other audience members and participants, share images and to take part in ongoing conversations online.

The long term aim is to ensure that the act of giving feedback adds to the value of a cultural experience because it creates an immersive opportunity for people to reflect on and make sense of a performance or exhibition and to be offered easy routes to find out more about the piece, those involved and similar pieces of work.

Further enhancements might include individual giving and crowd sourced funding options through functionality in the app-based portal supporting the system.

5. International interest and involvement

When DCA began this process in 2011, it was exploring a new pilot approach to the measurement of the public value created by the arts and cultural sector.

Some three years later the work originated by DCA and the WA cultural sector is now attracting international attention and support. The vital importance of these developments is that there is a growing international community working on the development and refinement of this common approach to quality measurement and wider intrinsic value measurement.

There are now three countries using standardised core quality metrics from their artists, peers and the public through CultureCounts.

The Manchester Metrics Pilot was effectively a rigorous control-test on whether the system and the core quality metrics developed in WA was a credible approach to adopt. In generating their quality metrics, the Manchester group did not review either existing metrics used by UK funders or the emerging metric set produced in WA, but embarked on the same process of co-creating the quality dimensions with their sector.

It is significant that the key outcomes and metric statements they generated to capture the quality of cultural product/experience mapped closely to the metric set produced by DCA and their cultural partners in WA as this establishes the basis of standardisation and therefore benchmarking and comparison.

In the Manchester Metrics Pilot, the testing revealed the triangulation of feedback from self, peer and public respondents provided rich insights into the quality of the cultural product and experience. The artistic intention of the cultural organisation and the interpretative context of peers and assessors are key parts of the reflection process allowing cultural organisations the opportunity to reflect on their 'before' and 'after' judgments of the cultural event.

John Summers, CEO of the UK's longest established professional orchestra Hallé Symphony Orchestra, provided the following comment on their test event (Verdi Bicentenary Concert) in the Manchester Metrics Pilot:

> "Against the new criteria we thought it should have scored highly against 'Presentation', 'Captivation' and 'Rigour.' We felt that our peers and public would judge us well on doing something that was world class in execution, imaginatively thought through and fit for the city and concert hall which is our home… What the ratings show us is that the peers, in particular, didn't quite 'get' the challenge in what we presented, but we were pleased to receive a high rating for 'Distinctiveness'… The most value for us in the process was the outcome against expectation – as the approach develops we think this should lead to better and more targeted planning by the Halle."

Arts Council England has produced a video and report of their pilot which explains in detail the process and outcomes, which can be viewed by searching 'Quality Metrics Pilot' on their website artscouncil.org.uk.

The work of the Manchester pilot has already helped DCA refine its understanding of the core metric set and given insights into how best to implement and roll out the system with cultural partners in WA.

The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA), Arts Council England, and the Arts and Humanities Research Council in the UK recently awarded the Manchester consortium of cultural organisations, DCA's project partners and Manchester University (their academic evaluative partner) a grant of over half a million Australian dollars under their 'Digital R&D Fund (Big Data)' initiative to undertake further development and testing work using the quality metrics.

A number of leading UK cultural institutions and organisations are involved in this phase of the trial including:

- Royal Opera House, www.roh.org.uk/
- Royal Shakespeare Company, www.rsc.org.uk/
- Matthew Bourne, new-adventures.net/matthew-bourne
- Unicorn Theatre, www.unicorntheatre.com/

DCA is a named peer review partner on this initiative and the shared intention is that DCA and our project partners in the UK and elsewhere will work closely together to share new insights and necessary developments of the system in the years ahead, maximising the ongoing public value of this approach.

CultureCounts was used to evaluate the cultural program of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland using the same quality dimensions used in WA and Manchester.

DCA has since been invited to Remix New York 2014 where there is interest from American organisations on the CultureCounts system and the value framework.

It is reassuring for DCA that its public value approach has already received extensive peer review and development inputs from other cultural ecologies and their professional communities.

DCA welcomes this openness of process in both the development approach and in stimulating the vibrant and evidence-based dialogue needed about how best to create an insightful and credible data culture that will enable a much richer public dialogue and understanding of cultural products and experiences and the wider public value created by the arts and cultural sector.

6. Implementing a new system

Over the next 12 months, DCA will be working with its funded arts organisations in WA to facilitate the use of the CultureCounts system through its Public Value Pilot.

This will be a phased process with DCA taking the lead role in introducing them to the system, its features and data reporting options and offering them the opportunity to use the system to generate feedback on arts and cultural events of their choice.

The Public Value Pilot will allow DCA to better understand the type of information that can be collected through CultureCounts and how this information can be used to explain the value of culture and the arts. The Pilot will also help DCA and its project partner, Pracys Economics, to refine and further develop CultureCounts so that it best meets the needs of arts organisations, artists, funders and audiences.

Consistent with DCA's approach so far, it will work collaboratively with the sector in WA to explore the use and interpretation of their data. DCA expects the new data insights will influence the strategy, professional practice and creative and commercial innovation of the sector.

This will allow a much more informed dialogue between DCA and those it supports about its shared intentions, creative aims and about the quality of cultural leadership and cultural experiences across Western Australia.

Moreover, the national and international interest in the CultureCounts system confirms DCA's instincts that it has the potential to provide, for the first time, a standardised means of benchmarking public value for arts organisations and funders. As it is on a single digital platform, metrics can be benchmarked locally, nationally and internationally offering new and exciting ways of reporting on cultural and public value creation.

While there is much interest and potential around the work that has been done to date on the PVMF and CultureCounts this project is still essentially an ongoing business improvement project. As the project is being further developed and the system implemented in WA, DCA will continue to collaborate with its cultural partners in WA, nationally and across the world to ensure that this work best reflects and responds to the needs of the arts and cultural sector.

Openness and transparency will remain at the heart of DCA's development approach to CultureCounts and the further development of the remaining components of the PVMF.

DCA's aspiration is that the PVMF and CultureCounts will become a widely recognised framework and system for the arts and cultural sector to better understand, capture and measure cultural and wider public value, with the potential to influence the strategy, professional practice, and creative and commercial innovation of the whole cultural sector.

Image credits

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