

The joy of claiming and naming value

Dr. T. Jonah Pearce
Sixteenth Letter Collaborative



Sixteenth Letter
Collaborative

The chart

The Cultural and Social Value of Job Grants		
Impact of Service-based Activities	# of Participants	% of Participants
Supporting civic participation and social capital	174	82%
Catalyzing economic development	136	64%
Improving the built environment	17	8%
Promoting stewardship of place	17	8%
Augmenting public safety	56	26%
Preserving cultural heritage	0	0%
Bridging cultural / ethnic/racial boundaries	63	30%
Transmitting cultural values and history	11	5%
Creating group memory and group identity	59	28%

Participants, N=212. Includes job experiences with grant partners only.
Developed from Maria-Rosario Jackson and Joaquin Herranz Jr. *Culture counts in communities: A framework for measurement.* (2002) The Urban Institute.



The Cultural and Social Value of Job Grants

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8. Outcomes and Impact of the Program								
What did participants do in their job experience or training opportunity? What was meaningful about the job and training opportunities created?	Participants worked in our... In our thrift store, Participants learned what is involved in running a thrift store. They learned how to process donations, how to select gently used donations for resale. They learned how to price stock, restock shelves, tidy and straighten shelves and floor racks. The participants learned how to implement and follow screening protocols with customers for Covid-19. They also learned customer service and how to assist customers and interact with them. For most of the participants they had not worked for an extended period of time and for one, she had never had a job before; was a good environment for both of scenarios for participants. The supervising staff were understanding and supportive of participants reentering or newly entering the workforce. was also able to be flexible and accommodating to the needs of the participants. Participation in the program was focused on participants who were due to Covid-19. A couple of them dropped out fairly early in the program so we increased the hours of the other participants.	and work experience in catering, yard care, and newsletter delivery. These participants developed new skills in Contactless Delivery. In May, we conducted an... where were able to put their new skills to use... designed and created special cards to go with homemade cupcakes and delivered them all over the city. In May, prepared snack packages for the... Spring Clean Up and used their Contactless Delivery skills. As for newsletter, and yard care, developed skills in physical distancing and practised their contact delivery skills. In May, when restrictions made it necessary for us to implement our "Work from Home" program, were given E-Learning courses to study, and asked to submit written essays on each subject. Next we were asked to submit creative projects such as art work, stories, songs, and poetry. For youth who needed access to the internet, we provided them with a lab... to use for their studies. were also asked to come in to work, one at a time, to perform other jobs such as cooking, baking, cleaning, organizing, stuffing newsletters, building furniture, and moving furniture from office to office.	supervision & leadership to volunteers within our... These supervisors were provided with casual wages. The volunteers in our program were provided gift cards and learned hard and soft skills required to work in a retail/food service setting. All grant recipients also worked on our cafe refreshment project where they striped and repainted our dining room tables. On site training includes: learning how to wash and put away dishes with a commercial washer, learning how to handle food in the kitchen (knife skills, hygiene skills, kitchen line skills), learning customer service skills, learning how to make drinks on our espresso machine, learning how to engage with your garden, providing support to our sales initiatives, like our summer book sale. Meaningfulness may be unique to the different participants we had. Some learned how to work in their first English speaking environment. Some accomplished fears associated with working with hot items in the kitchen, some learned time management and interview skills. Our program is robust but supportive, it's clear all had a great time connecting with supervisors/staff and building relationships.	Many participants engaged with the community, with both... as well as the community members who came into to access resources in; Soup Kitchen, Thrift store, showers/washrooms/laundry facilities. Many individuals worked within our kitchen as well as our thrift store. They worked as a team, building relationships and future employment skills. These job opportunities gave individuals a sense of belonging as well as a way to access employment with little to no barriers and also provided them an opportunity to give back to their community.		Supported food security related initiatives through the packing of food donations into boxes and bags, sorting large scale food donations for pick-up by agencies, order picking, following a list and loading vehicles, assembling bag lunches in a community kitchen, sweeping, cleaning, and organizing warehouse, practicing basic warehouse and kitchen safety, socializing with people from other walks of life, and the distribution of food to over 400 people per month. In addition, some participants supported litter patrols over 40 bags of litter removed from community, Tipi pop-up shelters for community use and community walks twice a week.		The majority of participants (3) worked as helpers during our Good Food Box pick up day events (markets). These men are having trouble finding meaning for themselves during the pandemic, and the opportunity to use their skills has been really significant for them. At the events the participants helped to keep everyone safe by ensuring everyone was social distancing properly, standing in line in the correct place, wearing masks, etc during the event. Our 4th participant, a single mother, who is under employed for her education, taught online exercise classes (their yoga and meditation, and strength training) to our older adult participants throughout the pandemic, providing much needed social interaction and physical activity for approximately 50 older adults. Our 5th participant was able to use her graphic art skills to create posters and social media campaigns for our Housing department's Tenant's Committee events. This was especially important to her mental health, as she has not been able to find work in her chosen field during the pandemic, and was happy to be able to put her skills to good use.
2. How much did each participant earn (on average)? Or, if participants volunteered, how many hours did volunteers work?	1 earned \$157.00 and then dropped out, 1 earned 180.00 and then dropped out, 1 earned \$452.25, 1 earned \$1357.50, 1 earned \$1692.00	#1 - Earned \$72 #2 - Earned \$72 #3 - Earned \$306 #4 - Earned \$791 #5 - Earned \$683 #6 - Earned \$330 #7 - Earned \$277 #8 - Earned \$277 #9 - Earned \$0 #10 - Earned \$169 #11 - Earned \$193	\$25 gift cards	\$12- \$211 per participant	Participants earned a combined amount of \$3000		Up to \$250	
3. Who benefitted from your project?								
Demographic								
Indigenous / First Nations								
At risk youth								
Immigrant/ Newcomers								
Senior citizens								
Visible minority								
LGBTQ+								
General population								
Persons with a disability/mental health								
Mother or primary care-giver with one or Other (Please specify):								
Criminal record								
6. Program Evaluation								
What does the general public need to know about who your participants are and why the jobs this grant created matter? Why is the work this grant supported important?	This was a great opportunity for folks to enter or re-enter the workforce in a safe and supported way. They had a strong sense of accomplishment in being able to participate. It is so important for opportunities to be created in supportive and understanding work places. Having this program attached to our Transitional Housing Program worked so well. All of our participants face many barrier in the employment sector, they were able to take the steps necessary to enter/re-enter into employment.	I would like the general public to know that our participants are young people, who have little to no work experience, who are searching for the chance to gain work experience, to earn some money, and to belong. This LITE grant allowed us to actively engage youth in meaningful work experience and training. As well, we have the ability to design and implement a "Work from Home" program in which our youth could work safely from home. The "Work from Home" program engaged youth in workshops and course work surrounding workplace, safety, and	Our participants are young people who need to be provided an opportunity. The barriers that our young people face are different, but each needs opportunity to learn and grow in order to even start dismantling those barriers, to even get to the same starting line as others. This supported work is vital to our community and to our city. We need to invest and develop young people so they can live healthy, and fulfilling lives, so they can create and foster healthy and compassionate communities and relationships.	This grant is so important because it provides employment opportunities for marginalized job seekers; these people facing multiple barriers including criminal histories, disabilities, mental illnesses, chronic housing insecurity, etc. It encourages individuals to get involved with organizations who are working towards changing the narrative in regards to employability and who offer a judgement free zone	During COVID 19 many of our programs and services were put off or discontinued for quite some time. With this being said, these Participants were fortunate to be able to continue to have hours at work and income	For this project the NECRC/OPK partnership supported marginalized participants by providing them with short term paid work experiences with two grassroots community organizations, Leftovers and Initiative. The purpose was to not only support participant but also to support grassroots community organizers who focus on reconciliation, Indigenous values and pro-social community engagement.	The work this grant supports is so incredibly important to our participants, especially during the pandemic when so many job and volunteer opportunities have been taken away. Though these job opportunities may be small, they have a huge impact on both our organization (help to run the programs we need to support our community), and the participants themselves. These jobs provide a sense of purpose, help to grow and maintain confidence in these individuals, and gives them a real opportunity to shine where other employers may not give	
7. Organizational impact of the program								
Increased opportunities for individuals								
Increased opportunities for individuals to								
Increased opportunities for individuals to								
Increased access to resources for the								
Connected people to resources and/or								
Reduced crime (property damage, theft,								
Other (Please describe):								
Increased confidence in their skills set								
Getting individuals engaged in								
Participants received references from								
Increased access to healthy								

The chart represents just a small set of qualitative data.



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Bonus benefit of standardization:

Cultural and Social Value of LITE Grant Programing, 2020 and 2021	2020	2021
Supporting civic participation and social capital	81%	82%
Catalyzing economic development	34%	64%
Improving the built environment	66%	8%
Promoting stewardship of place	92%	8%
Augmenting public safety	31%	26%
Preserving cultural heritage	0%	0%
Bridging cultural / ethnic/ racial boundaries	66%	30%
Transmitting cultural values and history	0%	5%
Creating group memory and group identity	31%	28%
<i>Source: 2020 and 2021 Organizational Grant Reports, 2020, N= 83; 2021, N=212</i>		

Beyond “naming and claiming”: allowed the organization to discuss in a more informed way the impacts of their work – and to scrutinize it beyond anecdotal analysis.



Outputs, Impacts, Values, oh my!

Outputs

Things you make

Services you provide

Activities or events

Impact / outcomes

Good or bad

Intentional or unintentional

Direct or indirect

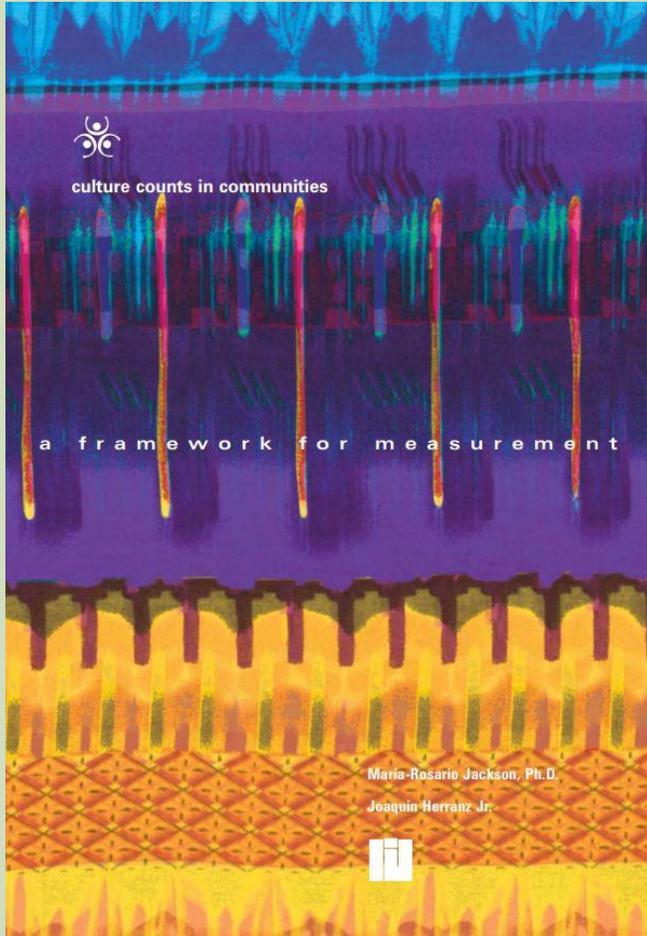
Change and Time horizon(s) of change

Value measurement

A standardized measurement of why it matters, expressed in quantitative terms

An assessment in relation to norms and/or values, which can be subjective





Culture counts in community: A framework for measurement

Maria-Rosario Jackson and Joaquin Herranz Jr. 2002. The Urban Institute.

68 page document!

Conceptual - the authors don't say how to go about creating a chart like the LITE chart

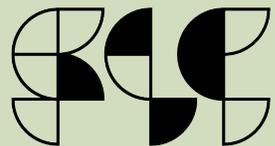
Methodological - thinking about data and data collection

System building - how can policy makers and practitioners work together; lots of examples of 'experiments in data collection'

BUT recognizing the arts “as an essential building block ...to create and sustain healthy and vibrant communities”

Available here:

<https://webarchive.urban.org/publications/310834.html>

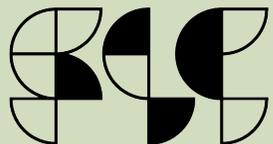


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Arts and culture undervalued

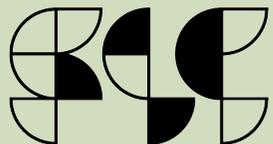
Quality of Life indicator systems measure employment, health, housing, and land use.

BUT the role of art, culture, creativity in community building processes undervalued – lots of evidence collected that arts and culture were “important elements of community life and essential components of the community-building process.”



Principles and insights

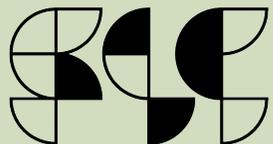
- Breadth, depth and value of arts, cultural participation, and creativity in neighbourhoods. **(strength-based)**
- See the connections between cultural activity and community-building processes **(community-led values)**
- Lots of documentation and stories of transformation, but while measures of economic good and formal participation existed, most measures were at the behest of funders, and captured a narrow band of cultural and social 'good' **(grounded perspective needed)**



Arts and culture = community life and community building

“Arts and cultural practices...frequently intersect with other community processes and are deeply embedded in them.”

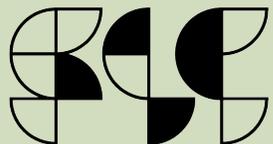
- Theatre and dance -> youth development
- Storytelling -> community organizing efforts
- Cultural heritage activities -> anchors for economic development



Where arts meets CED

“In Oakland...young immigrant Mien women talked about the value of embroidery circles. The circles provided an opportunity to hone their sewing and design techniques. But they were also important because they allowed for the transmission of heritage from one generation to the next and the interpretation of life in a new environments.”

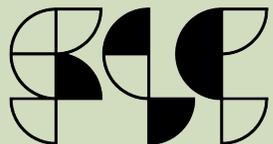
“Gardens...were...expressions of ethnic identity, given the different culturally specific methods of gardening used.



Cultural value IS well known ...

...by practitioners!

“Reveal[ed] a long tradition of community arts practice, with many practitioners **operating their program with well-documented assumptions about the impacts of their efforts**. But these often go unarticulated and are omitted from the type of theory that can guide systematic research and data collection efforts”



WE HAVE DATA! ... but how are we using it?

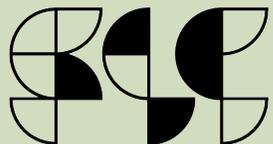
“Extensive documentation exists, complete with anecdotes, stories, and testimonials to the varied contributions of arts and creative activities to both individual and community development. Yet, without a firm theoretical base and appropriate methods to anchor this material to that base, such narrative evidence cannot lead to generalizable conclusions.” (p. 30)



Data issues

“There is little indication that data collection is guided by any underlying conceptualization about the social value of arts and culture.”

- Lots of raw data, little comparable data
- Inconsistent (nonstandardized, haphazard, fuzzy)
- Information gathered to satisfy grant requirements
- Bias toward formal venues (**who** counts **what**)



Case study

Organization creates short job experiences for people experiencing multiple and complex barriers.

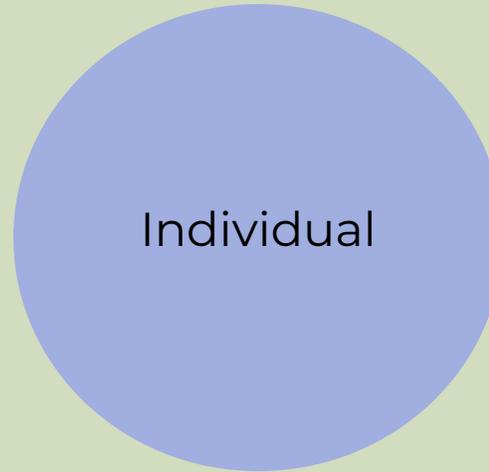
All jobs hosted at partnering NPOs/Charities.

Job experiences engage participants in a service-based activities that benefit the host partner and/or the community.

SO MUCH DATA...but underused and underintepretted.

Part of the task was figuring out what was usable and/or relevant.

Two outcomes from organization's work:



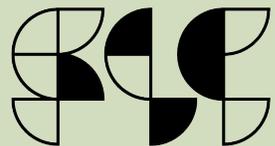
- Short job experience
- Earned \$
- Connection
- Specific issue solved (eg. bill paid)



- Task completed that supports the NPO and/or benefits community.

PROBLEM:

1. Previously only ever counting and reporting individual outcomes. Left out the local impact!
2. But not able to say outside short testimony and simple financial calculations why the Individual outcomes matter quantitatively. This remains a problem (see next slide).



A nose-counting quagmire

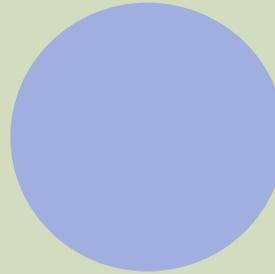
When organization reports Individual jobs created, they largely report the number of “noses.”

For example, in 2021, the organization created 212 Job Experiences via their granting program.

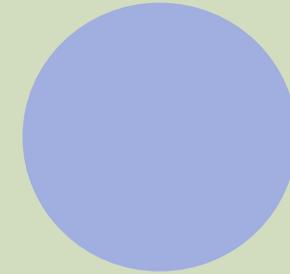
BUT

That number can't say much about the variety and meaning of the job itself.

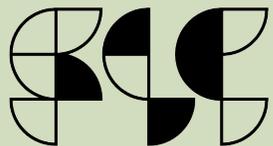
Every job experience matters, but they don't all look the same. Imagine the two dots are just 2 of 212 participants:



Cleaned meeting room once a week for 16 weeks.
Earned \$416.
Money earned saved for kids' school supplies and clothes.
Formed connection to NPO, got out of house, learning about Canada and neighbourhood.



Made sandwiches and distributed food hampers to vulnerable seniors who were home-bound, 15-20 hours for one month.
Earned \$1,000
Money earned used for damage deposit on apartment. Now qualified for training program.



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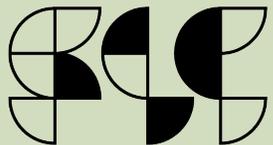
The chart doesn't solve the nose-counting quagmire. Another way of representing and even collecting the data would need to be developed.

Impact brainstorm

How is your work an asset to individual participants and/or family groups? (i.e. direct)

How is your work an asset to the wider community? (i.e. indirect)

What of your work is uncaptured?

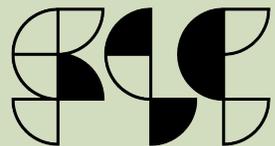


Cut-and-paste quantification? YES.

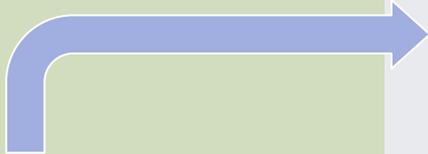
Developed by Jackson & Herranz review of research, existing surveys and attempts to capture the value of arts, culture and creativity in community led them to develop this list of cultural and social value.

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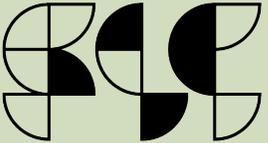
Available data



Note the questions:

1. What happened?
2. Why does it matter?

12	B. Outcomes and Impact of the Program
	<p>Participants worked in our [redacted] is our thrift store. Participants learned what is involved in running a thrift store. They learned how to process donations, how to select gently used donations for resale. They learned how to price stock, restock shelves, tidy and straighten shelves and floor racks. The participants learned how implement and follow screening protocols with customers for Covid19. They also learned customer service and how to assist customers and interact with them. For most of the participants they had not worked for an extended period of time and for one, she had never had a job before; [redacted] was a good environment for both of scenarios for participants. The supervising staff were understanding and supportive of participants reentering or newly entering the workforce. [redacted] was also able to be flexible and accommodating to the needs of the participants. Participation in the program was focused on participants who [redacted] due to Covid19. A couple of them dropped out fairly early in the program so we increased the hours of the other participants.</p> <p>The 11 participants received training and work experience in catering, yard care, and newsletter delivery. These participants developed new skills in Contactless Delivery. In May, we conducted an [redacted] where [redacted] were able to put their new skills to use. [redacted] designed and created special cards to go with homemade cupcakes and delivered them all over the city. In May, [redacted] prepared snack packages for the [redacted] Spring Clean Up and used their Contactless Delivery skills. As for newsletter, and yard care, developed skills in physical distancing and practised their contact delivery skills. In May, when restrictions made it necessary for us to implement our "Work from Home" program, [redacted] were given E-Learning courses to study, and asked to submit written essays on each subject. Next [redacted] were asked to submit creative projects such as art work, stories, songs, and poetry. For youth who needed access to the internet, we provided them with a lab [redacted] to use for their studies. [redacted] were also asked to come in to work, one at a time, to perform other jobs such as cooking, baking, cleaning, organizing, stuffing newsletters, building furniture, and moving furniture from office to office.</p> <p>Some participants provided supervision & leadership to volunteers within our [redacted]. These supervisors were provided with casual wages. The volunteers in our program were provided gift cards and learned hard and soft skills required to work in a retail/food service setting. All grant recipients also worked on our cafe refreshment project where they striped and repainted our dining room chairs. On site training includes: learning how to wash and put away dishes with a commercial washer, learning how to handle food in the kitchen (knife skills, hygiene skills, kitchen line skills), learning customer service skills, learning how to make drinks on our espresso machine, learning how to engage with our garden, providing support to our sales initiatives, like our summer book sale. Meaningfulness may be unique to the different participants we had. Some learned how to work in their first English speaking environment. Some accomplished fears associated with working with hot items in the kitchen, some learned time management and interview skills. Our program is robust but supportive, it's clear all had a great time connecting with supervisors/staff and building relationships.</p>



Available data

PLUS: participant interviews from a 3 of the 7 projects.

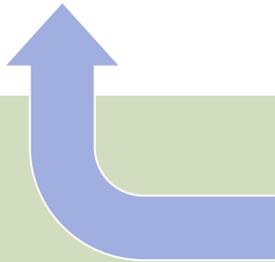
What does the general public need to know about who your participants are and why the jobs this grant created matter? Why is the work this grant supported important?

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Program worked so well. All of our participants face many barrier in the employment sector, they were able to take the steps necessary to enter/re-enter into employment.

I would like the general public to know that our participants are young people, who have little to no work experience, who are searching for the chance to gain work experience, to earn some money, and to belong. This LITE grant allowed us to actively engage youth in meaningful work experience and training. As well, we have the ability to design and implement a program in which our youth could work safely from home. The program engaged youth in workshops and course work surrounding workplace, safety, and

Our participants are young people who need to be provided an opportunity. The barriers that our young people face are different, but each needs opportunity to learn and grow in order to even start dismantling those barriers, to even get to the same starting line as others. This supported work is vital to our community and to our city. We need to invest and develop young people so they can live healthy, and fulfilling lives, so they can create and foster healthy and compassionate communities and relationships.

This grant is so important because it provides employment opportunities for marginalized job seekers; these people facing multiple barriers including criminal histories, disabilities, mental illnesses, chronic housing insecurity, etc. It encourages individuals to get involved with organizations who are working towards changing the narrative in regards to employability and who offer a judgement free zone



Note the questions: Asking about 'the unclaimed gap' – how are orgs underappreciated or unrepresented? Asking partners to articulate why the grant program matters to them and why it is needed for their participants.



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Available data

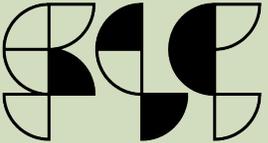
	Position/ Role	# of people
	retail work	5
	Catering	11
	Yard Care	
	Newsletter delivery	
	Barista	16
	Food handling	
	Cleaning	

Not available (because inconsistent reporting): the number of hours each participant worked. This was the result of an ambiguity in the question asked, and the desire to not over-burden grant recipients with ongoing, audit-heavy tasks, as grants cover no administrative costs.



Expanded chart

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
2021																	
Organization																	Total
Participants		5	11	16	75	12	24	5	2	8	6	24	8	8	8		212
Cultural and Social Value of LITE Grant Program	Retail in thrift store	Catering, yard work, and newsletter delivery	Restaurant work, cleaning	Soup kitchen, cleaning and retail thrift store	Cleaning and catering	Distribution of food, cleaning	Supporting covid protocols	Supervising warming shelter	Food bank support, cleaning and organizing	Yard work and kitchen cleaning	Community surveys	Neighborhood market	Packing and delivery of hampers	Packing and delivery of hampers	Number of Participants	Percentage of participants	
Supporting civic participation and social capital	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	174	82%	
Catalyzing economic development	*		*	*	*	*						*			132	62%	
Improving the built environment		*								*					17	8%	
Promoting stewardship of place		*								*					17	8%	
Augmenting public safety		*				*	*	*	*	*		*			56	26%	
Preserving cultural heritage															0	0%	
Bridging cultural / ethnic/racial boundaries		*			*	*					*		*	*	63	30%	
Transmitting cultural values and history		*													11	5%	
Creating group memory and group identity		*				*			*				*	*	59	28%	
Participants, N=212. Includes grant partners only.																	



Capturing value is about..

Documentation.

About tangible, intangible and/or long-term nature of activities (why they matter).

Being rigorous and methodological.

But it can also be:

Subjective, interpretive, and involve translation of qualitative data into quantitative data.



The chart

How is this chart the outcome of documentation?

How is the chart the outcome of rigor and method?

What about subjective?
interpretive?

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Creating group memory and group identity	59	28%

Participants, N=212. Includes job experiences with grant partners only.
Developed from Maria-Rosario Jackson and Joaquin Herranz Jr. *Culture counts in communities: A framework for measurement.* (2002) The Urban Institute.



Food for thought challenge

“We have found that many practitioners operate their programs with **well-developed assumptions about the impacts of their efforts**. However, frequently mired in the tasks of running NPOs, community arts practitioners seldom have time to codify the premises that guide their work. As a result, these assumptions often go unarticulated and are omitted from the type of theory that can guide systematic research and data collection efforts” (p. 39).



Challenge 1:

LIST:

What are your well-developed assumptions (things you know!)?

LIST:

How do you know? (What is the data you have to prove these things? What don't you have?)

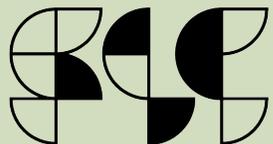
What kind of data?



Food for thought challenge 2

“We have lacked common language, concepts, data, and tools to articulate, document, and advance the role and value of arts, culture, and creativity within the conventional cultural sector and across other community-related policy areas.” (p. 42)

What impact statements would we add if we wanted to add a non-monetary economic values to the chart?



A call for data collaboration!

“Practitioners—community workers, arts administrators, and artists—must recognize that **harvesting their knowledge and experience in a systematic way is key to the creation of solid grounded theory that can guide research and policy that will further their efforts.** More than merely recognizing this reality, they will have to be key players, along with researchers, in the collection of data that can serve as indicators” (p. 43)

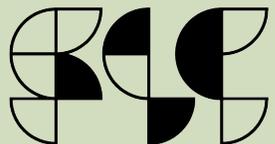


Opportunity and challenge

Analysts: Community actors need to be partners in the creation and implementation of studies and data collection efforts

Practitioners: Harvesting knowledge and experiences in a systematic way is key to creating solid grounded theory that can guide research and policy that will further their efforts

Policymakers and funders: Need to support data collection and analysis





Thank you!

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