Topic	Evaluation Workshop: What does it mean to communicate collective impact?		
Date	Friday, March 29, 2019	**Location**	Boardroom, Suit 350, 401 Richmond Building
Host(s)	Imagine Canada & Mass Culture, sponsored by RBC		
Participants	- Alex Gardner, Imagine Canada - Alex Glass, ArtsBuild Ontario - Alix MacLean, Hill Strategies - Bridget MacIntosh, Bridget MacIntosh & Associates - Charles C Smith, CPAMO - Christina Loewen, Opera Canada - David Lasby, Imagine Canada - Diane Davy, Arts Consultants Canada - Haley McDonald, Imagine Canada - Kallee Lins, Imagine Canada - Kathryn Townshend, Ontario Arts Council - Lisa Fiorelli, WorkInCulture - Liz Forsberg, Ontario Trillium Foundation - Navi Brar, RBC Foundation - Stacey McDonald, Ontario Trillium Foundation - Tara Mazurk, Global Public Affairs, Mass Culture - Robin Sokoloski, Playwrights Guild of Canada, Mass Culture		
Notetaker(s)	Kathryn Geertsema, Mass Culture		
Facilitator(s)	Tara Mazurk, Mass Culture		
Invitation	In Celebration of Imagine Canada's launch of The State of Evaluation: Measurement and Evaluation Practices in Canada's Charitable Sector, Mass Culture and Imagine Canada would like to invite members of the arts sector to discuss over brunch WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO COMMUNICATE COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN THE ARTS SECTOR? The national report provides the first comprehensive look at how Canadian charities are measuring and evaluating their work, how they are talking with their funders about evaluation, and what enablers and barriers they are facing. In 2018, Imagine Canada surveyed charities across Canada about their measurement and evaluation practices. Through this research, we discovered how the charitable sector is talking about the impact of their work. During this nation wide conversation LET'S MAKE SURE THE ARTS ARE AT THE TABLE BY COMING TOGETHER ON MARCH 29 (around a table of delicious food)! Specific data about the arts & culture sector and their evaluation practices will be made available during the event.		
Perspectives and thoughts	***Discussion of land acknowledgement*** Keep land acknowledgement personal. Self-reflection is needed, really consider what is being said. Land acknowledgements have begun to have a sense of routine, which needs to be moved away from. How can we say we have permission to be working on this land? How does the work we're doing today tie in with indigenous culture and history? Discussing social justice and social transformation, taking care of future generations, and how we may move ahead as a community. The Great Law of Peace. How can we create peace in the world using art? ***Thoughts on evaluation: get a feel from the room how we define & approach evaluation*** **How do you know personally that impact has occurred?** This is about understanding the various ways we may define "impact" – not reducing it down to a single meaning		

- Collecting stories, sharing these stories.
- Receiving unsolicited feedback – good and bad
- Compulsion to share: when one can't help but have conversations with others about it.
- Internal – keeps one up all night; one feels moved; sense of flow or peace; can't stop thinking about.
- Shared language on the sectoral level. When varied audiences are talking about the same phenomena using same lexical framework. So we are actually all looking at a set of issues in compatible ways, allowing deeper understanding of these issues.
- Longitudinal. Something that doesn't end but stays with one over time. Change that occurs over time. Spills out onto everything else.
- Don't know anymore what impact looks like. What feels right to us isn't right for other people.
- Measure impact against the desired state: what the world would look like if activities are successful
- Making new connections: between ideas, reverberating into other communities. Hearing about the spread of connections.
- When a space is transformed.

How do you define collective impact?
- Purpose to overcome silos: coming together to teach and share. Create a community of practitioners dedicated to establishing a network.
- Who comprises that network? Very few people of colour here. Collective impact needs to be linked to an idea of social justice. How do we connect to "collective impact"
- Seeing shifts in society. When I don't have to go to the Aki Studio to see native, but can see it everywhere.
- In an advocacy point of view, confidence as a policy maker that you have all the necessary voices at the table
- Collectively working together to achieve a goal. It is not incumbent on the artist to make change; rather, to make art. In terms of the OAC, it's our job to do that work. It may be unfair to place the burden of "evidence of impact" on artists and arts organisations when it may be the funder's role to do that. How do you demonstrate the necessity of funding without placing the burden on the artist who's trying to just make art? Everyone has the right to do their own work.
- As artists and members of arts service organizations, we are constructing society around us. Robert Lepage has had and is having impact with his work, but is it the impact we're looking for? Is that impact linked to the values we have personally or as an organization?
- Do we contextualise impact differently if it's for the artist or performer or producer as individuals as opposed to if we consider impact collectively, for an organization?

Role of evaluation
- focused on trying to define impact in the arts & communicate it to people who might not get that
- Evaluation has been wielded in many negative ways for many communities, especially if you think about where a lot of the approaches and principles we use have come from. Who's doing this, for whom, what are the larger goals, who's present/who's not? We need to ask these, and to have an ethical framework
- Rather than doing for someone, rather for something. That people aspire to something that's collective & shared
- Outputs are important, but it shouldn't stop there. Specific organizations need to have a framework outlining a theory of change, where you're linking your specific organizational model to a specific framework. This framework would be designed for

that organization's purpose. For example, based on strategic plans. What would we want the world to look like, and what is our organization's contribution to that? Taking that and then revising our performance model, how can take it one step further so that those who don't buy into our perspectives can understand. This needs specific research, and can't simply come out of our own work. We need to grapple with "what is our theory of change in the arts" and "Why is it important to us?"

What do you evaluate in art?
- Not to say it's simple in other sectors, but in the arts there are so many conversations where the impacts are very very different. How do we evaluate the more instrumental impacts in the arts? It's different to talk about artists versus organisations – and art for art's sake versus impact
- How do you quantify ideas? In evaluation, there's a set framework that you can't diverge from, but people have varying degrees of comfortability with language. There are community leaders who don't have the writing skills deemed necessary, but whose conversations fulfill standard evaluative needs. There was a movement towards putting this into practice at one point, but it was deemed unequal. This really emphasizes the importance of recognizing that people have different ways of communicating.

Is everything measurable?
- Depends on the definition of "measurable"
- You can't measure oppression and the degree to which a society or culture has been left behind as a result. Some societies have moved forward to a great extent, versus indigenous communities who were forcibly shut down. You can't measure that.
- Imagine Canada did a scan of 800 websites and what they were saying about "impact". There were a lot of numbers – that's not a societal impact, what i thought of as. It became a brand, this flashy "impact". One loses a sense of what people are feeling within what they're actually telling other people

Experience of evaluation from within an organization
- Brought someone in who deals with impact. We have all the research, but we need someone to actually go through and process it to make it cohesive.
- Rani Sanderson's Amplifying Impact Webinar on the OTF Knowledge Centre
- It's very rare that charities in general talk about emotion, but it's hugely powerful when they can bring emotion into higher level discussions.
- The work Sketch does, affecting people on the ground in a real and meaningful way.
- In New Orleans, The Data Centre did a study of the state of affairs across New Orleans, and the man who gave the presentation crafted a story to relay what the data means in the city. This allowed one to see the story of the city and the story of the people, so that we could really see the change that happened.
- Statistical Insights into Art series details the number of artists in Canada and who they are. Some kind of collective impact there – a lot more than expected. One of the good stories in this realm, and growing.
- Very few organizations actually have the funding required in order to carry out a proper evaluation. A lot of organizations supported through funding don't actually ask for enough funds to do an evaluation. They will contact the funder and let them know retroactively that they want to do an evaluation but didn't ask for enough initially. The budget percentage that ought to be allocated for evaluation is dependent on what you're trying to do, who you're working with, what evaluation method you're using. But 3% is probably not enough.
- Regarding collective impact, there is an expectation that by doing the work, an organization will rapidly progress from zero to collective, but the process is iterative and not linear. One has to approach the community at the centre of the evaluation and

ask "What did you do?", "What did you not do?", "How was it?". This can take a year and a half – but then once that information is gathered, how does one measure all of it? You need to look at the impact areas, and what themes emerge: community engagement, cohesion, aesthetic, the role of arts service organizations. This is an essential service that arts organizations can and should provide. The local context is the most important thing. They'll have examples and can learn iteratively. It will be approximately 5-6 years down the road that arts organizations will be able to get to collective impact.

Rundown of *The State of Evaluation in Canada: Arts, Culture & Recreation Charities* and communicating collective impact:

- Information regarding 'arts & culture' and 'recreation' is not seperated, but the former swamps the latter. Another group quite out of scope is "sports", as very few sports organizations count as charities.
- Some key discoveries as a result of this report regarding how the 'arts and culture' subsector differs from other subsectors
    - Lower focus on impact
    - How data is structured
    - How audiences want to hear about this data
    - Very low finding of more evolved evaluative techniques
- Statistical conversations, for instance web stats and surveys, are similar to those of other subsections. These correlated to more sophisticated uses of evaluation. Regarding evaluation specifically, not much stood out except for the emphasis placed on learning to try to be better. There was also a low incidence of attempting to influence the government.
- Regarding staffing, a lot of evaluative work is being done by those working in marketing and communications. Despite that they might have better access to the full extent of the success or issues of programs, it's rare that evaluation is ever carried out by program staff themselves – this is an area of disconnect, therefore. There is an overall lack of having staff who are specifically dedicated to evaluation.
- Asked organization what networks they draw from for evaluative support, and there was a tremendous diversity in responses. A lot of these organizations believe themselves to be part of a larger network. But, once again, there was a dramatically low level of staff with measurement or evaluation training.
- There is tremendous potential in this sector, where people want to do more, but also don't seem dissatisfied with what they're currently doing, either. The real challenge is expressing the value of the work to those outside the sector who don't typically believe in or understand its value.
- Looking at how public trust in charities is constructed: the public believes these charitable organizations will do well because they have good intentions, and that they can effect change because they do good things. For charities, the arguments in their favour emphasize 'need', and charities need to meet these needs. However, that only gets you through the door – once the need has been proven, charities need to follow through with a demonstration of their impact. This argument needs to be made in a sustained way so that, once again, the importance of their work is effectively communicated to those who don't necessarily see their value.
- Some barriers to achieving the above: financial resources, staff time

Discussion of *The State of Evaluation in Canada: Arts, Culture & Recreation Charities* and communicating collective impact:

- We can think more broadly than just focusing on the obvious beneficiary. How are we, the practitioners, benefited? How are the artists impacted? Regarding how the

	marketing directors seem to be bearing the bulk of this type of work – it should be coming from the CEOs office, and everyone in the organization should be focused on it. We need to work to close the feedback loop, and to think about how arts and arts service organizations are being impacted as the delivery mode, how the artists are being impacted as the instruments, not just the beneficiary. There may be others included in this too. ● We're involved in developing numbers for advocacy, rather than having the luxury to be able to evaluate in order to measure the extent to which we have fulfilled our own goals. ● An issue people face is how nebulous the concept of 'evaluation' is. A lot of the time, organizations don't know where to begin, or they don't have the capacity, or the time. Need to ask funders how such organizations should be acquiring those capacities. What needs to happen to get people to want to evaluate and see the need in evaluation. What are some evaluation processes? ● There seems to be a culture of sharing emerging, with collaborative modes of evaluation ● A lot of cities have labs that they run with partners, which make use of and build on existing networks, thereby connecting art workers. ● The Mowat Centre ● It's great to bring someone else in, for example, in the form of an evaluator. Everyone should have the power to make sense of the work they're doing. ● An issue, now that people are talking about evaluation, is that organizations either get overwhelmed and do nothing, or they want to bring in the most sophisticated and expensive processes. ● In order to make the process of evaluation less nebulous, perhaps framing the evaluation as follows: "What questions do you have about your program", "What do you want to achieve?"
What research would be useful?	● Easy to capture a number of people helped, and the type of support they were given, but how do you share the stories? How do you quantify that and get them back from partners? ● When is there impact – and how do you know? ● How do we get folks involved in that conversation? ● "Impact" has a violence. Is there another mode? This is a question we might ask in trying to not be so colonial, not so top-down. ● Look into examples of impact beyond artists, art councils and arts service organizations, for example in immigration, health, seniors. – e.g. *Migrant Dreams* by Min Sook Lee
Whose voices are missing around the table?	● Indigenous and first nation voices ● A more substantial number of people of colour.
Resources & links (mentioned during discussion or shared afterwards)	*The State of Evaluation in Canada: Arts, Culture & Recreation Charities* – Report, Imagine Canada http://www.imaginecanada.ca/resources-and-tools/research-and-facts/state-evaluation-canada *'I regret it': Hayden King on writing Ryerson University's territorial acknowledgement* – Article, CBC https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/redrawing-the-lines-1.4973363/i-regret-it-hayden-king-on-writing-ryerson-university-s-territorial-acknowledgement-1.4973371 *You've Got a Story, Now What Do With It?* – Amplifying Impact Webinar, Rani Sanderson & OTF: https://share.otf.ca/t/webinar-you-ve-got-a-story-now-what-do-you-do-with-it/1380 Sketch: https://www.sketch.ca/

	The Data Center: https://www.datacenterresearch.org/ *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series – Reports, Hill Strategies: https://hillstrategies.com/statistical-insights-on-the-arts/ *Migrant Dreams, A Film by Min Sook Lee* – Film, Min Sook Lee: http://www.migrantdreams.ca/ The Ontario Nonprofit Network: https://theonn.ca/
What next steps were mentioned as a result of the Gathering?	● Moving forward, it is necessary to build specific training for arts practitioners around evaluation. ● Build on existing innovation network, the way that city labs have been doing. ● Consider focus groups where ideas can be communicated clearly: what "evaluation" in this context means, what tools are available, get advice about next steps. ● How can we build capacity for analysis of data? Doing this and being allowed to fail. A lot of the time we don't allow ourselves to fail. Be less afraid of failure. ● Work on establishing evaluation from the ground up, to help orgs of all sizes to move forward. Organizations need to be allowed to mould evaluations to fit in with you. How do we break out of the scariness of evaluation?