

Appendix B: Methodology

In this appendix we outline the methodology and data collection behind the evaluation of the Medway Heritage Place programme.

Evaluation approach

We have strong beliefs about evaluation and making it work to be useful. This affects everything about how we approach evaluation design and implementation.

Underlying principles

The principles that underpin our approach to evaluation are:

- 1) **Evaluation is valuable as much for learning and change as it is for understanding whether outcomes were achieved** – processes and approaches are as important as outcomes.
- 2) **Learning and change occur continuously throughout the life of a project** and beyond. We commit time to giving feedback informally on a regular basis and see outcome sharing as equally important as any summative report.
- 3) **Evaluations should always be a joint endeavour** – people are at the heart of understanding the impact of the programme and supporting change, so human-centred design methodologies are embedded in our practice.

- 4) **Having a participatory, co-creative approach to evaluation is essential to engage and inspire** staff, artists, advisory groups and participants. They need to understand the value of evaluation, and we need to make it meaningful to them.
- 5) **Embedding skills are essential to what we do** – we will seek to develop opportunities for training and skills development within any evaluation programme.
- 6) **The importance of making the case for a programme** – this is particularly in the need for clear, validated analysis and reports which speak to multiple audiences.

The evaluation process

Utilising the principles set out above, we developed a framework for analysis and an approach which was built on supporting grant recipients to develop evaluation skills and understanding of the value of evaluation.

We then carried out direct data collection (see below) and, for the granting strand of the project, offered training, mentoring and support to the grantees with their own data collection.

Data collection approaches

Surveys

Data from two surveys were collected by the Medway Heritage Place team:

- at training events over the year, and
- to gather feedback from unsuccessful applicants.

A third 'end of project' survey was conducted by RMR.

These included information about quality and expectations of events, as well as the qualitative experience of successful and unsuccessful grantees at the latest points of contact with each.

Interviews and reflection sessions

1-to-1 interviews with a range of stakeholders were held by RMR based on the aims of the project as a framework to guide questions.

A series of reflection sessions (discursive in nature) were also held with grantees both during and after project delivery, and were central to the evaluation of the grant funding strand of the Medway Heritage Place programme.

Focus group

A reflective focus group session with grantees was held at the end of delivery for most projects. The conversation was facilitated by RMR and was designed to draw out learning, experience and outcomes.

The table below shows more detail about our data sources and sample sizes.

Data source	Description	Sample size
Grant applications	Data relating to grant project aims and objectives	111 applications received, 23 funded
Survey to unsuccessful applicants	Quantitative and qualitative data relating to grantees' feelings on how the application process was, including any support given	7 total responses
Grantee evaluation plans	Aims and objectives of each funded grant, and heritage categories / themes	9 plans received (written and / or verbal)
Grantee mid-point report	Progress and interim reflections and additional support needs identified	17 reports received
Grantee end-of-project reports	Qualitative data relating to feedback and reflections, as well as future aims / objectives and self-assessment of skills developed	19 reports received
1-1 Evaluation support sessions	Knowledge of progress in skills development and acknowledgement of additional support needed at interim stages	15/23 grantees met (at least once)
Training pre- and post-event surveys	Data collected by the Medway Heritage Place team at (and following) training events regarding quality and learnings, both qualitative and quantitative (from both successful and unsuccessful grantees)	22 total responses
Open Space event write up	We were able to draw on the write up of the Heritage Place initial Open Space session facilitated by RMR at the beginning of the project to further support the evaluation.	Report based on input from 103 attendees from 60 organisations

End of project surveys	Qualitative and quantitative data to capture reflections around project quality, expectations and impact	20 total responses
Reflection interviews and focus groups	1-to-1 strategic interviews with Medway Council stakeholders and Medway Heritage Place lead	5 interviewees, 4 interview sessions
	1-to-1 interviews and reflection sessions with grantees	18 of 23 grantees interviewed (at least once)
Grantee focus group / reflection workshop	Group grantee reflection discussion held in Medway with RMR to help draw out learning and challenges	1 workshop, 8 attendees
Ad Hoc contact and support with grantees	Not limited to: mentoring, advice, 'next steps' support, evaluation tools design, and in-person conversations at the final celebration event	Ad hoc qualitative data and feedback
Observation at Celebration Event	RMR attended the Heritage Place celebration event alongside many grantees and some of their participants allowing further discussion and feedback	1 event, several informal conversations and observation of presentations