ARTISTS IN COMMUNITIES
PROJECT AND RESIDENCY TOOLS
DOCUMENTATION AND EVALUATION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is documentation?

Documentation is systematically collecting data throughout the course of a project or residency. Think of it as a scrapbook for collecting and organizing different kinds of information and records. This can help guide planning and process decisions, reflecting and evaluating the project or residency, and possible future plans.

Why document the project or residency?

Documenting the project or residency from beginning to end will provide a comprehensive record of the processes that participants went through during the project. This record will help the applicants determine if their goals and objectives were met, provide material needed to share the project or residency story with others and convey the project's or residency's true impact.

Why is each project's documentation and evaluation process different?

Documentation and evaluation in *Artists in Communities* programs is intended to guide grant recipients' planning, decision-making, programming changes, and/or practice that occur as the residency or project unfolds in the community. It is important that recipients keep their own records in a way that is appropriate for that specific community, project, or residency. Documentation, data collection and an ongoing evaluation process can be developed by each grant recipient. The documentation should give valuable feedback on what is needed to address the project's or residency's goals and objectives, and community needs.

What kinds of documentation can be used?

The types of information gathering and the depth of the documentation will be different in a project and a residency, but common documentation includes social media posts, photographs, video, journal writing, surveys or questionnaires, minutes of meetings, scans of news articles. Artistic works themselves (both process and product) are important evidence, since they reflect the participants' interactions with artists. Records of reflective thinking can be included at any point in the project or residency. In a residency, this might include looking at the exploration question(s) on a regular basis to see if they are still the right questions or if they need refinement.

Information and Data Gathering

A **Cultural Inventory or Cultural Needs Assessment** tool is available in the *Artists in Communities* page on SK Arts' website. It can help you assess assets and needs related to culture in your community.

The table below provides suggestions for how project or residency partners might gather a variety of information and the questions to be answered underline before applying. Designing a successful project or residency will involve the target community at every stage: the design, evaluation, interpretation and dissemination of the documentation and data gathered. Pick and choose depending on needs.

Community Meeting	What do you want to know? Who will you invite? How will you invite people? How will you make it accessible? What process will you use at the meeting to explore your questions and ensure participation? Who is listening? Facilitating? How will you follow up with people who attend?
Advisory or focus groups	What do you want to know? What groups can advise on your questions? How will you make it accessible? How will you follow up?
Surveys	What do you want to know? Who will design the survey? What is your distribution audience? How will you collate the information you get on the survey? How will you conduct the survey? Online? Hardcopies? How will you follow up with respondents?
Research of existing information	What do you want to know? Who will do the research? How will you collate the findings?
Interviewing key people in the community	What do you want to know? What are your key questions for these people? Who will consult with them? Will you reimburse them for their time and expertise? How will you follow up with them?
Artist Records	How will the artist keep track of their own reflections during the project or residency?
Access/Diversity/Inclusion	Look at the diversity within your community and make sure you have included ways of information gathering that will be widely accessible. Is there any group in your community that will not be reached through your planned means of information gathering? If so, what other means can you use, or how can you adapt one of the above means to serve this group?
Other	For residencies, look at your exploration question and sub-questions, and make sure you have addressed them through your information gathering processes. If not, what other means can you use to get the information you need?

Documenting Participation

Document public participation and interactions with the artist at all stages of the project or residency, both process and product:

- Social media
- Photographs
- Video
- Feedback forms or posts
- Records of discussion

Evaluation

When assessing your project or residency information/data that you have collected, include the community participants in the interpretation of that documentation data and in the evaluation process. Consider these methods:

- <u>Hold a Community Shareback</u>: Hold a community event to get feedback on the entire project or residency. This gets direct feedback on your programming and celebrates the project or residency.

- <u>Hold a Data-Analysis Party</u>: Analyze the information and data in a shared space. Participants and respondents of surveys and program evaluation usually don't hear back on the findings.

- <u>Hold a Meaning-Making Party</u>: Since data is given voice by those who interpret the data, perhaps incorporate a Meaning-Making Party into a Data Party. Present the information and results to the community. Ask: "Did we hear this right? Does it reflect your experience with this project or residency?" Then, allow the community to choose how the information will be shared and what the path forward afterwards will be.

Telling Your Story: Use and Dissemination of Evaluation Data

- <u>Community Report</u>: Consider who gets the report. Who is the audience for the report? Who benefits from having a report? Is it to celebrate the accomplishments of the project or residency? Is it to more funding?

- <u>Use Info Graphics</u>: Create a visual representation of the data by using a drawing, mural, comic book, or whatever is suitable and accessible for the community.

- <u>Make a Toolkit</u>: A step-by-step How-To Guide for your project or residency can stay with the community, organization, and artists for future reference.

- <u>Your story</u> may be incorporated into your final report to SK Arts.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

THE ARTISTS IN COMMUNITIES PROGRAM CONSULTANT

https://sk-arts.ca/menu/grants/grants-by-type/artists/community-organizations.html

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