Valuing Creative Placemaking:

A survey toolkit for public and private stakeholders

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LANDCOM

Creating more affordable and sustainable communities

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The Station and Market Street Lawn in Newcastle. Photo courtesy of Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation.

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Preface

This independent research was funded through the Landcom Roundtable. The Roundtable was established to drive innovative approaches to urban research where government, academia and industry work in genuine collaboration. This research was funded to find innovative ways to value creative placemaking activities.

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Contents

5 Introduction

7 How to use this Toolkit

9 How to apply Toolkit components

10 Interpreting Toolkit outcomes

14 Indicators used in this Toolkit

16 References

17 Understanding the tools

18 Appendix 1: Organiser tools

20 Appendix 2: Facilitator tools

22 Appendix 3: Attendee tools

24 Appendix 4: Business owner tools

Toolkit Components

Question Selection Tool
For: All stakeholders

Organiser Overview Template
For: Organisers

Pre-Activity Briefing Document
For: Organisers; Facilitators

Event Debriefing Document
For: Organisers; Facilitators

Introduction

Creative placemaking uses the arts to make a place more vibrant, more socially engaging and more enjoyable and interesting overall.

As such, creative placemaking might take the form of arts-based activities within the physical environment, for example public art installations teasing out local history. Creative placemakers might also encourage the presence of arts-related businesses, or the staging of arts-related programming and cultural events or activities.

We designed this toolkit to help creative placemakers like you capture the value of these activities and understand how to improve them. This toolkit is intended to be easy to use, scalable to match your needs and helpful to a wide range of organisations. Whether you are doing a one-off event or a series of interconnected placemaking programs, there should be something in here for you.

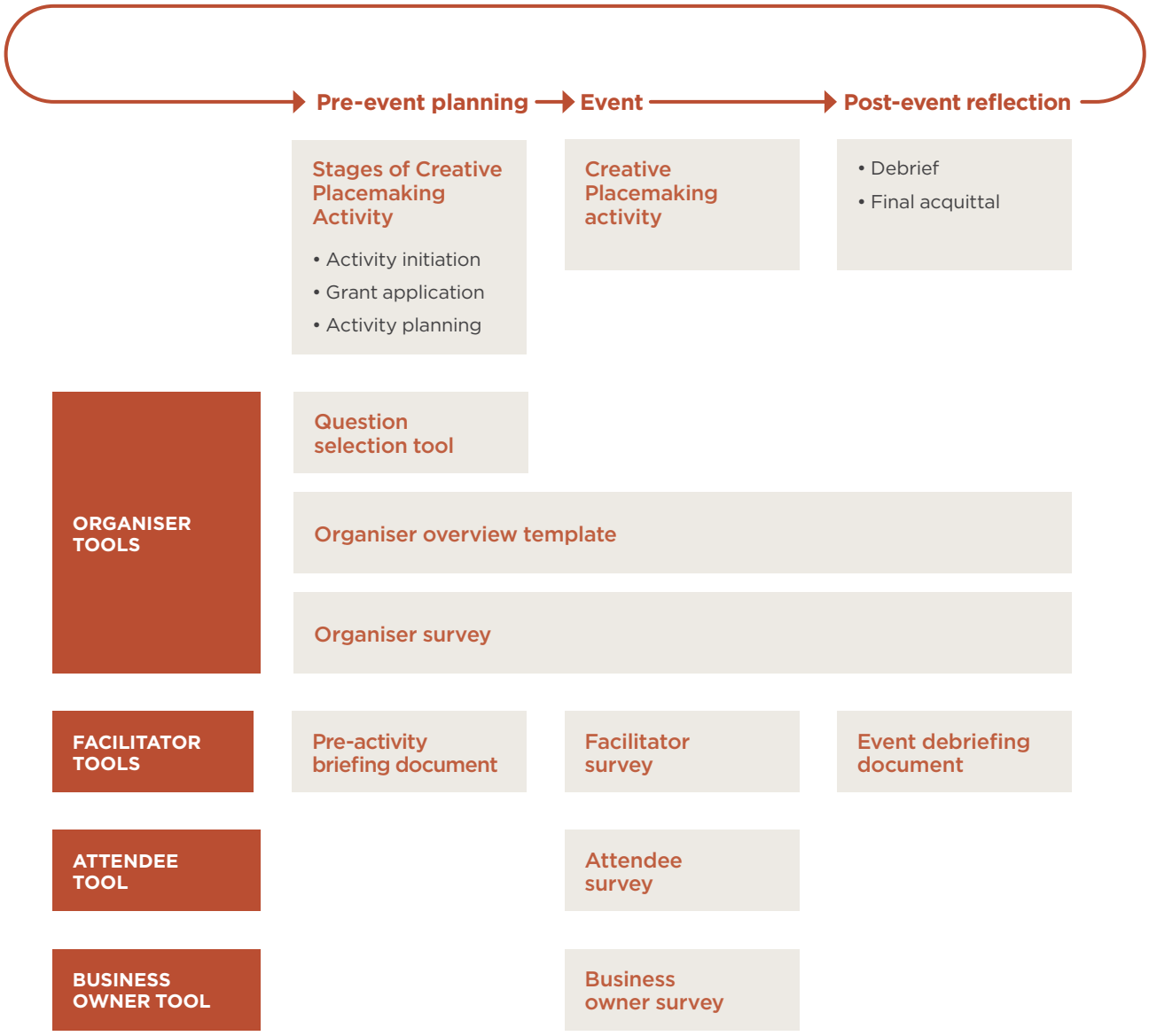
This toolkit allows you to assess your creative placemaking practices on a site undergoing renewal or other forms of community or physical change. Thanks to the various surveys and tools, you are able to compare the outcomes of your activity or event to your expectations. The indicators help you gain a broad view of the economic, social and environmental aspects of valuing creative placemaking. The toolkit will also help you plan, reflect on and improve your placemaking process. After you download and use the *toolkit components*, you can store the survey response data for your own future reference, to help you compare and thus evaluate the success of your subsequent creative placemaking events over time.

The toolkit draws from successful existing tools and approaches currently used by placemakers. To design it, we consolidated hundreds of existing indicators of the value of placemaking. We sought feedback from practitioners on what they needed to know, and which of the existing indicators they found most useful. We also added new indicators based on issues these practitioners told us were important, but that were missing in other toolkits and placemaking guides.

You can find further detail on the tools that we surveyed to develop this toolkit in our *literature review* (Cohen et al. 2018). We wish to acknowledge all the resources we used from it, as well as thank our interviewees for their invaluable feedback. We encourage you to follow up on the resources linked in each toolkit description and to delve deeper into the possibilities of creative placemaking!

The toolkit in the creative placemaking process

The tools are designed to be used at different stages of the creative placemaking process.



The Organiser is the person or institution who organises the creative placemaking activity or event.

The Facilitator refers to the person who facilitates the surveys on the ground.

The Attendee means a person attending the event.

The Business Owner designates the person owning a business or similar organisation, such as a not-for-profit, close to the placemaking site.

How to use this toolkit

This toolkit is intended to help you plan and evaluate creative placemaking activities.

Ideally, any placemaking event or intervention improves the value of a place. This toolkit will encourage you to focus on known areas of success and will help you find out what impacts your activities may have.

This toolkit is based on a set of indicators (or important elements). The associated measures are based on literature about placemaking (see Cohen et al. 2018; *Vaughan et al. 2021*) and interviews with industry and community stakeholders engaged in placemaking.

To begin... you first need to think about what you are looking for!

How long is the intervention you are evaluating?

When using the toolkit you may want to consider first whether you are interested in assessing:

- the short-term effects of a temporary creative placemaking event or intervention, or
- the longer lasting impact of a placemaking program, or
- both.

While sometimes it is hard to classify these impacts as they relate to perceptions of a place, it is still important to think about the period of time you are interested in when assessing a the placemaking activity. For example, you may want to judge the effectiveness of particular strategies at different stages of a project.

Our toolkit, where possible, therefore separates short-term and long-term effects.

How do you ensure a holistic view of placemaking value?

A key debate in the literature is around how to measure the economic value of creative placemaking, as well as other forms of value or benefits. We have made sure that each of the tools here takes into account the three main benefits that emerge from creative placemaking activities: the environmental value, the social value and the economic value. Overall, the toolkit encourages you to consider three significant value areas of creative placemaking. The associated indicators have been found to contribute to successful placemaking projects.

These three areas each have their own set of specific value indicators. These indicators match up with potential outcomes of placemaking activities, which include:

Environment (built and natural):

e.g. Upgrades and investment to public realm, walkability, and overall environmental benefits.

Social:

e.g. Civic participation, health and wellbeing, place attachment, cultural memory (via storytelling), and reduced crime.

Economic:

e.g. Education and skills development, employment, increased investment in infrastructure, uplift in property values, increased retail and local business, and tourism and place brand value.

These symbols appear throughout the toolkit. You can make sure you get a fuller picture of the value of your event by addressing items and selecting questions across each of these three categories in your surveys.

How to apply Toolkit components

YOU WANT TO:

Plan a creative placemaking project

Using this toolkit you can:

- Prepare for your creative placemaking project with a planning tool that helps you record and understand the existing situation and consider activities, roles, participation, costs etc. with the *Organiser Overview Template* and *Question Selection Tool*
- Focus your information gathering on specific outcomes for your project by adapting the toolkit to suit your needs using the *Question Selection Tool*
- Prepare the survey facilitators to conduct the business and attendee surveys with a facilitator thanks to the *Pre-Activity Briefing Document* and *Question Selection Tool*

Conduct survey(s) to gather feedback during or soon after a creative placemaking project

Using this toolkit you can:

- Survey attendees at a specific placemaking event or activity, using relevant questions for your project from the *Question Selection Tool*
- Conduct business owner surveys to find out about economic and social impact of a creative placemaking event or activity thanks to the Business Question Bank in the *Question Selection Tool*
- Capture what goes on during a creative placemaking event or activity by gathering information from those conducting the survey with your own questionnaire selected from the Facilitator *Question Bank in the Question Selection Tool*
- Assess your own approach to the creative placemaking process during the event thanks to the *Organiser Question Bank in the Question Selection Tool*

Reflect or report on a creative placemaking event

Using this toolkit you can:

- Capture insights on the project: what worked, what to do better next time, with the *Event Debriefing Document*
- Produce a report on your creative placemaking project by combining the data captured in all surveys with the *Organiser Overview Template*
- Reflect on and interpret the outcomes of the placemaking project with comparisons to your initial approach using the *Organiser Overview Template*
- Assess your activities and creative placemaking process using the *Organiser Question Bank in the Question Selection Tool*

Interpreting toolkit outcomes

Interpreting the data: finding value in creative placemaking

This toolkit will help you plan, reflect on and improve your creative placemaking process. Additionally, the toolkit components can be used together or selectively to help gauge the value of creative placemaking in urban contexts.

This toolkit does not provide a 'score' for your creative placemaking project. Rather, it helps you understand the value of tangible and intangible outcomes of your creative placemaking project (See: *Existing Indicators of placemaking success below*).

To fully explore ways that information can be collected and used from creative placemaking projects please see our literature review (Cohen et al. 2018).

This toolkit is based on research showing that measurements associated with value indicators for creative placemaking are divided into two categories:

- quantifiable measures based on 'hard' evidence and numerical data
- qualitative measures that are less tangible and rely upon (but are not limited to) interviews, observations and stakeholder conversations.

Both these types of measures contribute to the valuation of placemaking activities in terms of the economic, environmental and social benefits they provide.

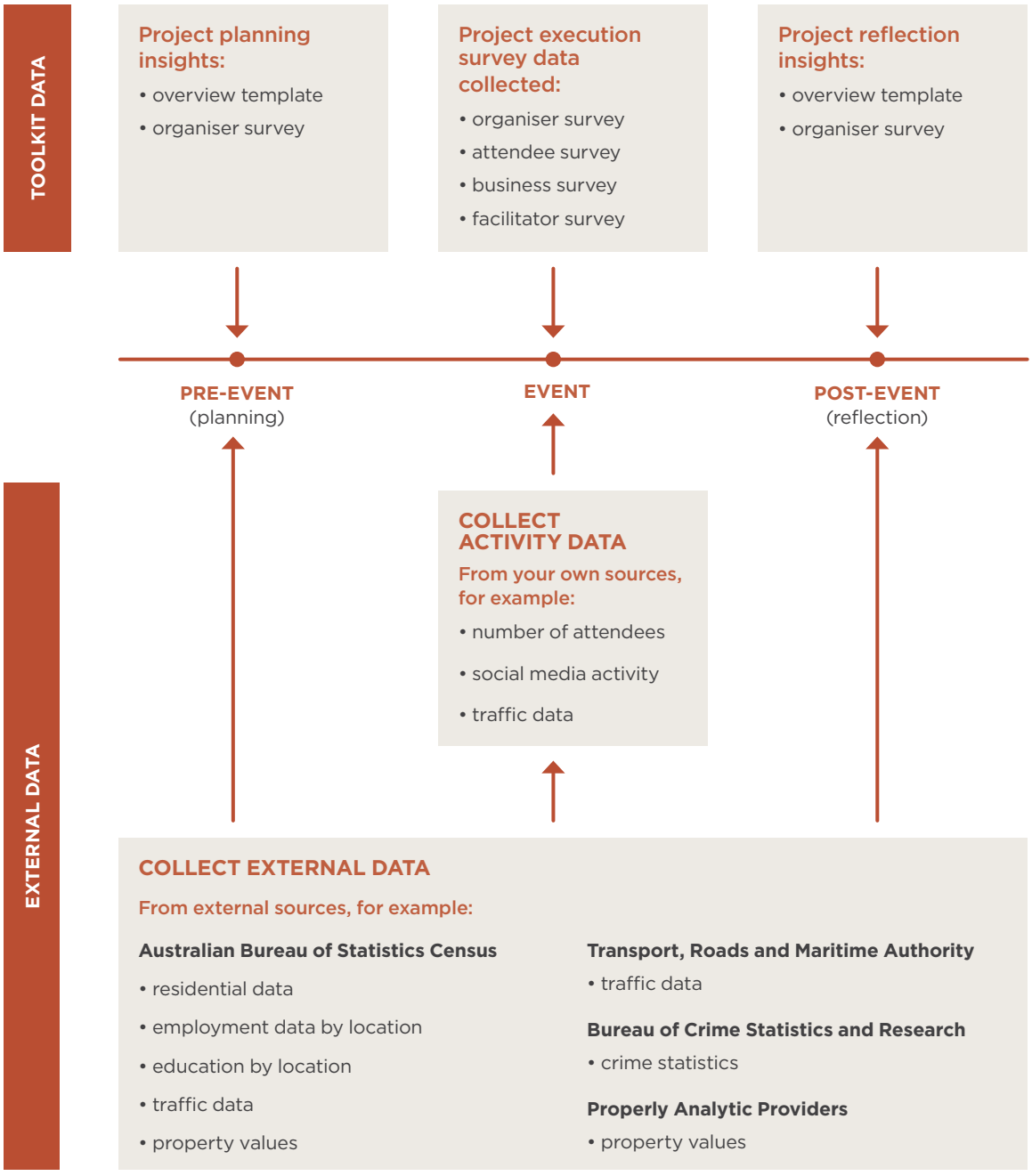
Existing indicators of placemaking success

There are different ways to interpret the benefits of placemaking, including scoring tools, high-level measurements, detailed methodologies and valuation guidelines. Our research found that detailed methodologies provided the richest overall content for the valuation of creative placemaking, combining various research methods and being able to adapt unique creative placemaking projects.

This toolkit follows a similar approach, combining elements of both qualitative and quantitative methods from previous research such as:

- geographic analyses comparing neighbourhood variation (Noonan 2013)
- in-field observations (public realm, geography, social interactions) (Karndacharuk et al. 2016; Noonan 2013)
- qualitative interviews coded/translated into numerical metrics. For example, Likert scales (Novak-Leonard & Brown 2011; Delconte et al. 2016; Karndacharuk et al. 2016)
- surveys with quantitative output (Novak-Leonard & Brown 2011)
- targeted selection of demographic measures (Novak-Leonard & Brown 2011; Flanagan & Mitchell 2016; Morley et al. 2014)
- cost-benefit analysis (Flanagan & Mitchell 2016).

Ways to collect information (data) on your placemaking event



This toolkit offers the flexibility of collecting a range of information (data) to suit your purpose. For example, using the toolkit across the duration of the project, you can collect:

- your own qualitative data through insights, opinions, information and observations
- your own numerical data such as the number of attendees
- external numerical data from organisations such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The information (data) collected using this toolkit can be used to:

- provide evidence (through value indicators) that your project outcomes reflect known environmental, social and economic benefits
- create a 'snapshot in time' report to compare the current project to other creative placemaking projects that you have run (particularly those that have also used this toolkit)
- compare the plans and anticipated outcomes with the actual outcomes of the project
- identify existing conditions (place situations, strengths, issues) and demonstrate how the creative placemaking activity has addressed these
- produce a report that focuses on specific outcomes for your project by using the value indicators.

Data privacy and personal information

- Please ensure that the collection of any personal information (as defined in Section 4 of the Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) (or PPIP Act) complies with the Information Protection Principles in that legislation.
- Please note that a collection notice is always required for the collection of all personal information except for sensitive personal information (defined as "information about ethnic or racial origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, sexual activities or trade union membership") where informed consent to the collection should be obtained.
- If consent is required, please see more information on privacy and data collection specific to online surveys on the NSW Government's Digital Service Toolkit: *https://www.digital.nsw.gov.au/delivery/digital-service-toolkit/activities-and-templates/obtaining-consent*, which includes a 'Consent form template for surveys'."
- For more information on privacy fundamentals and the NSW Information Protection Principles (IPPs), please see the Information and Privacy Commission's 'Essential Guidance Toolkit on information access and privacy fundamentals': *https://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/privacy/resources-agencies/essential-guidance-toolkit-information-access-and-privacy-fundamentals*

Green Star

Some parts of this toolkit link to the measures and indicators of the Green Building Council of Australia's Green Star - Communities v1.1 rating tool. Throughout the tools, the letters next to the star symbols identify the Green Star credit they relate to.

Credits	Green Star Compliance Requirements	Source	Toolkit Reference Code
Category: Liveability			
Community Development 10: To encourage and recognise projects that engage in and facilitate the development of the project's community.	**Community Events 10.3.1 b.** After the first year of implementation, an evaluation of the type and frequency of community events should be undertaken to inform the ongoing program events. This is to ensure the type of events and their frequency meet the needs of the project occupants.	Green Building Council Australia 2016	GSC Liv CD
Culture, Heritage, and Identity 12: To encourage and recognise projects that celebrate and incorporate the heritage, culture and historical context of the project site, supporting communities and places with the development of a sense of place and identity.	**Understanding Culture, Heritage, and Identity 12.2.1** Provide details of how the culture, heritage and identity of the project site, identified as part of the research for 12.1, has been shared with the community by providing details of the Culture, Heritage, and Identity Interpretation Initiatives (s) being implemented; e.g. c. An Interpretation Plan to enrich an understanding of the place while providing guidance for aspects of the development of the area that will build on its unique characteristics.	Green Building Council Australia 2016	GSC Liv CHI
Category: Governance			
Community Participation and Governance 7: To encourage and recognise projects that establish mechanisms for community management arrangements for facilities and programs.	**7 Community Participation and Governance 7.2.1 & 7.2.2** Project occupants actively involved in decision-making processes. Provide details of the community program that will be managed, coordinated, or organised by a community led entity; Provide details of the community led entity that will be responsible for the management, coordination, or organisation of the community program; Describe how the community program is managed, coordinated or organised by the community led entity.	Green Building Council Australia 2016	GSC Gov CPG

Indicators used in this toolkit

The components of this toolkit focus on the value that creative placemaking can bring to the environment, society and economy.

The following table summarises the indicators of these values, to help you to structure your information collection and reporting. The Question Selection Tool can be used to focus the intent of your project and provide reporting areas.

Details on how these indicators contribute to the environmental, social and economic value of creative placemaking can be found in our *literature review* (Cohen et al. 2018).

Placemaking value aspects	Indicators of value	Unique value indicators	Toolkit reference codes
Social	Civic engagement	Number of attendees	SO 1.1
		Diversity of participants	SO 1.2
		Community-assisted events	SO 1.3
		Repeat visits	SO 1.4
	Safety/crime reduction	Reducing vandalism	SO 2.1
		Addressing urban problems	SO 2.2
		Integration into urban planning	SO 2.3
		Reduction of crime	SO 2.4
	Place attachment	Attracts new audiences	SO 3.1
		Changed perceptions of community	SO 3.2
		Storytelling	SO 3.3
Environmental	Facility provision	Improved public facilities	EN 1.1
	Diversity support	Amenable/accessible environment	EN2.1
		Catering to diverse needs	EN 2.2
Economic	Real estate	Uplift in property prices	EC 1.1
		Investment in housing	EC 1.2
	Education and employment	Local business growth	EC 2.1
		Increased business activity	EC 2.2
		Increased career development/education	EC 2.3

References

Cohen M, Gajendran T, Lloyd J, Maund K, Smith C, Bhim S, and Vaughan J, *Valuing creative placemaking: development of a toolkit for public and private stakeholders*, 2018, NSW Government, Landcom, Sydney.

Erickson J S, *Livability and Creativity: Civic Innovations at the Intersection of Arts, Culture, and Planning*, 2016, Tufts University, Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning, Ann Arbor.

Green Building Council Australia, *Green Star – Communities v1.1 Submission guidelines*, Version 13/09/2016.

Lew A A, *'Tourism planning and place making: place-making or placemaking?'*, Tourism Geographies, 19(3), 2017, pp 448-466.

Markusen A, *'Creative Cities: A 10-Year Research Agenda'*, Journal of Urban Affairs, 36, 2014, pp 567-589.

Morley E K, Zhang W M, Brash S R & Collazos J, *The Validating Arts & Livability Indicators (VALI) Study: Results and Recommendations*, 2014, National Endowment for the Arts, Washington.

Murdoch J, Grodach C, & Foster N, *'The Importance of Neighborhood Context in Arts-Led Development: Community Anchor or Creative Class Magnet?'*, Journal of Planning Education & Research, 36(1), 2016, pp 32-48.

Vaughan J, Maund K, Gajendran T, Lloyd J, Smith C, and Cohen M, *'Determining and representing value in creative placemaking'*, Journal of Place Management and Development, 14(4), 2021, pp 430-445.

APPENDICES:

Understanding the tools

Appendix 1: Organiser tools

These tools are for the organisers of a creative placemaking project. They are the most extensive tools, and may look daunting, but it is worth starting early with them.

The organiser tools are essentially one tool in several formats.

The *Organiser Overview Template* is a planning and reflecting tool that you would use in the planning stage as well as the reflecting stage after you have collected information through surveys.

The *Question Selection Tool* allows you to select survey questions from the Question Banks according to your needs. Using the reference codes which indicate the types of value, long and short-term goals (as well as the links with the Green Star Communities indicators, if relevant) will ensure your survey has diversity and will fit your overall focus. Once you have selected the relevant questions, you then need to manually modify the survey templates to reflect the selected questions.

The *Organiser Question Bank within the Question Selection Tool* covers the same topics as the Organiser Overview Template but in a single process, providing you the opportunity to select questions that suit your purpose.

The *Pre-Activity Briefing Document and the Event Debriefing Document* can guide you to work with the survey facilitators (see facilitator tools for detail)

In summary, these tools are most useful when used alongside the other components of this toolkit. They are designed to be:

Used for planning and reflecting at the end of a creative placemaking project or program

Used with other tools, as they will give you a 360° view of creative placemaking activities

Used by one person or a group working together

Most useful if the questions are selected to suit your project needs.

Useful resources

Existing Indicators

Name	Description	Typology
The impacts of local arts agencies on community placemaking and heritage tourism (Delconte et al. 2015)	Coded qualitative interviews mapped across the Community Capitals Framework (CCF) of seven impacts: built, cultural, financial, human, natural, political, and social capital.	Detailed methodologies

Further Reading

J Delconte, C S Kline, & C Scavo, *'The impacts of local arts agencies on community placemaking and heritage tourism'*, Journal of Heritage Tourism, 11(4), 2010, pp 324-335.

Government Architect of NSW, *Better Placed: An integrated design policy for the built environment of New South Wales*, 2017, NSW Government, Sydney.

S Silberberg, K Lorah, R Disbrow, & A Muessig, A., *Places in the Making: How placemaking builds places and communities*, 2013, DUSP/MIT, Boston.

J Shupbach & D Ball, (eds), *How to do Creative Placemaking: An Action-Oriented Guide to Arts in Community Development*, 2016, National Endowment for the Arts, Washington DC.

Project for Public Spaces, *The Place Diagram*, 2009, PPS, New York.

"For the community to be engaged and to get to know each other, [You] might want to get a lot of women involved, young people involved, people from other cultural backgrounds... and volunteerism obviously is a way to do that.

"So, [you] need to understand who [you are] targeting, who's involved, even who's running it and who is missing."

Social Sustainability Consultant, *interviewed December 2018*

Appendix 2: Facilitator tools

These tools comprehensively gather the insights of event organisers and/or the people conducting Attendee or Business surveys (see: Attendee Tools; Business Owner Tools), who usually have a good understanding of the event.

The *Question Selection Tool* contains a Facilitator Question Bank that can be used to create a Facilitator survey to capture insights of facilitators on the ground during a Creative Placemaking event. The Facilitator Question Bank in the Question Selection Tool allows you to select survey questions that will focus the intent of your project and provide reporting areas. It allows you to select survey questions from the Questions Bank according to your needs. Using the reference codes which indicate the types of value, long and short-term goals (as well as the links with the Green Star indicators, if relevant) will ensure your survey has diversity and will fit your overall focus.

The Facilitator Question Bank in the Question Selection Tool is:

- designed to capture what goes on during and behind the scenes at an event or activity
- scalable: can be used for a small event with one facilitator (who can also be the organiser) or a larger event or series of events with a team of facilitators
- most useful if all questions are asked.

The *Pre-Activity Briefing Document* is an adjustable guide to ensure that the facilitator understands the purpose of the survey tools and knows what to look for during a creative placemaking event in order to record insightful observations.

The *Event Debriefing Document* can be used by survey facilitators and/or organisers to reflect on the placemaking activity or event that just happened.

Useful resources

Existing Indicators

Name	Description	Typology
Gehl Methodology (Gehl & CBRE, 2017)	Criteria for assessing quality of public space based on human experience.	High-level measurements

"Place has different levels of significance to different people.

"Something that I might love might not actually really resonate with others, and ditto, the other way around.

"One of the challenging things around placemaking is this ability to appeal to everybody or to create an environment that has something for everyone, something that's discoverable, something that is unique, something that is beautiful. But also, from a functional perspective, something that is generating benefit, whether it's economic or social or restorative, from an environmental perspective."

Community and Social Strategy Director,
Private Company,
interviewed December 2017

Further Reading

E J Cilliers, W Timmermans, F Van den Goorbergh, & J S A Slijkhuis, *'The Story Behind the Place: Creating Urban Spaces That Enhance Quality of Life'*, Applied Research in Quality of Life, 10(4), 2015, pp 589-598.

J Gehl & CBRE, *Placemaking: Value and the Public Realm*, 2017, CBRE, London.

J Murdoch, C Grodach, & N Foster, *'The Importance of Neighborhood Context in Arts-Led Development: Community Anchor or Creative Class Magnet?'*, Journal of Planning Education & Research, 36(1), 2016, pp 32-48.

Appendix 3: Attendee tools

The Attendee Question Bank in the Question Selection Tool contains questions that cover all categories of indicators (environmental, social and economic) so you need to think carefully about which questions you actually want to ask the attendees of a placemaking activity or event.

The Attendee Question Bank can be used to focus the intent of your project and provide reporting areas. This tool allows you to select survey questions from the Questions Bank according to your needs. Using the reference codes which indicate the types of value, long and short-term goals (as well as the links with the Green Star Communities indicators, if relevant) will ensure your survey has diversity and will fit your overall focus. Once you have selected the suitable questions, you then need to manually modify the survey templates to reflect the selected questions.

The Attendee Question Bank in the *Question Selection Tool* allows you to design an Attendee Survey to suit your needs. The resulting survey is designed to be done face-to-face, so you need to make sure you leave time to test the survey before you use it to make sure it flows well. You may also want to train the facilitators and undertake the *Pre-Activity Briefing Document* (if you need to) well before the event.

An Attendee Survey may generate very interesting conversations about place and community: the open-ended questions are especially important so don't be tempted to skip over them!

The Attendee Question Bank in the Question Selection Tool is:

- designed to capture the impact of event on participants and their sense/awareness of place
- adaptable: you are able to select questions to emphasise what you or the organisers want the community to get out of the event or activity.

"When people consider moving to the area: first they find us and then they find the events, the culture, people and network ... Then they move up here and come repeatedly to all our events."

Marketing Strategist,
Private Company,
Interviewed December 2017

Useful resources

Existing Indicators

Name	Description	Typology
Qualitative evaluation study of shared spaces in New Zealand (Karndacharuk et al., 2015)	A framework of qualitative analysis using on-street perception and expert interview surveys to investigate the performance of shared spaces and streets.	Detailed methodologies

Further Reading

A Karndacharuk, D J Wilson, & R C M Dunn, *'Qualitative evaluation study of urban shared spaces in New Zealand'*, Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment, 42, 2016, pp 119-134.

K E Till, & R McArdle, *'The improvisional city: Valuing urbanity beyond the chimera of permanence'*, Irish Geography, 48(1), 2015, pp 37-68.

K Worpole, & K Knox, *The Social Value of Public Spaces*, 2007, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York.

Appendix 4: Business owner tools

These tools focus on gathering information on the economic and social impacts from the perspectives of business owners or a local community enterprise.

The *Question Selection Tool* contains a Business Owner Question Bank that can be used to focus the intent of your project and provide reporting areas. This tool allows you to select survey questions from the Questions Bank according to your needs. Choosing the questions by aligning with reference codes, which indicate the types of value and match with long- and short-term goals (as well as the links with the Green Star Communities indicators, if relevant), will ensure your survey has diversity and will fit your overall focus.

The Business Owner Question Bank is a tool to generate a survey that can be completed face-to-face with a business owner or local community enterprise on the actual day of an event or activity, or could be sent out as an online form to fill out after the event.

This survey can also be done over time with the same or similar businesses to track what value a program of events is bringing to a community.

The Business Owner Question Bank in the Question Selection Tool is:

- designed to be used with existing and future stakeholders
- fit for both not-for-profit groups and social enterprises, as well as commercial businesses
- most useful if all questions are asked, however you can modify the survey to suit your needs.

Useful resources

Existing Indicators

Name	Description	Typology
An Economic Evaluation of the Renew Newcastle Project, Centre of Full Economic & Equity (Flanagan & Mitchell, 2016)	Criteria and case study of cost benefit analysis for Renew Newcastle.	Detailed methodologies

"[When] arts-run retail businesses ... thrive and survive, they hit the pulse of the local community and it's another example of placemaking, even if they're not conscious of it."

Director, Not-For-Profit Arts Organisation, Interviewed December 2017

Further Reading

M Flanagan, & W Mitchell, *An Economic Evaluation of the Renew Newcastle Project*, 2016, Centre of Full Employment and Equity, Newcastle.

D S Noonan, *'How US cultural districts reshape neighbourhoods'*, Cultural Trends, 22(3-4), 2013, pp 203-212.

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