Vahri McKenzie, Denise Thwaites, and Cathy Hope

Careful and Curious:

A Transformative Ethos for Artistic Evaluation

The logic of government subsidy recognises that there are forms of value not suitably captured by exchanges of the free market. Yet there remains a growing impetus for arts organisations and individual artists to measure and articulate the specific value of their practices through formal processes of evaluation. In the context of government subsidy, evaluation is supposed to provide accountability for public taxpayers and useful information for governments to inform public policy. These forms of evaluation typically adopt quantitative measures of benefit devised through top-down bureaucratic processes that reflect existing government frameworks and priorities. In doing so, they miss opportunities to capture unforeseen insights that artists and communities may articulate through alternative forms of evaluation.

This article offers a conceptual discussion and illustrative example of how more open and exploratory evaluation methodologies may intersect with existing government frameworks, so that the public can fully benefit from the rich critical and affective insights artists and arts workers offer through their subsidised projects. We adopt a creative research lens, as both writing position and research method, to consider the affordances of artistic evaluation that tactically appropriate existing industry-based schema, while privileging affective ways of interpreting and presenting data. We achieve this through discussion of an industry-embedded case that prototyped a "careful and curious" evaluation framework. Drawing on the work of feminist economists J.K Gibson-Graham and Marilyn Waring, alongside Maria Puig de la Bellacasa's "triptych of care as 'ethics-work-affect'" (2017, 13) and Perry Zurn's understanding of "feminist curiosity" (2021, 1), our evaluation model aims to instantiate a "transformative ethos" (Puig de la Bellacasa 2011, 100) for artistic evaluation to augment existing practices. Finally, we demonstrate our model's application in the case of the ACT Government's Creative Recovery and Resilience Program and their piloting of the Cultural Development Network evaluation framework. Our evaluation approach is careful in that it values care, and curious in that it is committed to experimental and creative-centred methods adopted across project design, delivery and evaluation. Through this, we reflect upon the

potential of evaluation, beyond the extraction and summation of value, as a process that generates value itself by developing a language of possibilities for artists and communities (Gibson-Graham 2006).

Measuring the Value of Art: Drawing on Feminist Economics, and Science and Technology Studies

To understand the complexities and affordances of evaluation for arts and culture, we might first consider its etymology. On the one hand, evaluation draws attention to the extractive dimension of this task; the Latin prefix ex- denotes a process of taking out or from. At the same time, the polysemic quality of the Latin valere foreshadows the complexity of defining the value one seeks to extract; the varied forms of this word connote worth, merit, strength, validity, sufficiency, or indeed, something that counts. Developing evaluation frameworks to determine what counts, as well as processes to count them, reflects the largely summative and quantitative approach that many organisations adopt to demonstrate value. The impact of similar frameworks was famously critiqued by seminal feminist economist Marilyn Waring in her book Counting for Nothing (2016 [1999]). In this she articulates how the United Nations System of National Accounts (an international system of economic management that shapes government policies worldwide) not only fails to account for the value of unwaged "women's work" [sic], such as home-making and childrearing, but assigns no value to non-commoditised "natural environments" [sic] (2016, 1). Within these systems of evaluation, the inability to account for unwaged contributions of the human and "natural" world has left such vital aspects of community life underrepresented in government policies.

For some, the move in arts and culture towards a creative industries paradigm provided a way to measure the contributions of the arts by leveraging quantitative economic frameworks (see Cunningham 2002; Bakhshi and Cunningham 2016). In 1994, Paul Keating drew explicit links between cultural and economic development (see Rowe et al. 2016), stating: "This cultural policy is also an economic policy" (Department of Communications and the Arts 1994). However, aside from noted objections to framing arts and culture's value in purely economic terms (see Gattenhof et al. 2021; Meyrick, Phiddian, and Barnett 2018; O'Connor 2016), there are documented challenges to using existing analytical frameworks and quantitative datasets to evaluate arts and cultural contributions to the economy (Santos-Duisenberg et al. 2010; Kuku et al. 2018; Hennekam and Bennett 2017). Indeed, in a free market context, the labour of artists and arts workers is often unaccounted for, as the market value of their intellectual property rarely reflects the intensity of work required to generate it (Lee 2022; Baumol and Bowen 1993). So, when evaluated through a summative economic lens, the value of an artist's work often suffers the same fate as those, such as carers, whose unwaged labour is rendered largely invisible.

This article is not the first to draw parallels between art's value and care work. Indeed, Millner and Coombs's recent edited collection *Care Ethics and Art* (2022) explicitly considers how artistic processes and outputs enact forms of care that resist the reductive evaluations of neoliberal economics. Likewise, we are far from the first to consider how care work might be better accounted for within systems of evaluation; programs such as Care Work and the Economy, as well as recent initiatives of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, seek to develop economic methods and tools to account for the value of care work and thereby inform policy that supports gender equity (Blecker and Braunstein 2022).

Our aim is instead to build upon the provocations of feminist economists Waring and Gibson-Graham, who not only recognise the diverse forms of labour, value and exchange that sustain the waged economy (see Figure 1), but invite us to experiment with our own methods of identifying and circulating value. Like them, we explore a "politics of possibility" that seeks to support the "self-cultivation of subjects" who can, in turn, generate their own language of value in a context of diverse economies (Gibson-Graham 2006, xxiii). In line with their work, we acknowledge the role of affects and feeling in transforming subjects that can think and act in new ways (Gibson-Graham 2006, 1). This article thus presents an experimental evaluation framework informed by creative research that moves beyond the summative logic typical of most models, embracing the generative capacity and affective qualities of language to propose new ways of accounting for art's value.

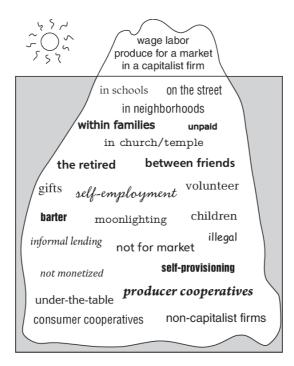


Figure 1: J.K. Gibson-Graham (drawn by Ken Byrne). The iceberg, from Community Economies Collective 2001. Published in Gibson-Graham (2006).

To develop our generative evaluation framework, we draw on perspectives from Science and Technology Studies, namely the work of Maria Puig de la Bellacasa that integrates approaches from feminist theory and environmental humanities. Given that evaluation frameworks may be considered "socio-technical assemblages" that aspire to precise measurement, and develop conceptual, organisational and technical tools to do so, we build on Puig de la Bellacasa's approach to transforming these "neglected things" from "matters of fact" into "matters of care" (2011, 94). Specifically, in her more recent work, *Matters of Care* (2017), Puig de la Bellacasa engages with feminist post-humanist interpretations of caring relations beyond the human world to consider the concept of care as a "speculative research question" (2017, 7). She does not offer a general theory of care, nor critique of care as a normative category, but rather considers care as a method, or "a critically disruptive doing" (2017, 12). Our experimental evaluation framework is informed by Puig de la Bellacasa's "triptych of care as 'ethics-work-affect" (2017, 13), using it as a structural device to guide our methods and approach (see Table 1).

For Puig de la Bellacasa, the term *ethics* does not connote normative moral obligations, but rather a "transformative ethos" (2011, 100), or way of being, that recognises our "thick, impure, involvement in a world where the question of how to care needs to be posed" (2017, 6). Her notion of *work* highlights the effortfulness of care, which involves "hands-on agencies of practical and material consequence" (2017, 4). Lastly, *affect* recognises the relational entanglements of care, where "transforming things into matters of care is a way of relating to them, of inevitably becoming affected by them, and of modifying their potential to affect others" (2011, 99). Puig de la Bellacasa's triptych thus offers a valuable model for responding to the entangled, embodied, and affective dynamics of artistic evaluation's socio-technical assemblages, which recognise the contingencies of evaluation outcomes while challenging the inevitability of their forms and processes.

In addition to taking inspiration from Puig de la Bellacasa's conceptual triptych of care, our evaluative approach adopts another guiding principle: curiosity. Perry Zurn examines the role of curiosity in the history of feminist thought, describing it as "deconstructive in nature" as it "breaks down" and "builds anew" (2021, 2). He emphasises the way it departs from traditional patriarchal modes of investigation by privileging "collaborative forms of inquiry" that harness "generous listening" (2021, 2). Such curiosity works in coalition with intersectional frameworks:

Feminist curiosity looks to the present for resistant praxis already at work. It does so with an ear for what goes unsung and unsaid, what is buried in bodies and blossoming between marginalized beings, in stolen times and heterotopic spaces. It attunes itself to the poetics of the present. (Zurn 2021, 5)

The embodied and affective language used in this characterisation aligns feminist curiosity with the "curious methods" of creative practices that combine "modes of inquiry, experimentation and reflection" (Hill and Paris 2021, 10). As such, it provides a suitable guiding principle to develop an artistic evaluation framework that acknowledges material entanglements, while remaining open-ended and welcoming to the unexpected through reflective and generative processes that develop new knowledge and ways of knowing. In this respect, our careful and curious approach does not aim to furnish scalable and generalisable conclusions, but rather to present evaluative artefacts with their own "lively existence" (Puig della Bellacasa 2011, 88). We suggest that the affective qualities of these curious artefacts are valuable yet often overlooked in entangled relations of care between artists, communities and governments.

Modelling Careful and Curious Evaluation: The Case of ACT's Creative Recovery and Resilience Program

In the following section we present the processes of developing our experimental evaluation framework that was trialled with members of the arts community within an experimental environment: the ACT Government's Creative Recovery and Resilience Program. Developing a framework to highlight evaluative labour allowed us to respond to Gibson-Graham's invitation to render visible and valuable those forms of work "below the tip of the iceberg" that sustain the measurable outcomes of arts practices, while at the same time tailoring it to project values such as equity, responsiveness, care and lifelong learning.

Our alternative evaluation approach remains open and experimental, and in the tradition of Gibson-Graham's diverse economies approach, aims to co-exist alongside other extant value frameworks. Rather than simply presenting another evaluation framework and advocating for its adoption, we embrace Puig de la Bellacasa's "transformative ethos" (2011, 100) by providing an illustrative case for how artists and arts workers may tactically navigate and appropriate existing evaluation tools and instruments to support their own creative and community needs. In doing so, our project intersects with artist-led projects such as Kate Rich's *Feral MBA* (2020–ongoing) and *Radmin* (2019–ongoing), which aim to "reclaim administration as a space for action, play, and intervention" and facilitate communities of practice for administration's "dark arts, wild experiments, and new collectivities" (Rich 2023).

In the development of our alternative evaluation approach, we acknowledge our privileged positionality as university-based scholar-artists who have received research training and support to develop creative practice skills alongside professional arts industry networks, which include artists, arts workers, and project managers. Our research approach is both creative and transdisciplinary, as it integrates methods, concepts, and perspectives from a range of disciplinary contexts, and involves cooperation between researchers, industry, and community stakeholders (Strober 2011,

16). Our insights should thus be understood as provisional outcomes for integration into more ongoing transdisciplinary action research, which unfolds through iterative phases of action and reflection with community co-investigators (McTaggart 1999; Bradbury 2015). We deem this approach appropriate for arts evaluation, given that subsidised arts activities may be undertaken by artists, audiences, researchers, or administrators with various professional and disciplinary perspectives; may entail a range of activities including advocacy, routine service auditing practices, and research (Daykin and Joss 2016, 8); and may offer ways to realise remedial social justice intentions, such as in health humanities contexts (Klugman 2019, 6).

Appropriating Existing Evaluation Tools: ACT Creative Recovery and Resilience Program and Cultural Development Network

Over 2021–22, following the initial waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACT Government's Creative Recovery and Resilience Program (CRRP) sought to "focus on employment and economic stimulus for the creative sector in the ACT" and to deliver six new projects "in partnership with local organisations to enable recovery and building [sic] resilience for artists and arts workers" (artsACT n.d.). The authors of this paper, working within the University of Canberra's Centre for Creative and Cultural Research, were successful in our tender to lead two of the six CRRP projects. The first was the Creative Recovery and Resilience Forum that, through a series of public discussion and workshop events, provided a community platform to explore issues and opportunities for the ACT creative sector relating to the theme of "recovery and resilience". The second was an artists' residency hosting four artists focused on Digital Innovation or Cross-Sector Engagement, delivered in partnership with Belconnen Arts Centre.

The CRRP coincided with the development of a new arts policy in the ACT, and arguably served as a testing ground for some of its policy agendas. Three agendas in particular were most apparent in the CRRP design: (i) government financial support for the other-than-economic value of the arts, to enable the arts to continue to "nourish our collective wellbeing, and connect our emotions, ideas, stories and heritage"; (ii) government economic investment in the arts to increase "capability and capacity" that leads to growth, and; (iii) stimulation of cross-disciplinary and cross-sector "partnerships, collaborations and relationships" to generate "entrepreneurial activity" (artsACT 2022, 2).

The new ACT arts policy also embedded a key element of the ACT Government's broader mission to deliver both "knowledge based economic growth" and "values driven economic investment" (Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, 2022, 38) with its commitment to explore tools that can measure the complex mix of "cultural, social and economic outcomes of investment in the arts" (artsACT, 2022, 23). This new policy context led to the ACT Government's trial of the evidence-based Cultural Development Network (CDN) framework as the measurement

framework for the CRRP. Based at RMIT University, CDN produces "tools, resources and research to assist local government and others in their arts/cultural development planning, strategy, policy and outcomes" (CDN 2019). Developed through an extensive review and analysis of literature and consultation with cultural sector participants, CDN's structured approach aims to meet the need for evaluation frameworks that are fit for the purpose of evaluating arts and cultural projects, and that enable comparisons to be made across different individual projects (Dunphy et al. 2020). As far as we are aware, our paper is the first published research about CDN's framework from a user's perspective.

CDN's framework applies a "Theory of Change" model at both project planning and project evaluation stages. Theory of Change is a planning and evaluation approach that is becoming more widely used by government bureaucracies and not-for-profit social impact organisations (Daykin and Joss 2016, 11). Rather than developing a theory based on an extensive review of relevant literature, or on the rigorous documentation and interpretation of practice knowledge, it invites users to identify a desired outcome, to identify what has been effective in achieving that goal in other contexts, then to plan similar activities to achieve the identified goal. Logic models such as Theory of Change provide a semblance of rigour, enhanced by quantitative data, with the aim of measuring diverse and dynamic outcomes. Instead of building on existing scholarship, they rely on primary empirical research to design evaluation frameworks.

CDN's approach includes the development of specific Values and Goals, followed by the selection of desired Outcomes from CDN's five-domain Measurable Outcomes Schema, which categorises benefits across Cultural, Social, Economic, Environmental and Governance domains. As creative researchers, we were fortunate to collaborate with an experienced "embedded creative" (Cunningham and Hearn 2014) appointed by artsACT to lead CRRP. Our artsACT collaborator was required as part of the co-design process to ensure the application of the CDN for ACT Government purposes, while facilitating the bespoke application of this model to suit our projects' Values and Goals. At the same time, this collaborator supported our use of our own, creative-centred and experimental approaches to project design, delivery and evaluation to both complement and provide comparative data to the CDN model. Together we identified a number of Values that guided the forum's design and curation: to support and promote the value of arts and culture for economic and cultural reasons; to provide an environment of care (equity, safety and responsiveness) for a community that had experienced uncertainty, economic precarity and other vulnerabilities; and to adopt experimental approaches in response both to the CRRP pilot program and to enable emergent forms, particularly in the peri-pandemic context.

The Artists-in-Residence project was centred around two core Values: care, the everyday nurturing and relational foundations of creative practice that had suffered during lockdowns; and lifelong learning that prioritised cultivating a long-term creative practice rather than a short-term project outcome. All Values met CRRP's own agenda to

prioritise broad inclusion and access to the projects, which were complemented by our focus on open-ended, creative and experimental processes. This is significant, as it provided opportunities to recognise forms of careful and curious labour that sustain those more visible outcomes in the creative and cultural sector, such as exhibitions, performances, and publications. Our approach prioritised experimental processes of trial and error, and relational processes of community exchange.

In addition to defining project Values, CDN's framework invites users to select specific Outcomes. This can be challenging in an arts context, where project outcomes often present as diverse and dynamic phenomena resisting narrow and predetermined categories. As participants in their pilot program, however, we collaborated with artsACT to select three Outcomes per project that best reflected the Values identified above. Given the forum's Values and an expectation that responses to recovery and resilience would be leveraged for sector capacity-building, we selected the following CDN Measurable Outcomes for planning and evaluation:

- Cultural Domain: Knowledge, ideas and insight gained
- Economic Domain: Professional practice capability increased
- Governance Domain: Access to beneficial networks and other resources increased.

To reflect the residencies' Values of care and lifelong learning, we selected the following CDN Measurable Outcomes for planning and evaluation:

- Cultural Domain: Knowledge, ideas and insight gained
- Economic Domain: Professional practice capability increased
- Social: Social connectedness enhanced.

The nominated Outcomes are integral to the CDN framework's use of Theory of Change. At the planning stage, the process of engineering formal project plans built around the Measurable Outcomes, while remaining sincerely oriented to the values that motivated us, took substantial hermeneutic labour as we sought to maintain scope for open-ended experimentality. This was significant given our commitment to self-cultivation for ACT creative communities. As will be discussed further below, applying a Theory of Change method at the evaluation stage relies on respondents' providing an unverified baseline from which to measure the resultant change they experienced.

Through preliminary analysis of CDN's framework and interface, we identified its approach to be predominantly quantitative and summative in nature, as it uses categorical modes of communication and analysis to extract seemingly objective information to present a cumulative picture of project success. CDN's approach is also scalable; its integration with online platforms enables use by a vast number of stakeholders and, in so doing, potentially facilitates the collection of sufficient quantitative data that may be used to draw generalisable conclusions.

Broader adoption of Theory of Change approaches following the term's popularisation by evaluation theorist Carol Weiss (1995) have in recent years been supercharged by the "metric tide" (Wilsdon et al. 2016) and turn to big data. As Julian Meyrick, Robert Phiddian and Tully Barnett have persuasively argued, a reliance on metrics to understand value in arts and culture increasingly eclipses other ways of understanding value (2018). Yet we suggest the performance of this evaluative rigour need not be plainly dismissed, but rather become a locus of creative and critical inquiry itself, inviting researchers to consider how we might adapt the rationalist frameworks of organisations and governments to generate our own systems of value. Complementing the affordances of CDN's framework, our alternative approach sought to render visible aspects of the evaluation processes that are often missed, including the care that artists and arts workers take to develop, deliver, document and evaluate their projects.

Designing a Complementary Evaluation Framework

Guided by our aforementioned understandings of care and curiosity, in this section we offer interpretations of how these concepts may be harnessed to effect change across four recognisable stages of evaluation: planning, data collection, interpretation and presentation (Table 1).

	CAREFUL	CURIOUS	
Project planning (Stage 1)	 A. centres relationships B. actively attends to perspectives and experiences that are often neglected C. considers the everyday labour of care 	 I. integrates exploratory processes embedded with present-day praxis. II. defines outcomes in open and provisional terms 	
Data collection (Stage 2)	 A. supports participant agency and self-cultivation B. responsive in form and media 	 I. facilitates participants' self-guided reflection II. engages in generous listening that embraces complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty 	
Interpretation (Stage 3)	 A. attends to affective dimensions of data collected B. recognises evaluators' situated positionality in interpreting data 	 I. considers evidence as provocations, rather than resolutions II. attends to experiential and embodied indicators of transformation 	

(Stage 4) read artis imp com B. cons arte	oys aesthetic affect to tivate/recirculate tic value and its act on subjective and munity becoming stitutes a lively cultural fact in itself as an come of creative ur		is deconstructive or generative rather than summative, i.e., opening to possibilities rather than settling accounts
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Table 1: Careful and Curious guiding principles for evaluation processes

Having completed the CDN-informed co-design processes with ACT Government stakeholders, our careful and curious approach began by co-designing detailed project activities with members of the ACT creative community. Reflecting the value of care, we actively centred relationships rather than material outputs (Stage 1, principle A), as both the forum and residencies were designed to activate grassroots networks for knowledge and skills exchange, crossing different art-forms and industry sectors. The open and bottom-up development of these events and encounters were exploratory and aimed at raising questions and sharing perspectives among present day practitioners (Stage 1, principle I), rather than providing solutions.

Our curation of activities attended to the experiences of marginalised members of the ACT creative community (Stage 1, principle B), not only through the development of access, inclusion and cultural safety plans for participants across both projects, but also by providing platforms for members of ACT's First Nations, LGBTQI and disability communities to share their perspectives regarding creative recovery and resilience through co-designed events. Both projects were designed iteratively, responding and adapting to feedback from participants as they unfolded (Stage 1, principle II). Finally, the everyday, practical labour of care was recognised through the appointment of two dedicated creative producers, who were funded to support the projects' alignment with community needs and resident artists' experiences (Stage 1, principle C). Even with our orientation towards care, we note here that the labour associated with the creative producers' everyday care and custodianship for the projects was significantly underestimated at the time of planning.

In addition to the CDN and careful and curious frameworks, our research was guided by a formal human research ethics framework that provided information and options for our participating stakeholders, who included recruited and remunerated artists and arts workers as well as unpaid participants in forum discussion and workshop events.

For Stage 2, collecting evidence to serve as evaluation data for the CRRP forum and residencies projects involved the requisite deployment of ACT Government nominated tools and resources, including the use of CDN's Takso survey tool, alongside our own

suite of evaluation techniques. Although CDN's guide to evaluation gestures towards the benefits of data collection methods such as arts-based approaches and participant observation, it identifies questionnaires as "the quickest and easiest method for gathering data from a large number of people" (CDN 2019, "Evaluate Outcomes"). Surveying is also the method anticipated by Takso, the software and evaluation tool with which CDN users interface. Given the quantitative design of CDN's survey, it was deemed most appropriate to test its evaluative capacity within the CRRP forum, which would involve a greater number of participants. We were provided with a pre-designed survey asking questions about our three selected forum outcomes, which our Forum Creative Producer sent via email to registered attendees and recruited artists following each event. However, as is common in small scale arts contexts, we experienced extremely poor uptake of requests to complete the survey by forum activity participants. To address the possibility that our email approach inhibited collection of survey data, further attempts to solicit responses were made by the Creative Producer, including adapting the survey to a phone interview, which took total survey responses from 19 to 30 from a total of 229 invitations sent (13% response rate). Possible reasons for this low response rate include the Takso survey's poor user experience, as well as a failure of such unremunerated survey methods to recognise the labour invested on the part of the respondent. From our observations, evaluation surveys seeking to extract information from participants without offering anything in return are not seen as offering value to potential respondents.

In addition to low response rates, concerns arose regarding the quality of CDN survey data: it was apparent that the survey used concepts and language that were not accessible nor well understood. For example, respondents were asked to assess forum activities on a scale of 1 to 10, but were not provided with any benchmarks to guide their responses. While larger-scale user experience surveys rely on a sufficient quantity of responses to level out individual variation and produce reliable data, in small-scale arts contexts, low sample sizes risk significantly misrepresenting audience and community experiences. Furthermore, using a Theory of Change model to evaluate project impact relies on respondents' making complex temporal assessments, with questions designed to measure outcomes from the economic domain phrased as follows:

Having participated in this activity, think about your access to beneficial networks and other resources. Using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is not at all and 10 is the most imaginable, how would you rate this access?

Thinking back to before you participated in this activity, how would you rate your access to beneficial networks and other resources then, using the same scale?

It appears these questions were not well understood: open text responses to the Takso survey question, "Can you tell us more about why you gave these two ratings?" included comments such as "The question is hard to understand" and "Not sure network access

has increased in the last 2 hours. Even if it has, can't say yet". Taken together, the low respondent numbers and questionable survey design indicate that survey data must be interpreted with caution, despite the CDN survey's beguiling appearance of rigour.

Given the issues identified with the quantitative data collection approach commonly used by CDN, we integrated other arts-based methods. When designing these, attention was paid to facilitate participants' agency, self-cultivation and informed consent (Stage 2, principle A), rather than subjecting artists to a prescribed bureaucratic system. Building on creative practice research methodologies that recognise the iterative and cyclical nature of creative practice knowledge generation, as well as the generative potential of emotions and affects (Smith and Dean 2009, 2–3), we used artist-led discursive and observational research methods to collect qualitative evaluation data in written, image-based and moving-image formats, tailored to respondent needs (Stage 2, principle B).

Yet developing our complementary careful and curious approach to gathering evaluation evidence also required navigating certain institutional constraints. Among them was the ACT Government requirement to demonstrate the extent to which our projects had achieved CDN Measurable Outcomes, even if we were not using their specific Takso platform or survey methods. To this end, evaluation data for the residencies project were collected to reflect the notion of "generous listening" (Zurn 2021, 2) through participant entry and exit interviews that used open-ended prompts for reflection (Stage 2, principle I), periodic reflections submitted by participants in any format, and researcher observations (Stage 2, principle II).

For the forum, three writers-in-residence were recruited as co-investigators to engage in participant observation of forum events, producing textual and image-based reflections for publication on the project website (Creative ACT 2022a). Although these accounts were analysed by our research team with reference to CDN Measurable Outcomes, writers themselves were encouraged to respond to nine forum activities freely and creatively, without reference to our evaluation framework. Rather, on the basis that "understandings of social worlds can be enhanced by observing, experiencing and talking to others" (Coffey 2006, 215), the dataset of nine written responses was designed as a corrective to the narrowness of the survey data. Far from eschewing the subjective written responses as rigorous approaches to evaluation, we privileged narrative and creative approaches in our research methods as vital to the sector.

Interpretation and Presentation: Generating Evaluation Narratives and Artefacts

As creative researchers we understand that interpretation often emerges through the process of presenting findings; the iterative processes of visualising and narrating evidence furnishes new interpretations as data becomes provocation for material enquiry (Stage 3, principle I), producing deconstructive or generative, rather than

summative artefacts (Stage 4, principle I). Within our evaluation framework, interpretation and presentation stages (3 and 4) are intimately linked, as can be seen in the following discussion.

During the data interpretation process, we attended closely to the affective dimensions of communication embedded in the datasets (Stage 3, principle A). Rather than seeking cool objectivity as evaluation analysts, we acknowledged our positionality as artist-researchers and embraced generous interpretations of data (Stage 3, principle B), which welcomed the complexity of relational entanglements for their transformative potential. In doing so, we considered how our interpretations might be directed towards the narrow target outcomes of CDN's Measurable Outcomes Schema, while also producing richer understandings that reflect qualities of care. In this respect, we contend that the hermeneutic labour of interpretation is a vital part of the hidden care-work that underpins evaluation frameworks such as that provided by CDN.

Given the paucity of accurate quantitative data furnished through CDN's survey, we were concerned that presenting its results in standardised graphical formats would only exacerbate a false sense of rigour and objectivity, rather than reflecting the complexity and ambiguity of the data collected (Stage 2, principle II; see Table 2). Instead, we took inspiration from experimental fields of data-based creative art practice, which attend to the subjective, emotional and embodied experiences prompted by visualisation (Li 2018), to develop an alternative approach to engaging with this data and its lacunae. Figure 2 presents an experimental graphic visualisation that attends to some experiential dimensions of survey responses (Stage 3, principle II); namely respondents' sense of uncertainty; the lack of clear reference points for numerical measures; and the thinness of quantitative data collected.

% agreement (% of respondents applying a score of 7 or more)	Number of responses	Cultural: Knowledge, ideas, and insight gained	Economic: Professional practice capability increased	Average change resulting from participation on 1–10 scale	Governance: Access to beneficial networks and other resources increased	Average change resulting from partici- pation on 1–10 scale
Activity 1	10	30%	50%	+0.2	60%	+0.1
Activities 2– 4	8	50%	62.5%	+0.6	50%	+0.9
Activity 5	3	66.7%	100%	+2.67	33.3%	+2

Activity 6	5	60%	40%	+1	40%	+2.5
Activities 7 and 8	1	100%	100%	no change	100%	+2

Table 2: Standard quantitative presentation of CRRP Forum activity survey data

Appropriating the convention of the line graph, Figure 2 charts the dynamics of reported respondent experiences with respect to CDN's cultural, economic and governance outcomes (columns 3, 4 and 6) over five events (encompassing forum activities 1-8), using weight of line as an indicator of data quantity. It uses familiar graphic form to highlight the parallels, divergences and intersections between CDN outcomes, but deploys an erasure of graphic reference points in a curious, deconstructive gesture that "breaks down" and "builds anew" (Zurn 2021, 2). The graphic highlights not only the gaps, but qualitative ambiguities of the data collected, as a muted grey is used to highlight the disembodied language used for cultural outcomes, which are framed as external resources to be "gained", rather than dynamic and relational capacities to "increase". This lively and curious artefact highlights the many layers of interpretive labour implicit in artistic evaluation (Stage 4, principle B), which aims to provoke questions rather than settle accounts (Stage 3, principle I). In doing so, it presents a multi-layered story arc of audience engagement that, through creative appropriation, remains interpretatively open and generative. Attending to its affect, this curious artefact transforms the relational dynamics generated by audiences through evaluation processes from "matters of fact" into "matters of care" (Puig De la Bellacasa 2011, 99). Positioning the graphic as a valuable creative artefact in itself, we aim to make visible the "urgent and everyday" labour of artists and arts workers engaging with evaluation systems' "administrative haze" (Rich 2023).

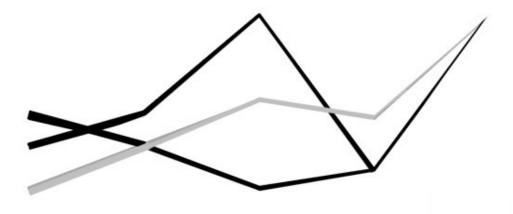


Figure 2: Experimental graphic visualisation of CRRP Forum activity survey data

We continued our tactical appropriation of bureaucratic systems with our interpretation and presentation of triangulated forum data collected through surveys, writer-inresidence accounts and researcher participant observation. While these data sources were identified in advance, their interpretation was a relational and embodied exercise that responded to the uncertainties and possibilities of the creative process (Stage 3, principle II). Aware of the ambiguities implicit in data collection and interpretation, we sought to adapt the "Traffic Light Assessment" convention used in bureaucratic performance management (Table 3). Instead of the anticipated associations between red (stop, cause for concern) and green (go, all good), our colour code used a colour spectrum to suggest graduated changes in intensity, where changes detected were estimated as small (red), medium (orange), large (yellow), or white (no change detected). Viewed holistically, these colours invoke the unique heat signatures of thermal imaging, where the eye is drawn to regions that require attention. This shift from a simple instructional colour code to one that is evocative of embodied affects conjured by heat and energy illustrates how evaluative artefacts might be attuned to convey the urgency of needs in the context of creative recovery and resilience. The presentation of data was a generative process of building a clear and compelling picture from the available evidence (Stage 4, principle I). Through this process, we confirmed that the measurement of qualitative experiences is not an obvious interpretive act, despite CDN's apparently rational and logical framework.

Yellow = large change	Cultural: Knowledge,	Economic:	Governance:
detected	ideas and insight	Professional practice	Access to
Orange = medium	gained	capability increased	beneficial
change detected			networks and
Red = small change			other resources
detected			increased
White = no change			
detected			
Activity 1			
Activities 2-4			
Activity 5			
Activity 6			
Activities 7 and 8			
Activity 9			

 Table 3: Speculative colour-coded presentation of triangulated CRRP Forum data

In addition to these experiments in visualising data as lively evaluation artefacts, exploring narrative forms was identified as a fruitful process to both interpret and present evaluation outcomes. This is illustrated by the case study, "A Transformative Cross-Sector Residency" (Creative ACT 2022b). Evaluating the experience of the Established Artist-in-Residence for Cross-Sector Engagement required us to navigate CDN's Measurable Outcomes alongside our own frameworks. With respect to the former, we reported specific outcomes against one of the three selected Measurable Outcomes, focusing on "countables" such as the numbers of workshops, seminars and artworks produced, and numbers of organisations the artist connected with (Table 4).

Established Artist in Cross- Sector Engagement	Economic: Professional practice capability increased	Cultural: Knowledge, ideas and insight gained	Social: Social connectedness enhanced
	7 new cross-sector connections with land- care organisations 1 ACT Environment Grant 1 new studio group formed with 5 artists 1 CCCR artwork 1 CCCR seminar 1 CRRP workshop	1 public workshop	High quality of Economic relationships identified

Table 4: Presentation of triangulated data, focusing on countables, for Established Artist-in-Residence for Cross-Sector Engagement

We recognised, however, that this table did not capture the transformative value of the residency for the artist and her community. This was instead achieved through our interpretation of the qualitative data collected through the artist's post-residency interview, which attended to the emotional and affective dimensions of communication. We were struck, for example, by the affective quality of the artist's account (Stage 3, principle A) as she described a sense of "astonishment" that the project centred "the idea that creative arts-based research and practice is about engaging with this really wide cross-sector group of people". Presenting the artist's experience of surprise at being so positively entangled with diverse community and industry groups required a flexible format that could illustrate how desired project outcomes developed and transformed with the artist's residency process. The narrative case study also featured the artist's figurative description of a woven basket, "a kind of loose weave basket . . . which sort of holds all these relationships together", giving form to the time-consuming work of building connections that gain in significance when viewed as a whole basket. Our narrative-based evaluation tracked those Outcome concepts we sought to understand (knowledge, capabilities, and connection) using synthesising narrative techniques. Rather than the somewhat arbitrary process of assigning "countables" to an Outcome, such as Table 4's Economic Outcome evidenced by a list of connections made, a narrative account shows how outcomes are relational and intermingled. Indeed, it is the work of initiating, developing and enhancing relationships—with social, cultural and economic implications—that was "transformative" for the artist. Through their affective force, we suggest our lively evaluative artefacts provide an example of how artists may develop new ways of feeling, thinking and representing the value of their work. These forms of experimentation can enable the ground-up self-cultivation of community subjects, who become active agents in making and re-making their own transformative economic imaginaries (Gibson-Graham 2006, xxiii).

Rather than disaggregating diverse and dynamic phenomena as CDN's approach requires, skilfully constructed narratives mediate and relate to make sense of complexity. "A Transformative Cross-Sector Residency" and two other case studies composed as part of our projects' evaluation fulfil Meyrick et al.'s (2019) criteria for "credible" evaluation narratives. Our impact narratives, including non-textual elements, "are one way that researchers and evaluators can address the creeping tropes associated with a scientific or economic framing of impact for individuals and communities", as demonstrated by Gattenhof et al. (2021). For the funder, the persuasive power of emotional and affective experiences conveyed in narrative format was attested to by ACT Government's use of selected passages in a subsequent ministerial media release (ACT Government 2022). It is notable, however, that harnessing this emotional and affective power is limited to communication from within government out to the public they serve, but not in the other direction, to inform public policy.

In Conclusion: Careful and Curious Reprise

The development of our creative research-led approach to producing lively evaluative artefacts, while seemingly divergent from CDN's approach, intersects with the development of a set of outcomes specifically designed to measure the related outcomes of arts and cultural activities. Articulating specifically "cultural outcomes of cultural activity" (Dunphy et al. 2020, 475) within the Cultural Domain sets CDN's approach apart from some similar frameworks that may be applied in arts projects, such as those measuring wellbeing (Wheatley and Bickerton 2017), belonging (Price and Applebaum 2021), or other subjective experiences. Our experience of reflexively using CDN's approach, however, reveals considerable limitations, including much thinner data when compared with the qualitative data and creative artefacts we interpreted in our parallel approach.

While CDN's systematised approach provides a beguiling sense of objectivity, our research affirms a concern that the apparent neutrality of metrics can disguise marketdriven and political approaches to arts activities, which risks undermining their benefits (Phiddian et al. 2017). If organisations are aware of the framework against which their work will be evaluated, they may begin designing their activities to meet the expectations of the framework rather than the needs of their communities, rendering cultural and creative activities less meaningful and less likely to yield benefits. Our key critique of CDN's approach is that it is over-confident in the clarity and straightforwardness of its framework's capacity to measure various qualities, framing the process of measuring intangible qualities as a straightforward one, which disguises the work involved.

Moreover, as with most frameworks, CDN does not position the process of evaluation itself as a cultural outcome of cultural activity: an interpretative and generative act that combines critical and creative techniques to generate possibilities for arts and culture, as well as an archive of research material about arts practice. By rendering the process of evaluation invisible-denying the positionality of the evaluator as well as the affective gualities of its modes of presentation-these frameworks ignore the everyday labours of care that artists, audiences, and arts workers contribute to evaluation. Our projects' outcomes depend on the quality of the information gathered, the skill of the analysis, and clarity and persuasiveness of our efforts to communicate our findings. This work takes time, expertise, and appropriate structural supports, but as it is often performed by arts workers and project managers adjacent to artists, such work may not be explicitly considered in evaluation. We contend that our careful and curious approach to evaluation can demonstrate value in a clear and compelling fashion and prioritise creative ways of knowing and interpreting data. Rather than a literal framework to adopt, our creative response to existing evaluation tools and instruments advocates with the "transformative ethos" (Puig de la Bellacasa 2011, 100) of a careful and curious approach to evaluation.

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VAHRI MCKENZIE is an educator, artist and scholar whose work frames creative engagement as a model of, and practice for, ways of being together in a complex world. She is Course Coordinator, Arts and Cultural Management at WAAPA (Edith Cowan University). Over 2021–22, Vahri was Research Fellow in Arts and Health at University of Canberra, where this work began. She developed transdisciplinary applied arts projects with industry and government partners, working with artists, arts workers and organisations to evaluate creative practices using methods that position artistic contributions as new knowledge.

DENISE THWAITES is Senior Lecturer in Interdisciplinary Arts at the University of Canberra. Her transdisciplinary research (re)configures text and image to explore the imbrications of cultural, ecological and technological networks. Her work has been published in journals such as Cordite Poetry Review, Meniscus Literary Journal, Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art, Culture Theory and Critique, Artlink and Derrida Today. Her creative research has also been presented by Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (Melbourne), Institute for Network Cultures (Amsterdam), Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Artspace, Firstdraft (all Sydney) and Next Wave Festival (Melbourne).

CATHY HOPE: Associate Professor Cathy Hope is Engagement and Impact Director and Coordinator of the Play, Creativity and Wellbeing Project in the Centre for Creative and Cultural Research in the Faculty of Arts and Design at the University of Canberra. Cathy's research projects are anchored in the creative and cultural sectors, including bolstering the local creative industries and using creative-led approaches to improve place and wellbeing outcomes in partnership with government, industry and community.

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