



Evaluation Framework

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Introduction

This document illustrates the results of the evaluation that was carried out throughout the project ADESTE. The evaluation aimed at evaluating the ADESTE innovative training collecting feedbacks from trainers and trainees.

The ADESTE piloting was a 10-month training involving 65 cultural professionals (trainees) and 13 trainers from 5 European countries from April 2015 to March 2016. The Evaluation process was not part of a separate work package, but it seemed useful to reflect on the overall project processes to see “What Works”.

There are essentially four areas to this. Firstly how the organisational processes work in constructing and running the project, do each of the WP inform the next, from a research overview, definitions and competences, selection of participants to final implementation.

Secondly in relation to specific areas of knowledge transfer, did the training [both parts] provide participants with the tools to both undertake ‘audience development’ and pass this knowledge and processes on to others. In the short term participants may have thoughts on this but only when those processes are applied can there be real reflection on the activity.

This is therefore a summary of the key points of a very extensive gathering of information. It is essentially at three levels:

- What Works 1 The delivery of the initial workshop conducted by the Audience Agency to train trainers
- What Works 2 On those trainers training trainees¹
- What Works 3 Trainees delivering skills and knowledge in their organisations

The third area of understanding of ‘What Works’ will come from the initial trainers [AA] as part of their delivery, in doing the work they obviously understand elements of how the learning works, but will also need the response of trainees.

The final area of evaluation will be the response of those trained as they deliver their skills, knowledge and processes to trial organisations.

As already understood from the initial research there are fundamental differences in partner countries to the structure of arts organisations, an understanding of audience development as a process, resources [such as the availability of data] and crucially the differing motivation of organisations in wanting to increase audience numbers for example, financial, social, government agency influence. This is also conditioned by a very different level of existing skills and support organisations, in audience development across partner countries. Therefore one of the key determinants of ‘What Works’ will be the flexibility and effectiveness of learnt AD processes in different cultural contexts.

¹ It is understood by those undertaking KT and Training, that the content and the method of transfer, are sometimes hard to separate. The approach of the person delivering can be as important as the content. Therefore participants; level two trainees, and those they will deliver to will be asked to self evaluate their attributes as well as ability to communicate.

Unique training

This project has brought together two distinct forms of training into one process, Knowledge Transfer and one Action Learning². The combination of the two providing a unique approach. This interaction between the two forms is of particular interest in this context as it could provide an advance on current forms of training³.

It is only with full testing that the format/process could be validated – to work. Although for the purposes of this project only the initial knowledge transfer can be fully tested and therefore validated.

² Find out more about the ADESTE innovative training on Resources www.adesteproject.eu

³ In a university context 'learning outcomes are written for a module based on the content and also the type/segment/previous education of the participant. These are tested with the first delivery of the module. However to be useful the outcomes have to have a means of testing, to say an outcome could be an 'understanding of AD processes' is not that useful unless it can be demonstrated. In which case it is better to have an outcome as 'able to apply AD processes', which can be tested. Therefore to know if the training is appropriate we would have to test the results of its application. This is unlikely to be fully achieved within the scope of the project so we should only assess as far as we can within the actions undertaken by the partners and trainees. However in the short-term feedback on the initial training could be used to develop it for future contexts.

Evaluation of the ADESTE project process, outcomes and outputs

- Evaluation helps with decision-making during a project and for future projects.
- Evaluation involves making judgements, based on evidence, about the value and quality of a project.
- Evaluation is open and clear and involves all partners, including the people taking part.⁴

We [Goldsmiths] see the role of the evaluator in developing the project, as being particularly related to the first idea, namely the gathering of appropriate evidence to support decision-making.

The next two are more directly functional and adhered to throughout the process by both the evaluators and the ADESTE creative team.

The tools used were primarily written surveys, undertaken by participants and stakeholders, at appropriate times after completion of specific cycles of the project.

The NESTA⁵ equivalent but different recommendation, *Standards of Evidence: An approach that balances the need for evidence with innovation*. Indicates a scale of levels of value for evidence from 1-5:

Level 1 You can give an account of impact. By this we mean providing a logical reason, or set of reasons, for why your intervention could have an impact and why that would be an improvement on the current situation

Level 2 You are gathering data that shows some change amongst those receiving or using your intervention.

We would suggest that in this case the first two have been met,

Level 3 would require a control group, who have not had the experience, but in this case it would be unrealistic to create this and would be unlikely to be comparable.

A further consideration was that we regarded the evaluation as being undertaken *not 'to' but 'with' partners*, therefore using an approach based on Grounded Research designed to encourage participants to openly discuss areas of the project and then to group their responses around the stated aims.

⁴ Arts Council England, *Partnerships for Learning: a Guide to Evaluating Arts Education Projects*. This guide recommends the development of these three key ideas.

⁵ www.nesta.org.uk/publications/nesta-standards-evidence

What Works 1: The delivery of the initial workshop conducted by the Audience Agency to train trainers (April 2015)

Feedback from the initial training session delivered by the Audience Agency was overwhelmingly positive across all partners and questions.

However there were country specific adaptations and additions to methodology shared so that partners could consider adding or in some cases simplifying the initial material and taught processes. Examples of this were:

- *The training might benefit from a clearer definition of a role of the ‘Audience Developer’. (Italy) [Do definitions help? Are national employment roles consistent? Marketing-v-AD debate]*
- *Different countries are at different points of development. To some the information was well known. To others it was new. The course satisfied both. (Denmark)*
- *In Spain, they created forms to understand the competencies of the people who were going to be taking the training. They also added some slides to evidence the relationship between training methodologies and research findings.*

Questions covered all areas of the training in detail, for example:

How far was the content useful for the needs of the trainers (what they will have to deliver)?

How far are the training techniques and content appropriate to you in your own national and regional contexts – is it culturally relevant?

Are the resources developed as part of the session useful for the training in host countries?

This last question provoked a range of answers primarily related to the innovative use of Action Learning⁶ as part of the process, all greatly valued it as part of the learning and considering it innovative.

- *Adjustment of the material is needed for the experience levels of the trainees. – Marketing skillsets may be lacking. (Italy)*
- *The mixing of different tools can be challenging to some learners. Especially those who have more experience of traditional teaching methods. (Italy)*
- *The trainees have expressed a lack of connection between the methodology and AL session. We will most likely dedicate a session (probably half a day) for ‘creating bridges’. (Denmark)*
- *AL is a very innovative method. Some trainees have high expectations for very concrete learning – AL offers another path for learning. This can be challenging. (Denmark, Spain)*
- *Case study and examples should be rewritten by every trainer to fit it more into national/regional contexts. Box Office Data here is very limited. (Poland).*

⁶ For more information about action learning: <http://www.actionlearningassociates.co.uk/>
<http://www.adesteproject.eu/power-action-learning-audience-development>

All of these responses were discussed by the ADESTE partners and action to address these issues considered with the intention of integrating responses into the next phase of the project:

- Length of Training – is this dependent on context/level of existing AD experience – And on the skill of the subsequent trainer;
- The range of trainees experience within the group;
- The degree to which AD/Marketing was integrated into the policy/mission/objectives of the organization;
- The degree to which AD was understood as a holistic process beyond Skills – a Philosophy

What Works 2: Evaluation of Trainers training Trainees

Again questions were created with participants so that they could understand and reflect on the process they had been through and compare that with colleagues in partner countries. Examples of questions: How well has the content and delivery mechanisms learnt in the London session adapted to the national and local context?

What have you been able to bring to the training in terms of your own training resources and ideas? What evidence do you have that this is an improvement?

What difficulties have you encountered in working with the trainees?

This last question as with others provoked a range of answers:

- *Some trainees lacked some core skills & experience necessary to create an audience development plan. - Areas include Marketing, Segmentation, Monitoring and Evaluation. More background ideas on these areas would be useful.*
- *Asking trainees to run 'AL' sessions in their own institutions was seen by some to difficult. [is this due to level of the trainer within the organizational hierarchy]*
- *Some institutions lacked even a marketing department, to help them create AD plans. [Marketing as a management tool]*
- *AL sessions turned into a valuable peer to peer industry talking space. This led to a desire for more time to focus on joint solutions in the session.*
- *A 'set up wizard' based set of documents for helping create AD plans would be useful, that could be taken back to the institution, this would help develop the training into concrete action plans.*

This second level also produced a number of short conclusions.

- A need for a longer training time for skills;
- National case studies [and time to create them];
- Continuing support for trainers [mentoring].

How can this be achieved?

A EU agency to enable ongoing discussion for support and to impact on AD strategies and national cultural policies.

What Works 3: Feedback from trainees in organisations

Summary of the ADESTE trainee evaluation survey

Feedback from trainees in organisations, at the time this was undertaken not all sessions in cultural organisations had taken place therefore a second round of evaluation took place in 2016 to include all in the process. Again the response, 55 in total out of 65 participants, was overwhelmingly positive with trainees feeling confident to express their views on what could be improved but also considering how the project could impact on their organisations.

As the legacy of the project progresses it will be possible to map the changes in organisations and their audiences. Italy already has evidence of impact that would be useful for any further iteration of the project.

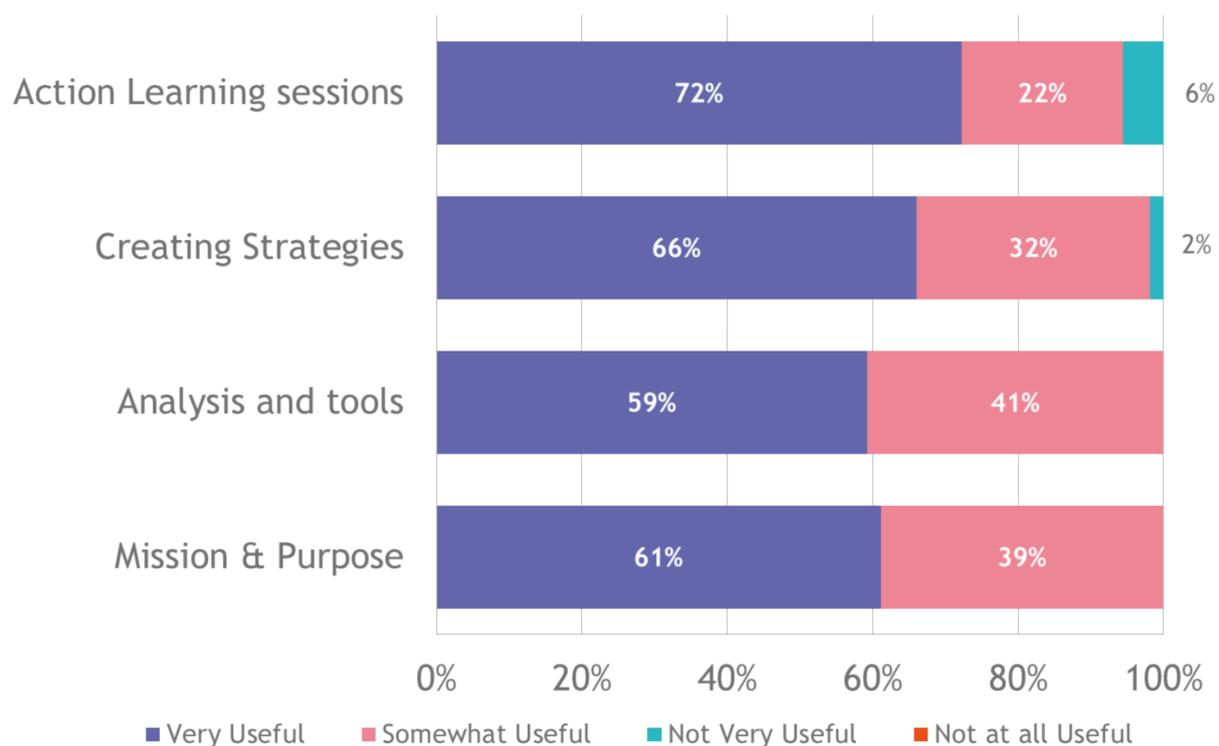
The first question asked provoked a range of relevant answers:

How relevant is the training to the work you are doing in your organisations?

- *Vital, fundamental, crucial, urgent – across all respondents.*
- *-‘Caused discussions and repercussions across my organisation’*
- *‘Very useful in helping find new audiences we do not yet know.’*
- *‘Gives me a strategy to deal with declining audiences -Helped me realise that AD function was spread amount too many people. Could be one single role.*
- *Gave us a sense of a ‘mission’ – bringing the act of connecting with a community to the core of our activities.*
- *The training is an answer to many questions we have in our organisation*

To the question “ *Which aspects of the programme have been most useful and why?*”, a summary of the response are:

- Frequent mentions of how theory and practice, case studies and the Ansoff matrix were used well
- Action Learning
- The opportunity to meet new people, share experiences and collaborate within the sector



To the question “*How has your view of the missions changed over the course of the programme*”? Changes in perception have been overwhelmingly positive, with only a small number of minor critiques from Denmark. **Some noted a deeper understanding of the impact and a more structured process. A more focused/useful refresher for those with previous experience and knowledge of Audience Development (AD)**

To the question “*If you had some advice for trainers of the programme what would it be?*” a summary of the responses highlighted:

- Denmark: more focus on analysis & more one-on-one
- Italy: more one-on-one and more time on case studies
- Poland: more case studies and more practical exercises
- Spain: an extended programme that allows follow ups on an international level
- UK - explore the international aspect in more depth.

To the question “*What was missing from the programme?*” Responses were quite varied and often contradictory by the nature of a varied group; some said more time, some said less, some said more practical examples, some said less practical examples

Overall, **more time, more case studies and a course book with further materials appeared to have a common trend.**

To the question “*What made it work well?*” The majority of respondents mentioned **the people; both the trainers and their fellow trainees.** Other mentions included the mixture of theory and practice being well balanced.

How did participants value the use of action learning in the ADESTE programme?
Some mixed reviews: action learning seems to work for different respondents in different ways, depending on their personal and professional backgrounds.
Overall it was seen by most as a valuable new skill - very challenging and thereby rewarding. However sometimes the link back to AD itself was a little less clear.
Overall the **Action Learning aspect and the style of the programme - theory with practical**, and the teacher/participant relationship were flagged as **positive and distinctive things about the ADESTE approach compared to other similar programmes of training**.
What do you think was the added value of action learning?

Learning by doing, learning from others, sharing experiences, meeting new people, seeing things from others' point of view, personal development, problem-solving, self-reflection, debate and analysis

A further question of many also produced interesting answers.

To what degree does your organisation understand that audience development is a management function for all staff – or just the concern of a marketing department?

- *Real audience development, the one that lasts and becomes a working procedure, can only be reached if the entire staff working-group is involved;*
- *Audience development is something radically new for my organization, which makes a little hard to figure out how it is considered;*
- *To fully understand there would need to be a restructure;*
- *I found it very difficult to explain why it is so important to work at public goals in a non generic and confused way;*
- *We are still dealing with an approach that considers the audience just as one among various aspects, which seems to depend more on random factors than on the choices we make;*
- *Smaller organisations find this easier to understand the need for everyone to be involved;*
- *There is a long way to go, in creating change in larger institutions, which seem to think that it is marketing.*

A few overarching conclusions came from this section of the evaluation:

- Either the initial training needs to be longer to enable participants to go into greater depth, or ongoing support/mentoring, or both needs to be provided;
- A mechanism is needed to help restructure marketing/AD functions, departments within an organization;
- In some organisations it hard to embed, Marketing/AD as a management function;
- Support during change in organisations is required;
- A mechanism to engage senior management and/or colleagues could be useful.

Further extensive evaluation was undertaken with Trainers and Trainees in spring 2016 when they had time to reflect on the process and their participation and all work was completed.

Trainers - In summary some of the new questions for trainers:

What has been the value of the ADESTE partnership? The replies were distilled to

- *A strong network, shared experiences and knowledge, international prestige;*
- *Being able to work with each other over such a long period enables sufficient time to research, test and evaluate*

And, if ADESTE has developed a distinctive approach or philosophy, how would you describe it?

- *A holistic approach to AD, audience focused and entrepreneurial.*
- *A place where we think of others as collaborators and not competitors*

What (else) has helped to make the partnership a success?

Flexibility, generosity, openness, good project management, ambition, good trainers, support, synergies, shared potential and shared expectations

For **Trainees** a key question among many was:

How, if at all, have you changed your approach/outlook as a result of taking part?

The majority of recipients have noted positive changes relating to the advantages of being able to implement a step-by-step approach;

- *Being able to instigate organisational changes with an evidence-based approach which has generally resulted in an increased self-confidence for individuals.*

What do you anticipate the lasting impact of the programme will be on you as a practitioner?

- *Having the tools to engage and persuade policy makers and partners, using structured, evidence-based thinking;*
- *Brings values to ideas relating to AD and increase professionalism;*
- *The programme provides an increased enthusiasm to be able to make a long-term difference within an organisation and the sector.*

Conclusions

‘I have a feeling we are “part of something bigger.” - trainee

The evaluation carried out highlighted how training in audience development is relevant to organisations today that need to face the challenge of increasing and diversifying their audiences. Although the numbers in the ADESTE programme cannot be considered representative of the cultural sector in the 5 countries involved let alone the cultural sector in Europe, by and large they represent the need for cultural organisations to have the tools to implement their audience development strategy.

ADESTE developed a distinctive audience development approach or philosophy, which is a *holistic approach to AD, audience focused and entrepreneurial and a place where to think of others as collaborators and not competitors.*

The ADESTE training was highly innovative bringing together two distinct forms of training into one process, Knowledge Transfer and Action Learning. The combination of the two provides a unique approach. This interaction between the two forms is of particular interest in this context as it could provide an advance on current forms of training.

For the purposes of this project only the initial knowledge transfer can be fully tested and therefore validated. However **as the legacy of the project progresses it will be possible to map the changes in organisations and their audiences.**

Being a piloting the format and the content of the ADESTE training will need for adaptations also taking in consideration the different cultural contexts and approaches to audience development such as either the initial training needs to be longer to enable participants to go into greater depth, or ongoing support/mentoring, or both needs to be provided.

What was interesting is that the work done was relevant to what they were doing in their organisations and provided an increased enthusiasm to be able to make a long-term difference within an organisation and the sector. **The people and the sharing also through the Action learning approach were the distinctive aspects of the training.**

- *Vital, fundamental, crucial, urgent – across all respondents.*

A few conclusions came from the evaluation that need to be considered in future training:

- A mechanism is needed to help restructure marketing/AD functions, departments within an organization;
- In some organisations it hard to embed, Marketing/AD as a management function;
- Support during change in organisations is required;
- A mechanism to engage senior management and/or colleagues could be useful.
- The majority of recipients have noted positive changes relating to the advantages of being able to implement a step-by-step approach;

- Being able to instigate organisational changes with an evidence-based approach which has generally resulted in an increased self-confidence for individuals.

ADESTE training contributed to transfer the tools to engage and persuade policy makers and partners, using structured, evidence-based thinking; to bring values to ideas relating to AD and increase professionalism.

In the future partners are looking into ways of the setting up of validation framework for the ADESTE training and brand.

Extensive breakdowns of all of the evaluation questions and answers are available in Excel files and summaries used by partners for reflection and development are available.