

MUSIC MAKES YOUTH MAKES

National Foundation for Youth Music

Taking an outcomes approach

Guidance on Youth Music's Outcomes Framework

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Part 1: About the outcomes approach

Introduction

At Youth Music, the outcomes approach underpins everything we do as a charity and grant maker, guiding us towards achieving our vision of a musically inclusive England. The outcomes approach is designed to help any organisation plan and evaluate their activities, and to measure the impact their intervention has on participants and stakeholders. Use of the outcomes approach is increasing right across the charity and cultural sectors and today we're already starting to see the benefits of adopting this approach.

This guide explains the general principles of taking an outcomes approach, and will show you how to apply it to a Youth Music funded project. Youth Music's Outcomes Framework is an essential part of the funding application process. Following the guidance will help you to determine the musical, personal and social outcomes you want to achieve for young people, as well as the desired outcomes you want to achieve for your workforce and organisation.

Why take an outcomes approach?

Unquestionably, the evidence we have collected so far suggests that adopting an outcomes approach is beneficial. Sometimes, it can be difficult to visualise what impact you might achieve, or how to measure if it has been achieved at all! In its simplest form, the outcomes approach provides a framework for project planning, monitoring, and evaluation: its aim is to help you channel your efforts to where they can have the most impact. It forces you to think about change from the very beginning of your project.

Taking an outcomes approach helps you to:

- understand what changes are taking place and alter your activities accordingly to ensure that the most positive outcomes are achieved
- determine your overall progress in terms of impact, and what to scale-up, scale-down or stop altogether
- identify, learn from and share the parts of your project that did not go so well **in addition to** the parts that went well
- secure further funding based on a robust and reliable evidence base.

If every project we support embeds an outcomes approach, then we as a funder can gain a better understanding of what is working and not working, with a view to sharing that learning with everyone else. With reliable evidence, we can also influence policy, government and the wider debates which affect all of us. By having evidence to back up our claims, we are in a stronger position to influence others and we will achieve the very best outcomes for young people.

The basic principles that underpin the outcomes approach are similar to other planning and evaluation frameworks out there. You might have come across 'plan, do, review', 'theory of change', 'action research cycle', and other approaches to planning and evaluation. They are all closely related and follow a similar process.

In a nutshell, taking an outcomes approach requires you to go through five stages.

1. Define the need for your project. Why should it exist in the first place?
2. Define your intended outcomes. What are the changes you would like to bring about as a result of your project?
3. Define your activities. What will you do to achieve those outcomes?
4. Define your indicators. How will you know if you have achieved your outcomes?
5. Evaluate. Review your progress, both good and bad. Learn from it and use this learning to inform next steps.

Next, you'll be taken through each of these stages in more detail, as well as a practical example demonstrating how the outcomes approach can be applied to a typical Youth Music funded project.

Taking an outcomes approach – a practical example

Defining the need

Before you think about the changes you want to bring about (i.e. the intended outcomes of a project), the first step is to understand why your project is needed in the first place.

Sometimes this starts out as a gut feeling, or you might simply 'know' there is a strong basis for taking action. But it's important to break down these thoughts and feelings in order to really understand what kind of project is needed, and the extent to which your project can actually change anything. For this you need evidence.

You can use things like:

- existing research and evaluation – either your own report, reports written by charities and organisations, or from published academic articles and papers (Google Scholar¹ is great for finding academic research on all sorts of topics).
- new research – if you already have contact with a potential target group, we encourage you to survey them and ask what their current needs are and what kind of project might help. You could do this using simple questionnaires or focus groups.
- local and national statistics – sometimes there are problems which are very specific to a neighbourhood, and sometimes it might be your whole town or county that has a specific need. Check if there are existing datasets and statistics you can look at: Neighbourhood Statistics² is really useful, and the CASE local area profiles³ have detailed information about cultural participation at the local authority level.

The most important thing is to use a range of sources of evidence so that you can really understand what's needed. You can then start to propose solutions and design your project.

Example: Early Groovers Funk-Soul Project*

Need and target group

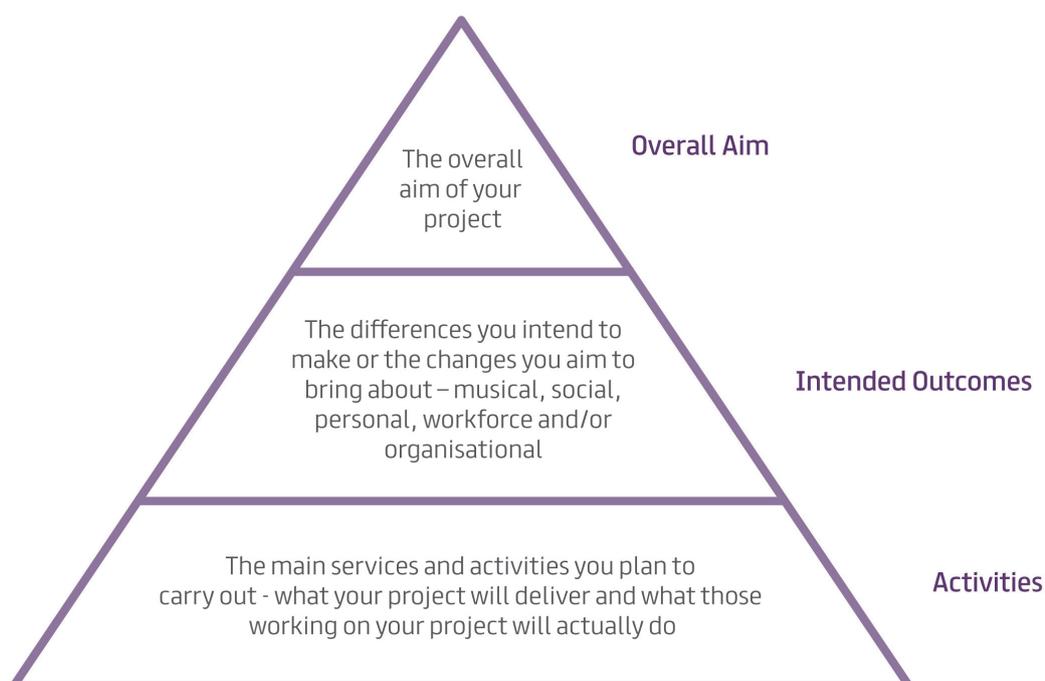
Evidence on the positive effects of music-making in the early years is growing (Lonie 2010). Quite a lot of early years music practice can be restricted to nursery rhymes and lullabies, however, recent research (Burke 2013) has shown how popular music can be a very effective way of engaging early years practitioners and parents in making music with their young children. This project intends to use funk and soul classics as source material across a range of instrumental and vocal techniques with 3-5 year olds, culminating in an Early Groovers End of Term Happening after 12 months.

The project will take place in three Children's Centres in Bridgeton which has low levels of regular cultural engagement when compared to the national average (47% compared to 76% nationally). A short email survey with the Children's Centres showed that music was an area they were interested in and felt they could improve on. This project seeks to trial an innovative and holistic approach to early years music making across the settings using funk and soul classics with young children (n=60-70), practitioners (n=10), and families (n=30). All Children's Centres are in areas of high deprivation and service users come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with around 33% of families with English as an Additional Language (EAL) - significantly higher than the national average.

*This is an example project application to help you talk about the need for your own project. It is fictional but based on some applications we've received over the years.

The planning triangle

The outcomes approach has been developed by the Charities Evaluation Service⁴ and we have adapted their planning triangle as a tool for you to use when planning your project. The triangle is split into three levels: the overall aim, intended outcomes, and activities.



The planning triangle (adapted by Youth Music from the Charities Evaluation Service tool).

The aim: What is your project setting out to do? What is the overall change or difference you want it to make? Fundamentally, this explains why your project exists.

Intended outcomes: Your intended outcomes are the changes that you are aiming to achieve because of your project. What difference will it make, for example, for the young people taking part? The language you use to articulate the intended outcomes should involve words that reflect change: 'increase', 'reduce', 'expand', 'enable' 'develop', 'improve'.

Your intended outcomes should be linked to the activities you will do (i.e. why are you doing the stated activities? What do you hope to achieve through delivering them?) The changes which result from your activities are your outcomes. Think about the time and resources you have available and the type of activities you will be providing: this will help you to devise outcomes that are realistic. They must relate closely to the activities you intend to provide (specific), be countable or able to be described thoroughly using research methods (measurable), and be achievable and realistic within the time and resources attached to the project.

The activities: What are you going to do that will bring about these changes? As mentioned above, these are the activities you will be delivering across the course of your project. While you use 'change' language for your outcomes (e.g. an improvement in singing ability), you should use 'doing' words for your activities (e.g. by providing 12 singing workshops).

The planning triangle allows you to think about each level and how they relate to each other. Will the overall aim of your project be met through achieving the intended outcomes? Will the activities you have planned realistically enable you to bring about the changes outlined in your intended outcomes? While some activities will help deliver on more than one outcome, it is critical that each activity is linked to at least one outcome, and that each outcome has at least one activity that will ensure your project delivers on it.

Use the Youth Music Outcomes Framework (detailed in Part 2) to help you think about what kind of outcomes you might want to achieve in a project. We expect all projects to work towards improving young people's musicality directly, or supporting opportunities for them to develop their musicality through changes in the sector (leading towards our vision of a musically inclusive England), so you might find it easiest to begin by thinking about musical outcomes. This may soon lead you to think about how the project may be working to develop young people's personal or social skills too. You might also then consider if you are focusing on changing the workforce or organisations involved as part of the project, and what changes these might be.

The outcomes framework is designed to be flexible: there is no specific combination of outcomes, or correct phrasing to be applied. The framework will simply help you to think through your outcomes and language, and provide an overarching structure

based on learning from the thousands of projects funded by Youth Music to date.

Example - Early Groovers Funk-Soul Project

Aim

To engage parents, families and setting staff in developmental music-making with young children using funk and soul classics.

Intended Outcomes

1. To improve young children's listening and performance skills through structured and unstructured music-making (musical outcome)
2. To increase the capacity of parents and setting staff to use funk and soul music in their activities with young children (workforce outcome)
3. To improve understanding of using popular music genres in early years music-making among early years workforce and sector (workforce and organisational outcome)

Activities

Recruitment will happen across all three Children's Centres with posters, information in the newsletter, and sign-up sheets being offered to all families using the settings. All sessions will be open access, although we intend to keep core groups of 10 children at each setting participating over the full 12-month period. Two music leaders will work with three early years practitioners at each setting, these individuals have already been identified and indicated a willingness to participate.

In each weekly two-hour session we will begin with warm-up exercises, playing a 'mash-up' of funk and soul classics and having a boogie. This will frame the sessions as musical and different from the usual nursery activities. Participants will then be given the opportunity to play with and explore the instruments, including drums and percussion, bass, electric guitar, and vocals, before being shown how to play basic rhythms on smaller and simpler versions of the main funk band instruments. This will include experimentation and improvisation in the early stages, with parents and practitioners being encouraged to play the adult instruments alongside the children. Over the course of the year we will work on performing simplified arrangements of funk and soul classics, ideally a different track each month, with the final three months focusing on our own composition, leading to the end of term happening – where the Children's Centres will be brought together and all other friends and families will be invited to watch and take part.

At the end of each session we will sit with the practitioners for half an hour discussing what music learning has taken place and how some of the pedagogical approaches could be introduced using different instruments at

different times in the nursery. These 30 minute 'grown up' development sessions will also be offered to the parent participants on a monthly basis, exploring and sharing practical ways of using the music collections of parents to engage in developmental music making in the home.

We will be working with two MA students to support our evaluation of the project (further information below), seeking to develop a set of 'top tips' to be shared quarterly on the Youth Music Network. We will also share these aggregated 'top tips' at a national conference on early years music-making in the final stages of the project.

In this example you can hopefully see how the activities have been checked against the intended outcomes to ensure that the proposed changes will take place.

For outcome 1 (musical development) there will be structured instrumental learning in groups, there will be sessions where participants listen to a range of different songs, and there will be opportunities for composition and performance. Overall this range of activities is highly likely to develop participants' musical understanding.

For outcome 2 (workforce development) the workforce will benefit from their direct participation in the project, there will be explicit learning opportunities after every session, there will also be learning sessions for parents.

For outcome 3 (workforce and organisational development) there will be embedded learning through the skilling-up of staff and parents, there will be 'top tips' blogs shared every quarter, and there will be the presentation of evaluation findings at a national conference.

When planning your own project think about all the different ways that your activities might bring about the outcomes, and be sure to discuss and describe how different ways of doing things could lead to different results.

The biggest oversight we tend to see in project planning and applications is a lack of detailed consideration as to how activities will bring about outcomes. It's important to really think about why certain things are happening in a project, and their order and priority. While developing your application it is always useful to look over and refine your outcomes, as well as ensuring that all activities are necessary and all outcomes have activities associated with them.

Outcome indicators and methods

Before your project starts you will need to decide what information you want to collect to provide evidence of your progress towards achieving your outcomes (indicators) and how to collect the information needed (methods). As with setting your outcomes, it is important that you're realistic about the number of indicators you decide to monitor and what kind of information you will be able to collect. We suggest aiming for at least

two indicators per outcome to ensure you are using a range of evidence to judge what is happening in projects.

When thinking about indicators remember that identifying what you need to track or measure will usually be quite obvious in the outcomes language you have already used. For example, if you are aiming to develop young people's composition skills you need to think about how you will know whether these have developed. This might involve asking participants to describe their skills, or arranging an external observation or assessment of these skills, or listening to compositions from earlier and later in the project – all of these approaches could demonstrate a change in composition skills – but composition skills is the indicator we need to track and evaluate.

Maybe you already collect certain kinds of information as part of your monitoring systems that you could use? Perhaps you could tweak the monitoring system you already use by rewording or adding questions that relate to a certain indicator? However, you may find that you need to find a new way of collecting the information. If you are looking at change you will need to think about collecting information at two time points (at/towards the start and at the end of the project). Having a baseline (i.e. an understanding of where the skills, knowledge, and ability of participants are at the beginning of the project) is important to demonstrate how much they have developed, as well as knowing what their development needs are.

When thinking about your indicators you will naturally start to think about the methods you will use to collect the information. This is fine, but remember that indicators are what you will be looking at and measuring – not how you will do it.

Some popular methods (i.e. not indicators) are:

- Recorded observation of participants
- Self-assessment questionnaires
- Diaries which participants or practitioners keep as part of the project
- Notes kept by project leads
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Audio or video recordings of participants' work at different stages

Youth Music's evaluation builder⁵

To support projects in selecting and measuring indicators we have created the Youth Music evaluation builder, available on the Youth Music Network. This is an online tool which contains a number of validated measures you can use to assess the most common outcomes and indicators across Youth Music funded projects. This includes measures of musical ability for early years children, musical ability of 6-10 year olds, and musical ability of older children and young people, agency and citizenship, wellbeing, attitude and behaviour, and a range of measures relating to practitioners. You can select any of the questionnaires that might be appropriate to use in your

project and create a bespoke downloadable PDF of all the tools and methods which can then be printed and shared with staff and partners. The evaluation builder also has guidelines for using qualitative methods, extended examples of how to analyse and interpret different types of data, and how to write-up findings.

Example - Early Groovers Funk-Soul Project

Outcome 1 – To improve young children’s listening and performance skills through structured and unstructured music-making. (musical outcome)

Indicators – Children’s listening skills, children’s instrumental and performance skills

Methods – To measure listening skills, the early years staff will keep an observation diary (to be filled out monthly) keeping a note of how children are responding to the repertoire: this will include levels of attentive listening, as well as general reactions and behaviours during the warm-ups at the start of each session. To measure instrumental and performance skills we will use the Youth Music early years musical development scale. This will be completed for every child within the first three sessions and again within the last three sessions: we will compare scores for each setting and for all children taking part in the project. Where possible we will track children who are returning as core participants and will use the scale to base questions on for focus groups with the families and practitioners at two points during the project.

Outcome 2 – To increase the capacity of parents and setting staff to use funk and soul music in their activities with young children. (workforce outcome)

Indicators – Staff confidence using methods and repertoire, levels of music-making taking place in family homes

Methods - We will design a short survey to be filled out by setting staff at the beginning and end of the project relating to their confidence in using funk and soul music in the nurseries, and the range of approaches to music-making they feel confident using. When families begin their involvement in the project we will give them a short questionnaire relating to their music tastes and habits and the extent of music-making they do in the home. This will be repeated at the celebration event at the end of the project and the results will be compared.

Outcome 3 - To improve understanding of using popular music genres in early years music-making among early years workforce and settings. (workforce and organisational outcome)

Indicators – Number of downloads of ‘top tips’ documents, knowledge and enthusiasm of Children’s Centre managers

Methods – As part of the publication strategy for the ‘top tips’ emerging from the project we will record the number of ‘retweets’ on Twitter, ‘likes’ on Facebook and ask Youth Music how many times the document have been downloaded from the Youth Music Network. We will also have a focus group with the centre managers from each setting in the first week and the final week of the project to explore their views about the use and value of music-making in the settings.

Learning and sharing information

While much of the guidance so far has related to project planning and supporting your application to Youth Music, it is important to remember that a strong outcomes approach is essentially about making project evaluation straightforward, meaningful and useful. When you are analysing and interpreting the data you collect as part of a project, try to think about what you - or others - might learn from it. This is also a useful way of framing some of the less positive things that might have happened, parts of the project that were challenging or didn't go to plan. This can be the most valuable information to share with Youth Music, and with other projects, so people can learn from mistakes or approaches that haven't had the desired effect.

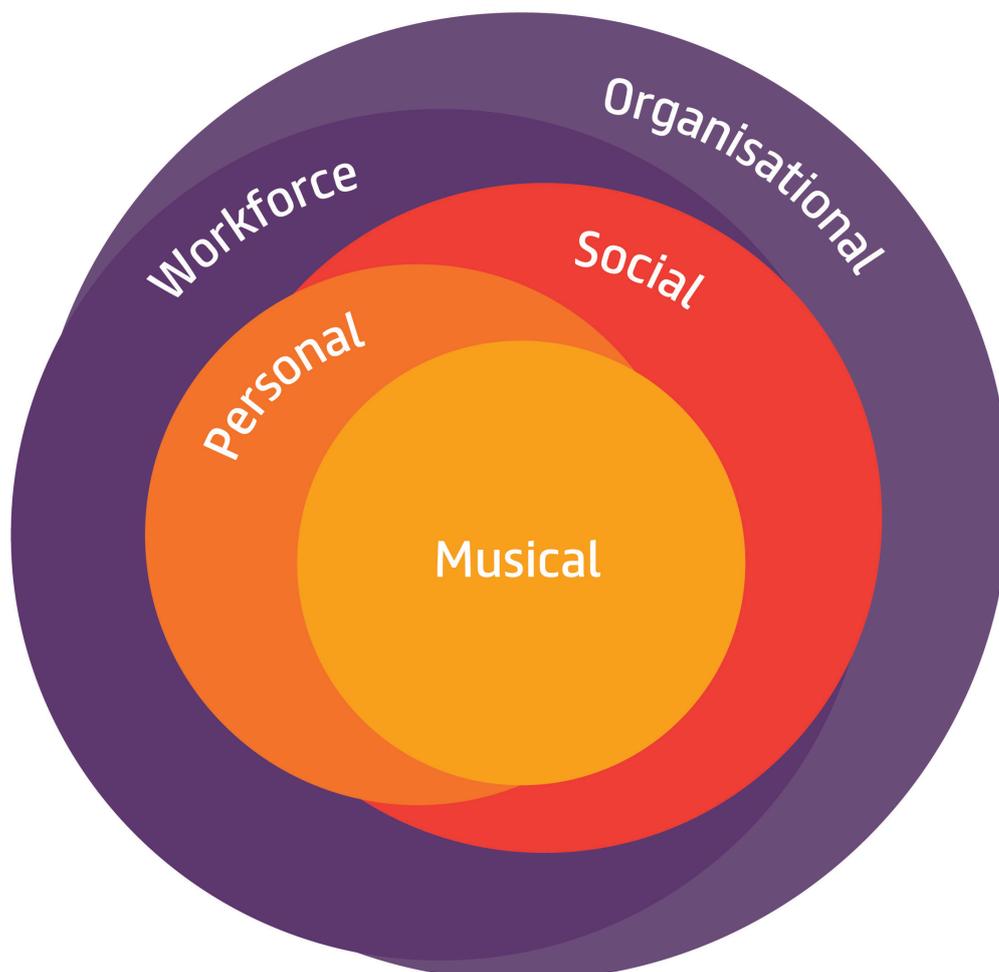
Think about who you might like to share your evaluation findings with, throughout and after the project. Much of the work funded by Youth Music is innovative and much of it is globally-leading. This means that there are probably lots of people who will be interested in the learning emerging from projects. Remember to budget for time to analyse, write-up and share evaluation findings when submitting your application for funding. Remember also that strong evaluation of your current project will develop your knowledge and learning for the next work you go on to do, which should increase your chances of getting future work funded.

Part 2: Youth Music's Outcomes Framework

The Youth Music Outcomes Framework defines the five broad areas of change that we would like to support through project funding. The outcome areas you will be expected to work towards depends on the fund you will be applying for. The Outcomes Framework is not prescriptive, giving the applicant flexibility to define their own outcomes, indicators and activities.

We would like you to apply for funding with a very clear idea of what changes you are trying to bring about (i.e. your intended outcomes). We know that things don't always go to plan, and there will be lots of outcomes that you can't even imagine right now. However, we have seen that the most successful projects do well because those involved have a strong approach to project planning and a shared understanding of what they are trying to do, and how.

Youth Music-funded projects work across five outcome areas. These relate to children and young people themselves (musical, personal or social outcomes), and to those supporting them (workforce and organisational outcomes).



Fund A applicants are required to work towards three intended outcomes from any of the outcome areas displayed above.

Fund B applicants are expected to work towards five intended outcomes from any of the outcome areas.

Fund C applicants must work towards five to ten intended outcomes from all five outcome areas.

How do I know which outcomes to choose?

There are endless ways to bring about positive musical, personal and social development. The most important thing is to be appropriate to your participants' needs and ensure that they have input into the project. Everyone will be on their own learning and progression journeys and you will be doing what you can to support their individual paths. That said, you will know from previous work and from consulting with participants which are the main areas of development you intend to focus on.

This applies to outcomes relating to the workforce or organisations too. Think about where you and your colleagues are now, and where the evidence tells you that funding is needed to improve things.

How do I know whether outcomes are musical, personal, social, workforce or organisational?

The following guidance describing the outcome areas in detail should help make sense of which outcomes relate to which outcome areas. We know there is a great deal of cross-over between outcomes – learning to play a musical instrument may increase confidence (and performing in front of others might change the perceptions of a community) – all of which needs to happen with the support of excellent practitioners and organisations.

Setting and measuring outcomes is not an exact science, but thinking clearly about the potential effects your activities will reveal just how many different outcomes you might achieve. This process is simply about structuring the work in a sensible and measurable way.

It is true that the fewer outcomes you are working towards, the simpler the process. This is why we have restricted Fund A applications to three outcomes.

In Funds B and C, if you are looking to do a few different projects under one application (e.g. some early years work, some work with young offenders and a bit of workforce development) try to aggregate your outcomes so that they apply across the streams and aren't repetitive:

Example outcomes for a Fund B programme working across two projects:

- To increase the musical skills and confidence of all participants (musical)
- To increase participants' knowledge of new musical cultures (musical)
- To improve the communication skills and empathy of all participants (personal)
- To increase the community's awareness of participants' musical achievements (social)
- To develop music leaders' knowledge of working with early years/young offenders (workforce)

You have the freedom to choose which combination of outcome areas you think is needed by your project, and the freedom to write your own intended outcomes. However, we strongly recommend taking time to consider the full outcomes framework and having a clear understanding of what is needed before working on your application.

Outcomes areas in detail

Musical outcomes

What are musical outcomes?

Musical outcomes are those relating to any aspect of musical development: this can include people's musical skills, knowledge and abilities. Everyone has some level of musicality and we are looking for projects that build on this in a way that is appropriate for the participants. When working towards musical outcomes we want projects to be specific about which aspects of musicality they are looking to develop.

Suggested outcomes language

- Developing **technical skills and abilities** – instrumental, singing, composition, improvisation, performance, technology
- Developing **musical understanding and communication** – expression, creativity, listening, interpretation, evaluation
- Developing **knowledge and understanding of musical worlds and roles** – experiences, musical cultures, the music business, music leading

How are activities linked to outcomes?

There are lots of different approaches that will bring about different musical outcomes. It's important to think these through and consult with participants before, during and after any projects, and to explain why you will try certain approaches in your application.

You might want to work in small groups to begin with if the participants aren't feeling particularly confident; you can then gradually work out who wants to develop in which ways and which kind of approaches might work for different participants. You might want to work out participants' musical interests and knowledge by asking them about music they listen to, or you might want to surprise them by playing something you think they will never have heard. All of these approaches will engage young people and help them to build confidence and trust (while developing musical understanding and knowledge), before you focus on more technical skills and abilities.

When you are working on a technical skill, remember that the participant will be likely to have an idea of how they would like this to develop. If you recognise you're in it together and can be flexible to each other's interests and learning intentions you might find that progression happens quite quickly!

Also remember that there is more to being a musician than playing an instrument. There are all sorts of visits, experiences and perspectives that might help participants to understand what being musical and being a musician is all about.

How can I measure and evaluate these outcomes?

For some musical outcomes it may be appropriate to use accreditation as a way of demonstrating if a participant has progressed musically (this can include graded exams, **Arts Award**, ASDAN, OCN, AQA and many others). Youth Music's evaluation builder (available on the Youth Music Network) contains a **musical development scale** which you can use to measure self-perceived musical ability at various stages of a project (e.g. beginning-middle-end), either using a survey or by talking to the young people.

You might want to encourage the music leaders to keep a diary or record of how they feel the participants are progressing musically. You could use qualitative methods like interviews and focus groups, where participants are asked to reflect on various aspects of their musical development. Don't forget that the **music itself** can be fantastic evidence of musical development: some of the best evaluations include clips and excerpts of music played and performed by individuals at various stages of their development.

Personal outcomes

What are personal outcomes?

Personal outcomes are those relating to any aspect of personal development: this can include people's skills, knowledge and abilities. Personal outcomes relate to how people feel about themselves, how they might be able to do things they weren't able to before, or how they have developed their understanding of the world. This includes educational development and emotional development. Personal development is also strongly linked to social development and both are strongly linked to musical development.

Suggested outcomes language

- Developing **extrinsic outcomes** like individual achievements and behaviours - literacy, language, numeracy, planning and problem solving, transferrable skills, knowledge of support available, work experience
- Developing **intrinsic outcomes** like emotional and psychological capabilities - communication, confidence, agency, self-efficacy, creativity, resilience, motivation, managing feelings, empathy, self-awareness

How are activities linked to outcomes?

It is particularly through being supported in musical learning that participants develop many extrinsic and intrinsic outcomes:

A young person learning how to write **hip-hop rhymes and make beats** may develop literacy and language skills as well as gaining confidence, self-efficacy and self-awareness.

A young person being given the opportunity to **develop composition and improvisation skills** will also be likely to grow in confidence and become more creative in other aspects of their lives (i.e. thinking of other ways of doing things or applying what they know in different contexts).

Personal outcomes

A young person being given the **choice of which genre or instruments they would like to learn** and being supported to develop accordingly will also be likely to develop agency (i.e. feeling in control of their lives), feel listened to, and perhaps feel increased motivation.

A young person being encouraged to **lead a music session** with their peers will develop music leadership skills alongside planning and problem solving, self-efficacy (i.e. their competence and ability to achieve things).

How can I measure and evaluate these outcomes?

There are many ways to consider and measure personal outcomes throughout the life of a project. **Our evaluation builder** has a range of tools that have been designed to measure common personal outcomes, these can be applied either quantitatively (using questionnaires) or qualitatively (using interviews, focus groups or creative methods).

A number of project outputs can also be used to indicate personal development (e.g. accreditations, registers of attendance, performances, filmed interviews). The Young Foundation's **Framework of Outcomes for Young People** also has a matrix of tools which have been validated for measuring and demonstrating personal outcomes across all kinds of projects: some of these might be relevant to your music project:

<http://youngfoundation.org/publications/framework-of-outcomes-for-young-people/>

Social outcomes

What are social outcomes?

Social outcomes relate to changes in a person or group of people that can have broader benefits for people and society beyond the individual. Social outcomes can be based on changes in a person, or can be based on changes in communities or environments that relate to a person or group of people. Thinking about why positive cultural, health and educational experiences and outcomes which improve many people's lives are so important to individuals also helps us to think about broader social outcomes.

Suggested outcomes language

- Social outcomes can be considered **from the perspective of the individual or group** in terms of developments in team working, cultural understanding, community connectedness, personal relationships, group creativity and problem solving, communication.
- Social outcomes can be considered **from the perspective of the community** or environment in terms of use of resources (e.g. education, health care, criminal justice), community cohesion, perceived value and reputation of young people, family relationships, volunteering.

How are activities linked to outcomes?

Social outcomes often emerge when individuals are encouraged to work together or in groups - group creativity and problem solving can be developed when participants are asked to **organise a musical event**; communication and trusting relationships can be developed when participants are given opportunities to **perform or improvise in an ensemble**; working together to **research or learn new genres** of music can increase cultural understanding; group performances or concerts may **engage audiences** in the community who wouldn't normally see young people doing something positive. Music is unique in allowing people to communicate with each other and develop their understanding without the need for language.

Social outcomes

Beyond working together, individual musical and personal development can also have broader social effects and outcomes: a person developing confidence and self-efficacy might begin to engage more at school, improving the school experience for their peers; a person being given regular opportunities to develop music skills may reduce negative behaviours (e.g. vandalism) which were affecting their community; an increase in certain individual practical skills may increase levels of volunteering in a community.

How can I measure and evaluate these outcomes?

Social outcomes can be measured using both quantitative and qualitative methods and it's important to use a range of methods to be confident in the types and level of changes you think are happening. Questionnaires, interviews or focus groups with participants can be great ways to measure changes in team-working skills, cultural understanding, relationships and communication skills. Observing groups, using video or visual methods can be a good way to explore changes in group creativity, problem solving and communication.

To measure changes from the perspective of broader communities you might need to ask schools for data relating to attendance or engagement, or ask the local police or youth offending teams if there has been any noticeable changes according to their data or perspectives. You can also engage with parents, carers and other audiences to explore whether they have identified any positive social outcomes as a result of young people participating in project activities.

Workforce outcomes

What are workforce outcomes?

Workforce outcomes relate to the skills, knowledge and personal development of the workforce employed on a project. These aren't direct changes in the young people you're working with, but they add a great deal of value to the workforce and, by extension, the project and the participants. In all projects we would encourage you to think about the needs of the workforce and how to measure and evaluate their development.

Suggested outcomes language

- Most outcomes will relate to the **skills, abilities or knowledge of the workforce**, but it is important to be specific about which of these you are aiming to change (e.g. increasing knowledge of working with early years children, or, improved ability to lead improvisation sessions, or increased understanding of how to work with young offenders).
- Workforce development outcomes might also relate to **levels of motivation and satisfaction** experienced by the workforce.

How are activities linked to outcomes?

Many people automatically think that training courses are the best way to improve workforce outcomes - and they certainly can be useful - but there are lots of other activities which can positively affect workforce outcomes. One of the best and most effective ways to help the workforce to develop, and to keep track of how they are developing, is by **making time for reflection** before and after sessions, or at particular points in a project. This can be facilitated, or very open, but it is useful to have a few questions for people to reflect on, and to ensure there are ways for people's thoughts and perspectives to be followed up.

Another useful way to help the workforce to develop is by providing **networking opportunities** where people from different (or the same)

Workforce outcomes

backgrounds can come together. This can be quite formal, by arranging conferences or seminars, or less formal: arranging for people to get together for a coffee after work, or facilitating a space where they can chat online. Learning from other projects has shown that networking is most effective when people are expected to prepare a related task before or afterwards. Another really effective way is to provide people with access to learning, which could be as simple as **giving someone a book and some time to read it**. Of course, some people will just need a course on Excel!

One of the requirements of applying for Youth Music funding is that you integrate our **Quality Framework** into your work (available to download from the Youth Music Network). This is a useful evaluation tool to support positive outcomes for your workforce: some of the ways that projects are using the Quality Framework include group planning and reflection sessions, as well as peer observations and feedback.

How are activities linked to outcomes?

In order to understand and demonstrate the full value of your project it is important to measure changes in workforce development. On one level, the numbers of practitioners attending training sessions or networking events, or the number of opportunities to reflect on practice, will tell us something about the scale of the work. However, it's really important to get a measure of how far knowledge, skills or abilities have changed as a result of these opportunities. This might be demonstrated by accreditation, or by using questionnaires (like the **practitioner development scales** from our evaluation builder), or by recording practitioner reflections throughout the project (Youth Music's quality framework 'Do, Review, Improve' can support with this). Something as simple as sitting down and exploring practitioners' needs, objectives, and progress (which many people do as part of a responsible employment approach anyway) can provide really valuable evidence of development.

Organisational outcomes

What are organisational outcomes?

Organisational outcomes refer to either your own or another organisation and are to do with how well-equipped organisations are to help children and young people to develop in and through music, and to support the broader youth music sector. They might relate to an organisation's ability to support children and young people, an organisation's level of connectedness, or an organisation's resilience to external changes. Organisational outcomes can also relate to organisational policies, procedures or cultures.

Suggested outcomes language

- Most organisational outcomes will relate to **changing, creating or embedding policies and procedures**. They might relate to **introducing or stabilising particular approaches**, or **increasing organisational networks or associations**.
- Organisational **knowledge** can be increased through certain activities, organisational **cultures or reputation** might also change.

How are activities linked to outcomes?

Organisations are made up of people and policies, as well as material items like offices, buildings, and stationery. It can therefore sometimes be difficult to think or talk about how these things change as a result of a project.

However, if a senior management team now has a more informed understanding of 'inclusion' (or indeed 'dubstep') as a result of your project, then you can see how this might be a big step forward. Some changes will be quite subtle, and others, like writing a strategy or policy for an organisation will be more explicit. How might getting some coverage in a local newspaper or engaging with your local MP change your organisation's reputation?

Organisational outcomes

Consider how the new partnerships you have made as part of a project may be adding value to your own or someone else's organisation. Think about what you can do with project funding (particularly overheads, core costs and indirect costs) to stabilise and strengthen your organisation. Or, if you are looking for funding to support other organisations, be very clear about what you are going to do and how this will link to changes in those organisations.

How can I measure and evaluate these outcomes?

Think about a range of measures and indicators you can use to show whether changes have taken place in an organisation. The number of new partners an organisation has can tell you something about how embedded in networks an organisation is, but the quality and value of these partnerships will be better understood through a quick email survey or interview with those partners.

Writing a policy or strategy for an organisation where there wasn't one before tells you half the story, but getting a statement from the Chair explaining how that will be used will tell you so much more. Providing newspaper clippings that show coverage of an event is a useful indicator that organisational reputation has been improved, but also showing a change in website visits, or number of telephone enquiries will add a bit more useful evidence that organisational standing has changed.

Something as broad as 'organisational culture' may seem a difficult area in which to show, but perhaps you can do a quick survey of staff opinions and knowledge at the beginning and end of a project and see if there are any differences?

Any questions?

This guidance aims to help you plan your project successfully and create high quality evaluation approaches. The outcomes framework which guides Youth Music funding will evolve as the information and evidence from funded projects is processed and analysed – in this sense it is over to you to create the outcomes framework of the future!

If you have any feedback on this document, or any further questions, please contact grants@youthmusic.org.uk or call the grants and learning team on 0207 902 1060.

Endnotes

¹ <http://scholar.google.co.uk/>

² <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/>

³ <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do2/research-and-data/evidencing-our-work/case-the-culture-and-sport-evidence-programme/local-heritage-and-culture-profiles/>

⁴ <http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/about-performance-improvement/about-monitoring-evaluation/ces-planning-triangles/index>

⁵ <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/evaluationbuilder>