Research, Aggregation and Reporting Requirements – Scoping Study

Context: Coventry City of Culture 2021

On 7 December 2017, Coventry was awarded the Title of UK City of Culture 2021. The Coventry City of Culture Trust (hereafter referred to as "CCCT") is now in the process of planning the year itself, the infrastructure to support it., and the methods of evaluating its impact. The year itself will aim to bring 2.5m visitors into the city, distribute over a million tickets for events, and see an increase in visitor spend of 20%. 80% of the local population will experience at least three events through the year, and over 16,000 locals will be involved as active volunteers and participants.

Purpose of this Project

To consider the opportunities for implementing a single research platform, which can gather primary research responses, aggregate the findings with other available and open source research data, and report upon it in a meaningful way for the CCCT, stakeholders and participating cultural partners.

We are looking to start conversations with research specialists already active in this field in order to provide a relevant solution.

Aims of the project

- To ensure that CCCT is able to obtain relevant data to meet its evaluation framework from a representative range of events and activities and a representative sample of audiences and participants
- To aggregate research data with data from other available sources (e.g. Household survey, Audience Finder, Impact and Insight Toolkit) in order to gain further population and sector insights
- To report to the different stakeholder groups in the most appropriate way, e.g. making data meaningful in the 'here and now' for the cultural sector in Coventry, whilst also representing longitudinal and aggregate data for the City.
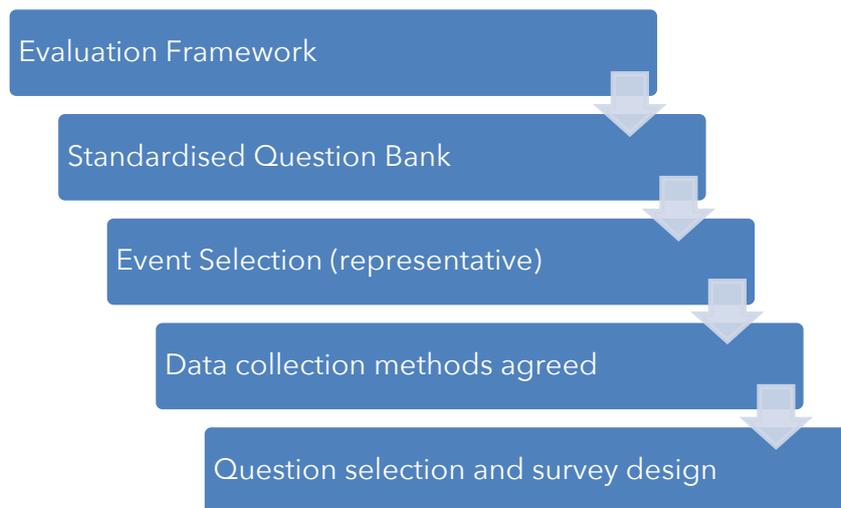- To allow access to the raw data for further academic investigation as required

How this fits with the Evaluation Framework overall

CCCT is in the process of agreeing the high-level impacts that it will aim to measure against, and it is our intention that these form the top level of an 'evaluation framework'. The monitoring and evaluation challenge for CCCT is then to ensure that effort, data and resource is focused on activities that will deliver evidence of this impact, rather than conducting data collection and research 'for its own sake' and trying to match it all up afterwards.

Many of the impacts may be evidenced easily without the need for primary research, and we are in the process of mapping other data sources against the impact areas to ensure that our approach is as streamlined as possible.

Where we have identified that impact will be best measured through primary research, is where this project comes in. (We are looking at a parallel process in regard to ticketing and participant behavioural data.)

The graphic below illustrates how we see this working -but we would welcome your input into this process:

Evaluation Framework

Standardised Question Bank

Event Selection (representative)

Data collection methods agreed

Question selection and survey design

- The Evaluation Framework sets out the top-level impacts, and a set of measures or evidence that will need gathering. It should also identify which sources we will use for each area.
- The standardised question bank would be an agreed, standardised set of primary research questions, mapped to each of the impact areas
- Events would be selected in order to provide a representative sample of both the activity across the year, and the audiences/participants
- Depending on the type of event, and who is promoting it, a realistic method of data collection would need to be used. For example, a free outdoor event is going to need very different data collection from a standard theatre show in a venue.
- The questions would then be selected (from the question bank) depending upon the type of event and the impacts that need to be measured. We anticipate some events only asking a few questions -but they need to be the 'right' ones for that event/audience.

Project challenges

1. <u>Which events should we survey?</u>

We will need the research provider to help work with us to identify a suitable and representative sample of events across which we can undertake research, many of which will not necessarily be under the direct control of CCCT and may include:

- Events and activities promoted by CCCT, including free and unticketed events (including outdoor events) and participatory activities
- Events / activities in non-NPO organisations / venues
- Events / activities in NPO organisations/venues

For the non-City-of culture promotions, the research provider will need to work in partnership with the cultural promoter, which may be a small independent gig promoter, or an established venue. These organisations may or may not already have their own evaluation frameworks / design in place, so if this project is going to deliver what THEY need, as well as what CCCT needs, there will need to be some 'harmonisation' of survey questions.

It is important that any research activity undertaken by CCCT, as well as evidencing impact overall, also delivers insight to cultural partners as we go along. We anticipate this requiring, for example, different types of reporting for venues/promoters in a short time-scale, compared with more detailed analysis over time for CCCT overall. The data set and technology needs to support both of these aims.

2. <u>Aggregating survey data from other sources</u>

Many of the organisations are already using their own audience surveys and may be reluctant (or unable due to funding requirements) to abandon these in order to use the CCCT surveys instead.

For example, existing NPOs of Arts Council England are required to undertake a quota of **Audience Finder** (AF) surveys (380 responses per year) and **Impact and Insight Toolkit** (I&IT) surveys – beginning as 4 evaluations per year in 2019 but increasing after that point. This will include Warwick Arts Centre, the Belgrade Theatre and Culture Coventry.

Warwick Arts Centre and the Belgrade Theatre also undertake their own post-event Experience Surveys (currently operated by Indigo-Ltd) which are benchmarked with other venues across the UK.

For this project to be a success, there is a potential 'conflict' between ensuring that CCCT data directly maps onto its evaluation framework and enabling existing organisations to gather the research data they need to operate as they need to.

Other sources of data to be aggregated may include:
- Coventry Household survey data

- Ticketing data (if a case can be made for how to aggregate this and to what ends)
- Other population / postcode / MSOA data
- Creative People and Places data

We will require the research provider to undertake a full mapping exercise of all the potential data sources and research requirements, and to propose a solution that can deliver a single research data set for CCCT as outlined above.

This may potentially mean, for example, Audience Finder and Impact/Insight Toolkit data being collected via the same research tool as CCCT and 'passed back' to the relevant sources; or data being supplied back to CCCT from the Audience Finder and Insight/Impact toolkit data sources respectively; and/or standardising some of the CCCT survey questions to 'fit' those asked in other surveys.

3. Reporting

Our ideal scenario is that CCCT holds its own pool of data – both from ticketing and survey data, and that appropriate reporting and dashboards are created based upon this.

The diagram below summarises the potential research data sources discussed above.
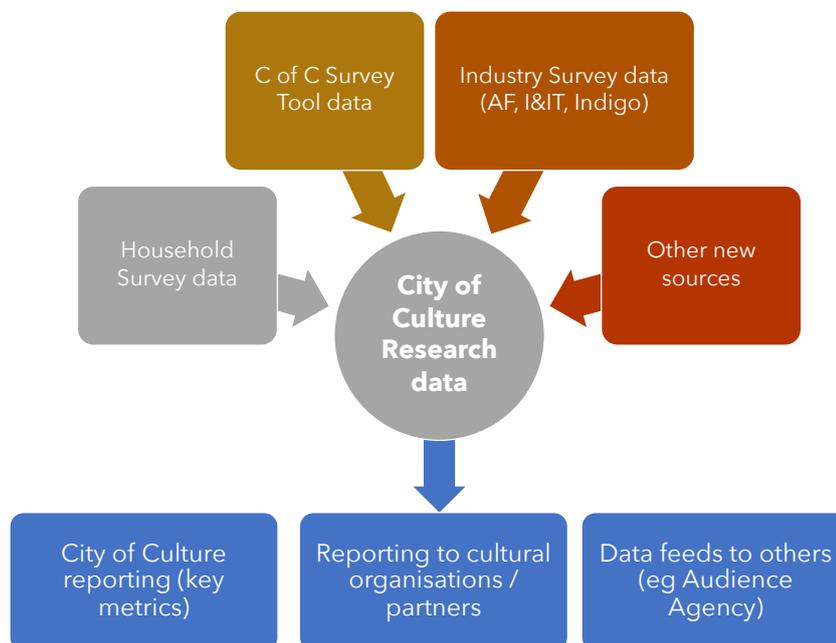
All the data would flow into a central system to allow:
- Cross-tabulation of data across different sources, where possible
- Creation of bespoke reporting and dashboards for CCCT
- Creation of bespoke reporting for individual organisations, cultural partners, and (if required) stakeholders
- Data feeds back to Audience Agency or Insight and Impact Toolkit where CCCT is collecting primary data

Scoping Study

We're interested in receiving submissions from suitable research providers to undertake a scoping study for this project. The scoping study will need to:

- Review previous / current methods of evaluation of similar projects and identify where impact has been most effectively demonstrated
- Similarly review current research practice from NPOs, cultural partners and CCCT
- Map the existing research needs amongst cultural partners etc. to identify <u>essential</u> requirements for each party, and where synergies exist (rather than simply repeating existing research ad infinitum)
- Design a suitable methodology to collect the impact evidence for CCCT, and for other cultural partners. This should include an examination of
  - how a standardised question set would be developed
  - how different methods of data collection might be managed (and varied per event)
  - how events and respondents are selected to ensure a representative picture
- Identify a suitable reporting tool to disseminate the findings as outlined.

Proposal

Please include in your proposal:

- Company credentials and background
- Examples of similar projects you have undertaken
- A description of how you would approach this project in terms of both methodology and timescale
- Budget breakdown

Budget

We have a fixed fee of £4,500 + VAT available for this project

For more information, or discuss the project further, please contact:

Jonothan Neelands, Warwick Business School: Jonothan.Neelands@wbs.ac.uk
      or
Katy Raines, Partner, Indigo-Ltd: katy.raines@indigo-ltd.com

Deadline for receipt of proposals

28th February 2019