Evaluation Master Class

Context: Most arts practitioners and organisations working in the participatory sector recognise the importance of evaluation as a way of improving practice and of demonstrating impact, but the demands of evaluation can be confusing and onerous. In the current climate, with the need to justify funding from diverse streams, and meet the needs of a range of funders; and with the recent government push to illustrate the economic impact of the work; evaluating work effectively and ethically is more critical than ever. There is confusion within the sector between monitoring, evaluation and reporting. There are no hard and fast guidelines as to what constitutes quality evaluation. It's easy for evaluation to be tacked on as an afterthought, or to be lost in the busy delivery of the work. This master class will help practitioners to navigate this complex terrain and develop a deeper understanding of what a quality evaluation process might look like with a view to embedding it more fully in their own practice.

Background and expertise: Evaluating impact is one of the key areas for investigation for Collective Encounters research lab, where we explore the practicalities, ethics and ideology of evaluation. Our Quality and Evaluation Framework has been held up as an example of good practice by funders including Baring Foundation and Arts Council England.

Target participants: Professional artists working in a participatory arts/applied arts/community arts/ engaged arts/collaborative practice/arts and health context.

Summary of training day: Co-facilitated by Collective Encounters' Artistic Director and Creative Producer, this full-day training session will involve tutor presentation, action learning sets and practical activity.

Participants will be provided with high quality materials to take away with them to remind them of their learning, including Collective Encounters' Quality and Evaluation Framework, a bibliography for further reading, and support hand outs from the day.

Training will cover both practical and theoretical areas, and by the end of the session participants will have:

- A clear understanding of what evaluation is and how to use it
- An understanding of the ethics of evaluation
- Ideas for how to develop and deliver an ethical evaluation process, from project beginning to end
- Practical, creative ideas for how to gather both qualitative and quantitative data
- Ideas about evaluating the quality of both creative process and product
- The tools to approach writing an evaluation report
- An introduction to some of the key evaluation methodologies used by funders and social sector partners

All materials can be supplied in accessible formats.