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1 INTRODUCTION

This short paper is a benchmarking input into the early conceptual scoping of DCA's new value framework.

In our project proposal we talked about the need to review international literature on best practice models and measurement to help aid the design of the new framework and help identify appropriate sources of peer review for the project.

This short paper shares some of that early review work, but with explicit reference to the emerging logic framework developed through early discussions between DCA and the Pracsys team. That framework begins to identify some of the key categories under 'outcome' and 'impact' areas that are of particular interest to DCA.

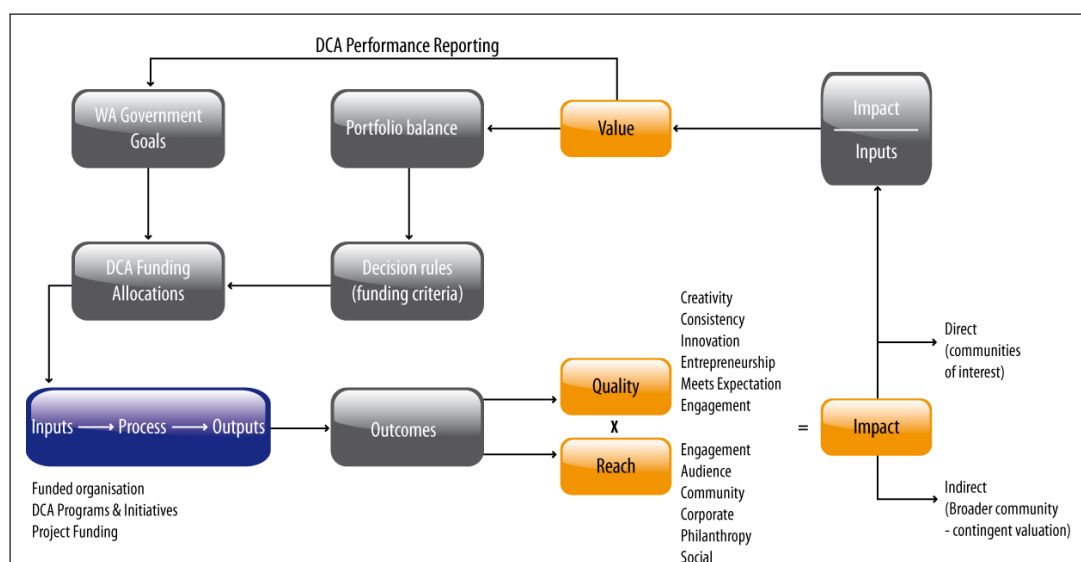
This short benchmarking analysis will comment on those dimensions of the logic model that are open to different interpretations and design modifications, using insights from international debate about the evaluation and measurement of public investment in the arts to help refine the emerging logic model.

In addition, this paper will seek to raise some broader issues arising from the benchmarking review that DCA needs to consider at this early scoping stage of the project – which impact both on the design of the value framework, but also on the downstream strategy for measurement and evaluation. In other words, it is important at this stage to not only benchmark the emerging framework, but to stress test the robustness of the model, and the conceptual clarity underpinning it.

With those aims in mind, this short document does not aim to be a comprehensive literature review – although key documents reviewed are listed in the bibliography. Rather the aim is to offer some indicative views, underpinned by key references, about the key issues and possible approaches that DCA need to work through with the Pracsys team over the coming weeks.

As we firm up the logic model, we can then benchmark in more detail some of the key elements and design options within the value framework.

Figure 1: Logic Framework Diagram



Source: Pracsys 2011; Productivity Commission, 2011

2 KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Our benchmarking review has identified a number of higher order issues within the logic model that need to be addressed, as follows:

1. The need to build a clear distinction between outcomes / impacts – and value
2. To clarify current thinking about capturing cultural value, and quality, in the arts and cultural sector
3. To test whether DCA have in mind a clear ‘hierarchy’ of key outcomes, impacts and value measurements?
4. To begin to explore whether some of the categories in the logic model are actually subsets of other categories
5. To begin to develop more fine-grained definitions under each category – closely reflecting DCA priorities
6. To explore whether DCA wants to be more explicit in terms of capturing economic outcomes / impacts?
7. To restate the fundamental principles of public value models so that DCA can make some clear decisions about its overall public value approach

2.1 A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN ‘IMPACT’ AND ‘VALUE’

It may seem a strange place to start, but is alarming how often the distinction between ‘impact’ and ‘value’ is collapsed in debates about the returns on cultural investment. For example, as Bakhshi¹ has recently observed:

‘Economic impact is not the same as value. Economic impact refers to the measurement of the employment, output and productivity consequences of cultural activities. Properly executed, economic impact studies are essential for economic development agencies that see culture as a locus for, or as an instrument of, economic development.

Perversely, however, all the economic studies one sees in the cultural sphere tend to be of the economic impact variety. Next to none look at valuation, using the empirical tools endorsed by the Treasury’s Green Book – the government’s official guide to cost-benefit analysis – that public economists have deployed so successfully in other controversial areas like the environment and health where, like culture, a good deal of public value is not mediated through markets, and is therefore not captured through market prices and transactions.’

In other words, the ‘economic value’ of the arts, as opposed to the ‘economic impact’ of the arts, seeks to value the arts in the round, using the techniques and language of economics – for example through using stated preference techniques to explore what people value, their choices and their preferences, as reflected in a common unit of measurement (money).

So for example, if we take the example of so-called heritage assets (as per DCA’s KPI that ‘Western Australia’s natural, cultural and documentary collections are preserved, accessible and sustainable’), we would explore people’s willingness to pay to preserve the heritage in question. These non-use values may relate to the asset’s existence value (people value the existence of the heritage item even though they may not consume its services

¹ Bakhshi, H. (2011) ‘Leadership and cultural value’ unpublished memo

directly); its option value (people wish to preserve the option that they or others might consume the asset's services at some future time); and its bequest value (people may wish to bequeath the asset to future generations). These non-use values are not observable in market transactions, since no market exists on which the rights to them can be exchanged.²

Willingness-to-pay studies of various sorts can be conducted at the micro-level to assess the community benefits from conservation of a specific heritage item. Alternatively they can be applied at the macro-level to find out how much the population at large would be willing to see spent out of its taxes on heritage protection in general.

If one looks at the UK experience, the Department of Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) approach has been to start with 'impacts' – and seek to understand the full range of potential impacts produced by the arts and cultural sector (in total the DCMS have produced value frameworks that contain around 90 different outcomes / impacts). Then DCMS, having decided which of these impacts are the most promising, has attempted to put a monetary value on those impacts. So for example, it has demonstrated the economic value of engagement in terms of the subjective well-being income compensation of the arts.³

Interestingly our review of international practice reveals that few, if any, Arts Councils have taken upon themselves the responsibility of consistently capturing these broader 'value' creating contribution of the arts (embracing not just economic value, but cultural, social, and public value as well). So a key question for DCA, given the cost of these evaluation techniques, is whether to make such considerations an integral part of the value framework. And then for DCA to be clear about the dynamics of that decision - namely to balance a desire to sharpen the rationale underpinning their investment decisions, and to make a stronger case for overall public investment in the arts within WA, against the resource cost of measurement and evaluation.

Experience from the UK suggests that contingent value / willingness to pay measures are hard to directly relate to allocation and investment decisions, which is why evaluations of this type are rarely commissioned.

These observations suggest two immediate questions for the DCA as they develop their value framework:

1. Which, if any, of the key outcomes/ impacts (economic, social) would DCA like to prioritise and seek to capture measurements of their broader value?
2. What is the best approach to measuring these 'value' creating activities?

One approach would be to regularly commission stakeholder perceptions surveys, and public consultations (so for example, DCA could commit to carrying out a full public value assessment of its top twenty funded organisations every 5 years. Or a contingent value assessment of the same group of funded organisations on a similar timescale).

2 Throsby, D. (2006) 'The Value of Cultural Heritage: What can economics tell us?' In 'Capturing the Public Value of Heritage' English Heritage.

3 See Selwood, S (2010.21) 'Making a difference: the cultural impact of museums: An Essay for NMDC' Sara Selwood Associates

2.2 CAPTURING CULTURAL VALUE AND QUALITY

There are now an established range of methods to try and capture the qualitative cultural impacts of public investment, and in turn cultural value. These include self-evaluations; peer and user-review; and stakeholder analysis. There is also growing support for 'artistic self-assessment'. Bailey and Richardson⁴ have suggested that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to assessing what Australasians refer to as 'artistic vibrancy' (and what in the UK is referred to as 'excellence'):

'The idea that universal templates can be developed across companies and / or artforms is thus belied by empirical evidence, and the literatures shows, attempts to create such templates often degenerate into box-ticking.'

Methods suggested by their case studies, which include peer and staff opinion, could include assessment panels, guest artist surveys and staff days – reflecting the 360 degree review approach supported by much of the literature on performance management.⁵

In the UK, Arts Council England is currently rolling out an Artistic Assessment Scheme, that is centred on 'artistic assessments by assessors who have knowledge and experience of the arts', and focuses on 'excellence' rather than 'impact'.

More generally, the issue of defining artistic 'excellence' remains a sticky issue once you step beyond the established approach of judging against appropriate standards as set by professional practice in the relevant artform, with those judgements taken by informed practitioners.⁶

A key issue for DCA is the level of commitment it wants to display in measuring quality, and the corresponding resource implications of adequately funding peer reviews of artistic vibrancy or excellence. For example, bringing in national and international peers is an important part of a robust process, due to the inherent danger of a 'closed' artistic community within a particular state or country indulging in 'grade inflation' to support each other's claims for ongoing funding. The cost implications of such an approach are also self-evident.

2.3 A 'HIERARCHY' OF KEY OUTCOMES?

How far does DCA need to determine a hierarchy of core outcomes, and how is DCA expecting its funded portfolio to respond to those outcomes in their funding proposals.

Presumably DCA would not ascribe the same importance to all of the outcomes in the emerging logic model? So for example, audience reach is presumably more important than entrepreneurship across the sector? In other words is there a higher order goal set that needs to lie at the heart of the value framework – with other subsidiary, 'nice to have' impacts lying within the model, but as secondary

4 Bailey, J. & Richardson, L. 'Meaningful Measurement: a literature review and Australian and British case studies of arts organisations' conducting artistic self-assessment' Cultural Trends, No. 76

5 See Selwood, S. (2010.22) op cit

6 See McMaster, B. (2008) 'Supporting excellence in the arts: from measurement to judgement.' Department of Culture, Media and Sport; and Throsby, D. (2010) 'The Economics of Cultural Policy', Cambridge University Press

sources of value creation compared to the higher order goal set.

The approach adopted by Arts Council England in their 10-year framework, 'Achieving Great Art for Everyone' is an interesting model for the DCA to benchmark against. Effectively ACE's value framework is built around five 10-year goals – which are their prioritized outcomes (see Figure 2 below - I have included under each goal one example of ACE's prioritized success criteria for the goals).

What is interesting about the ACE approach is that these five goals act as the specific impact areas which then directly form their investment criteria. So for example, regularly funded organisations in England (now called National Portfolio Organisations) had to show in the latest funding application round how they would make a significant contribution to at least two or more of the five goals.

Figure 2: ACE's Ten Year Goals

Goal 1: Talent and artistic excellence are thriving and celebrated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using our investment to ensure excellent art happens
Goal 2: More people experience and are inspired by the arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing arts opportunities for people and places with the least engagement
Goal 3: The arts are sustainable, resilient and innovative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening business models in the arts and helping arts organisations to diversify their income streams, including by encouraging private giving
Goal 4: The arts leadership and workforce are diverse and highly skilled <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating equal opportunities to enter the arts workforce
Goal 5: Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the delivery of arts opportunities for children and young people

Source: ACE (2010) 'Achieving Great Art for Everyone'

So for DCA, this model raises some interesting questions. Firstly, how are DCA going to relate the value / investment framework to the application / evaluation process for funded organisations?

Secondly, are there any priorities in the ACE model that are not currently in the emerging DCA logic model, which could be usefully included? For example, there is currently no mention of a specific focus on children and young people, yet since March 2011 DCA has put in place a new 'Action Plan for Young People and the Arts.' Are children and young people a subset of the 'community' category under 'Reach'?

Similarly, does the 'entrepreneurship' category under 'Quality' imply that DCA are looking for more sustainable business models – or does 'entrepreneurship' imply something else in terms of impacts. Similarly, do the 'corporate' and 'philanthropy' categories under 'Reach' imply something similar in terms of leveraged income / diversified business models.

Thirdly, the ACE model suggests something interesting about the different approaches DCA could adopt to the overall 'architecture' of the value framework. In addition to the five goals and corresponding priorities, ACE have a higher order set of outcomes they are seeking from their work and investments, as detailed in Figure 3.

Figure 3: ACE's higher order outcomes

Excellence = outstanding art and outstanding art experiences

Reach = more people attending and taking part in the arts

Engagement = more people feeling the arts are meaningful to them

Diversity = the arts reflecting the diversity of contemporary England

Innovation = artists and organisations having the freedom, and being challenged, to innovate.

In some respects, having facilitated the ACE top team in producing 'Achieving Great Art for Everyone', it's true to say that ACE 'fudged' the link between these higher order goals and the more granular ten-year goals / priority impacts – although they did check that the 'outcome' set produced by the five ten-year goals would deliver on these higher order goals.

In practical terms, these higher order goals (excellence, reach, engagement, diversity and innovation) are ACE's touch stone ambitions in achieving their overall mission of 'Great Art for Everyone'

We're not suggesting DCA follow a similar formulation, but at the moment the emerging logic framework feels like it might be blending higher order outcomes (quality, reach), with more granular outcomes (philanthropy), and one of the things we need to work through is establishing exactly how DCA want that clear hierarchy of outcomes and related impact areas to look like, and how this relates to DCA's current KPI set, or indeed a revamped KPI set.

International benchmarking suggests our collective aim should be to create a clear hierarchy of goals and performance management grids – i.e. conceptualizations that define the higher level goals of DCA that are then broken down into more specific and more concrete categories of activities and effects that constitute DCA's particular strategy for creating public value through the arts. Our benchmarking work also suggests it is vital not to overcomplicate the goal hierarchies, with three to six key goals forming the core of any public agency's understanding of itself and its mission.

In a fascinating study by Moore et al⁷ of 13 State Art Agencies in the USA, all of whom expressed an interest in developing a public value approach, the authors summarized the key higher-level goals of those state agencies – which is also a useful input for DCA to benchmark against (see Figure 4 below).

Figure 4: Key goals of US State Art Agencies in Moore study (2005)

- Contribute to state economic development
- Encourage and facilitate widespread participation in the arts
- Support and strengthen the arts community
- Strengthen the quality of individual and community life
- Help children learn and achieve
- Integrate arts activity in other state services
- Generate public policy support for the arts
- Generate popular support for public funding of the arts

7 Moore, M et al (2005) 'Creating Public Value Through State Arts Agencies' The Wallace Foundation

2.4 CATEGORIES AND SUB-CATEGORIES

Following directly on from these observations about the ‘architecture’ of the goals, outcomes and impacts, we need to explore with DCA the extent to which some of the categories in the logic model are actually subsets of other categories, or other higher order goals.

So for example let’s look at one of DCA’s Key Performance Indicators – ‘A creative, sustainable, and accessible culture and arts sector.’ If we take the financial health measure of ‘sustainability’ within DCA’s KPIs, and then look at the emerging logic framework – the focus on corporate leverage, philanthropic leverage, and entrepreneurship, are potentially all sub-sets of delivering on the financial health element of the sustainability KPI.

This could have a number of implications as we refine the logic framework. Firstly, should DCA have a higher order outcome goal around the ‘sustainability’ of the funded arts sector in WA? Secondly, irrespective of the higher order goal issue, all of this suggests that DCA might want to revisit the current definition of financial health used within their KPIs (reserves greater than 20 per cent of turnover; working capital greater than 2.0; and case reserves of greater than 10 weeks of expenditure).

For example DCA could look at leverage ratios, getting funded organisations to detail all their funding streams in order to calculate how they are leveraging public funds to generate other revenue in terms of corporate and private income. Or alternatively, DCA could decide to look at the balance of income streams for each of its funded organization.

In this context within the UK there has been a lively debate across the sector about the ‘gold standard’ mixed economy ratio for publicly funded arts organisations suggested by Arts and Business – comprising of a third public subsidy, a third earned income, and a third through sponsorship and philanthropic giving.⁸ This may be an area in which DCA could choose to innovate in terms of the new value framework.

2.5 DEVELOPING MORE FINE-GRAINED DEFINITIONS OF EACH CATEGORY – REFLECTING DCA PRIORITIES

DCA and the project team face quite a large number of prioritisation choices under each of the emerging categories. For example, if we take the current ‘social’ category under ‘reach’ – this ‘social’ category could include a wide range of outcomes / impacts – from educational and health based outcomes, through to strong and cohesive communities. Depending on how many outcomes DCA wish to prioritise, DCA could choose to direct us to review the best practice literature about how best to measure the wider impacts of its investments, including Social Return on Investment (SROI) approaches.⁹ For example, within the new value framework, DCA could choose to invite applicants to give greater consideration to forecasting their SROI if they meet their intended outcomes as a result of a successful funding application to DCA’s new value framework.

⁸ Arts and Business (2010) ‘A Private Sector Policy for the Arts’

⁹ Cabinet Office (2009) ‘Social Return on Investment – an introduction’

Similarly, the 'engagement' category under 'Reach' could be a narrow measure of access and audience numbers, or a more innovative measure of deeper public participation and consultation, aligned with DCA's Strategic Objective 2 ('DCA objectives are aligned within a public value framework')¹⁰ and building on Australia Council's 'Creative Communities' initiative.

This raises the key issue as to whether DCA already has in mind a hierarchy of priorities within each sub category – and is DCA clear about how is it arriving at those prioritized sub-categories? If one looks at international approaches, the route to such prioritized outcomes tends to reflect two key influences. Firstly, a pragmatic focus on where the direct causal link from cultural investment to these outcomes is strongest (for example see the CASE evidence programme in the UK and the strong link between cultural investment and measures of subjective well-being).

Secondly, because those outcomes are priorities of either Central or Local Government, and as a result are actively shaping the broader commissioning of public services, hence opening up additional public budgets that cultural organisations could tap in. No doubt DCA will be balancing these strategic and tactical considerations.

So for example, in the UK the 'Creative Partnerships'¹¹ experience for cultural organisations, and the 'Renaissance Programme' led by the Museums and Library Association (MLA)¹², has led directly to better links between schools and cultural organisations, and a

growing emphasis that cultural organisations should be doing more to formalize their education offer to schools, and in turn that cultural funders and Schools themselves need to be clearer about the outcomes they are expecting from commissioning services from cultural organisations. Clearly, given DCA's 'Creative Connections Partnership Framework' with the Department of Education, this might be one of the outcome areas DCA may choose to prioritise

More broadly, a key factor will be factoring in some inevitable path dependency in the new value framework as a result of DCA's existing KPI set. For example, the 'creative' outcomes element of the current KPI set is an obvious area where the new value framework will suggest some innovations. Which begs an inevitable question. DCA's current strategic plan ends in 2014. As a result of developing this new public value framework, will there be an opportunity to renegotiate the Department's KPI's to align them more closely with the new value framework?

As a development team, we need as much clarity as possible around what's up for grabs and what isn't within the new framework.

10 Department of Culture and the Arts, 'Strategic Plan 2010-2014'

11 See www.creative-partnerships.com

12 See www.mla.gov.uk/what/programmes/renaissance

2.6 MEASURING ECONOMIC IMPACTS THROUGH GVA BASED MODELS

Our benchmarking review suggests that DCA will need to develop more clarity on its approach to capturing the economic impact of its investments in the sector.

At the moment the emerging logic model doesn't make any specific provision for GVA type measures (although they are no doubt implied within the direct /indirect impact categories relating to communities). This raises the question as to whether economic impacts – measured in GVA terms – need to more clearly sketched and differentiated. In other words, DCA need to consider whether such measures are of primary or secondary importance to the value framework.

Our review of the international literature confirms there is a maturing approach to measuring economic impacts, with an increasing emphasis on capturing Gross Value Added (GVA) impacts.¹³ In simple terms GVA models attempt to measure within a defined geographical area the total value of goods and services available through economic activity. So for example, if additional jobs are created in a regional economy, this will lead to higher GVA. Similarly higher salaries and business profits will lead to a higher GVA figure.

All GVA models are therefore essentially variations on input/output models that are trying to capture:

- Direct and indirect employment effects (for example net employment gains; wages)
- Profits (gross operating surplus)
- Secondary / external visitor effects
- Indirect / Supply Chain effective (income multiplier effects through local expenditure in goods and services)¹⁴

In deciding its approach to capturing economic impacts, DCA will need to determine its preferred approach to capturing such outcomes and whether to adopt a formal input / output model to measure overall GVA impact (see Figure 5 for example).

There is also the issue here of the balance between 'tight' and 'broad' definitions / approaches. If we depict GVA measures as a 'tight' definitional approach, there has understandably been a growing interest in 'broader' approaches – charting the contribution of the arts to that wider creative economy (including place making and brand considerations, which often find a quantitative expression in City benchmarking exercises such as the Arnholt-GfK Roper City Brand Index¹⁵, which measures issues such as 'pulse', and 'liveability' in cities, which include consideration of the cultural offer and creative milieu).

¹³ There needs to be a clear distinction between the contribution of the arts to the economy (measured in GVA terms), and the 'economic value' of the arts, which seeks to value the arts in the round, using the language of economics – for example through using stated preference techniques to explore what people value, their choices and their preferences, as reflected in a common unit of measurement (money)

¹⁴ See Office for National Statistics (2010) 'Measuring the economic impact of an intervention or investment'

¹⁵ See www.simonanholt.com/Research/cities-index.aspx

Figure 5: The Shellard Model for measuring economic impact

The Shellard Model (below) grew out of Arts Council England commissioned research on the economic impact of performing arts organisations. The challenge for AGMA is to generate a model that is serviceable to a wide range of potential organisations across the portfolio.

Economic impact = annual turnover + overseas earnings + additional visitor spend + salaries + subsistence allowances + goods and services expenditure X a multiplier of 1.5

The multipliers applied to such models differ – for example the Treasury Green Book uses a regional multiplier of 1.0 for effects in the regional economy*

* See Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2009) 'Practical Guidance on Implementing the Impact Evaluation Framework'

2.7 THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC VALUE MODELS

The 'public value' literature is well known and we won't rehearse the full logic model here.¹⁶ But given there is a lively debate in the literature about what 'public value' is, this suggests that DCA have some clear strategic choices about which aspects of public value they want to emphasise.

As Gray notes¹⁷, the literature implies that public value is at least one of:

- An approach to management
- An end-product of the management process

- A set of processes that organisations could/should/ought to pursue

At the heart of public value approaches is the desire to both improve service delivery (thus delivering improved 'value' to the public), and to develop a better linkage between public sector organisations and the general public so that there is a better match of expectations between the two.

It is clearly important that DCA are clear about the key benefits they want to deliver through a public value approach. These might include:

- Enhanced public legitimacy for its actions and decisions (in which the WA public will better understand your activities and decisions, and / or exercise more influence over your activities and decisions)
- Improved service delivery, which may or may not include greater public involvement in this delivery through the identification of service needs¹⁸

As this brief review makes clear public value approaches can therefore encompass provision, outcomes, trust or cost-effectiveness? Are some elements of these public value models more important to DCA than others, and how will this shape DCA's measurement and evaluation of public value outcomes?

¹⁶ See Moore (1995); Moore et al (2005); Denhardt & Denhardt (2000); Coles & Parston (2006); and Blaug et al (2006)

¹⁷ Cray, C. 'Arts Council England and Public Value: A Critical Review' De Montford University

¹⁸ So for example, the Kentucky Arts Council include within its strategy goals the ambition that 'Public Policy is favourable to the arts in Kentucky', and that they will 'encourage citizens to become involved in shaping public policy (see Moore (2005))

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