

Creative approaches to evaluation for the creative arts

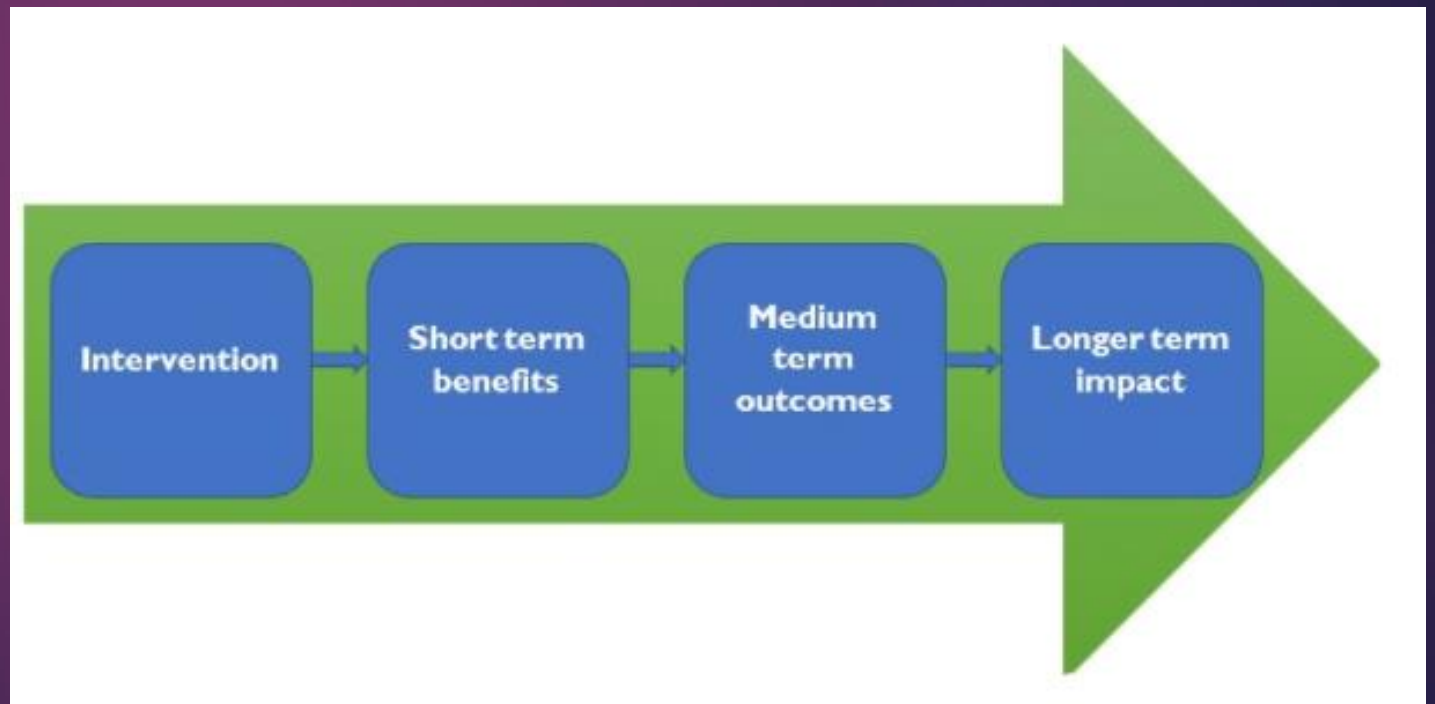
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Plan of Session

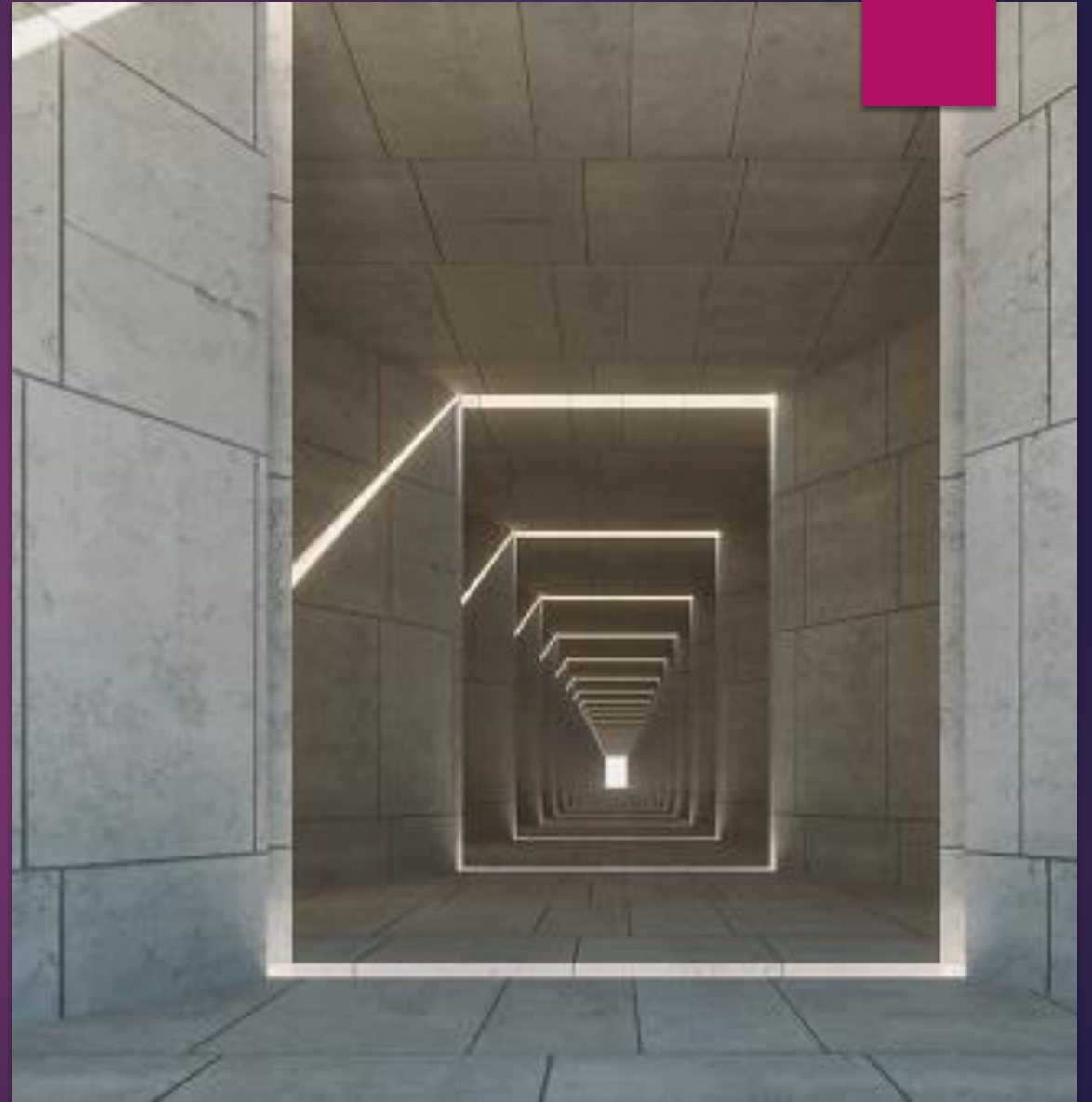
- ▶ Presentation: Embedding theory of change within a small specialist performing arts higher education provider
- ▶ Practical Workshop: Using creative and innovative approaches to support evaluation.

Embedding Theory of Change in Outreach for Small Specialist Providers



The Challenges

- ▶ For small specialists generally:
 - ▶ Limited internal expertise and skill
 - ▶ Limited budget – cannot employ evaluators
- ▶ For performing arts providers specifically:
 - ▶ Long pathways from outreach to entry
 - ▶ Finding appropriate methods of evaluation



Widening Participation into the Creative and Performing Arts



► Challenges:

- Less encouragement for progression into art HE due to:
 - Comparatively lower graduate salaries
 - Government policy and campaigns
- Long leaky pipeline
 - Learners may engage for many years and ultimately pursue a different path
 - Problematic when success measured by progression data

Conservatoire for Dance and Drama

Federation of six schools:

- Bristol Old Vic Theatre School
- Central School of Ballet
- London Contemporary Dance School
- National Centre for Circus Arts
- Northern School of Contemporary Dance
- Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance

Located in:

- Bristol
- Central London
- Greater London
- Leeds

Specialising in:

- Ballet
- Circus Arts
- Contemporary Dance
- Drama
- Production arts

Context:

- Small premises
- Small teams
- Few dedicated staff with multiple responsibilities

WP at CDD

A focus on access

- Small schools = high level of individualised support and therefore high retention and success rates
- Underrepresented students progress at same rate as their peers

Barriers to widening access:

- Arts absent in national curriculum
 - Fewer young people with requisite skills

Approach to access:

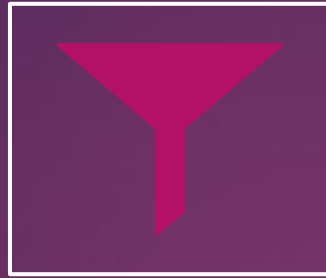
- Intensive, long term prevocational training programmes
 - Open to learners as young as 11
 - Consisting of all day training on Saturday and several hours throughout the week

The Challenges in Evidencing Impact



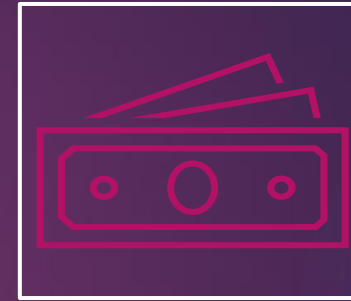
Long pipeline

- Ten years or more



Direct applications

- Small applicant pool,
small data sets



Prohibitive cost of tracking services

- Less able to track learners
- Less able to prove positive
personal impact outside of
progression into own institution

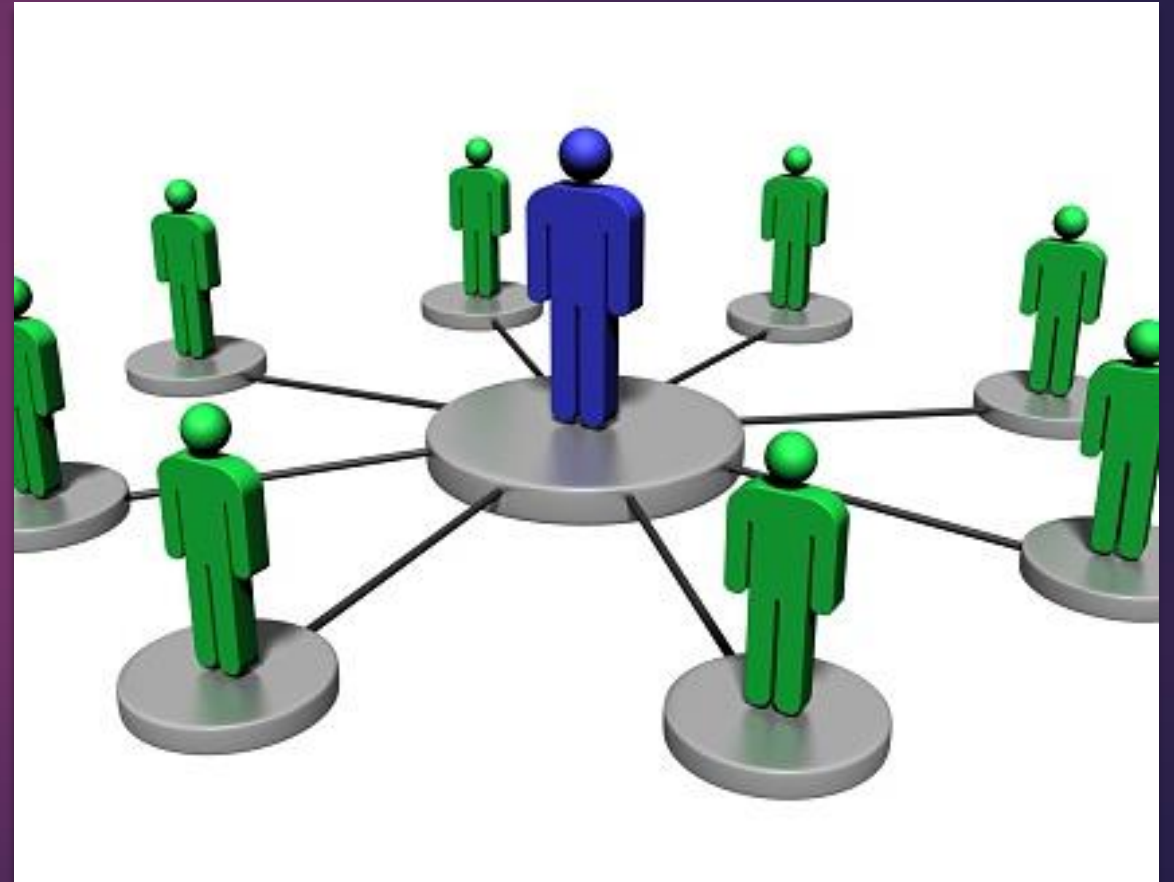
Building Evaluative Competency

- ▶ Practitioners delivering session identified as best placed to undertake evaluations
 - ▶ However, experienced teacher but not skilled evaluators
- ▶ Practitioner skills complemented by WP coordinator (Jon until 2019)
- ▶ Evaluation given strategic importance in 2016-2020 CDD Widening Access and Success Strategy
- ▶ Evaluation framework based of Kirkpatrick Model developed



First Steps Towards Theory of Change: Hub and Spoke Model

- ▶ Intensive workshop:
 - ▶ Practitioners mapped anticipated outcomes of projects
 - ▶ Identified the change they would like to see
 - ▶ Introduced creative evaluation methods
 - ▶ Continued support post-workshop



Embedding Theory of Change

- ▶ Development of toolkits and structured support/mentoring
 - ▶ Widening Access and Participation Project Development and Evaluation Handbook as a single point of reference
 - ▶ Emphasis on thinking about the provision as a pathway and with one activity leading on to another
- ▶ Various supportive tools:
 - ▶ Outcomes mapping templates
 - ▶ Theory of change template
 - ▶ Targeting checklist
 - ▶ Sample surveys
 - ▶ Evaluation checklist
 - ▶ Guidance on creative and online evaluation methods

Mapping on to the NERUPI Framework

- ▶ Framework overlaying Kirkpatrick Model with OfS Standards of Evidence, mapped over the NERUPI levels of engagement
 - ▶ Each activity categorised as Enthuse, Inform, Develop, or Support
 - ▶ Overlain on Kirkpatrick model: Enthuse activities receive a minimum of Reaction evaluation, Inform received Learning, Develop receive Behaviour and Support receive Impact

Key					
Not Appropriate	Appropriate under certain conditions	The minimum level of evaluation expected	The optimum level of evaluation	Excellent but likely disproportionate	Unnecessary

More Robust Evaluation					
Type of Activity	Objectives	Reaction- Action to activity	Learning – Changes in levels of knowledge	Behaviour – Changes to behaviour of participants	Impact – Overall impact to the student
Enthuse – Sows the seeds of aspiration to the Arts / discipline. Often dismissed as 'not-WP' and is light touch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students have a positive experience with vocational training and somewhat improved knowledge 	At a minimum: End of event questionnaires and/or focus groups gauging process made against objectives.	At a minimum: Pre and post surveys measuring the knowledge of students against the objectives	For this level of engagement, this is likely cumbersome and disproportionate. Appropriateness will depend on activity and resource	Unnecessary for this level on engagement
Inform - Educates about future options or offers a 'taster' of what conservatoire education is like. More intense engagement with students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students have demonstrably improved knowledge of vocational training and potential pathways. 	Not appropriate for this level of engagement	At a minimum: Pre and post surveys measuring how much the student knowledge of topics related to activity objectives.	At a minimum: learning evaluation with a tracking and/or longitudinal element to assess how the behaviour as related to a specific art form or expectation of HE participation has been changed as a result of the activity.	For this level of engagement, this is likely cumbersome and disproportionate. Appropriateness will depend on activity and resource
Develop - Ensures students have requisite skills or ability to succeed at auditions. Often sustained over more than one session.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students have developed knowledge and skills specific to vocational training and application. 	Not adequate for this level of engagement	Only acceptable if accompanied by robust tracking of students into application, audition and HE. Proceed as above	At a minimum: learning evaluation with a tracking and/or longitudinal element to assess continued engagement and aspirations of application to HE/vocational training	At a minimum: learning evaluation with a tracking of student applications into CDD or elsewhere.
Support - Work to support students to succeed on their particular pathway. Will often involve 1-to-1 work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students know how to succeed in their chosen pathway 	Not adequate for this level of engagement	Only acceptable if accompanied by robust tracking of students into application, audition and HE. Proceed as above	At a minimum: learning evaluation with a tracking and/or longitudinal element to assess preparedness for HE/vocational training.	At a minimum: learning evaluation with a tracking of student applications into CDD or elsewhere.

Embedding Theory of Change: Developing an Evaluation Framework

- ▶ Outcomes of each engagement level mapped on to NERUPI framework
 - ▶ Column one: Enthuse level activities mapped onto Stage 0 of the NERUPI Framework; Inform on to Stage 1, etc.
 - ▶ Column two: Key learning objectives and sub-objects from each programme aim of NERUPI framework reworked to focus specifically on performing and creative arts

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- ▶ Handbook and framework integrated into annual and termly reporting and monitoring cycle:
 - ▶ School plans submitted in Autumn using template linked to handbook and evaluation framework – should offer a step by step process
 - ▶ Plans discussed at Widening Access and Diversity Committee and then with each school individually

[illegible]

Making Theory of Change Part of the Day to Day

- ▶ Monitoring and evaluation are standing items of the Widening Access and Diversity Committee agenda
- ▶ Termly evaluation reports submitted ahead of the meeting using prefilled template directly linked to Handbook and evaluation framework
- ▶ Shared successes and challenges shared in meeting

EVALUATION REPORT			
PROJECT DETAILS			
Stage			
Project name			
Description			
What are the desired outcomes of the project?			
Did the project run, if not why?			
Location		Total cost of project	
APP Commitments Addressing		Sources(s) of funding for project and amount from each pot	
Collaborative?		Partners?	
LEARNER DATA – IF CAPTURED			
Actual Number of Learners		Actual proportion of Students from targeted groups – see traffic light above	
Number of learners previously engaged with CDD		Groups specifically targeted	
Number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Learners		Number of learners from LPNs (POLAR4 Q1&2)	
Number of learners in IMD Q1&2		Number of learners with families with income <£42,875	
Number of learners with a declared disability		Number of care-experienced and estranged learners	

EVALUATION	
Level of Engagement	Level of Evaluation
How was it evaluated?	
What were the findings of evaluation? Narrative	
What were the findings of evaluation? Qualitative and Quantitative	
<p>This will depend on how you have chosen to evaluate the activity. Please see the Evaluation Framework in this Handbook. Suggestions are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaction Evaluation: The number of students, teachers and/or parents who think the activity delivered a good/bad introduction to Conservatoire training and the pathways to this etc. This can be taken straight from any post-activity questionnaire Best if results can be presented also by target demographics. • Learning Evaluation Using pre and post activity surveys, report on the change in knowledge of students, teachers and/or parents as a result of the activity Best if results can be presented also by target demographics. • Behaviour Evaluation In addition to the Learning Evaluation, please report on any longitudinal surveying you may have done to record how many students retain aspirations of applying to vocational training, have remained engaged with the art form etc. If it has been possible to track students' participation in other activities and attendance at audition, this numerical data would also be useful. Best if results can be presented also by target demographics. This would allow for comparison between more and less privileged students on youth provisions. • Impact Evaluation In addition to the Learning and Behaviour Evaluation, please report, where possible, on the number of students from your activity applying and progressing into your school, any Conservatoire School or HE in general. If it was possible to undertake a comparative evaluation, the results from this would also be useful. Best if results can be presented also by target demographics. This would allow for comparison between more and less privileged students on youth provisions. 	
How does your evaluation inform future plans?	
<p>This should refer back to the questions asked in the Handbook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have the expected outcomes been achieved? How and why? - Did the activity reach the right people? - Was it sufficiently impactful relative to the resource expended? - How can the activity be made more impactful? 	

Conclusions

- ▶ Theory of change valuable in small, specialist providers
- ▶ Has helped build capacity and resilience in CDD
- ▶ Led to a year on year improvement

HOWEVER:


- ▶ Required significant commitment of time and resource
- ▶ Only possible with management buy-in
 - ▶ Easier to get buy-in if methods are integrated into current activities or processes.
 - ▶ That's creative methods are particularly important



Any Questions?



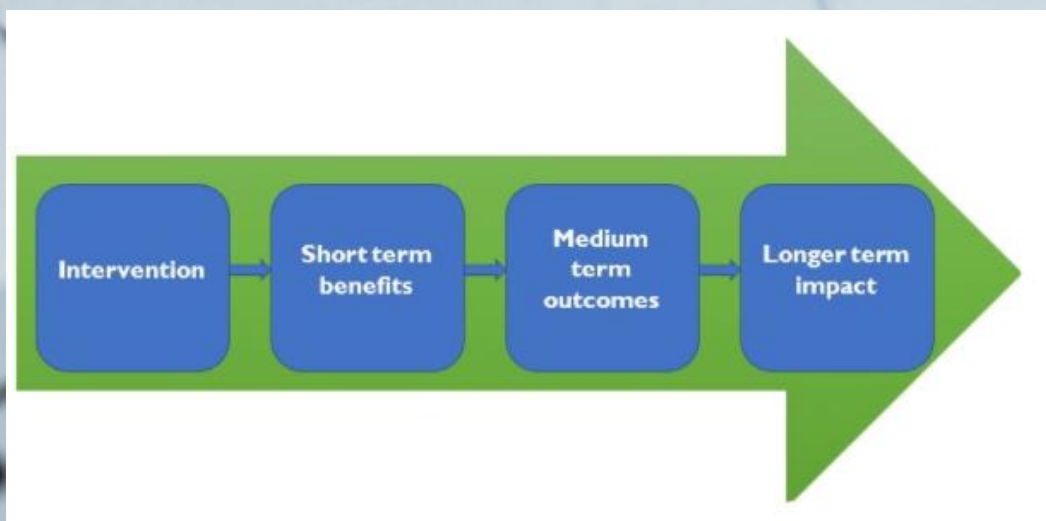
Workshop: How to embed creative and innovative approaches



What sort of
creative
evaluation
have you
used before

And where has this
sat in your ToC ?

(use the chat box)



BEING A REFLEXIVE EVALUATOR

In
groups



What questions do we want to answer?



How can I get the best quality data to answer them?



How do I get staff buy-in to help get that data?

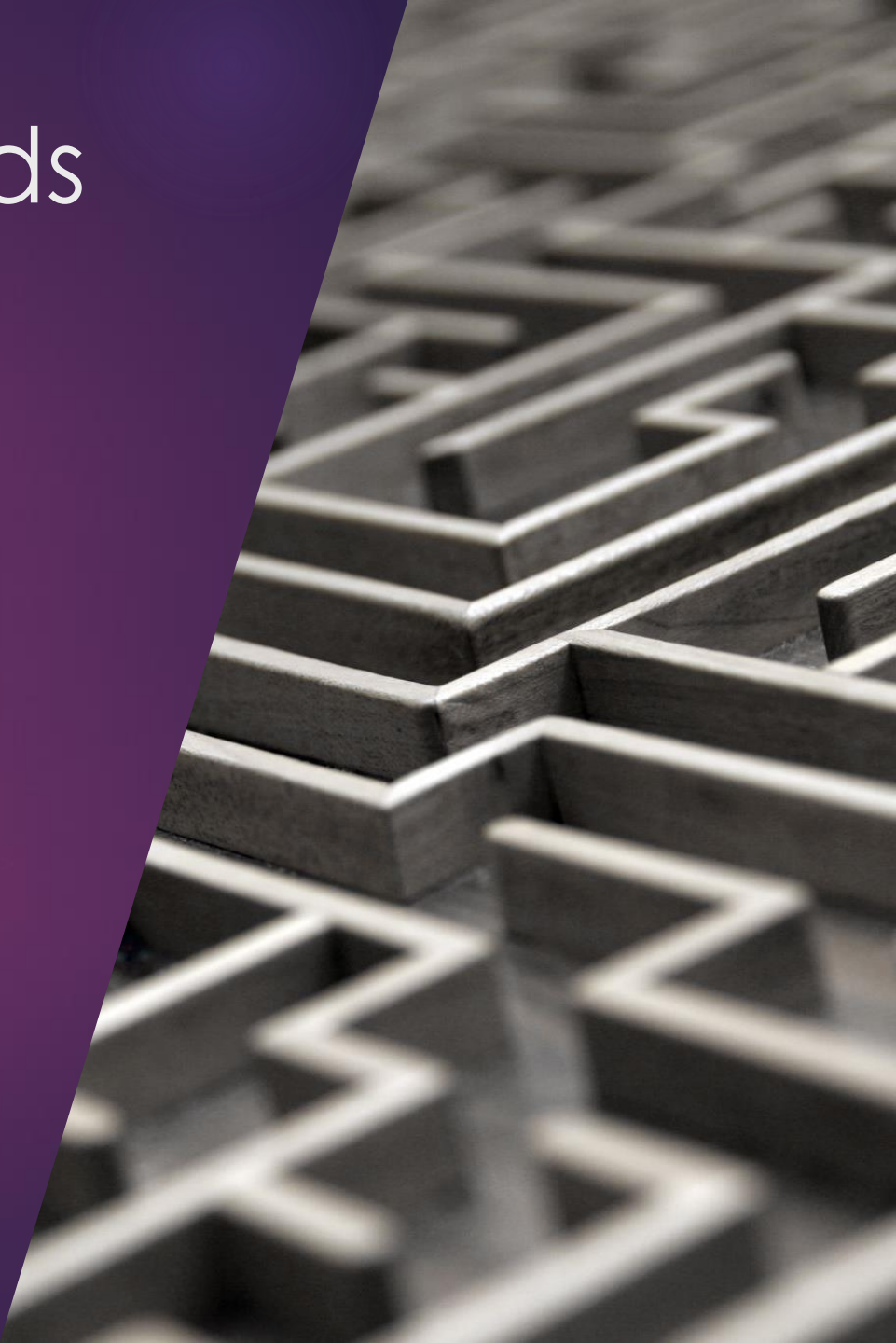


How might we do this in a way that fits with your art forms?

<https://www.nerupi.co.uk/members/toolkit/evaluation/overview-of-evaluation-planning>

Why use creative methods

- ▶ Co-construction and a playful approach to data collection
- ▶ Through the act of play that different ways of thinking can be opened up (Gauntlett, 2007)
- ▶ These methods offer a way of going beyond categorical or binary thinking and to explore issues in a more nuanced way (Kara, 2015)
- ▶ Making the familiar strange (Mannay 2010)
- ▶ Do we attach too much importance to certain forms of expression over others? (Haw and Hadfield 2011)
- ▶ Potentially more inclusive and accessible (Aldridge 2007)



Why use creative methods?

- ▶ Become part of the intervention not something 'extra'
 - ▶ Increased engagement
 - ▶ Increased buy in
 - ▶ More valuable insights



How can I use creative methods



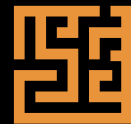
Primary data collection to measure outcomes

Can allow you to answer some questions
quantitative methods don't allow



Mixed methods approaches to add depth to quantitative data

Win hearts and minds in reports



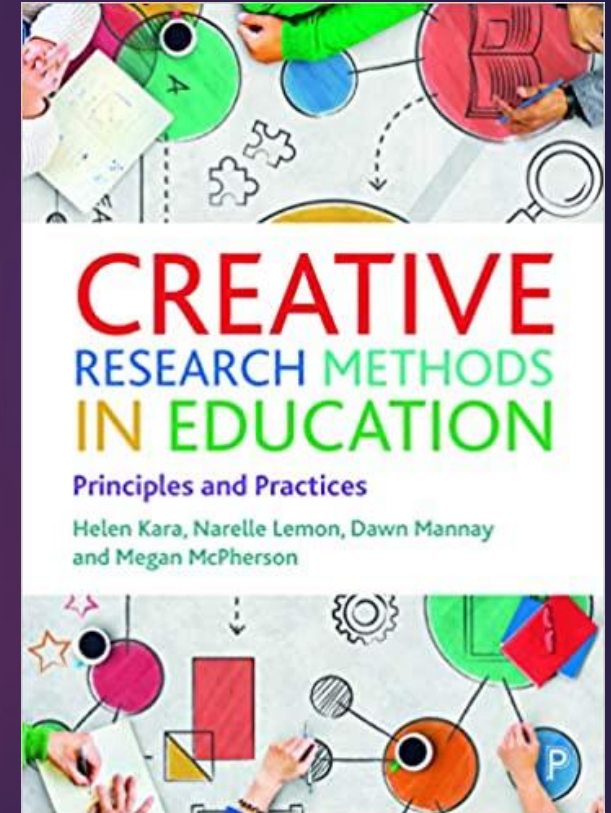
To help participants discuss the 'taken for granted' and make 'the familiar strange' (Mannay 2010)

Brilliant to go beyond the 'don't knows' that we often get or to answer the Why? questions

WHAT CREATIVE METHODS ARE THERE?

- ▶ Drawing
- ▶ Devised performance
- ▶ Journals / Portfolios
- ▶ 'Skills' assessment
- ▶ Graphical Data collection devices – Timelines / Skills wheels
- ▶ Graffiti Walls – written and drawn
- ▶ Photo methods – Collage / Photography/ Found imagery
- ▶ Modelling- Lego / Plasticine
- ▶ Video – Vox pops /Narrative / Work in progress
- ▶ Poetry – Spoken Word - Reflective writing

<https://www.nerupi.co.uk/members/toolkit/evaluation/methods-guides>



Graffiti walls

- <https://www.europlanet-society.org/outreach/europlanet-evaluation-toolkit/evaluation-tool-graffiti-wall/>

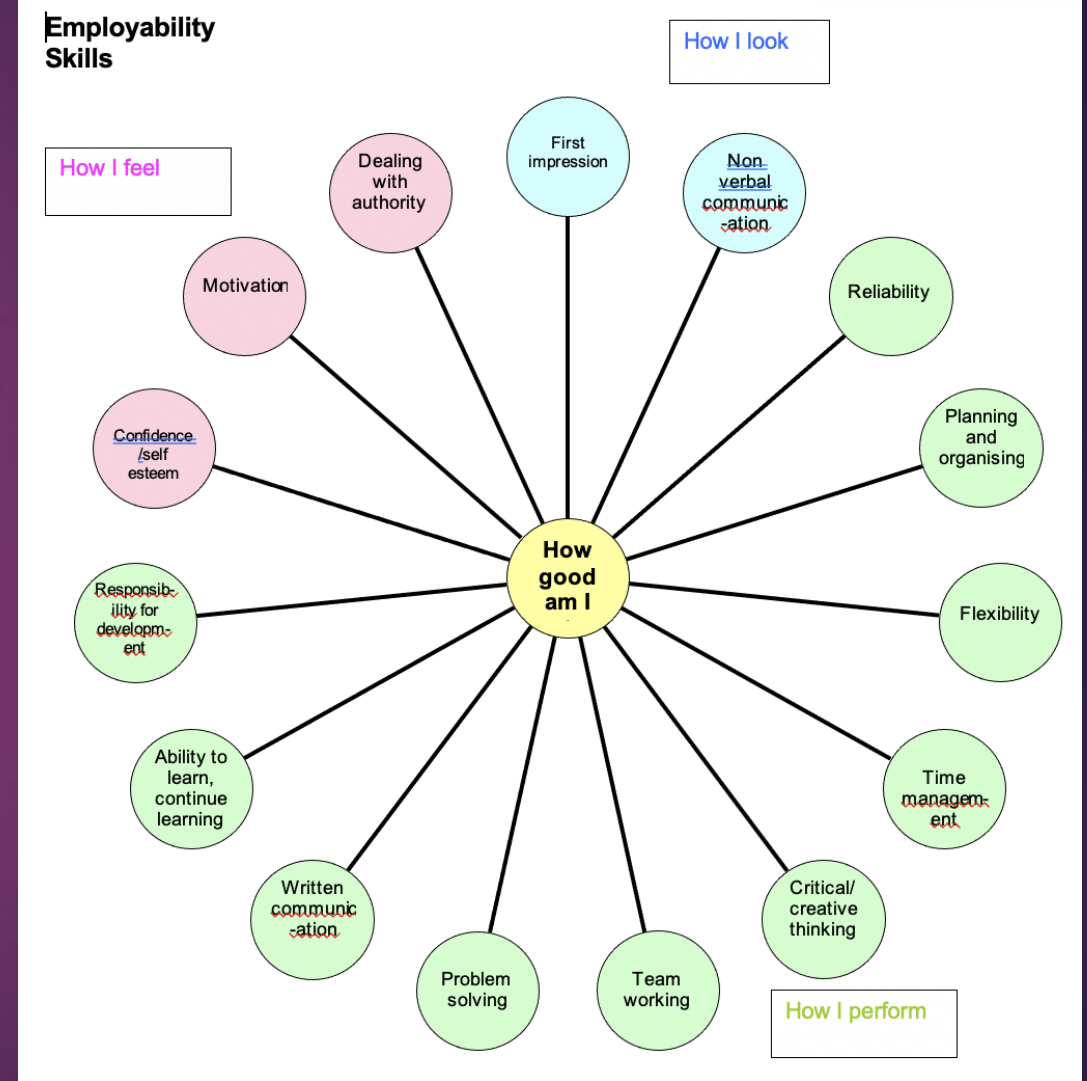


Skills wheels

- <https://evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk/resources/evaluation-wheel-employability-skills-wheel/>

Think about:

How might these be used to evidence different parts of a ToC?
Short term?
Medium term?
Long term?



Plasticine and Lego

- ▶ Jessie Abrahams and Nicola Ingram
<https://www.socresonline.org.uk/18/4/21.html>
- ▶ Phaedra Petsilas
- ▶ <https://www.rambertschool.org.uk/reflecting-on-action-creative-approaches-to-teaching-reflective-practice/>



Figure 1. Garry's^[7] plasticine models

Garry: The one on the right being...having come from Bristol and living at home, or having lived at home, I sometimes felt like I could stick out – so that's the black on a white background, so a contrast. But, I still had a really good time in the first year and I still enjoyed it so it's a smiley face. And home me is.... I'm a mixture of different things and I blend in more and I feel more comfortable.

Photo based methods and Collage

- ▶ Sue Challis -
<https://tactileacademia.com/2014/06/16/collage-in-evaluations-exploratory-ideas-about-value-and-resistance-2/>
- ▶ Analia Meo
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/160940691000900203>

Practice examples: Photo Elicitation

Photo elicitation



A small scale study conducted with a sample of estranged students at the University of Lincoln (UoL) used photo elicitation to explore the experiences of estranged students and provide the institution with recommendations on how to better support its estranged students. The students in this study included estrangees, estrangers and estranged persons.

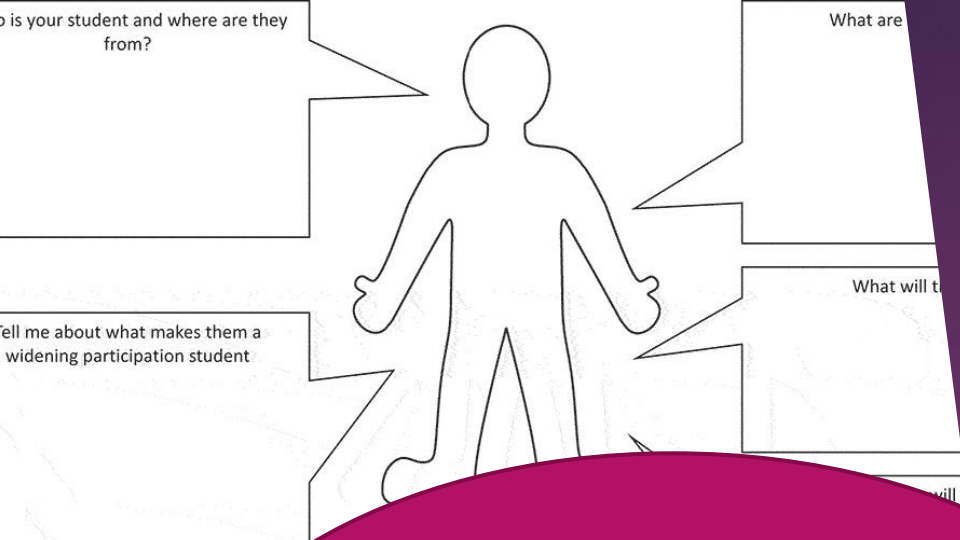
What did the research involve?

Deciding how to recruit participants was a challenge and it was decided to send out an invitation to all students to take part in the study. Of those who responded who met the eligibility requirements, eight went on to meet with the researcher in a one-to-one meetings to provide information about the project, to receive instructions for participation and to talk through issues of consent. The students were asked to take a series of images over the Easter holiday period - which represented their student experience, a period which is significant in the university calendar for estranged students since it is assumed that most students spend time with family during university holidays. The students were also encouraged to complete a research log of the images they took during the holiday in which they described the image and what it meant to them (which six people completed). Some 49 images were collated and afterwards the students attended focus groups where the images they had provided were shared and discussed. The students' comments about, and reactions to, these images were audio-recorded with their consent. The research questions explored perceptions of support, belonging and home. The students were not asked to provide the researcher with any details about their experience of estrangement - they were

Slide 2 of 5



<https://www.nerupi.co.uk/members/resources/more-on-photo-elicitation>



- Changes over time
- Changes with familiarity with people
- Changes with familiarity with artform



Creative confidence (Kelley and Kelley 2012) and its relation to using visual methods (Rainford 2020)



<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13645579.2019.1672287>

Challenges and affordances

Challenges

- Reluctance to Draw or create
- Perception of task
- Limitations of representation
- Creative confidence / FEAR
- Aesthetics
- Interpretation
- How to analyse it
- Value afforded to different methods

Affordances

- Development of Rapport
- Making Thinking Visible
- Making the familiar strange (Mannay 2010)
- Ability to go beyond rhetoric
- Hearts and Minds

How might this be different for individuals who have actively chosen creative subjects?

How can we build creative confidence?

Low stakes activity

Scaffolded introduction

Modelling good practice

Using the same method longitudinally

Breakout groups:
How might you do
this in your specific
context
(5min)

COLLECTING DATA:

DIGITAL TOOLS FOR TAKING CREATIVE METHODS ONLINE

Think about:

How might these be used to measure medium and long term outcomes as well?



Padlet - Ideal for written and still images



Flip Grid – IDEAL for hosting video and creation of vox pops



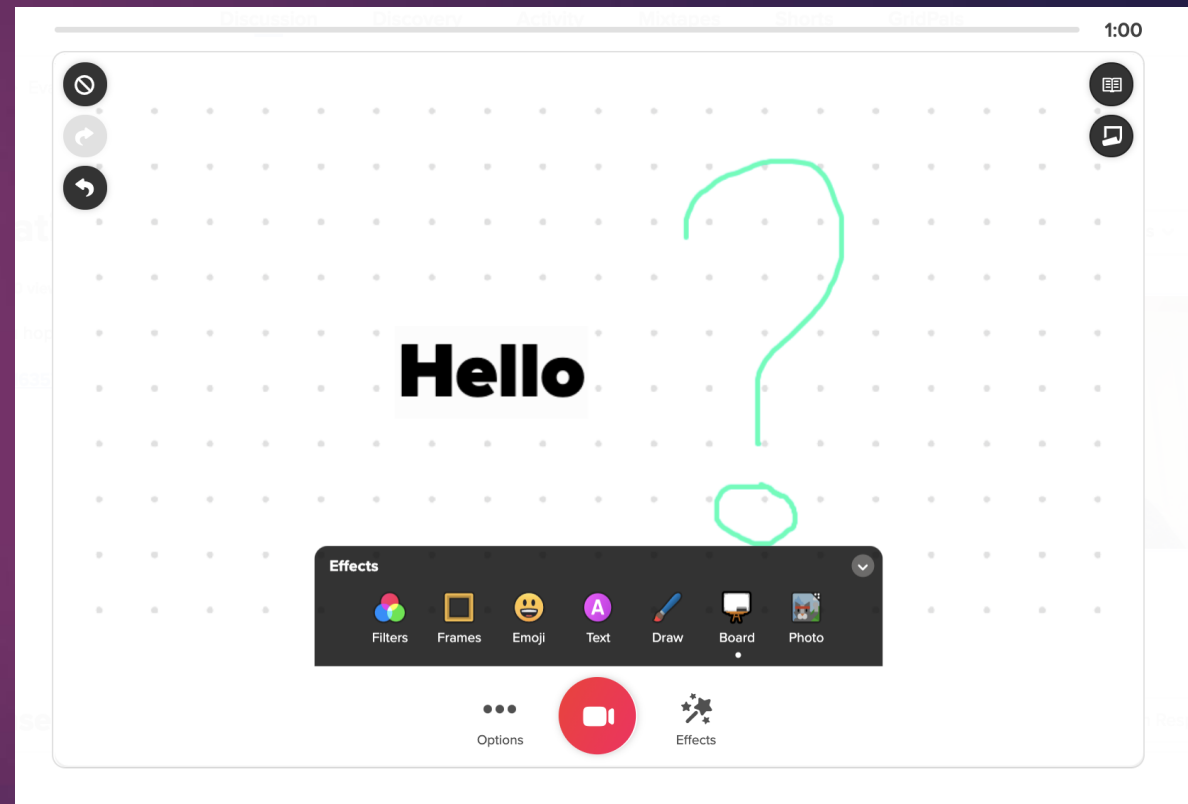
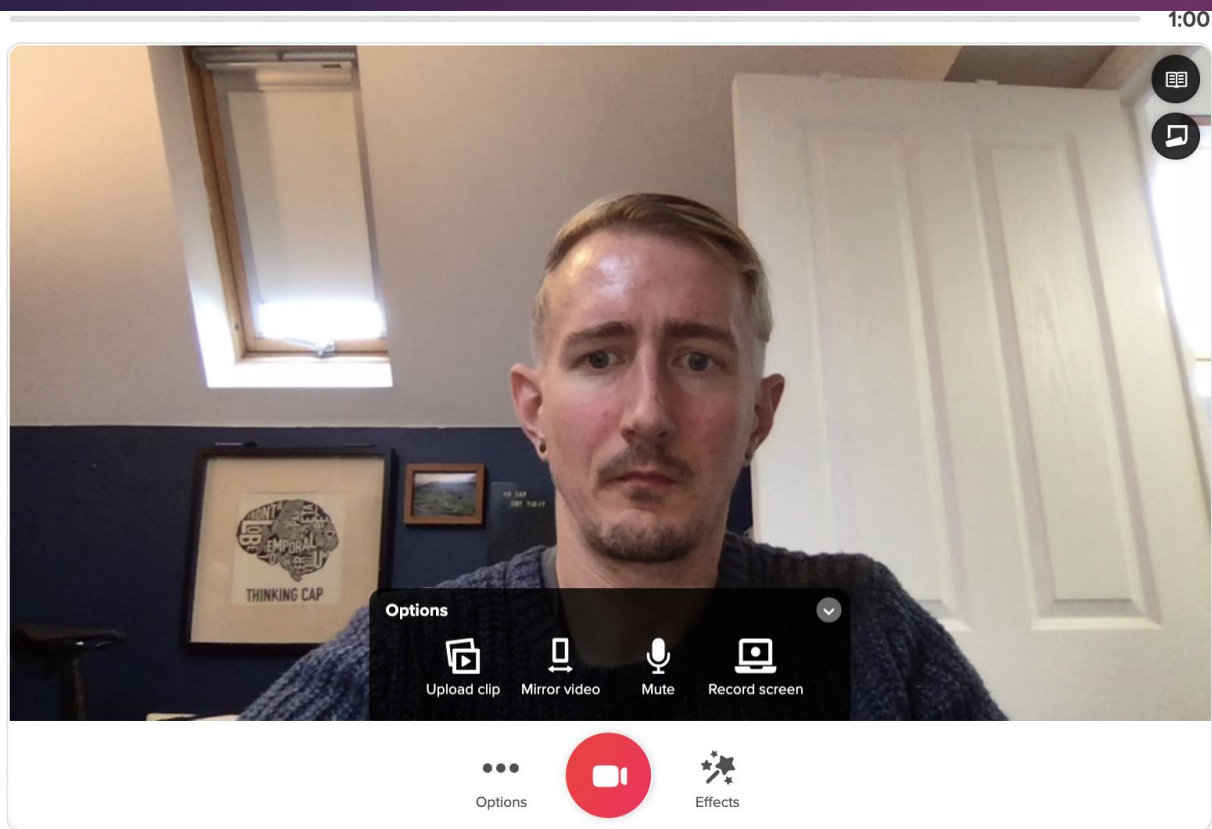
Collaborative documents – Reflective journals / Group consensus



Online classrooms i.e Blackboard Collaborate / Microsoft teams / Zoom*– Drawing / Modelling / Discussing

FLIP GRID DEMO

This may be familiar if you attended the conference session I ran on online methods



How might you use Flipgrid?

Breakout groups (5 min)

- ▶ Where might it be useful?
- ▶ What barriers might there be?
- ▶ What support might you need?
- ▶ How might you build in creative confidence (if applicable?)
- ▶ What types of outcomes is it useful for – short /medium / long?

ANALYSIS:

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH THE DATA

Creative output or traditional output?

- Are you interested in ideas, their words or the artefact

What is the focus of your analysis

- Applying your interpretation or theirs
- These two questions will drive your analytical approach but you might consider:
- Thematic analysis across participants
- Using this data to support other quantitative methods to deepen evaluation reports
- Coding and using existing approaches to quantitative or qualitative analysis if appropriate

Ethical questions



Ethics isn't tick box approach

Iterative and constant ESPECIALLY Visual Methods



Representation

Who is seen in these methods?



Whose voice?

Lomax (2012) – Participatory videos

<https://www.nerupi.co.uk/members/toolkit/evaluation/reporting-your-evaluation-1>

Breakout: Ethics

- ▶ What ethical issues might using creative methods in your context bring up?
- ▶ Is there anything you might need to think about specifically?
- ▶ What about the data and outputs?

Nominate a spokesperson to bring back three key points



Points to consider

- ▶ What methods could you consider?
- ▶ Why THIS creative method?
- ▶ How are you going to capture the data?
- ▶ How are you going to analyse the data?
- ▶ Ethical considerations?
- ▶ What are the challenges?

Further Reading

- ▶ Abrahams, Jessica and Ingram, Nicola (2013). 'The Chameleon Habitus: Exploring Local Students' Negotiations of Multiple Fields'. *Sociological Research Online*. 18(4)21. <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/18/4/21.html>
- ▶ Aldridge, J. (2007). Picture this: The use of participatory photographic research methods with people with learning disabilities. *Disability & Society*, 22, 1, 1–17.
- ▶ Gauntlett, D. (2007). *Creative explorations: New approaches to identities and audiences*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- ▶ Harrison, N. and Waller, R. (2017) 'Evaluating outreach activities: overcoming challenges through a realist 'small steps' approach', *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education*, 21(2-3), pp. 81-87, DOI: 10.1080/13603108.2016.1256353
- ▶ Haw, K. & Hadfield, M. (2011). *Video in Social Science Research: Functions and Forms*. New York, Routledge
- ▶ Kara, H. (2015). *Creative Research Methods in the Social Sciences*. Bristol: Policy press.
- ▶ Kelley, T., & Kelley, D. (2012). Reclaim Your Creative Confidence. *Harvard Business Review*, 90(12), 115-118. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2012/12/reclaim-your-creative-confidence>
- ▶ Lomax, H. (2012) Contested voices? Methodological tensions in creative visual research with children, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 15:2, 105-117, DOI: [10.1080/13645579.2012.649408](https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2012.649408)
- ▶ Mannay, D. (2010). Making the familiar strange: can visual research methods render the familiar setting more perceptible? *Qualitative Research*, 10(1), 91-111. doi:10.1177/1468794109348684
- ▶ Mannay, D. (2016). *Visual, Narrative and Creative Research Methods*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- ▶ Rainford, J. (2020) Confidence and the effectiveness of creative methods in qualitative interviews with adults, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 23:1, 109-122, DOI: [10.1080/13645579.2019.1672287](https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2019.1672287)

Handy resources

Useful introductory creative methods book: Thomson, P. (2008) *Doing Visual Research with Children and Young People*. London, Routledge.

What is inclusive research? Nind, Melanie (2014) Inclusive research and inclusive education: why connecting them makes sense for teachers' and learners' democratic development of education. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 1-16. ([doi:10.1080/0305764X.2014.936825](https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2014.936825)).

Nind, Melanie, Boorman, Georgie and Clarke, Gill (2011) Creating spaces to belong: listening to the voice of girls with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties through digital visual and narrative methods. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 2011 i-First, 1-14.

NCRM respository – lots of handy resources on more creative research methods (e.g. I-poems)