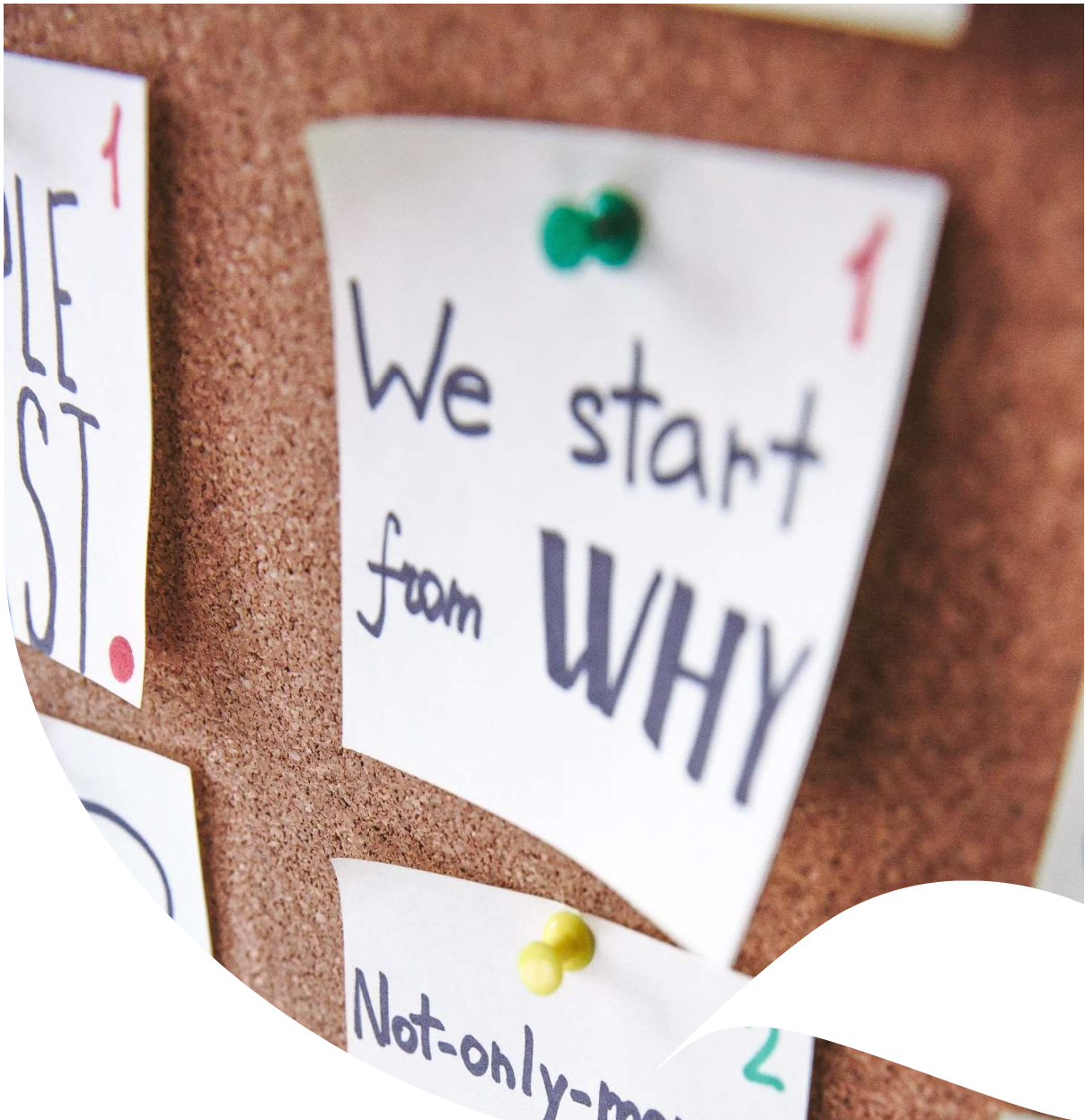


Creating Out Loud: Communicating value



Overview

Purpose

The purpose of this meeting is to develop how you communicate the value of your work by

- reflecting on what motivates your creative practice / involvement in the arts and culture sector
- considering what “value” means
- learning with and from your fellow circle members.

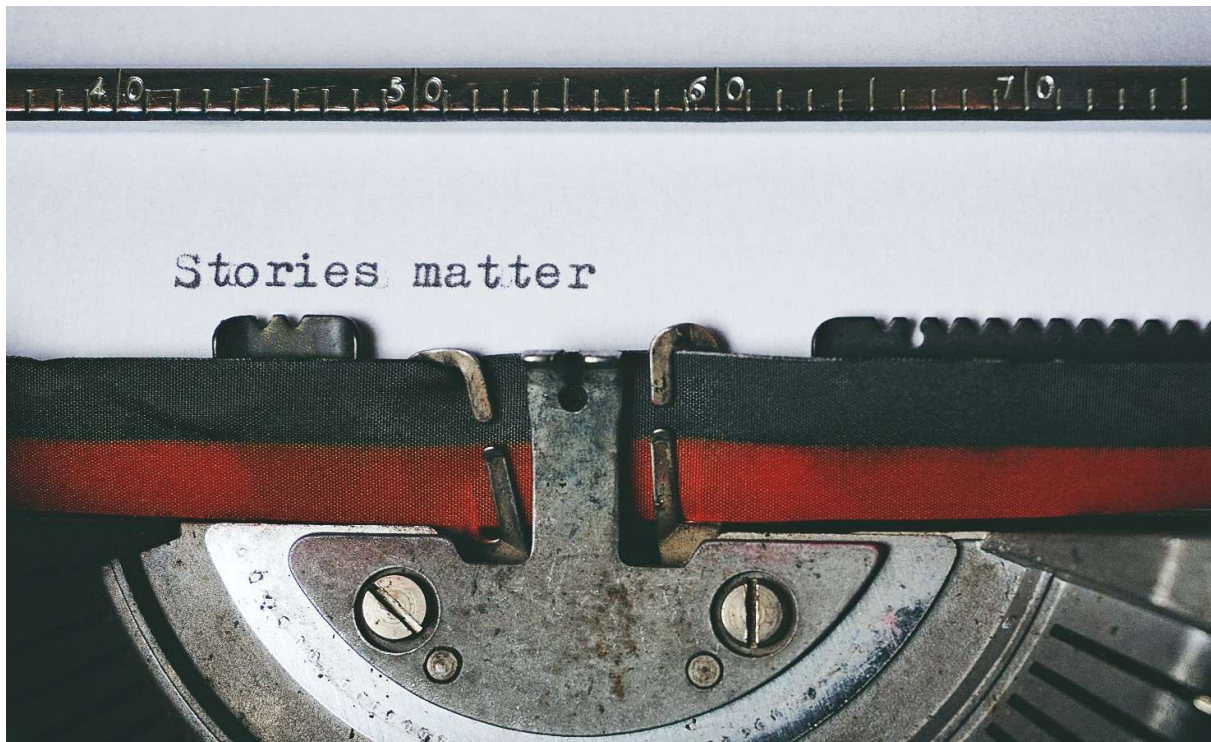
Agenda

Activity	Suggested timing	
	(60 minute session)	(75 minute session)
Being here	15 minutes	15 minutes
Individual reflection – Knowing your “why”		
• personal reflection	5 minutes	5 minutes
• sharing reflection	15 minutes	25 minutes
Group discussion – Communicating value	20 minutes	25 minutes
What next?	5 minutes	5 minutes

Being here

Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which you are meeting, and pay respects to their Elders – past, present, and emerging.	
If this is your first meeting...	If this is not your first meeting...
Share your name and how you are currently involved in the arts and culture sector...	Tell your circle about the step(s) you took since your last meeting...
Tell your circle who is the most creative person you know, and why...	If you did not take the step(s) you planned to take, share one thing you learned or one thing you enjoyed since the last meeting...

TIP: Be as personal / detailed as you feel comfortable being. Resist commenting during someone else’s turn.



Individual reflection – Knowing your “why”

In one of the most watched TED talks of all time, author Simon Sinek claims people don't buy what you do; people buy why you do it.^[1]

- everyone knows **what** they do – the product or service they deliver.
- many people and organisations also know **how** they do things – the systems or processes they are particularly good at, which set their work apart from that of their competitors.
- but only very rarely, Sinek claims, do people and organisations know **why** they do what they do.

*By 'why,' I mean: What's your purpose? What's your cause? What's your belief?
Why does your organisation exist? Why do you get out of bed in the morning?
And why should anyone care?*

*If you don't know why you do what you do... how will you ever get people to vote for you,
or buy something from you,
or, more importantly, be loyal and want to be a part of what it is that you do?^[1]*

Knowing-why refers to your values, attitudes, motivations and ambitions.^[2] It includes

- the extent to which you identify personally with your work (including the organisational cultures within which you work)
- the personal and/or professional priorities that influence your work (e.g., commitment to specific cultural practices, geographical locations, and/or political ideologies).

- artwork
- products
- services

what



- skills - expertise
- systems - processes
- unique offering

how



- purpose - motivation
- values - priorities - commitments
- ambitions

why



Reflect on the 'why' of your work in the arts and culture sector

1. What motivates your work / creative practice?
 - What purpose / ambitions do you have for this work?
 - What personal and/or professional values, priorities or commitments do you bring to this work?
 - What threatens / supports your "why"?
2. How central is knowing your "why" to the way you communicate about your work?

Share your reflections with the circle.

TIPS: Listen deeply to what your fellow circle members share. Ask questions for clarification. Look for commonalities between responses, and points of common interest or concern. You might like to use the space below to write down or draw your own and/or other circle members' ideas.

Group discussion – Communicating value

Identifying *why* you want (or need) to communicate about the value of your work should always be your first step.^[3]

- Are you applying for a job?
- Are you seeking funding or sponsorship?
- Are you marketing a specific artwork?
- Are you looking for collaborators?
- Do you want to influence public policy?

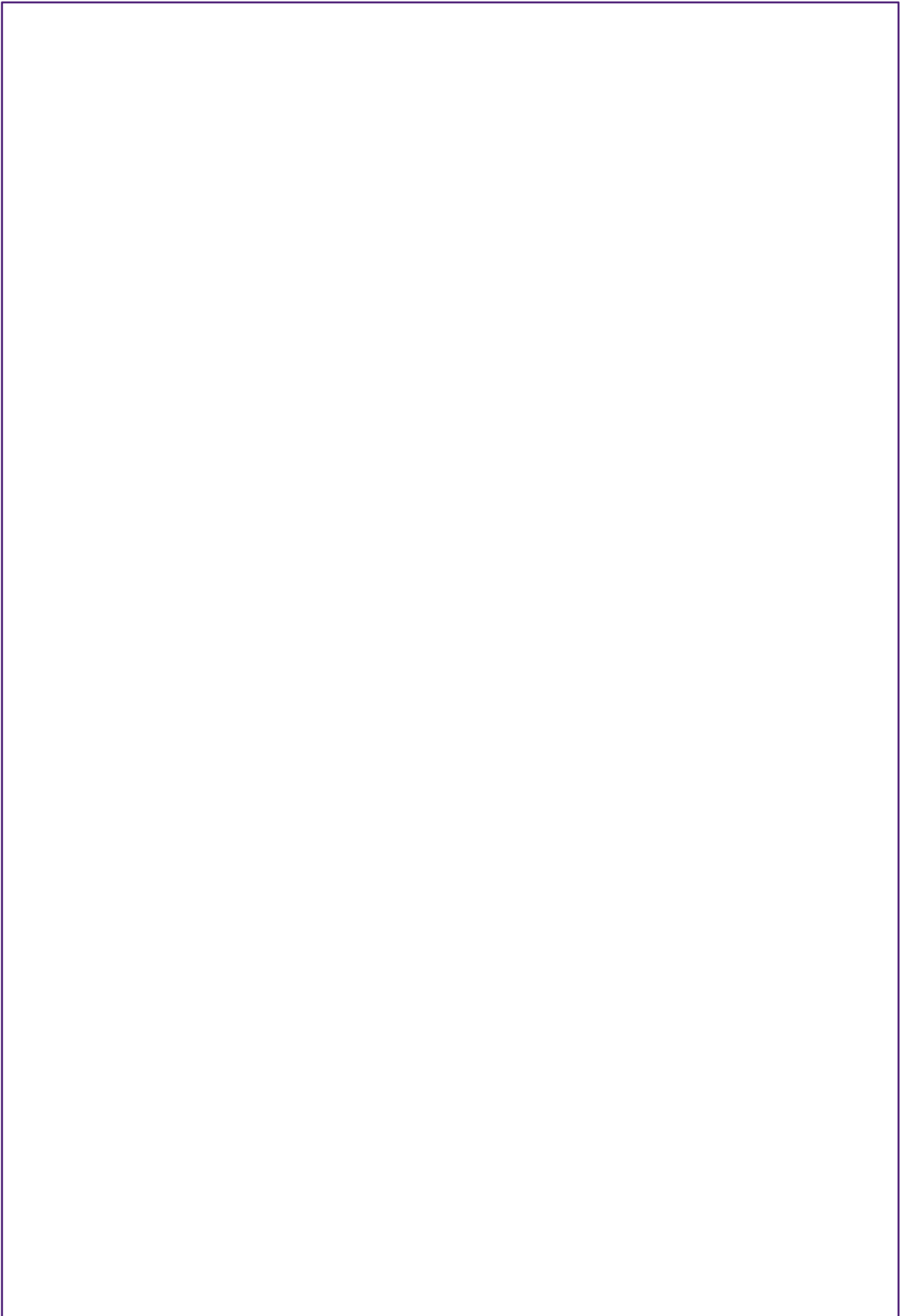
Once you know *why* you are communicating, you can make appropriate decisions about what kind of document you need to produce

- what topics you need to cover
- who your audience needs to be
- which channel(s) of communication will be most appropriate and helpful.

As a group, use one or more of these questions to brainstorm the *why, what, who, and how* of communicating value.

1. *Why* do artists and arts companies need to communicate about value?
2. *What* type(s) of benefit and/or value most need to be communicated? (see page 8 for more detail)
3. *What* are you communicating the benefit and/or value of? (e.g., specific artworks? individual artists' body of work? an art form? the subsidised art and culture sector as a whole? amateur, commercial, and/or participatory art [e.g., digital storytelling]? something else?)
4. *Who* do you need to communicate with about this value?
 - who do you normally communicate with? what type(s) of benefit / value do they prioritize? are you trying to persuade them to recognize a different type of value?
 - who else might you communicate with, to achieve your goal / purpose?
5. *How* can different communication channels help you communicate value in new and effective ways?

TIPS: *Listen deeply to what your fellow circle members share. Ask questions for clarification. Look for commonalities between responses, and points of common interest or concern. Use the space on the next page to write down or draw your own and / or other circle members' ideas.*



What next?

Making the most of peer coaching involves taking at least one step after each meeting. This might mean learning more about the topic of this meeting, pursuing your own personal or professional goals, and/or helping other circle members pursue their goals.

Steps you might take after this meeting include (but are not limited to):



- watching Simon Sinek's TED talk:
 - https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action?language=en
- watch this video in which Djiribul woman Shelley Reys explains what she does and why:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=AgPneNP_AxHc
- learning more about different types of value related to art and culture:
 - <https://ahrc.ukri.org/research/fundedthemesandprogrammes/culturalvalueproject/>
 - <https://www.motu.nz/our-research/wellbeing-and-macroeconomics/well-being-and-sustainability-measures/value-and-culture/>
- thinking more about the *why*, *what*, *who*, and *how* of your communication (about value, as well as other topics)
- check out this approach to identifying your core values: <https://www.transitioningwell.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/TW-Lighthouse-web.pdf>
- considering these principles how art and culture are / should be evaluated
<https://www.culturalvalue.org.uk/a-uk-first-evaluation-principles-for-the-culture-sector/>
- telling someone new about the benefit and / or value of your work
- exploring new communication channels
- progressing your personal / professional goal

What one step will you take before the next meeting?

TIP: Choosing a step now, writing it down, and telling your fellow circle members about it can help you make progress towards your goal. Even very small steps can help you and your fellow circle members make progress towards your goals.

Defining “value”

The question of how best to value – and communicate the value of – art and culture is a difficult and longstanding one.^[4] One way of approaching this challenge is to distinguish between “value” and “benefit.”^[5]

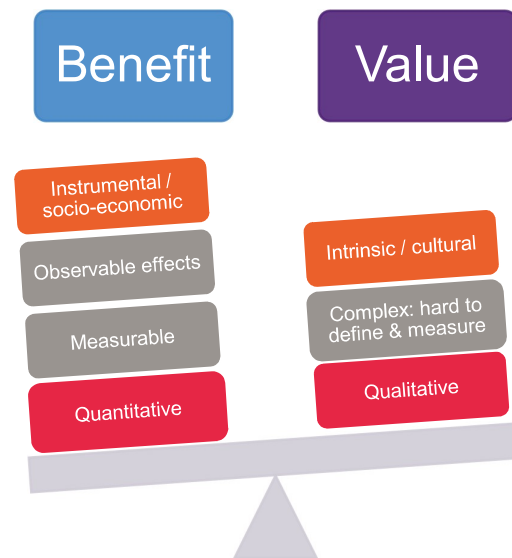
- **Benefit** refers to the observable effects of art and culture in other areas, such as the economy or public health.

In recent decades, public arts funding bodies have increasingly adopted this “instrumental” approach by valuing art and culture largely as a means to an end.^[6]

“Benefit” tends to be measured quantitatively, but numbers are always best understood in context, which stories and qualitative case studies can provide.

- **Value** is a more complex idea, with many definitions – and it is difficult to measure.

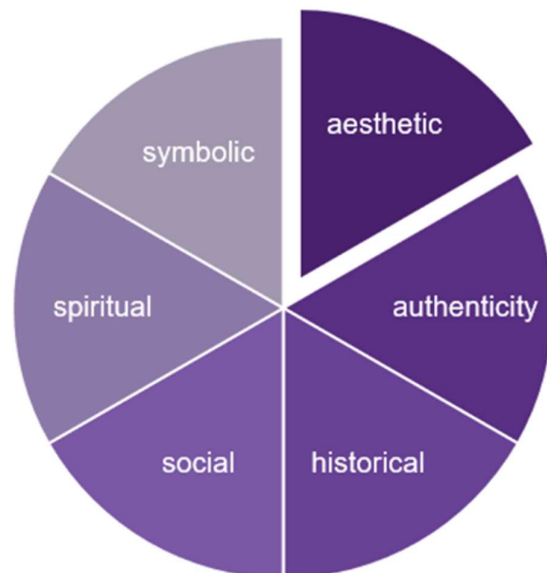
Cultural goods may have value for people who experience and enjoy them, but they can also have a larger value to ‘society’ – although neither of these types of value can be captured by a dollar figure.^[7]



The idea of “*cultural value*” is a helpful way to think about the value of art and culture.^[8]

“Cultural value” includes:

- *Aesthetic value* = the “beauty, harmony, form and other aesthetic characteristics of the work”^[8]
- *Authenticity value* = that “the work is the real, original and unique artwork which it is represented to be”^[8]
- *Historical value* = how the work “reflects the conditions of life at the time it was created” and provides “a sense of continuity with the past”^[8]
- *Social value* = how the work connects people and gives them “a sense of identity and place”^[8]
- *Spiritual value* = the work’s “particular cultural significance to members of a religious faith, tribe or other cultural grouping” and/or “qualities shared by all human beings”^[8]
- *Symbolic value* = how the work conveys meanings that are valued by those engaging with it.^[8]



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Additional Discussion Guides

Discussion Guides on other topics related to arts and culture can be found at: <https://creatingoutloud.business.uq.edu.au/>



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The opinions in this Discussion Guide do not necessarily represent the views of The University of Queensland, funding / industry partners, or the individual members involved in the reference groups.

About Creating Out Loud

“Creating Out Loud” is an 18-month Industry Research Fellowship funded by the Queensland Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation, under the Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowship program.

Creating Out Loud was developed to support Queensland’s artists and arts managers as they recover from and rebuild business, artistic, and cultural practices following the COVID-19 pandemic.

For further information visit

<https://creatingoutloud.business.uq.edu.au/>



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This guide includes links to various web material. All links were working at the time of publication. Please note however that these links may become outdated over time.

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