

# Conference 2015

Bringing the information world together

Sponsored by



# From output to impact: How to demonstrate the value of your library

CILIP  
Conference  
2015



Masterclass – Demonstrating Value  
Thursday, July 2  
Sue Reynolds, RMIT University  
Carolynn Rankin, Leeds Beckett University

Start with the the end first...

What do we want to  
*achieve* – rather than what  
are we going to *do*?

# Overview

WHAT is impact?

WHAT is value?

WHY demonstrate value?

➤ 2 case studies

HOW to measure impact and value?

➤ ISO 16439:2014

**bsi.**

# Masterclass plan

By the end of this session you will have:

- some understanding of how to demonstrate impact and why this is important
- begun to develop your own impact plan
- been introduced to ISO 16439:2014

*‘Without research ... we have no evidence – and without evidence, it’s difficult to claim victory.’* (Neuman, 2009).

# Context - CILIP PKSB

## 4.1 Understanding research

*Appreciating the nature and value of research, including practitioner research, and research carried out on behalf of clients*

## 4.5 Understanding research contexts

*Assessing the needs of a service, organisation or client, and selecting appropriate research methods and ways of presenting results*

## 11.2 Communicating with stakeholders

*Ensuring that all key stakeholders are identified, so that they can be communicated with and consulted. Ensuring that stakeholders support and engage with the service. Recognising the importance of communicating value and developing a marketing and communications plan, ensuring that the service is highly visible to all stakeholders.*

# Activity 1

Write down the 'hat' you will be wearing today for the sake of this activity:

Are you thinking strategically about:

- the full library service?
- a project or programme within that service?
- about yourself as a Chartership candidate?



# Why measure impact?

- Strategic planning – decision making and resource management
- Quality management
- Determining impact over time
- Comparison with similar libraries
- Promotion of library's role and value to stakeholders
- Inform political decisions

# Activity 2

What is your priority at the moment?

What population are you trying to serve?

Output >>> Outcome>>>Impact >>>Value

Output: products of library processes

e.g. number of loans, downloads,  
reference questions

Outcome: effect of the output

e.g. user satisfaction

Impact: difference or change in an  
individual or group

Value: importance to stakeholders  
(funding institutions, politicians, the  
public)

# Context - Public Libraries

CILIP: Public libraries contribute to literacy, learning, health and wellbeing, and employment

ALIA (Australian Library and Information Association): Public libraries improve literacy and information literacy, contribute to economic prosperity, improve skills and life chances

But how do we **PROVE** it?

# Economic value

- Arts Council England 2014 *Evidence review of the economic contribution of libraries*
- ALMA-UK 2014 *Economic impact toolkits for archives, libraries and museums*
- SGS Economics and Planning 2011 *Dollars, sense and public libraries: The landmark study of the socio-economic value of Victorian public libraries.*
- Australian Library and Information Association 2013 *National welfare & economic contributions of public libraries*

# Measuring the Social Value of Public Libraries: Potential Outcomes and Impacts



(Rooney-Browne, 2011)

# Activity 3

What are you hoping your project or activity or service will achieve?



# Why evaluate? A case in point

“The love in the room”: Evaluating the National Year of Reading in an Australian public library



**National  
Year of  
Reading  
2012**

# “The love in the room” ... Outcomes

“The love in the room was extraordinary”

“Feel really proud”      “Quite incredible”

“Look at what we did, look at what we can do”

“All things to all people”      “Life changing”

“It gave a lot to a small group of people ...  
who will benefit from this in a massive way”

“We thought we were doing good reading things”

“It was such an amazing success”

# “The love in the room”... Evidence

“Conversational rather than on paper... over a long coffee”

“Such a hard thing to actually measure or put down in words”

“Ticked boxes tell you nothing”

“Just really wrecks the whole thing”

“It is hard to do”

“The love in the room”...  
Impact?

“Our downfall because we have no evidence”

# The demand for evidence *‘so what...?’*

*Capturing the Impact of Libraries* final report

- Predominance of one-off evaluations of time limited programmes and pilot schemes over research on core services
- Lack of baselines against which to measure change
- Lack of qualitative in-depth research that analyses the specific nature of interactions that take place in libraries

(DCMS/BOP Consulting, 2009: 2)

# The National Year of Reading 2008

Reading any thing, any time, any  
where

2008

NATIONAL Year  
of Reading



# Stronger and Safer Communities

## Tier 2 - Supporting cultural diversity and identity

*One of our big successes is the manga. We'd had one before we last saw you now we've had three – we get a group of about 150 supposedly hard to reach people... some of those people come back, I see some of the men twice a week sitting on our sofa reading manga and I know they are from that event*

*We are doing a lot of great stuff, including breakthrough initiatives for some groups e.g. making materials for homeless people. We have never done that before.*

# What to do?

Input/Process/Output measures

- INPUT  
Funding, Staffing, Resources, Space, Equipment, Computers
- PROCESS Cataloguing, Lending, Reference service
- OUTPUT Number of users, User satisfaction



# Activity 4

OUTPUT

What can you count?

# ISO 16439:2014 *Methods and procedures for assessing the impact of libraries*

- Need for proof of 'value'
- Value of libraries traditionally self-evident

Value can be identified through determining ...

## **IMPACT:**

- On individuals – changes in skills/behaviour/well being
- On institution/community – prestige/ranking, funding increase
- For stakeholders – funding bodies, public, politicians, staff

# The standard in practice

Evidence can be:

- **Inferred** through output data - attendance at events, performance measures, usage statistics
- **Solicited** – questionnaires, interviews, surveys
- **Observed** – structured or informal

**Mimics the process of qualitative research**

# Activity 5

What method/s would you consider using to gather opinions on impact?

# The standard in practice

- Provides models and examples for data collection
- Reflects research methodologies
- Applies the formality of research design
- Helps to determine:
  - What is meant to be achieved?
  - What population is served?
  - Effect of outcomes related to overall goals and objectives
  - Definition of the impact sought

# Difficulties

- Seeking to measure an intangible
- Identifying library impact from other impacts
- Varied impact on different groups
- Measuring longer term impact
- Relies on method of data collection and analysis
- Library staff may not be familiar with methods for determining impact
- Labour intensive planning
- Costly

# Activity 6

What is the biggest positive factor in attempting to measure impact?

# Activity 7

You will have to present some kind of report - how might you communicate to a variety of stakeholders?



# Measuring impact

*Generate impact indicators that will **drive your data collection** in areas that will provide you with the **elusive evidence** of impact that is **vital** to decision making and real service development.*

Markless, S. and Streatfield, D 2013  
*Evaluating the impact of your library.*  
London: Facet, 63

# Pew Research Internet Project: Library User Quiz

The questions ask about IMPACT, but are they really measuring impact?

12 questions to go

**Agree or Disagree: Because it provides free access to materials and resources, the public library plays an important role in giving everyone a chance to succeed**

Strongly agree

Somewhat agree

10 questions to go

**Agree or Disagree: Public libraries are important because they promote literacy and a love of reading**

Strongly agree

Somewhat agree

Somewhat disagree

9 questions to go

**Agree or Disagree: Having a public library improves the quality of life in a community**

Strongly agree

Somewhat agree

Somewhat disagree

Strongly disagree

Next Question →

Next Question →

14 questions to go

**If your local public library closed, would that have a major impact, minor impact or no impact on you and your family?**

Major impact

Minor impact

13 questions to go

**If your local public library closed, would that have a major impact, minor impact or no impact on your community as a whole?**

Major impact

Minor impact

No impact

Community does not have a local public library



*‘Without research ... we have no evidence – and without evidence, it’s difficult to claim victory.’* (Neuman, 2009).

Thank you & Questions

# References

- Department for Culture Media & Sport (UK) 2014 *Independent Library Report for England*. London: DCMS. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-library-report-for-england>
- Grant, Maria J., Sen, Barbara and Spring, Hannah 2013 *Research, Evaluation and Audit: Key steps in demonstrating your value*. London: Facet.
- Halpin, E., Rankin, C., Chapman, E.L. and Walker, C. (2013) Measuring the value of public libraries in the digital age: what the power people need to know, *Journal of Librarianship and Information Management*, published online 3 September 2013. doi: 10.1177/0961000613497746
- International Standard (ISO) 16439 2014 *Information and Documentation: Methods and Procedures for Assessing the Impact of Libraries*. London: British Standards Institution.
- Markless, S and Streatfield, D 2013 *Evaluating the Impact of Your Library*. London: Facet.
- Neuman, Susan, B 2009 *Changing the Odds for Children At Risk: Seven essential principles of educational programs that break the cycle of poverty*. New York; Teachers College, Columbia University
- Pew Research Centre: Internet, Science and Tech 2013 *Library User Quiz*. Washington: Pew. <http://www.pewinternet.org/quiz/library-typology/>
- Reynolds, Sue and Welch, Bernadette 2014 "The Love in the Room': Evaluating the National Year of Reading in an Australian public library" *Library and Information Research* 38(117):37-53. <http://www.lirjournal.org.uk/lir/ojs/index.php/lir/article/view/604>
- Rooney-Browne, Christine 2011 "Methods for Demonstrating the Value of Public Libraries in the UK: A literature review" *Library and Information Research* 35(109):3-39. <http://www.lirjournal.org.uk/lir/ojs/index.php/lir/article/view/469>



# Conference 2016

Bringing the information world together

**Register your interest**

<http://bit.ly/CILIPConf16>