



# ARTS AND HOMELESSNESS QUALITY FRAMEWORK

2025



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

## QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR WORKING IN ARTS AND HOMELESSNESS

**What is it?** A co-created guide that offers suggestions, good practice, case studies and values for creative projects with people who are, or have been, homeless.

**Who is it for?** Anyone involved in arts and homelessness projects, including independent artists/producers, cultural organisation staff, homelessness support workers, commissioners, members of services.

**Why we have produced it?** The Framework is an updated version of Arts and Homelessness International (AHI) previous Arts and Homelessness Practice Guide which was inspired by other toolkits and guides in the sector.

**Who has created it?** AHI is the global arts and homelessness network aiming to connect and strengthen the sector. We are a co-produced charity where 50% of board and staff are or have been homeless. The framework has been co-authored by **Natasha Steer** and **Matt Peacock** of AHI, with members of the community listed at the end.

**We are human!** We don't claim to have all the answers, we may have made mistakes and readers of the guide may have alternative views. We are treating this as a living document which can be adapted and updated on an ongoing basis for everyone's benefit. If you have any questions or feedback please contact us: [hello@artshomelessint.com](mailto:hello@artshomelessint.com)

**Perfection is the enemy of action.** This document is intended to give hints and suggestions instead of being a template of how all projects should be run. Please take what is useful and don't let it slow you down from getting started and getting creative!











**WE OFFER FREE TRAINING ON THIS GUIDE AND MANY TOPICS INCLUDED IN THIS GUIDE**

**plus free 1-2-1 advice and guidance.**

**email: [hello@artshomelessint.com](mailto:hello@artshomelessint.com)**

**[www.artshomelessint.com](http://www.artshomelessint.com)**

# INDEX

Quality framework - infographic	page 3	
1. 'True' co-creation	page 4	
2. Trauma Conscious Practice	page 5	
3. Define Aims	page 6	
4. Plan, Evaluate, Document	page 7	
5. Environmental Responsibility	page 8	
6. Accessibility	page 9	
7. Digital Accessibility	page 10	
8. Wellbeing and Welfare	page 11	
9. Belief, Bias and Belonging	page 12	
10. Continuity and Legacy	page 13	
Check-list - good, better, even better	pages 14-18	
Evaluation Tools	pages 19-22	
Further Information	page 23	

# ARTS AND HOMELESSNESS QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The Quality Framework is an interlinking plan of considerations when designing and delivering an arts or creative project with people who are or have been homeless.

This Framework operates in a cyclical manner, as we believe it is vital (resources permitting) for projects to sustain themselves and for insights gained from past initiatives to inform and enhance future endeavors.



# 1. 'TRUE' CO-CREATION



## WHAT IT IS

Co-creation is where people with lived and learned experience come together to make work in a way which pays attention to power. It means projects are designed by the people the project is for; a shift in hierarchy, from one person having power to shared power. Normalising everyone being 'at the table'. True co-creation takes time, is pioneering and is sometimes challenging. It is not only ethical, it makes everything better.

## WHAT IT IS NOT

Co-creation is not the same as consultation where someone in power 'tests' their idea out with a group of people. It also doesn't have to be leader-less and a free-for-all. Good leaders can create 'freedom within a framework' and make any process truly co-created.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- **AHI's Five principles in co-creation:** Learn from each other; it takes time but it doesn't need to be perfect in order to start; communicate; be flexible; create a support structure.
- **'Freedom within a Framework':** Top-down hierarchies are problematic, but so is the opposite of having no structure. Think of a 'scaffolding of guidelines/parameters' around which everyone can be free to express themselves.
- **'Nothing about us without us'** - ensure lived experience is embedded throughout. Ideally a group should be involved in the fundraising stage of a project so they have ownership of it.
- **Don't let co-creation stop you trying something new** - often trying something new opens other windows of possibility. It's OK to try something new even if no one has specifically asked for it. Support people to challenge their usual perceptions of how things should work.
- **Paying people fairly:** Too often people with lived experience are asked to be experts but are not paid as such. Make a distinction between 'taking part' and roles which should be paid. For guidance on fair and legal ways of paying people, visit our Fair Pay Guide, below.
- **Starting somewhere is better than not starting at all** - if co-creation is new, then factor in a transition period for hierarchies to shift. Then check in where you're at using the checklist on page 14.
- **Partnerships are essential** - forge collaborations and lean on your friends in the sector.
- **The 3 stages of co-created meeting:** Before (prepare everyone, answer questions, demystify, support); during (have good facilitation, include everyone in the meeting, be positive about contributions); after (de-brief, next steps).

### CASE STUDY:

**Museum of Homelessness** is a pioneering arts org and space in London, UK. It practices deep co-creation including a core group of members who are part of all decision-making processes.  
[@ourmoh](http://www.museumofhomelessness.org)

### FURTHER GUIDANCE/TRAINING AVAILABLE:

AHI offers training in Co-creation including Radical Governance Co-creation (we also pay our trustees) - see [here](#). See the Arts and Social Outcomes Networks [Fair Pay and Lived Experience guide](#)

## 2. TRAUMA CONSCIOUS PRACTICE



### WHAT IT IS

Trauma conscious practice creates/promotes psychological, emotional and physical safety. It recognises that trauma symptoms, rather than challenging behaviour, are a response to perceived danger and a quest for safety. The practice requires leaders to work with what is coming up for them and be accountable to their own responses and model healthy boundaries without being rigid. Trauma conscious practice in the arts can support healing and recovery from trauma, but is not therapy. Trauma conscious practice pays attention to the political and structural dimensions of trauma, for example the hostile environment or climate emergency, as well as the individual impact.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Meet people where they are** and ask their access needs. **Co-create a group agreement** about how people want to be treated. Plan what to do if this agreement is broken.
- A team that is **representative of lived experience** creates a more compassionate environment.
- **Venues:** Use familiar, comfortable venues where possible. **Offer a quiet space;** pay attention to **lighting, sound and other spatial elements** to support people's nervous systems to be in the optimum state for social connection (strip lights can set someone into 'fight or flight')
- **Structure:** Keep it predictable with warm welcomes, regular breaks; members should be able to join **at their own pace;** acknowledge and celebrate **attendance** as a meaningful step. Highlight individual/group **achievements and progress.** Welcome trusted companions for support if helpful at initial sessions.
- If working with people's stories, recognise that **trauma can lead us to need affirmation.** Trauma stories can become a form of cultural capital. Take special care with that responsibility
- **Seek to understand before seeking to respond** - trauma responses can be unpredictable. Ask what's going on for someone before deciding what to do about it.
- Have **clear feedback/complaints routes:** Thank feedback/apologise and learn from mistakes.
- **Leaders should know boundaries, support active listening and honour their own needs** (being vulnerable/looking after yourself allows you to be consistent and human); be clear what you can and can't do (see signposting below). Value **emotional safety** as much as physical safety.
- Be **'body and language aware'**. Communicating how you present can avoid misunderstandings. E.g. 'I feel most at ease with my arms folded'. Some members may express themselves better non-verbally. Leaders and facilitators should have **regular supervision.**
- Have a clear **safeguarding plan** which includes crisis situations, and assign a safeguarding lead. Create **signposting** to direct people to help outside of sessions and ideally create a **therapy budget.**
- Understand that **a project or setting is not always right for everyone,** and that's okay.

### CASE STUDY:

**Response Ability Theatre** is a trauma-conscious UK charity, run by and for survivors of trauma including homelessness. They publish working principles and safety-measures on their website demonstrating how to create the best environment for all [www.responsabilitytheatre.org](http://www.responsabilitytheatre.org)

### FURTHER GUIDANCE/TRAINING AVAILABLE:

Response Ability Theatre offers trauma-conscious training, including practical trauma-conscious communication training. Contact [info@responseabilitytheatre.com](mailto:info@responseabilitytheatre.com) to work out what they can offer bespoke to your team to meet your needs.

# 3. DEFINE AIMS



## WHAT IT IS

Aims are what you hope to achieve in your project or work. They can vary from 'enjoyment', or 'increasing well-being' or more public-facing aims e.g. 'promoting positive attitudes'. Aims are important because: a) if you don't know what you want to achieve, you will not know if you've achieved it and b) they help demonstrate if and how your work is being effective. This is especially helpful for your later evaluation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Think about starting with an **Aims Triangle**. This will allow you to collect your thoughts and map out your aims and how they relate to your work. See template on page 21.
- We also recommend having a **Theory of Change** – this will help you to define your goals and how to get there. A resource for this can be found on page 20.
- You can **start small** with what you have, don't over complicate your idea. **Think clearly about what you can and can't offer.**
- If it feels appropriate, make your aims **SMART** (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) but don't be restricted to this.
- **Aims can be simple or complex** – to create a space where people can be themselves may seem simple but it can be a vital service.
- **Try to balance ambition and realism:** Don't assume the community won't be able to do things and at the same time, don't set people up to fail. Find tactics to make non-attendance OK e.g. in a performance, 'double cast' a role so that two or more people know it in case someone can't make it. Don't be disheartened with low numbers – one person having a transformational time is still a transformation.
- Make sure aims are **co-created** with the community, avoid making decisions about aims for people, especially personal aims.
- Think about **short-term aims** (e.g. to create a positive community) and **longer-term aims** ('impacts') – e.g. a member joined another creative group outside homelessness services.
- Consider early on how you measure these aims – refer to **Plan, Evaluate, Document** on page 7 and the Evaluation Tools from pages 19-22.

### CASE STUDY:

The Choir With No Name has a clear set of 4 aims about making people shine, building a positive community, building skills and sharing quality music-making.

### FURTHER GUIDANCE/TRAINING AVAILABLE:

The National Centre for Voluntary Organisations has good guidance on their website about setting aims and all kinds of organisational tools and tips.

# 4. PLAN, EVALUATE, DOCUMENT



## WHAT IT IS

Evaluation helps assess whether a project is meeting its aims. It includes monitoring (collecting data like attendance and how many sessions have taken place) and evaluation (analysing that data to identify outcomes, such as increased participation or enjoyment). Indicators, like laughter and smiling are evidence of enjoyment and well-being. Documenting (through notes, photos, or videos) capture what happened and supports evaluation, celebrating achievements and demonstrating impact to others.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Think about what and why you are evaluating to start with.
- **Follow these steps:** Set Aims; monitor progress; evaluate findings; document and share results (see pages 19-22 for more details)
- Consider combining **'Stats and Stories'** - often called quantitative and qualitative evaluation e.g. the percentage of people who increased in wellbeing and stories/case studies to illustrate the positive change in someone's life.
- **Plan evaluation early but time it right:** Set out the process before you start but avoid early evaluation forms – wait until members are settled in.
- **Communicate clearly:** Let people know why evaluation is happening, how it will help the project improve (not just that information is being extracted); how data will be used, and ensure ethical handling (e.g., ICO registration, data policies).
- **Document as you go:** Record progress using notes, photos, or creative methods - don't leave it to memory. BUT follow **an ethical policy around taking, using and storing images/video** of community members. See Streetwise Opera's guide below.
- **Use what's available:** Consider free, accessible platforms to document and share your work, online or in person, and use a system that fits with your work (see below).
- **Get creative:** Use engaging tools for evaluation. Creativity can enhance both reflection and feedback. Produce an Impact Report which is creative e.g. with poems/photos.
- **Build in reflective practice:** Regularly ask yourselves, 'What was good?' and 'What could have been better?' and implement improvements as you go. See [here](#) for a description of Reflective Practice. Have an anonymous suggestion/comments box for people to use.
- **Think about legacy:** Consider how a project will be seen and **shared** after it ends and where it will live (e.g., if a website is taken down).

## CASE STUDY:

Cardboard Citizens have produced some really clear [impact reports](#) which include photos, case studies and 'stats and stories'.

## FURTHER GUIDANCE/TRAINING AVAILABLE:

Streetwise Opera, Anthony Luvera and University of Lincoln are producing a Guide for ethical Photography and Filming in the arts/homelessness sector called **Reframing Homelessness: A Guide to Ethical Visual Representation**. Available soon

# 5. ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY



## WHAT IT IS

Environmental responsibility within this work means understanding and actively considering the environmental impact of creative projects, spaces, and processes. It recognises that social justice and environmental justice are interconnected—people experiencing homelessness are often among those most affected by climate change, pollution, and environmental degradation. Climate change is already creating major climate migration, increasing homelessness. It is everyone’s responsibility to create arts experiences in ways that protect the planet for current and future generations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Follow the 6 R’s:** Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repair, Repurpose.
- **Involve your community** in sustainable practice, encourage collective responsibility and creative problem solving. Source locally where possible, encourage others to do the same.
- **Use recycled/recyclable materials and ethical/sustainable products:** Prioritise materials that can be recycled or have already been used. Dispose of materials responsibly.
- **Minimise waste:** Design workshops and events with minimal waste in mind. Be **intentional** with what is made and shared. Avoid creating throwaway outputs. Design pieces with value, longevity, and reusability in mind.
- **Build in time to explore sustainable options:** Allocate time in project planning to research and test environmentally conscious alternatives.
- Explore opportunities to interact with **green space, environment**, recycling and food waste.
- **Learn from others:** Connect with and learn from organisations already practising sustainability in creative work inc Julie’s Bicycle – see below. **Research thoroughly**, stay informed by seeking out suppliers, case studies and toolkits that support sustainable practices.
- **Acknowledge challenges openly:** Recognise sustainability is not always straightforward. Include shared responsibility in artist contracts to reflect this reality.
- **Create an environmental policy and audit** what you use including how you travel.
- **Consider projects that raise awareness of environmental responsibility/impact** on homelessness.
- **Consider the impact of digital use** and the impact of heavy use on servers etc
- It can be a **privilege** to be able to consider the environment – keep in mind that not everyone is able to think about packaging, composting and sourcing items locally as this often comes at extra expense both in time and money. Mobility might also mean not everyone can use public transport.

### CASE STUDY:

Mathare Empire in Nairobi, Kenya uses arts to educate the public around the environment. Streetwise Opera’s project ‘Nature’ explored the climate crisis through music.

### FURTHER GUIDANCE/TRAINING AVAILABLE:

Julie’s Bicycle provide various tools including the Carbon Calculator

# 6. ACCESSIBILITY



## WHAT IT IS

Accessibility covers a wide range of ideas about making services and projects as easy as possible for people to find, attend, use and appreciate. It includes accessibility across disability, race, sexual orientation, gender, learning speeds, neurodiversity and more.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Be clear** from the beginning what is expected, what will happen and when. Print it out.
- **Respect all needs:** Consider visible/invisible disabilities, neurodivergence and co-occurring conditions. Make sure venues are accessible.
- **Come as you are:** Welcome everyone as they are, without expectation. Reflect on when a group will be open to new people joining and when it needs to be protected and closed.
- **Sensory support:** Offer earplugs; adapt materials to reduce sensory overload.
- **Ask, don't assume:** Invite members (and leaders) to share access needs privately or openly. Offer gentle workarounds for reading/writing tasks with someone clearly on hand to assist.
- **Pace and flexibility:** Go at the group's pace, with optional extra tasks and room for absence.
- **Storage for belongings** - people may feel conscious of bringing in their belongings to a space, consider ways people could securely store belongings.
- **Access budget** - when applying for funding, try to include an access budget for costs such as transport.
- **Preferred contact method:** Ask how people want to communicate (email, phone, post).
- **Respect identity:** Use language people prefer about themselves.
- **Model inclusion:** Lead by example (e.g. share pronouns or personal access needs).
- **Accessible formats:** Share materials in text, BSL, image, audio, video, on coloured paper etc.
- **Open processes:** Allow flexible ways to take part (e.g. video, Braille, in-person, with/without print-outs, observing/taking part).
- **Consider whether a venue is dog friendly** since community members may have dogs and no one to look after them. Also consider other members' needs when it comes to dogs.
- **Accessible food and drink** - make sure there is a wide range of options including halal and avoid serving alcohol at events/fundraisers.
- If possible provide a separate **quiet space** and a **prayer space** in the building.

### CASE STUDY:

**Museum of Homelessness** use the community to design every single aspect of their programmes and building projects. This ensures they capture every point of accessibility.

### FURTHER GUIDANCE/TRAINING AVAILABLE:

Check out **Access All Areas'** resources [here](#).

# 7. DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY



## WHAT IT IS

Accessibility covers a wide range of ideas about making services and projects as easy as possible for people to find, attend, use and appreciate. It includes accessibility across disability, race, sexual orientation, learning speeds and more.

## ACCESS

- **Co-design tech use** with the community and invite ongoing feedback.
- **Be clear** about what tech is needed, which tech will be used and what support is offered.
- **Make materials accessible** for different literacy, language, and access needs.
- **Offer flexible ways to communicate** (e.g. in person, email, phone, voice message, text).
- **Understand the cross over of disabilities** (including neurodivergence) **and digital use** and how some tech can support people i.e screen readers, dictation, captions, AI note-taking.
- **Use hybrid options** to reduce travel and increase inclusion.
- **Suggest venues** near the community with reliable internet and free device access.
- **Acknowledge digital poverty** - limited data, poor coverage, power outage, lack of electric or no privacy (provide data packages if possible).
- Provide basic **online safety** guidance but also inform people so they feel empowered to use it rather than overly cautious.

## SKILLS

- **Don't assume** digital skill levels: everyone learns differently. And **offer options** for involvement and ways to work in pairs or with support. Provide **clear, simple instructions** and use varied formats (video, audio, images, text).
- **Share your knowledge** clearly, without needing to be an 'expert'. Peer to peer support is really valuable and can be reciprocal.
- **Build understanding** through conversation, not direct questioning.

## WELLBEING

- **Respect fears** or discomfort around tech; offer private support and acknowledge concerns about digital safety.
- **Be transparent** about data use: what's collected, why, and how it's shared.
- **Let people stay anonymous** or choose what they share; collect only what's needed.

### CASE STUDY:

Geraldine Crimmens of [Drummond Street Artists](#) started to buy data packages for members during COVID and found some grants

### FURTHER GUIDANCE/TRAINING AVAILABLE:

Check out the [Digital poverty alliance](#)

# 8. WELLBEING AND WELFARE



## WHAT IT IS

We want to create an environment where people can be their true selves, and considers individual needs, such as accessibility or need for quiet areas. These principles may be brought together in a Safeguarding Policy, which sets out how you protect and support participants, especially young people or vulnerable adults. Good safeguarding practice takes care of people's wellbeing and welfare so that crisis points happen less frequently. This applies to staff, facilitators and participants.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Wider determinants of health:** It can be good to understand the overlapping factors impacting health and how specific creative practices may be of benefit.
- If storing members' **special category and health data** you will need a data handling policy and to understand the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which may involve a fee (find out more at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk))
- Consider that some people may not have regular access to food so try to **supply food and drink where possible and ask people about their dietary requirements.**
- Consider providing a **hygiene box** for people which includes items such as sanitary products, plasters and soap. Your local hygiene bank might be able to provide these.
- Be aware of where the nearest **first aid kit** is and that a **trained first aider** is always on site.
- Be considerate of using **sharp crafting items** around people who self harm, log items in and out; use safety versions where this is reasonable to.
- Ensure you are aware of services to **signpost** people to for further support.
- **Risk assessments** help you think about each possible risk and how to mitigate them.
- **Safeguarding policies** are essential to help make sure everyone is safe. Leaders and volunteers should be trained (see below). If possible, one person should take on the responsibility of being the identified **Safeguarding Lead.**
- If members are on probation, discuss with any supervisors the **terms of their licence** so that this can be supported. Set up a data sharing agreement where necessary.
- Consider the wellbeing of members **and** the team especially where the majority of facilitators have lived experience and live with health challenges. Consider lone working policies. A good analogy is to 'put on your oxygen mask first' which means ensuring facilitators provide the best care to participants because they are in a position to support others.

### CASE STUDY:

Making Things Up are developing some resources for artists' welfare

### FURTHER GUIDANCE/TRAINING AVAILABLE:

In the UK, most local authorities provide free safeguarding training online. See Ann Craft Trust's guide to writing a [Safeguarding Policy](#). See Arts Council England's [guide to managing risk](#). Plus the [Radical Safeguarding Toolkit](#)

# 9. BELIEF, BIAS AND BELONGING



## WHAT IT IS...

Creating inclusive spaces where all identities, beliefs, and backgrounds are respected and valued. It means actively recognising difference as a strength, avoiding assumptions, avoiding tokenism and ensuring everyone feels that they truly belong, not just included in name. This involves practical steps like inclusive scheduling, food options and spaces for reflection or prayer, as well as commitments like supporting self-identification, listening to feedback, unlearning bias, and addressing issues when they arise. Belonging comes from meaningful inclusion, agency, and ongoing reflection, not token gestures.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Value** cultural, spiritual, gender and identity-based difference as a strength.
- Ask about how people want to be **greeted** i.e handshakes/no handshakes
- **Don't make assumptions about people's faith, beliefs, or background.** Avoid tokenism: Real inclusion means helping people feel they belong. Be curious, ask and find out what would help them feel comfortable.
- **Respect** religious and cultural observances when scheduling and planning e.g. be aware that energy levels may range from very high to low during fasting. Consider having a calendar up with religious holidays on - this can even be used to co-create activities.
- **Offer spaces for prayer, reflection and inclusive food options** (halal, kosher, vegan, no-alcohol).
- **Don't assume gender or pronouns** - allow people to self-identify.
- **Embed LGBTQIA+ inclusion** visibly and meaningfully from the start.
- **Look at developing a code of conduct** or understand the codes of conducts that partnering organisations follow which can then support the way you work.
- **Recognise** that faith and sexual identity may intersect with trauma or exclusion.
- Be aware that not everyone has been exposed to alternative perspectives or informed of kinder language used to describe others. **Focus on informing rather than punishing.**
- **Support people's agency:** Let members choose how they take part.
- **Shift** from 'unconscious bias' to actively noticing and unlearning.
- Use **reflective prompts** like, 'Whose voices are missing?' and, 'What assumptions am I making?'
- Make space for feedback: **Inclusion is ongoing.** Keep evolving through reflection, co-creation, and lived experience leadership.
- **Address issues as they come up:** people will be watching how you respond to topical conversations or debates that come up.

### CASE STUDY:

Check out the **Outside Project** the LGBTQIA+ community shelter and centre [here](#).

### FURTHER GUIDANCE/TRAINING AVAILABLE:

Check out 'To Accompany is Political; A Transfeminist Essay on Homelessness' by Florencia Montes Paez of No Tan Distintas in Buenos Aires, Argentina published by Formas Press - see [here](#). Plus University of Leicester's **Trans Inclusive Culture Toolkit** see [here](#).

# 10. CONTINUITY AND LEGACY



## WHAT IT IS

Good projects can create such a positive environment, building well-being, purpose and a supportive atmosphere (often in contrast to people's day-to-day lives) that it can be challenging when they end. However, no one can take the incredible achievements away and this should be celebrated. Projects ideally would continue, but often that is not practically possible so endings need to be positive and well-planned with good signposting.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Try to remember that **the day after a project is often the most important day**.
- **Communicate** – be clear about the project length and chat about this. Talk about the fact that it is natural to feel a sense of sadness at the end of a positive experience, and that no one can ever take their achievements away from them. Communicate the view that experiences build new, stronger, foundations which can be transferred to any context.
- **Celebrate** the incredible achievements of the individuals in the group: consider providing people with certificates and mementos.
- **(Exit) Plan** – if a project needs to come to an end, work on signposting people to other trusted groups early on. If possible, take members to new groups to settle in.
- Where possible, provide your own **Progression Pathways** – this could be to become a leader, an ambassador for the work or professional training.
- Help participants to have a **vision** of what could be next for them creatively and where they could go for direction i.e education, joining other groups, working in the creative industries.
- **Staggered ending**: If there is a culmination e.g. a performance or exhibition, don't have it right at the end but leave enough time to meet, reflect and wind-down.
- **Check-in**: If a project ends, always check in with everyone a little while afterwards
- **Continuous work**: If a project is continuous, be aware of the different dynamics between people who have been there for a long time and newcomers – talk about it in the Community Agreement. If there is a time limit on membership, how is that managed?
- **Archive materials** – consider donating information about your project to local and national archives. Consider digital online portfolios that showcase the project. Don't undervalue how useful sharing your work may be to others.

### CASE STUDY:

Many projects have regularity at their core, even when no projects are happening. The Medway Arts and Homelessness Forum meets monthly; Streetwise Opera, Cardboard Citizens etc have developed professional development progression routes; Choir With No Name organises a free dinner after each rehearsal; Museum of Homelessness has a venue that is open to most days.

### FURTHER GUIDANCE/TRAINING AVAILABLE:

Arts & Homelessness International has free 1-2-1 advice and training about planning projects inc continuation and legacy. Email [Katie@artshomelessint.com](mailto:Katie@artshomelessint.com)

# PROJECT CHECKLIST – GOOD, BETTER, EVEN BETTER

Tick where you are at

## 1. TRUE CO-CREATION

### GOOD

- Co-create a community agreement with everyone
- Set up some decision-making processes with members
- Try the '3 stages of a co-created meeting' on page 4

[ ]

### BETTER

- Set up an advisory group with members
- Offer to pay people when it's for more than 'taking part'

[ ]

### EVEN BETTER

- Appoint people with lived experience on the board
- Create a professional development pathway for members
- Appoint people with lived experience onto the staff team

[ ]

## 2. TRAUMA CONSCIOUS PRACTICE

### GOOD

- Co-create a community agreement with everyone
- Encourage people to go at their own pace
- Use a predictable structure

[ ]

### BETTER

- Identify a safeguarding lead and introduce them to all
- Make sure there is always a quiet space for people to go
- Have a signposting plan to other support services

[ ]

### EVEN BETTER

- Seek training from a provider such as Museum of Homelessness or Response Ability Theatre
- Make sure the whole team are trauma conscious

[ ]

# PROJECT CHECKLIST – GOOD, BETTER, EVEN BETTER

Tick where you are at

## 3. DEFINE AIMS

### GOOD

- Create a Theory of Change with your community (see p 20)
- Complete an Aims Triangle to co-create your top 3-4 aims with your community (see p 21)
- Co-create some aims with the members

[ ]

### BETTER

- Work out which are short-term and long-term aims
- Start early on how you will measure aims (see Evaluation in section 4)

[ ]

### EVEN BETTER

- Work out how your aims can be SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound

[ ]

## 4. PLAN, EVALUATE, DOCUMENT

### GOOD

- Draw up an Exit Plan including signposting members to other groups
- Organise a reflection meeting after a project
- Put together a simple evaluation structure (see p.19 )

[ ]

### BETTER

- Find creative ways of carrying-out evaluation (e.g. a drawing or poetry exercise)

[ ]

### EVEN BETTER

- Produce and share an Impact Report and make it creative
- Ensure the work is not lost and plan recording for project legacy

[ ]

# PROJECT CHECKLIST – GOOD, BETTER, EVEN BETTER

Tick where you are at



**GOOD**

- Establish the 6 'R's: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repair, Repurpose
- Use recycled materials and dispose of materials responsibly

[ ]

**BETTER**

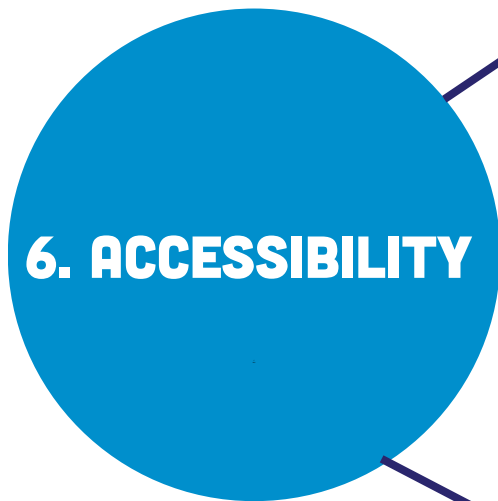
- Learn from others and use the Julie's Bicycle climate tools at [www.juliesbicycle.com/](http://www.juliesbicycle.com/)

[ ]

**EVEN BETTER**

- Draw up an Environmental Policy and Audit
- Consider weaving in environmental responsibility into a project

[ ]



**GOOD**

- Check access needs in advance
- Use a venue/space that is accessible
- Offer different ways to take part depending on preference
- Welcome everyone to come as they are

[ ]

**BETTER**

- Provide accessible formats for materials - braille, different languages, large type, coloured paper
- Consider sensory challenges people may face

[ ]

**EVEN BETTER**

- Identify a quiet space and a prayer space that people can go to

[ ]

# PROJECT CHECKLIST – GOOD, BETTER, EVEN BETTER

Tick where you are at

## 7. DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY

### GOOD

- Co-design tech access with the community
- Talk to members about online safety
- Allow everyone to be anonymous if they choose e.g. with cameras off on screen calls

[ ]

### BETTER

- Offer members support with getting online, using Zoom and Teams functions etc

[ ]

### EVEN BETTER

- Buy data packages for community members who can't afford to get online
- Search for free spaces/computer terminals near to where people are e.g. a local library

[ ]

## 8. WELLBEING AND WELFARE

### GOOD

- Always know where to signpost a community member for extra pastoral support
- Create a Safeguarding Policy

[ ]

### BETTER

- Create a Risk Assessment for all projects
- Provide food and drink at sessions and events

[ ]

### EVEN BETTER

- Provide hygiene boxes
- Train all staff and volunteers in safeguarding and identify one person as a safeguarding lead to everyone for all sessions who is the go-to person

[ ]

# PROJECT CHECKLIST – GOOD, BETTER, EVEN BETTER

Tick where you are at

## 9. BELIEF, BIAS AND BELONGING

### GOOD

- Avoid tokenism: Inclusion means belonging, not just representation
- Embed LGBTQIA+ inclusion visibly and meaningfully from the start

[ ]

### BETTER

- Offer a prayer space and inclusive food options
- Think about whose voices are missing

[ ]

### EVEN BETTER

- Get training in unconscious bias
- Draw up a policy on bias/belonging

[ ]

## 10. CONTINUITY AND LEGACY

### GOOD

- Communicate how long a project is and when it will end – talk about what will happen and what this might be like
- Stagger endings so that there is plenty of down-time and reflection after a project

[ ]

### BETTER

- Draw up an Exit Plan including signposting members to other groups
- Create archive material about the project

[ ]

### EVEN BETTER

- Provide Progression Pathways e.g. becoming a leader, going onto professional training, becoming an ambassador
- Where possible create regularity with the group

[ ]

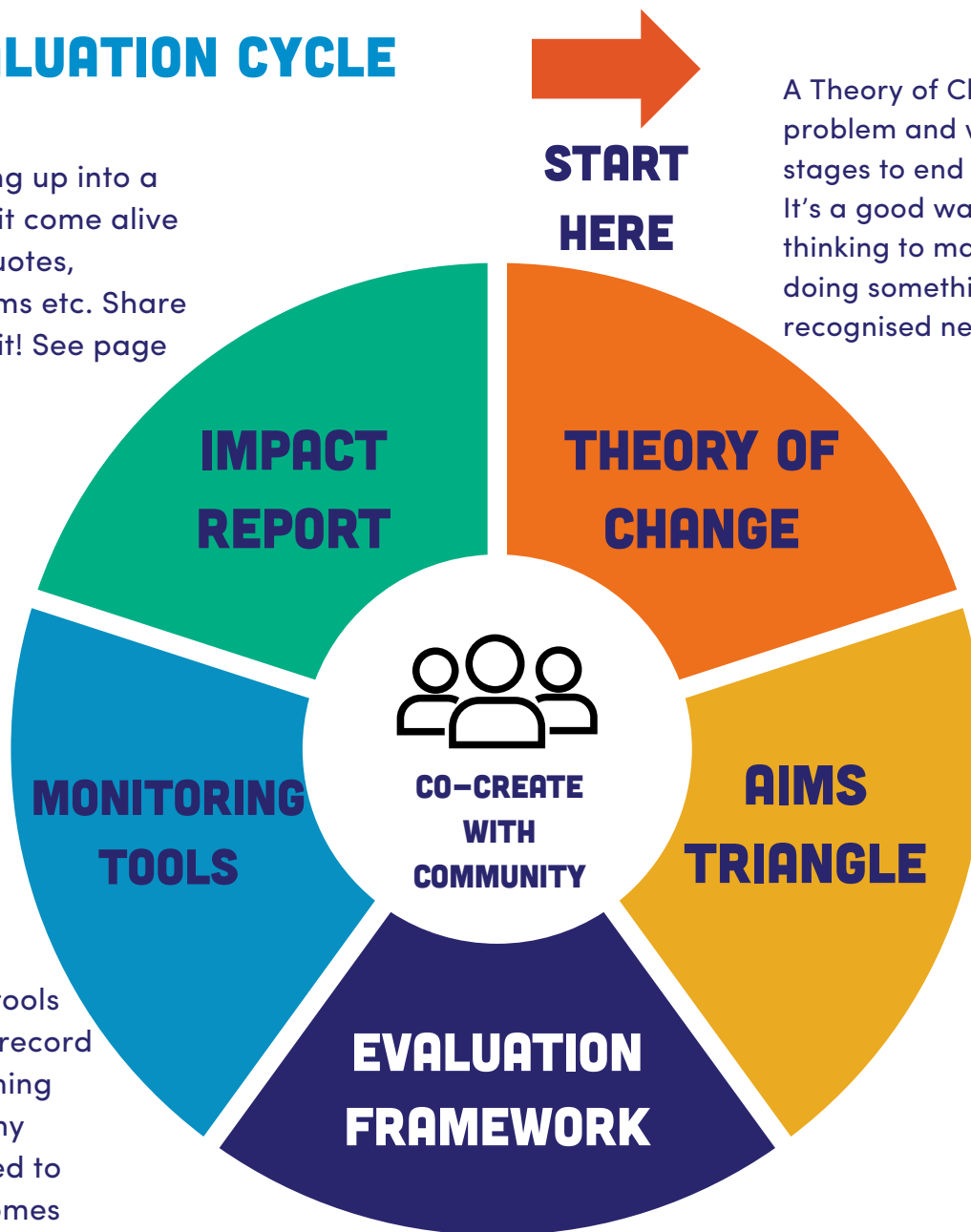
# EVALUATION TOOLS/TEMPLATES

On the following pages there are a set of evaluation tools for an imaginary arts/homelessness project setting out a Theory of Change, an Aims Triangle, monitoring tools and an evaluation framework

## THE EVALUATION CYCLE

Write everything up into a report - make it come alive with photos, quotes, drawings, poems etc. Share and celebrate it! See page 22.

These are the tools you will use to record what is happening (from how many people attended to what the outcomes were). Try to make them creative! See page 22.



A Theory of Change looks at a problem and works up through stages to end up with a purpose. It's a good way to challenge your thinking to make sure you are doing something that is meeting recognised needs. See page 20.

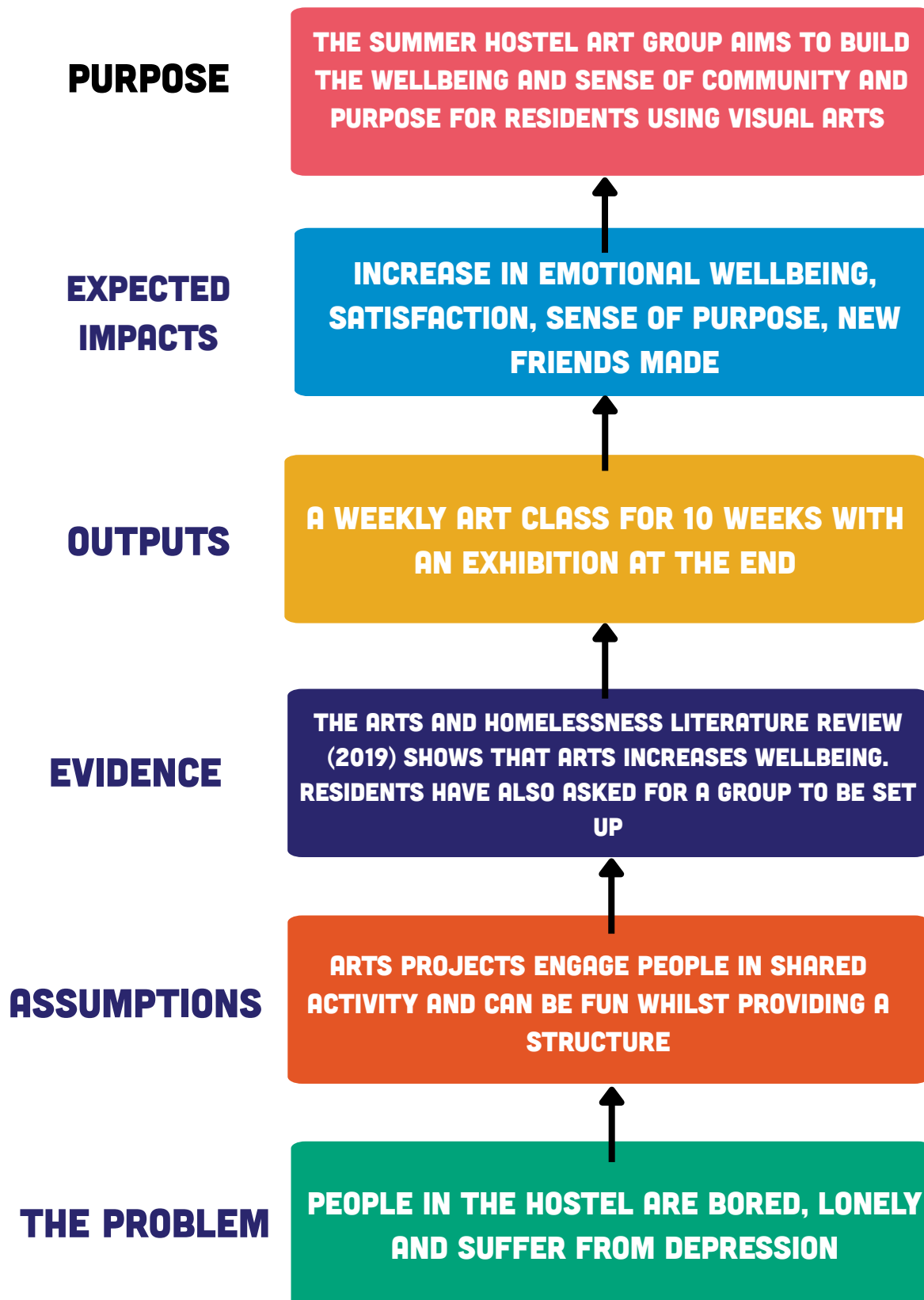
An Aims Triangle is a way to plan the project in more detail - how many sessions, how many people are you expecting to come. See page 21.

An Evaluation Framework sets out how you will measure aims and if the project met its aims; how do you know; what is the evidence? Create a simple framework/plan to capture this. See page 22.

# EVALUATION TOOLS/TEMPLATES

## THEORY OF CHANGE – THE SUMMER HOSTEL ART PROGRAMME

A Theory of Change looks at a problem and works upwards through stages to end up with a purpose. It's a good way to challenge your thinking to make sure you are doing something that is meeting recognised needs. Below is an example of how this might work with a fictional project.

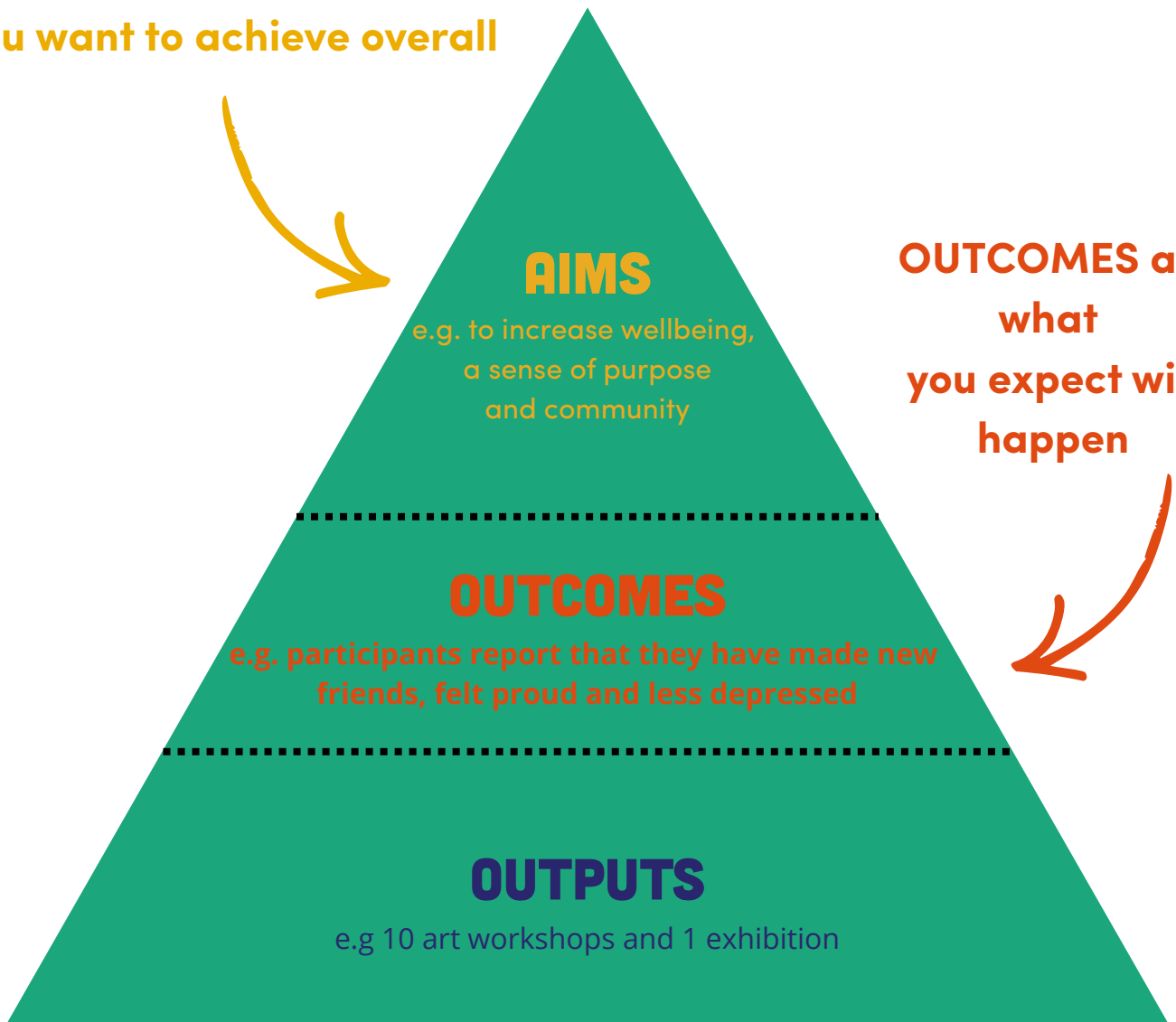


# EVALUATION TOOLS/TEMPLATES

## THE AIMS TRIANGLE

An Aims Triangle is a way to plan a project in more detail - how many sessions, how many people are you expecting to come, what will change etc. Here is an example:

**AIMS** are what you want to achieve overall



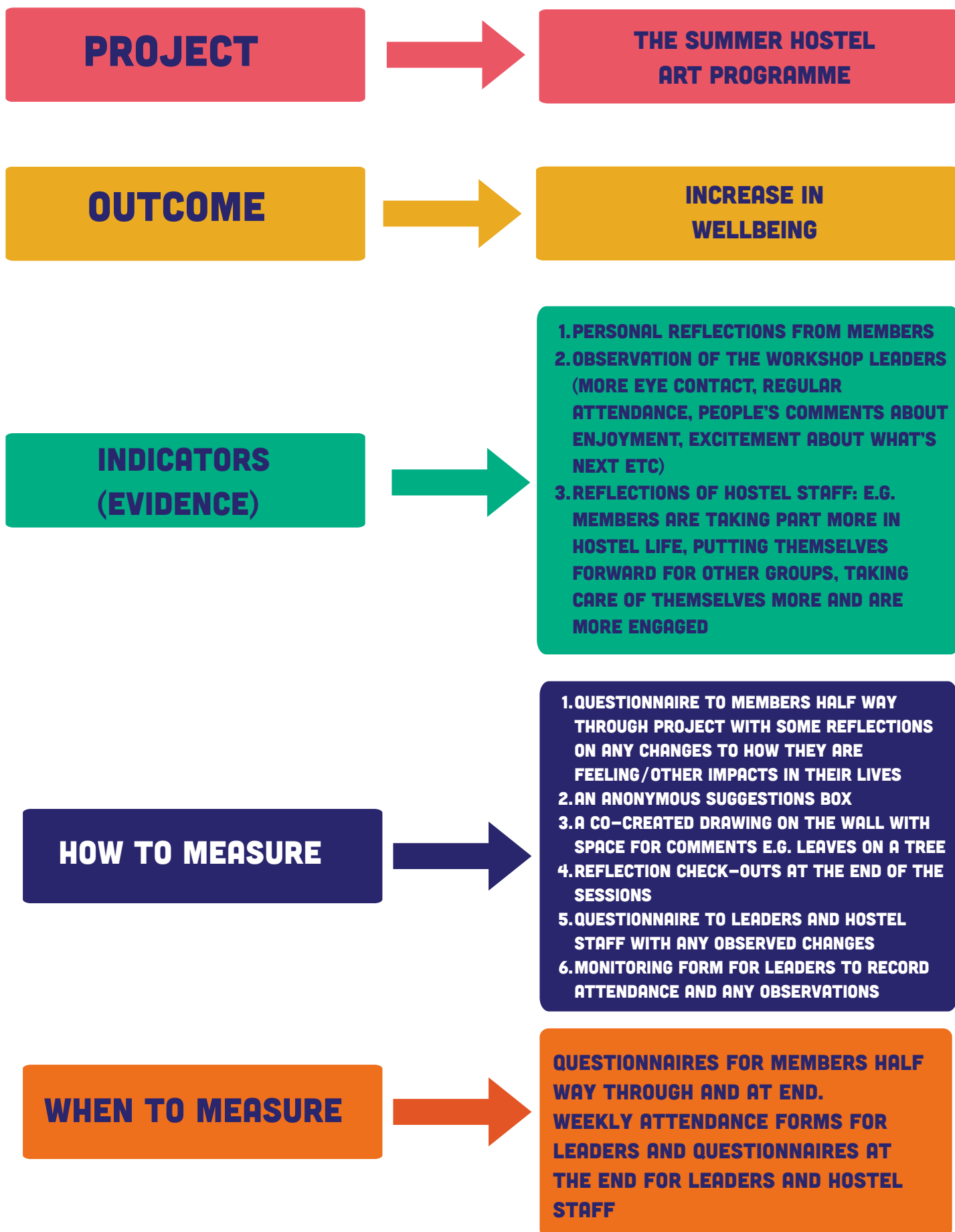
**OUTCOMES** are what you expect will happen

**OUTPUTS** are what you will do - your activities

# EVALUATION TOOLS/TEMPLATES

## EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

An Evaluation Framework sets out how you will measure aims if the project met its aims; how do you know; what is the evidence?



# FURTHER INFORMATION

## Contact us

We are funded to provide support to the arts and homelessness sector - please get in touch if you'd like some advice and guidance. Please contact [hello@artshomelessint.com](mailto:hello@artshomelessint.com) for more details.

Also, please get in touch if you feel we have missed anything or there are any errors in the Quality Framework - we will be updating it regularly.

**[www.artshomelessint.com](http://www.artshomelessint.com) and @artshomelessint on Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn and BlueSky**

## Training

**We also run training on the following:**

- **Cultural Spaces Responses to Homelessness** - training for cultural spaces to work in the best way with people who are or have been homeless.
- **Co-Creation** - training on working in a more equitable way where power and decisions are shared with the community. This includes Radical Governance Co-Creation including paying trustees with lived experience.
- **How to Run an Arts and Homelessness Project** - training based on this Quality Framework

## Resources

Visit our page here [www.artshomelessint.com/research/](http://www.artshomelessint.com/research/)

**Research and resources include:**

- **A Literature Review of Arts and Homelessness (2019)** review of all the research reports available on arts/homelessness which helps to build a case for the work. This includes info on how all projects studied demonstrated one or more of the following impacts: Wellbeing, resilience knowledge/skills and agency.
- **Fair Pay and Lived Experience (2023)** - paying people fairly and legally for their work including benefits rules.
- **Cultural Spaces Responses to Homelessness Toolkit and Review (2020)** - how museums, galleries, arts centres and libraries can support people facing homelessness.
- **The Jigsaw of Homeless Support (2018)** - a co-created model of how arts and creativity can fit into a holistic support structure of homelessness.

## Acknowledgments

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has contributed to this Quality Framework including attendees of the 2025 International Arts and Homelessness Summit; the AHI Associates; the QF Working Group (Nell Hardy, Lisa Ogun, Bekki Periman, JP De Souza and Benjamin May), Katie Langford and Samra Said and Matt and Jess Turtle from Museum of Homelessness.

With heartfelt thanks to our funders including Arts Council England, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Linbury Trust and David Wise.