



THE BEANE
HOUSE OF ART
& KNOWLEDGE

The Beane Health and Wellbeing in Museums Toolkit



CANTERBURY
MUSEUMS & GALLERIES



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Foreword

The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge is a Museum, Gallery, Library and Visitor Information Centre in the heart of Canterbury, Kent. Alongside the permanent collection of historical artefacts and treasured art works, the museum has additional gallery spaces for an ever changing programme of special exhibitions, contemporary works and community engaged shows.

The Beaney has developed an award-winning health and wellbeing programme, which uses its unique building and collections to enhance visitors experience. As the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance South East Museums Champion, The Beaney is a pioneering therapeutic museum, embedding health and wellbeing as a priority across all museum activities. This includes running regular health and wellbeing groups, hosting public events, innovative exhibitions and developing the learning programme to ensure that everyone who comes to The Beaney gets the most out of their visit.

Working in partnership with local organisations, museums and community groups, The Beaney has successfully delivered a variety of projects which improved participants wellbeing. Evaluation through standardised measurement tools has demonstrated that participants' feelings of wellbeing and overall mood improves when engaging in activities at the museum and feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. The Beaney continues to innovate in culture for health and wellbeing practice, responding quickly to the Covid-19 crisis by delivering activities digitally and over the phone, enabling the community to use the collections for therapeutic benefit from home.

By consolidating this experience and learning into a document, we hope to make other museums feel confident enough to bring aspects of health and wellbeing into their work. Not only will this enhance your visitors' experience, it will bring benefits to your own staff, museum and wider community.

Jemma Channing, Health & Wellbeing Coordinator, Canterbury Museums and Galleries

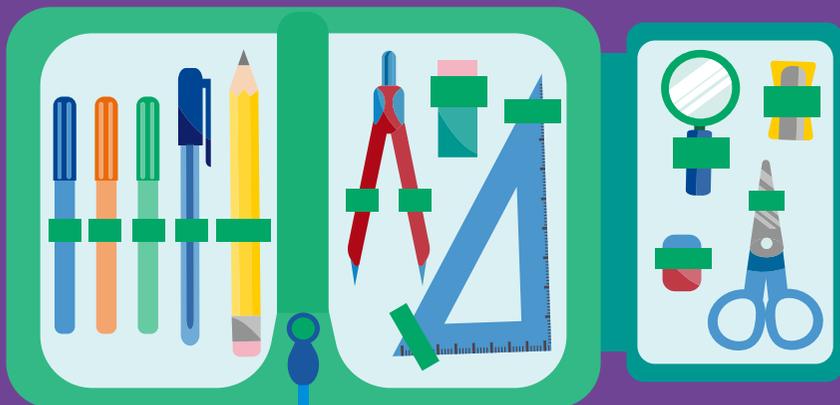


Contents

Foreword	2
Contents	3
Introduction	4
Section 1: Why health and wellbeing?	6
Section 2: Choosing a group and recruiting participants	11
Section 3: Planning health and wellbeing activities	16
Section 4: Measuring the impact of your project	23
Section 5: Funding your project	30
References	35
Appendix A: List of facilitator questions for object handling	36
Appendix B: Hiring a facilitator tips	37
Appendix C: Likert Scale examples	39
Appendix D: The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale example form	40
Bibliography	41
Special thanks	42



Introduction



This toolkit produced by The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge is designed for museums looking to begin or expand on their health and wellbeing activities. There is a growing body of evidence supporting the therapeutic value of museums and culture on the health of both individuals and communities.

Museums and other cultural institutions have a big part to play, as public spaces for learning and coming together, where collections can inspire creativity and conversation.

This toolkit came about as a response to the need for a clear, simple guide for museums who want to expand their offer to visitors to include activities which promote good health and wellbeing.

This toolkit is intended as a step by step guide. It will give the user:

- An introduction to the research underpinning health and wellbeing practice in museums.
- Guidance on the practical steps of planning, running and evaluating health and wellbeing activities.
- A list of resources and further reading to develop your ideas further.
- References and appendices to provide you with the research and tools that were drawn on to develop this document.

With this toolkit we aim to provide support and ideas to enhance knowledge, alongside real life examples of practice. We hope that it is useful and inspiring.

This toolkit is by no means exhaustive, but will show how museums of all sizes and types can have a positive impact on their visitors and communities, using the amazing buildings and collections they already have.

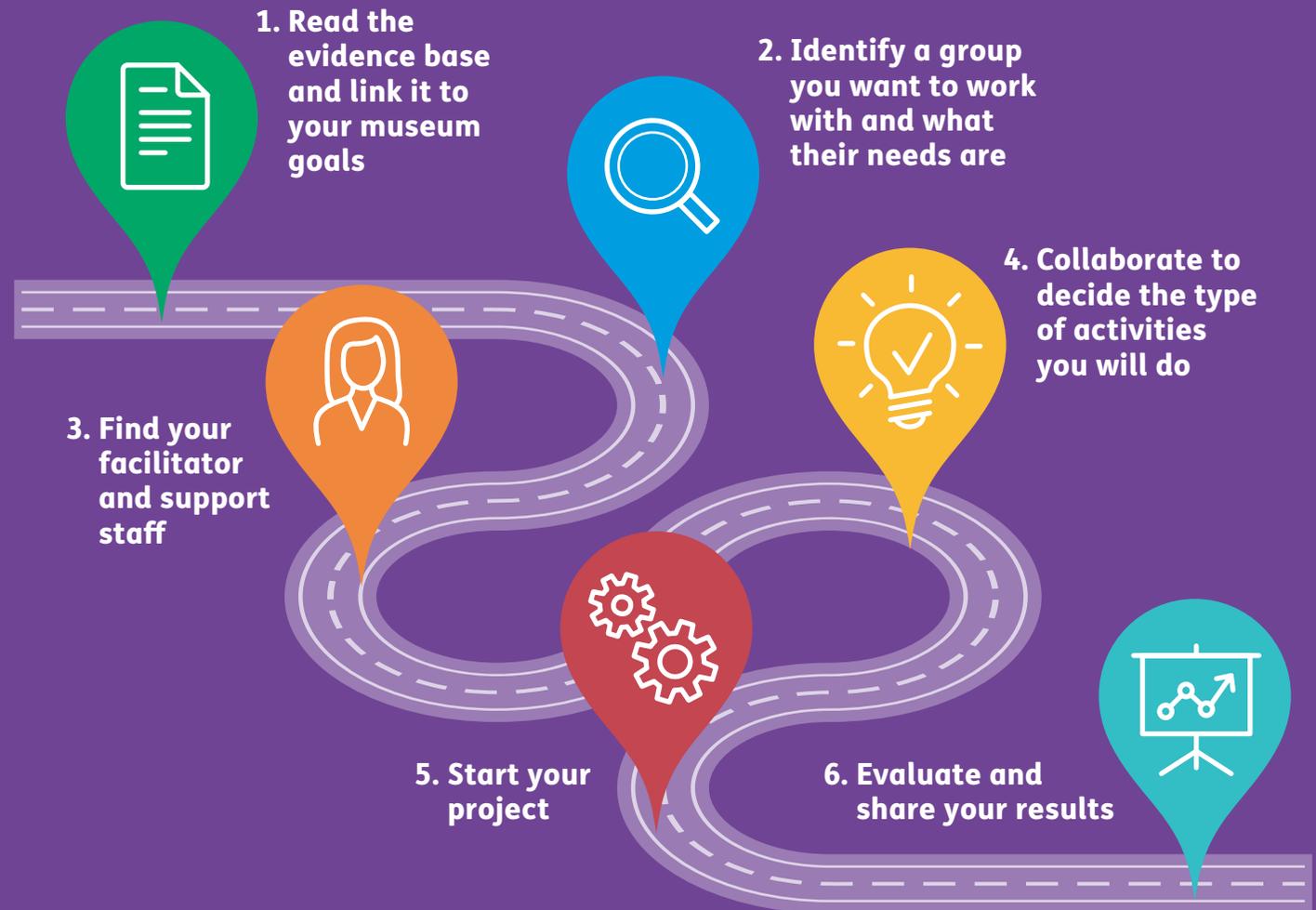


How to use this toolkit

Each chapter provides a brief summary, followed by an in-depth exploration of the evidence and considerations for each step of setting up a health and wellbeing project in your museum. Additionally, each chapter has a round up of the key points.

Throughout the body of the text, references are included as footnotes, with a reference list at the end of the toolkit. References to tools which can be found in the appendix will be referenced as "Appendix A, Appendix B, etc". The bibliography provides further reading suggestions of useful books and publications.

How to run a health and wellbeing project





“Health and wellbeing is taking the spotlight.”

Jemma Channing
Health & Wellbeing Coordinator
Canterbury Museums and Galleries



Section 1: Why health and wellbeing?

Health and wellbeing is increasingly embedded in research, policy and funding for museums and cultural organisations, however while this area of interest is growing, organisations and staff need a clear understanding of why this has come about.

An ever growing body of research indicates that visiting museums and participating in cultural activities has a positive impact on health and wellbeing.

In national policy such as Arts Council England's "Let's Create" strategy, health and wellbeing is spotlighted as one of the core focuses, with links to NHS partners and policy cited as an integral part of how organisations operate going forward.

As economic and social factors impact on our visitors' lives and wellbeing, it is important for

cultural institutions to look at what their role is as a part of their local and wider communities.

Culture for wellbeing

There is a rapidly growing body of evidence which demonstrates that engaging in heritage and cultural activities has a positive impact on physical and mental health.

Evidence shows that participating in culture and museum activities, including engaging with collections can have positive impacts on individuals wellbeing.¹

¹Fancourt, D. and Finn, S., 2019. *What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review. Health Evidence Network synthesis report 67.* World Health Organization (WHO).

Did you know?



Music Therapy reduces the need for sedative medication for 67% of people with dementia



82% of people report greater wellbeing after engaging with cultural activities

600

600 galleries and museums in the UK have a health and wellbeing programme



There are numerous positive health outcomes available for visitors. This includes:

- Improving mental wellbeing by reducing social isolation
- Developing confidence and self-esteem
- Reducing anxiety and depression
- Improving mood and increasing reported levels of life satisfaction²
- Improved cognitive skills such as concentration and focus
- Developing creative skills
- Improved fine motor skills such as dexterity and hand eye coordination.

These benefits have a wider impact as they have been shown to also extend to people's carers and others involved in their care.³

²Chatterjee, H. and Noble, G., 2016. *Museums, Health And Well-Being*. 2nd ed. New York: Routeledge.

³Ascenso, S., Perkins, R., Atkins, L., Fancourt, D. and Williamon, A., 2018. Promoting well-being through group drumming with mental health service users and their carers. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Wellbeing*, 13(1).

⁴Koebner, I.J., Fishman, S.M., Paterniti, D., Sommer, D., Witt, C.M., Ward, D. and Joseph, J.G., 2019. The art of analgesia: A pilot study of art museum tours to decrease pain and social disconnection among individuals with chronic pain. *Pain Medicine*, 20(4), pp.681-691.

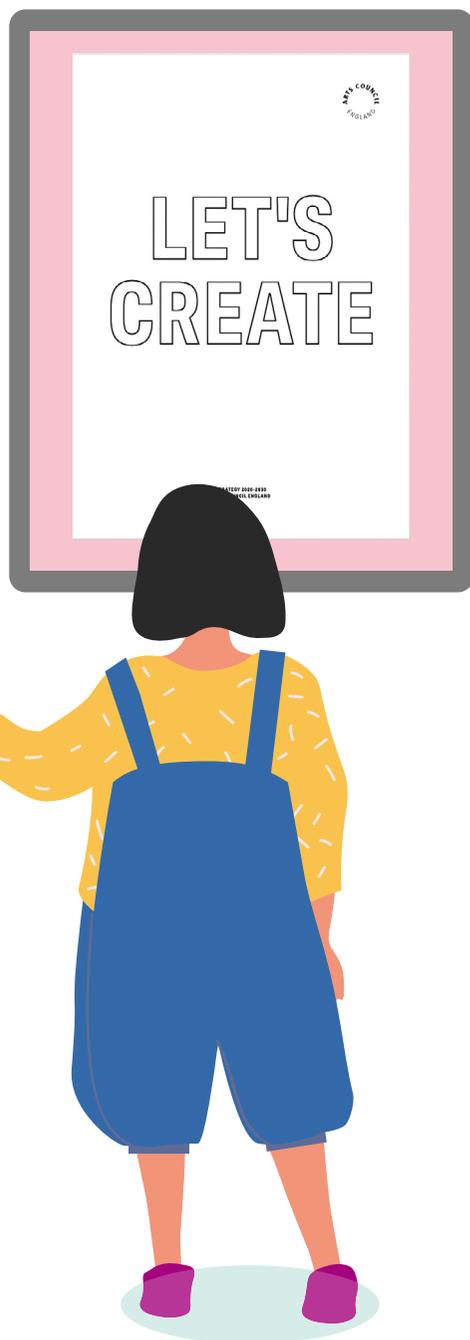
⁵Shella, T.A., 2018. Art therapy improves mood, and reduces pain and anxiety when offered at bedside during acute hospital treatment. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 57, pp.59-64.

There are also positive impacts on participants' physical health. Cultural institutions are beautiful spaces that can be used in a variety of ways – through movement activities including dance and exercise, to improve physical health. This is alongside the impact of improved mental health on physical aspects of health, for example reduced blood pressure and reduced reported levels of pain.^{4 5}

As we know that engaging in culture has a positive impact on wellbeing; so we can look at our own organisation to identify ways that we can enable our communities to access the benefits of cultural activities. Museums are by no means traditional healthcare settings, as community venues we are well placed to offer health and wellbeing interventions in-house but this could also be done as outreach work with existing community groups.

The role of cultural institutions is to create and facilitate an environment where health and wellbeing can flourish, not to diagnose or treat specific conditions. Our role is not to replace health or social care services. But by acknowledging that culture influences health and wellbeing, it will help us to better plan how to engage with our audiences. This includes working with local health organisations and community groups to meet the needs of our local population.





The wider picture

It is clear that culture can have widespread positive impacts on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities, on a local and national level. But what does it mean for your organisation?

Culture for Health and Wellbeing is a continuously growing area of research and crucially it is one of the central themes of Arts Council England's strategy "Lets Create" which looks at the impact of the arts from 2020 until 2030.⁶ There is a wealth of support for organisations looking to work in the field of health and wellbeing. On a national level the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance provide leadership and support for organisations looking to transform the wellbeing of their communities through the use of culture and creativity. In 2014 an All Party Parliamentary Group was formed. This cross-party group of parliamentarians have a shared interest in the impact of the arts on health and wellbeing, which aims to raise awareness of it's benefits and make them available across the country.⁷

Furthermore The NHS Long Term Plan published in 2019 set out a framework to improve health outcomes which included collaborative practice between health services and community groups to deliver services and support wellbeing.⁸ Social prescribing is also becoming a key focus of the Government's public health strategy with the recent launch of the National Academy for Social Prescribing which aims to develop working partnerships between sectors including the arts, health, sports, leisure, and the natural environment to promote health and wellbeing.⁹

More than ever before, museums have the opportunity to get involved in transformative change in the cultural sector, with benefits for the communities they serve and the organisations themselves.

⁶Arts Council England, 2020, *Let's Create: Strategy 2020-2030*. London: Arts Council England.

⁷The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, 2019, *Annual Report 2018-19*. London: The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing.

⁸NHS, 2019, *NHS Long Term Plan*.

⁹National Academy for Social Prescribing, 2020, *A social revolution in wellbeing: Strategic Plan 2020-23*. UK: National Academy for Social Prescribing.

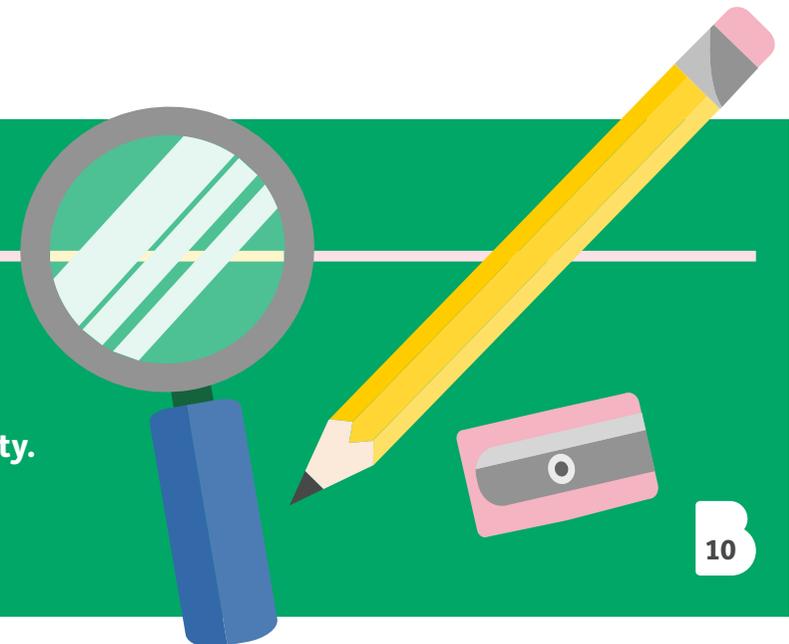


“There is growing evidence that creativity and culture are essential to our wellbeing, from reducing loneliness to building a sense of community, as we’ve seen throughout the last year when culture provided a way to connect online when we couldn’t meet in person. Supporting thriving cultural communities is a key theme of our "Let’s Create" strategy. We are excited to work with partners to support further research in this area, learn from what is proven to work internationally, and explore the potential of promising new approaches such as social prescribing.”

Hazel Edwards, South East Area Director, Arts Council England

YOUR FIRST STEPS

- 1** Consider the evidence base for your planned activities.
- 2** Consider how your health and wellbeing activities align with National policies and priorities.
- 3** Consider the needs of your audience and local community.





“The confidence they’ve gained, from coming to a session like this, ripples out across their entire life”

Wendy Daws, Sensing Culture Facilitator





Section 2: Choosing a group and recruiting participants

Choosing a group of participants to work with can seem daunting initially, and is one of the first things you'll need to decide. Choosing to do targeted work with a group of people living with a specific condition means you can address a local health need, but will require some planning to make sure their needs are met.

With careful planning you can make a real difference to peoples interaction and enjoyment of your museum and it's collection.

This section gives an overview of the various things you'll need to consider to help you choose a group of participants, how to meet their needs and support them to get the most out of your project.



Choosing a group of participants

One of the first things to be decided is what group you intend on working with. It can be initially overwhelming to choose which group of people you would like to work with and there is no one right answer.

You can choose to work with a group that has a shared diagnosis or symptoms, or you could run an open group. It depends on a number of factors; think about what your organisation would like to achieve with this project, consider any previous experience with specific groups which may come in useful, as well as considering the existing relationships you have with community groups which could be a starting point for recruiting participants.

It is useful to segment your audience using what information you have available.

This is information that can be collected through visitor surveys and social media insights.

This will help you understand who is visiting your museum and identify if there are any groups that are over or under represented in your visitor numbers currently. This is an opportunity to be proactive and engage with target groups in a positive way.

Think about the needs of your local community. Your local NHS trust websites and district council websites will provide breakdowns of the most common health conditions and disabilities in your area.

Consider if there is a condition which is prevalent in your area which you could work with. This will make your work much more meaningful and relevant to people as it is responding to an identified need.



It's useful to reach out to organisations working with your target group, not only for recruiting participants but also so you can get an idea of what their needs might be in terms of access, activities and support.

Developing these kinds of partnerships is crucial when reaching out to groups that are under represented in your audience currently, to enable you to understand their needs and support their engagement with the museum so they get the most out of it as possible. It also gives you a chance to co-design the project to make it as successful as possible.

While planning it is also important to consider any training needs which will enable you to deliver this to the best of your ability and ensure that participants experience the maximum therapeutic potential of your collections.

Choosing the right activities for the group

The programme of activities that you select should be closely linked to the group you are working with. Consider what their specific needs are, what they are interested in and what they would like to get out of it. In practical terms it is also important to plan activities that can be delivered effectively with your available time, space and resources.

Certain times of year may make it difficult for some groups to participate, for example in winter where the reduced light might make it harder for some groups to travel and access your museum. The time of day is important too, as practicalities such as school runs and public transport timetables will impact on people's ability to access your activities. As much as you can, make it as easy as possible for people to attend.

If you are planning on running a project with a set amount of sessions then it is important in the planning stages to consider the legacy of your project. The legacy is what will happen when your planned series of events comes to an end. If your participants have enjoyed the sessions it is highly likely they will want the group to continue in some way. This project could be used as a pilot to apply for future funding or you could think about other ways to support the project going forward such as offering space to use, staff or volunteer time.



Setting the scene

Run an introductory session initially. This can be a great way to get to know the group informally and to give them a chance to get to know you and each other. Use this time to set up the programme for participants, to give them an overview of what you will be doing. It is also a great opportunity to find out about their interests and needs, and to give people practical information such as where the toilets are, where the parking is and where the activities will be taking place.

Holding the sessions on the same day, at the same time and in the same place will make the group quickly feel familiar and establish a routine. The length of the group can vary, however 1 hour or less is generally too brief and makes it difficult to get into a topic. Likewise anything over 2 hours is likely to be tiring. 90 minutes to 2 hours provides ample time for activities, discussion and a break.

Breaks are important not just for comfort, but also to give participants an opportunity to talk to each other. Discussions and socialising are two of the most important aspects of group projects, especially for reducing isolation and building social networks, don't underestimate the value of conversation on the overall experience of participants.





The setting

Our environment has a huge impact on our wellbeing, and can make or break the success of a group. Think about where in the building your group will be taking place. Ideally a room that is big enough for people to move around in comfortably that is not so large that people feel lost in it.

Most activities will need tables for people to work on and you will also need a space to keep (and potentially store) materials. Seating should be comfortable as well as functional. Generally speaking, a U shaped seating arrangement works well to enable the group to all see each other as well as the facilitator, you may want to experiment with different layouts to find out what works best for the group.

Make sure that lighting is bright enough to work in but not overpowering, and ensure that the temperature of the room is comfortable for participants. A general ambient temperature is 20 degrees celsius but this will depend on the group and the room you use. Natural lighting is preferable but if this is not possible or adequate enough, diffused artificial light creates a more

comfortable light source than fluorescent lighting which can be harsh on the eyes.

If your group are going to be talking about their lives and experiences, it is important that they have a space which is private, where people won't walk into the room or be able to overhear conversations. This will be reassuring to the participants and create a trusting atmosphere. This is also something that the facilitator should reiterate – that what is spoken about in the group stays within the group.

Consistency is often comforting therefore it is helpful if the group takes place in the same room every time. This will give the participants a sense of familiarity and will help them settle into being in the museum.

WHAT NOW?

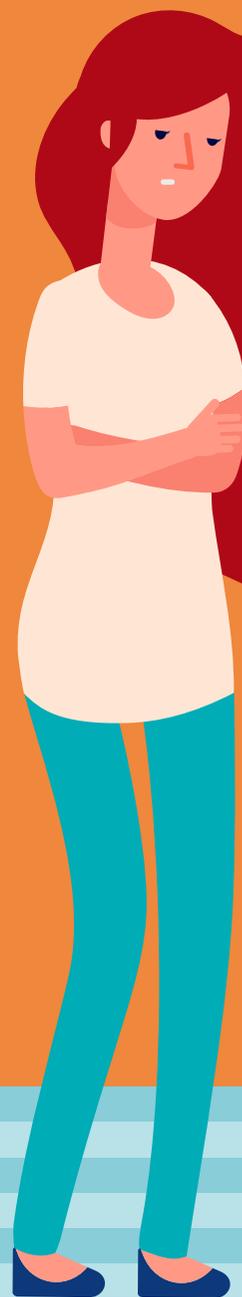
- 1** Think about the needs of your community and link with local organisations to help reach participants.
- 2** Consider the needs of your participants when planning activities.
- 3** Run an introductory session to help orientate participants to the space and get to know each other.
- 4** Spend time planning your project environment to support participants to engage.

Your group may move around the museum and galleries for various activities, but having a consistent and comfortable space to begin and end each session in will help participants feel at home. This sense of security may also lead to further independent visits by participants outside of the regular group.



“I cannot explain how grateful I am that The Beane is specifically opening their doors to those who suffer from anxiety.”

**Volunteer,
Esmée Fairbairn Collections Review Project**





Section 3: Planning health and wellbeing activities

The type of activities you do with your chosen group are crucial to the participants' enjoyment of your project. Ensure that adequate planning time is built into your plan which will enable you to take the practical steps to set up your project for success.

Administration for your project

It's crucial to plan and update administrative tasks which will make life easier as you get further into the project. Before you start, think about whether you have a way of keeping track of these key areas:

Scheduling

Plan a timeline of activities, and be sure to include time for planning, project delivery and evaluation. This will give you an opportunity to think about each step you will need to take to deliver the project and who will be responsible for it.

Risk Assessment

Complete a risk assessment for the project as a whole, this will help to identify in advance any issues that may arise and give you time to come up with solutions to mitigate those risks as much as possible.

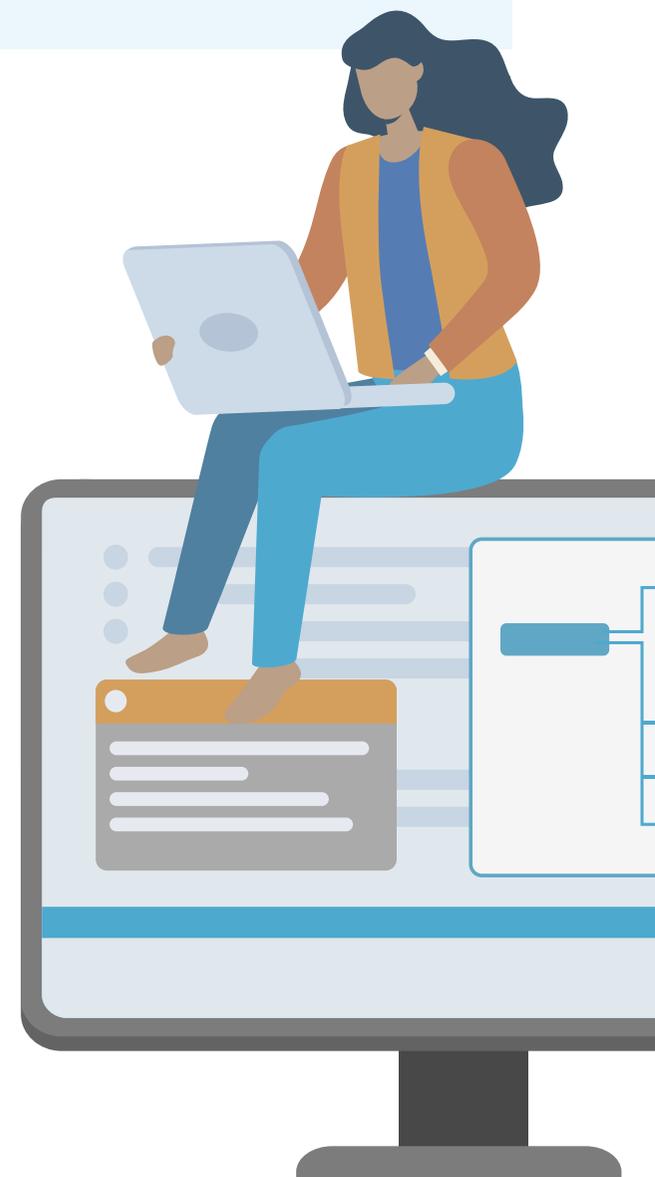
You may also need to complete a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessment if you are planning on using any materials that may cause injury. This includes things like glue or cleaning supplies.

Ensure that everyone involved in running the group has access to the risk assessment, has read and understood it.

Budget

Set up a spreadsheet to keep track of every cost associated with the project. Start with estimated costs and keep track of actual spend.

It is always useful to include a contingency budget and it can be helpful to think about 'in kind' contributions from your partner organisations.





Communications

Like all projects, you are likely to be working with a range of different stakeholders so it is helpful to think about who they are and how you can keep them updated and invested in the outcomes you are trying to achieve. Put together a simple communications plan and think about how each stakeholder group likes to be kept in touch e.g., meetings, direct mail, e-newsletters etc. Pay particular attention to any preferences your target group may have in terms of their specific needs and make sure you have allowed sufficient time and budget to accommodate any adjustments you might need to make, e.g., producing large format text.

Evaluation

It is very challenging to evaluate your project if you haven't set out clear aims and objectives at the outset. Think about setting SMART objectives that you can keep track of throughout the duration of your project. This will make evaluating much easier.

These administrative tools will help keep your project on track. Allowing yourself the opportunity to be flexible in both your timeline and budget will give you the ability to adapt in the event that changes need to be made or unexpected costs come up.

Types of activity

The advantage of running health and wellbeing groups in museums and heritage spaces is the abundance of inspiration to draw from when designing your programme. Consider how you are going to incorporate your museum's collection into the activities.

Object handling is a popular activity for all age groups which gives participants the opportunity to handle artifacts in a way they might not have done before. If you do not have a handling collection, consider making one using objects which are not part of your display, replicas or even 3D printed reproductions of collection items. 3D printing can be done in a cost effective way by partnering with local universities or creative organisations. You will need to consider where this will be stored and, if appropriate, provide gloves. Object handling is a great way to introduce a topic and start a discussion, it is also a great opportunity for developing sensory awareness as participants explore the shape, size and textures of museum objects in ways they haven't been able to do before. Appendix A is a list of example questions facilitators could ask to start a discussion.

Creative activities inspired by your collection can help develop participants' skills in a fun and supported way. In a group led by an artist facilitator, participants could make drawings or sculptures, or write poems inspired by the collection. A collaborative group creative activity is an effective method to incorporate many voices and can alleviate anxieties of participants who don't feel confident sharing their work individually.

Alternatively you may wish to take the group around the building, to explore the galleries and look at works on display. Our buildings are part of the collection too, so you may want to run a group that uses these spaces in a new way; performances by choirs, participatory dance events.



Types of activities

Museum and gallery tours.

Creative activities: painting, model making, drawing, collage.

Music and singing groups.

Dance or movement based activities.

Specific therapeutic interventions such as Art Therapy.

Storytelling and reminiscence.

Digital projects such as video activities, virtual tours and online exhibitions.



Flexibility

It's important to have flexibility in your programme. While an outline of activities for the entire duration of the programme might seem like a good idea, it's important to get to know the group and let their feedback influence the development of the activities.

Whether it's a short-term or long-term programme, allowing it to be a dynamic process, which responds to the needs of the participants, rather than sticking rigidly to a plan, is far more likely to have a meaningful positive outcome. People will enjoy taking part in activities which they feel they have ownership of, which can also contribute to their wellbeing as their self-confidence and self-esteem grows.

Experiment with different activities with the group, take feedback on board and use it as a learning experience.



Finding a facilitator

A skillful facilitator is the difference between a group going ok, and a group going brilliantly. It is important that the facilitator has an understanding of what your organisation hopes to achieve and an awareness of the needs of the group. Interpersonal skills are very important, they will need to be comfortable talking to a wide range of people, with varying needs and differing levels of confidence. Kindness goes a long way.

Focusing on developing positive relationships with the group and between participants will help participants feel more comfortable and confident. As their confidence grows, so does their enthusiasm to take part in new things, so having a patient, empathetic facilitator is key.

You can choose to have existing museum staff facilitate the group or bring someone in. This entirely depends on the skills and experience of your current staff, alongside their availability to plan for and deliver sessions. If you decide to recruit a facilitator outside the organisation, you will need to make time to recruit and induct them.

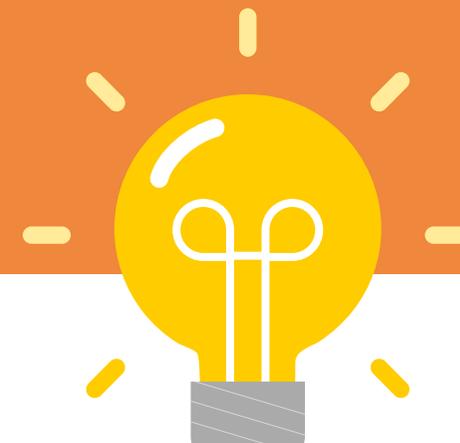
It is good to have more than one member of staff available for the group. One to lead on the activities and one to provide support to participants. This is something that experienced volunteers can also be involved in. It's not only a great way to keep the group on track, it also means that someone can go around and make sure everyone understands the instructions or if anyone needs help. They can also be a great source of feedback for the facilitator, by providing feedback on what participants have struggled with or enjoyed.

Whoever facilitates the group should also have a good knowledge of the museum and its collections, as participants are likely to ask questions. Bear this in mind when recruiting from outside your organisation as you will need to allow time for them to become familiar with the collections themselves.

Appendix B provides information on finding a facilitator including timelines, where to find a facilitator, contracts, pay guidelines and insurance.

REMEMBER

- 1 Starting with good planning and administration will help your project and activities run smoothly.**
- 2 Choose activities that bring your collections to life in a new way.**
- 3 Be flexible to meet the needs of the group.**
- 4 Finding a great facilitator will ensure activities work well and support participants' engagement.**





Case study: Chatham Historic Dockyard – Carers Mobile Dockyard

Over the last 5 years we have been providing an Outreach programme, Mobile Dockyard, to those in the Community that are unable to access the site. This saw the Trust working with a number of organisations to bring speakers, objects and collections directly into the community. On average reaching 4167 individuals via 97 sessions per year.



At the start of 2019 the Mobile Dockyard sessions were expanded to an at-risk youth focused community group, Carers First. We started delivering sessions to two Young Carer support groups in the local area.

We wanted to maximise the value the young people got out of these sessions, so we decided to combine with our Arts Award programme. So the young people could earn a recognised qualification whilst at the same time enjoying creative activities linked to the Dockyard.

Activities that the Young Carers took part in over the course of the programme and during their day at the Dockyard included:

- Blindfold Painting to Sea Shanties
- Rocket Firing
- Surreal Dockyard Collage
- Bookbinding and Zine Workshop
- Rope Making
- Make Your Own Jolly Roger Flag.

It's been a great opportunity for us as an organisation to reconnect with young people that we were seeing regularly through our outreach programme and who we haven't been able to see during Lockdown. It also allowed us to expand our audience to groups of young carers who we haven't worked with before.





The feedback we received from the survey monkey we sent out was really encouraging –

“Gave us something really fun to do during lockdown. Thank you for giving us this opportunity”

“It was very enjoyable, also learning a bit about each art project was fun”

“It’s been great, my daughter and I have had a great time making the bits! I just wish I was better with tech.”

We wanted to provide a range of quality art materials in both boxes that could be used by everyone within the young carers age group (5-18 years). We decided that rather than going with a supplier (who supplied, packaged and delivered the boxes for a substantial fee) that we would source the materials and pack and deliver the boxes independently. This meant we could provide both quality and quantity, stretching the funding further.

Obviously this came with its own set of challenges. We had a very short deadline for the first 50 Art Boxes to be packed and delivered so items being out of stock, delays in deliveries due to COVID and pre-Christmas post and a broken down car made the process a lot more stressful than expected! Luckily, we have a fantastic team who worked really hard over the last couple of weeks before the Christmas break and we got everything packed and delivered on time. My advice, if you’re given an estimated delivery time – double it!

Written by Sophie Wynne,
Arts Award Officer
and Alexandra Curson,
Community Engagement and
Volunteer Manager, Chatham
Historic Dockyard Trust.





“Being in a position to handle works of art as a volunteer has truly transformed my sense of self-worth, and in particular the caring work environment has played a significant role in helping to overcome obstacles that years of illness and alienation has prevented me from handling alone.”

Volunteer, Esmée Fairbairn Collections Review Project





Section 4: Measuring the impact of your project

When running any project it's important to get an idea of how successful it has been. With health and wellbeing projects, evaluation can seem daunting. But using existing tools and trialling new ones can help you to generate evidence of the real life impact of your work on participants health and wellbeing.

You can measure the success of your project in multiple ways using tools such as standardised assessments, alongside more personal ways of gathering feedback such as interviews and diaries.

How you choose to document the impact of your project depends on what you want to achieve, the needs of your participants and outside factors such as funding guidelines and organisation specific requirements.

Evaluation is a critical examination of an activity, which involves collecting and analysing information about the activity in order to determine how successful it has been, to improve its effectiveness and inform future programming decisions. Evaluation needn't be a dull tick box exercise, it should be an interesting, inspiring and powerful example of your impact, but it will require time and resources. Although evaluation might take place at the end of an activity it is important to consider it in your planning from the very beginning, consider it as part of your programme rather than a separate task.

What to measure?

One of the values of The Happy Museum is “Measure What Matters” (Measure what matters, n.d.). It is tempting to gather as much information as possible from and about participants, however this can be counter productive. Not least because of the burden it places on participants to share information, but also because it won't provide us with the information we want. If you are running a programme to find out if engaging in museum activities can improve wellbeing then you need to identify a way of measuring wellbeing. If you want to demonstrate how object handling improves memory then you will need to find a way of demonstrating this so that you can effectively evaluate whether or not your intervention was successful.

What you need to evaluate will be determined by the objectives of your programme, which is why it is important to embed evaluation at the planning stages, as it links directly with your project's aims. You may also be required to carry out specific types of evaluation from funders or other organisations. Consider if any of the information you have to collect will help you demonstrate the impact of your project and if not, how can you get that information in another way?





Evaluation practicalities

Another influence on your method of evaluation will be the participants themselves. In collaboration with your facilitator and, wherever possible, the participants themselves, it is crucial to consider the needs of our participants and how this might impact their ability to take part in evaluation.

Ensure that the language you use in any evaluation tool is accessible and free of jargon. Consider if a pictorial format might be more appropriate. Also consider the time that will be spent on evaluating, by staff carrying it out and the participants themselves. If you want participants to complete forms then this time needs to be built into the programme timeline, but not impact their ability to engage with the group. A form that takes 20 minutes to complete is going to severely impact time in a 2 hour session. It is also necessary to consider physical barriers such as sight loss, hearing loss or any sensory needs.

As well as potential cognitive barriers such as participants' understanding of what they need to do and how participating in evaluation may impact them emotionally. For example: Someone with a degenerative condition may be disappointed if they are not seeing the improvement they had hoped for. This is why it is important to have an understanding of your group's needs and identify who can provide support and encouragement. A facilitator or volunteer who can feedback to participants how well they are doing at an activity can help people reflect positively on their achievements which will have a beneficial impact on their wellbeing.

The good news is that there are multiple modes of participation in evaluation and which one you choose should be influenced not only by what information you need to gather but also the needs of the group.

Feedback forms or measurement tools might be suitable for some groups, but there are many ways to evaluate – it can be written, spoken or participatory. There is a way of evaluating every programme, it is just a matter of finding the right way to do it for your organisation, your aims and the participants.





WAYS OF EVALUATING

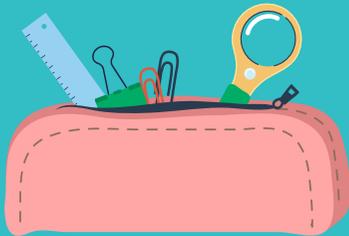


Quantitative

Qualitative



Creative



Economic



Quantitative evaluation

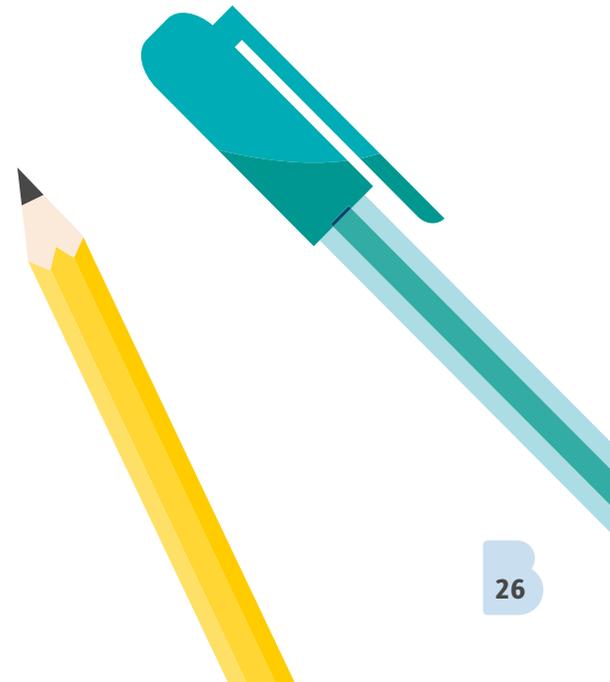
As the name implies this refers to the measurements that can be quantified numerically. It can be used for monitoring project delivery and for capturing simple measurable outcomes such as the number of participants attending each session. However, it is becoming increasingly common to gather quantitative evidence for wellbeing outcomes.

There are numerous quantitative measures which can be used including simple Likert Scales, which ask the participant to rate aspects of their wellbeing on a scale (See Appendix C for an example of a Likert Scale).

The Warwick and Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) is being used more and more by cultural organisations as a way of measuring wellbeing using a 14 question rating scale. The questions ask about both emotional and functional wellbeing to provide a good overall picture of how that person is feeling. It is becoming increasingly popular for use in museums due to its ease of use and because it enables comparison between different types of intervention.

N.B: The WEMWBS is protected by copyright and you will need to obtain a license to use it, this can be obtained through their website which is included in the bibliography.

To generate comparable data using these tools, you will need participants to undertake a minimum of 2 measurements of wellbeing. This information provides comparable numerical data of the impact of a programme, which you can then use to identify any changes, generate graphs or percentages to demonstrate the impact of your activities.





Qualitative evaluation

This focuses on experiences which are difficult to capture numerically. For example: How engaging in the programme has improved attendees' confidence. Qualitative evaluation focuses more on the experiences, narratives and opinions of the participants involved. Ways of capturing this information include focus groups, observations and interviews. They can help capture the participants' perspective of their own health and wellbeing.

Creative approaches

Activities such as film-making, visual arts, music, etc. can be used to enable participants to express their feedback. This method can be good for participants who struggle to articulate their experience or would prefer not to. It is also a great way of demonstrating what you are doing.

Economic evaluation

This type of evaluation can be used to capture benefits and savings. One example is Social Return on Investment (SROI) which is used to project the costs and impacts that would occur if an intervention did or did not take place. The results are often expressed in the form of social return for every £1 spent. Using SROI requires further training, a link to further information on this can be found in the bibliography.

It is good practice to use more than one approach in your evaluation. Different elements of the evaluation will be useful in different ways and can give you an in-depth insight into the successes and limitations of your work.

When to measure

If you want to demonstrate an improvement or a change, then you will need to get an initial assessment so that any further evaluation can be assessed against a baseline measure.

This is something that can be done in the initial introductory session. Explain why you are taking this information, and what it will be used for.

Depending on the length of your programme you may consider undertaking mid way evaluations. This is generally more appropriate in long-term programmes. It will enable you to see if the programme is on track to deliver the expected outcomes (if you had any expected ones) and help you identify any unexpected outcomes. It is also useful as it may help highlight any adjustments that can be made to the programme.





Post project evaluation

If you are running a closed ended group with a specific number of sessions it is worthwhile to consider re-engaging with participants after the project to see if there are any long-term outcomes.

This is especially useful if your activity was specifically targeted to achieve a particular outcome. Is the impact sustained over a period of time, or does it tail off when the intervention ends and why is this? This is information which can be used for future programming and potential funding bids. Ultimately evaluation is a dynamic process, but if you wish to demonstrate a specific change then the information you collect needs to be comparable with another set of information taken at another point in time.

What to do with your evaluation

Many organisations carry out fantastic work, complete questionnaires and then struggle to know what to do next with that information. In the first instance, take some time to reflect.

Many evaluation reports will only communicate the positive results of the project but they can also be a chance to reflect on what didn't work so well. It is perfectly normal and ok if things don't go to plan, in fact it is to be expected.

Don't forget, tools are standardised but people are not. It may be that the evaluation tools selected were not quite right for this particular group or it may be that it has highlighted issues which can be addressed in future projects. All of this information can be used to influence planning and improve future programming.

Sharing your evaluation

Once you have had an opportunity to write up your evaluation, share it widely. Sharing it internally and externally with a wide audience means that your work is recognised, and others can learn from it.

Think about how you are going to layout your evaluation for others to access. Something that is text heavy might put people off reading it and make it inaccessible to some readers. Where possible add graphs, photos and quotes from participants which will break up the information and give the reader a deeper insight into what you have achieved. Consider developing a shortened version or an easy read version which will make it more accessible for wider audiences.

You don't have to produce a traditional written report. Some museums find other approaches, such as videos, are more effective at communicating the information and allow for a more creative output. Consider how you want to disseminate your work in the planning stages of your project and factor in any costs such as film makers or professional copywriters if you don't want to produce reports in house.



THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL EVALUATION

1 Only measure what you need to know.



2 Build time into sessions for evaluation and consider the needs and preferences of your participants.



3 Remember, there are many ways to gather information – choose the type, or a combination of types, that works best for your museum, participants and overall project.



4 Consider how often and when you will be measuring the impact of your work.

Case study: The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge – health and wellbeing documentary

In 2020 The Beaney released a health and wellbeing documentary which included interviews with participants, carers and museum staff about the impact of health and wellbeing activities at the museum.

[The video](#) provided an opportunity to share the lived experience of participants in their own words, to understand how these groups had improved people's wellbeing on a personal level and what it meant to them, their lives and the people around them. The participants spoke about how attending groups at the museum had improved their confidence, given them independence and allowed them to build a social network with people who were experiencing the same challenges as them.

This insight into their stories was very moving to hear and demonstrated just how powerful the impact had been on people as human beings which could not have been picked up with a rating scale alone. Giving the participants an opportunity to describe their experiences in their words gave us a deeper understanding of the impact of the groups and how wide reaching the wellbeing benefits were, not just for participants but their carers too.

Written by Jemma Channing, Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge.



“A hugely important part of the group is discussion and social interaction, which are both free.”





Section 5: Funding your project

Any project you run has associated costs, and how you cover the costs depends on your organisation's existing funding model alongside opportunities for external funding. Running a health and wellbeing project of any size will incur costs which may include staff time, staff training, access costs and materials for activities to name but a few.

There are multiple ways to fund your work and multiple resources that you will already have at your disposal to help manage the costs. Funding should be planned from the start of your project, as well as the legacy; consider how you will continue to cover the costs of a project if it proves to be successful.

Time spent planning allocation of resources at the start of your project will help alleviate difficulties further down the line and support your project's longevity.

The costs

Like any project, the costs will be directly related to the complexity and length of the project, the materials, staff and training required, plus what resources you currently have available.

Consider what resources you currently have at your disposal; the collection, the building, any staff availability, willing volunteers, workshop materials and existing networks. There is likely to be some aspects of the project which are already available to you at no cost. Once these have been identified you can then add on any surplus costs.

These costs may include: the cost of a facilitator, the cost of refreshments and materials for participants, any specialist equipment which you do not already have and specific training or consultancy which may be required to enable you to deliver the project.

One of the primary concerns for museums wanting to undertake health and wellbeing work is the associated cost. However big or small you decide to go, there will be a cost, however, it does not need to be excessive and there are numerous ways to run a project on a smaller budget.





Low budget options

If you do not have the capacity to fundraise for a project but still want to explore a health and wellbeing activity in your museum, there are many ways to embed it which are lower in cost, but will still have a positive impact.

If you have a community room in your museum, or a space where learning activities usually take place, consider if this could also be used as a space for a health and wellbeing group.

Use your existing resources such as handling collections, photographs and archives. These can be used to start discussions, inspire activities and provoke reminiscence.

Creative activities require an initial outlay for materials, but simple supplies such as pens, paper, sharpeners, rubbers and paint can be used for a variety of activities for all ages.

Use activities you already run, such as tours, but invite new groups to participate in them. Think back to your research into the local area – are there any groups that you aren't currently engaging with, and could you contact an organisation working with that group to invite them to your museum for a tour?

Remember that a hugely important part of the group is discussion and social interaction, which are both free. If you can facilitate this in a positive way you will already be having a positive impact on peoples wellbeing.

Funding sources

There are multiple funding streams available and your eligibility to apply for these funds will be determined by your own organisation's circumstances. Well known sources of funding for health and wellbeing projects are available on the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance website and include: Arts Council England, National Lottery Grants, The Baring Foundation and the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation. There are also multiple funders who provide funding for projects which focus on specific diagnoses and groups of people. As well as organisations which fund projects related to specific items or periods of historical importance.





You will need to allocate time to search for appropriate funding and to apply for it. If you link up with partner organisations, this can not only make your funding bid stronger, it means that you can share resources such as staff skills with writing bids.

Choosing a funding source needs consideration as different funders will have different requirements, such as specific evaluation criteria or a time frame to deliver your project in. So taking time to review different funding streams is important as it will influence the way your project is shaped.

There will also be a gap between applying for funding and receiving it if you are successful, ensure this is built into your project timeline and consider what your back up plan is if your bid is not successful. It might be that you can still deliver your project, but on a smaller scale, or that you want to apply for funding from elsewhere.

Legacy

If you run a project which takes place over a set period of time and then comes to an end, consider at the planning stages, how you could continue the legacy of this project in some way and what the associated costs of this would be.

Unsurprisingly, people who have felt a positive benefit from an activity will want it to carry on, and groups may wish to continue meeting.

You can use your project as part of a funding bid to run it longer term, with a good evaluation of the outcomes, you will have evidence to support its value to funders. If fundraising is not possible, discuss with the group if they have any ideas of how the group could go forward.

Some groups continue to run with participants paying a small amount of money each week to cover the cost of basic materials and refreshments. Consider if you as a museum can provide anything for the group going forward – a permanent, regular space for free or a volunteer facilitator.





Case study: Tunbridge Wells Museum & Art Gallery (now 'The Amelia')

After taking part in an award winning partnership project with Canterbury Christ Church University, staff at the local authority run Tunbridge Wells Museum & Art Gallery (TWMAG) took it upon themselves to continue the good work.

Having undergone the Alzheimer's Society's 'Dementia Friends' training as part of the More Than Reminiscence project, museum staff began to wonder if this training might not prove beneficial to all staff of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. With this in mind, staff undertook training to become 'Dementia Champions' (those permitted by Alzheimer's Society to deliver Dementia Friends information sessions) and specifically target all council frontline services.

Over the course of the three years of this endeavour, over 100 new Dementia Friends have been trained for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, including all staff at the Gateway (council contact centre), the Theatre, Health Team, Parking Services and Housing services.

The impact of this training has been far reaching, with several members of staff saying that it had helped them when dealing with members of the public. It has proved a relatively simple step toward making the borough of Tunbridge Wells a friendlier place to all of its residents. It has also shown the impact a museum can have as part of a larger organisation.

Written by Jeremy Kimmel, Culture Manager at The Amelia.

COSTING IT UP

- 1 Start with a breakdown of all the costs associated with your project.
- 2 Use the resources you already have available in your organisation.
- 3 Collaborate with partners to explore different funding streams.
- 4 Consider the legacy of your project and how you will keep it running if outside funding comes to an end.





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Appendix A: List of facilitator questions for object handling

The following questions are examples of ways to open up a discussion using objects from your museums handling collection. These are prompts which will hopefully open up a discussion and facilitators should be comfortable with.

What is it? What do you think this could be?

How do you think it was made?

Is there a design? What is it? How did they apply this design?

How old do you think it is? Why?

Is there any writing on it?

Might something have been stored inside it? What?

Is there any evidence of how it was made or used?

Who might have worn/used it? And why?

What material is it made of?

Is it complete or broken/damaged?

What does it remind you of?

What textures can you feel on it?

Do you think this is important? why/why not?



Appendix B: Tips for hiring a facilitator

Finding a facilitator

There are numerous ways to find a facilitator for your project. This includes open calls directly from your organisation – remember to utilise social media to share opportunities as an easy way for people to share the details.

You can also engage with your networks and any partner organisations for recommendations of facilitators, as well as where they found theirs. Using sector networks such as the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance to share your opportunity can help you reach practitioners you may not have worked with before. Consult with your local museums development team for support too, they can help with general guidance for finding facilitators as well as sharing your opportunity with their own networks.

Skills to look for

Depending on the nature of your project you may wish to appoint someone with specific experience with your target participant group. As well as this, it is important that a facilitator is creative, flexible, organised, able to work on their own initiative when required and perhaps most importantly, has excellent interpersonal skills. A facilitator who can make people feel at ease and communicate well will be able to bring out the best in the participants and help make your project as successful as it can be.

Look for a facilitator who has worked with your target group of participants previously, their knowledge and experience will be useful when planning your programme of activities and they will already have an insight into their needs. A portfolio of their previous work will give you an understanding of the types of activities they are experienced in. It is also important to find someone who is comfortable with partnership working. If your museum is dedicated to embedding wellbeing into its practice, then finding someone who shares this interest and understands the associated benefits and challenges will be an asset to your project.



Admin

It is wise to inform whoever is in charge of administrative tasks in your organisation as early as possible in the planning process that you are going to be hiring a facilitator and on what terms this will be (Freelance or contracted). Your museum will have obligations as a result of how you chose to employ your facilitator and communication with administration staff can give you pertinent information which will need to be included in any contracts. Identify if a DBS check is going to be required. This is something that will be needed if your facilitator is going to be working with vulnerable people or young people.

You will need to ensure your facilitator has the right kind of insurance. Your specific requirements will depend on your organisation, but public liability insurance will be necessary for anyone working with members of the public whether this is in open or closed groups.

Rates of Pay

If you are paying your facilitator, the rate of pay will depend on the amount of time you require from them and the level of expertise you expect. Guidelines on rates of pay for creative facilitators can be found on the Artists Union England website.

Remember that you are not just paying for the time that they deliver the workshop, you are also paying for their expertise, planning time and evaluation time. You should also consider what is included in the rate of pay such as travel expenses, VAT and materials for the workshops.

If you are running the project on a volunteer basis, it is important to share what you can provide the volunteer to support them in their role. This can include mentorship, professional development, skills training and experience.



Appendix C: Likert Scale examples

The following are examples of Likert Scales. The first uses a numerical value for the participant to rate their mood and the second uses a smiley face system for participants to indicate their answer.

1. Tick box rating scale:

	1	2	3	4	5
How would you rate your mood today? (1 = Very Low, 5 = Very Good)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

2. Visual scale:

How much did you enjoy today's session?





Appendix D: The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale example form

This is an example of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) form. WEMWBS is protected by copyright. Should you wish to use WEMWBS you will require a license appropriate to your intended use, the link for this can be found in the bibliography.

Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts.
Please tick the box that best describes your experience over the last 2 weeks

	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling interested in other people	1	2	3	4	5
I've had energy to spare	1	2	3	4	5
I've been dealing with problems well	1	2	3	4	5
I've been thinking clearly	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling good about myself	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling confident	1	2	3	4	5
I've been able to make my own mind up about things	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling loved	1	2	3	4	5
I've been interested in new things	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling cheerful	1	2	3	4	5



Bibliography and further reading

Websites:

[The Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance](#)

[The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale](#)

[The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge Wellbeing Documentary](#)

[All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing](#)

[The Happy Museum Project](#)

[Social Return on Investment](#)

Books:

Touch in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling

by Helen Chatterjee and Guy Noble.

Arts in Health: Designing and Researching Interventions

by Dr Daisy Fancourt



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THE BEANEY
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