



Questions and Answers

1) What is the Qualitative Impact Framework?

The Qualitative Impact Framework is a conceptual framework and research plan developed to meet the unique Canadian context. The purpose of this framework is to support the development and implementation of qualitative research that will be undertaken by the Council and its partners for the purpose of communicating the value to Canadians of investments in the arts made by the Canada Council. The framework will examine the benefits to artists and organizations receiving Canada Council funding, and it will also enable the Council to tell the story of how those investments benefit the Canadian public. The Canada Council specifically aims to focus on non-economic, non-instrumental measures, acknowledging that the primary benefits of a vibrant arts sector are intrinsic.

Through the Qualitative Impact Framework: the Canada Council will gather evidence to demonstrate its impact in three areas:

- Impact on Grantees
- Impact on Artistic Work and Practices
- Impact on Audiences, Communities and Society

The Qualitative Impact Framework is intended to:

- Provide the Canada Council for the Arts with a blueprint for gathering qualitative evidence of the impact of its investments in artists and organizations which, over the coming years, will allow the Council to demonstrate and substantiate the impact of expenditure of public funds;
- Support arts milieu in understanding and articulating the intrinsic impact of *their* work;
- Support critical self-reflection and inform the Council's future strategic thinking with relevant qualitative data;
- Forge partnerships with other organizations to undertake intrinsic impact measurement that will deepen understanding of the impact of the arts in the short term and long-term.

3) Why is the Qualitative Impact Framework Necessary?

The Canada Council's funding reaches a large portion of Canada's complex and diverse arts ecosystem – thousands of artists and organizations each year. This makes the Council a major stakeholder in the health and vitality of the ecosystem.

The Qualitative Impact Framework will support the Council's efforts to demonstrate the impact of its investments and the value of public funding for the arts. It is complementary to other research and program evaluation at the Canada Council. Further, the Council will use this framework to understand the impact of a five-year doubling of its parliamentary appropriation (2016–2021).



4) Why qualitative research?

Qualitative data helps to tell a deeper story than statistics alone would allow. Drawing from other research approaches internationally and in consultation with the Council's stakeholders, the framework has been developed to guide the Council in its efforts to gather qualitative evidence of the intrinsic impacts of the arts and arts funding.

The framework is complementary to other measurement activities that capture *quantitative* impacts, such as CADAC (Canadian Arts Data / Données sur les arts au Canada) led by the Canada Council in partnership with provincial and territorial arts funders, and the Culture Satellite Account (Statistics Canada).

5) How was the Qualitative Impact Framework developed?

The Canada Council worked with consultants WolfBrown and James Doerer to undertake a rigorous examination of trends and issues in the realm of qualitative impact measurement. This foundational work included deep research into different models and frameworks used in a variety of sectors around the world, including the arts. This rigorous approach increased the Canada Council's own understanding of intrinsic impact research and led to the design of a conceptual framework that is unique to the Canadian context. This work was also guided by an Advisory Committee for two years.

In the latter stages of development, the Council held a series of consultations with arts funding agencies, National Arts Service Organizations, and selected arts organizations in Vancouver, Halifax and Quebec City to obtain general feedback on the Framework. The consultations provided direct feedback on the framework and resulted in further refinements.

6) Who is leading this research at the Council?

Within the Canada Council, this research is being led by the Research, Measurement and Data Analytics Section (RMDA). The mandate of RMDA is to:

- supports the Canada Council to make evidence-based decisions about programs and services;
- undertakes arts research, develops and shares knowledge about the Council's activities and sector-wide trends in the arts; and
- demonstrates the impact of the Council's investment and promotes the value of the investment in the arts.

RMDA contributes to the Council's internal capacity-building as it relates to performance measurement, evaluation, and quantitative and qualitative data collection, validation and analysis. It reports on the Council's granting and non-granting activities, strategic commitments and actions. Through its promotion of accountability and transparency, RMDA demonstrates the impact of public investment in the arts and contributes to the development of the arts sector.



7) What are the next steps?

Beginning in 2020, the Council will launch three new research projects:

- Study the transformative effects of Canada Council funding on first-time grant recipients
- Support core funded organizations in assessing their civic impact
- Examine social impact of the arts

The Council will also embark on the development of a framework to examine issues of impact and value in Indigenous arts and culture contexts.

Research into qualitative impacts is distinct from the Council's granting decision process and will in no way be used in the peer assessment of grant applications.