

5th Living Knowledge
Conference



May 10-12 2012 Bonn

Panel session on
New approaches
to evaluating
Science Shops projects
May 10th 2012



Andrea Vargiu
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Laboratorio Foist
per le Politiche Sociali e i
Processi Formativi



PERARES Project
Public Engagement with
Research and Research
Engagement with Society
(FP7/2007-2013)
g. a. n° 244264



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Developing indicators for the evaluation of Public Engaged Research



WP9: Main objectives

WP9: Monitoring and evaluation of PER through science shops and variants and knowledge debates

- To develop a set of indicators to evaluate influences of CSO and public participation in the development of scientific knowledge with reference to specific projects and actions.
- To make available guidelines and replicable instruments and practices for such evaluation.
- To 'test' these indicators and instruments on initiatives undertaken by science shops as part of the present project.
- To be a resource for the project partners and individual work packages in their self-evaluation exercises.



Why evaluate?

- 1. Building knowledge.** Knowledge is produced as an end in itself (thus, not necessarily for intervention).
- 2. Learning.** In order to learn from what has been done. It applies to all relevant actors of the evaluated organization.
- 3. Managing and planning.** In order to get a better organization. Evaluation is intended to get elements useful for decision making. Differently from the simple “learning” evaluation, it is mainly used by decision makers within an organization. It mainly focuses on internal efficiency (typically organization monitoring and evaluation, quality management etc.) and external efficacy (costs/benefits analysis; customer satisfaction etc.).
- 4. Informing (accountability).** In order to give information to relevant stakeholders (funders, institutions, general public etc.). It mainly focuses on results and impacts.

Evaluating PERARES: Why? What? When?

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Shared objective	Main objective	Focus	Object	Time frame
Learning	Planning	Needs and resources	CSOs Community Science shop	Ex-ante
	Managing	Organization	Teaching and learning Research Science Shop	In itinere
	Accountability	Effects: •Outputs •Outcomes •Impacts	Teaching and Learning Research CSOs	Ex-post •Outputs •Outcomes •Impacts



Evaluating PERARES: Phases and instruments

Time frame	Instrument	Purpose
Ex-ante	Checklist for early-stage evaluation	To be used in the preparatory phase before substantive interventions happen and researchers go into the field
In itinere	Questionnaire for mid-point evaluation	To be used at a stage in a project when the project can still be modified without damage to it
Ex-post	1. Questionnaire for end-point evaluation 2. Questionnaire for post-project evaluation	1. To be used when the project report is submitted 2. To be used as a means of assessing the longer-term impacts and carried out approximately 12 months after the project has completed



PERARES: Main indicators

Start point

- Framing and aims
- Means and organisation
- Resources
- Involvement (access, participation)
- Expectations
- Monitoring

Mid-point

- Framing
- Objectives
- Transparency
- Resources
- Involvement
- Reorientation

End of project

- Outputs
- Experience
- Resources
- Participation
- Unexpected ideas
- Project statistics

Post project

- Processes and relations
- Utility
- Comments
- Project outputs (figures)
- Longer-term impacts



PERARES: In itinere indicators

Dimensions	Indicators
Framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project alignment with the original aims Definition of main questions at the start Significant unexpected issues causing the main questions to be redefined Modifications agreed between the partners Need to redefine questions and aims as the project proceeds
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of achievement of objectives set for this point Possibility of overcoming delays experienced so far Need to re-set the objectives for the later stages of the project
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roles and responsibilities clearly established Efficiency of project management Allocation of personnel resources Allocation of financial resources Adequacy of methods Fairness of project management
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of personnel Quantity of personnel Efficient use of personnel Adequateness of funding Adequateness of administrative facilities
Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants' opportunities to contribute to the project's content Participants' opportunity to contribute to the project's methods Efficiency of partnership
Reorientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present need for significant changes Future need for significant changes



PERARES: Output indicators (1)

Dimensions	Indicators
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting of the end-user's needs • Usefulness to a wider public than the immediate client • Relevance to academic research • Readability of publications produced for a non-specialist public • Improvement of students' ability to perform research • Improvement of students' Problem-solving abilities • Improvement of students' capacity for self-directed work • Outputs' consistency with overall objectives
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants' overall satisfaction • Quality of staff involved (e.g. friendly, pro-active, client-oriented, accessible) • Partners' understanding of procedures • Students' supervision quality • Satisfaction of partners' expectations
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriateness of personnel resources • Appropriateness of financial resources • Appropriateness of facilities (e.g. equipment, meeting spaces)
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of common ideas • Development of a common understanding of the problem area • Partnership's utility in achieving the project results • Efficiency of partnership • Students' commitment • Supervisors' commitment

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PERARES: Output indicators (2)

Dimensions	Indicators
Unexpected ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexpected ideas or innovative process/product that emerged from the project • Indication of eventual relevant change
Project statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students involved in the project • Total credits, e.g. ECTS, obtained for participation in this project by each individual student involved • Average grade for student assignments • Academics involved in the project • Staff personnel involved (paid and volunteer) • External contributors • Value of contract research in cash • Days from first contact to delivery of final product • Civil society organisations contributing to the project • Private enterprises contributing to the project • Local government agencies contributing to the project • State agencies contributing to the project • Individual citizens affected by the issue(s) examined

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PERARES: Impacts indicators (1)

Dimensions	Indicators
Processes and relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase of clients' knowledge of how research is done• Awareness of community-based research• Diffusion of research-based policies• Increase in students' interest in engaging with societal issues• Effects on academic policy towards community-based research• Relations between academics and civil society organisations• Influence on the direction of further research in the subject area
Utility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase of organisation's capacity to participate in research• Increase of organisation's capacity to apply research results in a societal context• Increase of organisation's capacity to get project funding
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most important impact of the project• Most stimulating aspect of the project• Most disappointing aspect of the project

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PERARES: Impacts indicators (2)

Dimensions	Indicators
Project outputs (figures)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic publications produced arising from this project • Non-academic publications/documents produced (e.g. policy reports, guidelines) • Citations in academic publications • Mentions, appearances or contributions in public media (e.g. radio, TV, newspapers) • Mentions in non-academic publications/documents (e.g. policy reports, guidelines) • Participations in academic conferences where the project was presented • Participations in non-academic conferences where the project was presented • New in-house research projects on same or related theme • Requests for advice on policy or legal issues relating to the project topic
Longer-term impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of new research collaborations • Reinforcement of existing research collaborations • Raise of societal awareness of the issue(s)