

Entre Transições


Retrospectivas – Transversalidades – Perspetivas

Coordenação de Maria Assunção Gato e Pierre Guibentif

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Acknowledging the multidimensionality of value creation in cultural activities: an impact self-assessment toolkit

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Abstract

The question of value and its measurability has always been central in the study of social and economic practices, including cultural activities. However, contemporary structural changes related to the emergence of cognitive-cultural capitalism carry new forms of cultural production, consumption and mediation that challenge the analysis of cultural activities' value(s).

Despite the recognition of the multidimensionality of its value, impacts of cultural activities are still often underestimated, and evaluation exercises struggle to include the diversity of dimensions of value created by these activities, in economic, social, cultural, environmental or participatory terms.

Combining work developed in different research projects, this paper addresses value creation processes in culture and proposes a new conceptual and analytical approach to assess the impact of cultural activities in a given territory. A multidimensional impact assessment method, (co)developed with actors in the creative field, is proposed, provided through a toolkit for (self) evaluation of value(s) generated by cultural institutions.

Key-words: Value Creation; Multidimensionality of Value; Impact Assessment; Cultural Activities

Introduction

The theme of value and its measurability has always been central in the history of economic thought and, in particular, in the field of cultural economics (e.g. Throsby, 2001). Nevertheless, the deep transformations of contemporary societies, the profound technological advances and the rise of cognitive-cultural capitalism accentuate the centrality of aesthetic-symbolic knowledge in economic and social processes (Scott, 2008), presenting additional challenges to the analysis of value creation. This occurs in general, for all activities, as creativity spreads across all sectors, but also, particularly, in the symbolic and aesthetic knowledge-intensive activities, such as cultural and artistic ones. The mechanisms of value creation in these fields are linked to specific intermediation and gatekeeping processes. These are significantly challenged by the strong asymmetries observed between the subjects regarding information, as well as concerning the cultural and social capital stocks (increasingly) required for the complexities and particularities of the processes of codification and de-codification of meaning in these activities (Becker, 1982; Caves, 2000; Costa, 2007). Digital technologies have introduced structural transformations in these processes, especially in the cultural field, unveiling a new paradigm in the organization of these activities, which Pier Luigi Sacco labels as culture 3.0¹, where the distinction between producers and consumers has become increasingly blurred (Sacco, 2011). Culture is seen as network organized and based on diversified forms of collective sense-making. New channels of value creation have promoted active cultural participation, building communities of practice that produce and share cultural and creative contents, for instance, on digital platforms, open up new possibilities for the cultural experience and value creation outside the conventional domain of action and impact of culture (Sacco, 2011; Sacco et al., 2012).

Understanding the territorial expression of cultural and creative activities - as well as the territorial dynamics that embed cultural activities' development and the way creative dynamics are rooted in local communities and their territories - is essential to clarify the local processes of value creation and how they can be mobilized to promote (a more) sustainable development, even if these processes are anchored in globally structured economic, social, and symbolic mechanisms (Kebir et al., 2017).

In this context, analysing the co-creation processes between artists, stakeholders and local communities as well as the governance mechanisms and the participatory practices in the cultural field can be particularly enlightening.

In general, there is great difficulty in perceiving the full importance and the “value” of artistic and cultural practices and institutions, not only for individuals but also for communities and for society as a whole. Furthermore, there is usually a lack of acknowledgement of the fundamental importance that specific territorialized dynamics play in cultural activities and in creative processes, as well as about their anchoring mechanisms within globalized processes. Both can function as important factors for value creation, requiring the disentangling of the symbolic mediation mechanisms behind them.

Moreover, the various benefits of a personal cultural experience for the life of an individual or

¹ Distinguishing it from previous “regimes”, Culture 1.0, based on the patronage model, and Culture 2.0, fuelled by cultural and creative industries.

the multiple effects these activities and practices can have on local communities and society as a whole (such as developing innovative and creative skills, improving wellbeing or fostering sustainable development) are often overlooked or, at most, only demonstrated in a quite unclear way (Tomaz, 2018). These are frequently reduced to results or products of a tangible nature, not recognizing the invisible processes and components and the way they are embedded in the territories and in the local communities. Hence, it is also essential to consider the recent changes in cultural policies and in cultural participation processes, and their importance in the framework of territorial development (Bonet et al., 2018; Costa, 2015; Dupin-Meynard & Négrier, 2020), and therefore their role in that route to value creation.

Despite the vast literature and the growing number of research projects² that seek to overcome many of the blockades that have been determinant for the recurrent instrumentalization of cultural activities vis-à-vis other economic, social or political objectives, some issues are not yet considered about the processes of value creation and the impacts of cultural activities. The acknowledgement of personal subjectivity as well as contextual and relational aspects in value creation and value measurement, at individual and collective levels, are critical aspects at stake here.

It is fundamental to understand the influence of artists and their work in the local context, and the way their practices are embedded in the territory, as well as to make visible how artists and cultural processes create intangible value, whether in the personal experiences of each individual, or for communities and society as a whole, bringing development to those territories. The traditional mechanisms for measuring the impact of these activities on society are generally quite unsatisfactory, often focused on the easiest and simplistic dimensions to measure value creation (with quantitative indicators, easier to collect and address, and overvaluing the economic dimension, either at direct, indirect or induced levels).

A broad research programme, combining work held in the scope of different projects, has been conducted at DINÂMIA'CET-Iscte over the past few years in order to address this complexity of value creation in a comprehensive but effective way. To this end, an analytical framework was constructed encompassing a diversity of dimensions related to the creation of value and the measurement of cultural/creative activities' impacts at the economic, social, environmental, cultural-artistic and participatory levels. Combining the work developed in five research projects, an impact self-assessment toolkit is proposed expressing the diversity and multidimensionality in value creation. Several tentative analytical grids to assess the impacts of creative activities in the territories and communities have been developed and tested with cultural and creative actors in some of these projects. Subsequently, a specific framework, comprising 5 main dimensions (cultural; economic; social; environmental; citizenship and participation), was refined enabling (self)assessment of the impacts of cultural activities in a particular territory or community. This analytical framework (operationalized in several sub-dimensions and indicators) is available at CULTURE.IMPACTS DYI, a digital application (through an online-platform) that enables the systematization, self-assessment and self-awareness of value creation and their impacts by the cultural sector agents.

² See for example, Sacco's methodology for measuring the impact of cultural heritage activities; the "Impact Playbook" developed by Europeana to support cultural heritage organizations (<https://pro.europeana.eu/page/impact#impact-playbook>); the works of Flanders Arts Institute; the research of Paul Heritage and Leandro Valiati on the "Relative Value" for Arts and Humanities Research Council, and their work on the currency of cultural exchange, or the recent EU funded projects UNCHARTED (Understanding, Capturing and Fostering the Societal Value of Culture) and MESOC (Measuring the Social Dimension of Culture).

The following section will briefly address the main objectives and methodological aspects followed in this research programme. In section 3, the general analytical grid that results from this research is outlined. Section 4 presents some aspects on the operationalization of this toolkit in practice, and the paper finishes with a brief concluding note.

1. The process: developing an integrative and multidimensional approach to value and impact assessment

New understandings and dynamics in culture require new methodological approaches and operative tools to examine, communicate and sensitize cultural actors, policymakers and audiences about the diversity of value(s) associated with the specific and multifaceted nature of these activities. By the same token, the same new methodologies and tools are required to thoroughly assess the impacts of these activities on local territories and communities, at a diversity of levels and dimensions: economic, social, environmental, cultural-artistic and participatory. Traditional impact measurement methods tend to focus on short-term indicators, based on easily collectible information and quantitative data, not considering the multiple effects of these activities in the personal lives of the individuals nor on local territories and communities. Thus, they are not responding to the complexity of reality, the multidimensionality, multiplicity and time-range of impacts, and the specificity of each situation (Tomaz et al., 2020).

An academic response to this demand, assuming the aforementioned challenges faced by these activities in contemporaneity, must also consider the tensions between research and policy advocacy regarding the impacts of arts and culture and the development of methodologies for their measurement and evaluation, and how they influence the decision-making processes (e.g. Belfiore & Bennett, 2010; Galloway, 2009).

In this vein, a DINÂMIA'CET-Iscte multidisciplinary team³ has been developing a research programme that mobilizes and crosses the work produced in different action-research projects carried out in recent years (CREATOUR, RESHAPE, IMPACTOS-AR, ARTSBANK⁴), co-producing knowledge with artists, cultural promoters, creative tourism agents and public authorities, in several territorial contexts, both at Portuguese and European levels (Costa, 2022; Tomaz et al., 2020).

This broad research programme aims to deepen knowledge (i) about the mechanisms of creation and sharing of value in cultural and creative activities on contemporaneity; (ii) about the impacts (on all their economic, social, artistic, environmental diversity) of these activities on the social fabric; and (iii) about the role of culture in the transformation of behaviours (and in the renegotiation of identities). In parallel, it intends to improve understanding about the importance of the territorialized logics followed by cultural/creative dynamics in this process of value creation and the importance of the local anchoring on globalized (cultural, economic, social) processes as a factor of value creation, disentangling the symbolic mediation

³ Involving the authors of this text, but also our colleagues Maria Assunção Gato and Ana Rita Cruz (the six people involved in a “variable geometry” in these projects) as well as the partners and community members involved in all these projects, to whom the authors naturally acknowledge their important contributes.

⁴ More recently, there is also a 5th project - “STRONGER PERIPHERIES – a Southern Coalition” (funded by Creative Europe programme) - in the testing and application of the toolkit presented in this paper.

mechanisms behind these processes.

In practice, this presupposes the development of a pragmatic analytical grid that enables and enhances awareness and perception about the multidimensionality of value creation by cultural and creative activities, and the operationalization of its measurement, for each concrete agent. Assuming a perspective of co-creation of knowledge with cultural and creative agents, this entails testing and applying this grid to a diversity of empirical situations, which were provided by the aforementioned parallel research projects. The general aim was to develop a toolkit that can be used autonomously by cultural agents and policymakers to perceive the diversity of factors underlying value creation and the multiplicity of impacts of their cultural and creative activity on society and on their specific communities.

These broad objectives have been pursued, in the framework of the four research projects mentioned above, in multiple but complementary ways.

At the Portuguese level, CREATOUR project⁵ allowed the team to co-design and test with a diversity of stakeholders a conceptual and analytical framework intended to measure the impacts of 40 pilot initiatives of creative tourism in the particular context of small cities and rural areas in Portugal. The experience exposed the challenges, opportunities and constraints in the diversity of situations found, along with the need to develop a qualitative self-assessment tool that could be also adaptable to other situations and settings.

The development and adaptation of this analytical grid to other contexts, and particularly to cultural and creative activities, in their broad diversity, was possible with the collaboration of 8 “Reshapers” (artists, curators, cultural managers), from all Europe, who reunited in the scope of RESHAPE project⁶ to discuss the value of art in the social fabric. The work conducted and then discussed within the broader RESHAPE community along this project enabled the extension of the analytical framework to a diversity of contexts, branches of activities, types of organizations, governance models and specific problems that have decisively strengthened the analytical and conceptual model under development.

In parallel to these projects, ARTEMREDE, a network of 15 municipalities in Portugal, which combines programming with cultural training and community-oriented work, has been working with DINÂMIA’CET-Iscte on a project⁷ to assess the impact of the activities of their associated city-councils on their respective communities. This work also decisively bolstered the analytical model, as ARTEMREDE municipalities are open to testing these new approaches and methodological tools.

In addition to this, the experimentation of other exploratory methodologies, particularly urban artistic interventions, to work with the communities has taken place, disentangling the effects of creative actions in territories, and their material and symbolics impacts - in the scope of the

5 CREATOUR - Creative Tourism Destination Development in Small Cities and Rural Areas (SAICTPAC/0003/2015) (project No. 16437), funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT/MEC) through national funds and co-funded by FEDER through the Joint Activities Programme of COMPETE 2020 and the Regional Operational Programmes of Lisbon and Algarve.

6 RESHAPE – Reflect, Share, Practice Experiment, funded by EC, Creative Europe Programme.

7 IMPACTOS-AR – Study on the impacts of the activities of ARTEMREDE, funded by ARTEMREDE municipalities' network.

ARTSBANK project⁸. This has been another way of exploring, in practice, new tools to try to question the notions of value and the perceptions that the cultural agents and policymakers have, and the way they measure the impacts of cultural and creative activities.

The work carried out in all these projects (as well as the subsequent application of the toolkit in the STRONGER PERIPHERIES project, involving very diverse European contexts), with the collaboration of a variety of stakeholders, exposed some of the vulnerabilities of common impact assessment procedures, in public and private entities, given the nature of the cultural activities and the specific circumstances of each project, location, or scale intervention. At the same time, the work conducted within these projects confirmed the difficulties stakeholders experience in providing and communicating evidence of some of the qualitative effects of their activities and their value, as well as of their contribution to achieving more sustainable development in these territories and communities. In addition, involved stakeholders highlighted the need to integrate these evaluation exercises into their internal processes of goal setting and in identifying possible gaps, challenges and opportunities that may arise from the identification of the multiple effects of their activities.

There is a general awareness of the broad scope of the impacts of these activities and their multidimensionality for everyone involved. This is generally complemented with the clear perception of the individual/institutional diversity in motivations, as well as about the resulting variety (and diversity of appreciation) of the expected impacts for each one's activity. Additionally, the perception of discrepancies between the (intrinsic) motivations of the actors and their discourses (mostly based on extrinsic motivations, particularly related to funding issues) is also usually clear.

Naturally, the mobilization of the knowledge provided by all these stakeholders was very important in the development of an integrative and multidimensional approach to impact assessment. It was fundamental in a process that crossed these different streams of research and contexts, allowing a co-construction process that resulted in a broad analytical framework, which was then operationalized in a pragmatical toolkit, that is accessible in a digital application/platform, allowing the systematization, self-assessment and self-awareness of value creation and its impacts by actors in the cultural/creative sector.

2. The outcome: a new multidimensional framework to understand the value and the impacts of cultural activities

The operationalization of a multidimensional analytical framework to understand the value and the impacts of cultural activities was set up through a step by step process (cf. Costa, 2022; Gato et al., 2021; Tomaz et al., 2020), one that views the assessment of the impacts of the creative activities through the lens of territorial development perspective. This meant working with five main dimensions to embody the multidimensionality of sustainable development (Ferrão, 1995; Costa, 2007, 2015), drawing upon, on the one hand, the vast discussions on the dimensions of sustainability and, on the other hand, the debates on “culture” as the 4th pillar of sustainable development (Hawkes, 2001; Nurse, 2006; UCLG, 2011). More details on the conceptual and

⁸ ARTSBANK – Creative milieus at “Margem Sul”: triggering territorial development through co-creation of knowledge in the contemporary metropolis (several sources of funding).

analytical aspects of this framework and on the debates in which it was grounded can be found in Costa (2022) and Tomaz et al. (2020)⁹.

In a nutshell, and having the idea of promotion of the wellbeing of communities as reference, the conceptual model that was developed seeks to identify the multiple effects generated, intentionally and/or unintentionally, by cultural and creative projects/activities, on a regular or occasional basis, in the territories and local communities, taking into account the conditions and resources existing in each case.

As illustrated in Fig. 1, the analytical framework used for the analysis is structured in five main intertwined dimensions. These are related to the creation of value at economic, social, environmental, cultural-artistic and participatory levels, with the background of sustainable development as reference.

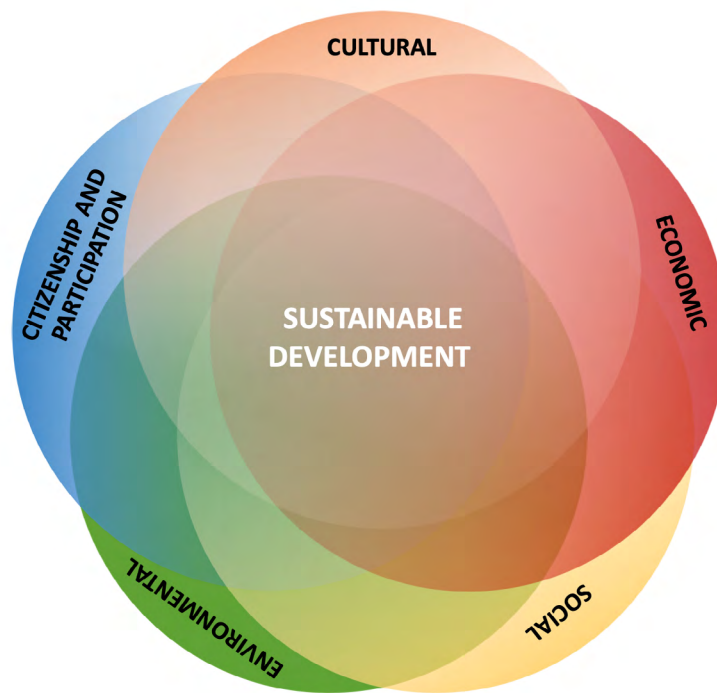


Fig. 1 Sustainable development model
Source: Own elaboration

⁹ The latter focused on the specific perspective of creative tourism.

These five analytical dimensions are subdivided into 15 sub-dimensions that were operationalized by a set of questions corresponding to 75 different indicators, which are presented in Table 1¹⁰.

| DIMENSIONS | SUBDIMENSIONS | INDICATORS |
|--|---|--|
| Cultural | 1. Artistic/cultural relevance | 1.1. Intrinsic cultural value and artistic “quality” |
| | | 1.2. Empowerment of artists/creators |
| | | 1.3. Contribution to a (more) creative society |
| | | 1.4. Social recognition of creative value |
| | | 1.5. (Degree of) novelty and artistic innovation |
| | 2. Cultural richness | 2.1. Preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage |
| 2.2. Accumulation, valorization and intergenerational transmission of locally-based know-how | | |
| 2.3. Differentiation and uniqueness | | |
| 2.4. Reinvention of tradition | | |
| 2.5. Cultural diversity | | |
| 3. Creative embeddedness in the community/territory | 3.1. Articulation of creation with the community and its daily life | |
| | 3.2. Rooting in the local creative environment and consolidation of the creative ecosystem | |
| | 3.3. Strengthening local cultural identity (and appropriation of activities by the community) | |
| | 3.4. Openness and hybridization of local identities | |
| | 3.5. Personal conditions for creation | |
| Economic | 4. Economic viability | 4.1. Revenue/income creation with the activity developed (for the promoter and its partners) |
| | | 4.2. Market expansion and generation of new markets |
| | | 4.3. Enhancement of autonomy and enabling economic self-sustainment (and resilience of the “business model”) |
| | | 4.4. Notoriety and appreciation of the promoter’s (/creator/author) brand |
| | | 4.5. Creation of new organizational/institutional solutions |
| | 5. Economic growth and local prosperity | 5.1. Value creation in other economic sectors (accommodation, transport, catering, traditional local products, tour operators,...) |
| | | 5.2. Contribution to the development (and visibility) of a local creative cluster/milieu/scene |
| | | 5.3. Incorporation of creative content (aesthetic and symbolic) in other sectors’ value chains |
| | | 5.4. Increase in local control and autonomy |
| | | 5.5. Negative economic implications on the community (negative externalities) (*) |
| | 6. Structural change | 6.1. Quality of jobs offered |
| | | 6.2. Generation/preservation of employment in the territory/community |
| | | 6.3. Stimulation to investment in the territory/community |
| | | 6.4. Promotion of collaboration and networking |
| | | 6.5. Development of business and management skills and soft skills for access to finance |

10 For further discussion on this conceptualization and on the rationale underneath each specific subdimension and indicator, cf. Costa (2022).

| | | |
|---------------|--|---|
| Social | 7. Social Cohesion and equity | 7.1. Promoting equity in access to culture and expansion of cultural capital 7.2. Fight against exclusion and promotion of inclusion (and access conditions) of minorities or specific population segments 7.3. Promotion of social cohesion 7.4. Contribution to territorial attractiveness and population retention 7.5. Promotion of social innovation and community development |
| | 8. Participants fulfilment | 8.1. Personal fulfilment of participants (enjoying the creative experience) 8.2. Creation of cultural habits and recurrence of participants 8.3. Opening mentalities and changing behaviours 8.4. Learning, knowledge and understanding of the world 8.5. Wellness and personal development |
| | 9. Engagement with social fabric | 9.1. Suitability and adaptation to community 9.2. Social participation 9.3. Involvement and social appropriation 9.4. Negative impacts on residents' quality of life and conflict in the community (*) 9.5. Community awareness of the importance of creative activities |
| Environmental | 10. Valorization and protection of the physical environment | 10.1. Generation of alternatives to massification and management of carrying capacities 10.2. Appreciation and protection of the landscape 10.3. Use and valorization of existing physical and natural resources and infrastructures 10.4. Vitality and appropriation of public space 10.5. Physical integrity (*) |
| | 11. Responsible use of resources | 11.1. Efficient planning of resource use in activities, encouraging the use of local resources 11.2. Reduction of audiences/visitors carbon footprint 11.3. Management of scarce natural resources 11.4. Energy efficiency 11.5. Taking advantage of the small scale |
| | 12. Environmental quality and biodiversity | 12.1. Pressure on traffic and parking infrastructure and transport systems (*) 12.2. Pressure on supply and sanitation systems and waste collection/treatment systems (*) 12.3. Pollution and degradation of natural resources (*) 12.4. Protection of local ecosystem 12.5. Awareness of environmental quality values, biodiversity and ecological footprint reduction |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Citizenship and participation | 13. Identity expression | 13.1. Recognition and provision of place for the expression of diversity and identity multiplicity |
| | | 13.2. Empowerment (of individuals and groups) for the expression of (their) identities |
| | | 13.3. Provision of a safe space |
| | | 13.4. Promotion of intercultural and cross-cultural intersections |
| | | 13.5. Promotion of tolerance and openness to difference |
| | 14. Civic Participation | 14.1. Enabling of citizenship and individuals' involvement in social life |
| | | 14.2. Furthering of cultural audiences engagement and participation in the artistic processes |
| | | 14.3. Creative freedom |
| | | 14.4. Empowerment in access to culture |
| | | 14.5. Promotion of questioning and critical thinking |
| | 15. Governance and quality of processes and policies | 15.1. Development of fair, supportive and efficient governance models |
| | | 15.2. Solidification of the (formal and informal) mechanisms for regulating the creative ecosystem |
| | | 15.3. Influence in the development of public policies |
| | | 15.4. Transparency in governance structures |
| | | 15.5. Democracy |

Table 1 Operationalization of dimensions of analysis in subdimension and indicators

Source: Own elaboration

Note: The operationalization of the indicators marked with (*) is made through a reverse scale

As mentioned above, it is important to remember that the identification of the dimensions, the sub-dimensions and the indicators listed above is the result of a wide-ranging process of discussion, monitoring and co-production of knowledge, involving a diversity of steps, in the purpose of developing and testing this framework with different kinds of actors within the aforementioned projects. For each of these 75 indicators, scale assessment questions (enabling comparative analysis, if required), as well as other qualitative and quantitative questions were then prepared, in order to operationalize the toolkit that allows the self-assessment of value creation by the cultural stakeholders.

3. The pragmatical implementation: the self-assessment impact toolkit

In the sequence of the aforementioned process, and aiming to support cultural activities impact assessment through the lens of value creation, a practical toolkit was developed to help professionals and organizations (municipalities, local/regional development associations, companies, cultural institutions, networks, etc.) that develop activities in the cultural and creative field as well as planners and policymakers. It is available through an online platform, named CULTURE.IMPACTS DIY¹¹, and it can be applied to the various types of cultural activities (performing arts, visual arts, museums, heritage, cinema, audio-visual, design, architecture, books and press, etc.), as well as in the field of cultural and creative tourism.

¹¹ The platform, developed by Bagabaga studios, is the main pragmatical output of this research programme, and is the operative basis for the recollection and analysis of information about the sector and the activities of its institutions, enabling the self-assessment of value creation and impacts by each agent. It has been discussed between the research team and the technological developers, and is currently under testing in the scope of the aforementioned projects.

It was designed to be easily accessible and flexible for these different types of professionals and for all private and public organizations who want to know if and how they are producing changes in their communities and to help them achieve better results. It includes the critical issues that they found most helpful in measuring, monitoring, and evaluating their work and activities. The self-assessment tool provides impacts assessment both in terms of evaluating i) the general operation of an organization and its regular activity; and, ii) a specific activity or event (or series of events).

The impacts self-assessment tool is available on this platform, for direct use of cultural agents. It can be used solely as such (after registration of the institution and provision of a login and code for the self-application) and it can also be complemented with other tools (e.g. an audiences analysis tool) and with other services provided by the research team to help cultural stakeholders to analyze their data, to confront it with other cultural agents' activity, and to improve their performance.

Therefore, the CULTURE.IMPACTS DIY, more broadly, aims to be a platform to:

- Reflect on an organization activity and/or its specific activities;
- Identify its multiple impacts (at 5 levels: economic, social, cultural, environmental, participation and citizenship), both tangible and intangible, through the lens of the effects felt in the community and in territorial development;
- Visualize, estimate and compare the value of the effects generated in each of those different dimensions;
- Point out possible causes or conditions for positive and negative impacts, allowing for progress validation and action planning;
- Access a set of aggregated non-identifiable data about the organizations and activities in the sector (enabling comparisons);
- Identify possible connections and foster coordination between stakeholders;
- Implement systematic monitoring;
- Assess the experience(s) and the demands of audiences;
- Promote informed dialogue with managers or funders;
- Improve a shared understanding of the value of cultural and creative experiences.

The use of the CULTURE,IMPACTS DIY platform involves several steps and offers diverse tools that can be used in different moments, in order to better fit the nature of organizations and the objectives they intend to achieve with the evaluation. The full process, briefly described in Fig. 2, is supposed to begin with an initial diagnosis to recognize the nature of organizations and their contexts, as well as the objectives they want to achieve, taking into account the available activities and resources. Next, it is possible to access a confidential online questionnaire, which enables the user to estimate and assess the effects of its organization's regular activity or the specific impacts for a particular activity or event.

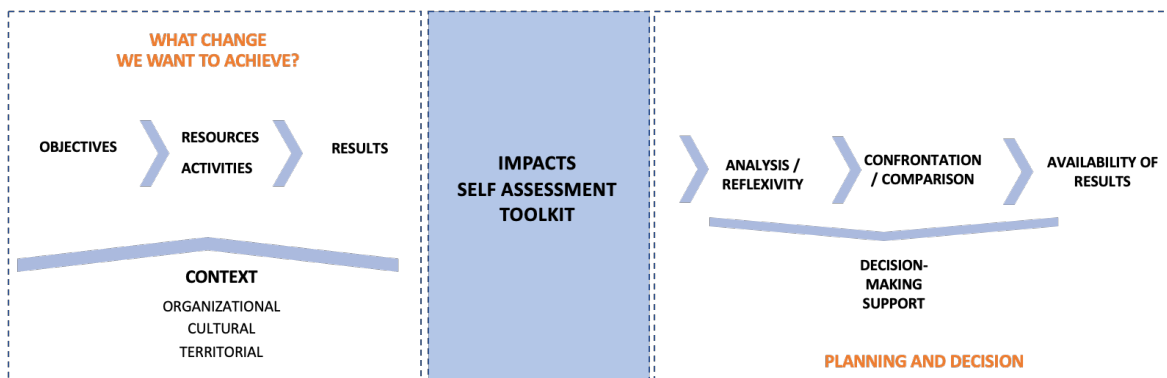


Fig. 2 The comprehensive process for using CULTURE.IMPACTS DIY toolkit
Source: Own elaboration

The questionnaire enables the classification of perceived impacts of a project or of an activity on the multiple aspects of development (which are operationalized via the 75 aforementioned indicators, presented on Table 1), considering a 1 to 7 scale (where the effects are reported from 1 = insignificant to 7 = very significant). A small set of complimentary (quantitative and qualitative) questions is also available, in addition to these scale questions. After completing the questionnaire, the users have immediately access to a comprehensive and comparative outlook of their activity across the 5 sustainable development dimensions as well as to a set of automatic comparative graphical displays of their situation regarding some contextual averages (e.g. sectoral or regional scores). It enables organizations to visualize in which dimensions of development their actions achieve a more significant impact and in which areas they can be improved, comparing to other promoters. They may also choose to use the service offered by the platform for more detailed analysis of this information, and an analysis of the compiled data will be carried out by the research team or other kinds of comparable perspectives with aggregated data will be provided.

In addition to this toolkit, considering the effects of cultural and creative experiences on end-users and the need to monitor cultural audiences, this CULTURE.IMPACTS DIY also comprises an audience monitoring tool, so that the user institutions can better understand their publics and identify triggers for ensuring audience engagement. This other tool includes a survey with questions related to a diversity of issues about the characteristics of the audiences and about their cultural experiences, including: the motives and the planning aspects for the participation in the cultural experiences proposed by user organizations; the context of the experiencing itself (embracing the conditions of participation in that specific event as well as general cultural habits); the degree of satisfaction and the assessment of the quality of the experience, in several dimensions; the shared values and the attitudes of the audiences; the assessment of some direct impacts (basic economic returns); or the characterization and sociodemographic profile of respondents.

This CULTURE.IMPACTS DIY platform, comprising these diverse tools, and various modalities of use, is being tested with several cultural actors, in the abovementioned ongoing projects that embody this research programme. It is also open to further improvements, revisions and adaptations to new projects and fields. For the specific purposes of this chapter, it is important to remember that it is the vehicle for the pragmatismal implementation of the self-assessment

impact toolkit described in the previous sections. Therefore, it is the tangible expression for the material implementation of this tool, enabling the self-assessment of value creation and impacts by cultural institutions and other stakeholders.

4. Conclusions

Resulting from a DINÂMIA'CET-Iscte research programme that combines work developed in various research projects, conducted at national and international level, over the past few years, this paper presents an analytical framework to help disentangle the increasing complexity and diversity of value creation mechanisms in cultural activities and to facilitate the assessment of their multiple impacts in a given territory or community.

The conceptual framework that underlies this research comprises a multidimensional approach to sustainable development, based on the quality of life and well-being of communities and their individuals. Culture is integrated as a fundamental dimension in these processes, acknowledging the territorial embeddedness of creative dynamics and giving space to consideration of contemporary forms of mediation, and new processes of cultural production and consumption.

This analytical frame is developed and put into practice through an assessment toolkit that uses a specific grid for enabling (self)evaluation of impacts by cultural agents. This assessment framework encompasses five main dimensions for evaluating the territorial impacts of cultural activities (cultural, economic, social, environmental; citizenship and participation), assuming the different types of value that these activities create in the community. These five main dimensions are then subdivided into 15 sub-dimensions, and their assessment is operationalized through a scale rating in 75 different indicators.

This impacts self-assessment toolkit has been developed and tested with diverse cultural and creative actors in the scope of those research projects. It is now available through a digital application (the CULTURE.IMPACTS DIY platform) that allows the systematization, self-assessment and self-awareness of value creation by the agents of the cultural/creative sector. The impacts of their activity are therefore perceived as a result of the levels of creation of value for each of the several dimensions and subdimensions of sustainable development. This allows for a multidimensional assessment of the impacts, either for a specific activity or event or for the continued activity of an organization, enabling comparative analysis in time and space, even for different types of activities.

The analytical framework and the operational toolkit presented in this text are a good example of the potential of interdisciplinary team work, with an interdisciplinary perspective, in providing answers to relevant social problems, through comprehensive and long term applied research. Seizing the DINÂMIA'CET-Iscte propitious atmosphere for this kind of research, aiming to understand societal dynamics and striving to contribute to the design of the future, this research programme crosses different research projects, external stakeholders, and areas of analysis in order to construct a tool to assess the impact of individual initiatives and collective dynamics in their specific communities and territories. It shows it is possible to achieve the construction of a practical tool, transversal to all those projects, assuming a common framework that crosses the conceptual frames and the specific objectives of each project, and that the result pays off, both

academically and socially, being definitely more consistent than the potential outcome that may be expected from each project alone. This toolkit can now be used by different institutions and projects either in their own reflexive processes (regarding their activities and the context in their sectors), or in their self-assessment exercises. The conceptual framework developed in the scope of this research programme is also expected to have relevance in the debates about the recognition of the value of cultural activities by practitioners, promoters, and policy makers, and the public in general. The diversity of stakeholders involved in the variety of contexts and sectors inherent to the several research projects ensures greater and broader dissemination of its results.

A final aspect to highlight relates to the practical relevance and social utility of the results of this research programme, and the way this also benefits from the crossing of various projects and research scopes. This toolkit proposal seeks to correspond to current social changes and is developed to challenge conceptions, practices, routines and instruments on this field, ensuring the idea of having different actors work together to improve these models and tools. The CULTURE.IMPACTS DIY platform, as well as the analytical framework behind the impacts self-assessment toolkit surely contribute to acknowledging the multidimensionality of value creation in cultural activities, and therefore, to improving the quality of impacts measurement in cultural activities.

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Entre Transições

Retrospectivas – transversalidades – Perspetivas

O DINÂMIA'CET-Iscte (DC), Centro de Estudos sobre a Mudança Socioeconómica e o Território, organizou nos dias 1 e 2 de junho de 2021 a conferência Entre Transições – Retrospectivas, Transversalidades, Perspetivas – para celebrar um triplo aniversário: 40 anos do Centro de Estudos Territoriais, 31 anos do DINÂMIA e 10 anos do DINÂMIA'CET unidade orgânica do ISCTE. Analisaram-se as transições para sociedades do futuro através da apreciação crítica de dados recolhidos no longo prazo, aproveitando as lições retiradas de 40 anos de investigação sobre as grandes questões sociais emergentes. Cruzaram-se os contributos dos três Grupos de Investigação do DC – Inovação e Trabalho; Cidades e Territórios; Governança, Economia e Cidadania –, apoiando-se nas suas três Linhas Temáticas Integradoras: Inovação e Transição rumo a Sociedades Sustentáveis; Desafios de Regulação e Governança para Sociedades Complexas; Criatividade e Participação em Sociedades Capacitadas. Pretendeu-se assim colaborar na compreensão das dinâmicas sociais e contribuir para o desenho do futuro, promovendo a sustentabilidade ambiental, a coesão social e a democracia.

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