

# Beyond metrics: evaluating social impacts of art

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# What kinds of social impacts?

Awareness

Emotions

Interest

Opinions

Understanding



# What kinds of evidence might be available?

1. What you can measure
2. What you can see or hear
3. What your audience tells you



# What you can measure

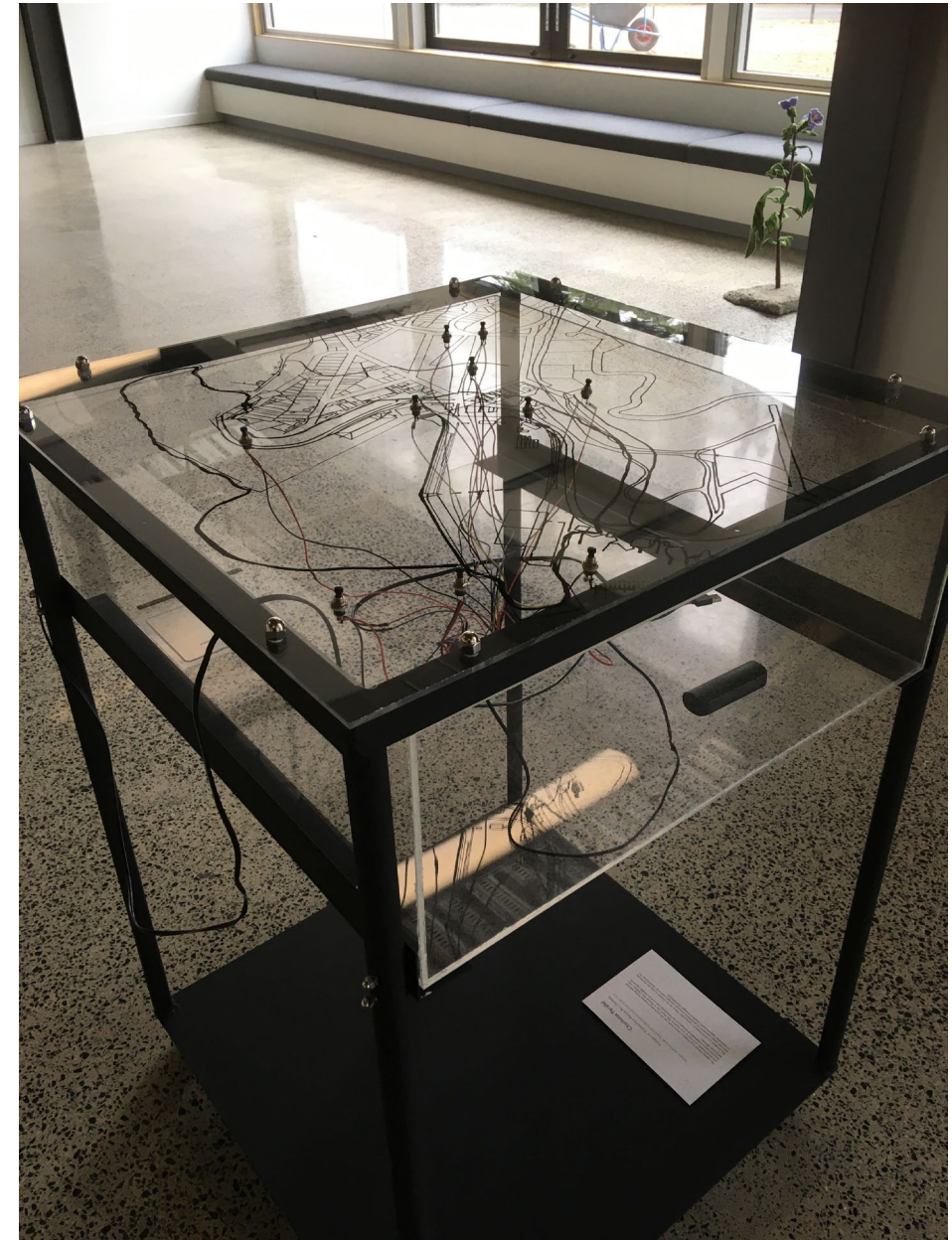
- How many people?
- Who were they?
- What did they take away?
- Did they come back?
- Did they take action:
  - To find out more?
  - To support a cause?
  - To receive something?





# What you can see or hear (or what others can report)

- Group visits
- Gallery staff observations
- Reviewers
- Digital and print media
- ... ?



# What your audience tells you

- Visitors' book
- Social media hashtag
- Opportunity to respond
- Creative engagement



# Formal evaluation methods

- Independent source
- Survey
  - On paper before they leave
  - Upon exit
  - Online afterwards
- Interview
- Q methodology
- ... ?





# Impacts I found for 25 exhibition attendees

51 of the 54 artworks engaged one or more participants strongly

Multiple and mixed emotional responses

Connected to other people: 23

Connected to the environment: 23

Thoughts and feelings connected: 20

Feelings reinforced: 6

Encouraged: 6

Changed perspectives: 5



# Plan ahead

What impact do you want to have?

Who do you want to come? How can you facilitate that?

Who else might you ask for impact evidence?

How might you embed gathering impact evidence?

What budget do you need?

Do you need ethics approval?

# For further information

- **Brook, L.** (2022) Evaluating the Emotional Impact of Environmental Artworks Using Q Methodology. *Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts*, 9 (3), July 2022, 211-232
- **Brook, L.** (2021) A Sense of Entanglement: Artworks Contributing to Connectedness. *Scope: Contemporary Research Topics (Art and Design)* 22, 40-48
- **Brook, L.** (2018) Evidencing Impact from Art Research: analysis of impact case studies from the REF 2014. *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society*, Vol 48, 2018 - Issue 1, 57-69

# References

- **Burns, T.W., D.J. O'Connor and S.M. Stocklmayer** (2003) Science communication: a contemporary definition. *Public Understanding of Science*, 12, 183–202
- **Sommer, L.K., J.K. Swim, A. Keller and C.A. Klöckner** (2019) “Pollution Pods”: The merging of art and psychology to engage the public in climate change. *Global Environmental Change*, 59, 101992
- **Burke, M., D. Ockwell, and L. Whitmarsh** (2018) Participatory arts and affective engagement with climate change: The missing link in achieving climate compatible behaviour change? *Global Environmental Change*, 49, 95-105

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