

## A SERVICE PROVIDED BY RESEARCH AND STATISTICS BRANCH

Issue 4

August 2009

Welcome to the summer edition of Research Watch, a service designed to keep business areas in touch with the latest research in culture, arts and leisure.

Research and Statistics Branch continually monitor over 30 websites in the UK and Ireland related to research into culture, arts and leisure. We aim to bring you the highlights of new research by way of a monthly bulletin which will provide you with a short executive summary and a link to all featured research. If any further information is required please get in touch.

Irene and Philip  
Research and Statistics Branch,  
August 2009

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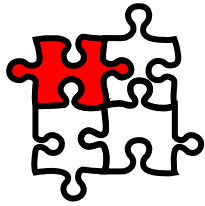
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## Arts

### **Do We Have The Arts Funding System We Deserve?**

**By** Cumberland Lodge  
**Date** 2009  
**Pages** 4

A summary of conference proceedings which considered the value of the arts, funding, and the Arts Council (England). It was suggested that the value of the arts should be considered more widely than economic value or social impact and emotional fulfilment was identified as important. A recent survey showed an increase in private donations to the arts, but a decline in corporate support, and peripheral earnings associated with attendances (e.g. refreshments) are expected to be lower. The points were made that it is important to project the value of the arts to related government departments, and that making more money available to the arts produces better art because it enables artists to take risks. There was some criticism of Arts Council (E), in particular the need to give artists more control over the spending of money and artist involvement in the Arts Council's (E) decisions.

Link:

<http://www.cumberlandlodge.ac.uk/Resources/Cumberland%20Lodge/Past%20Conferences%20Reports/Arts%20Funding%20Bullet%20Summary.pdf>

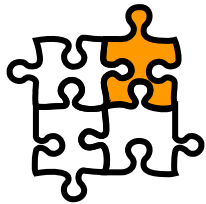
### **Evaluation of the Artfull Initiative 2008 - Full report (2009)**

**By** Scottish Arts Council  
**Date** 2009  
**Pages** 86

This report is an evaluation of the Artfull Initiative, a Scottish national initiative which recognises the positive impact of the arts on mental health. The evaluation aimed to identify outcomes, highlight lessons learned and set out proposals for the future. The evaluation took the form of desk research, discussions with various representatives from projects and interviews with relevant strategic stakeholders. The evaluation found that involvement had a positive impact on mental health but that at present it was difficult to ascertain the long term impact of the work. Recommendations were included in the report, one of which was a need for further research.

Link:

<http://www.scottisharts.org.uk/resources/publications/research/pdf/Final%20Report%20Artfull%202.pdf>



## Libraries

### **An overview of public library research activity and developments in Northern Ireland**

By Helen Osborn  
Date 2008  
Pages 6

A brief overview of public libraries-related research carried out in Northern Ireland. The paper highlights that it is mainly practitioner research with a view to service development, or research commissioned by DCAL to inform policy development. The research undertaken in respect of Tomorrow's Libraries is described, ETI's work gets a mention, as does DCAL's survey research. Academic research in this field is rather sparse and Helen Osborn cites four local studies, three of which were dissertations. The paper finishes with the recommendation for a coherent research agenda shared by DCAL, NILA and other institutions, an enhanced skills base, closer involvement with research being undertaken elsewhere and an effective methodology for the dissemination of findings. The author states she is optimistic that the advent of NILA will help meet these requirements.

Link:

<http://www.lirg.org.uk/lir/ojs/index.php/lir/article/viewFile/90/126>

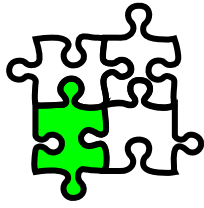
### **Capturing the Impact of Libraries**

By BOP Consulting  
Date 2009  
Pages 75

This research, commissioned by DCMS, identifies existing data and synthesises research on capturing the impact of library services. The report looks at each area of impact systematically, but the conclusions are familiar: it is well known what libraries do but demonstrating and communicating the impact of public libraries remains largely elusive. Widespread absence of data is a recurrent theme projected throughout the report. Important advice from the authors is that evidence regarding libraries impact should not claim one-to-one causative relationships (because libraries alone are usually not the sole drivers of impacts), but should concentrate instead on showing how libraries can make a contribution towards a range of socio-economic priorities. The report rounds off with a useful logic model for capturing the impact of public libraries, and some advice on gathering data and evidence to populate the logic model. Of interest, the authors suggest a library census day whereby data could be systematically collected from all users in all libraries on a prescribed day. The authors suggest that such an exercise would be a good investment 'given the chronically few resources devoted to researching and evaluating impact' when placed in the context of the overall public libraries budget.

Link:

[http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/Capturing\\_the\\_impact\\_of\\_libraries.pdf](http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/Capturing_the_impact_of_libraries.pdf)



# Museums

## **Learning within Museums in Northern Ireland**

By Northern Ireland  
Museums Council  
Date May 2009  
Pages 33

This report provides an overview of learning provision within all accredited museums in Northern Ireland. Findings from the survey on which the report is based, show that much progress has been made. This was attributed to capital development, upgrade in facilities and increased availability and use of specialist staff. The report however states that the full capacity of museums as centres for learning has not yet been met.

The report includes 36 recommendations which include proposals such as staff training, developing links with all relevant sectors, marketing, and undertaking research.

Link:

[http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page\\_8/9\\_file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page_8/9_file.pdf)

## **Shared interest: developing collaboration, partnerships and research relationships between higher education, museums, galleries and visual arts organisations in the North West**

By Museums,  
Libraries and Archives  
Date May 2009  
Pages 81

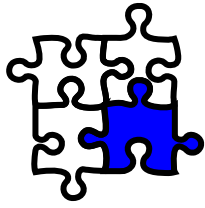
This research was commissioned by Arts Council England North West, the North West Universities Association and Renaissance NW, and sought to investigate the relationships between higher education institutions and museums, galleries and visual arts organisations.

Nine case studies were included alongside summaries of key practices and issues. The research provided evidence that common priorities can be met through working together. Priorities common to both sectors include increasing participation, knowledge transfer, employer engagement, collaborative research, entrepreneurship, creative practice and innovation.

Key lessons are outlined under the following headings: setting objectives; governance, staffing and structure; communication and marketing; liaison, facilitation and knowledge transfer; and funding and resources.

Link:

<http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence/documents/shared-interest-report-NW-2009.pdf>



**Sport**

### **Active England Final Evaluation Report**

By Sport England  
Date March 2009  
Pages 67

This report evaluates the impact of Active England, a programme jointly funded by Sport England and the Big Lottery Fund which aimed to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and the community as a whole by actively promoting sport and exercise.

The Active England programme funded 241 projects which fit with the aims of the strategy.

The report states that the programme met its objectives in increasing participation in target areas and for specific target groups but only partially met its target for creating innovative approaches. The main outputs were highlighted: 1.4 million individuals participated in sport, around 803,000 people benefited from coaching; and support was given to 6,600 volunteers.

Link:

[http://www.sportengland.org/research/evaluating\\_impact.aspx](http://www.sportengland.org/research/evaluating_impact.aspx)

### **Active England Technical Appendix Results and Case Studies**

By Sport England  
Date November 2008  
Pages 167

This report accompanies the Final Evaluation Report. The first section provides further analysis through case studies, regional reports and legacy reports while the second section includes examples of guides and tools for monitoring and evaluation.

The outcomes of the projects were examined under headings such as outputs per £1,000 spent, factors influencing the outputs of the projects, type of activity, funding type, while the effects on participation were also investigated.

The case studies cover the aims and performance of the projects and outline plans for the future.

Link:

[http://www.sportengland.org/research/evaluating\\_impact.aspx](http://www.sportengland.org/research/evaluating_impact.aspx)

# Cross-Cutting/Other

## Conferences

### **The Future of Culture, Tourism and Sport**

17<sup>th</sup> September 2009, London

This conference will explore how the culture, tourism and sport sectors can meet the challenges which lie ahead and promote their position in providing a high quality service. The content of the conference will attempt to outline potential of cultural services to contribute to positive outcomes and wellbeing across all sectors, from improving health to reducing crime.

This is hosted by Neil Stewart Associates and supported by CLOA, Improvement and Development Agency and DCMS.

Link: <http://www.neilstewartassociates.com/se230/se230%20brochure.pdf>

### **THE 6TH ANNUAL NAO PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT CONFERENCE**

#### **Lessons learned – looking at the past, present and future of performance measurement**

Thursday, 28 January 2010, London

This conference is organised by the National Audit Office with speakers from the National Audit Office and other experts.

Topics relating to performance measurement such as its effectiveness in achieving value for money, success factors, collecting information and best practice will be considered. Insights from the private sector and case studies will be discussed. A panel discussion on the wider lessons from the case studies will form part of the conference.

Link: <http://www.cityandfinancial.com/conferences/index.asp?id=273>