**Consultant Brief for the design of a monitoring and evaluation methodology for the Peter Scott Gallery, Lancaster Arts**

**Overview**

Lancaster Arts (LA) is a combined arts organisation featuring a contemporary arts programme within the portfolio of Arts Council England through presentations, commissions and arts sector support. For the most part, our two annual seasons take place in the Peter Scott Gallery, the Great Hall and Nuffield theatre, all of which are situated on the university campus. We are responsible for the University art collection and the Peter Scott Gallery is an accredited museum.

Visitor monitoring for the gallery does not capture sufficient data to enable us to learn more in-depth detail on our visitors to the gallery, and what their responses to the exhibitions are, beyond a general appreciation. We also wish to understand how this is changing within a programme that has undergone significant development over the last 4 years. This brief is for the development of a monitoring and evaluation methodology for the gallery that can be used by the team and invigilators, and which will reveal both who is coming, what they think about the work and the experience, and what difference it might make to them.

**Background**

**Please see our** [**website**](https://www.lancasterarts.org/youre-invited/whats-on/exploring-land-a-conversation-through-art)

Lancaster Arts’ mission is to create the conditions for art to make change, alongside our collaborators and have a commitment to supporting work that responds to social and/or environmental justice. One of our core strategies is to work with annual themes that directly influence the work we programme and commission. In 2025, this is [Land](https://www.lancasterarts.org/ideas/2025-land).

**Our approach**

Audience participation has been developing as an integral part of our artistic programme since 2021. This has meant that audiences and gallery visitors directly contribute to the work on an ongoing basis in different ways. We prioritise the programming of artists who consider imaginative ways of inviting the audience into the experience they create. We purposefully seek a broad range of different portals for participation, and this can be a useful tool in considering greater inclusivity.

In the Peter Scott Gallery, invitations to participate, contribute or respond are regularly built into our exhibitions, from audiences lending objects or contributing memories to an installation, to activating an artwork (by mopping it with water). This means that we need to find ways of better understanding the characteristics and qualities of this enhanced engagement.

LA also commissions and produces work off campus and we are also keen to understand if and how this may lead to gallery footfall, and to explore whether monitoring methodologies developed for the gallery space could also be adapted for these contexts.

**Current visitors**

LA currently gathers data through:

* Illuminate audience surveys via emails sent to ticket bookers, as required by Arts Council England
* Live audience feedback workshops conducted by external agency, Pudding
* Bespoke audience surveys
* Mailing list increases
* Box office data linked to our CRM
* Show and projects reports from the LA team
* Counting gallery visitor numbers, and in-person observations from the whole LA team and volunteer invigilators and stewards.

Although we do run some gallery events that require booking through the website, the gallery remains unticketed, an open resource, and available for drop-in visits. This means our gallery visitors are less likely to be reached through survey approaches that rely on emailing ticket bookers, and also that we are unable to capture data at point of ticket sale. We have mainly anecdotal evidence of our gallery audiences and observed visitor demographics can substantially alter depending on the exhibition itself. Visitors will range from Fine Art students based at the University to locally and regionally based artists, regular visitors from the region and audiences coming to concerts and theatre performances. We find that if we have regional artists on show, people will travel from places like Manchester to come as they are known locally. We also are increasing visitor numbers nationally.

Outside of the specific age categories, we also see niche groups with special interests visiting such as, for example, those with a keen interest in specific areas of the University collection such as the Pilkington’s Royal Lancastrian Pottery collection.

**Why we need this**

As with all public facing arts organisations, particularly in the current climate, LA has limited capacity and evaluation is frequently the area that is most neglected. We are committed to learning more about our gallery visitors and how we can learn from and engage with them. An external eye on this is invaluable.

**Brief**

The monitoring and evaluation methodology will:

* Identify practical methodologies that capture the following without negatively impacting on visitor experience:
* monitoring data such as demographics, reason for attending, how they learned about the exhibition, previous engagement with exhibitions or gallery attendance, postcodes, etc, ensuring alignment with ACE Illuminate data categories
* qualitative responses to the work and the experience that can be adapted to a variety of evaluation questions and/or outcomes frameworks
* Set up a mechanism for measuring change
* Consider how easy-to-implement monitoring for un-ticketed activity developed for gallery exhibitions could be adapted for outdoor installations

**Tasks for consultancy**

* 1. Visit to the gallery, meet the core gallery team and director to discuss brief and identify the core needs for a monitoring methodology.
  2. Desk research and follow up emails.
  3. Design a first draft for methodology that the core team feed into to produce a final draft for testing.
  4. Put methodology into action in exhibition. Agree a plan for testing to assess effectiveness.
  5. Finalise methodology.
  6. Visit to gallery and training for team to implement (including invigilators).

**Person Specification**

* Demonstrable track record in designing evaluation and monitoring approaches
* Experience in working with museums and galleries and understanding of the challenges and opportunities when carrying out monitoring and evaluation in these contexts
* Experience in training with arts teams for evaluation methodologies

**Fee:**

£2000 that will include travel (2 visits will be necessary)