
AGE & OPPORTUNITY - BEALTAINÉ 2018

EVALUATION REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2018

AIDEEN WARD

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research project tested the extent to which the Bealtaine festival achieves its stated ambition in terms of outcomes for the audiences and impacts at a greater societal level.

It represents a change in emphasis from reporting aggregate figures and qualitative results and instead seeks to build a framework for evaluation based on measuring outcomes for audiences in terms of changed behaviour / beliefs and impacts at a broader societal level.

Without a point of comparison (a longitudinal study, a contrast with another festival or a control group who did not experience Bealtaine) it is difficult to state categorically what is “good” but the data speaks for itself. The findings also can act in the future as a baseline for other comparisons. In the meantime, the findings can be compared across the portfolio of initiatives that come under the Bealtaine umbrella and interesting notes are made on where the achievement is highest.

Audience research among the Tier One¹ events demonstrate that the stated outcomes are being achieved. Audiences report positive feelings towards being Likely to Attend Arts Events Again (84%) and a feeling of being Connected to their Community (72%). The other outcomes around a sense of feeling Artistic / Creative (69%) and Confident (62%) show very slightly lower percentage achievements. Among the organisers of the Tier Two National Programme events, the Tier Two organisers assessment of their events’ ability (their opinion only) to deliver these outcomes was quite similar to the findings reported by Tier One audiences when asked directly. In fact, the audiences scored even higher on Artistic / Creative and Likely to Attend Again than the organisers believed would be the case but organisers over-estimated the connection to community that would be achieved.

Parameter	Audience Feedback Tier One	Organiser Estimate Tier Two
Likely to Attend Arts Events Again	84%	72%
Connected to their Community	72%	87%
Feeling Artistic / Creative	69%	64%
Confident	62%	66%

Examining outcomes in relation to the related inputs there is some evidence within the Tier Two events that smaller / medium sized events contribute more strongly than larger events - demonstrating that there is an important role for the smaller events within the portfolio of the festival. For example, small events (in terms of audience size) outperformed larger events in outcomes achieved for the audiences. Medium and small events (in terms of financial and man-hours inputs) outperformed larger events in terms of outcomes.

Satisfaction levels with the festival were measured at Tier One events using the Net Promoter Score, which allows some basis for comparison with international norms. NPS is typically used by brands to determine how likely a customer is to recommend a product or service to a friend. Used in the context of Bealtaine it measures attendee satisfaction and allows for comparison across

¹ Tier One refers to Age & Opportunity organised events – formerly known as the Strategic Programme, Tier Two refers to National Programme events organised by partners. For operational reasons different methods were used at the different programmes – described in detail in the methodology

event types. Overall Bealtaine's NPS of 48 is hugely impressive and far above what is seen by brands worldwide. As a rough point of comparison, the Irish travel and leisure industry scored 5 on this scale in 2015 (Amarach Consulting 2015).

Findings at the Tier One event audience research showed that NPS is higher than the norm when:

- Attendees engage (discuss, engage in Q&A, etc.) or are creative (sing, make, dance) during the event.
- It is a new event this year
- The event is conducted in alternative locations (not in theatres or standard venues)
- The attendee is a repeat attendee

Bealtaine is successful at bringing in new audiences to its events – those who do not otherwise engage in the arts. For example, 37% of new attendees at Tier One events this year say they never, rarely or only sometimes attend any other arts events. Among previous attendees to Bealtaine events only 7% claim such low attendance at arts events. Hence Bealtaine can be seen as an introductory opportunity for new audiences.

Looking at the longer-term impacts of Bealtaine, organisations running the Tier Two National Programme of events believe they have most success in Bealtaine's first desired impact around creating greater participation and representation of older people in the arts. Overall organisers are confident about their ability to deliver against the some or all of the impacts listed.

Broader stakeholders and partners are highly positive about Bealtaine's contribution to impacts. Those with overlapping desired impacts are very positive, mainly about increasing participation and inter-generational opportunities. One of the main funders emphasised that reducing social isolation through the creation of inter-generational opportunities is a key objective for them. Other impacts may be more niche and relevant to smaller numbers of stakeholder but are important and recognised as successfully delivered by Bealtaine.

At aggregate level some work was done in this evaluation to assess the overall financial and economic impact of Bealtaine. However, this is reliant on organisers registering their events on the Bealtaine website – which many do not do. As such the estimates are extrapolated from the survey data based on events registered and almost certainly under represent the reality. This report strongly recommends that more be done to encourage organisers to register their events so that a more accurate assessment of the overall impact of the National Programme can be made in future years. For example, seven local authorities, nine Library HQ and seven individual libraries registered on the website but we know that events were held at many other local authorities and libraries. In some cases double reporting was noted where the same event was reported on by two related organisations.

Using the data we have from the Tier Two National Programme surveys and extrapolating up from this to those who registered we estimate conservatively that 1,409 events attracted 50,119 plus another 30,000 estimated to have viewed a public art exhibit.

In addition Tier One events numbered 56 events with 6,400 attendees.

Programme	Number of Events	Audience Estimate
Tier One Age & Opportunity Festival events	56	6,400
Tier Two National Festival	1,409	80,119
Total	1,465	86,519

The methodology is an aggregation to estimate this has its challenges and is considered by this researcher to be best estimates while also being conservative about the reality of the festival's aggregate figures.

This evaluation process has been a learning experience for the organisation. In this short process with very little lead-time a lot of work has been done to understand the process of evaluation and how it may be done more effectively in the future. Engagement with the organisers overall has been positive and the feedback has included a desire for greater levels of engagement with Bealtaine. Some good case studies and several excellent and enthusiastic organisers have been identified – organisers have asked for opportunities to share inspiration and ideas, learn from successful events and network with each other. This enthusiasm points to the ownership organisers feel of Bealtaine and the extent to which they have bought in to the success of the festival.

CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

As a learning organisation Age & Opportunity seeks to understand its outcomes and impact among its audiences, organisers and artists to help promote its work and to find ways in which these can be improved.

This approach was taken in a pragmatic way, using “just enough” research to understand the positive impact where it exists and attempt to determine those aspects of the Bealtaine programme that affect audience outcomes and broader societal impact and where changes could be made for improvements.

The Wheel (The Wheel, 2011) states that *“the ability of organisations to get to grips with the concepts and tools that allow them to demonstrate their impact will be of critical importance to them in the coming years.”* It also states that the extent to which organisations are conducting robust evaluations is low but that *“burgeoning interest that is now gathering some momentum”* Among state funders *“examples can be found of a statutory drive towards impact measurement”*

As well as developing understanding for the purposes of learning and improving as an organisation, Bealtaine also competes for funding in an environment where impact measurement is becoming the norm in the sector.

Bealtaine is conscious of the move towards evidenced and enhanced long-term outcomes from funders and statutory bodies and seeks to focus on developing its information base to gain insights that will allow it to enhance the quality of its events and improve the event related outcomes for its audiences.

To gain maximum benefit this short and small project in 2018 a process was designed to examine “what it takes” to put an evaluation system in place and to prepare for future ongoing evaluations.

A note on time-frames: The researcher for this evaluation was appointed in April 2018 to evaluate the Bealtaine festival which ran from May 1st – 31st 2018. The evaluation was conducted during May and June 2018.

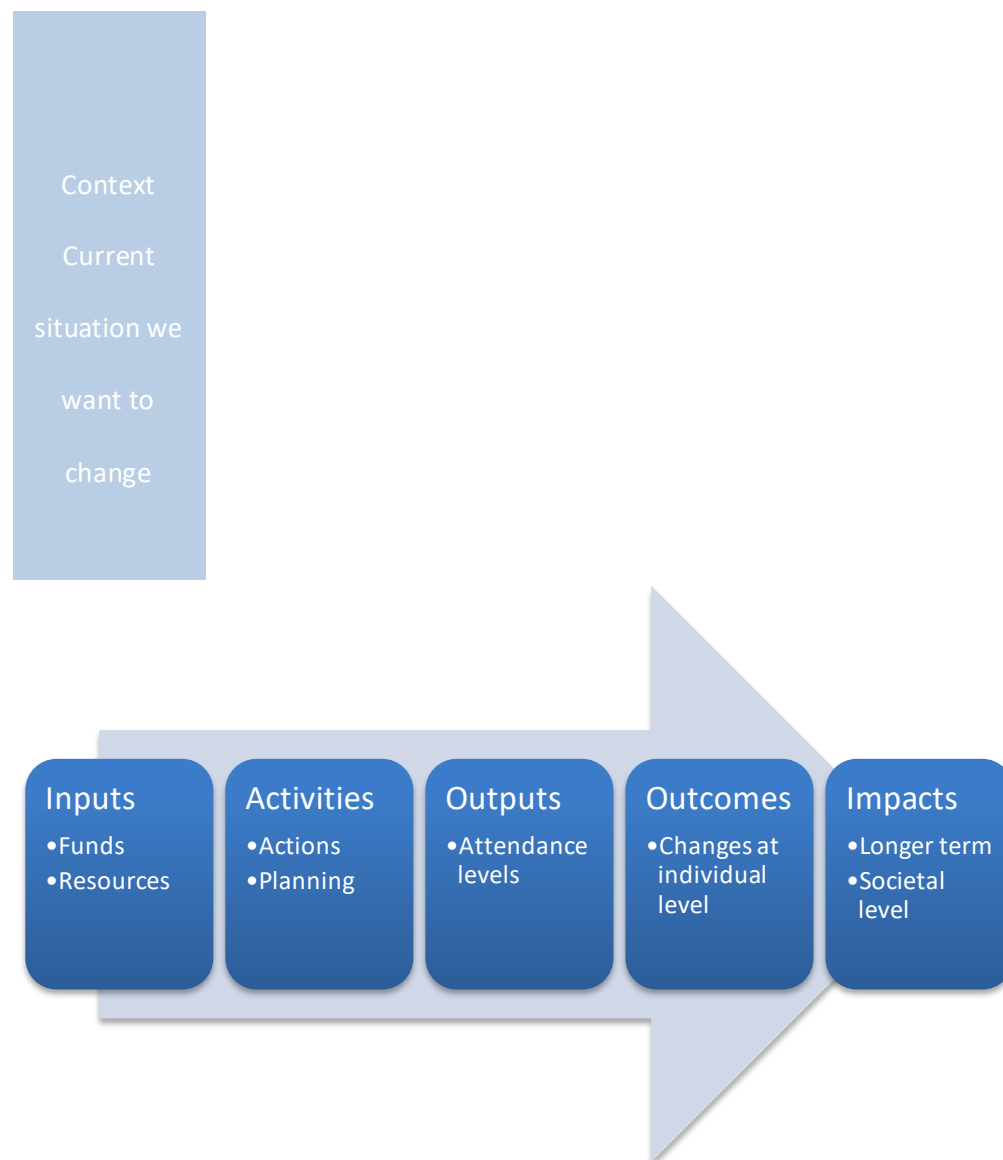
EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Currently, any theory of change associated with arts festivals for older people is just that – a theory. We assume that positive benefits accrue from Bealtaine events for the target audience.

However, we need to build an evaluation model that will demonstrate value in continued investment in Bealtaine. It must be one that is realistic to implement given the sometimes ad hoc nature of the delivery of and attendance at Bealtaine events. (I.e. some events are run without direct communication with the Bealtaine organisation and some attendees attend as drop in attendees with little knowledge of the nature of the event) Finally any evaluation model should help us learn from what can be done to improve the experience for attendees and organisers.

For many, evaluation is thought to be centered around collecting quantitative results on attendance and usage and qualitative feedback from users. These are key steps but are a part of a more complex process which is described below.

Evaluation should look at the chain effect whereby changes may be needed in each step to affect change in the next step.



The question is – what can we measure at each step that produces the next step and contributes to the desired result. Often in evaluations the danger is that we measure what is easy to measure – the Outputs (quantitative – e.g. attendees and qualitative – e.g. anecdotal feedback) and fail to note the bigger picture around Outcomes (changes in Distance Travelled among the audience) and Impacts (changes at societal level)

Below are a series of generic indicators that correspond to each step in the chain linking resources-in to impacts as thought of during the design phase of the Evaluation. In the real world, and with the limited preparation time and budget for this evaluation we realise that this is almost impossible and we tailor the possibilities to what is feasible at local level given the nature

of attendance where attendees “come upon” the event for example at outdoor events or those that do not require pre-booking.

- . CONTEXT – the current situation
 - What is the issue or problem?
 - What are the barriers?
 - Who are the other stakeholders?
- .
INPUTS – resources
 - Staff time
 - Materials
 - Investment in marketing
- . ACTIVITIES or actions: logistical details
 - Planning
 - Marketing
- . OUTPUTS – immediate results of the resources and actions:
 - Number of attendees at events
 - Number of events
- . OUTCOMES – “Distance travelled” by individuals – have they changed their behavior or beliefs
 - Attendees satisfaction
 - Changed behavior or beliefs
 - Spontaneous feedback
- . IMPACTS at community level in longer term:
 - Changed behaviour at societal level
 - Hanged behaviour by stakeholders
 - Spontaneous feedback

Monitoring these indicators should tell us if what we think is happening is, indeed, actually happening, and if it is happening in an effective and efficient manner. ^[1]_{SEP}

Measurement will come for a variety of sources – no one source could answer all these questions.

MEASURING OUTCOMES – DISTANCE TRAVELLED

For the purposes of 2018 research we adopted the outcomes as being the objectives of Bealtaine. Within these outcomes we seek to identify where change has occurred. Or in social sciences research we seek to measure the “Distance Travelled”.

In an ideal scenario data would be collected at baseline (start) and at the end of a programme and compared to measure Distance Travelled and compare this data to a Control Group who did not experience Bealtaine. With the limitations above and In the case of the type of programmes being run in Bealtaine (predominantly drop in events) this was not deemed to be a realistic data collection methodology. Hence, the final data collection method outlined below was selected.

The research team sought to create a research methodology that will allow them to survey large numbers of participants at events at short notice. The methodology needed to be scalable, low cost, and do-able in very tight timelines.

Previous qualitative research was considered to be too expensive and there was an acknowledged need at Age and Opportunity that more robust international quantitative methodologies should be examined.

Theory of change (Quality Matters, 2011) is employed in this research. This examines what, if any, is the “Distance Travelled” by the audience over the course of their Bealtaine experience.

SELECTING THE PARAMETERS FOR OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

Outcomes for Bealtaine audiences were already clearly articulated and were taken as read for the purposes of this evaluation. These were:

- Changed belief about feeling artistic / creative
- Changed belief about connection to community
- Anticipated change in behavior regarding future attendance at artistic events
- Improved confidence

At a strategic level for the festival the impacts had also already been previously well articulated by Bealtaine and were:

- Critical opportunities for the greater participation and representation of older people in the arts.
- Arts programmes for disadvantaged older people.
- Opportunities and peer-to-peer supports for older professional artists.
- Opportunities for intergenerational exchange.
- Debate and discourse around key cultural issues impacting on older people and other opportunities to influence national and international policy.

RESEARCH SUBJECTS

The audience for this research is the primary audience for Bealtaine events, the organisers themselves and the broader stakeholders and funders for the festival. All were consulted and asked to contribute to a Logical Model based body of evidence.

	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
What will we measure?	Funds Resources	Actions Planning	Attendance levels	Changes at individual level	Longer term Societal level
How will we get this information?	Organiser survey	Organiser survey	Organiser survey	Audience Survey and Organiser Survey	Organiser Survey Interviews with selected stakeholders and funders.
Which programme	Tier Two	Tier Two	Tier One & Tier Two	Tier One & Tier Two	Tier One
Questions from each phase of the research	Financial inputs	Hours invested	# events Attendance	Satisfaction NPS Four outcomes Spontaneous feedback	Five impacts Spontaneous feedback

ORGANISER RESEARCH

Bealtaine has previously conducted a survey of organisers and organisers are used to being asked to report back on figures and opinions to help aggregate up the benefits generated by the festival.

Organisers Data Collection – Based on previous year’s research among organisers it was decided to conduct the research using Survey Monkey whereby organisers of the Tier Two National Programme were asked a series of questions that

- Gave an aggregate picture of their entire programme of events as part of Bealtaine (for those who run more than one event)
- Built a more detailed picture of one particular event selected by them in which more detailed questions were asked relating to their interpretation of audience outcomes (time and resource limitation in 2018 precluded audience surveys among the national programme.
- Relayed their interpretation of impact and their event’s contribution the five impact objectives.

AUDIENCE RESEARCH - OUTCOMES RESEARCH

Given the fact that there was very short notice to do Audience Surveys we could not ask organisers to conduct this research for the Tier Two National Programme. As a result Audience Surveys were only conducted at the Tier One Strategic Events run by the Age & Opportunity events and not at the National programme of events. This was not optimal but accepted as inevitable for 2018. Future research would ideally include audience research from at least a selection of national events.

Data Collection

Data was collected in-person on paper-based surveys by Bealtaine staff and entered in survey monkey by Bealtaine staff.

257 surveys were completed at 17 events. Both the survey and the list of events are shown in Appendix 1

Notes on data collection

- Data collection at the Temple bar event was difficult given the drop-in nature of the events, especially the outdoor events.
- More lead in time is needed to brief volunteers who are being asked to do the data collection.
- Advance notice needed for organisers who may not have been expecting this type of research being done at their events.

NOTES ON SELECTED QUESTIONS:

Parameters that may contribute to outcomes - Questions 2, 3 & 4 -

Bealtaine staff identified three parameters as potential contributors to outcomes. (These questions were entered by the administrative staff when inputting the audience's feedback. i.e. the audience was not asked to give these answers)

Q2. Audience Engagement type – this question sought to determine if the type of audience engagement contributes to successful outcomes. The data was divided into those events that are

- Passive – where the audience passively listens or watches
- Engaged – where the audience engages through Q&A, discussion , etc.
- Creative – where the audience makes arts in some form, dances, draws, performs, etc.

Q3. How established the event is – do new events or established events contribute to successful outcomes?

- New this year where this is the first time this event was held.
- Previously established where the event has been delivered previously

Q4. Venue type – does the type of venue contribute to successful outcomes?

- Official (with box office) - theatres, performance spaces
- Unofficial – libraries, museums, formal public spaces but without a box office ticketed type environment
- Alternative – a place where such events are not normally held, outdoor events, restaurants, etc.

Question 9 - Outcomes and Distance Travelled:

The outcomes listed above were directly taken from Bealtaine's objectives which had already been articulated clearly. These were translated into questions for the audience surveys with a 1 – 5 Likert scale for their answers from No to Yes.

Question 10: Net Promoter Score is a worldwide standard question that measures the willingness of audiences to recommend a company's products or services to others. It is used as a proxy for gauging the customer's overall satisfaction with a product or service and a customer's loyalty to a brand. It uses a Likert scale of 0 – 10.

'Detractors' gave a score lower or equal to 6. They, with all likelihood, won't attend events again, could potentially damage the festival's reputation through negative word of mouth.

'Passives' gave a score of 7 or 8. They are somewhat satisfied and probably wouldn't spread any negative word-of-mouth, but are not enthusiastic enough about the event to actually promote it.

'Promoters' answered 9 or 10. They love the event / festival. They will be the repeat attendees and are the enthusiastic promoters who will recommend the festival to other potential attendees.

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is determined by subtracting the percentage of customers who are detractors from the percentage who are promoters. What is generated is a score between -100 and 100 called the Net Promoter Score. At one end of the spectrum, if when surveyed, all of the

customers gave a score lower or equal to 6, this would lead to a NPS of -100. On the other end of the spectrum, if all of the customers were answering the question with a 9 or 10, then the total Net Promoter Score would be 100.

Net Promoter Score is difficult to “score well” on. In one study of commercial entities the median NPS was 16. (Reichheld 2003)

STAKEHOLDER RESEARCH - IMPACT

Impact is by far the most difficult to measure of the steps in the Logic Model and ideally is part of an evolving conversation with stakeholders around their vision of how the long term community level impact is articulated and observed.

The impact portion of the evaluation was conducted through telephone interviews with Tier One partners, stakeholders and funders. The full list of those consulted appears in Appendix 2 along with the questions for discussion during the telephone interviews.

REACH OF THE RESEARCH

343 individuals were consulted for this research.

	Vehicle	Consultations
Audience Surveys – at Tier One Strategic events only	Online	257
Organiser Surveys – at Tier Two National Programme events only	Online	68
Tier One Stakeholder Interviews for impact	Telephone	18

LIMITATIONS ON THE RESEARCH

This research project was commissioned in April 2018 for a festival running for the month of May 2018. As such there was little lead time and the methodology was limited to what could be done in that time frame in terms of methodology design and data collection.

Organisers and partners were limited in the time they could devote the evaluation process as it inevitably sought their input when they were particularly busy with the events themselves. Many expressed a desire to be more aware of upcoming evaluations in future.

Audience Research: Audience research was conducted only at Tier One Strategic events only and not at Tier Two National Programme events. This means that the audience feedback is not representative of the full Bealtaine festival.

Organiser Research among Tier Two National Programme: Organiser research is based on those 68 that chose to complete the online survey and is not statistically representative of the full population of organisers. In addition Bealtaine does not have robust records of who exactly is organising Bealtaine events. For example, seven library HQs registered events on the website but other major library services had not registered although we know they conducted a programme of events. This obviously will under-state the aggregate figures unless we correct for and make estimates but given the low level of data any aggregation would be difficult to stand over. Only nine Local Authority Arts Offices registered and again we are aware of other events organised by these bodies across the country. It was beyond the scope of this short project to collate these activities that were not otherwise recorded on existing systems.

Summary of data sources:

Event Type	Audience Research	Organiser Research	Stakeholders
Tier One Age & Opportunity Festival events	☐ 257	☐	☐ ??
Tier Two National Festival	☐	☐ ??	☐

Research among the artists was not included in the scope of the ev

aluation but it is expected the findings herein will be useful for work ongoing with the artist cohort who are involved heavily in the festival.

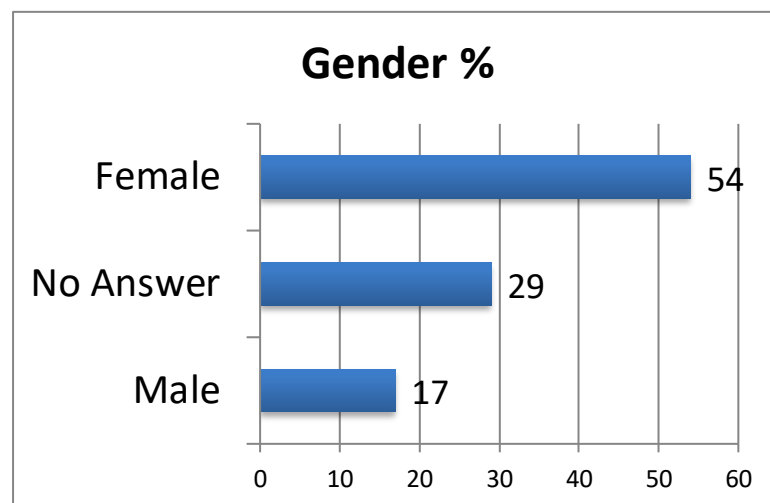
Tier One Strategic Events versus Tier Two National Programme: Crucially the Strategic Events are not included in the Organiser research as there was insufficient capacity to gather this breakdown of data.

These are key crucial limitations within this research and in all cases relate to a shortage of manpower and time in the run up to and during the festival itself. Key lessons have been learned that are elaborated upon among the suggestions for further research, which are included in Recommendations.

FINDINGS

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AUDIENCE FROM TIER ONE AUDIENCE RESEARCH

FIGURE 1 – GENDER

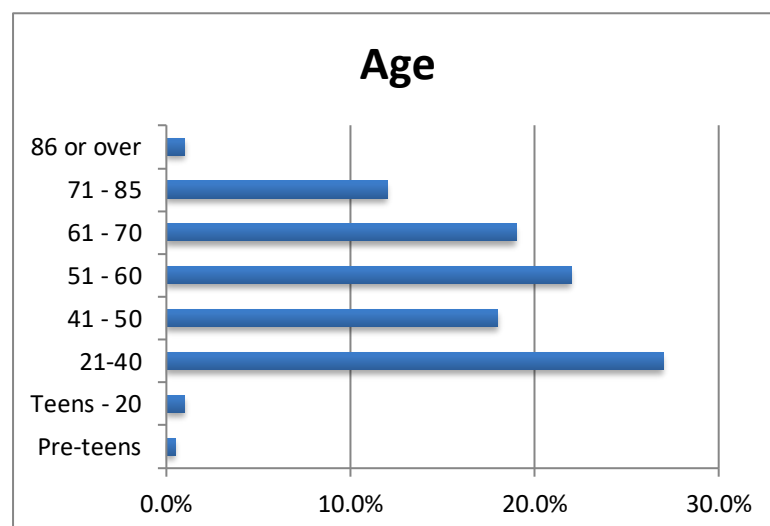


29% of respondents did not answer this question rendering the findings less useful. If we disregard those who did not answer the results would be

- 24% male attendees
- 76% female attendees

This has traditionally been the audience for Bealtaine to date.

FIGURE 2 - OVERALL AGE BREAKDOWN

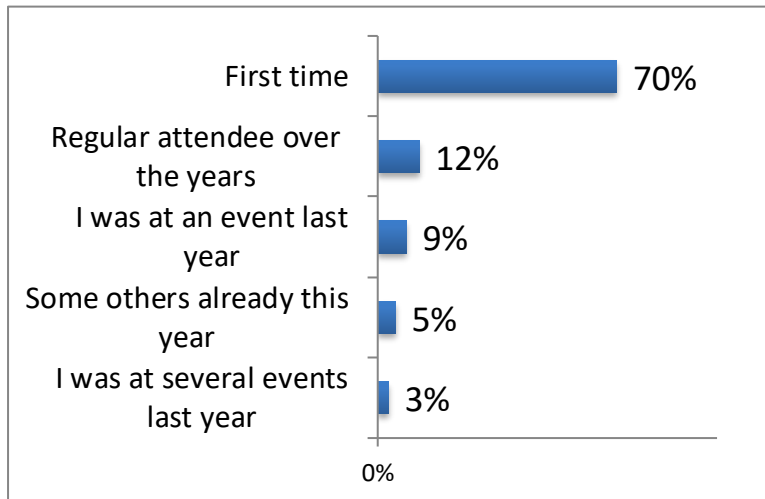


54% of attendees are over 51 – the specific target market for the events.

Of those under 50 who attended, 42% of them attended alone – they were not accompanying an older person. (i.e. 23% of attendees overall were younger audience members who were not accompanying an older person)

The balance of 58% came with a friend or family member who may have been an older person but the data cannot tell.

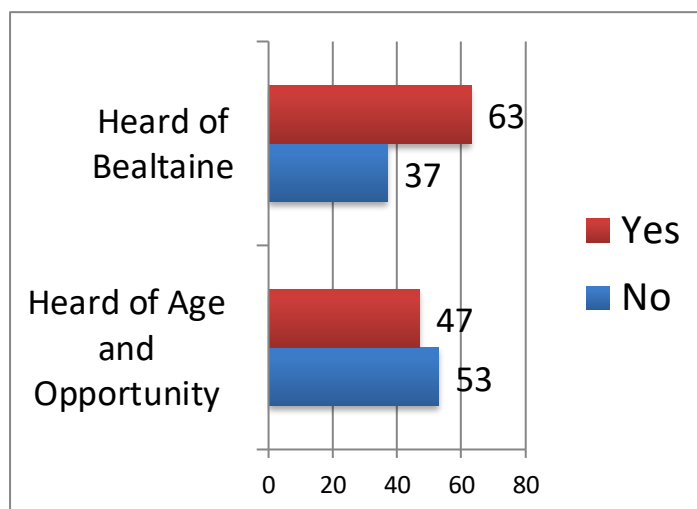
FIGURE 3 - PREVIOUS ATTENDANCE



Bealtaine attracted a large proportion of new attendees in 2018. 75% of respondents were attending in 2018 for their first time.

This information presents an opportunity for Bealtaine as Repeat attendees have the highest NPS and suggests that the possibilities of asking attendees to Refer a Friend in future would be beneficial. As shown below this is already happening to a large extent where 44% heard about Bealtaine through word of mouth.

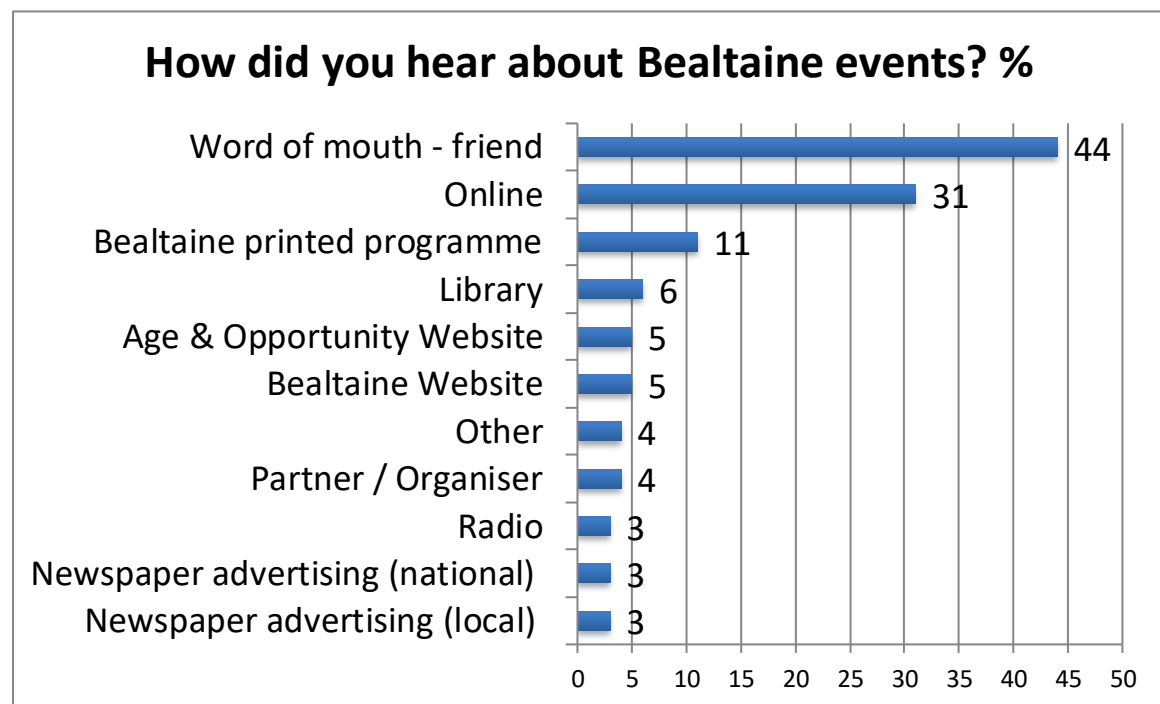
FIGURE 4 – BRAND AWARENESS OF AGE & OPPORTUNITY / BEALTAINÉ



Name recognition for Bealtaine is higher than for Age & Opportunity.

63% of respondents had heard of Bealtaine beforehand while only 47% had heard of Age & Opportunity.

FIGURE 5 - HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT BEALTAINÉ?

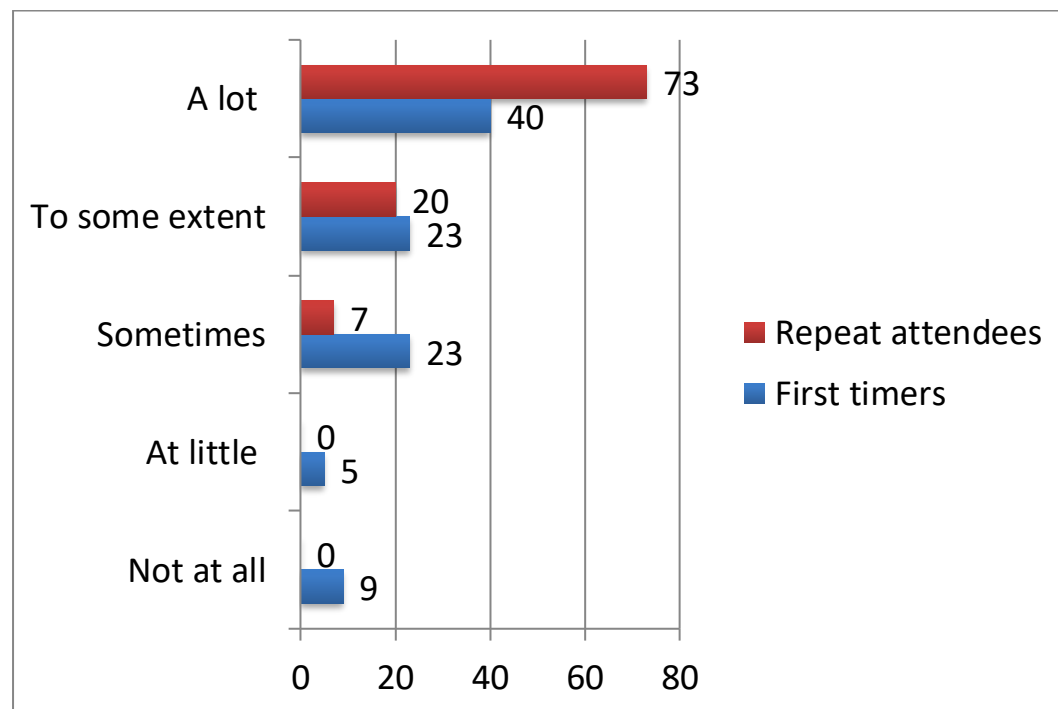


Word of mouth is the strongest deliverer of audiences followed by Bealtaine's online presence. Low cost but higher effort channels deliver the higher audience numbers.

Partners and organisers are low on the list at 4% recalled by attendees but the 6% who mention libraries would bolster partners as a recruiter of audiences. Also, Online is a catch-all that may include the partners / organisers online presence. This may be worth further investigation and more careful categorization to capture effective marketing channels.

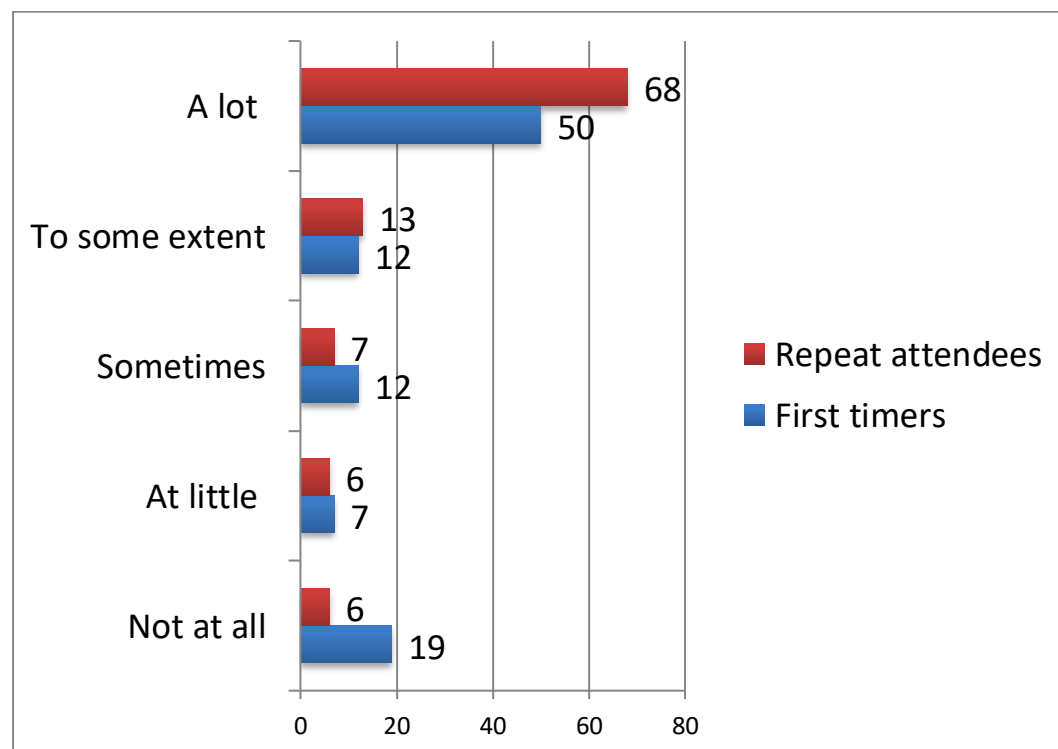
The following analyses the characteristics of the audience in terms of their propensity to regularly attend arts events and to make art themselves.

FIGURE 6 - ATTENDING ARTS EVENTS VS FIRST TIME / REPEAT ATTENDEES



As may be expected repeat attendees are more likely to attend other artistic / creative events at other times of the year. 93% of repeat attendees attend some or a lot of other events. Only 63% of the first time attendees gave the same answer suggesting that Bealtaine is introducing arts events to new audiences. 37% of first time attendees rarely or never or only sometimes attend other arts events. 7% of previous attendees claim such low attendance.

FIGURE 7 - MAKE ART V FIRST / REPEAT ATTENDEES



81% of repeat attendees themselves make art a lot or to some extent while 62% of first time attendees make arts (approximately the same number that attend arts events)

SATISFACTION FINDINGS FROM AUDIENCES:

As an overall measure of satisfaction with the events Net Promoter Score was used. A “good” NPS is highly dependent on the sector and little work has been done in the arts or in festival sectors for this scoring mechanisms. However, rather than focusing on the score itself, what is of more interest is the relative score among the various events in the portfolio.

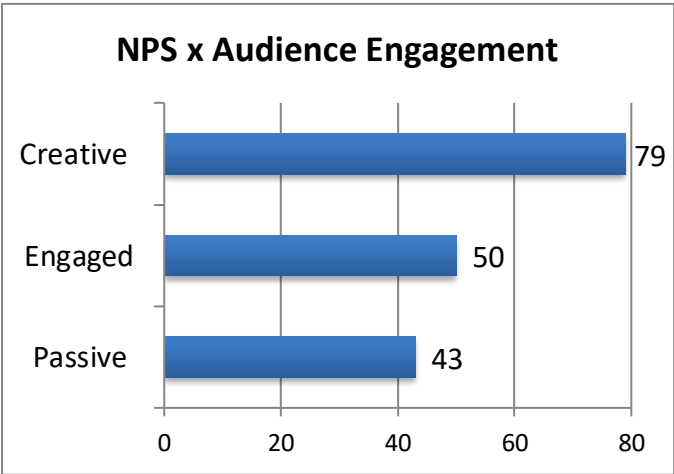
Nevertheless a contextual side note shows that recent consumer research showed that the Irish travel and leisure sector scored 5 on this scale (Amarach Consulting 2015). Among international brands achieving any score above 40 is considered exceptional.

Overall the Net Promoter Score for Bealtaine was 48 far in excess of international standards for other sectors.

NPS CROSS REFERENCED AGAINST SELECTED PARAMETERS

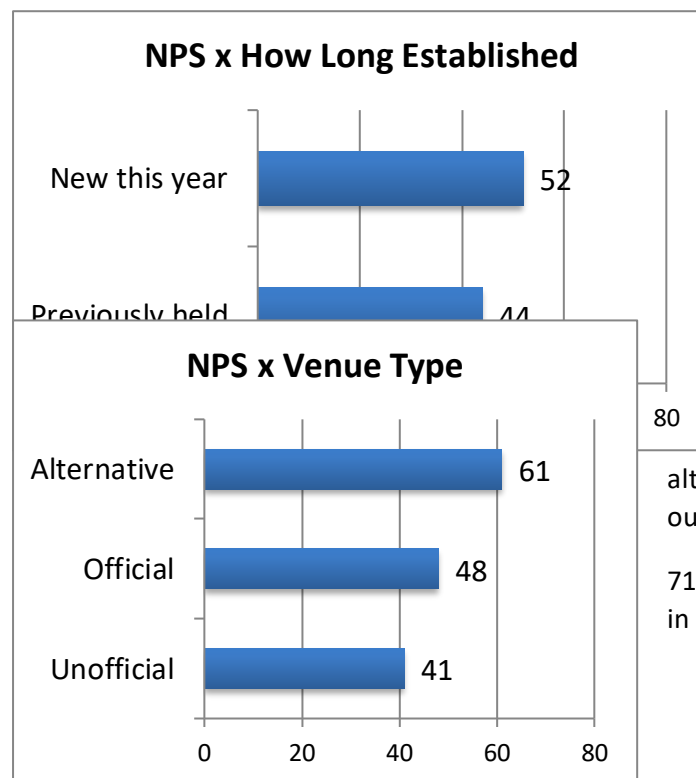
When examining what contributed to that impressive NPS, some parameters appear to be contributing more than others. These findings are from Tier One events.

FIGURE 8 - NPS BY AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT TYPE



Audiences who were engaged creatively at their events reported the highest NPS. This finding is cautioned by the fact that surveys included only 14 individuals who had attended two Creative style events. Those 144 individuals who attended nine Engaged events scored second highest at 50. Passive events scored an NPS of 43.

FIGURE 9 - NPS BY HOW LONG ESTABLISHED



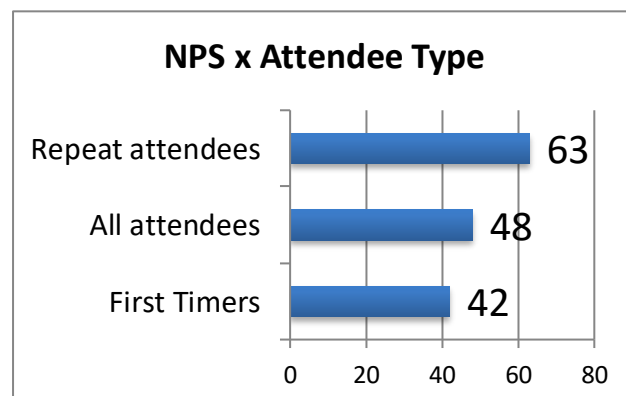
New events scored higher than previously held events. 163 audience members reported on 11 new events. 91 audience members reported on five previously established events.

FIGURE 10 - NPS BY VENUE TYPE

Events held in Alternative spaces scored the highest at 61. These alternative spaces included restaurants, outdoor venues and exhibition spaces.

71 attendees reported on six events held in Alternative spaces.

FIGURE 11 - NPS AND ATTENDEE TYPE



NPS was contrasted for first time attendees and for repeat attendees.

Repeat attendees reported higher levels of NPS at 63 compared to an average of 48. This is unsurprising given the extent to which word of mouth is a key channel for new attendees to hear about Bealtaine.



*It as a really wonderful afternoon
really special and different.*

*Keep up the good work. Nice to see
diversity in gender/age group
attending*

*More please - such creative and
informative events*

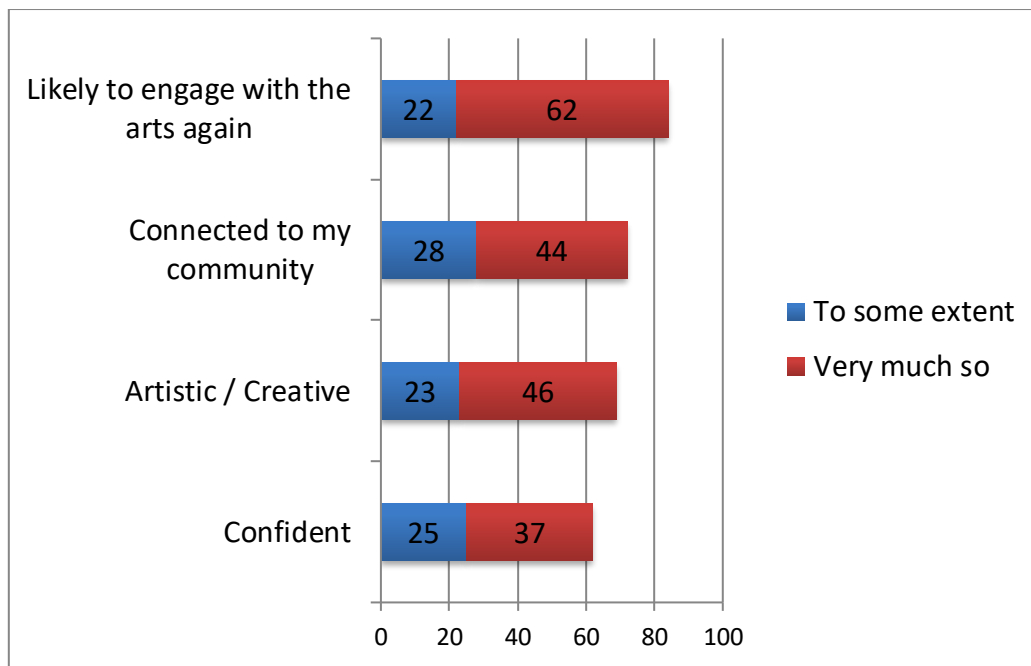
Selected Audience Comments

OUTCOMES FOR AUDIENCES

The data shows the following outcomes reported by the audience at Tier One events. Highest levels of Distance Travelled is reported on the following where the percentage shows those who agree to some or a great extent (answering 4 or 5 to Question 9):

- Likelihood of engaging with the Arts again – 84%
- Connected to my community – 72%
- Feeling more artistic / creative – 69%
- Confident 62%

FIGURE 12 - DISTANCE TRAVELLED

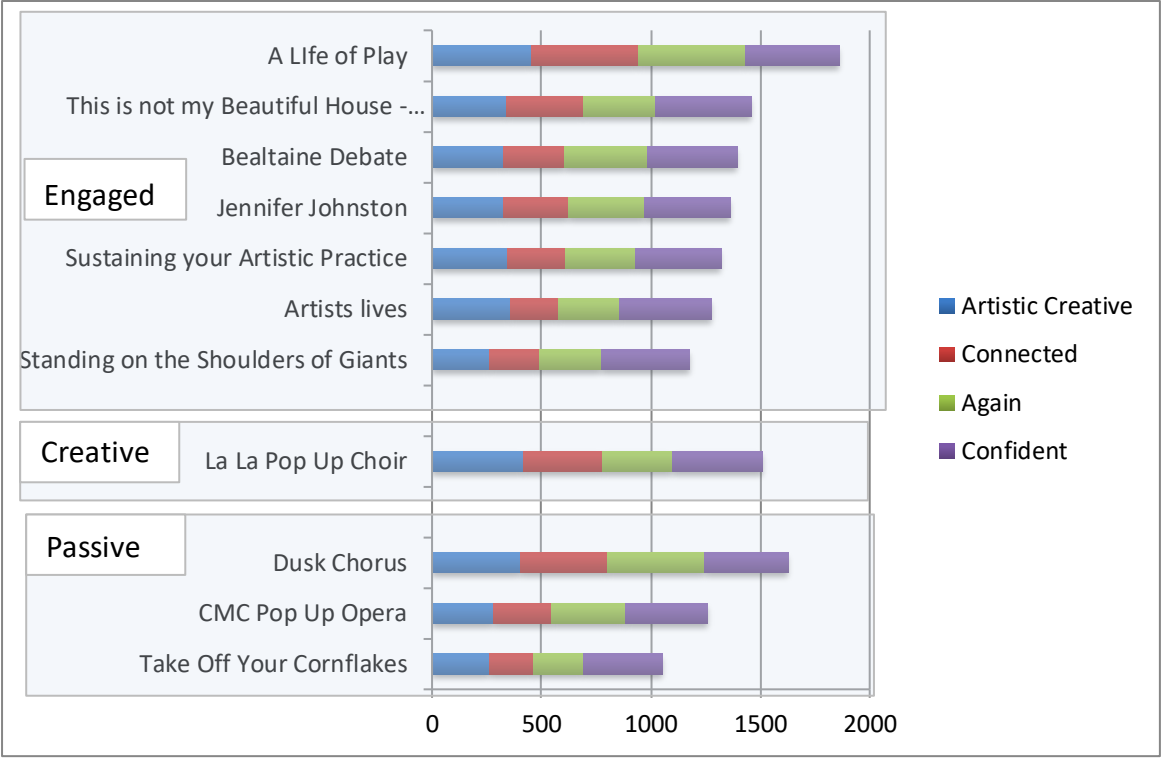


Again this overall result can be analysed in more detail and cross-referenced with information about events and event types. Audience members scored some events higher than others.

In many ways this measurement is crude as it asks audiences immediately after an event for their opinion. It does not take into account the challenging nature of some events which may not be immediately enjoyable but may nevertheless be beneficial.

For the purposes of this analysis only a selection of Tier One events (See Appendix 1) was surveyed. During analysis those with fewer than 8 responses are removed from the dataset. The data scores those who answered 4 or 5 to the Outcomes question.

FIGURE 13 - OUTCOMES VS EVENT TYPES



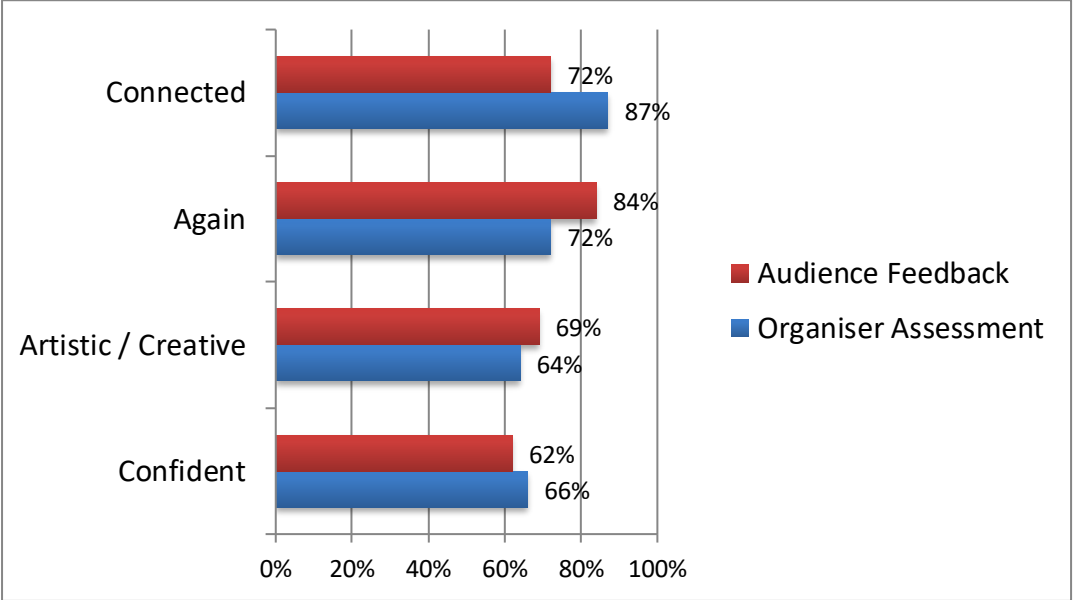
Where the audience was Engaged and Creative during the event attendees reported higher levels of outcomes. Dusk Chorus was the exception to this trend but it could be argued this was Engaged as there was an element of singing along. Response numbers for Creative events were particularly low with just two events surveyed (La La Pop Up Choir with 10 responses and Print Studio with just 4 responses.) Further work on this theme would be useful.

A Life of Play scored highest of all events on all parameters except Confidence where This is not my Beautiful House scored highest.

New events feature stronger than established events in their ability to deliver outcomes.

Within the Tier Two research organisers were also asked for their assessment of their events contribution towards Outcomes. Audience surveys were not conducted for the National Programme so this is a proxy for the audience opinion. Organisers were confident that their events deliver Connection to Community and to a Likelihood of attending arts events again. They are somewhat in line with the audience findings and are shown in comparison below:

FIGURE 14 - OUTCOMES - AUDIENCE AND ORGANISER ASSESSMENT

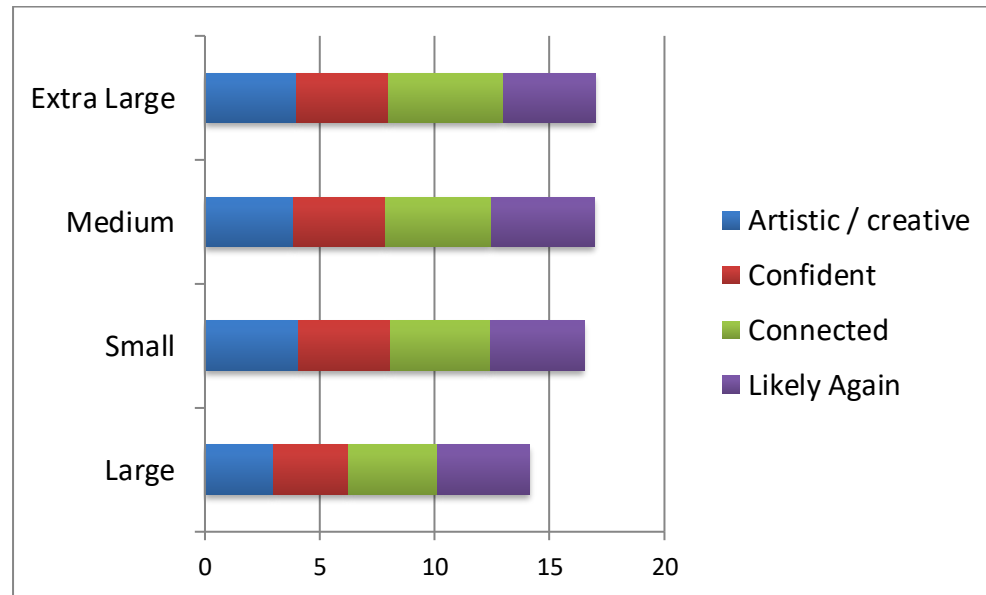


These findings point to organisers being in tune with their audiences and giving a quite accurate assessment of the outcomes they are delivering. It should be noted that for many organisers this may have been the first time they have given much thought to the outcomes sought by Bealtaine specifically. The alignment is reassuring but also acts as grounds for further enhancing the relationship between Bealtaine and its organisers.

OUTCOMES ANALYSED AGAINST INPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

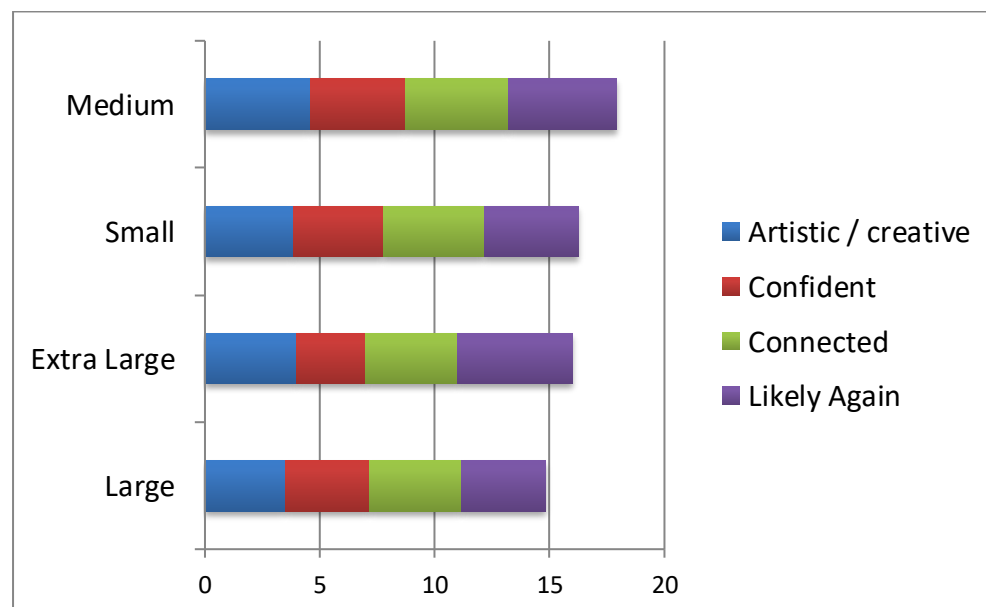
To assess the effectiveness of a portfolio of initiatives it is useful to analyse the effect of the scale of inputs into the creation of those outcomes. For example, does size matter? Do we get better results the bigger the inputs, the bigger the budgets, the bigger the event? The findings show that small and medium events deliver on outcomes better than the larger events in most situations. The classification of Small, Medium large, etc. are shown in Appendix 3. Note: This information came from the Tier Two Programme only.

FIGURE 15 - OUTCOMES VS BUDGET SIZE



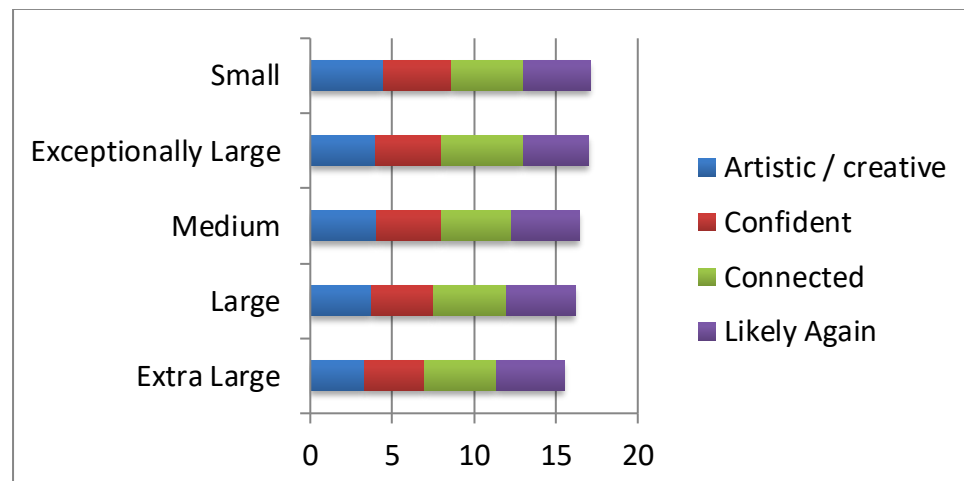
(The Extra Large budget event category in this case refers to a single event Hidden Histories at The Glucksman) As a general observation organisers of small and medium events are confident of their events ability to deliver the four key outcomes to their audiences.

FIGURE 16 - OUTCOMES VS TIME INVESTED



Again smaller and medium events (measured by time invested in organising them) scored better than the larger events in delivering outcomes in the assessment by the organisers.

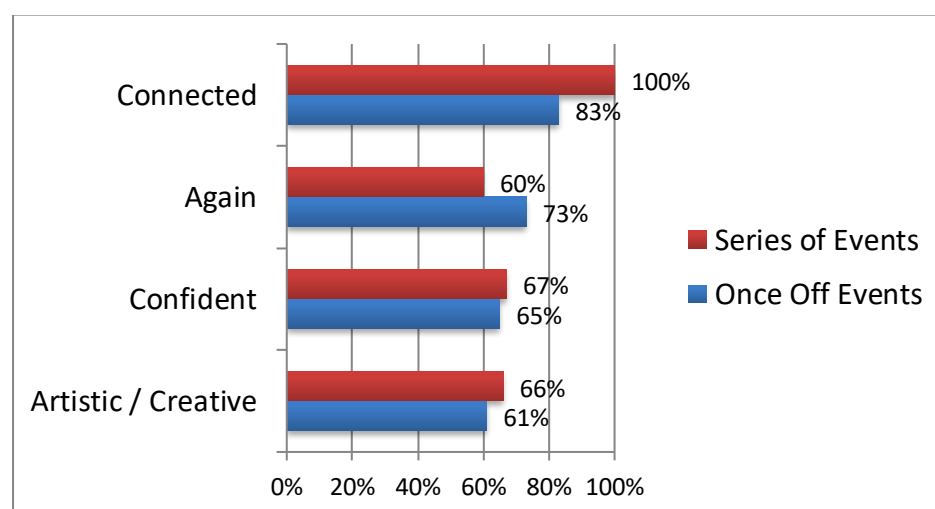
FIGURE 17 - OUTCOMES VS AUDIENCE SIZE



Again small and medium events based on audience size acquit themselves well in delivering outcomes for audiences in the opinions of the organisers.

The key finding from this piece of “slicing and dicing” of the data is that events of smaller sizes are an important part of the portfolio of events within the festival. They deliver important outcomes at local level and appear to out-perform the larger events in delivering the desired outcomes for audiences.

FIGURE 18 - OUTCOMES VS ONCE-OFF / SERIES OF EVENTS



This table presents the difference between the ability of a once-off event to deliver outcomes versus a series of events where the audience member attends more than one event. For example, a series of workshops that build upon each other. The parameter on which a series of

event performs best is Connected to Community where organisers judged this form of event results in a fully positive outcomes for the audience – 100%. The findings show that those attending Once Off events were more likely to attend arts events again – more so than those who attended a series of events – an unexpected finding and not necessarily positive.

Caveat – this data was gathered asking the opinions of Tier Two organisers – it was not directly asked of the audience members themselves. A note for future research especially as in addition to this limitation the “Series of Events” definition may have been misunderstood by some organisers.

AGGREGATED RESULTS

This research attempted to estimate the aggregated results around

- Full number of events
- Audience at Bealtaine events
- Audience spend and economic impact of the festival
- Overall budget spent by organisers
- Overall in-kind contributions by other stakeholders
- Hours spent by organisers themselves

Data on the National Programme was gathered towards this end but flaws exist in this data gathering and extrapolating up from the current data set is not as robust as would be ideal.

For various reasons there is confusion around the data on the National Programme due to its complexity. Organisers do not all register with the Bealtaine website. For example, nine local authorities arts offices registered in 2018 but some of the largest ones did not - although we know events did take place. There can also be confusion as to “who owns the events” held at county level as other bodies within the local authority also register events or replied to the survey. In one county two organisations reported back each reporting 150 events but clarification led to the discovery that there were 150 events in total. Library Headquarters also register and 15 did so in 2018 but an additional four were found to be active after an Internet search of events. In addition however 12 individual libraries registered events, including some which are in counties where the headquarters also registered.

As some of the largest deliverers of events it is worth looking at the library network and local authority arts offices in greater detail to understand just how complex this data gathering would be if Bealtaine were to attempt it in a more robust way in the future.

Organiser Survey findings	Individual Libraries	Library Headquarters	Local Authority Arts Offices
Events	1 - 7 events per library	8 - 150* events	2 - 91 events
Audience	17 - 330 audience total	40 - 1,000	35 - 2,600
Average Budget	€486	€3,000	not known - € 20,000
Average In Kind Spend	€310	1,450	€4,133
Average audience spend	€5	8.33	€8.50
Notes:			
Number of surveys returned	7	7	7
Completed registration	12	15	9
Total in the country	331	31	31
Number of other active organisations found during search	6	4	

Note – each of these libraries is part of one of the Library HQ to the right.

* (denotes the one county which counted all events in the county within the library response.

Given this confusion in even understanding who and how many organisations ran Bealtaine events aggregating up from the data set to hand has challenges.

What has been calculated is shown below but contains flaws and inconsistencies based on the complexity described above. This method looked at the performance of those who replied to the survey and generated average performance for each of the categories (Local Authority, Active Retirement Association, Art Centre, etc.) It then extrapolated up to the number of each of these categories there were in the registration figures - and then supplemented with the other events and organisers found through an online search.

Programme	Tier One Age & Opportunity Festival	Tier Two National Festival
Number of Events	56	1,409
Audience Estimate	6,400	80,119 *
Budget Spent	€ 499,401	€ 216,000
In Kind Estimate	€ 250,000	€ 174,000
Audience Economic Activity		€ 412,000
Staff hours at Organisations		8,228

* (Including 30,000 observers of one public art event)

The process to estimate this has had its challenges and some recommendations are made below in terms of how it can be improved upon for future years.

REQUESTS FROM ORGANISERS

In the survey organisers requests further supports from Bealtaine.

FIGURE 19 - REQUESTED SUPPORTS FROM ORGANISERS



This feedback aligns with some of the activities held during The Gathering – the post festival session with organisers usually held in autumn. This report and the feedback from successful case studies in the survey will generate valuable content that will answer some of these needs, for example, ideas and examples of successful events, parameters that contribute to success, opportunities to meet with other organisers, etc. to be delivered at The Gathering.

IMPACTS OBSERVED

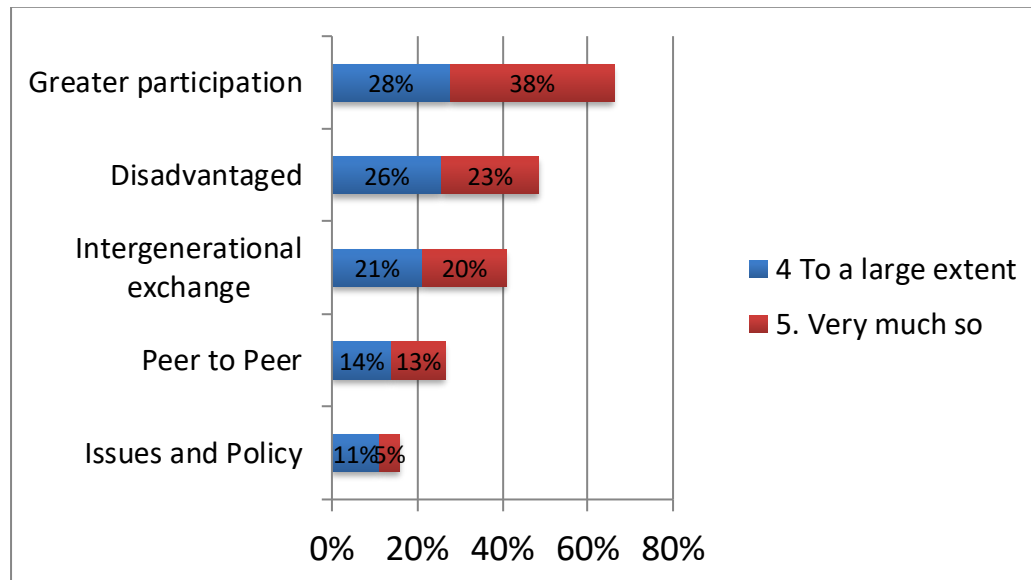
Organiser Research – Tier Two National Programme

Organisers were asked for an assessment of their programme of events and its ability to deliver on the desired impacts. Several organisers were very confident of their contribution to impact. (% refer to those who responded 4 or 5 on a Likert scale of 5, i.e. 4 to a large extent, 5 Very much so)

- 66% of organisers believe their events contribute to greater participation and representation of older people in the arts

- 48% believe they accommodate disadvantaged people²
- 41% believe they provide inter-generational opportunities
- 27% believe they provide peer to peer opportunities
- 16% believe they contribute to policy

FIGURE 20 - IMPACTS OBSERVED BY ORGANISERS



It should be clarified that it is not expected that all events contribute to all impacts sought. The vast majority of organisers claim to deliver on at least one impact. 26% do not consider that they significantly contribute to any of the impacts sought from the festival.

Organisers were also asked what aspects of their events contribute to impacts. The majority of comments related to creating supportive atmospheres, shared design with the older people and making their events inter-generational in nature.

Interesting cases have also come to light from this research. 21% of event organisers are confident about their ability deliver for their audiences across all the desired outcomes. 47% are confident about delivering against at least two of the impacts. 14% however, do not consider their events to be contributing to any of the five desired impacts suggesting room for intervention and support. The reasons for this are not known – these organisers were motivated enough to complete the survey but either were not aware of the desired impacts or do not believe they contribute towards their achievement. Engaging with this group could yield useful benefits.

Pockets of excellence and enthusiasm are to be found and the detail is in the detailed spreadsheets made available to the Director of the Festival for future reference.

² There is some concern that the definition of Disadvantaged may need clarification as a large number cited this as an impact but there is little detail on exactly what they mean. There is a concern that they may mean that all older people are disadvantaged.

Stakeholder Research

Telephone conversations with Tier One Strategic Programme partners and funders resulted in the followed key themes in the discussion. The full list of those consulted is shown in Appendix 2.

Partners ranged from close partners with overlapping objectives to those with a “looser” relationship which was based primarily on Bealtaine as a vehicle for the partner to develop an audience for their own programme or venue.

In terms of specific Bealtaine’s long term objectives the discussions worked around those themes:

Greater participation and representation of older people

Five partners would be considered close partners with high levels of overlapping objectives in supporting older people in the arts. This group highlighted Bealtaine’s importance in generating new audiences for them and offering those audiences something new, challenging and different.

Of those with a looser relationship to Bealtaine there was still high levels of value noted where Bealtaine brought new and diverse audiences to these partners in some cases where they have a limited ability to do so themselves.

All partners recognise and are fully supportive of Bealtaine’s ability to increase participation and representation of older people in the arts. Partners are impressed by the festival’s reach and national visibility. Partners are delighted to be involved with Bealtaine and its brand. There is an appreciation of the broad approach to the arts that the festival takes and that it is inclusive of all.

In terms of artists, it is recognized that Bealtaine has a skill and creates a forum for older artists to come forward (despite the fact that some mention an unwillingness to be labeled an ‘older artist’). For those that have a lifelong desire to make and produce art Bealtaine is seen as a form where recognition is given of lifelong work and ongoing opportunities exist.

Disadvantaged Older People:

Few partners specifically target this audience for arts programmes but appreciate that Bealtaine is the best vehicle in which this could be done better. The Mercer Institute is the only partner³ surveyed that specifically targets disadvantaged older people with arts programmes in their local community. Meanwhile, the HSE noted that a top priority for them would be those disadvantaged older people suffering from social isolation as a key segment of interest.

Peer to Peer learning opportunities:

This aspect is also noted and appreciated. Partners comment that it is successful but there is always demand for more in this area. Partners prioritise this approach themselves but some note that when Bealtaine is involved this becomes more successful. One partner noted that Bealtaine supports the year round work in this way effectively but needs to continue to be aware of the year round landscape in order to continue to fit well within it.

³ Waterford Healing Arts Trust also runs a residency which accommodates this audience but was not included in this body of research.

Inter-generational opportunities:

This is a theme that is of strategic interest to partners and where they see Bealtaine as a successful vehicle. Collaborative arts practice and the rigorous thinking by Bealtaine and the team around the arts is noted and appreciated. This aspect is noted as being important and beneficial by partners both for artists themselves but also as a general theme among the broader audience for whom inter-generational opportunities are valuable.



Fruitful collaborations
Excellent leadership
Hard to do and done well
Broad approach is good
Great it is so ambitious
Keeping it fresh

Debate and Discourse

Partners note that Bealtaine is an excellent opportunity for older artists and the support community around them to engage with each other. Those who collaborate closely are highly appreciative of this opportunity for deep and rich engagement.

Bealtaine is noted as being “in an enviable position” whereby it has a national reach at all levels of appreciation of the arts in many forms and formats. And at the same time has created a strategically important role contributing to the debate around arts, older people and broader societal issues by amplifying the voice of its constituents.

Constructive Feedback

When specifically asked for constructive feedback, partners were reluctant to critique Bealtaine and say we need to keep doing this, but if possible do it even better.

Partners are ambitious for Bealtaine and for its future success. They recognise the success it has had to date and want to build on this further.

Suggestions for future discussion:

Some partners put forward areas related to and building on this that they would like to discuss further with Bealtaine – these have been noted and delivered to the Director.



*Great reach
High quality
Challenging
Excellent Conversations
Visible Nationally
New and different way of
programming for us*

criticism partners
except to
and if

research
with
to the Festival

RECOMMENDATIONS

This report recommends that the findings of this research be shared as much as possible to create ways in which delivery of the festival can be enhanced. Insights have been generated that point to where outcomes and impact are best delivered.

Features that contribute to outcomes can be encouraged with partners and organisations. These features include

- Offering opportunities for audience members to engage during events through discussion and conversations and also through the creation of art itself.
- Conducting events in alternative locations
- Offering new events year on year
- Offering opportunities for inter-generational engagement

The tension between relying on repeat attendees versus the difficulty of always generating new audiences has no perfect balance point. Bealtaine is strong on bringing in new audiences that do not generally experience arts events outside of Bealtaine and this is an important objective of the festival that is achieved well. However, the Net Promoter Score, the measure of overall satisfaction, is significantly higher among repeat attendees suggesting opportunities to build even further on the word of mouth upon which the festival has built much of its success in recruiting audiences.

Organisers have expressed an appetite to work more closely with Bealtaine. Requests for support in inspiration and ideas, networking among themselves and learning from each others' best practice is encouraging.

Bealtaine's complex and dynamic environment and the extent to which organisers feel a sense of ownership of Bealtaine has been described as "a blessing and a curse" for the festival. Vibrant events take place all over the country under the umbrella that is Bealtaine but not all are accounted for or credited to the festival itself. To some extent this is considered a "great problem to have" – organisers take pride in their ability to deliver events and tailor to local needs and available inputs. However, it makes it difficult to extrapolate up to the overall impact of the festival given how much unknown activity takes place. The other downside to this diverse activity base is that there is a wealth of experience and enthusiasm that could be further harnessed to a greater extent by bringing this group more closely under the Bealtaine umbrella so the festival as a whole can benefit from their experience and skills.

This report recommends continued emphasis to improve the registration process and incentivise organisers to engage with Bealtaine. Within the registration and data gathering there is a need for some coding to allow for later analysis – for example a simplification of organisation type would have been helpful in analysing performance by the different organiser types.

An additional recommendation is to tap into this wealth of experience and share the best practice that exists. Many National Programme organisers are highly confident and hugely experienced in delivering these events but at any given time there are those for whom this is new and uncharted territory. Bealtaine can act as the facilitator to share best practice and encourage those kinds of events that have been proven through this research to deliver results. Excellent case studies exist within the survey responses as well as an enthusiasm to share across the network of organisers. Leveraging the sense of ownership that organisers feel for the festival while also helping build capacity and present models of good practice would be a valuable role for Bealtaine.

The vast array of organiser types is complex but where there are channels to the key organizer types (libraries, Library HQ, Arts Offices, etc.) there may be economies of scale around liaising with these bodies to share good practice.

The Gathering in the autumn may offer an opportunity to share the research and the good practice built up among the community of organisers for whom this festival is an important part of their calendar of events.

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1. Amarach consulting (2015) Ireland Customer Experience Report 2015
2. Reichheld, Fred (2003) 'The One Number you Need to Grow', Harvard Business Review December 2003
3. Kendrick, J.R. (1996) 'Outcomes of Service Learning in an Introduction to Sociology Course', Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 3 (1), pp. 72-81.

APPENDIX 1 – SURVEY AND LIST OF EVENTS INCLUDED

AUDIENCE SURVEY

Thank you attending this Bealtaine event.

We would love to get your feedback.

Have you ever been to previous Bealtaine events?

	Please check:		Please check
This is my first time		I was at several events last year	
I have been to some already this year		I have been a regular attendee over the years	
I was at an event last year			

Had you heard of Age and Opportunity? Yes

No

☐
☐

	Scale				
	No	Maybe			Yes
Do you regularly attend artistic / creative events?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you make art or actively engage in creativity? (paint, make music, dance, etc.)					
Coming to this event makes me feel more	1	2	3	4	5
Artistic / Creative	1	2	3	4	5
Confident	1	2	3	4	5
Connected to my community	1	2	3	4	5
Likely to engage with the arts again	1	2	3	4	5

How likely is it that you would recommend Bealtaine events to a friend?										
Not at all			Likely			Extremely Likely				
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

I am –	Please check:		Please check
Pre-teens		51 - 60	
Teens to 20		61 - 70	
21 – 40		71 - 85	
41 – 50		86 or over	
Male		Female	

How did you hear about Bealtaine events?	Please check:		Please check
Age & Opportunity website		Online	
Age & Opportunity programme		Newspaper advertising	
Word of mouth / friend		Radio	
Library			

How did you get to the venue today?	Please check:
By bus	
By car	
On foot	
Other	

Did you come alone or with someone?	Please check:
Alone	
With a friend	
With family	

Do you have any other comments or feedback to Bealtaine?

Thank you and enjoy the festival!

TIER ONE EVENTS – AUDIENCE NUMBERS AND SURVEY PARTICIPATION

Event Name	Audience Numbers	Audience Surveys
A Life of Play Workshop, Performance and Commission	115	✓
An Act of Hospitality can only be poetic	1307	
Artist as Collaborator	20	
Artists' Lives	80	✓
Bealtaine @ Temple Bar including	1600	
Bealtaine Debate		✓
CMC Pop Up Opera		✓
Cow House Residency		✓
La La Pop Up Choir		✓
Print Studio		✓
Project Arts Centre Tour		✓
TBG&S Workshops		✓
Bealtaine Book Club	500	
Bealtaine Visual Arts Residency Presentation	23	
Belonging	73	
Dawn and Dusk Chorus	63	✓
Everybody Sings, a multi-media Performance and Commission	148	✓
Gallery of Photography		
Home, a Filmpoem Screening and Commission	1360	
Hospitable Actions (Visual Arts)		
IMMA		
In, Around & Aftereffects Workshops	14	
Jennifer Johnston in conversation with Arminta Wallace as part of Bealtaine Book Club	58	✓
RHA Gallery		
Sendiana	308	
Standing on the Shoulders of Giants	90	✓
Sustaining your Artistic Practice - Dublin	63	✓

Sustaining your Artistic Practice Limerick	16	
Take Off Your Cornflakes	370	✓
The Bealtaine Debate: Does Age Have a Bearing on Creativity	80	
Theresa Nanigian: An Artist's Response to the work of Philip Toledano	20	
This is Not My Beautiful House III	50	✓
Unexploded Ordnances	50	

APPENDIX 2 – ORGANISER SURVEY

To be added to PDF at the end.

APPENDIX 3 - STAKEHOLDER RESPONDENTS AND DISCUSSION

Arts Council	Ann O Connor
Cow House Studios	Rosie O Gorman
Cow House Studios	Frank Abruzzese
Create	Ailbhe Murphy
Dublin City Council	Ray Yeates
Gallery of Photography	Trish Lambe
Health Service Executive	Austin Warters
IMMA	Helen O'Donoghue
International Literature Festival Dublin	Martin Colthorpe
Irish Architecture Foundation	Sile Stewart
Irish Writers Centre	Valerie Bistany
Lexicon DLR	Maire Davey
Limerick City Gallery and Studios	Una McCarthy
Mercers Institute for Successful Ageing / Creative Life Initiative	Rosin Nevin
RHA Gallery	Colin Martin
Temple Bar Company	Claudine Murray
Temple Bar Gallery	Clíodhna Shaffrey
Visual Artists Ireland	Noel Kelly
Waterford Libraires	Mary Conway

Discussion points for Impact interviews:

Discuss extent to which interviewee observes A&O Objectives for Bealtaine being delivered or where there are opportunities for improvement.

- Critical opportunities for the greater participation and representation of older people in the arts.
- Arts programmes for disadvantaged older people.
- Opportunities and peer-to-peer supports for older professional artists.
- Opportunities for intergenerational exchange.
- Debate and discourse around key cultural issues impacting on older people and other opportunities to influence national and international policy.

Other questions

- How are these aligned to your objectives for your involvement with the festival?
- In what ways do you see these objectives being met?
- Do you see opportunities to do better?
- In terms of a societal impact of Bealtaine over the long term - where do you see impact?
- Where would you like to see even greater impact?

APPENDIX 4 – DEFINITION OF SCALES

For the purposes of comparison across event types orders of magnitude were used for comparison purposes:

	Budget	Hours Invested	Audience size
Small	€ 0 - 500	0 – 40 hours	1 - 20
Medium	€ 501 – 1,000	41 – 80 hours	21 - 50
Large	€ 1,001 – 2,000	81 + hours	51 - 100
Extra Large	€ 2,001 – 5,000	Two weeks +	100 - 800
Exceptional	One event €8,500		One event 30,000