## **BODIES IN TRANSLATION- Activating the Arts stream**

A DRAFT PROCESS FOR WORKING WITH ARTISTS AND CURATORS

Bodies in Translation: Activist Art, Technology, and Access to Life is a research project that creates collaborative partnerships between artists, arts organizations, activists, scholars, and educators. We cultivate activist art produced by disabled, d/Deaf, fat, Mad, and E/elder people with the goal of expanding understandings of vitality and advancing social justice.

Michael Orsini and Christine (Chrissy) Kelly are Stream Leads for the Activating the Arts stream of this grant. In collaboration with local artists in Manitoba and Ottawa, this stream explores how art contributes to embodied forms of activism. Specifically, this stream aims to develop a disability-arts-informed evaluation tool that may be adaptable for use across a range of artists and/or art organizations.

## **PROCESS FOR ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION**

1. Identify and meet with artist or curator, share information and learn from one another, develop team.
   1. (*researcher*) Describe the overarching BIT project, the local project, the utility and worth of evaluation, and the potential benefit(s) of creating an evaluative tool.
   2. (*artist/curator*) Describe your overall approach or philosophy to your work, identify a potential event or exhibit and what the event might be about (e.g., is there theme or message?). What would you like to accomplish with the event?
2. Determine a shared purpose
   1. (*artist/curator*) What do you hope to achieve from the evaluative process?
   2. (*researcher*) What do you hope to achieve from the collaboration? (knowledge generation, creation of an evaluative tool)
   3. (*team*) How can these dual goals be combined?
3. (*team)* Determine timeline and budget
   1. When and where will the event occur, how frequently or over what time frame?
   2. What are the resource requirements?
      1. What is the budget/cost for the event?
      2. How will the research/evaluation project support and facilitate the artist/event?
4. (*team*) Can we foresee and mitigate any barriers or uncertainties?
5. Choose items to evaluate
   1. (*artist/curator*) Generate a handful of questions: What don’t you know that, if you did know, would make a difference in your work? What do you want to find out?   
        
      Example questions: what factors support and/or act as barriers to producing the event, how does the broader social/political/cultural context impact the event, what is the audience experience of the event, how has the event changed audience members’ feelings/understandings, how can we expand our audience, what is the experience of the performers/artists, how does the event support accessibility and/or inclusion of diverse groups
   2. (*team*) Refine the questions: Prioritize which answers, when known, would be more helpful (or more interesting). Ask ourselves, why do we want to know this?
6. (*team*) Determine measures. (examples listed below)

Identify audience/visitors

* Number of event attendees, tickets sold, income earned
* Demographics
  + Season ticket holders
  + Donors
  + Patron loyalty
  + Art event consumption activities
* Life story
* Identity as art consumer

Movement and time at exhibit/event

* Gloves
* Spatial mapping
* Time
* Stopping
* Rests
* Length of stay
* Time of visit

Motivations/expectations

* Intrinsic and extrinsic

Accessibility

* How do people respond to access features?
* How to people experience access features?

Audience/visitor response and engagement

* affective, emotional, cognitive and conative
* Before – during - after
* Individual relationships or responses to content
* Overall audience response
  + Restlessness, leaving, applause, laughter
* Performer’s response/relationship with audience/viewer

Audience/visitor assessment of art/event

* Overall event or piece
* Specific factors of event or piece
* Physical space/environment

Ideas & Change

* Prior and post-knowledge
* Behavior change
* Attitude change

Organizational process of art group

* Values and goals
* Experiences of artists, volunteers, employees, collaborators
* Organizational assessment

1. (*team*) Select appropriate and feasible techniques (examples listed below)

* Digital story telling
* Survey, cross-sectional or longitudinal
* Observations
* Interviews (before-during-after)
  + Walk through interview
  + Life story interview
  + Use of lived experience guide to conduct interview
* Group discussion before/after a show
* Written responses
* Talk-back wall
* Arts-based response – body mapping, scrapbook, poetry
* Blog/twitter/other social media response
* Interaction with online material
* Photovoice
* Photo elicitation
* Diary
* Spatial mapping
* Ethnography
* Accessibility audit
* Administrative data (ticket sales etc.)
* Artist reflections
* Other