

Evaluating your photovoice or digital storytelling project

How do you know whether your project has made a difference? What photovoice or digital storytelling adaptations or changes might your team make along the way? This infographic invites facilitators, researchers, and program leads to reflect on how they might evaluate their participatory visual methods (PVM) project. It is produced in partnership between the Centre for Community Based Research and Trillium Health Partners - Institute for Better Health and made possible through support from the Evaluation Capacity Network.



Why evaluate your PVM projects?



- To understand co-researchers/participants, facilitators' or community advisory board members' experiences with the project
- To identify, account for, and respond to ethical tensions (e.g., cultural appropriateness, accessibility, power dynamics)
- To build in moments for reflexive practice and team debriefs
- To explore the impact of a project on co-researchers/participants, as well as broader communities after exhibits or screening events
- To gather evidence-based recommendations for your team, other researchers, and the field

Consider types of evaluation

Evaluation is an organized and systematic approach to collecting information that helps teams critically reflect on the activities, impacts, and effectiveness of their projects.

	Process Evaluation 	Outcome Evaluation 
Focus	How it went (workshops, prompts, recruitment, etc.)? What is working well? What could be improved?	What changed as a result of the initiative?
Dimensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safe expression • power dynamics • dialogue • environmental factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual vs. collective change • gain in knowledge or skills • access to and use of resources • understanding of inequities

Ideas for evaluating PVM projects

Choose methods that best fit your evaluation purpose, capacity, and accessibility needs of participants.

★ Surveys ★

- Pre and post workshop surveys with co-researchers
- Post exhibit or post-screening surveys with audiences
- Short surveys with community advisory board members

Conversations

- Project reflections with co-researchers/participants
- Community partner interviews
- Facilitator field notes, journals and team debriefs

Arts-based methods

- Project closing discussions (using objects, theatre, creative writing, etc)
- Visual methods to spark reflections

A co-researcher shared an insight about evaluation in the following study: “Adapting participatory visual methods to online and hybrid settings with diverse communities”.



Co-researcher

I think it could be cool to have somewhere to share your opinions on the process that's anonymous and maybe available throughout [the project] and at the end. I think lots of times when feedback is requested, it's usually in a group setting... For me, I'm pretty open, but I know sometimes people might not feel as comfortable, especially if you have an opinion that's different than the rest of the group.

Looking for real world examples? : References and suggested readings

Budig, K., Diez, J., Conde, P., Sastre, M., Hernán, M., & Franco, M. (2018). Photovoice and Empowerment: Evaluating the Transformative Potential of a Participatory Action Research Project. *BMC public health*, 18(1), 432. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-018-5335-7>

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Gubrium, A. C., Fiddian-Green, A., Lowe, S., DiFulvio, G., & Del Toro-Mejías, L. (2016). Measuring down: Evaluating digital storytelling as a process for narrative health promotion. *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(13), 1787-1801. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316649353>



Listen to our podcast episode on co-researcher experiences with photovoice. Available on Spotify, Amazon, and YouTube.

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