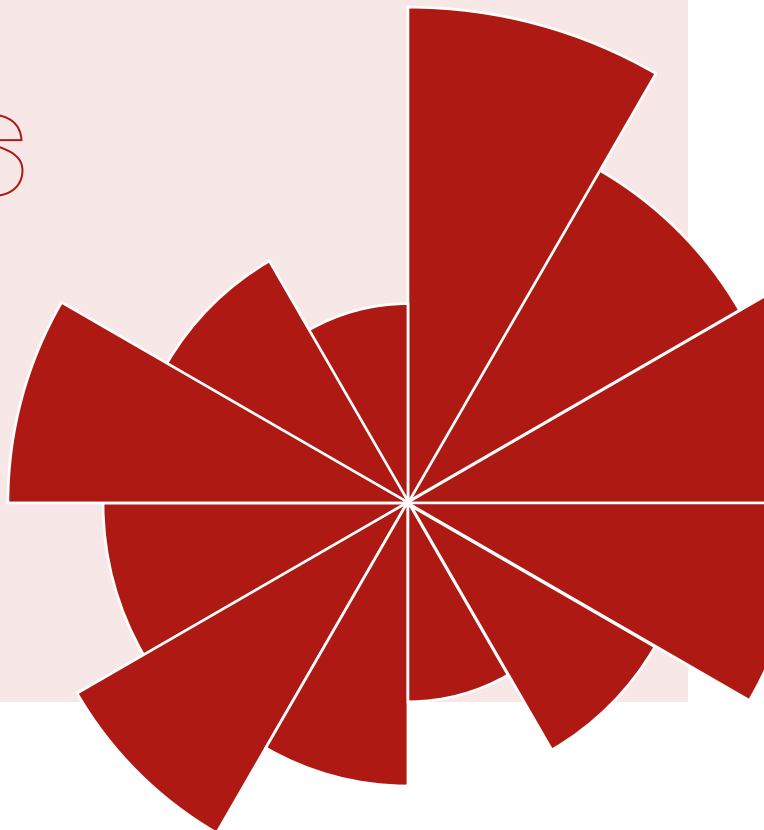


EXPERIENCE IMPACT COMPASS

A framework for capturing the
impact of experiences







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Experience Impact Compass – an introduction
Seismonaut, August 2023

Second edition

“The spreadsheet can tell us about visitor numbers, lending figures, how many people have seen the film or bought a ticket for the concert. It indicates something about consumption, but not much in terms of value that art and culture provide to people and society.

There is a need for an expansion of the language for the value of culture. The Experience Impact Compass offers this aspect.”

Christian Laursen, Head of Libraries and the Citizen Service Centre,
Roskilde Municipality

INTRODUCTION

This guide introduces you to the Experience Impact Compass. In it, we describe the structure of the compass and show you how to use it.

The basic ambition of the Experience Impact Compass is to create a qualified language for the impact of culture on the public.

The guests' experiences are in focus

The Experience Impact Compass offers a supplement to guest statistics, which primarily provides insight into quantitative matters (number of visits, loans, participants, gender distribution, age distribution, etc.). With the Experience Impact Compass, we create a framework for examining the impact of experiences. Here we get an insight into what impact culture actually has for the public which consumes it. When we work with the Experience Impact Compass, we always use the experience of the guest as a starting point.

The Experience Impact Compass

The Experience Impact Compass consists of 4

dimensions and 12 parameters. Together, they form a language to reveal the experiences people have in their encounter with culture. It helps you to ask the right questions and fully probe the impact of the experience for the guest.

The impact profile

With the Experience Impact Compass, you can prepare an impact profile, which can be used to analyse, evaluate and document the impact of the experiences you create. You can create impact profiles at different levels – from a single activity to the institution as a whole. The guide describes how you choose the right focus area and prepare an impact profile.

Impact expansion

The Experience Impact Compass allows you to identify relevant opportunities for impact expansion. Impact expansion is when you work strategically to expand or change the impact profile of the activity or institution you work with.

Several approaches to the method

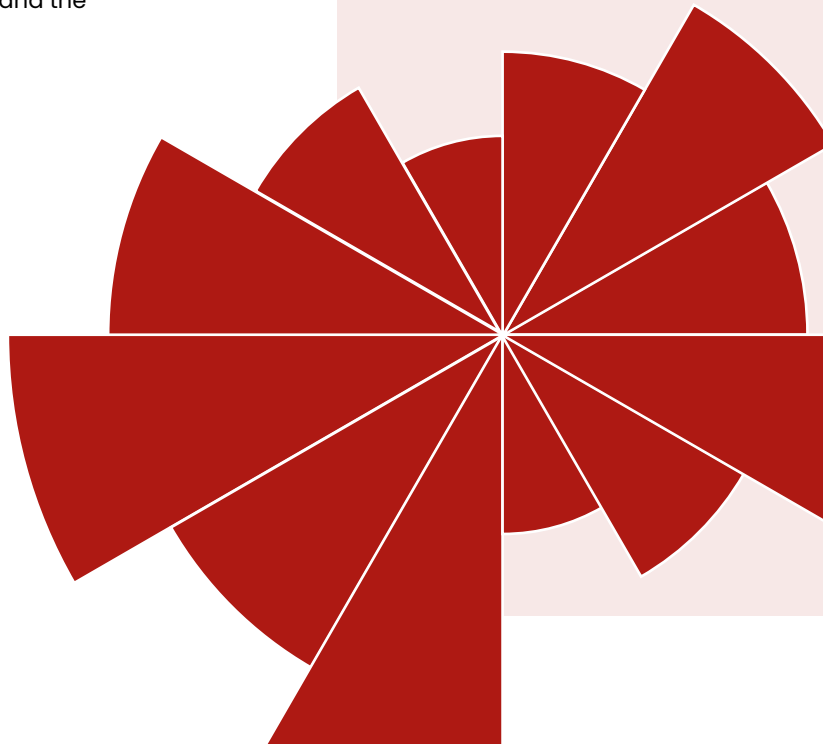
There are several approaches to getting started with the Experience Impact Compass.

The compass can form the basis for data collection, e.g. in connection with guest surveys or evaluations.

Here you can use the compass as a frame to develop relevant and nuanced questions for studies – qualitative and quantitative. You can also use the compass as a starting point for dialogue, collaboration and development, which does not necessarily require you to collect new data.

When the compass is used as a dialogue tool, you must try to put yourself in the shoes of the guest and experience your offer from the guest's perspective. The purpose of this guide is to help you get started with using the Experience Impact Compass and the method behind it.

Have fun!



THE COMPASS IS FOR THOSE WHO WANT...

TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF CULTURE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PUBLIC

With the Experience Impact Compass, we put the experiences of the public at the centre. It is about getting to know what the public actually experiences, and then interpreting the impact of the experience based on the 4 dimensions of the compass.

DEVELOP NEW OR EXISTING ACTIVITIES AND OFFERS

You can use the Experience Impact Compass to develop new or existing activities. Here, the compass can help focus on the public's unfulfilled wishes and needs, and thus expand the activity's impact for the public.

NUANCE THE POLITICAL DISCOURSE

The Experience Impact Compass provides an opportunity to nuance the political discourse. It is always useful to know how many people participated in an event or bought a ticket for the performance. However, it is also very valuable to know what the experience actually meant to those who participated. With the compass, you can focus on the human experience and thus broaden the strategic and political discourse to include more than the economics and target figures.

INSPIRED BY THE CULTURAL VALUE PROJECT

The Experience Impact Compass was developed with inspiration from the British research project, The AHRC Cultural Value Project, which today continues to research the value of culture under the name Centre for Cultural Value.

The AHRC Cultural Value Project uncovers many years of research into the impact of culture, and draws the conclusion that “what emerges from the Cultural Value Project is the imperative to reposition first-hand, individual experience of arts and culture at the heart of enquiry into cultural value” (The AHRC Cultural Value Project (2016): Understanding the Value of Arts & Culture).

At Seismonaut, we have developed the Experience Impact Compass on the basis of some key insights and principles that arise from this research project. We have applied the principles to investigate what impact different cultural experiences have on the public in actuality. We have analysed and mapped the impact of everything from feature films, visual arts and performing arts to public libraries, cultural heritage museums and churches.

Along the way, we have developed the Experience Impact Compass as a method and a tool. Initially, we created the compass to structure and visualise our results. We then learned that the compass was suitable as a tool for evaluating, improving and developing the experiences of the public.

We also discovered that the compass can be used at a strategic-political level to nuance the understanding of what cultural value is and what we actually want to achieve with culture. This can lead to the decision, at a strategic and political level, to revise the success parameters you look for in a cultural policy, a strategic effort, a performance contract or the like.

On our website, you can see some examples of how we have worked with the Experience Impact Compass for the Bikubenfonden, Roskilde Central Library and the Danish Film Institute, respectively.

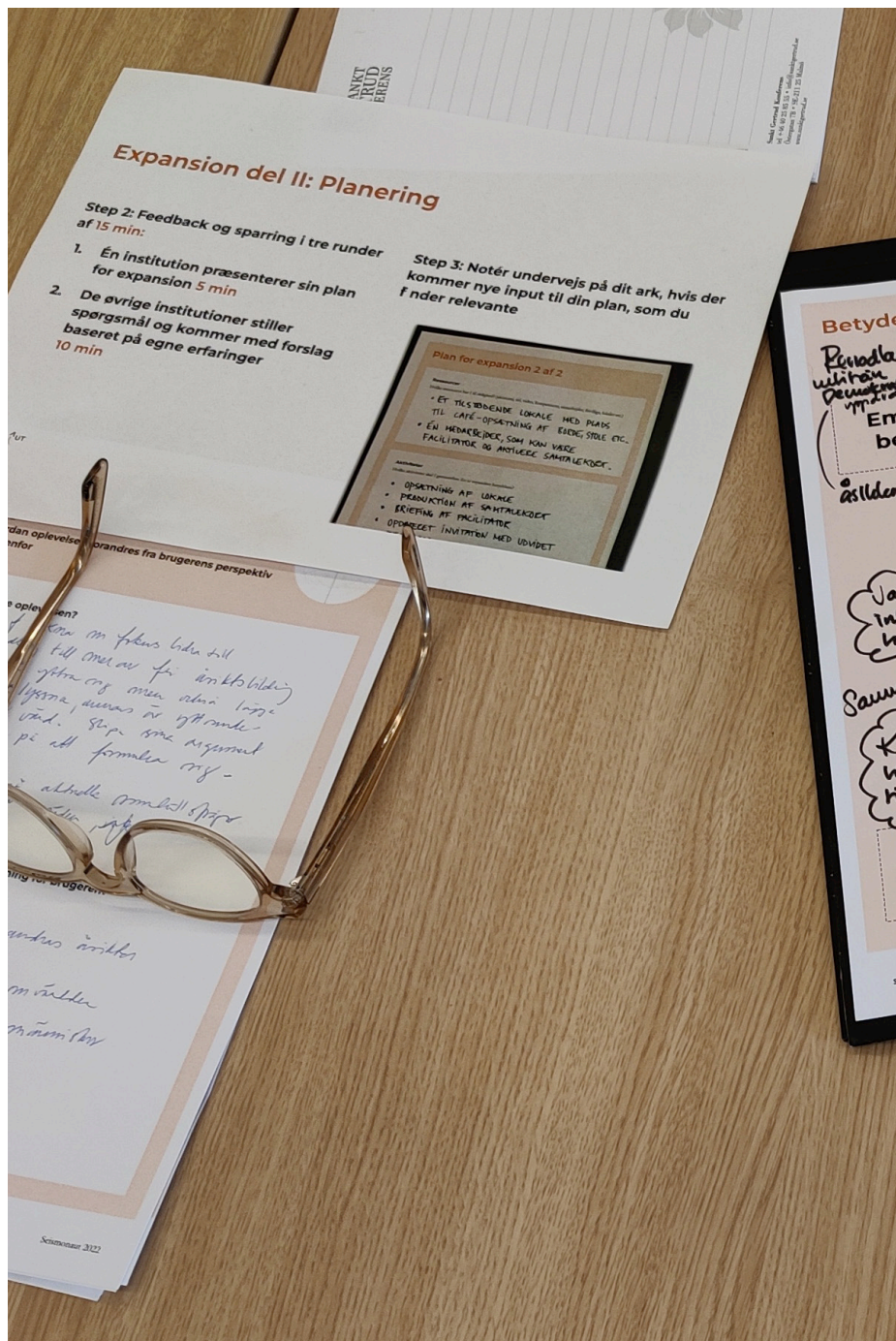
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“It is only once we have started with individual experience that we can then work outwards, and understand the kinds of benefit that culture may have for society, for communities, for democracy, for public health and wellbeing, for urban life and regional growth.”

The AHRC Cultural Value Project (2016):
'Understanding the value of arts & culture'

“In the past, only experts have been asked about the impact of culture and not ordinary people. It has always been the expert’s understanding of the subject that has dominated. There is a great democratising potential in turning it around and examining the individual’s experience.”

Tone Roald, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Copenhagen



GET STARTED WITH THE EXPERIENCE

The best way to familiarise oneself with the Experience Impact Compass is to use it actively. On the following pages, we present three steps to get off to a good start.

Download worksheets and the guide as a PDF



**EXPERIENCE
IMPACT**

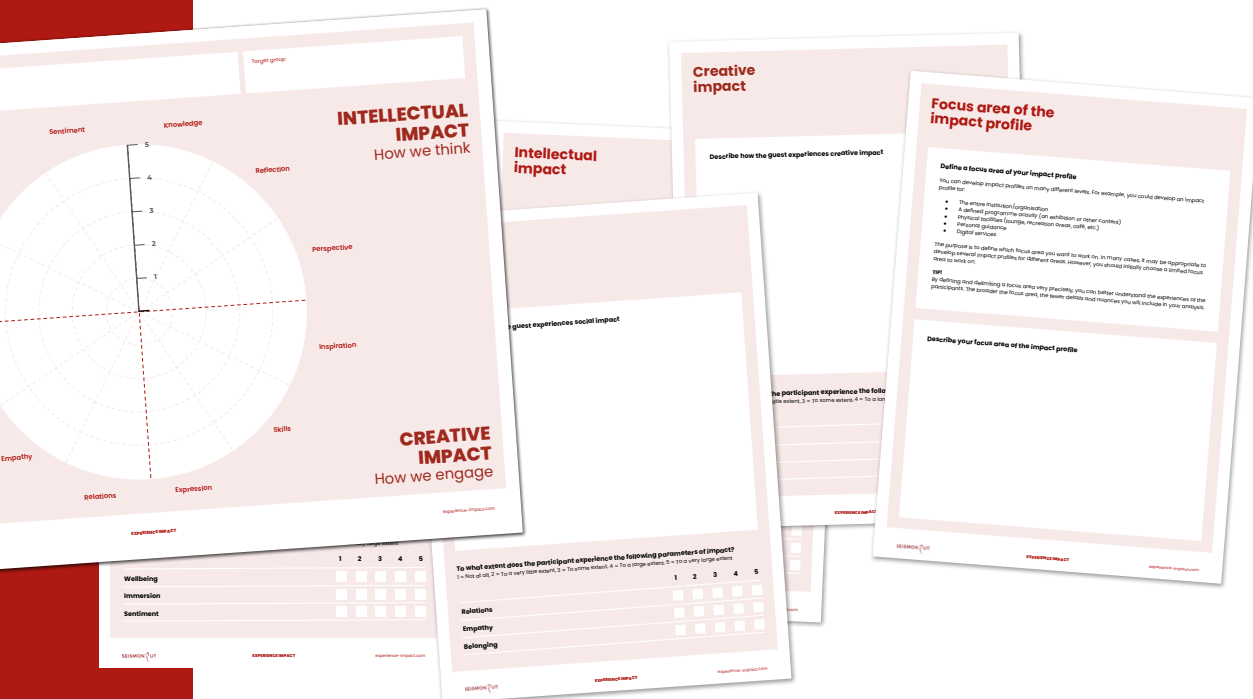
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1 GET TO KNOW THE COMPASS

2 ANALYSE YOUR OWN IMPACT PROFILE

3 EXPAND THE IMPACT FOR YOUR GUESTS





GET TO KNOW THE COMPASS

The four dimensions

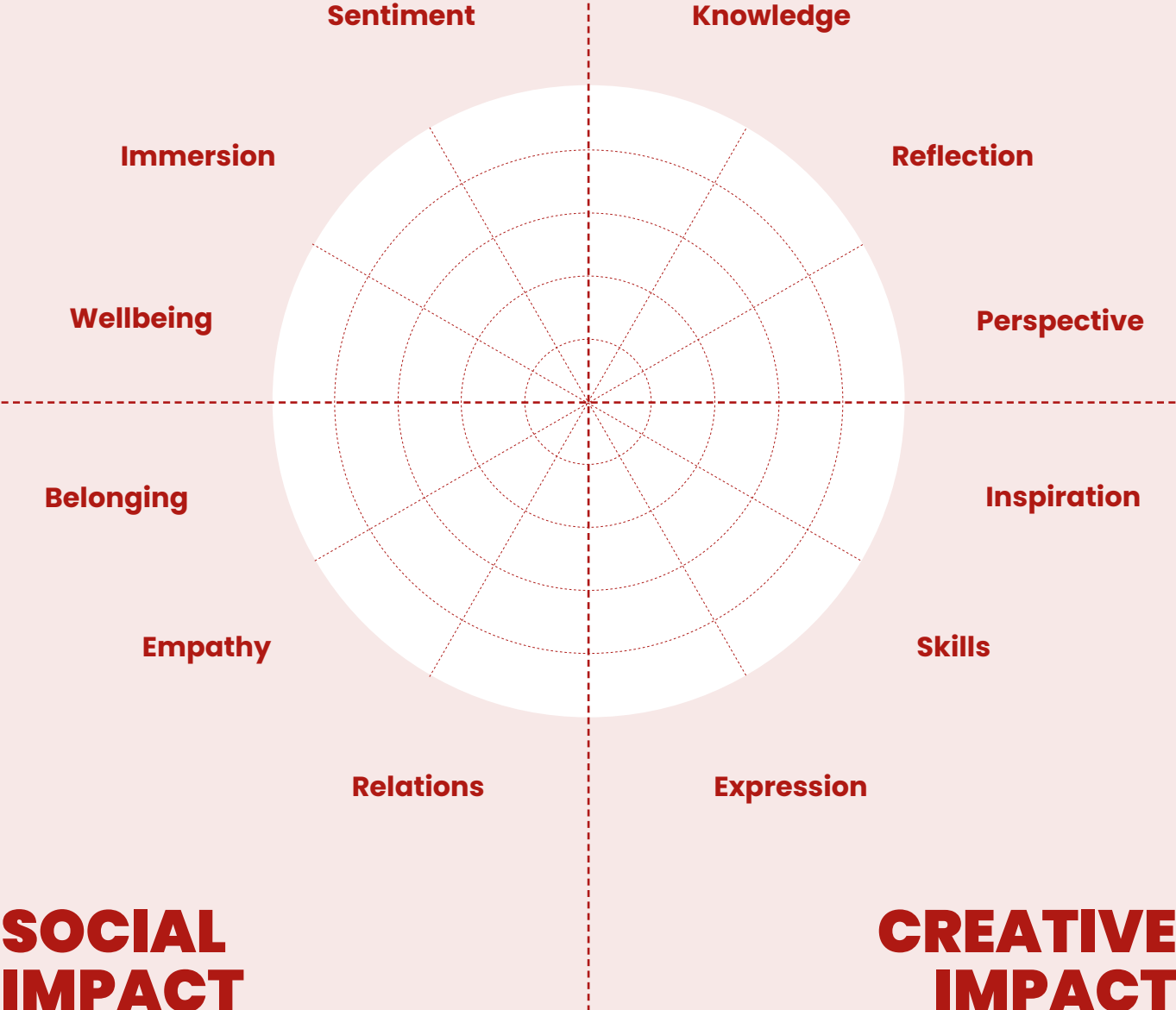
The Experience Impact Compass consists of four dimensions: The emotional impact, the intellectual impact, the social impact and the creative impact. The four dimensions are not isolated from one another, but are often connected with each other.

12 parameters of impact

The four dimensions contain three impact parameters each. The 12 parameters in total form a framework for understanding how the experience impacts the guest. The 12 parameters of impact are described on the following pages.

**EMOTIONAL
IMPACT**

**INTELLECTUAL
IMPACT**



EMOTIONAL IMPACT

WHAT WE FEEL

The emotional dimension pertains to the guest's emotional experiences in the encounter with culture. The three parameters of impact in the emotional dimension are:

Wellbeing

When we let our guards down – that feeling of being at ease that enables us to relax and simply feel good in the moment.

Immersion

When we get carried away – the feeling of leaving reality for a moment and immersing ourselves in the present.

Sentiment

When an experience activates our senses and stirs our emotions – whether we're excited, entertained, frightened or provoked.

INTELLECTUAL IMPACT

WHAT WE THINK

The intellectual dimension is about the guest's thought processes. Through experiences we can gain new knowledge, reflect on a topic or be presented with new perspectives on ourselves or our world around us.

The three impact parameters in the intellectual dimension are:

Knowledge

When we learn something new – the experience triggers our intellect by not only enlightening us but elevating our understanding.

Reflection

When we're encouraged to think twice – what we've experienced makes us want to reflect on the experience and how it affects us.

Perspective

When an experience shifts our beliefs – it influences not only how we perceive the world around us but ourselves too.

SOCIAL IMPACT

WHAT CONNECTS US

The social dimension is about the experiences of the guests with each other. The social impact arises both around conversations and through interaction with other people, but can also be more subtly present, such as the experience of being alone with others – an experience that many will recognise from, e.g. a library.

The three impact parameters in the social dimension are:

Inspiration

When an experience triggers new ideas – we're motivated to drive change by doing something new or doing the same things differently.

Skill

When we're empowered to create something – we're not only enabled by a new skill or craft but a certain confidence too.

Expression

When we just can't help but participate – expressing ourselves creatively becomes the enabler for engaging with the experience.

CREATIVE IMPACT

WHERE WE EXPRESS OURSELVES

The creative dimension is about the guest's experience of self-expression. It may be that the guest creates something material in a workshop or the like, or that they participate actively in filling in the framework that an experience, escape, a work or the like creates.

The three impact parameters in the creative dimension are:

Relations

When we experience something together – whether it's with family, friends or strangers, the presence of and interaction with others affects us.

Empathy

When an experience makes us want to level with one another – through compassion, we're not only making an effort to understand but to relate.

Belonging

When we feel heard and seen – the intangible sense of togetherness that arises through acceptance and inclusion.the moment.

“We are now on track to carry out our large-vision survey – and the Experience Impact Compass was an excellent tool for basing the design of the survey on.

Based on the Experience Impact Compass, we have gained a valuable and fantastic insight into how the Aalborg Libraries impact the citizens and, not least, what impact we must have on them in the future.”

Mette Nissen, Library Consultant at Aalborg Libraries

ANALYSE YOUR OWN IMPACT PROFILE

CHOOSE A FOCUS AREA

To get the most out of the Experience Impact Compass, it is important that you define a focus area for what you want to work with.

The Experience Impact Compass can be used to analyse the impact of a specific activity, a particular offer, a special place, etc. – or you can use it to analyse the impact of your institution as a whole. Limiting your focus area to a specific target group you want to focus on is also possible.

The list on the right shows some examples of how you can define your focus area. Ultimately, it is up to you to define the focus area that suits your needs.

Focus area of the impact profile

Define a focus area of your impact profile

You can develop impact profiles on many different levels. For example, you could develop an impact profile for:

- The entire institution/organisation
- A defined programme/setting (an institution or other context)
- Physical facilities (e.g. sports, recreation areas, café, etc.)
- Personal guidance
- Digital services

The purpose is to define which focus area you want to work on. In many cases, it may be appropriate to develop several impact profiles for different areas. However, you should probably choose a limited focus area to work on.

TIP: By defining and delimiting a focus area very precisely, you can better understand the experiences of the participants. The broader the focus area, the fewer details and nuances you will include in your analysis.

Describe your focus area of the impact profile

Physical facilities

You can examine the impact of your workshops, exhibition halls, recreational areas, restaurant or café, outdoor areas, etc.

The collection

You can examine the impact of your collection (physical and/or digital).

Selected activity

You can investigate the impact of selected events, special exhibitions, workshops etc. which you may offer to your guests.

The entire institution

You can examine the impact of your entire institution or defined parts of it – if you are part of a larger organisation.

Other things

In other words, you can explore the impact of everything you do and create for your guests. We recommend that you practice on a smaller and well-defined focus area before moving on to more complex analyses.

ANALYSE YOUR IMPACT PROFILE

In short, an impact profile is a visual impression of the meaning you create for your guests.

An impact profile is drawn into the Experience Impact Compass using the 4 dimensions with 3 parameters of impact in each.

All fields contain a scale from 1-5 (see right). Your impact profile is drawn in by relating to each individual parameter of impact and marking the relevant value on the scale.

You can draw your impact profile based on two different approaches:

1. You can collect concrete data (qualitative or quantitative), where you actively ask about the experiences of the guests of the 12 parameters of impact and translate the results into values on the scale.
2. You can use your existing experience and knowledge of the guests as a starting point, and on that basis enter the values as an estimate.

5-point scale

The numerical value in the compass goes from 1-5 according to the following scale:

- 1 = Not at all
- 2 = To a very little extent
- 3 = To some extent
- 4 = To a large extent
- 5 = To a very large extent

Use the worksheets to review each dimension and estimate the numerical value for each parameter of impact.

Finally, you draw the values onto the impact profile, which can now form the basis for discussions, development and expansion of the experience.



**EXPAND THE
IMPACT FOR
YOUR GUESTS**



An impact profile can be used as a starting point for a new discussion about how you can expand the impact of a given experience for your guests.

When you have an overview of how your experience or institution as a whole creates an impact, you can start the discussion about what potentials there are in developing the experience and thereby expand the impact for the guests.

One can develop experiences and expand the impact in different directions. To help you off to a good start, we have collected some tips that can inspire and help you get started.

Note!

It is important to note that it is not always relevant to expand the impact meaning of a given experience. It may be that there is no need for it, or perhaps you do not have the time or resources for such an expansion.

In the same way, it is not a meaningful goal that every cultural experience must score high on all 4 dimensions and all 12 parameters in the compass.

It is your own professional judgement as to whether the analysis of your impact profile gives reason to adjust the experience.

FIVE MEASURES FOR EXPANDING THE IMPACT

Contents

You can develop the content of your experiences by, e.g. exhibiting your collection in a new way, put it together in new ways or work with completely different types of content.

Time

You can develop the experience in time by, e.g. allowing the guest to meet you online before they physically arrive or by making sure they get something to take home that can prolong the experience.

Spaces

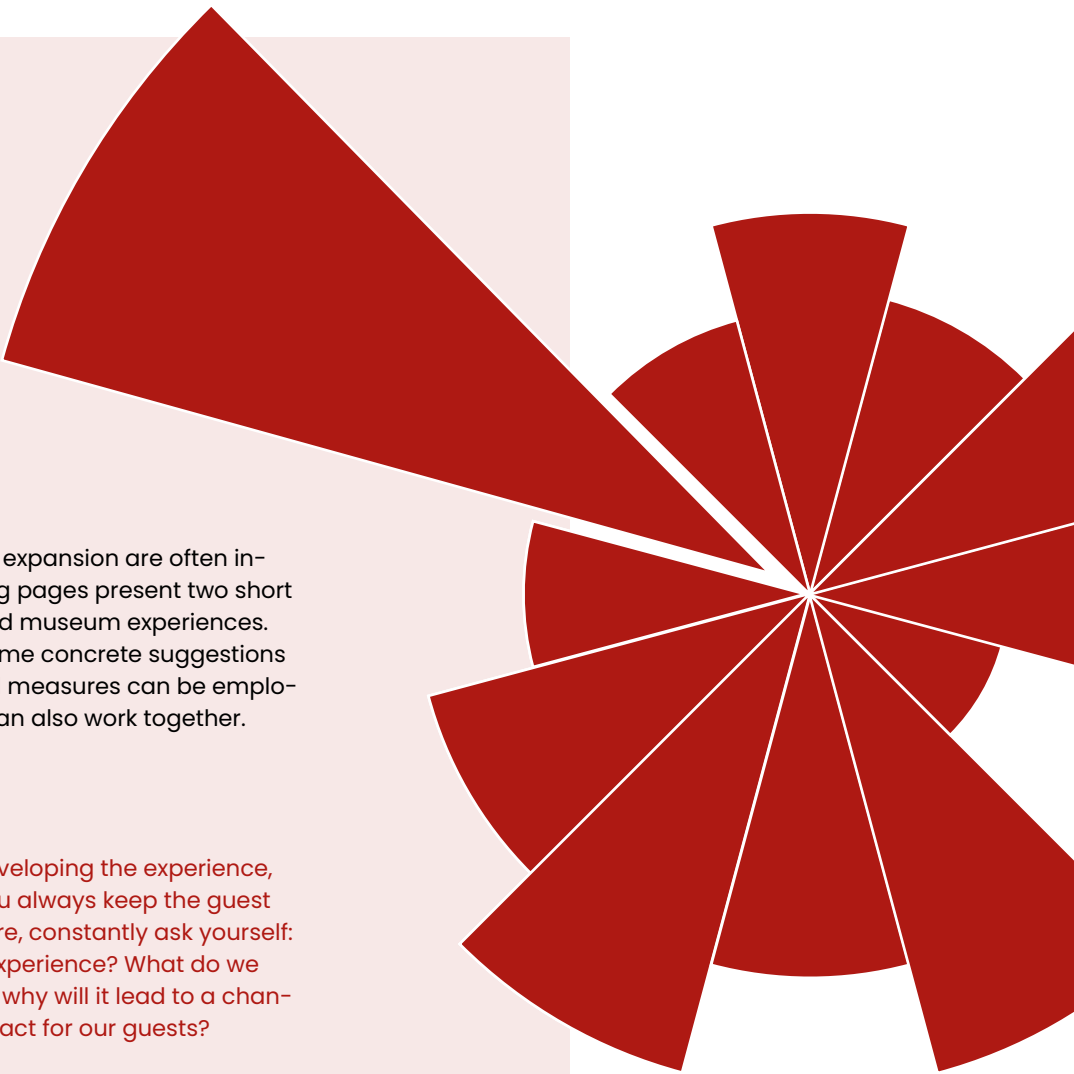
You can develop the experience by bringing more spaces and places into play – internally at your own premises or together with external partners. Spaces affect us differently, and they can change the overall experience of the guests.

Organisation

You can also develop the experience through collaborations with other organisations. Different skills, expertise and approaches can be used here, which has the potential to change the experience.

Media

You can develop the experience by employing media, e.g. by addressing the guest digitally or by using new materials and formats in your communication.



The five measures for expansion are often interlinked. The following pages present two short examples of expanded museum experiences. The examples give some concrete suggestions on how the presented measures can be employed – and how they can also work together.

Tip!

When you work on developing the experience, it is important that you always keep the guest at the centre. Therefore, constantly ask yourself: What do our guests experience? What do we want to change? And why will it lead to a changed or expanded impact for our guests?

Two examples from Rudolph Tegner's Museum and Statue Park

COOPERATION WITH A CAFÉ

An art museum, which does not have its own café, collaborates with a nearby restaurant, where guests can dine and drink coffee after the museum experience.

This gives the guests the opportunity to sit down and have a chat about the experience. This can expand the social and emotional impact of the experience.

In the example, the following expansion measures are employed:

Time: Extended experience.

Spaces: From one space to several spaces.

Organisation: From a single organisation to a cross-functional collaboration.





YOGA AT THE MUSEUM

An art museum collaborates with a yoga studio. It attracts a new type of visitor, who gets the opportunity to experience the exhibition space and its contents in a new way.

This can expand the social and emotional impact of the art museum, as well as connect to the creative and intellectual impact through the content and character of the yoga course.

In the example, the following expansion measures are employed:

Content: New activity at the museum.

Organisation: From a single organisation to a cross-functional collaboration.

TALK TO US

Seismonaut has developed the Experience Impact Compass as an open-source tool. So the materials are freely available to everyone.

If you need help to get started or to master the compass's many options, we can also provide you with additional assistance. On the right, you can see an overview of some of the things we offer. Don't hesitate to reach out if you have a project in mind!



Introductory workshop

- Get to know the background and purpose with the experience impact compass
- Get the 4 dimensions and the 12 parameters of impact under the skin
- Get inspiration for how you can work with the Experience Impact Compass

Masterclasses

- Learn to work with the Experience Impact Compass and get concrete tools to perform:
 - Guest surveys
 - Evaluations
 - Development of new or existing experiences (Impact expansion)

Events and community

- Share knowledge and experience with other users of the Experience Impact Compass
- Sign up for our newsletter, which is only about the Experience Impact Compass and keep up to date with events, updates and other activities

Co-creation

- Get expert help to develop and implement strategic initiatives based on the Experience Impact Compass



**Andreas Linnet
Jessen**

Head of Experience, Seismonaut
alj@seismonaut.com
+45 3115 8945



**Nicklas Hilding
Andersen**

Chief Advisor, Seismonaut
nha@seismonaut.com
+45 5384 5051

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