Scoping Need

Taking the first steps to scope out a project

This toolkit is an introduction to the first steps of developing an idea into a project. It covers establishing what your idea is, gauging interest in your idea, seeking out networks and partnerships, and evaluating evidence of the need for your project. This toolkit is intended to be used mostly in the beginning stage **before** you start to actively plan your project.

This toolkit is part of a series that we are developing here in the Arts and Culture Projects team at the University of Bedfordshire, to complement the Heritage Enterprise Hub

You do not have to cover everything with just one project plan or achieve everything you want to achieve with just one project.

<u>Gauging interest and need</u>

Think about why you want to do the project. Does it come from a passionate interest of yours in something that you want to explore, or has it come from finding a gap in people's understanding and provision – a need you want to meet?

If your project idea comes from a passion of yours, you still need to find an audience, and evidence for why it is important that you do this work **now**. If what you want to do doesn't quite lend itself to a project that meets the need you've established, it's not the end of the world. Could you reframe it to yourself and others? Think about the overlap between your interests and the interests of other people and focus on that. You don't have to align with the top priorities of everyone you speak to, as that isn't possible. But finding the areas where you have things in common, and can collaborate, will help.

if you are seeking to provide a needs-led response then establishing need is the first thing you need to do – which means asking other people where they feel the gaps are and what they would most appreciate in terms of what they can get access and what they can get involved in.

Talking to other people about your idea can be beneficial in several ways. It can help you find an audience or beneficiary group for your project – people who would appreciate the work and benefit from it. It can help you find stakeholders and partners – people who want to get involved and might want to work on it with you. Floating the idea of what you want to provide also helps you to assess how interested people are in it, and you can find out from them what they want and need. When your interests align with those of another person or organisation, there's probably work you could do together.

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You may come out of this evidence-gathering phase with lots of different responses, but if the same thing gets brought up over and over again it is clearly a gap that your project may be able to fill.

Talking to people about your project idea doesn't have to be formal. You don't need to

you will be able to track the development of your idea over time and

We hope this toolkit is useful to you in your heritage practice and research. If you are interested in engaging with and/or working in the cultural and heritage sectors in Luton and Bedfordshire, for example if you would like to run a community heritage project, please take a look at what we have going on through our funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund – our events through the Heritage Enterprise Hub, and the Heritage Impact Accelerator programme for cultural, community and heritage practitioners – to get involved.

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