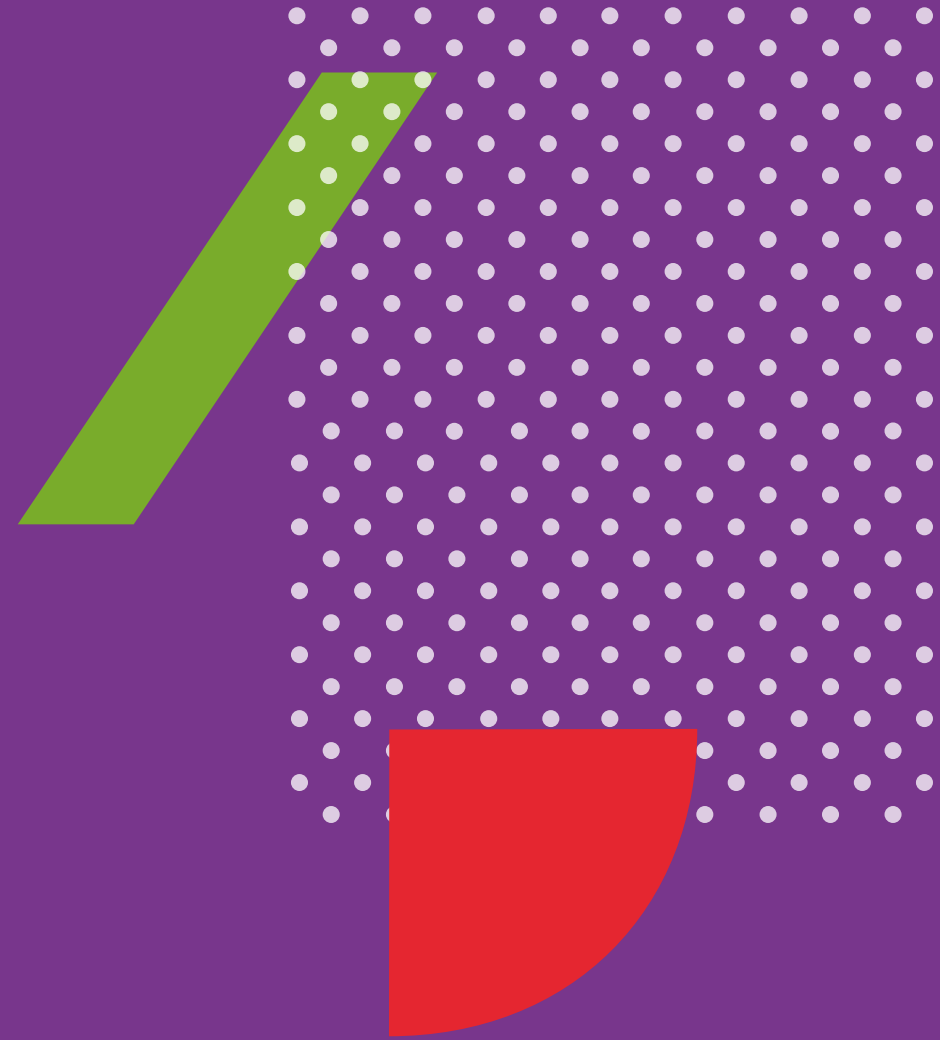# POWER OF POP FUND

Monitoring and evaluating impact in the pop culture for social change field:
A toolkit for UK organisations

Alice Sachrajda
and Saphia Youssef
April 2023

2POC SKIN DEEP BRIDGE COUNTERPOINTS. 'HEARD OKRE

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Do you ever feel daunted or overwhelmed by monitoring and evaluating your cultural change work? Well if so, read on! This guide is intended as a way to demystify the tools we can use to measure and evaluate our work and impact in the pop culture for social change field. And, in doing so, we hope to inspire you to view monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) as a valuable part of your creative process that enhances your work and your impact.

What is Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning?

Monitoring, evaluation and learning is about assessing your ways of working and reflecting on where and how improvements and adjustments can be made.

Each of the three terms are distinct from one another:

- **Monitoring** is the continuous collection of data to measure if and how you are progressing towards your objectives. It also helps you identify any unintended issues or outcomes.

- **Evaluation** is the assessment of the design, implementation and results of an ongoing or completed project.

- **Learning** is reflecting on the information gathered so that you and others can improve what you are doing now and in the future.

At the outset, we want to make it clear that we are not setting out fixed ways of working or definitive expectations. Rather, we want to help you to think about the tools available to you and the variety of methods you might like to consider. All organisations are different and so these approaches may be more useful to some than others and the type of method you use may also vary from project to project – there is no right or wrong way of 'doing' MEL. It may also change over time as your work and your organisation evolves. A lot of MEL work will involve experimentation, openness to new methodologies and finding the best approach that works for you and your organisation.

This guide is set out as follows:

Impact

First we reflect on how we can measure impact in the pop culture for social change field.

Tool box

We then open the tool box to unpack the sorts of methods and approaches that can be used for social and cultural change evaluation.

Ecosystem

Then we reflect on the broader work that is needed to evaluate the pop culture for social change ecosystem and note how your work, as a key player in this space, feeds into the broader field as a whole.

Resources

Finally, we share a set of resources and open source materials that may be useful as you develop your work.

Definitions

We are conscious of how easy it is for us to fall into the trap of using abstract language and jargon. So, we want to start by explaining what we mean when we refer to the following terms and phrases:

Pop culture
"The conversations, big ideas, major narratives and immersive stories – films, TV, music, books, games, political speeches, journalism and more – experienced by mass audiences of millions of people every day."

– Pop Culture Collaborative

**Pop culture for social change
(including the pop culture for social change field and ecosystem)**
"Work that connects social and environmental justice to pop culture and entertainment. We take our lead from influential organisations in the US such as Pop Culture Collaborative that have carved out this niche and coined this term. We refer to this space as a 'field' and to the people and organisations working in this space as 'the ecosystem'."

– New Brave World

Narratives
"Narratives are patterns of stories that are held by individuals or groups and contain beliefs about the way the world works. They can be harmful, beneficial, or both."

– Narrative Strategy: The Basics

Narrative power
"The idea that the stories, images, films, games and media we produce and interact with are embedded with power. As such, they define whose voices are worth listening to, whose lives matter and what we imagine as possible for our society."

– New Brave World

MEASURING SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IMPACT

We all want our work to have a positive impact. And often we can feel intuitively that our work has value. But when trusts and foundations are investing in the work that we do, we need to prove to them that there is merit in our ways of working and that the work is generating the impact we believe it is having.

But how can we measure something as big and as complex as our culture and the extent to which creative content, ideas and narratives are resonating with a broader audience?

Our view is that we absolutely can measure and demonstrate our impact, but we need to be clear about the sorts of questions we are asking and the types of impact we are looking to evaluate.

So, for example, it is probably unfeasible to expect an organisation to show how their work is influencing mainstream pop culture at large. Quite apart from the challenge of demonstrating cause and effect, it sends us into the realms of quantifying and qualifying reach and sets up unrealistic goals and expectations. We could fall into the trap of producing vanity metrics or attributing unfounded impact to our work. Funders could also place too much pressure on grantees to deliver and demonstrate quantifiable impact.

But there are impact indicators that we absolutely can look to measure and evaluate. And, in doing so, we can begin to build up a picture of the value of our work and its contribution to influencing the pop culture for social change field as a whole.

Asking ourselves the following questions can help us begin to understand the impact of our work in the pop culture for social change field:

- **How is our work contributing to a shift in narratives?** i.e. What narratives are we moving away from and which are we moving towards? How are these narratives resonating with different audiences?

- **How are we influencing the power dynamics in the creative industries and changing ways of working?** i.e. Who is making decisions? Who is involved? How are practices, approaches and attitudes changing? How are we shifting power within the industry to centre those with lived experience? How are we investing in the leadership of Black, POC, migrant, refugee and other marginalised creatives to ensure they have a sustainable career and create a legacy within the creative industries?

- **How is our work creating the space for a multiplicity of narratives?** i.e. How is it disrupting dominant or stereotypical narratives that only portray certain viewpoints or perspectives in the mainstream? How are we giving a platform to new voices, a variety of experiences and a diversity of stories?

- **How is our work strengthening the pop culture for social change ecosystem?** i.e. How are we forging networks across and between industries? How are relationships being enhanced and how is trust being established? How have these connections evolved over time? What partnerships and collaborations are developing within this ecosystem?

UNPACKING THE TOOL BOX

Below we set out a series of methods and tools that can be used to explore and evaluate pop culture for social change work and its impact. We encourage you to explore, test and reflect on these approaches.

Logic models

A logic model is a graphic which represents what a project aims to achieve and how. They are usually characterised by 'if-then' relationships, i.e. if we do X, then the expected result will be Y. Logic models can be used for any project, for example, an event, print series, campaign, training programme etc., to build your understanding of the inputs, activities and enablers which will contribute to achieving your goals.

There are five key components to a logic model:

- Inputs
- Activities
- Outputs
- Outcomes
- Impact

Logic models are useful for monitoring and evaluating your work because they can help you identify what data you need to collect and analyse from people you have worked/collaborated with and/or your target audience, such as meeting minutes, social media engagement, surveys, case studies, interviews, etc. This data will help you understand the causal link between one of your activities. For example, if you hold a safeguarding training with industry partners, your expected outcome may be improved industry knowledge around safeguarding and pastoral support.

Ideally, logic models should be developed during the development or early stages of a project, so that they can be used to inform your intended impact and establish what data you will need to collect to measure this. However, you can develop a logic model for a project at any stage, including retrospectively.

An additional factor to consider is the level of impact that you're hoping to achieve, i.e. whether your project aims to create change at an individual, community, narrative, industry or field level.
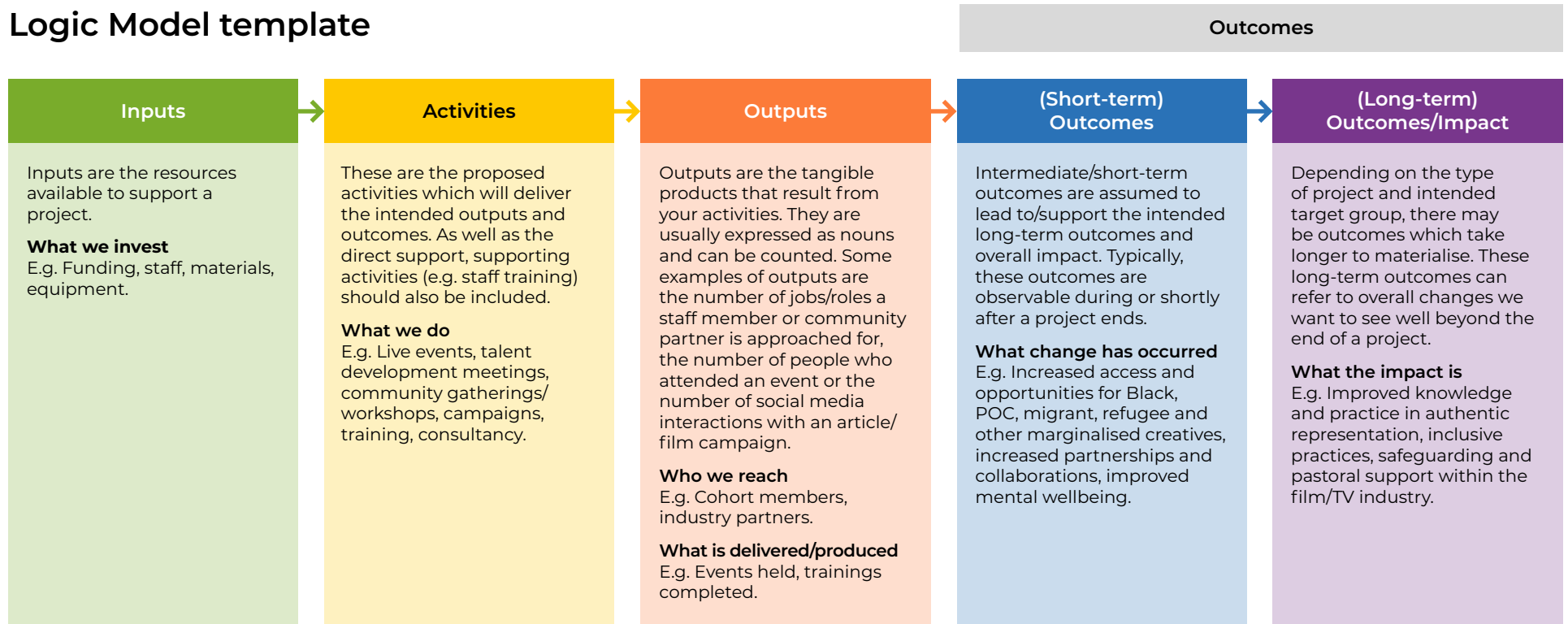
- **Individual level** – A logic model for an individual level project might include details about someone's social, emotional or psychological processes (Example outcome: Increased self-esteem/confidence).

- **Community level** – A logic model for a community level project would describe changes that you would hope to see from targeting a specific group or community (Example outcome: Increased engagement with your content amongst the Arab community).

- **Narrative level** – A logic model for a project which aims to create narrative change might describe audience changes that you hope to see as a result of creating new narratives or leveraging existing content (Example outcome: More positive attitudes towards immigration or increased authentic representation of Black, POC, migrant, refugee or other marginalised communities in film/TV).

- **Industry level** – A logic model for an industry level project might include details about changes to talent pipelines and entertainment content, with the aim of building narrative and industry power (Example outcome: Increased access and opportunities for people with disabilities in the arts).

- **Field level** – A logic model for a field level project might describe developing infrastructure to build organisational capacity or facilitate partnerships and collaborations (Example outcome: Increased community/network gatherings or increased investment in leadership development).

A logic model should be developed in collaboration with your staff and key stakeholders, to gain multiple perspectives. The more participatory a logic model is, the more likely it is to be relevant, feasible and sustainable. Logic models do not need to include details about absolutely everything that happens in a project. Instead, they should summarise the aspects that are critically important in explaining how the project aims to produce its intended impact.

Logic Model template

Outcomes

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	(Short-term) Outcomes	(Long-term) Outcomes/Impact
Inputs are the resources available to support a project. **What we invest** E.g. Funding, staff, materials, equipment.	These are the proposed activities which will deliver the intended outputs and outcomes. As well as the direct support, supporting activities (e.g. staff training) should also be included. **What we do** E.g. Live events, talent development meetings, community gatherings/ workshops, campaigns, training, consultancy.	Outputs are the tangible products that result from your activities. They are usually expressed as nouns and can be counted. Some examples of outputs are the number of jobs/roles a staff member or community partner is approached for, the number of people who attended an event or the number of social media interactions with an article/ film campaign. **Who we reach** E.g. Cohort members, industry partners. **What is delivered/produced** E.g. Events held, trainings completed.	Intermediate/short-term outcomes are assumed to lead to/support the intended long-term outcomes and overall impact. Typically, these outcomes are observable during or shortly after a project ends. **What change has occurred** E.g. Increased access and opportunities for Black, POC, migrant, refugee and other marginalised creatives, increased partnerships and collaborations, improved mental wellbeing.	Depending on the type of project and intended target group, there may be outcomes which take longer to materialise. These long-term outcomes can refer to overall changes we want to see well beyond the end of a project. **What the impact is** E.g. Improved knowledge and practice in authentic representation, inclusive practices, safeguarding and pastoral support within the film/TV industry.

The arrows illustrate the logical connections between the processes.

Rationale
A summary of why you think your project will work and how it links with your organisation's strategy and goals.

Assumptions
The assumptions relied upon for your project to work, e.g. we might assume that the film/TV industry are receptive to portraying more authentic narratives of minoritised and marginalised communities.

Risks
Risks are factors/events that may hinder the project's ability to achieve its outcomes. A useful place to start is by thinking about what might occur if the assumptions don't hold true or what could impede project progress.

Surveys and questionnaires

Surveys and questionnaires are a great way to evaluate the impact of a project as they can be used to rapidly collect responses from an unlimited number of stakeholders at any stage of a project. At the start of a project they can be used to gather baseline/benchmark data about an individual's attitudes/behaviours (e.g. if creatives feel they have access to spaces for joy and hope), or an organisation's or industry's processes, structures or activities (e.g. what opportunities creatives have to consult or collaborate on authentic storylines). They can also be used during a project to track developments, discussions or polling on different issues, as well as after a project to understand how effective a project has been in achieving its aims or how relationships have evolved.

Surveys and questionnaires can use a mixture of open and closed questions to collect a combination of numerical and narrative data. This enables you to both quantify responses and provide space for stakeholders to describe the nuances of their experiences.

Examples of open ended questions include:

- What are your key takeaways from this event/campaign/article etc.?
- How will you apply this learning within your organisation/work?
- What else would you like to know about this topic?
- What relationships have been developed throughout this project and how have they evolved?

Often with open questions, the answers will be qualitative i.e. the respondent can type out their answer in their own words, usually in a free text box. Qualitative answers provide richer, in depth data as the respondent is able to answer how they like.

Examples of closed questions include:

- Have you worked on a project where you have featured or worked with someone from an immigrant background? (Yes/No)
- Which types of events do you prefer: in-person, virtual or hybrid events?
- How have you met other Black, POC, migrant and marginalised creatives working in the UK?
  - Through social media
  - Through participating in a creative project
  - Through events and networking opportunities
  - Through other industry partners
  - Through word of mouth
  - Other
- Do you think the language we use is accessible and easy to understand? (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree)

Often with closed questions, answers can be quantified i.e. the respondent will select one of the multiple choice options or they will be asked to indicate their response on a scale/ranking. For example 65% of respondents answered 'Strongly Agree' when asked if the language we use is accessible and easy to understand. Quantitative data can be visualised using graphs and charts and data can be compared and analysed across age groups, different genders/ethnicity and/or over time.

There are multiple free survey and questionnaire tools that you can use, including SurveyMonkey, Google Forms, Smart Survey and Microsoft Forms, to name a few. Questions should focus on gaining feedback on what you would like to learn from your stakeholder and many of these free tools offer automatic analysis of responses. It is good practice to use simple and accessible language and to highlight at the start how long a survey will take to complete.

Interviews and qualitative analysis

Interviews allow you to gain a more detailed insight into the views of a smaller sample of stakeholders. These can take place as informal conversations/catch-ups or in more structured/semi-structured formats, depending on the context and who you are speaking to.

Interviews can be used to gain a deeper understanding of how an individual or cohort are progressing in their career, how well supported they are and what their key skills and abilities are. In addition, interviews can be conducted with industry partners or specialists to share learning and expertise or with audience/community members to understand how a project has impacted their awareness, knowledge or skills.

Similar to surveys and questionnaires, interviews can be conducted at any stage of a project: to establish a baseline, to monitor how a project is progressing and to evaluate its impact. Interview questions are usually open-ended to give the stakeholder space to expand how they wish.

Examples of key interview questions for an individual or cohort are:

- How are you feeling in general? (About your work, within your family/personal life, etc.)
- Do you feel like you're making progress towards your goals/ambitions?
- What do you think have been your key achievements over the past X weeks/months?
- What challenges have you faced?
- How well supported do you feel?
- What additional support would you like to receive?
- How have your professional relationships developed?
- Who would you like to partner/collaborate with in the future?
- What have you learnt over the past X months?

Examples of key interview questions for industry partners or specialists are:

- Tell me a bit about your work
- Who is your target audience and how do you reach and engage with them?
- How does your work try to create change on an individual, community, narrative, field or industry level?
- In the last 10 years do you think there's been an improvement in authentic representation of Black, POC, migrant, refugee and other marginalised communities in film & TV? In what ways?
- What more needs to be done?

- What do you think are the key barriers to achieving narrative change?
- Where should funding be targeted?
- How do you monitor and evaluate the impact of your work?
- Can you give me an example of a project where you successfully partnered/collaborated with another organisation?
- Who would you like to partner/collaborate with in the future?

Examples of key interview questions for audiences/community members are:

- How well informed did you feel about [insert topic/issue] prior to being part of our project/event/network?
- What were your highlights from the project?
- What challenges did you face?
- How did your views around [insert topic/issue] change after being part of our project/event/network?
- Do you feel like your motivation and/or sense of responsibility for educating yourself about social justice issues has changed as a result of being part of our project/event/network?
- What relationships, partnerships or collaborations developed as a result of our project?
- What more do you think could be done in this space?
- How well supported do you feel?
- What additional support would you like to receive?

To analyse interview responses, sentiment analysis can be used to interpret opinions, attitudes and emotions. For a sentiment analysis to be accurate the same questions must be asked of each interviewee and the interviewer must be aware of their biases. Once interview responses have been collected, sentiment analysis is applied to classify answers into four categories: **positive, negative, neutral** or **mixed.** Answers to each question can then be compared between interviews to understand the general sentiment around questions and where further support or intervention is needed. These findings can then be quantified by adding up the number of positive, negative, neutral or mixed responses to each question. E.g. 75% of interviewees felt positively about making progress towards their goals. Sentiment analysis can also be applied to social media feedback/dialogue to further capture audience views.

Word clouds can also be used to visualise and map the frequency/importance of words from an interview. For example, if across 10 interviews the words "power", "authentic", "longevity" and "sustainability" appear multiple times, these words will be shown in a word cloud as bigger and bolder than other less frequently used words. Word clouds are a visual representation of common language and sentiment and there are multiple free tools online which can be used to plot key words, including Monkey Learn WordCloud Generator, WordArt.com and WordCloud.com, among others.
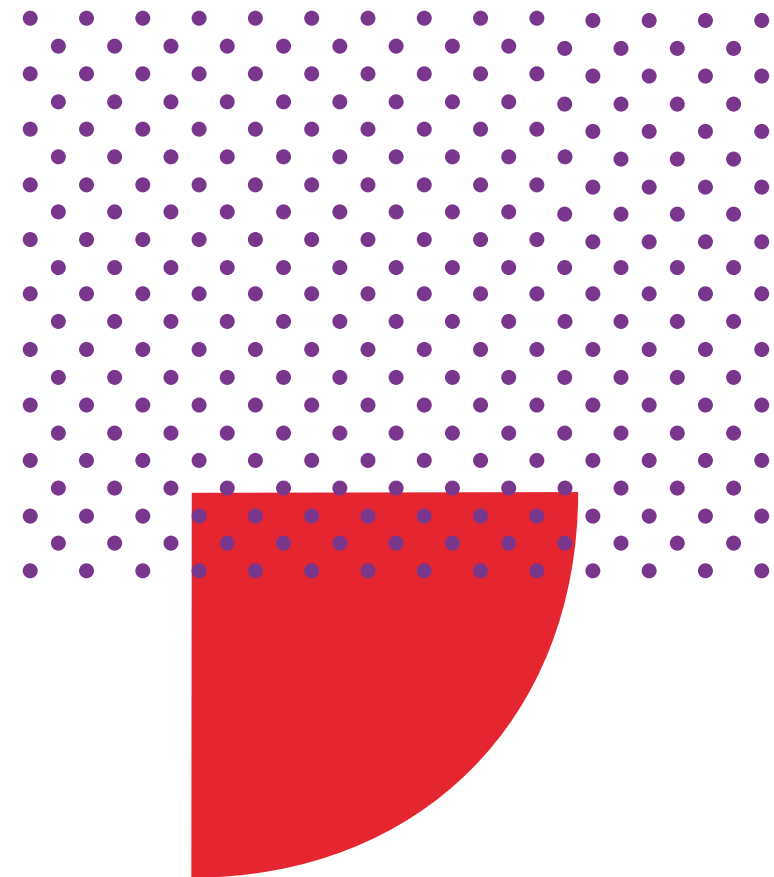
Case studies

Case studies are a powerful way to demonstrate the journey of an individual, organisation or project. A case study is an intensive study which helps stakeholders gain a deeper understanding of a topic. They are often used to provide examples of promising practice. Case studies use a range of research methodologies to collect insights including interviews, observations and surveys, among others.

Case studies should include:

- A brief description of the individual/ organisation's work and what their goals/ ambitions are

- How their work is contributing to narrative change and/or the pop culture for social change field

- A piece of work or project that they have worked on that you'd like to spotlight

- Who was part of this project and was it a collaboration/partnership with others?

- What was the outcome of this project/what was its impact?

- What key lessons or recommendations can others take forward?

- Key quotes from your interviews/ conversations with the subject

Example of a case study: The Pop Culture Collaborative

The Pop Culture Collaborative (PopCollab) is an innovative US-based donor collaborative and funder learning community working to transform the narrative landscape in the US around people of colour, immigrants, refugees, Muslims and Indigenous peoples, especially those who are women, queer, transgender and/or have a disability. Founded in 2016, the PopCollab supports the growth of the pop culture for social change field in the US through four programme areas: grantmaking, funder and field learning, network and partnership building and narrative design. Since its inception, the PopCollab has invested more than $19 million across 300 grantees, senior fellows and entertainment industry partners to catalyse social change and collective power.

In 2022, the PopCollab published an evaluation of their first five years of grantmaking by Engage R+D, which aimed to uncover 1) how the PopCollab's narrative infrastructure grantmaking has strengthened their grantees' organisations, teams and projects, and 2) what the PopCollab can do differently in future to better serve their grantees and the field. The evaluation highlighted the following insights:

- **Investing in Leadership Growth** – Grantees working to build the pop culture for social change field have received transformational guidance from the PopCollab about cultivating their voice and vision. As a result, grantees are advancing their work and growing their influence as leaders in the field.

- **Capacity Building** – Grants support staff expansion, internal capacity building, field leadership and the ability to increase overall impact. However, key barriers for grantees included lack of consistent, coordinated large scale philanthropic funding and limited internal capacity.

- **Research & Learning** – The PopCollab funding supports research and learning about the pop culture for social change field (e.g. developing theories of change, standardising terminology and metrics and defining terms), knowledge generation, creative development, innovation and experimentation.

- **Field Coordination** – The pop culture for social change field (consisting of grantees, senior fellows and allied partners) provides community and connection for grantees. They value the connection and co-learning that takes place at the PopCollab's organised in-person gatherings.

The evaluation also highlighted opportunities and recommendations to further build the capacity of the PopCollab's grantees and the pop culture for social change field, which includes involving grantees in strategic planning and seeking more community-driven approaches to funding. In addition, there are opportunities for strengthening impact by clarifying expectations and timelines for grantees and providing more tailored capacity building, field matchmaking (both of people and resources) and technical assistance. Finally, a key recommendation from grantees was to leverage the vast network of funders and media partners in a more focused or nuanced way so that grantees can be paired with the specific resources they need to advance their work.

It is clear that in the first five years of the PopCollab's grantmaking, they have scaffolded, resourced and nurtured the pop culture for social change field in the US from the ground up. They have tested out strategies and built a narrative framework that is now ready to scale.

"Evaluation and impact shouldn't be about justifying if it's worth funding narrative change. Instead, we must focus on the learnings and insights that inform and evolve a strategy towards long-term, transformational change. For example, at the Pop Culture Collaborative, we have learned the best approaches for organisational capacity building; how to support partnerships and collaborations that scale and expand narrative power; and how to best cultivate narrative networks that can seed new narrative oceans."

Tracy Van Slyke, Chief Strategy Officer, Pop Culture Collaborative.

Quantitative data collection

Although social change work often focuses on qualitative data to understand how narratives impact views, attitudes and emotions, quantitative data can also be helpful in evidencing impact. Quantitative data can be collected to analyse field-level, industry-level, narrative-level and audience-level outcomes.

Examples of quantitative metrics that can be collected across these outcomes include:

Field-level:

- Number of new staff members recruited, onboarded and trained
- Number of staff members who have increased knowledge and skills, e.g. in safeguarding and pastoral support
- Number of projects designed as a result of hiring new staff
- Number of new funding opportunities for an organisation
- Number of events or community gatherings hosted
- Number of new partnerships and collaborations (within and across sectors)
- Number of training sessions held for industry partners

Industry-level:

- Number of new industry contacts/ partners
- Number of films/TV shows or storylines pitched to industry partners
- Number of jobs secured by staff/cohort members to work on projects about their community
- Number of awards or commendations for a project
- Number of placements or consulting opportunities

Narrative-level:

- Number of resources created
- Number of videos, posts, articles, events, media campaigns and other pieces of creative content created
- Number of media contacts/press sources contacted
- Number of reviews/articles about creative content
- Number of awards or recognitions for a project
- Number and type of content produced by alumni, community members and collaborators
- Number of new authentic narratives in film/TV and other creative industries

Audience-level:

- Number of social media mentions/ interactions with posts (e.g. likes, comments, shares)
- Number of new followers/subscribers/ community members
- Number of attendees at events
- Number of viewers/audience for a pitched project
- Audience ratings
- Number of 'influencers' or key industry partners sharing or amplifying a project
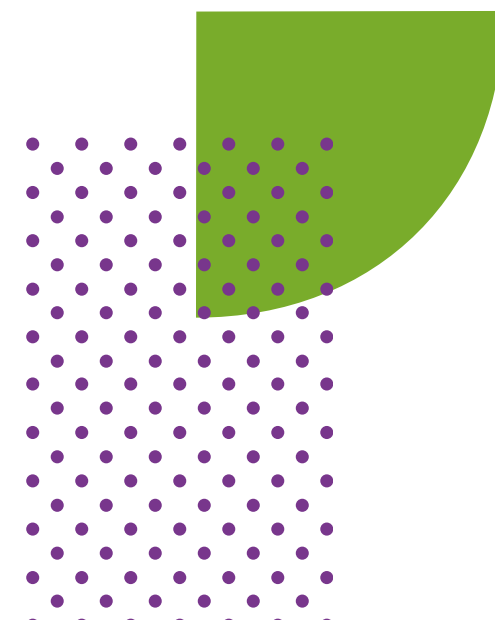
Social network analysis/mapping

An illustrative way to show how the pop culture for social change field is growing over time is to evaluate networks through social network analysis. Organisations at the centre of this work and philanthropic partners can benefit from mapping their connections, partnerships and collaborations to track and visualise how relationships are evolving over time and the reasons behind this growth. It is a useful analytic lens to understand the pop culture for social change field, as the field in the UK is emerging and interdisciplinary, with diverse types of organisations across multiple industries and sectors involved.

In 2021, the Norman Lear Center and Pop Culture Collaborative began research to design the first ever "state-of-the-field" mapping survey. The goal in surveying the pop culture for social change field in the US was to identify connections between different organisations, investigate how closely field members work together, and illuminate the many ways in which members' strengths and resources are collectively leveraged. In February 2021, 93 organisations were identified as part of the pop culture for social change field with input from the Pop Culture Collaborative team, and all were sent an annual survey to participate in the social network analysis.

To conduct the social network analysis, the Norman Lear Center and the Pop Culture Collaborative used Visible Network Lab's (VLN) Program to Analyse, Record and Track Networks to Enhance Relationships (PARTNER tool) to address the following questions:

- What organisations are part of the network and how are they working together?
- What activities do members of the network do together?
- What resources are exchanged?
- What has collaboration with organisational partners enabled them to achieve?

To read the full findings of the social network analysis, click here.

As part of the PoP Fund, we are beginning to establish a baseline of the state and strength of the field in the UK through an early visual map of the pop culture for social change ecosystem (see ecosystem section below). This has been developed based on our current knowledge of the field, however it is key that we gain your input to widen our understanding of the pop culture for social change ecosystem.

To develop your own social network analysis survey, follow these steps:

- Identify your network partners (this can be collated in a database on Excel)
- Create an annual social network analysis survey, which can be sent to all the partners in your database (see guiding questions below)
- Use a validated tool like VLN's PARTNER tool to create a network map of your findings (if you have the resources to do so)
- Alternatively, use free social network analysis tools to map your connections (23 Free Social Network Analysis Tools [As of 2023] - RankRed)
- Create simple visualisations of your findings through graphs about your network's

characteristics, e.g. how long they've been working in the narrative change field, what areas they work on etc.

- Repeat the survey on an annual basis to illustrate changes in your network

When developing your annual survey consider the following key questions:

- How do the organisations in your network describe themselves and their work, i.e. what issues do they work on and how long have they been doing narrative change work?
- What activities do members of your network do together?
- What resources are exchanged through partnerships and collaborations?
- What additional resources and/or capacity is needed to facilitate partnerships and collaborations?
- What other organisations do your network partners currently collaborate with?
- What has collaboration with other organisations helped them to achieve, i.e. what were the outcomes of this collaboration?
- How were the outcomes of collaborations monitored and evaluated?
- What challenges have arisen from collaborations?
- What partnerships do you hope to establish in the future?

THE POP CULTURE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE ECOSYSTEM
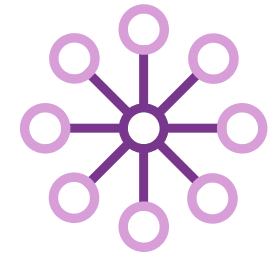
The pop culture for social change field is made up of people working in and between a range of different sectors and industries.

It encompasses activists, campaigners, creatives, experts by experience, funders, brokers, networkers, producers, commissioners, movement builders, researchers, evaluators, narrative and communications specialists and many more. Just like a natural ecology that is more than the sum of its individual parts, the pop culture for social change 'ecosystem' is changing and growing all the time.

This UK ecosystem map is by no means comprehensive. We are conscious that there is a growing number of organisations, thought leaders and initiatives in this space and we are excited about the prospect of this ecosystem developing and evolving. This is an attempt to illustrate some of the areas where pop culture for social change work is emerging in the UK and to show where there are areas that need to be strengthened in order to reinforce the ecosystem as a whole.

UK pop culture for social change ecosystem map:
A snapshot of some key organisations working at the intersection of pop culture, racial justice and migration in the UK
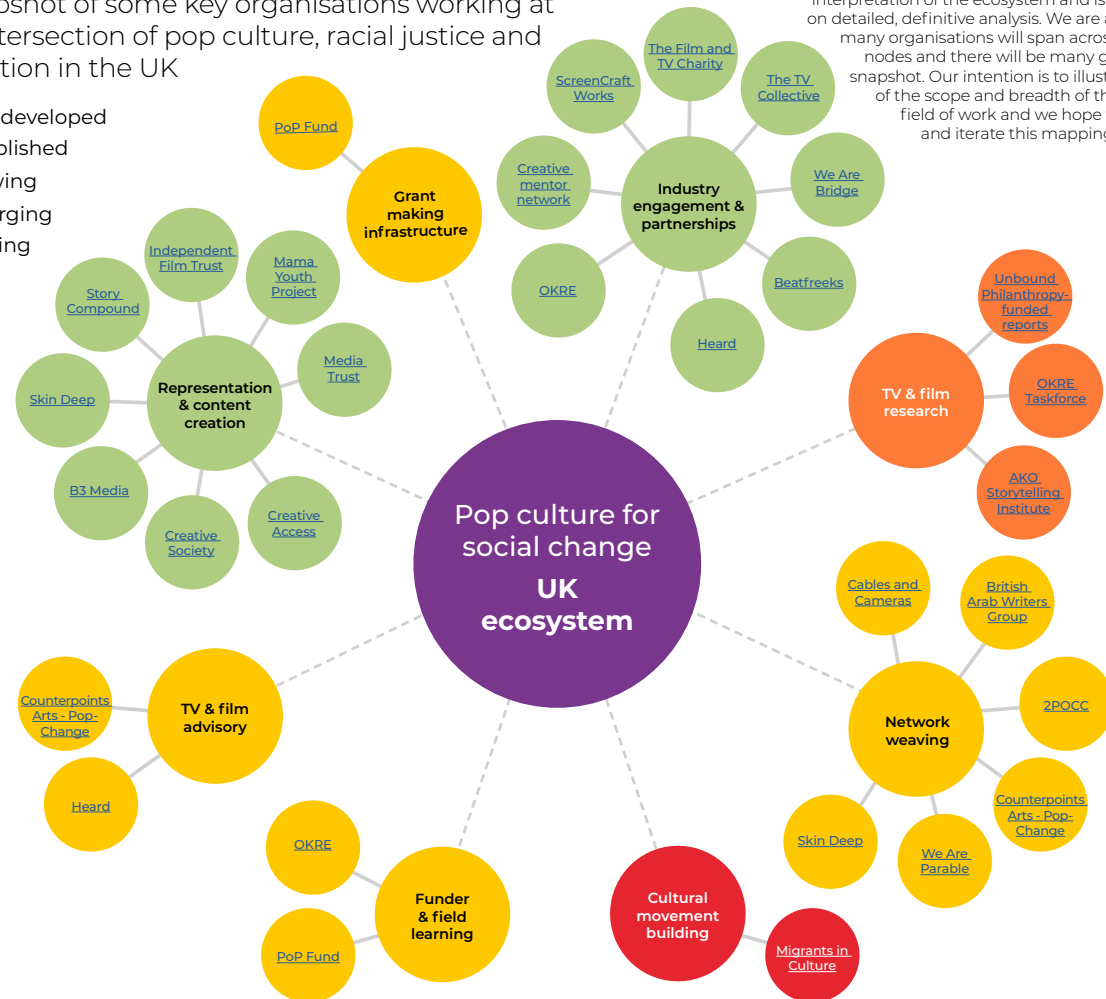
This map is based on our own qualitative interpretation of the ecosystem and is not based on detailed, definitive analysis. We are aware that many organisations will span across multiple nodes and there will be many gaps in this snapshot. Our intention is to illustrate some of the scope and breadth of this exciting field of work and we hope to develop and iterate this mapping in future.

Legend:
- ● Very developed
- ● Established
- ● Growing
- ● Emerging
- ● Lacking

Map nodes:
- Grant making infrastructure: PoP Fund, Mama Youth Project
- Industry engagement & partnerships: ScreenCraft Works, The Film and TV Charity, The TV Collective, We Are Bridge, Creative mentor network, OKRE, Beatfreeks, Heard
- Representation & content creation: Independent Film Trust, Story Compound, Media Trust, Skin Deep, B3 Media, Creative Society, Creative Access
- TV & film research: Unbound Philanthropy-funded reports, OKRE Taskforce, AKO Storytelling Institute
- Network weaving: Cables and Cameras, British Arab Writers Group, 2POCC, Counterpoints Arts - Pop-Change, We Are Parable, Skin Deep
- TV & film advisory: Counterpoints Arts - Pop-Change, Heard
- Funder & field learning: OKRE, PoP Fund
- Cultural movement building: Migrants in Culture
- Pop culture for social change UK ecosystem

One of our aspirations at the PoP Fund is to learn, not only how individual grantees are developing their own areas of work, but also how the ecosystem is evolving as a whole and what is needed to sustain it in the longer term. In this vein, we are particularly inspired by the work of the Pop Culture Collaborative (PopCollab), a US-based innovative donor collaborative and funder learning community, which is a thought leader in the pop culture for social change field in the US.

Since its inception, the PopCollab has invested nearly $25 million to catalyse social change efforts and collective power of more than 300 grantees, senior fellows and entertainment industry partners.

In May 2020, the PopCollab launched the Becoming America Fund – a first-of-its kind, multi-year, multi-million dollar initiative to fund and curate a narrative network of pop culture narrative field members to work together to "ignite public imagination about our pluralist future." As a result, they developed an emerging design and evaluation framework around the "formation, coordination, alignment and reach of a narrative network."

> "Social justice narrative change fields, especially those that centre BIPOC [Black, Indigenous and People of Colour] leadership and innovation, need narrative infrastructure for narrative immersion."
>
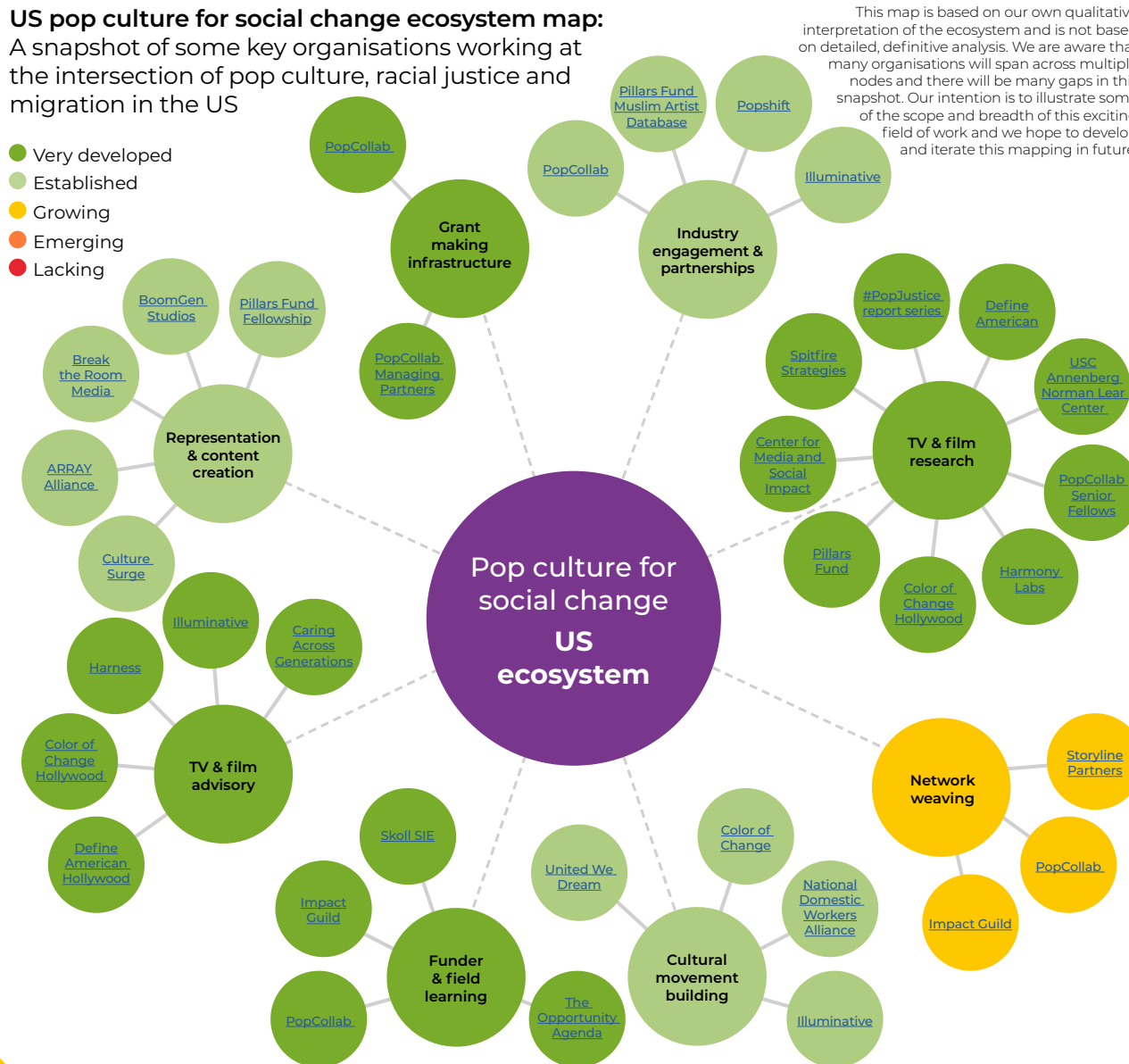> Tracy Van Slyke, Chief Strategy Officer, Pop Culture Collaborative

Tracy Van Slyke ©Miles Maker

By contrast to the UK ecosystem map, the map below demonstrates work underway to build this field in the US. This map is by no means comprehensive and will no doubt contain many gaps, particularly as this field is constantly evolving. But it is helpful to illustrate the depth and breadth of the work underway in the US across multiple areas that are strengthening and reinforcing the ecosystem as a whole.

US pop culture for social change ecosystem map:
A snapshot of some key organisations working at the intersection of pop culture, racial justice and migration in the US

This map is based on our own qualitative interpretation of the ecosystem and is not based on detailed, definitive analysis. We are aware that many organisations will span across multiple nodes and there will be many gaps in this snapshot. Our intention is to illustrate some of the scope and breadth of this exciting field of work and we hope to develop and iterate this mapping in future.

We are keen to deeply reflect on the work that is taking place in the US and consider how we can learn from it in order to build and strengthen the ecosystem in the UK. However, alongside this, we need to be able to demonstrate to funders why this work has collective impact and why there is a case for investment in the pop culture for social change ecosystem as a whole.

By focusing on the broader ecosystem, we are keen to explore and evaluate the following questions. We ask that you keep these in mind and reflect on them when you are carrying out your MEL so as to help us build up a more comprehensive picture of the ecosystem:

- **Where is there currently the most energy and momentum in the field?**
- **Which types of organisations are lacking in the field?**
- **What research is needed to understand the field better?**
- **What opportunities are there to work more intersectionally?**
- **Which networks are needed and where would brokering be beneficial?**
- **What opportunities might there be for partnerships across and between industries?**
- **What learning opportunities would you benefit from?**

Legend:
- Very developed
- Established
- Growing
- Emerging
- Lacking

RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

The following organisations have produced resources, materials and open-source content which are valuable sources to review and reflect on.

Doc Society's Impact Field Guide

Doc Society is a non-profit foundation working to support the global community of documentary filmmakers. Its Impact Field Guide is an open source resource used by over 55,000 filmmakers and changemakers around the world. It has also produced a comprehensive set of case studies, the content and format of which may be useful to view. The following sections of the Field Guide Toolkit contain valuable content relating to impact and impact measurement:

- Planning for impact
- Impact in action
- Impact distribution
- Measuring impact

Pop Culture Collaborative

The Pop Culture Collaborative is a US-based philanthropic resource and funder learning community. Its vast array of learning tools (case studies, essays, podcasts, visual reports, digital magazines and more) are designed to help field members and funders immerse themselves in visionary narrative change strategies, groundbreaking field approaches, and critical new insights around pop culture for social change. We recommend checking out the following materials in particular:

- Break the Story learning series
- Case studies – including From Seven Seconds to When They See Us: How Color of Change is Transforming Narratives in Pop Culture and From The Help to Roma: How The National Domestic Workers Alliance Is Transforming Narratives in Pop Culture
- Grantmaking Strategy Spotlight: Culture Change Research
- Connections and Accomplishments: A 2021 Pop Culture for Social Change Network Analysis

Define American

Define American is a narrative change organisation that uses the power of storytelling to humanise conversations about immigrants. It conducts original, cutting-edge research to identify narratives that inspire people to action. Key research and tools include:

- Change the Narrative, Change the World 2022 – the third groundbreaking television research report on immigrant representation produced in collaboration with the Norman Lear Center.
- The Define American Immigrant Representation Scale is a tool to help TV and film creators develop more authentic, nuanced immigrant characters.

Skoll Center for Social Impact Entertainment

The Skoll Center for Social Impact Entertainment (SIE) serves to advance the role of entertainment and performing arts to inspire and drive social change. Its research provides a structure to measure and map the influence of SIE. Key materials include:

- The State of SIE report
- The State of SIE mapping tool
- SIE case studies (in collaboration with Doc Society)

The Norman Lear Center

The Norman Lear Center, based at the University of Southern California, is a nonpartisan research and public policy centre that studies the social, political, economic and cultural impact of entertainment on the world. Key links and research studies include:

- Hollywood, Health and Society provides entertainment industry professionals with accurate and timely information for storylines on health, safety and national security.
- Media Impact Project is the research and evaluation arm of The Norman Lear Center. It studies stories – in film, TV, documentaries, games, art and news – and their impact on audiences. It helps media makers, cultural change organisations and foundations understand audiences and how to engage them.

The Commons Social Change Library

The Commons Library is a repository for campaigning and organising resources from Australia and around the world. It includes 1000+ educational resources in a range of formats. All materials are free, digital and directly available. Particular sections that may be useful include:

- Communications and narratives
- Power mapping tools
- Theories of change

Africa No Filter

Africa No Filter supports the development of nuanced and contemporary stories that shift stereotypical and harmful narratives within and about Africa. The following links are worth reviewing:

- Who is influencing African youth? Research exploring the impact of pop culture on narratives about Africa.
- Research by Africa No Filter Academic Fellows

Harmony Labs

Harmony Labs is a media research lab, using science, data and creativity to research and reshape our relationship with media. For more than a decade its work has helped storytellers and strategists, decision makers and dreamers, harness the immense power of media to shape a positive, pluralistic future. Note in particular the following:

- Narrative Observatory – a one-of-a-kind data infrastructure that empowers partners to find, research and resonate with the right audience in today's media minefield. The Observatory delivers audience-based insights, narrative and network analysis, and empirical validation of cultural strategy and content.

Further reading relating to narrative and cultural change ecosystems:

- New Brave World: The power, opportunities and potential of pop culture for social change in the UK, by Alice Sachrajda and Marzena Zukowska

- Spotlight on Impact Storytelling: Mapping and recommendations for the narrative and cultural strategies ecosystem, by Erin Potts, Dom Lowell and Liz Manne

- Creating an ecosystem for narrative power, ReFrame, by By Jen Soriano, Joseph Phelan, Kimberly Freeman Brown, Hermelinda Cortés, Jung Hee Choi

- Narrative infrastructure for narrative immersion: A strategic grantmaking framework, Pop Culture Collaborative, by Tracy Van Slyke

CONCLUSION

Pop culture has the potential to be a major driving force for social and environmental change. But as an emerging and cross-cutting field there are challenges in researching and evaluating pop culture for social change work. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning is both possible and necessary, but we need to be clear about what we are measuring, and why, and the types of methods that can be used.

We encourage you to explore and experiment using this toolkit as a guide. We hope that it will help you measure and evaluate your own organisation's work and impact, but also contribute to our understanding of the pop culture for social change ecosystem as a whole.
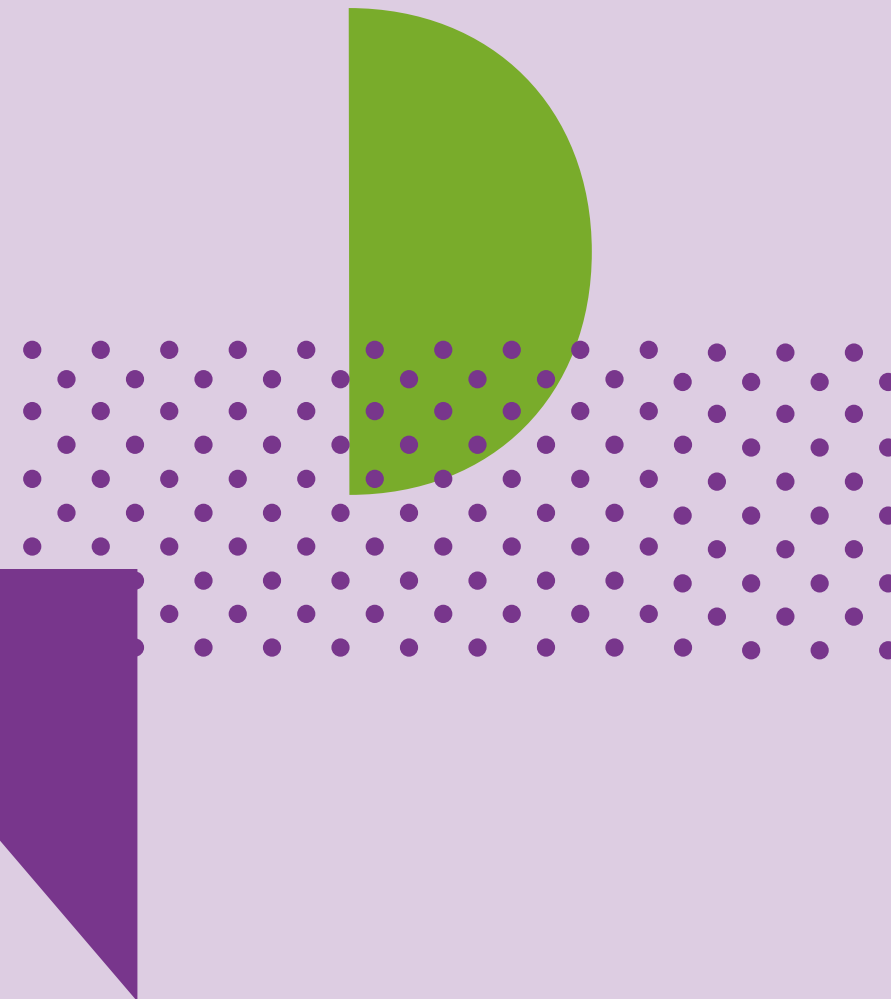
POWER OF POP FUND

The Power of Pop (PoP) Fund is a pooled UK fund supported by Comic Relief, Unbound Philanthropy, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Oak Foundation. The PoP Fund supports organisations working at the intersection of popular culture and social change, with a particular focus on migration and racial justice.

The first cohort of funded partners is made up of: 2POCC, Skin Deep and We Are Bridge. The second cohort is made up of: Counterpoints Arts, Heard and OKRE. Collectively, their inspiring work amplifies the experiences and testimonies of Black, People of Colour (POC), migrant, refugee and marginalised creatives through bespoke support, network building and cultural production.

Alice Sachrajda is a Cultural Strategy Consultant advising the PoP Fund and Saphia Youssef is the PoP Fund Learning Coordinator. With thanks to Emma Frobisher, Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning Manager at Comic Relief, for editing this toolkit.

COMIC RELIEF   UNBOUND   ef Esmée Fairbairn FOUNDATION   phf Paul Hamlyn Foundation   OAK FOUNDATION