

2019

**Place Evaluation: A
relational model to
measure what matters in
'place'**



Hernandez-Santin C., Hes, D. & T. Beer
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Prepared by:

Cris Hernandez-Santin, Dominique Hes, and Tanja Beer, University of Melbourne



For:



With the support of



This document was prepared as a teaching guide for placemaking academics to engage their students in the topic mentioned in the title. It is part of a 12 module series created through a multi-university collaboration including Curtin University, University of Notre Dame, the University of Technology of Sydney, University of New South Wales, University of Queensland, The University of Adelaide and the University of Melbourne. The module was informed by practitioners through an intensive skillset and gap analysis workshop in Oct 2017.

This module envisioned as a 1-week delivery includes:

- This template including ~10 hours of content as follows
 - A total of ~3 hours of presumed in-class exercises (no more than 1-hour lecture)
 - A total of ~7 hours of personal study time (i.e. readings/short essays/videos to watch)
- The slides/materials used for the lecture.
- List of 'mandatory' reading and recommended readings relevant to the module content.

The document is subdivided into two sections.

1. Section 1: Provides an outline of the aims of the module
2. Section 2: Expands on the specific topic covered by this module and the recommended exercises for tutorial activities.

1 Section 1:

Overview

The place evaluation module explores existing strategies to evaluate place from a socio-ecological perspective and argues that we need to go beyond the easily measurable attributes of place and have greater inclusion of the intangible benefits of place. This evaluation needs to be across the aspects that are involved in placemaking at four different levels – input, output, outcome and legacy. Presenting a framework on the four dimensions of place: community, individual, natural environment and built environment, this chapter advocates for evaluating relationships. It will use a case study to showcase how evaluation can simultaneously target key relationships of place and respond to place-specific values. While this module is focused on the socio-ecological benefits of place, it needs to act simultaneously as economic evaluations a topic addressed in the Place Economics module.

Summary of materials referred to in this Module

The following should be easily accessible through the PlaceAgency web platform, local council and developer websites, or university library databases (journal articles etc). Some are for your reference, and some are needed by students for their activities.

Resources needed for student’s independent study outside the classroom.

- Two videos available through the online portal:

| |
|---|
| How are places evaluated? (11min) |
|---|

| |
|--|
| What is the importance of evaluation to placemaking? (4:48min) |
|--|

- Hes, D., Hernandez-Santin, C., Beer, T. & S. Huang. (2020) “Place evaluation: Measuring what matters by prioritising relationships.” In D. Hes and C. Hernandez-Santin *Placemaking fundamentals for the built environment*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Burton, L, 2015, Mental well-being and the influence of place, Chap 11, in Barton, H., Thompson, S., Grant, M., and Burgess S. (Eds) 2015 *The Routledge Handbook of Planning for Health and Well-Being: Shaping a sustainable and healthy future* (pp 150-161) (London: Routledge).
- Raymond, C. M., Frantzeskaki, N., Kabisch, N., Berry, P., Breil, M., Nita, M. R., Calfapietra, C. (2017). A framework for assessing and implementing the co-benefits of nature-based solutions in urban areas. *Environmental Science and Policy*, 77, 15-24.
- Toolset database.

Resources needed for students’ in-class activities.

- Value cards
- Toolset database and slide deck created by students on the assigned tool.

Additional resources that may support a facilitator not familiar with this topic. These directly informed the subtopic summaries.

- Carmona, M. (2019). Place value: place quality and its impact on health, social, economic and

environmental outcomes. *Journal of Urban Design*, 24(1), 1-48.

- Carr, L. J., Dunsiger, S. I., & Marcus, B. H. (2011). Validation of Walk Score for estimating access to walkable amenities. *Br J Sports Med*, 45(14), 1144-1148.
- Harder, M. and Burford, G., 2018. *Measuring intangible values: rethinking how to evaluate socially beneficial actions*. Routledge.
- Hes, D. (2017). Impact of community engagement on sustainability outcomes. Expert Commentary report for Next Generation Community Engagement project, Melbourne School of Government, The University of Melbourne
- Junot, A., Paquet, Y., & Fenouillet, F. (2018). Place attachment influence on human well-being and general pro-environmental behaviors. *J. Theor. Soc. Psychol.* 2 (April), 49–57
- National Trust. (2019). Places that make us. Report for the National Trust, Wiltshire, UK; online Retrieved from <https://nt.global.ssl.fastly.net/documents/places-that-make-us-research-report.pdf> (accessed 25/02/2019).
- McMillan, D. W., and & Chavis, D. M.. (1986). Sense of Community: A Definition and Theory. *Journal of Community Psychology* 14(1): 6-23.
- Mihaylov, N., & Perkins, D.D. (2014). Community Place Attachment and its Role in Social Capital Development in Response to Environmental Disruption. In L. Manzo & P. Devine-Wright (Eds.), *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Research* (pp. 61-74). Routledge.
- Summers, J. K., Smith, L. M., Case, J. L., & Linthurst, R. A. (2012). A review of the elements of human well-being with an emphasis on the contribution of ecosystem services. *Ambio*, 41(4), 327-40.
- Rating Place reports: <https://placeagency.org.au/rating-place/>
- Scannell, L., & Gifford, R. (2010). Defining place attachment: A tripartite organizing framework. *Journal of environmental psychology*, 30(1), 1-10.

Objectives of the Module

- Using evaluation as a way for continued place improvement
- Knowledge of the range of tools available to evaluate projects from a ‘place’ perspective. And understanding the limitations of different evaluation approaches.
- Ability to develop a tailored evaluation approach bespoke to the project and community involved incorporating economic, social and ecological components.

Module Content

1. Why it is important to evaluate places?
2. Available tools for evaluating place
3. Limitations of tools and strategies for place evaluation
4. Revisiting the Four dimensions of place
5. The Relational Model for Place evaluation
6. Developing your own evaluation framework starting from values of a place.

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of this module students will be able to:

- Conduct reflective and reflexive practice to learn from work experiences

- Determine the key elements required for an area to be considered a place
- Knowledge of the range of tools available to evaluate projects from a ‘place’ perspective.
- Understand the limitations of the evaluation
- Develop a tailored evaluation approach bespoke to the project and community involved incorporating economic, social and ecological components.

Enhanced capabilities

Early in the PlaceAgency program development workshops were held with academics, community and industry representatives. During these, a total of 62 skills were identified from which 11 capabilities were identified as relevant within the context of this module. 8 of these were included in the final module. These are listed below and their location within the module noted.

| Cognitive Skills (Head) | Affective Skills (Heart) | Practical Skills (Hand) |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Understanding the value proposition of place (benefits and risks and importance of evaluation) (a key focus of the module)</p> <p>Knowledge on the general scope of tools and strategies for evaluation – see toolset for scope of tools</p> <p>Understanding the pros/cons of evaluation – Through lecture and activity 2.</p> | <p>Liaising – Knowing how to communicate the benefits of your projects to different people in a language of what matters to them.</p> | <p>Critical analysis of evaluation techniques – Through section C of outline and Activity 2.</p> <p>Thinking long-term – Finding indicators of long-term benefits through Activity 2.</p> <p>Finding the values of place and measures for success – valuing relationships for a holistic picture – through lecture and Activity 1.</p> <p>Building a place-specific evaluation framework – Key outcome of the module as applied to a case study.</p> |

Module Overview

Table 1: Module overview. Summary of the activities considered within this module and the time equivalency. In white content that is either delivered in-person or online but requiring some element of students listening/discussing with the group etc. In grey, self-study activities, videos, etc.

| ACTIVITY | TIME | NOTES |
|----------|----------|--|
| A | Readings | <p>2 hrs</p> <p>Hes, D., Hernandez-Santin, C., Beer, T. & S. Huang. (2020) “Place evaluation: Measuring what matters by prioritising relationships.” In D. Hes and C. Hernandez-Santin <i>Placemaking fundamentals for the built environment</i>. Palgrave Macmillan.</p> <p>Burton, L, 2015, Mental well-being and the influence of place, Chap 11, in Barton, H., Thompson, S., Grant, M., and Burgess S. (Eds) 2015 <i>The Routledge Handbook of Planning for Health and Well-Being: Shaping a sustainable and healthy future</i> (pp 150-161) (London: Routledge).</p> <p>Raymond, C. M., Frantzeskaki, N., Kabisch, N., Berry, P., Breil, M., Nita, M. R., Calfapietra, C. (2017). A framework for assessing and implementing the co-benefits of nature-based solutions in urban areas. <i>Environmental Science and Policy</i>, 77, 15-24.</p> |
| B | Videos | <p>30 min</p> <p>Watch the 2 videos and write a list of key points made through these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are places evaluated? (11min) to get insights into how some leading placemaking practitioners currently assess their projects • What is the importance of evaluation to placemaking? (4:48min) highlights the need for evaluation strategies and the key uses for evaluation in place. <p>Considerations for facilitator: videos are embedded in the lecture slide deck in case you want to show specific moments of the video or simply use them as a reminder to discuss key aspects.</p> |
| C | Toolset | <p>1.5 hr</p> <p>From the toolset database, each student will choose one tool and prepare 5 slides that summarise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What it is and what is its purpose • Specific variables being measured • The methodology used to measure said variables • Advantages of the tool • Limitations of the tool. <p>Add your summary into the database and make sure to add the specific indicators as well, we have added an example. See Attachment 1</p> |

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------|--|
| | | | Some considerations for the facilitator: you may like to determine who will evaluate which tool or set the database as a live document (i.e. via google docs) so key summary can be incorporated. |
| D | Lecture | 1hr | <p>The slide deck provides an outline on place evaluation and proposes a relational model to support and enhance economic evaluation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do we need to evaluate places? (10 min) • How are places evaluated? (15 min) • Revisiting the Four dimensions of place (5 min) • The Relational Model for Place evaluation (20-30 min) |
| E | Tutorial | 2 hr | <p>Please see the 4 focus areas and associated exercises below for more detail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity 1: 40 mins. Starting from values for place evaluation • Activity 2: 1hr-20 mins. Existing evaluation methods. |
| F | Refining evaluation process | 2.5 hrs | <p>Spend time revisiting the evaluation framework to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revisit and finalise the key values used as an evaluation framework for your case study; 2. Explore the set of indicators to evaluate different relationships at short, medium and long-term scales (input, output, outcome and legacy) 3. Fill in the gaps and create your own indicators as required. |
| G | Journal questions | 30 mins | <p>Journal question:</p> <p>8.1. The evaluation has power, what do you think this is? (max 150 words)</p> <p>8.2. How you will evaluate the success of the place? (max 100 words)</p> |
| | TOTAL MODULE | 10hrs | |

2 Section 2:

Introduction to Module

This module outlines the potential role of evaluation as a tool informing future evolution of the place rather than the end of a project. While there is ample literature that highlights the benefits of placemaking, place attachment, sense of place and how these terms (amongst others) are correlated with numerous benefits such as reducing crime rates or enhancing liveability. However, placemaking projects, in general, rarely count with enough funding to assess if they achieved the outcomes the initiative promised or not.

Furthermore, the question arises, are we measuring what matters? There is thirst within the industry of having tools and resources that allow them to support the placemaking business case, using it as a way of justifying their services or encouraging further investment. This is evident with a large number of tools and frameworks in the market that assess aspects relevant to the place.

Unfortunately, the evaluation tools available, in many cases, present a fragmented view of place, assessing only specific elements (i.e. wellbeing or liveability) but failing to address others. In particular, the things that most matter to people, are difficult to evaluate. Terms such as belonging or fun in the city are ambiguous terms that are not easy to measure and are most time lacking in available tools.

To ensure that we measure what matters, we propose a relational model based on the four dimensions of place: self, community, public/private space and natural environment. By encouraging actions and activities that support relationship building and connection across these, we then must look for evidence of six key relationships:

1. self and public/private space,
2. community and public/private space,
3. self and community,
4. public/private space and natural environment,
5. self and natural environment, and
6. community and natural environment.

These relationships are supported by four key literature topics: place attachment, sense of belonging, ecological health and biophilia

2.1 Starting from values for place evaluation

This section shares the Rating Place project. As per the reports on the preliminary workshop, “Rating Place is a project where universities and practitioners create a place rating framework informed by the industry. This project proposes to take an approach of embracing uncertainty to develop and harness innovative tools and frameworks to measure the outputs, outcomes and long-term legacy of a project through the lens of ‘place’ and the relationships occurring within it.” Rating place workshop reports

As of October 2019, the project was at trial stage and looking to apply to an ARC-linkage grant project. During the pilot stage, four ½ - 1-day workshop were conducted with over 120 place experts in Sydney, Melbourne, Geelong and Perth, Australia (with 25-45 participants per workshop). The methodology piloted at this project was inspired by work of Dr Harder, M. and Burford, G., (2018) on *Measuring intangible values*. In its purest

form, these methods ask communities to explore what is most important to them and slowly develop the right indicators that speak to that community. For instance, rather than a generic measure for connection to nature, the process might land in some members of the group specifically enjoying bird watching while others enjoying reading under the shade of a tree. As such, the process develops clear direction of what activities and intangible elements are what makes people feel connected to their fellows.

The full method, however, is longer and deeper than the pilot workshops allowed and was not specifically created to evaluate place, thus, we developed a set of ‘place value cards’ which present single terms that have been highlighted by the literature as relevant to place. This includes literature supporting all the 6 relationships presented in the relational model presented in this module resulting in 94 cards. The cards are used as a brainstorming tool asking participants to think about the thing that gives places a heartbeat (‘must-haves of place’) and the attributes that are important for this specific project/context (place-specific values). For example, literature tells us that places have a distinctive identity, a sense of knowing where you are or being able to feel a certain vibe in the place; thus, this would be considered a must-have. Meanwhile, if the project is a park, a market or a shopping centre, they may place importance in different types of activities or ways of relating to the community and stakeholders.

The first activity will engage students to brainstorm on the values most important for the place they are working on and the specific placemaking intervention they are creating. As such, by this point, the students should have a clear idea of the purpose of their placemaking approach and some ideas on what they would like to do but not have a very defined conceptual idea to allow the evaluation process to inform their thinking.

Exercise 1: 40 min. Starting from values for place

| Instructions | Delivery | Time | Objective of the exercise |
|--|---|--------|---|
| Introduce students to the Rating Place Project | In class viable for online group discussion with some tweaks. | 5 min | Develop an understanding of the place values as understood by the students. Please note that ideally, this is a resource to be used with community so they develop the evaluation framework of their own places. |
| Within the group work team, divide up into pairs and subdivide the place value cards. Each pair will place the things that they believe are most important to the place in the centre of the table. | | 10 min | |
| The whole team now gets together to discuss and choose up to 5 ‘must-haves’ of place and up to an additional 10 of ‘place-specific’ values. Note: based on available time, you may reduce the number of values addressed. | | 25 min | |

2.2 Existing evaluation methods.

The University of Melbourne and Place Leaders Asia Pacific took it upon themselves to look at existing tools and frameworks available for the evaluation of wellbeing, liveability, connection to nature, place, etc. This

includes both tools in the market and those created for research purposes. With a total of 77 tools in a database, these tools provide an example of resources in our reach and provide a set of indicators used to evaluate some aspects of our projects.

This activity is subdivided into two parts. Part 1, asks students to share their finding in the exploration of the database. Meanwhile, Part 2 asks students to map the tools in the relational model, write down relevant indicators as expressed by the available tools. Part 3, asks the whole group to students to discuss the limitations and gaps of the existing tools.

Exercise 2: 1hr-20 mins. Existing evaluation methods.

| Instructions | Delivery | Time | Objective of the exercise |
|---|----------|-----------|---|
| <p>Part 1:</p> <p>In the team workgroups, each person will take 2-3 minutes to share the five slides created as part of Section C of the module outline.</p> | In class | 15-20 min | Explore existing tools and what they measure. |
| <p>Part 2:</p> <p>Using the Relational model, create an image, a diagram that writes down different tools and their relevant indicators</p> | | 30 min | |
| <p>Part 3:</p> <p>As a whole group discussion, share your insights with the group. This facilitated discussion will explore the gaps in evaluation strategies.</p> | In class | 30 min | Identify limitations to evaluation strategies |

You may want to do this as an assessment task.

Attachment 1:

The database has a list of tools all categorised (category, type and coloured columns). It also includes a summary of what the tools were created for. All tool names go directly to the website/reports of the tool as before October 2019.

| STUDENT NAME | TOOL NAME | TOOL CATEGORY | TOOL TYPE | INDEX | GUIDE OR FRAMEWORK TOOL | DATA COLLECTION TOOL | ASSESSMENT TOOL | ENGAGEMENT TOOL | RESOURCE TOOL | TOOL PURPOSE |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------------|-------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---|
| Cristina Hernandez Santin | Thriving Places Index | Health & Wellbeing | Index | Y | | | | | | The Index is designed as a measure of the drivers of wellbeing. It is designed to measure how well areas are doing at growing the conditions for equitable, sustainable wellbeing. |
| | Gensler Experience Index | Urban Experience | Index | Y | | | | | | The Gensler Experience Index identifies the key drivers of a great experience, quantifies the direct impact great design has on experience, and provides a holistic framework for understanding experience. The goal: to inspire the creation of great places that engage people's emotions and keep them coming back. |
| | California Healthy Places Index (HPI) | Health & Wellbeing | Index & Interactive Map | Y | | | | | | The California Healthy Places Index (HPI) is a tool to assist you in exploring local factors that predict life expectancy and comparing community conditions across the state. The HPI provides overall scores and more detailed data on specific policy action areas that shape health, like housing, transportation, education and more. The website offers other resources including an interactive map, graphs, data tables, and policy guide with practical solutions for improving community conditions and health. |

After selecting what tool, you will use for the analysis, you will read about the tool and document the target user, the specific variables, methodology, advantages and limitations of the tool. The image below shows the example of one prefilled tool.

| TOOL TARGET USER | SPECIFIC VARIABLES | METHODOLOGY | ADVANTAGES | LIMITATIONS |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Local Authority, Public Health teams, Health and Wellbeing Boards, Private Sector & Citizens | 1) Equality : Wellbeing, Health, Income 2) Local Conditions : Education (adult qualification, children education, child learning), Place (Greenspace, transport, safety, housing), Community (participation, social cohesion, culture, social isolation), Health (mortality, mental health, risky behaviours, overall health), Economy (unemployment, overworked, deprivation, local businesses) 3) Sustainability : Household Recycling, CO2 Emissions, Energy Consumption | 48 indicators that use existing data from established national data agencies. All indicators are chosen to represent the drivers of wellbeing – factors which are known to improve people's wellbeing now and in the long term. Each local authority gets a headline results graphic and a scorecard. The score ranges from 1-10 and broken down into a linkert scale. Under 3.5 = lowest, 3.5-4.5 = low, 4.5-5.4 = Average, 5.4-6.5 = high, Above 6.5 = highest | It is using data publicly available and gathered through population surveys. The indicators themselves are common in most countries thus providing comparable data. This indicators are regularly updated, generally considered valid, | Indicators are generalised, numeric and fail to address the emotional connection sought by place. The tool is targeting health and wellbeing measures but fails to include natural environment |

Lastly, go to the indicator tab and fill out the specific indicators used by the tool and how they are defined by the tool if that information is available. If everyone pitches in, you will end off with a large and really valuable database with all the tools and indicators currently used at industry and/or research institutions.

Go to the Indicator tab...

| Tool | INDICATOR | DESCRIPTION - How is the indicator measured or defined? | Measured variables | Subcategories |
|-----------------|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Thriving Places | Exercise | Utilisation of outdoor space for exercise/health reasons | Place and environment | Local environment |
| Thriving Places | Air pollution | Combined Air Quality Index (made of the levels of four pollutants) | Place and environment | Local environment |
| Thriving Places | Public transport | breakdown % respondents who go to work by public transport | Place and environment | Transport |
| Thriving Places | Active transport | breakdown % respondents who go to work through active travel | Place and environment | Transport |
| Thriving Places | Car traffic | Car vehicle traffic thousand vehicle miles per capita | Place and environment | Transport |
| Thriving Places | Distance to services | Average of road distance to post office, a primary school, general store or supermarket and GP surgery | Place and environment | Transport |
| Thriving Places | Traffic accidents | Road traffic accidents rate (per 1000 resident and workplace population) | Place and environment | Transport |
| Thriving Places | Youth offending | First time entrants to the youth justice system (per 100,000) | Place and environment | Safety |
| Thriving Places | Crime severity | Crime Severity Index | Place and environment | Safety |
| Thriving Places | Poor housing | Social and private housing in poor condition (proportion) | Place and environment | Housing |
| Thriving Places | Housing affordability | Difficulty of access to owner-occupation (local authority district level) – proportion of households aged under 35 whose income means they are unable to afford to enter owner occupation | Place and environment | Housing |
| Thriving Places | Homelessness | Number (per 100 households) accepted as being homeless and in priority need under the homelessness provisions of the 1996 Housing Act | Place and environment | Housing |
| Thriving Places | Noise | Noise complaints (per year per local authority about noise per thousand population) | Place and environment | Housing |

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