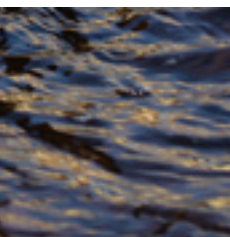




# Take a Closer Look at the Stages of Project Planning and Action

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**M**ay these guidelines encourage you to create art education projects that are meaningful, decolonial and sustainable.

### **Explore the Socio-Cultural and Ecocultural Context**

In the framework of AAE projects, the notion of *community* is understood broadly, encompassing human inhabitants and more-than-human beings, environments and material agencies. This approach encourages considering how humans, more-than-humans and their surroundings co-shape and influence one another within ecocultures.

If physical presence at the location is not possible in the initial phases, remote and digital methods can be used creatively, such as engaging with local social media groups or conducting online participatory mapping. The project plan should clearly describe the chosen methods, intended participants (humans and/or more-than-humans), schedule and forms for presenting the results. Outcomes may take various formats, including text, images, video works, installations or web platforms.

Preliminary exploration is crucial as it helps articulate the project's relevance and refine its scope. In ecocultural and community-based projects, meaningful directions often emerge from dialogue and attentive intra-action with the local context, including the landscapes, ecosystems, species and human actors involved. Therefore, sensitivity to place and an openness to unexpected forms of interaction are essential for responsible and responsive project design.

### **Learning from Earlier Art and Art Education Projects**

When planning an AAE project, it is essential to engage with what has come before. This means familiarising oneself with earlier projects, artworks and pedagogical initiatives that have addressed similar themes, places or communities. Such contextual awareness



Figure: Bark Boat. Photograph: Mari Parpala, 2018.

honours the work and knowledge of previous artists, educators and community members, and it helps to both extract lessons learned and build upon existing relationships, methodologies and narratives.

Researching local and regional art histories – including Indigenous artistic traditions and other Northern artistic traditions, land-based practices and past community art projects – can reveal important cultural meanings, symbols or protocols related to the place or topic. It also allows for respectful continuation of art and education rather than disrupt-

tion. In Arctic communities, where histories are often transmitted orally or through lived practice, this process may involve direct conversations with Elders, Northern knowledge holders, artists and educators in addition to studying published materials.

Situating a new project within a broader landscape of past and ongoing work fosters continuity and dialogue across time. It supports ethical practice and helps ensure that projects contribute meaningfully to existing cultural ecosystems rather than appropriating or isolating them. This also strengthens the project's relevance, resonance and potential for impact, both locally and more broadly, when fostering the impactfulness of art and art education.

## **Decolonial Research as a Foundation for AAE Projects**

It is essential to engage with research literature specifically grounded in Arctic art and art education. Such literature provides culturally and environmentally relevant perspectives that reflect the unique conditions, values and worldviews of Arctic communities. Relying solely on global or mainstream art and art education sources would risk overlooking or misrepresenting these specific contexts. By reading Arctic scholarship, you will gain a deeper understanding of local practices and knowledge systems and contribute to the decolonisation of research and education by valuing regionally rooted ways of knowing, making, teaching and researching.

Concepts and literature worth visiting include the following: Arctic art and design practices, land-based education, decolonisation, eco-cultural resilience and community-based art education frameworks. Relevant authors may include Indigenous Arctic scholars, Northern cultural theorists and artists whose work emerges from the specific contexts of the Circumpolar North. Incorporating such theoretical grounding helps the project to resist extractive or outsider-driven perspectives and instead supports place-sensitive, culturally sustaining and ethically grounded artistic and educational practices.

The book series *Relate North* has been published annually since 2014 to identify and share contemporary and innovative practices in teaching, learning, research and knowledge exchange in the fields of arts, design and visual culture education in the North.

*Education in the North* is a journal that publishes research findings, comments and critiques on all aspects of education. This includes formal and informal educational settings, as well as compulsory, community, further or higher education and allied professions (such as psychology, social work and librarianship).

The key literature on the concepts of new genre Arctic art and new genre AAE includes the following:

- Hiltunen, M & Korsström-Magga (Forthcoming). Nomadic antlers. New genre Arctic art education and activism. In A. Sohns (Eds.), *Artistic dialogues with the Arctic North: Environmental change and identity in transition*. Routledge.
- Jokela, T., Berliner, P., & Manninen, A. (2024). Introduction: Creating sustainability portraits in the Arctic. In T. Jokela, P. Berliner, & A. Manninen (Eds.), *Creating Arctic sustainability portraits* (pp. 8–12). Lapin yliopisto. <https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe20241209100493>
- Jokela, T., Manninen, A., & Berliner, P. (2024). Introduction: a journey with new genre Arctic art. In T. Jokela, A. Manninen, & P. Berliner (Eds.), *Mapping the new genre arctic art education* (pp. 8–13). Lapin yliopisto. <https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe2024120599888>
- Jokela T. & Hiltunen M. (2024). New genre Arctic art education as a way of knowing with the North. In T. Jokela T., M. Huhmarniemi & K. Burnett (Eds.), *Relate North: New genre Arctic art education beyond borders* (pp. 12–37). InSEA Publications.



Figure: Wool Innovation project. Photograph: Lola Cervantes, 2024.  
 Figure. Artistic process. Photograph: Mari Parpala, 2022.

- Jokela, T. & Huhmarniemi, M. (2022). Arctic art education in changing nature and culture. *Education in the North*, 29(2), 4–27. <https://doi.org/10.26203/55f2-1c04>
- Jokela, T., Huhmarniemi, M., Beer, R. & Soloviova, A. (2021). Mapping new genre Arctic art. In L. Heininen; H. Exner-Pirot & J. Barnes (eds.), *Arctic Yearbook 2021: Defining and mapping sovereignties, policies and perceptions*. Arctic Portal. <https://arcticyearbook.com/arctic-yearbook/2021/2021-scholarly-papers/400-mapping-new-genre-arctic-art>
- Ruotsalainen, J. (2024). Discursive frameworks of Arctic art. *Arctic Yearbook 2024 – Arctic relations: Transformations, legacies and futures*. <https://arcticyearbook.com/arctic-yearbook/2024/2024-scholarly-papers/526-discursive-frameworks-of-arctic-art>

## Arctic Art and its New Genre

An AAE project may draw from a wide range of creative traditions, using tools, materials and methods that span from natural dyes to media technologies, poetry and performance. However, Arctic art diverges fundamentally from the dualistic and colonial traditions of Western art. It does not separate art, design and craft, nor is it created solely for art's sake. Artists in the Arctic often blend different means of expression – combining beauty and functionality, cultural meaning and practical use – while engaging with Northern knowledge systems and natural materials.

Artists may gather materials directly from nature, live and create in relationship with the Land, collaborate with ecosystems and carry forward traditional crafting practices. In such cases, art becomes a way to maintain, reinterpret and transform local ecocultures and ways of life. Arctic art encompasses a broad range of creative expressions – including craft, design and cultural production – that carry the heritage of Arctic ecocultures across generations and cultural boundaries. It embodies both tangible and intangible heritage – material knowledge embedded in making, visual languages and symbols rooted in lived traditions.

The revitalisation of crafting skills and traditional knowledge often focuses on Indigenous heritage and other Arctic cultural practices. Such efforts must be grounded in cultural respect and cannot take place without the involvement and consent of cultural members. When revitalising craft heritage through AAE projects, cultural appropriation must be consciously avoided, especially in cases where communities choose not to share certain knowledge or practices.



Figures: Snow sculpting. Photographs: Antti Stöckell, 2024.

In many cases, AAE projects focus on forms of knowledge and skills that emerge from participation in local ecocultures and that can be shared with newcomers and guests. Projects may also explore cultural practices that are held in common across multiple Arctic cultures or traditions from minority Indigenous groups that have formed over generations of living in close relationship with the Land.

The need to preserve, revitalise and take pride in cultural heritage is shared by both Indigenous peoples and other communities living in the Arctic. AAE projects can support this by fostering cultural continuity, intergenerational learning and ecoculturally rooted forms of expression.

The concept of new genre Arctic art refers to contemporary artistic practices – such as interventions, performances, installations, media art and community collaborations – that are participatory, activist and responsive to urgent social and environmental issues. These practices reflect a shift from object-based public art toward socially engaged and often politically motivated forms of expression. In the Arctic, they frequently address topics such as climate change, natural resource extraction and cultural self-determination.

This kind of contemporary Arctic art is increasingly shaped by local voices. It engages with ecocultures, politics and identities from within the region. Arctic communities – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities – create art that challenges colonial narratives and reflects lived realities.

AAE builds on these approaches by integrating local ways of making, land-based learning, environmental awareness and community engagement. Art educators in the North have developed methods – such as snow and ice sculpting – that support cultural resilience and revitalisation by drawing on local nature, crafts and ecocultural knowledge. These methods aim to strengthen cultural identities, foster pride and support sustainable ways of living.

New genre AAE recognises the importance of materials, landscapes and relationships in learning. It is informed by ecological thinking, land-based pedagogies and the lived experience of Northern communities. Art is seen not only as a form of expression but also as a mode of inquiry and activism – one that helps to imagine and create more hopeful and sustainable futures.

AAE projects call for culturally sensitive and ecologically grounded educational practices that value Northern knowledge, participation and collaboration. By connecting contemporary art with community, nature and culture, AAE contributes to creativity, empowerment, resilience, decolonisation and meaningful change.

## Documenting AAE Projects

In the context of AAE, documentation plays an essential role as a tool for learning, reflection, motivation and representing process and artistic productions. In remote and culturally rich northern contexts, documentation becomes both a pedagogical approach and an ethical responsibility. Recording participants' voices, questions and reflections – alongside visual documentation – helps to make transformations, interconnections and artistic growth visible. In AAE, documentation should honour the unique knowledge systems, languages and environmental relationships of Arctic communities.

Documentation and evaluation should create lasting benefits that go beyond the duration of a single project. These may include educational resources for schools, materials supporting cultural heritage preservation, archives for community memory and tools for designing future initiatives. When documenting art and art education in Arctic contexts, it is essential to respect the seasonal rhythms, Indigenous knowledge systems and the interconnection of Land and community.

In every AAE project, it is necessary to consider how the documentation represents the core of art and art education. Does it primarily present the artworks as finished objects, or does it highlight artistic, communal and transformative processes? Does it reflect the spirit, cultural context and social environment of the place in which the art was created? In many AAE projects, documentation is often the primary means by which wider audiences can experience the artwork. Projects may take place in remote locations or natural landscapes that are difficult to access, and many artworks are ephemeral, existing only for a short time and experienced by a small group of participants. Thus, documentation is not merely supplementary, it is central to extending the work's reach, honouring its context and preserving its connection to place, culture and community memory.

Documentation must always be guided by the project's purpose, goals and theoretical framework. In AAE, art is often understood as a process deeply related to Land and people. Therefore, documentation should emphasise this evolving and relational nature – one that resists extractive or colonial ways of seeing.

### ***What Should Be Documented in AAE Projects?***

- **Land and people should be depicted in a decolonial manner:** Avoid repeating colonial representations or romanticisations of Arctic landscapes and communities. Emphasise respectful presence and relationality.
- **Relating Land and people:** Document how the project team comes to know and respect the Land, its cultural significance and the people who live there. This includes engagement with local knowledge, stories and traditions.

- **An inclusive community that includes more-than-human agencies**
- **Creative processes:** These include sketching, theme development, stages of making, problem-solving, learning moments and emotional responses.
- **Artworks and events:** Completed works should be documented in their environment (close-up, distant views, different angles and, when possible, across seasons and times of day). Capture audience and community engagement, as well as the natural disappearance or intentional decay of the artwork.
- **Project goals and impact:** These include, for example, evidence of collaboration, active participation, intergenerational dialogue or reconnection with Land and heritage

### ***Documenting Diverse Perspectives***

- **The Land in its changing conditions:** Arctic environments are dynamic. Shifts in light, temperature, snow, water and seasonal rhythms shape an artwork and its perception. Documentation planning should account for this, for example, it should consider whether it is possible to revisit the site at different times or document melting, freezing or other transformations.
- **Wide shots:** Depict artworks in their environment and groups interacting with the Land and each other.
- **Medium shots:** Depict working methods, gestures, and the use of tools and materials.
- **Close-ups:** Depict details of the materials, facial expressions, hands at work and symbolic or meaningful objects.

### ***Ethical Documentation in Arctic Contexts***

Documentation in AAE projects must follow ethical and cultural protocols, particularly in Indigenous and local communities. Photos, videos and audio recordings should reflect respectful relationships with the Land, people and traditions – not external assumptions or narratives.

When projects involve sensitive cultural practices, traditional knowledge or sacred places, documentation must not reveal information the community wishes to keep private. Ask:

What is appropriate for public visibility? What should remain within the community?

### ***Purposeful and Context-Sensitive Documentation***

The resulting materials may be used for communication, exhibitions, visual essays, research publications, evaluation, funding reports or future planning. These purposes may shift over time, so documentation should be intentionally planned – especially in large-scale projects involving entire schools, villages or institutions.

For example, when time and resources are limited, one group may be selected for deeper documentation. A camera should be easily available to capture fleeting northern light conditions and spontaneous moments.

### ***Documentation Methods and Tools***

Choose tools based on their intended use: Will the documentation be shared in community gatherings, websites, exhibitions or archives? If the documentation also serves as research data, it is important to record conversations and process stages consistently.

Recommended tools:

- Photography
- Field notes and diaries
- Sketches and idea maps
- Short video clips (especially useful for capturing atmosphere and the unique qualities of the Land)
- Documentary movies, augmented reality, podcasts and other media can also be applied if resources allow it

### ***Consent and Ownership***

In Arctic and Indigenous contexts, informed consent is essential. Always seek permission before documenting individuals, cultural knowledge or sacred spaces. For children, guardian approval is required. Written agreements are highly recommended and should clarify the following:



Figure: Documentary film making in Greenland. Photograph: Niko Väistö, 2025.

- Who owns the documentation?
- Where and how will it be stored and used?
- Who has access?

Designating a documentation person or team can help ensure consistency. However, the documenter should not be a total outsider – they must understand the project’s values and the cultural and ecological context. Ideally, local or community members should be involved in the documentation process. This promotes community ownership and cultural continuity. Internationally known participatory methods, such as photovoice, can be applied in AAE projects too. Ideally, communities should also retain access to and rights over materials that represent their stories and ways of knowing. When sharing documentation, prioritise local, community-led archives when possible. These ensure long-term access and cultural sovereignty more effectively than distant or institutional repositories.

## **Communicating about an AAE Project**

In Arctic contexts, communication must be designed with special attention to linguistic, cultural and geographical considerations. Local and Indigenous languages may play a crucial role in ensuring that messages are accessible and meaningful to community members. Whenever possible, consider producing key communication materials (such as posters, invitations or project summaries) in local languages alongside national or international languages.

Involving community representatives or knowledge holders in shaping the communication content can improve cultural relevance and appropriateness. This is especially important when communicating about sensitive cultural topics or local knowledge.

In the North, physical distances and digital connectivity may shape communication choices. Not all Arctic regions have stable or affordable internet access; therefore, traditional and place-based media (such as community radio, village noticeboards and word-of-mouth promotion via local events) remain valuable tools.

When sharing outcomes externally – such as in exhibitions or publications – ensure that you acknowledge and, where appropriate, obtain consent from community partners whose voices, images or knowledge are featured. This helps to uphold the principles of ethical collaboration, cultural safety and co-authorship.

Consider how the results will be shared after the project ends, for example, in exhibitions, online galleries, publications or seminars. Artworks and events live on in various



Figure: Public art by school community in Utsjoki. Photograph: Mirja Hiltunen, 2021.



Figure: Presenting public art at school in Utsjoki. Photograph: Mirja Hiltunen, 2021.

forms, including articles, documentation and memories. Thoughtful communication planning can extend the project's influence to broader discussions about the role and significance of art and art education. Thoughtful communication planning also contributes to the project's decolonising potential by ensuring that the community's perspectives, stories and interpretations are represented authentically and not overshadowed by outsider narratives. When possible, community members should be invited to co-present the results, artworks or findings, whether in local exhibitions or international forums. Creating and exhibiting artworks are important for initiating dialogue. Sharing artworks online with other groups adds a new dimension to the dialogue and allows new audiences to interact with the works.

Also, leverage the channels of partner organisations and the university to reach relevant audiences. The social media platforms of the ASAD network are offered to expand the communication in the Arctic art and design education networks. You can tag the

Instagram account @asad\_network (as a collaborator of your post) and the Facebook account @ArcticSustainableArtsAndDesign or share in the Arctic Sustainable Arts & Design Facebook group.

## **Celebrating the Results of the Project in AAE**

An AAE project culminates in a meaningful closing phase. As the work progresses, participants often become increasingly committed to the process. Seeing a community contribution – whether material, symbolic or conceptual – can evoke feelings of cultural pride and inspiration. In successful projects with well-crafted outcomes, participants often experience joy, empowerment, increased capability and a sense of belonging. Through the unveiling of the final artwork, they may literally or symbolically have their voices heard and recognised.

In the university context, students are expected to not only celebrate the learning process, their and others' contributions, and the project's overall progress, artistic quality and social impact, they are also expected to critically reflect on theme. In AAE, this includes reflecting on how local realities, Arctic ecologies, Indigenous or community-based knowledge systems and collaborative dynamics shaped the artistic and educational outcomes.

Within the pedagogical model of project-based learning, this final phase is often referred to as a 'closure moment'. It includes evaluation, shared reflection, and giving and receiving feedback. This process helps clarify and give meaning to experiences that may only become fully visible and understandable in hindsight, when the creative and collaborative journey can be viewed as a whole.

The goal of an AAE project – and the way its quality and effectiveness are measured – often extends beyond the institutional setting. Art seeks to be seen, felt and shared. In Arctic regions, final presentations or celebrations are shaped by the nature of the project, the community's cultural practices and the participants' wishes. These may take the form of artwork unveilings, exhibitions, seminar presentations, public conversations with artistic interventions, seasonal gatherings, village festivals or other local events.

Such events might welcome families, local residents, community leaders, Elders, knowledge keepers and other relevant audiences. When shared publicly, the value of the artwork increases in the eyes of its creators, and the moment of celebration can strengthen community bonds and the shared experiences of success and recognition.

Media – including local newspapers, radio and social platforms – can be powerful tools for appreciating and amplifying the project. Through increased media visibility,



Figure: Showing video art. Photograph: Aki Lintumäki, 2022.

Arctic art and design projects can gain broader recognition and contribute to public discourse on the role of art in sustaining cultures, ecosystems and traditional ways of life in the North.

## **Reporting the Project for Study and Scholarly Purposes**

Project reporting is an integral, planned and shareable part of the overall project process – just like other stages of project work. Reporting depends on the scale and funding of the project. This guideline is generally written for students and doctoral candidates to use in project-based learning.

The project report should focus on providing an analytical and reflective account of the activities carried out, as well as on presenting the project's outcomes and potential ideas for further development. It is essential to highlight both the successes and the

challenges encountered and to propose constructive suggestions for improvement. This openness allows future projects to build upon the experiences of their predecessors, fostering continuity and increasing the cumulative impact of short-term projects.

In the report submitted for academic credit, each student must also reflect on their role and learning within the project team, demonstrating how they contributed to and grew through the collaborative process.

In Arctic contexts, project reporting may also partially occur through the public sharing of results – such as sharing in seminars, exhibitions, community events or project publications. In these cases, particular attention should be given to ensuring continuity and broader impact, recognising that one-off projects can contribute to longer-term community benefits, knowledge sharing and cultural sustainability.

Moreover, when working in Arctic communities, it is crucial to reflect on how the voices, knowledge and interests of local partners have been represented and respected in the project outcomes and reporting. This includes acknowledging any local or Indigenous contributions, shared authorship and consent to publish or exhibit local cultural expressions or knowledge. Reporting thus becomes not only a documentation of the process but a part of the project's ethical responsibility and its contribution to the decolonisation of research and art education.

#### **THE AAE PROJECT REPORT IN A NUTSHELL**

You must clearly state the context, focus and purpose of your project. When working in Arctic contexts, this includes recognising the specific cultural, social and environmental characteristics of the region. This summary should be approximately half a page in length.

#### **STATE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT**

You are expected to justify your focus not only in terms of your personal or professional interests but also in terms of its relevance to Arctic communities, cultural sustainability or local art education practices. This justification should reflect an awareness of the distinct challenges and opportunities of working in Arctic or Indigenous contexts, including potential contributions to community well-being or cultural continuity.

### KEY LITERATURE

Your literature review must engage with existing research, ideas and theories that are relevant to Arctic art, design and/or art education, where applicable. Using global or general literature alone is insufficient; you should demonstrate an understanding of regionally grounded scholarship and knowledge systems to ensure cultural relevance and to support decolonising research approaches.

### THE APPROACH

You are expected to describe your chosen research or project methodology and to justify it in the Arctic context when stating the purpose of your work. Suppose community involvement is part of your project. In that case, you should explain how you have ensured that the project employs ethical, respectful and participatory approaches that allow local voices to be heard and considered.

### OUTCOMES

You should clearly describe the outcomes of your project, which may include artwork, workshop results, community feedback, photographs, drawings or video records. When appropriate, ensure that the community's perspectives or interpretations of the project are reflected in these outcomes.

### ANALYSIS

You are expected to reflect on and critically analyse the project, considering how the Arctic context, local knowledge or community engagement may have shaped the process and results.

### COMMUNITY VOICE

Include quotations from feedback provided by participants or stakeholders of the project.

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Your conclusions must be well-grounded in the evidence you present and should reflect the significance of your work for Arctic art and AAE or community development. Where relevant, discuss how the project outcomes may support or impact on the local community and how community voices have been included or represented in your findings.

## A REFERENCE LIST

Ensure that your references include appropriate Arctic and Indigenous sources, in addition to any global or general literature used.

## EXPECTED QUALITIES

The report should be a coherent, legible, tidy and well-structured text file with images.

The identity of any individuals or communities involved in the study should not be disclosed without prior informed consent. Anonymity must be maintained unless explicit permission to identify persons or institutions has been granted.

In Arctic community-based projects, ethical considerations – including respect for local knowledge, cultural protocols and the right of community members to review or comment on how their voices are represented – are essential.

## Evaluating AAE Projects in Arctic Contexts

The role and purpose of evaluation in AAE projects vary depending on the scope and nature of the project. In small-scale art initiatives, evaluation may focus on artistic processes, community engagement or immediate outcomes. In contrast, broader ABAR projects often require more systematic and multi-layered evaluation strategies as they aim to generate new knowledge, support long-term development goals and inform policy or education practices.

In AAE projects – especially those situated in Indigenous or multicultural Northern communities – evaluation is a continuous, relational and participatory process. Evaluation encompasses both ongoing reflection and mid-project adjustments, as well as a summative reflection upon completion. In AAE, this process often unfolds in two stages: the first, immediately after the project ends, when memories are still fresh; the second, some time later, when participants have had the opportunity to process and situate the experience in broader life or cultural contexts.

Participants' perceptions and lived experiences form the foundation of any meaningful evaluation. This necessitates collaborative and culturally appropriate methods such as feedback discussions, talking circles, story-sharing, interviews or written reflections. These approaches honour local ways of knowing, oral traditions and community-based

dialogue. Self-evaluation is also essential, especially in relation to one's learning, actions and their alignment with community values, cultural protocols and the ecological realities of Arctic life.

In Northern settings, the action research model is especially suitable. It allows for reflection in action, values iterative learning and honours the contributions of all participants – including Elders, youth, artists, educators and land-based knowledge holders. It also makes space for Indigenous worldviews, non-linear time and communal interpretations of meaning. Evaluation should be embedded in the project's relationships with people, place and cultural traditions, and it should be carried out in accordance with local protocols and permissions.

### ***Key Dimensions of Evaluation in AAE***

Evaluation should address both the process and the outcomes of a project, while foregrounding its cultural, social and ecological relevance. Specifically, AAE evaluations should consider:

- **Multiple dimensions and goals:** How well were the project's aims achieved, including its cultural, educational, artistic and environmental goals? How successful were the collaboration, communication and documentation processes?
- **Tangible outcomes:** What events or public gatherings occurred? What physical, digital or ephemeral artworks were created?
- **Quality and cultural relevance:** Do the artworks or events reflect the creators' intentions and resonate with local traditions, stories and identities? How were they received by the community or audience?
- **Social, cultural, environmental and transformative impact:** How did the project influence intergenerational dialogue, Indigenous or minor language use, environmental awareness or cross-cultural relationships? Did it contribute to cultural revitalisation, resilience or a sense of belonging?
- **Personal learning and role reflection:** What did participants, facilitators and artists learn about themselves and their roles? How did their understandings of art, place or community change through the process?

### ***Culturally Responsive and Place-Based Evaluation***

Evaluation methods must be adapted to the realities of Arctic and Indigenous communities. Projects in the North are deeply influenced by seasonal variations, geographic remoteness and oral traditions. Evaluation should acknowledge this, and methods should be flexible and respectful of timeframes that do not necessarily align with institutional calendars.

In addition to traditional artistic evaluation criteria – such as those related to form, technique, and material use – AAE projects require culturally responsive frameworks. These should consider the following:

- **The dialogue between artwork and Land:** In many Indigenous and Northern cultures, Land is a living presence and artworks are in dialogue with that presence.
- **The relationships formed through the project:** Artistic value includes the connections fostered between participants, Land, ancestors and future generations.
- **The visibility and invisibility of outcomes:** Not all impacts are visible or immediate. Sometimes, a project plants seeds that bloom later – in a conversation, a remembered teaching or a new sense of agency.

### ***Power, Representation and Ethics***

Evaluation is never neutral – it is always shaped by perspective and purpose. The project team should approach AAE projects with humility, cultural awareness and a commitment to co-learning. In many cases, local co-researchers should be involved in the interpretation and analysis of outcomes.

Evaluations can critically address questions of power, representation and voice. Every community holds internal hierarchies; therefore, it is essential to ask the following:

- Whose voices are included in the evaluation?
- Who defines what is considered valuable, beautiful or successful art?
- Are marginalised perspectives actively sought and respected?
- Are dominant narratives being reproduced or challenged?

These questions intersect with social dimensions, including those related to language, class, gender, age, religion and mental health. AAE evaluations should aim to not just describe what happened; they should also challenge and expand understandings of value in art and art education.

### ***The Role of the Artist and Facilitator***

Artists and facilitators play multifaceted roles in AAE projects – they act as listeners, collaborators, cultural connectors and catalysts for dialogue. Their contributions must also be evaluated: How did they relate to the community and the Land? Did they act with humility and openness? Did they centre Land and community voices or impose external visions?

Quantitative indicators, such as audience numbers or media visibility, can supplement this evaluation, but they should not overshadow qualitative dimensions, such as

trust-building, cultural humility and fostering respectful relationships. In Arctic contexts, long-term relationality is often more meaningful than short-term visibility.

### ***A Holistic Evaluation Framework***

A meaningful evaluation in AAE contexts integrates the following multiple dimensions:

- The intentions of the project
- The aesthetic, educational and transformative experiences of participants
- The cultural and environmental significance of the work
- How evocative are the artworks
- The social and emotional outcomes for individuals and communities

In Arctic Indigenous and multicultural settings, art must work both aesthetically and socially. It should honour and strengthen the relationship between people, place and culture. AAE evaluation is not simply a measure of success – it is a way of deepening understanding, accountability and care in Northern creative practices.