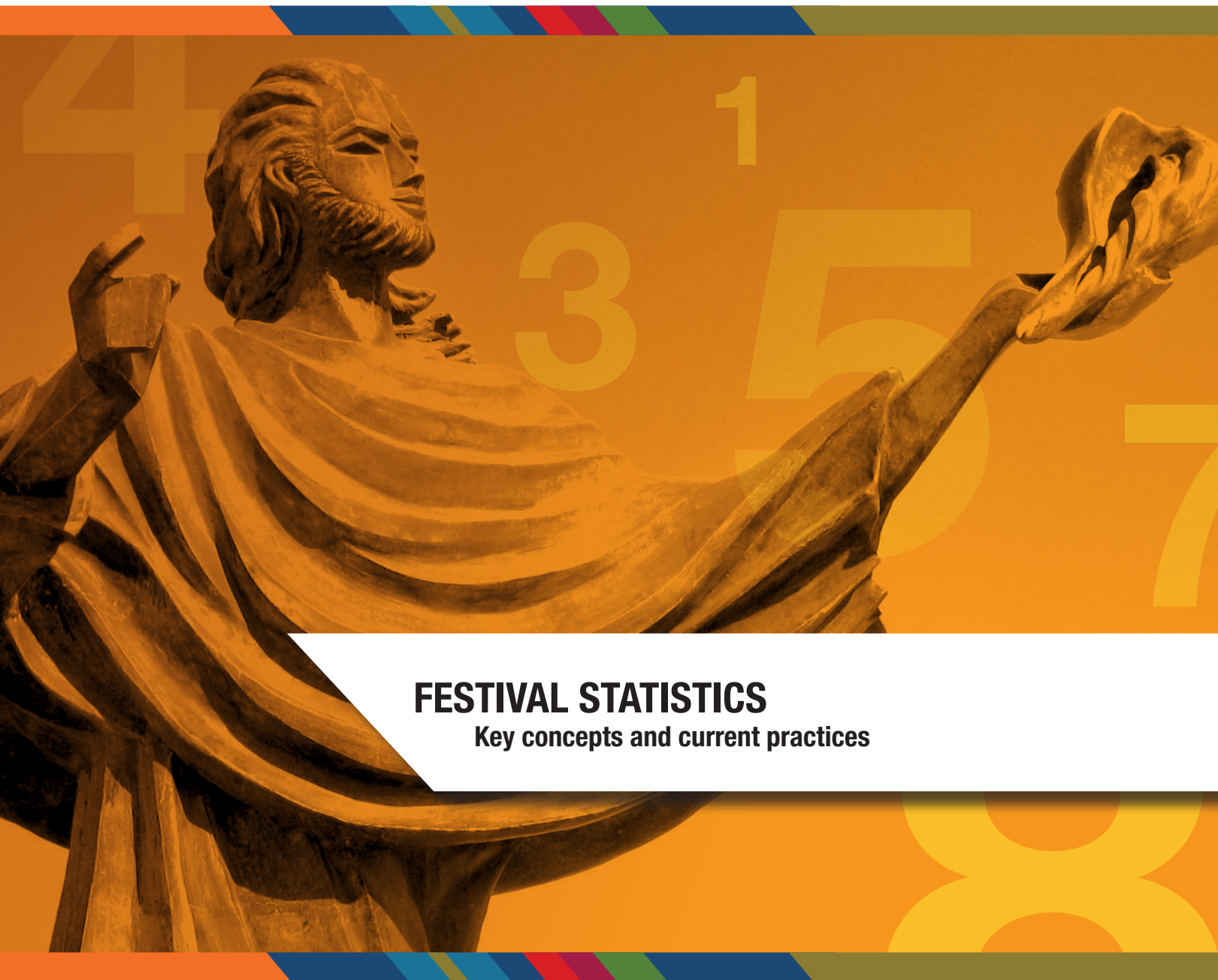




United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

UNESCO  
INSTITUTE  
for  
STATISTICS



## **FESTIVAL STATISTICS**

**Key concepts and current practices**



# **Festival statistics: Key concepts and current practices**

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# Table of contents

	Page
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Executive summary .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1 Objectives.....	8
1.2 Key terms, basic assumptions and parameters.....	9
1.3 Policy considerations.....	12
<b>2. A review of current techniques for assessing festivals .....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1 Approaches to festival statistics .....	14
2.2 Festival data research from the developing world .....	17
2.3 Festival data: Key issues in debate .....	18
2.3.1 Qualitative vis-à-vis quantitative research approaches .....	18
2.3.2 The validity of economic impact assessment.....	20
2.3.3 Inclusion of socio-cultural variables .....	23
2.3.4 The need for 'all-inclusive' approaches.....	25
2.4 Festivals and tourism statistics.....	27
2.5 Alternative models for festival assessment .....	28
2.6 Research gaps on measuring festivals.....	31
<b>3. Best practice in measuring festivals: The case of Australia and South Africa.....</b>	<b>36</b>
3.1 Why Australia and South Africa.....	36
3.2 In search of best practice: Analytical approach.....	36
3.3 Analytical overview of secondary data .....	36
3.4 Mapping best practice: Results .....	37
3.4.1 Effective approaches to measuring festivals.....	39
3.4.2 Methods of data collection .....	42
3.4.3 Indicator frameworks .....	42
3.4.4 Data collection instruments.....	44
3.4.5 Nature of data .....	45
<b>4. Recommendations .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>List of boxes</b>	
Box 1. The Edinburgh Festival, United Kingdom.....	17
Box 2. Evaluating festivals in New Zealand.....	23
Box 3. Recycling statistics from the 2014 Smithsonian Folklife Festival .....	26
Box 4. Profile of Gibson's cultural mapping of rural festivals in Australia.....	30
<b>List of tables</b>	
Table 1. Festivals in Montreal by theme, 2010.....	11
Table 2. Music festivals in France by genre, 2012 .....	11
Table 3. Public-funded festivals in Europe, selected countries .....	11
Table 4. Some reasons why governments commission the collection of festival data .....	13
Table 5. Examples of key variables .....	15

Table 6.	Social impact techniques with measurement and data focus .....	25
Table 7.	Summary of selected studies by broad themes .....	32
Table 8.	Key impacts from special event literature and assessments .....	35
Table 9.	Core themes used as selection criteria for source material .....	37
Table 10.	Australian festivals used to define best practice, by source.....	38
Table 11.	South African festivals used to define best practices, by source .....	38
Table 12.	Sample of prevailing approaches used in impact assessments in Australia and South Africa .....	39
Table 13.	Methods used for data collection for select festivals .....	42
Table 14.	Variables used in festival impact analyses in Australia and South Africa .....	43
Table 15.	Festival domains matches to indicators and variables used to assess festivals in Australia and South Africa .....	44
Table 16.	Survey instruments used .....	45
Table 17.	Festival elements and corresponding statistics for select festivals in Australia and South Africa .....	46

**List of figures**

Figure 1.	Definitions of festivals by role and approaches to gathering festival data .....	9
Figure 2.	Typology of festivals .....	10



## Executive summary

Festivals are seen as a major source of income and tourism at local and national levels. This handbook sets out the major dimensions of current research and practice on festival statistics, identifying best practice which will help organizers and national authorities in evaluating the events in their area.

- Many festivals seek to demonstrate the contribution that they make to local economies by using methods of evaluation, cost-benefit analysis and especially economic impact assessment.
- Many economic studies of festivals use inconsistent methods, involving for example multipliers which exaggerate the knock-on effects of spending and employment.
- Environmental and social impacts are rarely included in festival assessments and evaluations.
- Techniques of environmental and social analysis include; triple bottom line, social accounting, socio-cultural impact assessment, but these have rarely been applied in practice.
- Festival impact assessments rarely acknowledge negative impacts such as contamination by waste or disruption of traditional lifestyles.
- Other approaches to festival statistics involve ethnographic study, cultural mapping, and social media analysis.
- Impact assessments economic, environmental and social are much more common in developed countries than in developing countries. There is an urgent need for more evaluations of festivals in developing countries.
- Assessments and evaluations are much more common for major urban/national events than for smaller/rural events.
- Countries rarely have a systematic approach to festival policy or evaluation, but national frameworks for festival evaluation can increase comparability, and support strategic policy.
- A minimum set of data that can be collected cheaply comprises costs and ticket sales. The latter includes financial data and numbers of participants.
- Countries seeking to carry out impact assessments should seek expert help to ensure that the results are accurate.
- An international framework for festival statistics is needed to standardize methods to make assessments more comparable and more effective.

# 1. Introduction

This document describes the theories, concepts and practices that currently inform and are used in the effective measuring of festivals across the globe. It identifies prevailing theoretical perspectives on measuring festivals; current policy constructs concerning the collection of data on festivals; as well as best practices and processes for festival data collection and statistics based on experience from around the world.

## 1.1 Objectives

The growing recognition of the importance of collecting data on festivals, particularly to gauge their social and economic contributions to their host societies, highlights the need for a greater understanding of how festivals can be measured and data collected in a standardised, systematic manner based on existing, effective models and current practices. The difficulty in establishing a common standard hinders skills-building and improving technical know-how in gathering festival data. This report identifies best practices to improve the quality of festival statistics.

The literature presents several perspectives on the measurement of festivals, but most attention is given to impact assessment. Notwithstanding the drawbacks, much of the literature supports impact assessments as useful models for collecting festival data.<sup>1</sup>

Given the inherent challenges of collecting and interpreting data at the national and regional levels, there are few benchmarks of best practice which could begin to formulate a festival statistics framework based on effective national and regional experiences. Indeed, there are so many different types of festivals that one might consider whether it might be better to have several statistical models depending on the objectives of the event and the nature of the activities.

This document seeks to identify the most effective mechanisms for measuring festivals based on a determination of international best practices through:

- i) the primary elements in festival-related research
  - the prevailing perspectives within academic discourse on statistics and data collection for cultural phenomenon such as festivals; and
  - the key models, tools and techniques that can be used for measuring festivals and collecting data.
- ii) current best practices in assessing festivals, collecting data and analysis, in particular, the methods and the indicators of specific country experiences as a means of determining a global benchmark.

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<sup>1</sup> Terminology is complex in this area but in general terms the most common approach to festivals is to evaluate what they have contributed to the local economy.

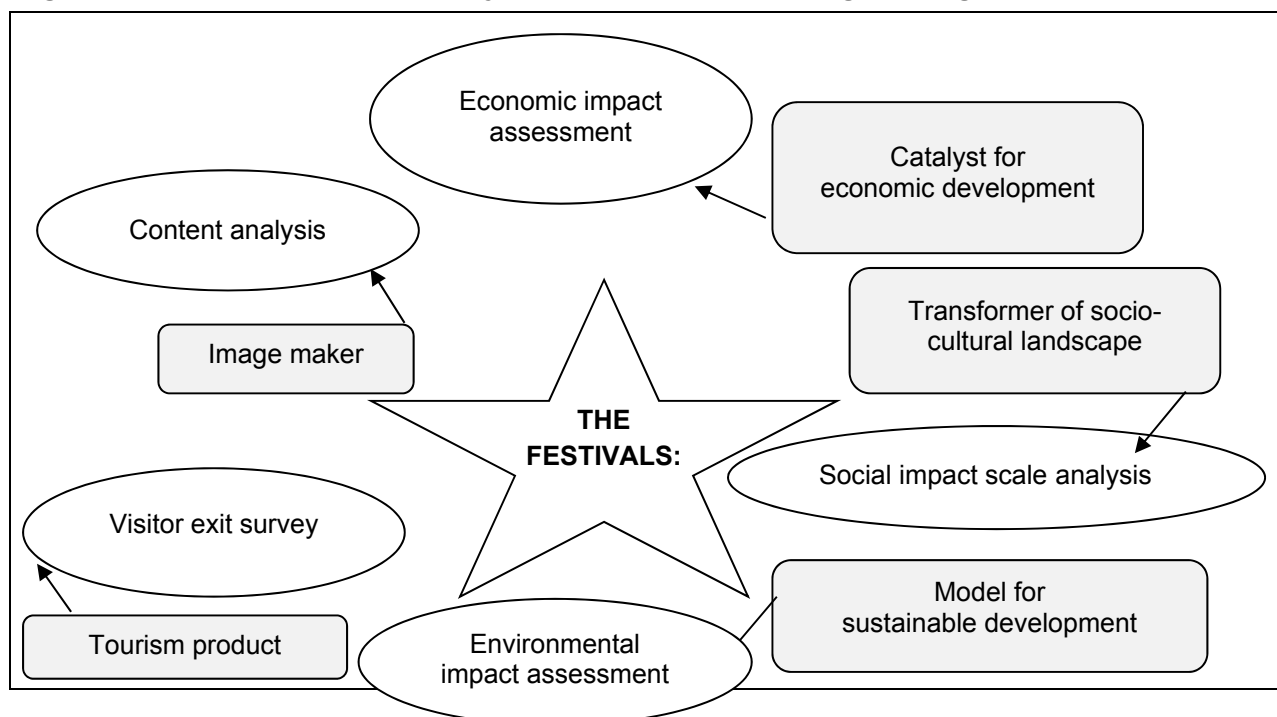
## 1.2 Key terms, basic assumptions and parameters

Festival statistics is a specialised area of data gathering and analysis that may be viewed as a subset of the wider assessment of events (Tull, 2011). Festival statistics can be cross-functional. They can be used to develop a macro-understanding of the role and impact of festivals on society, which can in turn inform policy on culture, development and diversity, as well as project management, tourism development and cultural industries commercially-driven or not-for-profit (Tull, 2011).

Conventional statistical approaches may need to be adapted for measuring cultural phenomena such as festivals. Festivals can impact differently across communities and countries. A one-size-fits-all approach to data gathering and analysis will not work.

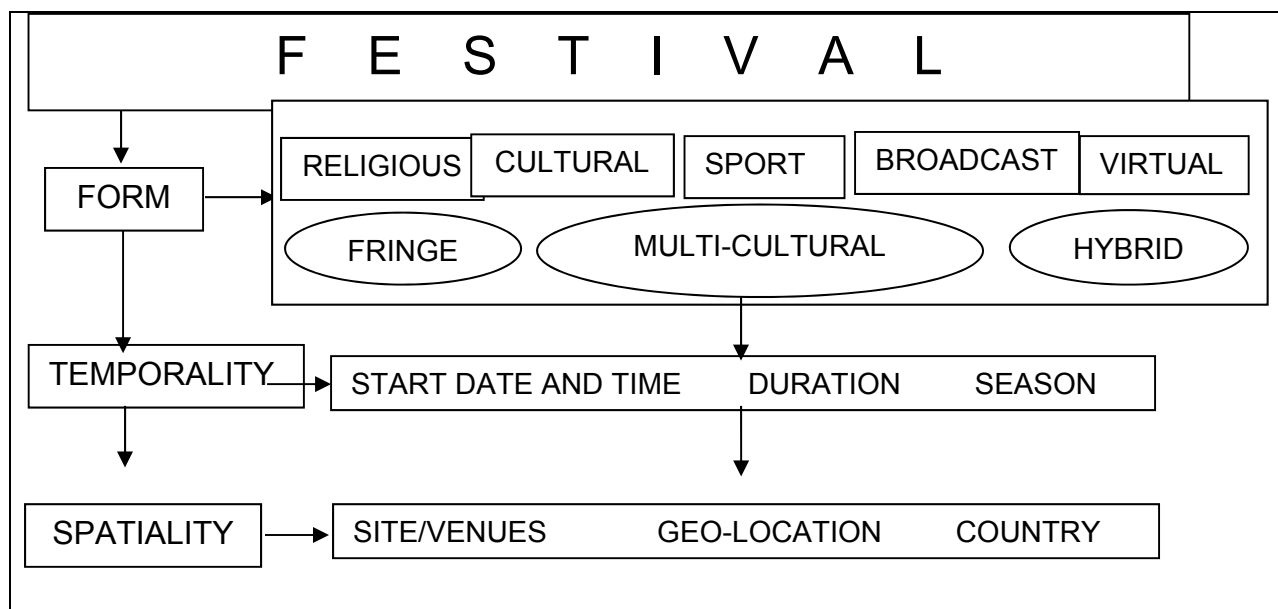
Notwithstanding the varied perspectives on the meaning of festivals (Richards, 2006; Picard and Robinson, 2006; Metaucci, 2002; Bowdin, 2001; Getz, 1987; Turner, 1982), Getz's (2007:31) simple definition of festivals as "themed, public celebrations" is the most practical approach. The 2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) categorises festivals under 'performance and celebration', further defining them as including "all expressions of cultural events. that occur locally and can be informal in nature" (UNESCO-UIS, 2009:26). Definitions of festivals tend to emphasise particular characteristics to explain their role and function. For example, serving the interests of the elite (Waterman, 1998), enabling commodification of local cultures to satisfy tourist-driven demand (Robinson and Connell, 2008), as catalysts for economic development (Andreeva, 2008; Wait, 2008; Bowden, 2001; Nurse and Tull, 2003, 2004; Tull, 2003; Hall, 1989; Getz, 1987), as well as positive influences on the socio-cultural landscape of their host societies (Robertson and Rogers, 2009; Bianchini, 2008; Pickernell and O'Sullivan, 2007; Small, 2007; Reid, 2007; Fredline, Jago et al., 2003; Onyx and Bullen, 2000; Delamere, 1997). This usually serves as the point of departure for most assessments (see *Figure 1*).

**Figure 1. Definitions of festivals by role and approaches to gathering festival data**



Festivals can be broadly classified according to their primary characteristics, duration and spatiality (venue and geo-location of the festival)<sup>2</sup> (see **Figure 2**). Festival activities may be drawn from various festival forms and may feature multiple geographic locations within a region, such as the Caribbean’s *CARIFESTA* and Bali’s Arts Festival in Indonesia. It is difficult to separate religious festivals from cultural festivals in some countries. Religious festivals are centered on the celebration of spiritually significant moments, but this may also feature cultural or heritage practices as in the case of *Divali* and *Holi*. Similarly, it may be difficult to distinguish between broadcast festivals and virtual festivals, as in the case of *International Reggae Day* in Jamaica which features a musical festival that is broadcast all over the world via satellite television and the Internet.<sup>3</sup> Figure 2 offers a basic conceptual understanding of festival forms to establish a simple basis for comparison throughout the report.

**Figure 2. Typology of festivals**



Source: Based on event typology by Jago and McArdle, 1999:7.

Festivals may have several different objectives and functions, to the point where some are not related to the festival ‘genre’. For example, they may be explicitly designed to support tourism, in which case they may be ‘successful’ if they attract foreign visitors and spending, even if they present a view of local culture which is otherwise of little interest to the local community. A music or film festival may be more interested in whether it covers all the latest ‘releases’ than the profile of its audiences. This can be manifested in statistics which are more about the

<sup>2</sup> It is acknowledged that event typologies based on size, most notably that of McDonnell et al. (1999), which classifies events based on the scale of impacts (attendance, media, profile, infrastructure, costs, benefits) are also useful frameworks for conceptualisation. However, in the context of this exercise, this framework is better assessed as a model for gathering festival data given its detail.

<sup>3</sup> The virtual festival generally refers to a festival where the patron ‘attends’ by going online to the website as the festival is being streamed live, as in the case of many broadcast festivals, or as a ‘visit’ to the (web)site of the festival long after the festival has passed. At the other end of the spectrum, the virtual festival can be imaginative and the attendee simply assumes virtual identity through an avatar, as is offered in the 3D virtual world of *Second Life* at <http://secondlife.com/>. See also an example of a virtual festival held by the BBC within *Second Life* at: <http://blogcritics.org/scitech/article/bbc-hosts-virtual-music-festival-inside/>

performers than the audience. Such performance-centred events may be more like an exhibition than a festival. By contrast, some major exhibitions, most stereotypically for example those of impressionist painters, may seem more like festivals in the way that the organizers appear to be more interested in the range and number of visitors than in the exhibits themselves. This serves to illustrate that something can be both a festival and another kind of ‘event’ at the same time, and the statistics may reflect this dichotomy.

**Tables 1 and 2** illustrate the potential diversity of festivals. Table 1 shows the range of festivals in one major global city, Montreal, in one year. Table 2 shows the great diversity of festivals within one discipline, music, in France in one year. **Table 3** gives some idea of the overall number of festivals in major European countries.

**Table 1. Festivals in Montreal by theme, 2010**

Theme	Percentage
Dramatic arts	47%
Cinema	16%
World culture	16%
Visual arts and crafts	13%
Literature	5%
History and heritage	3%
Total	100%, 76 festivals

Source: MCCC, 2012, p.89, translation S. Ellis

**Table 2. Music festivals in France by genre, 2012**

Genre	Percentage
Vocal	11%
Electronic or amplified (rock, pop)	22%
Traditional or jazz	27%
Other current or popular	34%
Other mixed genres	6%
Total	100%, 98 music festivals

Source: CNV, 2014, p.9, translation S. Ellis

**Table 3. Public-funded festivals in Europe, selected countries**

Country	Number of festivals	Country	Number of festivals
Bulgaria	85	Italy	200
France	c. 1000	Poland	163
Germany	c. 240	Russia	over 100
Hungary	89	Spain	700

Source: Ilczuk and Kulikowska, 2008:8. *The diversity of contexts and experiences with data collection and analysis can obscure the identification of common effective practices and processes to generate a standard set of festival data measures, indicators and analysis. Best practice is defined as a relevant, useful example or case study of practicable experiences that reflect sound policy initiatives and effective processes in festival data collection that can be used as an international benchmark.*

Cultural participation surveys are undertaken in many countries across the world and collect the number of people who attend festivals or other cultural events (UNESCO-UIS, 2012). For example, the cultural participation survey of Mexico in 2012 found that 60% of the population had attended a traditional festival (INEGI, 2014:14). However, such surveys only collect information on overall participation during the preceding year. Such data cannot be related to financing, employment or performers at specific festivals. This report, therefore, focuses on statistics which may be collected at individual festival sites and in local communities. When referring to a regional study, it is usually a compilation of information from individual festivals within the region rather than a regional survey that happens to cover the territory within which a number of festivals take place. If guidance is required on broader cultural participation surveys, please refer to the UIS Handbook on Cultural Participation Surveys (UNESCO-UIS, 2012).

### 1.3 Policy considerations

Getz (2009) notes that public policy pertaining to festivals is generally fractionalised, it is not comprehensive and fails to integrate events effectively with all the relevant policy domains. It is noted that, where consideration is given to festival policy, it is typically linked to festivals that contribute to tourism and the overall image of the host locations, and by extension to tourism and economic development (Getz, 2009). Naturally, limited policy focus can impede the overarching development of the festivalscape. In this regard, Getz (2009:71) argues for festival policy with a broad policy scope hinged on the following goals and parameters:

- i) Minimalisation of negative economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts;
- ii) Generation of greater economic benefits for local people and enhancement of the wellbeing of host communities;
- iii) Improvement in the working conditions of the festival environment and initiatives to generate further employment;
- iv) Inclusion of local people in decisionmaking with respect to festival development;
- v) Support for diversity and contribution to conservation of natural and cultural heritage;
- vi) Creation of enjoyable experiences by enabling visitors to connect meaningfully with residents;
- vii) Provision of access for physically challenged people; and
- viii) Being culturally sensitive, encouraging respect between event-goers and hosts, building local pride and confidence.

The statistics for many of these elements will be discussed in the next section.

In the absence of a stated policy on the collection of festival statistics, general attitudes to measuring festivals can be an indicator of policy. Most countries collect some festival data, although the frequency, duration and choice of festivals may vary. The reasons for pursuing the collection of festival data are similar across the globe and stem primarily from the reasons for which impact assessments of festivals are conducted, namely more to do with economic rather than artistic/cultural development (see **Table 4**).

**Table 4. Some reasons why governments commission the collection of festival data**

<p><b>Artistic/cultural development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to encourage artistic excellence</li> <li>• to foster greater artistic expression</li> <li>• to encourage more cultural diversity</li> <li>• to determine socio-cultural benefits to the local community</li> <li>• to assess level of international exposure for local artists</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economics/industrial development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strengthening the position and image of the country, region or city</li> <li>• to assess performance of festival in generating economic benefits</li> <li>• to assess performance of the festival in expanding tourism</li> <li>• to establish benefits versus costs</li> <li>• to assess audience participation</li> <li>• to assess stimulation of local economy</li> <li>• to prove return on public investment</li> <li>• to assess return on private sector investment</li> <li>• to utilise funding given for cultural research initiatives</li> </ul>

For the most part, government-commissioned collection of festival data tends to focus on major national or regional festivals that have some significant artistic value, are considered internationally prestigious, and therefore contribute to the promotion of the country or region abroad. Few countries are able to conduct or commission annual festival data collection exercises. The main reasons are: lack of funding; shifting political interests; shifting stakeholder interests; host community apathy; and the festival's loss of global appeal. Moreover, a lack of interest in cultural statistics in general makes it difficult to consistently produce festival data. This in turn makes the quality and 'policy relevance' of the data questionable. (Weisand, 2002; Selwood, 2002; Schuster, 2002; Allin, 2000). Data on cultural phenomena are more common for developed countries as developing countries lack the resources. Thus, as Schuster (2002) observes, what exists can be best described as the explorative advancement of a 'statistical base of data' rather than an organized policy formulation on festival statistics.

## 2. A review of current techniques for assessing festivals

This section offers a review of the contemporary discourse on festival statistics. The review has sought to include as far as possible work from across the globe, although it is noted that much of the research around festival statistics has been undertaken in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. Despite the general dearth of research on collecting festival data from developing countries, the review examines some work out of South Africa and the Caribbean.

### 2.1 Approaches to festival statistics

The literature reflects the general understanding of the term ‘festival statistics’ as encompassing ‘hard’, quantifiable data – notably, the number and characteristics of attendees or performers/exhibitors (for example, Gibson et al., 2009; SAM, 2008; SQW and TNL, 2005; Hill Strategies, 2003); festival attendance levels (for example, Kim et al., 2008; Wilton and Nickerson, 2006; Snowball, 2004; Antrobus et al., 1997); visitor expenditure (for example, Kim et al., 2008; Snowball, 2004; Felsenstein and Fleischer, 2003); festival revenue (for example, Gibson et al., 2009; SAM, 2008) and festival employment levels (for example, SQW Ltd. and TNL Ltd., 2005; Hill Strategies, 2003; Antrobus et al., 1997). These variables are common to most data collection exercises on festivals.

The literature on festival impacts is a major area of study (for example, Arcodia and Whitford, 2007; Quinn, 2006; Gursoy et al., 2004; Thomas, 2004; Raj, 2003; Reeves, 2002; Getz, 1997, 1991; Hall, 1992) that has spawned a growing body of related festival data.<sup>4</sup> Data-driven studies tend to take the form of assessments to measure specific impacts (see **Table 5**). They focus on the more prominent festivals in urban, developed areas, such as the Baker Associates’ (2007) study of Glastonbury Festival (United Kingdom) and SQW Asia’s study (2008) of the Glasgow International Festival. Such findings cannot be applied to all festival forms, since smaller festivals and rural festivals, for example, are likely to have different objectives and require different data.

Research highlights the economic and commercial impacts of festivals (Baker and Associates, 2007; Jura Consultants, 2006; Vrettos, 2006; Allen and Shaw, 2002, 2000; Long and Perdue, 2000), including the stimulation of economic activity either directly or indirectly (Hackbert, 2009; Jackson et al., 2005; Carlsen, 2004; Formica and Uysal, 2003; MacDonnell, Allen and O’Toole, 1999; Kim et al., 1998). The Baker Associates (2007) assessment of the Glastonbury Festival is one of the more comprehensive studies, yielding a range of data from visitor spending and employment to less quantifiable economic impacts, such as trading opportunities for not-for-profit organizations and festival to the stimulation of local entrepreneurship. Some economic impact studies focus on no particular festival, and instead produce sectoral data (Gibson et al., 2009; Hill Strategies, 2003; Allen and Shaw, 2002, 2000) or regional data (Maughan and Bianchini, 2004; Nurse, 2002).

---

<sup>4</sup> The work of Langen and Garcia (2009) on assessing available literature on the impacts of “major cultural events and festivals” provides a useful review of this.



**Table 5. Examples of key variables \***

Variables	Associated impacts			
	ECI	EI	SI	TI
Number of festivals in a group	√	√	√	√
Theme/Type of festival	√	√	√	√
Purpose of festival	√	√	√	√
Duration	√	√	√	√
Structure of festival organizing body	√			
Patron size	√	√	√	
Patron spend	√			
Number of visitors	√		√	√
Demographics of patrons	√		√	√
Demographics of visitors	√			
Purpose of visit	√			√
Visitor spend	√			√
Spending apart from festival-related items	√			√
Motivation for attending festival			√	√
Source of information on the festival				√
Medium of transport to festival	√	√	√	√
Employment generated by festival	√		√	
Tax revenue derived from festivals	√			
Increased job opportunities	√		√	
Source of funding	√			
Festival income	√			√
Festival expenditure	√			√
Significance of environmental initiatives to festival patrons		√		
Noise pollution		√		
Use of green energy		√		
Festival organizers' awareness of green initiatives and policy				
Practice recycling measures		√		
Construction of new facilities, new infrastructure	√	√	√	√
Media value	√		√	√
Level of participation by host community/residents			√	
Identification with theme			√	
Community attachment			√	
Level of traffic congestion			√	
Level of crowding			√	
Level of crime		√	√	√

**Notes:** ECI=economic impact, EI=environmental impact, SI=socio-cultural impact, TI=tourism impact  
 \*Formulated based on the literature surveyed.

The literature rarely measures the political, environmental and social impacts of festivals. One possible reason for this vacuum stems from the overwhelming focus on the positives of festival impacts, which overshadows festival data on environmental and social impacts. For instance, data from a recent European Festival Report on 'green issues' (2009) reveal that, while approximately 36% of festival organizers believe that their festival's environmental credentials influenced ticket buyers, most still engaged in practices that are likely to harm the environment.<sup>5</sup> The literature tends to shy away from data on such issues apart from Hede (2007), Fredline et al. (2004), and Fredline, Jago and Deery (2003), who offer empirical evidence of environmental impacts. Discussions on environmental impact generally center around conceptual analyses of 'green' issues and programmes, particularly within the context of tourism management (Allen, 2008; Bowdin and McDonnell, 2001; Getz, 1997).

Some statistics on potential negative impacts of festivals can be culled from the press reports on the Munich Oktoberfest 2012, which recorded 4,500 items of lost property, including 1,000 items of clothing, 950 identity cards, 480 phones and 400 keys. There were 111,000 attempts to steal glasses (one-half the number of 2011). Some of these were used in 66 attacks on other people, medical assistance was given to 827 people, and there were 2,031 calls to police. It should be added that 6.4 million people are said to have taken part in the two-week Oktoberfest, the world's largest beer festival, and they drank 6.9 million litres of special festival beer.<sup>6</sup>

During a festival, a number of social problems can emerge including traffic congestion, parking problems, crowding and overcrowding to more serious cases of social dislocation, crime and vandalism (Delamere, Wankel and Hinch, 2001; Douglas et al., 2001; Dwyer et al., 2000). Research on the socio-cultural impacts has examined festival impact on the host community and local residents' perceptions (Small et al., 2005; Mihalik, 2000; Soutar and McLeod, 1993); the formation of social capital (Arcodia and Whitford, 2006; Sirianni and Friedland, 2000); and community development in rural areas (Gibson et al., 2009; Whitford, 2009). Goodman (1999) has shown that festivals encourage the participation of indigenous host communities and help to preserve traditions (Gursoy, Kim and Uysal, 2004).

There is a growing body of research on social impact methods<sup>7</sup>, notably the Festival Social Impact Attitude Scale (Fredline et al., 2003; Delamere, Winkel and Hinch, 2001; Delamere, 1997); social impact assessment (Finsterbusch, 1995); the social impact perception scales (Small, 2007; Small and Edwards, 2003); and the evaluation of social networks and business capacity building (Pickernell and O'Sullivan, 2007; O'Sullivan and Jackson, 2002). Nevertheless, as Robertson and Rogers (2008:2) observe, "this area of data collection remains relatively under-represented and under-applied in evaluative terms".

---

<sup>5</sup> For example, approximately 61% of festival organizers in 2009 admitted that they do not use sustainable energy, while just one-third of festival organizers in 2008 were familiar with any environmental legislation affecting festivals. Areas of legislation raised included health and safety, noise pollution, local council rules on pollution, litter and emissions policies, and land regulations (see <http://www.agreenerfestival.com/summary.html>).

<sup>6</sup> Spiegel, accessed 1 November 2014 at <http://www.spiegel.de/international/zeitgeist/munich-reports-rise-in-number-of-brawls-at-2012-oktoberfest-a-860089.html>

<sup>7</sup> These will be further assessed in Section 4 in terms of their practicability for gathering festival statistics.

The purpose of the vast majority of festival data is to explore and justify the role of festivals as a platform for tourism development. Much of this has been built on the early work of Getz (1997), Hall (1992) and Ritchie (1984). Visser (2007:102) notes that this tends to cover three broad areas: sociological and leisure participation, community development, and tourism industries. Of the three, sociological and leisure participation has been important as it is often used in further research on festival strategic planning and tourism development. Data are usually generated from demographic analysis, visitor profiles, visitor expenditure and motivations of visitors (Kim, Han and Chon, 2008; Getz, 2007; Felsenstein and Fleischer, 2003; Dewar et al., 2001; Krausee, 1998; Formica and Uysal, 1996; Schneider and Backman, 1996). Empirical research is also conducted on festivals as instruments of tourism promotion (Felsenstein and Fleisher, 2003, Mules and Faulkner, 1996), and to a lesser degree, on the role of festivals in image placement and tools for destination branding (Esu and Arrey, 2009; Long, 2004).

### **Box 1. The Edinburgh Festival, United Kingdom**

The Edinburgh Festival is thought to be the world's largest arts festival. In 2013, it sold 1,943,493 tickets, 4.6% more than in 2012 and 3.5% more than in 2011. However, these administrative data do not include attendance at the many free events.

Average tickets per event in 2012 were 42.75, down from 44 in 2011. A number of possible explanations are an increase in the number of events or increased attendance at free events because of the international economic depression. An audience survey could help resolve this question.

*Source: Statistics from The Stage News, accessed 11 October 2014 <http://www.thestage.co.uk/news/business/2013/08/edinburgh-fringe-reports-record-ticket-sales-but-average-attendance-down/>*

## **2.2 Festival data research from the developing world**

Festival research has also given impetus to the emergence of a small but growing body of festival data on small local festivals and their impact on their respective host communities. This area of festival data collection expanded through research on small rural festivals (Gorman-Murray, Waitt and Gibson, 2008; Brennan-Horley, Connell and Gibson, 2007; Chabra, Sills and Cabbage, 2003; Higham and Ritchie, 2001; De Bres and Davis, 2001), which has in turn influenced research on festivals in developing countries. Studies of festivals in the Caribbean – Dominica's World Creole Music Festival (Nurse and Tull, 2004), Cayman Islands' Pirates Week (Nurse and Tull, 2003), the Trinidad Carnival (Nurse, 2003), and the St. Kitts Music Festival (Sahely and Skerit, 2003) – all focus on assessing festival impacts, in particular economic benefits, much like the studies on small rural festivals. They include data on visitor expenditure, donations, revenue generation and foreign exchange earnings to estimate the festival's contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) and employment (Nurse and Tull, 2004, 2003; Nurse, 2003). The studies have also generated tourism data, such as visitor preference, length of stay, accommodation type and visitor expenditure outside the festival. In evaluating the management of sports events across the Caribbean, Sinclair-Maragh (2011) suggests similar best practices, including thorough cost-benefit analysis, a macro-environmental assessment and an economic assessment model.

An interesting feature of Caribbean research is its use of comparative data derived from assessments of Caribbean-styled carnivals in developed countries such as the UK Notting Hill Carnival, Toronto Caribana and New York Labour Day (Tull, 2005; Nurse, 2003). The main objective is to illustrate the impact of carnivals in other parts of the world to justify events in the Caribbean. Socio-cultural impact remains a relatively uncharted ground within Caribbean festival data research.

It has been suggested that festival data on the South African festival landscape are relatively sparse (Visser, 2008:104). Following the established notion that festivals have a greater impact on smaller localities (Snowball and Antrobus, 2002, 2001), much of the festival data from South Africa are derived from festivals in smaller urban areas (Snowball and Antrobus, 2001, 2002; Witepski, 2002), either university towns or near a university (Visser, 2008), with consequent easy access for researchers. Finally, as in the Caribbean, studies are generally focused on economic impact assessment.

This review of festival data research from the developing world only presents data from South Africa and the Caribbean. There is an urgent need to document a wider spectrum of the academic and consultancy-based literature from the developing world.

## **2.3 Collecting festival data: Key issues in debate**

This section begins by considering three key issues which have been the subject of particular debate: qualitative versus quantitative approaches; the validity of economic impact assessments (including the use of multipliers and cost-benefit analysis); and the relevance of social impacts. Following this, the potential for more holistic assessments is discussed. Some alternative approaches to measurement are then mentioned, including SWOT analysis, stakeholder theory and ethnography. The relationship between festival statistics and tourist statistics is set out, and finally an overview of gaps in research is presented.

### **2.3.1 Qualitative vis-à-vis quantitative research approaches**

Quantitative research approaches are predominantly used in the collection of festival data (for example, Gibson et al., 2010; SAM, 2008; Kim, Han and Chon, 2008; Allen and Shaw, 2000), and since this paper is about statistics, it will maintain a broadly quantitative stance.

The core quantitative data for any festival event are the numbers of participants (performers/ audience) and spending (by organizers – cost, and by visitors – benefit). Almost every event throughout the world collects these data. Availability of figures on attendance assumes that they are monitored through ticket sales or controlled entrances/exits. Financial estimates are heavily dependent on careful calculations of transfers (e.g. not counting grants twice at national and local levels) and substitutions (e.g. not counting spending by locals as a net benefit when that money would have been spent in the local community anyway). Much of these data are administrative, in other words gathered in the course of running the event.

Many festivals want to supplement administrative data with that derived from surveys which can provide, for example, much more details on the socio-demographic background of participants, as in the Franklin study on the economic impact of the Trinidad Carnival (2009); the Kim, Han and Chon (2008) study on determinants of expenditures by festival visitors; the Hill Strategies (2003) study on the economic impact of 97 festivals and events in Ontario; and the London Development Agency (2003) study on the economic impact of the Notting Hill Carnival. These examples highlight yet another important feature of quantitative measuring – the researcher knows clearly what he/she is looking for and investigates within those parameters.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Miles and Huberman, 1994.

The Australian National Folk Festival Ltd's 2010/2011 Annual Report includes a section labelled 'festival statistics', which presents data on festival attendance (day-to-day and overall). The data were captured to allow organizers to measure trends for future planning and programming. In the case of this event, the organizers were able to trace the effects of the economic downturn and competing festivals. Likewise, in its paper on strategic monitoring and evaluation of festivals, Arts Derbyshire (2011) encourages the collection of data on festivals, arguing that this helps the organization to maintain a successful festival, as well as satisfy funders as to its viability. Data included expected attendance vis-à-vis actual attendance and occurrence of incidents and accidents (Arts Derbyshire, 2011).

However, there are precautions to be observed in using quantitative methods as the sole means of collecting information on festivals. In a review of the economic impact study on the Trinidad Carnival (Franklin, 2009), Tull (2009) notes a number of issues. Although telephone surveys can represent a random sample of a wide cross-section of the population, calls were limited to persons with landline services. Consequently, the data attained may only represent a particular demographic grouping of the population, since younger age demographics as well as those in the lower socio-economic brackets in Trinidad and Tobago are predominantly mobile users. The consistency of response to certain types of questions is also debatable. For instance, when asked about money spent on 'mas',<sup>9</sup> some respondents gave a dollar amount that referred to the costume only, while others included spending on other accoutrements such as boots, tattooing and body painting, hairstyles and makeup. Finally, useful details emerging out of conversation when conducting surveys cannot be represented numerically and therefore may be lost. In sum, exclusive counting can limit the efficacy of the study.

Some literature seems to place emphasis on festival statistics with lesser attention paid to qualitative information. For example, the Sydney Festival Annual Review 2012 claims that "92% of attendees thought the Sydney Festival enhances Sydney's reputation as a cultural and arts destination" but does not qualify how the festival contributes to achieving this. Similarly, Scollen (2011), in collating and analysing demographic and psychographic data on the Shakespearean Festival in Australia, reduces festival statistics to data that can be collected via "closed format questionnaires [and] that can be readily generated into statistical analysis".

Other researchers have incorporated qualitative methods into their research. For example, Pattison (2009) discusses the social and cultural benefits of festivals in Edinburgh, where the method adopted was that of semi-structured interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders. Andrews' evaluation (2003) of the short-term impact on cultural organizations, audiences, city and region in the Manchester 2002 Commonwealth games, with particular reference to the Cultureshock programme, used qualitative interviews with key stakeholders, questionnaires and review of monitoring forms. Garcia's assessment (2003) of the Cultureshock programme also includes an assessment of impact on audience development, levels of investment and art-form development, using stakeholder interviews, focus groups and participatory mapping techniques.

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<sup>9</sup> The term 'mas' is a Trinidad colloquialism. It is the shortened, more popularly used form of the term 'masquerade' that refers to Caribbean-styled carnival masquerade.

### 2.3.2 The validity of economic impact assessment

There are a variety of ways to consider the economic benefit generated from a festival. 'Evaluation' assesses whether money provided for the event is used effectively. 'Impact assessment' considers whether a festival had an overall positive or negative impact (usually economic but may include environmental and social impacts) on a defined geographic area. 'Cost-benefit analysis' examines the degree to which benefits cover, or exceed, the costs of the event, and can include environmental and social 'costs' (Florio, 2014).

It would appear from the literature that quantitative data are most commonly collected from festivals for use in economic impact assessment, but collection methods may need to be improved. The benefits of economic impact assessment have been well established (Sayman and Sayman, 2006; Bowdin et al., 2008; Johnson, 1999; Allen and O'Toole, 1999; Getz, 1997). However, while the economic and monetary flows of festivals may be captured, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed to produce a valid estimate of economic impact (Johnson and Sack, 1996; Crompton, 1995; Crompton and McKay, 1994).

Some researchers question the overall validity of economic impact assessments given that they are usually requested for the purpose of advocating and promoting the positive gains from pursuing a festival strategy. Crompton and McKay (1994:33), for example, contend that economic impact assessments are usually commissioned "not to find the true impact, but rather to legitimize the [festival's] public support by endowing it with an aura of substantial economic benefits". Curtis (1993:7) similarly contends that "they are in truth the exact equivalent of an expert witness in a lawsuit who comes to testify in support of the side that is paying the expert's bill".

Snowball and Antrobus (2008:1) assert that economic impact assessments are "plagued by a number of methodological problems". Jackson and Sack (1996:374) summarise a number of issues which need to be addressed: "confusing the unit of analysis; failing to calculate costs associated with the project; assuming that all spending is new; ignoring leakage from the local economy; and applying an inflated multiplier to estimate indirect spending". Some studies tend only to assess the benefits and not the costs (Crompton and McKay, 1994). For example, it is standard practice to count the number of visitors, but the spending of local people at the event cannot be considered as an injection of new money but is rather a substitute of money they would otherwise have spent at other local facilities and so should be excluded as a net gain (Snowball and Antrobus, 2008; Crompton, 1995; Crompton and McKay, 1994).

The use of multipliers is a particularly contested area of economic impact assessment. They are commonly used to assess the extent to which the festival visitor's expenditure stimulates economic activity throughout the host community, thus generating further spending (Snowball and Antrobus, 2008; Crompton and McKay, 1994). These should be carefully chosen and based on valid comparative economic studies. They should be based on changes in income rather than sales (Crompton, 1995; Crompton and McKay, 1994). People who are 'time-switchers' between jobs (labour substitution) or 'casual' employees can inflate the expenditure data directly attributable to the festival (Snowball and Antrobus, 2008; Crompton and McKay, 1994).

Such methodological problems can result in economic impact assessments producing seriously flawed data (Snowball and Antrobus, 2008; Johnson and Sack, 1996). Some researchers argue that the full economic impact can only be assessed after some years have elapsed, reflecting the longer-term positive and negative benefits with a longitudinal approach (Cernusca, Gold and Godsey, 2008; Formica and Uysal, 1998). Longitudinal studies have addressed the Expos,

offering some important insights into measuring festivals. For instance, Dimanche (1996) found that a long-term approach was better suited to measuring economic impacts of the Louisiana Expo of 1984, as well as its impacts on tourism, the community and physical infrastructure. This was best conducted five to ten years after the event. Jeong and Faulkner (1996) provide valuable data on the extent to which the benefits and costs associated with the Taejon Expo (Korea, 1993) impinge on the immediate community by measuring the positive and negative perceptions of the festivities one year after the event. Lim and Lee (2006) compared the Taejon Expo to the Gyeongju Biennale using community perceptions some years after the events, an approach that builds on social exchange theory (perceptions of benefits are based on expected/anticipated/forecasted outcomes). Edwards et al. (2004) assessed Expo 98 in Lisbon through the eyes of key stakeholders in the tourism industry, using longitudinal studies.

Economic impact assessments may incorporate broader measures of the economic, social and cultural impacts of festivals. Advocates include Jackson et al. (2005); Allen and Shaw (2001, 2002), Burgan and Mules (2001), Carlsen, Getz and Soutar (2001), Fredline, Jago and Deery (2003), Delamere (2001) and Delamere, Wankel and Hinch (2001). Increased attendance, enhancement of the overall tourism experience, promoting economic benefits and functioning as a catalyst for development are taken as arguments to support festival growth (McDonnell, Allen and O'Toole, 1999). Using a wider range of variables allows for a more holistic assessment of the festival that can improve quality and validity. When effectively conducted, impact assessments identify the costs as well as the benefits of the festival to the host community.

Hackbert (2009) proposes seven types of economic analyses that are used in tourism studies, of which five have broader relevance to the economic impact of cultural festivals. These are as follows:

- i. Input-output models are used to estimate the “increase in economic activity associated with some money injection” (Ariana et al., 2007), such as visitor expenditure (Southern, 2007). They are the most widely used approach in festival assessment and yield data on consumption, as well as income and employment opportunities generated by festivals. Jackson et al. (2005) contend that they are best for “small festivals where there are unlikely to be any structural changes in the local economy” attributable to the festival.<sup>10</sup>
- ii. Tracing spending flows is used to identify changes in sales, tax revenue, revenue and employment attributable to tourism activity (see Frechtling, 1994) and can therefore be used in the context of festival tourism. Its particular tools are visitor spending surveys and secondary data analysis from government economic statistics (see Tohamy and Swinscoe, 2000).
- iii. Fiscal impact analyses are used to estimate revenues and costs to local government triggered by the festival by tracking changes in demand for government utilities and services resulting from tourist activity (see Burchell and Listokin, 1978 and Deller, 2001).
- iv. Financial analysis is used to determine the profit and assess whether the revenues generated by the festival were sufficient to cover its costs. “It generally includes a short-term analysis of the availability and costs of start-up capital as well as longer-range analysis of debt service, operating costs and revenues” (Hackbert, 2009).

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<sup>10</sup> Input–output models are commonly used for assessing national and provincial economies so they also offer the potential for placing festivals within such economic contexts.

- v. Demand analysis is used to track how prices, marketing, promotion, competition, quality and quantity of facilities, and other demand shifters affect the number and types of visitors (see Walsh, 1986; Johnson and Thomas, 1992; O'Connor, 2005).

A major drawback is the absence of a standardised model and the use of consistent comparative pre- and post-event criteria on which to base impact assessment (Carlsen, Getz and Soutar, 2001). This presents a challenge for comparability as the formula used to describe the outcomes differ from festival to festival, creating problems for benchmarking. Also, impact assessments are fairly comprehensive and resource-intensive and require careful planning to yield data of a high and substantive quality.

One possible response is a national methodology. A Finnish Event Evaluation Tool (FEET) was developed in 2007 (Pasanen, Taskinen and Mikkonen, 2009). It aims to be the best practice in producing comparable results and was designed for use by small Finnish municipalities. It has three parts: customer profiles, economic and social inputs; and takes into account environmental impacts. Separate questionnaires are administered to organizers, attendees, local residents, local entrepreneurs and policymakers. Economic assessment is based on an input-output model and uses direct impacts rather than multipliers. Socio-cultural impacts are based on the attitude questionnaires using a Likert scale derived from Australian practice.

Cost-benefit analysis is an evaluation tool that identifies and measures the costs and benefits of an event. Although first developed to evaluate alternate uses of public funds from an economy-wide perspective (Mishan 1988), cost-benefit analysis has been proven useful in the spheres of tourism and special event evaluations and has, by extension, become a model of evaluation which can be applied to festival data.

Cost-benefit analysis can be used where the objective is to determine financial expenditure alongside social and/or environmental costs (Southern et al., 2007). This type of analysis is used where the objective of the evaluation is to estimate the net worth of the festival by balancing the costs of the event against the benefits that can be derived; net worth is assessed as the benefits outweighing or offsetting the costs. This approach also takes into account costs and benefits accruing to the host community that are directly resultant of the festival, referred to as externalities or spill-over costs and benefits. (Burgan and Mules, 2000).

The contingent valuation method (Florio, 2014:123-37) is sometimes employed in this approach to place a monetary value on visitors' overall experience. It relies on interviews with sample patrons to assess willingness to pay to attend as a 'substitute' entrance fee or asks them to choose from a set of financial options for festival attendance. The major benefit of this model of assessment is that it allows for non-monetary values to be converted into financial sums, including the value of 'intangible' impacts that are traditionally omitted from economic impact analysis but which may provide measurable costs and benefits. The weakness immediately apparent is the heavy reliance on the interviewees' honesty to questions pertaining to festival expenditure, as that could skew the balance between cost and benefit. Cost-benefit analysis addresses these issues with sophisticated models of non-market goods of consumer choice and fluctuations in future benefits or social welfare, but such ideas remain controversial (Florio, 2014:173ff).



### 2.3.3 Inclusion of socio-cultural variables

Social impact assessments of festivals measure the changes in the communities and in social relationships resulting from hosting the festival, paying attention to factors such as the roles that age, race and gender play in the community. While this dimension of assessment is critical to attaining a broader holistic understanding of festivals, social impact assessments can be considered challenging given their more intangible nature and the corresponding perceptions that intangibility cannot be measured. The 2009 UNESCO FCS (2009:40) sums it up well: “the main challenge is how to assess the social dimension of culture, which often occurs in the informal sector, where no economic transactions take place. Some aspects of the social dimension of culture are related to its symbolic value and to its role in giving a sense of identity, shared value and belonging, in preventing exclusion and for building social cohesion and stability. It also refers to the non-commodified dimension of culture; those practices, which occur mainly within communities, that take place outside the economic sphere. The social aspect of culture cannot always be measured very easily”.

#### **Box 2. Evaluating festivals in New Zealand**

The approach of New Zealand’s Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment is an example of a financial, cost-benefit, evaluation of festivals/events which takes into account many of the issues set out in this paper.

New Zealand has a Major Events Development Fund, but individual events adopted different forms of evaluation. In response, the government developed a national approach and applied it retrospectively to 18 events which took place between 2010 and 2012. They decided to adopt a cost-benefit approach due to concerns about economic multipliers and because Treasury guidance assumes full employment as a pre-existing condition, and so all employment ‘creation’ is instead a substitution of one job for another. The method does not treat all international tourist participants spending as ‘additional’ but only those who explicitly came to the country for the event. The calculation also includes a specific 20% consumer surplus reflecting a perceived ‘willingness to pay’ more than the event ticket price, as identified in ‘contingent valuation’ studies mentioned in this paper. It also includes 25% of tourist airfares which have been identified by New Zealand’s Tourist Satellite Accounts as contributing to the national economy.

The results suggested:

- There was a net economic benefit to the country of US\$32 million, in contrast to the US\$143 million benefit claimed by event organizers. All but one event covered costs.
- The Major Events Fund achieved a return to the national economy of almost double its investment.
- Longer events might encourage tourists to stay longer, based on a slight correlation between these two factors.
- Larger events led to larger benefits, suggesting a strategy to invest in larger events.
- Social and cultural benefits were insufficiently assessed.

*Source: MBIE, 2013*

Impact assessments that fail to go beyond economics offer a limited view of festivals (Mason and Beaumont-Kerridge, 2004; Ghent Festivals/Centre for Tourism Policy Studies, 2003; Raj, 2003). Carlsen et al. (2007) contend that “cultural, community and social benefits of major festivals have not been systematically studied”. There has been some discussion in the literature on the need to include non-economic variables in the assessment of economic

impacts, but this has been easier said than done. Some studies have admitted to the importance of incorporating social impact variables in economic impact studies (for example, London Development Agency, 2003). Other studies have claimed to have assessed local impacts beyond the economic rubric but in practice have hardly adjusted their methodological frameworks to meaningfully assess socio-cultural impacts and remain primarily concerned with quantifiable economic benefits (for example, Sussex Arts Marketing, 2004; Center for Tourism Policy Studies, 2003).

Vrettos (2006) raises concern about methodology in his comparative analysis of four impact studies of major festivals, noting that each utilises a different methodology and ignores impacts generated from the artistic and social nature of the festivals. Arcodia and Whitford (2006) suggest that festivals increase social capital by building community resources and forming social cohesion in audiences

The study on Manchester's Pillar Events (Jura, 2006) best captures the issue of social variables in assessing economic impacts. This report identified a lack of understanding and insufficient exploration of the indirect impacts on the host communities as a major research gap and suggests that outcomes that do not lend to easy measurement tend to be ignored or poorly addressed. The report argues in favour of focus groups and longitudinal studies as a way of addressing the shortfalls of traditional quantitative methods. Langen and Garcia (2009:8) stress the longitudinal study of Liverpool's year as European City of Culture in 2008. This impact study began in 2000 and continued through 2010.

Langen and Garcia's research (2009:2) on the economic impact literature highlights some studies that seek to include a range of non-economic variables in the conducting economic impact assessments. The report notes, for example, that the Mason and Beamont-Kerridge (2004) study examined a range of impacts – economic, socio-cultural, environmental and political (community) in carrying out a study of visitors' and residents' attitudes to impacts of the Sidmouth International Festival. Similarly, writing on the Edinburgh Festivals, Carlsen et al. (2007) have sought to develop a more comprehensive approach to measuring impacts. Some experts favour a social accounting matrix approach, as Saayman (2012, 136) says, "Therefore when a social accounting matrix is utilised, one cannot only determine the output and income generated due to the event but also the distribution of the benefits amongst the local population". The Morris Hargraves McIntyre and Arts About Manchester (2008) study evaluated the achievements of the Manchester International Festival against its aims, objectives and targets which included certain social impacts.

Literature of 2010 and later suggests the use of a more socio-cultural-centered impact assessment as opposed to economic impact assessment in evaluating festivals (see Bayrak, 2011; Brown and Trimboli, 2011; Dreyer and Slabbert, 2011; Woo et al., 2011; Taylor and Slabbert, 2011; Slabbert and Viviers, 2011). Brown and Trimboli (2011) emphasise that, while economic impact assessments are instrumental to the funding politics of festivals as a means of measuring the viability of a festival, it is the socio-cultural impact assessments (SCIE) that determine the 'quality' of the festival and attest to the true 'value' the festival adds to society. SCIEs can be employed as tangible markers to determine a festival's success rating, highlighting the socio-cultural impact that the festival has on the community and speaking to the patronage of the festival-goer, thereby enabling the festival to secure funding.

While SCIE models are gaining in popularity for some researchers, they present two main challenges. They can prove difficult to analyse or corroborate given the intangible nature of socio-cultural effects. There is a need for fluidity and flexibility while administering these assessments as each festival is unique. Brown and Trimboli (2011) inferred that SCIE and economic impact evaluations both have equally important parts to play in sustainability, development, planning and organization of festivals, and as such, the validity of SCIE models should not be framed within the scope of economic festival value.

In an important analysis of the Seville Spring Fiestas, which was explicitly linked to intangible heritage and the UNESCO FCS, Palma et al. (2013) analysed a typical participation survey to suggest that repeated attendance (intensity) was associated with cultural identity and socialisation (kinship, participation in processions and performances), not sex or level of education.

There are a few commonly accepted statistical standards that support the measuring of the social dimension of culture that have also been applied to measuring festivals (see **Table 6**).

**Table 6. Social impact techniques with measurement and data focus**

Instrument	Measurement focus	Examples of data focus
Household and time-use surveys	Cultural participation, both active and passive	Level of participation by demographic group, gender and other factors (UNESCO-UIS, 2012)
Social impact perception (SIP) scale	Festival visitors' perceptions	Inconvenience, community identity and cohesion, frustration, entertainment and socialisation, community growth and development, behavioural consequences (Small, 2007)
Social impact attitude scale		Level of festival's safety, tolerance; creativity of the community Social costs and social benefits of festivals

These models collect data on population characteristics, community and institutional structures, individual, family and community resources, etc. Although the execution of these models can be time-consuming, they help to identify factors that cannot be directly observed and can therefore generate a range of data on socio-cultural factors that are not easily tracked by quantitative models. Thus, social impact assessments are particularly useful for gathering data to inform socio-cultural-driven policy formulation.

### 2.3.4 The need for 'all-inclusive' approaches

A 'total picture' of a festival is hardly attainable through the collection of statistics alone; there is opportunity for conducting a more holistic or 'all-inclusive' approach. Carlsen et al. (2007) propose an "inclusive research agenda which looks at the benefits of festivals for the arts, culture, community, economy, society and stakeholders".

In a more recent publication, Tull (2009) makes the case for combining qualitative and quantitative methods in measuring festivals in order to "track a broad spectrum of the phenomenon under investigation". She reasons that the combined use of qualitative and quantitative research approaches can allow for the maximisation of their strengths and the minimisation of their limitations (2009:8). Snowball and Antrobus (2008) similarly propose the use of a mixed method approach in generating data for economic impact studies. Critical to all

of this is the ability and willingness to triangulate, since the use of multiple methods can allow the researcher to see various dimensions of the same issue. Investigations based on quantitative measuring can be checked against findings derived from qualitative measuring to gather a relatively complete picture of analysis. The complementary use of the approaches therefore gives opportunity for a broader range of issues to be analysed as well as a more holistic assessment.

**Triple Bottom Line (TBL).** This approach emerged from the debates surrounding climate change and gas emissions, for business and tourism to evaluate their impact on the natural environment in terms of sustainability. As a framework for measuring and reporting performance against economic, social and environmental parameters, the TBL approach assesses a festival's impact on its host communities. TBL approaches would measure, for example, water and energy use and waste generation and draw attention to 'green' responsibility to the environmental footprint of the event (Fredline et al., 2004, 2005; Hede et al., 2002; Sherwood et al. 2004, 2005).

The TBL approach has great potential for comparisons between festivals, provided that the indicators are standardised. The approach proposed by Fredline et al. (2004) indicates how TBL measurements could be integrated to enable an overall assessment of the impact of an event. However, the operationalisation of the framework would require a suite of event-specific indicators which measure the economic, social and environmental impacts and underpin the model.

A drawback to this approach is that it is somewhat unbalanced in its measurement of impacts. In the first instance, the economic indicators are far better developed than the environmental. In the second, economic impact is quantifiable, while social and environmental impacts require qualitative assessments which can pose problems of comparison across the three elements. Sherwood (2007) proposed indicators for the TBL to address this. The TBL approach would produce festival statistics that facilitate the categorisation of festivals worldwide according to their 'green' rating and standing.

### **Box 3. Recycling statistics from the 2014 Smithsonian Folklife Festival**

The Smithsonian Folklife Festival is a two-week showcase of the arts (including performances) and crafts of cultures around the world, which takes place outside the Smithsonian on the Mall in Washington, D.C. every year since 1967. During this time, it has, for example, involved some 23,000 musicians. In 2014, the festival concentrated on China and Kenya.

The 2014 Smithsonian Folklife Festival was the greenest one to date and represented the largest composting effort for any event on the National Mall.

"Resource recovery tents were strategically placed near dining areas and busy walkways to maximise accessibility and visibility. By collecting and sorting waste at these numerous stations, we were able to break our previous sustainability records and divert an incredible 93.15% of waste from landfills."

**Total waste collected:** 40.95 tons      **Recycled:** 14.6 tons  
**Composted:** 23.6 tons                      **Landfill:** 2.8 tons"

Source: Blog by Kendra Speak, accessed 10 October 2014, <http://www.festival.si.edu/2014/sustainability-matters-2014-festival-statistics/>

Overall it appears that there has been no significant change in the conceptualisation of festival statistics and festival data-gathering processes. Concepts and definitions appear to reinforce the notion of festival statistics as comprising any data that would be beneficial to festival managers/organizers and policy developers in understanding the role and impact of festivals and festival events. Carlsen and Anderson (2011) assert that there is need for “empirical analysis on the effectiveness of the strategic management of festivals”, given that a festival’s success is closely connected to how effectively and efficiently it is managed. They further argue that festival data should extend to information on sound festival management practices, including information on the festival’s financial management and related statistics on costs, revenue, sponsorship and support. Such data are seen as crucial to helping festival managers demonstrate the event’s economic viability.

Other literature seems to share this view and suggests a diverse range of elements from which festival statistics can be derived. Notable examples include: assessing stakeholder views (Barron and Rihova, 2011; Buch et al., 2011; Herrero, 2012; Jin-Soo, 2011; Loots and Slabbert, 2011; Slabbert and Viviers, 2011); assessing consumer/patron demand and motivation (Bayrak, 2011; Chen et al., 2011); assessing audience/patron experience (Kamenidou, 2011; Linko and Silvanto, 2011; Scollen, 2011); gathering data that can allow for reasonably accurate projection of the festivals economic impact (see Myles and Carter, 2011; Della Lucia, 2012); compiling financial data (see Bracalente et al., 2011); and analysing internal event operations (Della, 2012; Reid, 2011; Weng Chiang et al., 2012).

## **2.4 Festivals and tourism statistics**

The link between festival and tourism statistics has already been mentioned several times but warrants further clarification. Some festivals’ main objective is to attract tourists, and the nature of the events presented (e.g. type of music, summer scheduling) is geared towards the cultures of their foreign visitors. Other festivals are geared to local culture (e.g. harvests, saints days), and the attendance of foreign tourists is incidental. This dichotomy can have an important impact on statistics. Festivals dependent on foreign tourists are likely to emphasise the amount of visitor spending brought into the area. Festivals which are more geared to local culture are more likely to emphasise financial efficiency and social benefits, as most of the money will not be additional to the local economy. The European Festival Census 2012, a private sector market survey, suggested that 35% of festival-goers had been to a festival outside their own country (UKFA, 2013:24).

Tourism statistics (UNWTO, 2010a) are a highly developed set of measures in their own right, including tourism satellite accounts (UNWTO, 2010b). They tend to consider spending during the complete vacation rather than single local events. There is an emphasis on sustainable numbers of tourists due to the degradation caused by mass tourism in the most popular destinations. Tourism satellite accounts assess tourism’s contribution to the national economy and may be related to input-output models which are commonly used for festivals.

In contrast, festival statistics largely focus on what activities/spending tourists undertake at the festival or in the immediate locality. It is difficult to attribute spending in a completely different part of the country to a particular festival, even if the reason for the visit was to see a certain festival.

## 2.5 Alternative models for festival assessment

Since 2010 academics have proposed a series of new approaches to festival statistics.

Mangia et al. (2011) propose a “new integrated theoretical model” that would “...include and combine the dimensions evaluated by the traditional literature and pool with dimensions related to the analysis of organisations’ strategic goals and to the organisational effectiveness analysis”. This work contends that current theoretical models for festival assessment are lacking two pivotal aspects: strategic assessment and assessment of the structures and mechanisms used by the festival organization to accomplish stated tasks, which would allow for more effective and accurate data collection and analysis of impacts. The inclusion of strategic assessments, insofar as an analysis of the identified mission and strategic aims of the festival organization, has relevance for demonstrating the successful achievement of festival objectives and therefore for the festivals to be legitimised in external contexts.

Methodological triangulation is seen as critical to this model, mainly via the use of internal document analysis, interviews with top and middle management, and analysis of real actions in terms of performance and results achieved. Simultaneously, assessment of the organization’s mechanisms and structures will allow for the strengths and weaknesses of the festival to be taken into account towards measuring and evaluating the “degree of efficacy, coherence and congruence, which has implications for profitability, productivity, adaptability, market share and so forth”. (Mangia et al., 2011:102).

Carlsen and Andersson (2011:83) propose a Strategic Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis to determine the capability of a festival’s management and strategy and to address the multiple challenges that festival organizers face and the strategies they adopt. Carlsen and Andersson’s (2011) assessment can include a section specific to the role of the festival stakeholder. Additionally, case studies, descriptive analysis and surveys are the recommended tools for data collection for a strategic SWOT analysis (Carlsen and Andersson, 2011).

Another recent model is the Stakeholder Theory proposed by Reid (2011). This model monitors event stakeholders to gauge festival sustainability. Reid (2011) argues that the Stakeholder Theoretical Management Framework can be used for the organization and planning of small to medium rural festivals. Identifying and facilitating event stakeholder relationships can lead to greater event participation because of improved planning and monitoring. The Stakeholder Theory offers a combination of economic and business organizational methods through qualitative research to determine socio-cultural factors and results. It also allows for the measuring of satisfaction and motivation among the event stakeholders and by extension patrons.

Similarly, Chen et al. (2011) consider consumer perceptions and motivation useful areas from which to generate festival data. They indicate several models that can be used to assess customer perception and expectation at a cultural festival; namely the GAPS Model of perceived service quality, SERVQUAL (Service Quality), SERVPERF (Service Performance), FESTPERF (Festival Performance) and FESTIVALSCAPE (Chen et al., 2011). They contend that visitor behaviour and loyalty is in direct relation to festival quality and service which includes programme content, facilities and amenities, staffing, and information dissemination among others. Yan et al. (2011) also make reference to the SERVQUAL and SERVPERF models of assessment and the role that these methods can play in fine-tuning festival programming which factors in visitor loyalty and satisfaction.

Della Lucia (2012:1), speaking to the wider context of event planning and investment decisionmaking, proposes an “innovative methodology to improve the economic impact estimates of events” which is namely a combination of bottom-up input-output models and action-tracking technologies to track consumer behaviour. This, she argues is a useful means of generating greater rigour in capturing the real/actual consumption of festival goods and services and spending patterns of festival-goers, as well as a more accurate method of calculating participation in various festival events and festival attendance generally. The proposed model assesses economic impact via the use of an electronic instrument, as opposed to questionnaires that provide information mainly on intended and perceived behaviour. As such, Della Lucia argues that this model lends to greater accuracy with regard to input data and estimates of economic impacts. Della Lucia asserts that tracking via an electronic object given to the festival attendee, which would send feedback via radio waves to an electronic transmitter, would yield more accurate primary data on the actual behavior and provide a more accurate reading of the festivals’ economic impact. The main problem associated with action tracking, however, would be budget constraints pertaining to costs of the technology and skilled human resource to use it. Other drawbacks include its being looked on with suspicion by target groups, as well as problems of a technical nature insofar as determining the appropriate system to track the desired outcome and the pre-existence of action-tracking circuits at variance with specific technology.

**Ethnography** is considered appropriate for assessing festivals, particularly as a means of triangulating data derived from the previously mentioned models, though it has rarely been employed alongside statistical assessment (Bendrup, 2008; Stadler, Reid and Fullagar, 2013). Its associated research methods of observation, interviewing and the use of documentary sources can yield valuable and valid data, particularly if used within the wider frame of experience-related studies. Ethnography has been used in the analysis of tourism since the 1960s, so given the association of festival research and festival tourism, the use is justifiable. If festivals can be considered as a ‘place’ for a culture’s presentation of itself and its deeply held meanings, then an ethnographic methodology is the best fit for bringing this to the fore.

This approach relies on informant interviews and participant observation as the mechanisms for gathering the data on festivals. The drawback of this approach is that the fieldwork is demanding in terms of time, financial and human resources. The benefit is that the researcher as festival attendee/festival volunteer/local resident (any of the roles that would offer an insider perspective) would capture rich details and nuances of the festival (intangibles that have real value) that might otherwise not be accounted for in traditional methods such as visitor surveys, satisfaction surveys and event surveys. This approach would also allow for the understanding of socio-cultural and environmental impacts of the festival from a visitor’s perspective.

While the practicality of these models for gathering festival data has been tested, it is still to be seen whether they will become common models. It is recognised that resource constraints and traditional approaches to gathering festival data still predominate. There may be a slow shift in acceptance of newer models.

**Cultural mapping.** Recognised by UNESCO as an effective means of preserving the world’s tangible and intangible cultural assets, cultural mapping gives opportunity for the collection of cultural data, including festival statistics, which can serve as invaluable information for the development of policy. The basic activity of cultural mapping requires that the community is involved in the identification and documentation of local cultural resources. This gives opportunity for the collection of unique and community-known data on the festival that might be otherwise overlooked or difficult to capture under traditional means of gathering cultural

information. For example, indigenous dance steps associated with a festival or traditional recipes for festival-related cuisine could be effectively recorded under cultural mapping. Another strength of this approach is its flexibility in reproduction – collected data can be represented through a variety of formats, including geographic maps, graphs, diagrams, aerial photographs, satellite-produced images, in addition to the generally used statistical databases.

Chris Gibson (2009) offers an interesting example of cultural mapping being used to document rural festivals in Australia. This study was triggered by the need to gain a more expansive view of the significance of these festivals beyond the social and economic impact analyses and in so doing add to the discourse on rural festivals' significance (see **Box 4**). He did acknowledge that the methods utilised within the cultural mapping exercise do not replace conventional economic modelling, community consultation or practice-based creative arts research but rather serve as a platform for integrating various kinds of inquiry – “a ‘horizontal board’ onto which all kinds of quantitative and qualitative data can be pegged to suit the particular questions being asked” (Gibson, 2010:7).

#### **Box 4. Profile of Gibson’s cultural mapping of rural festivals in Australia**

“...previous literature missed the point about how festivals could connect people within rural, often small communities, catalysing all kinds of economic relationships based on logics other than profit-maximisation. In a first phase, a map database of every rural festival outside the capital cities in three Australian states (New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria) was created to generate an overall picture of the prevalence of festivals, to enable spatial analysis of their distribution, regional clustering and differentiation. Over 2,800 festivals were included (between 2005 and 2008). Phase 2 entailed close analysis with help from the managers of 480 festivals, and in a third phase, research pursued detailed field work at individual festivals: the Parkes Elvis Revival Festival in NSW, Chillout in Daylesford, Victoria (Australia’s largest non-metropolitan gay and lesbian festival) and Opera in the Paddock in Inverell, New South Wales.

From these second and third phases it was possible to glean qualitatively the networks, relationships and dynamics that enable festivals to gel rural communities and generate overall measures of impacts for the whole rural festivals sector. It was clear from our map database that festivals were diverse and geographically scattered throughout rural Australia (with greater per capita concentration of festivals in the New South Wales Riverina region than in other parts. Our survey revealed that the bulk of rural festivals are small (29% had audiences of less than 1,000), run by non-profit organizations.

From surveys and field work at individual festivals, it was possible to calculate state-wide statistics on employment, income and volunteerism. While most rural festivals are modest, socially-motivated and not especially geared to tourism, their significance is worth serious recognition from governments because of their sheer quantity and geographical ubiquity. This conclusion was not so much based on numbers of tickets sold or on how much money was ploughed back into the community, but on how they congeal across the annual calendar of activities in regions to secure a part of the local economy.”

Extracted from Chris Gibson, “Mapping Culture, Creating Places: Collisions of Science and Art”, presented at ReGenerating Community Conference, Melbourne, September 2009. <http://www.cdn-generations.net.au/conferenceproceedings.htm>



Cultural mapping does not normally provide statistics unless there is a deliberate attempt to structure the information discovered into quantifiable analytic units.

**Social media** has become an important part of celebration and intangible heritage, as a place to share notice of upcoming events, to arrange mutual participation with friends and family, and to exchange feedback during and after an event. Festival organizers want to create an impact on social media to encourage people from the same online communities to participate. Statistics on social media involvement are an indicator of demand for festival experiences. Eventbrite (2014) studied the details of some 20 million online conversations about 181 music festivals in the United States on Twitter, Facebook and other platforms in 2013-2014. 75% of the people involved were aged 17 to 34 years. One-quarter of conversations concerned a music festival in which they were participating through live streaming over the Internet. One-half of the conversations took place before the concert took place, and almost one-third took place after the event had ended.

## **2.6 Research gaps on measuring festivals**

Overall, the literature reflects that, while there are a number of perspectives and approaches for measuring festivals and collecting festival statistics, there are some research gaps that can pose a challenge to attaining valid and reliable festival statistics (see **Tables 7 and 8**). These are as follows:

- i) The influence of tourism studies and events management on the collection of festival data seems to have overshadowed opportunities for developing approaches, methods and tools for data collection specific to festivals as cultural phenomena. This has implications for the end use of festival data which may not only be for the purpose of proving commercial sustainability/success and tourism impact.
- ii) The overwhelming preference and focus on economic impacts has precluded greater exploration of other important issues, such as festivals and technology, festivals and politics, festivals and the environment, etc.
- iii) Even where an environmental impact assessment is conducted, very few studies have separated this from an assessment of physical infrastructure, which can also be important to tourism planning and community development. Academic discourse has not given this issue due attention.
- iv) The lack of attention to longitudinal studies is reflected in the dearth of festival data on past trends, which can be useful in forecasting studies and feasibility studies for festivals.
- v) By extension, the general focus on short-term assessment (one festival season or one day of a festival) presents challenges in gathering festival data for long-term planning or for effectively characterising the significance of the festival.

In sum, these gaps suggest that, while there is a growing body of literature and research on measuring festivals, there is a need for higher standards in practice for economic assessment of festivals and a need for both more research and practice on the integration of social and environmental considerations into holistic festival assessments.

**Table 7. Summary of selected studies by broad themes**

Theme	Authors	Key issues	Festival/country
Methodology	Getz, Anderson and Carlsen, 2010	Formulates a systematic framework and priorities for comparative and cross-cultural festival management studies, based on a literature review and results of a four-country study	Sweden, Norway, UK, Australia
	Carlsen et al., 2007	An economic impact study that debates the shortfalls of festival research with an overemphasis on the economic data; argues that the cultural, community and social benefits of major festivals have not been systematically studied	Edinburgh Festivals, UK
	Andrews, 2003	An example of the use of a qualitative approach, featuring qualitative interviews with key stakeholders and review of monitoring forms	Manchester, UK
	Garcia, 2003	Qualitative assessment of the Culture Shock Programme – stakeholder interviews, focus groups, participatory mapping techniques	Manchester, UK
	Dimanche, 1996	Evaluates the long-term legacy of Louisiana Expo of 1984; argues for the use of a longitudinal approach	Louisiana
	Jeong and Faulkner, 1996	Features a community impact assessment; measures both the positive and negative perceptions of the festival	Taejon Expo 1993 (Korea)
Impact assessment	Saayman and Rossouw, 2010	Discusses the economic value of the Cape Town International Jazz festival <sup>1</sup>	Cape Town
	Robertson, Rogers and Leask, 2009	Summarises literature relating to methodologies for evaluating the socio-cultural effects of festivals; provides a comprehensive review of secondary literature and telephone interviews with a sample of UK festival directors	United Kingdom
	Ali-Knight et al., 2008	Addresses contemporary issues concerning the potential of festivals to produce economic, social, cultural and community benefits; a global look at trends usually underrepresented in the literature; discussion of current status of festivals	

Theme	Authors	Key issues	Festival/country
	Langen and Garcia, 2009	Literature Review of studies and reports on the impacts of large scale events and festivals; examines methods used in festival research between 1993 and 2008	Several festivals EU, in particular UK
	Morris Hargreaves McIntyre and Arts About Manchester, 2008	Evaluation of the Manchester International Festival's social impacts	Manchester
	O'Sullivan, Pickernell and Senyard, 2008	Discusses use of festivals as a strategy for local economic development; Quantitative survey approach, telephone survey	Wales
Impact assessment	Robertson and Rogers, 2008	Assessment of rural and non-urban festivals using socio-cultural evaluation based on media analysis	Several festivals, UK
	Snowball and Webb, 2008	Addresses social and cultural impacts of the festival; makes a case for the role of the festival in producing and maintaining national cultural capital	South African National Arts Festival
	Hamilton et al., 2007	Assesses the economic, social and cultural impacts of this festival before, during and after the festival year; makes a case for the use of a range of qualitative and quantitative methods including interviews, surveys, focus groups, discussion groups and press impact analysis	Highland Year of Culture
	Hede, 2007	Explores use of TBL (triple bottom line) approach to evaluating the impacts of festivals from a stakeholder's perspective; advocates mapping the interests of stakeholders as a starting point for developing sustainable strategies	
	Rollins and Delamere, 2007	A review of Festival Social Impact Attitude Scale	
	Jura Consultants, 2006	Economic impact assessment of Manchester's Pillar Events makes an argument for use of focus groups and longitudinal studies	Manchester

Theme	Authors	Key issues	Festival/country
	Lim and Lee, 2006	Comparative analysis of two festivals using community perceptions and socio-economic impact assessment	Taejon Expo and Gyeongju Biennale, Korea
Impact assessment	Pattison, 2006	Explores social and cultural benefits of festivals; uses semi-structured interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders	Edinburgh
	Vrettos, 2006	Comparative analysis of four impact studies of major festivals	Festivals in UK and Spain
	Small, Edwards and Sheridan, 2005	Evaluates socio-cultural impacts of small festivals	Several festivals, Australia
	Edwards et al., 2004	Uses stakeholder analysis to assess tourism impacts; makes a case for longitudinal studies and use of qualitative methodology	Expo 98, Lisbon
	Gursoy, Kim and Uysal, 2004	Discusses measurement of impacts of festivals on local communities as perceived by festival organizers based on a self-administered survey	Virginia
	Nurse and Tull, 2004	Examines economic impacts of World Creole Music festival using quantitative and qualitative methods	Dominica
	Nurse and Tull, 2003	Examines economic impacts of World Creole Music festival using quantitative and qualitative methods	The Cayman Islands
	Nurse, 2003	Examines economic impact of festival tourism in the Caribbean	Several festivals, Caribbean
	Mason and Beaumont-Kerridge, 2004	Presents the economic, socio-cultural, environmental and political impacts of the festival, used visitor surveys, focus groups with residents	Sidmouth International Festival
Fredline, Jago and Deery, 2003	Exploring the use of a social impact scale to assess social impacts of events	Several Festivals in Australia	

**Table 8. Key impacts from special event literature and assessments**

Dimension	Impact
Economic (positive)	Business development and investment opportunities
	Capital expenditure on construction of facilities
	Destination promotion
	Development of tourism industry
	Economic benefits
	Employment opportunities and skills development
	Legacy of infrastructure and facilities
	Sponsorship benefits
	Visitor expenditure
Economic (negative)	Costs of staging event
	Damage to reputation of destination
	Inflation
	Under-utilisation of infrastructure
Social (positive)	Celebration of community values
	Community pride
	Improvement in quality of life of host community
Social (negative)	Crime and vandalism
	Disruption of lifestyle of residents
	Overcrowding, congestion and noise
Environmental	Affect on natural resources

Source: Sherwood, 2007

### **3. Best practice in measuring festivals: The case of Australia and South Africa**

#### **3.1 Why Australia and South Africa**

The festival landscapes of both Australia and South Africa make useful case studies. Australia is highly regarded for its proliferation of some 200 festivals spread across the country<sup>11</sup> and has been gaining ground in the literature on festival analysis. This can perhaps be attributed to a number of factors, notably: the easy access to information on festivals in Australia via the Internet; the evidence of a strong policy platform and institutional framework for festivals; and an apparent focus on continuous assessment of festivals for the arts and culture.

This is juxtaposed with the South African festival landscape, which – although it does not have such an extensive array of festivals as Australia – exemplifies a best case scenario for developing and emerging countries. South Africa has some 100 festivals, but its capacity for measuring festivals and gathering festival statistics has not been as extensive. Nevertheless, South Africa has seen the development of festival evaluation practice in more recent times, amidst some resource constraints.

Analysis of the festival measurement and data collection of these two countries affords the opportunity to map the trends in festival statistics, identifying the most commonly used practices and effective strategies for measuring all forms of cultural festivals.

#### **3.2 In search of best practice: Analytical approach**

Websites offering information for festivals in Australia and South Africa were explored and the most popular listed festivals were identified. Search terms such as ‘best festivals’ or ‘festivals one should not miss’ were used. This produced a list of approximately 50 cultural festivals across Australia and 30 across South Africa with a web presence.

A contact list (organizers of the festivals selected) was then compiled. Festival organizers were then contacted and/or their websites and other Internet sources scrutinised for documentation of useful experience and examples of sound practices in data collection and measurement. In light of the poor response from festival organizers, best practice scenarios were based on existing research from conference papers, journal articles and documented case studies. Commonalities were identified and best practices in measuring festivals and gathering festival statistics coming out of select festivals from Australia and South Africa were mapped.

#### **3.3 Analytical overview of secondary data**

The source material garnered from the web search can be divided into four categories: academic/scholarly research papers produced mainly by university lecturers for presentation at conferences or for publication; descriptive reports produced by the festival organizations or commissioned for purposes of research and documentation; evaluations and impact assessments produced by the festival organizers, associations or consultants; and feasibility studies or financial reports commissioned to satisfy funders or to ascertain/gain financing. The

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<sup>11</sup> For a comprehensive listing of festivals in Australia according to theme and location, see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_festivals\\_in\\_Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_festivals_in_Australia)

majority of the source material reviewed comprised academic/research papers emanating from the fields of festival studies, tourism and event management.

Best practice scenarios hinged on specific criteria. Documents had to present statistical or descriptive information on evaluation on the selected festivals in Australia and South Africa (see **Table 9**).

Online databases were perused for source material that examined festivals in Australia and South Africa, namely: Science Direct, Taylor and Francis Online, Sage Journals Online, SwetsWise, EBSCOHOST and Wiley Online Library. Queries returned results for numerous other online journals, many of them being tourism journals, which were then scoured for articles written between January 2010 and December 2012 that surveyed Australian and South African festivals and discussed the methods adopted to measure these festivals (see **Table 8**). This produced approximately 50 documents to be used in discerning effective processes and techniques in gathering festival statistics that could be construed as best practice.

**Table 9. Core themes used as selection criteria for source material**

Festival demographics such as attendance, patron profiles, programming
Economic and socio-cultural data
Role and impact of festivals and festival events
Motivation, experience and satisfaction of festival-goers and event participants
Festival management practices and internal event operations
Organizers, staff, volunteers, vendors, sponsors and other stakeholder information
Festival landscape/market

The process of filtering relevant source material on measuring festivals and gathering festival statistics in Australia and South Africa yielded useful data drawn from some 40 festivals collectively (see **Tables 10 and 11**). Data extraction was limited to cultural festivals, ranging from arts festivals, music festivals, heritage festivals, community-based festivals, to popular arts and entertainment festivals and multicultural festivals. The reports, studies and journal articles selected were written by authors including festival organizers, consultants, academics/researchers and governmental/state entities.

### **3.4 Mapping best practice: Results**

There appears to be a general consensus across the festival landscapes of Australia and South Africa that they should be evaluated on multiple levels and include the perspectives of most/all stakeholders to maximise the use of the data. There is consensus on how information on festivals is collected and that collecting the same type of basic information on the festivals in the same way is critical. Basic information includes: festival type, size, purpose/objective, locale (rural/urban) and status (private, public), festival owners/implementing body/festival organizers.

Effective common practices specific to measuring festivals and gathering festival data exist in both Australia and South Africa. They were identified in the following areas: approaches to measuring festivals; methods of data collection; indicator frameworks used; collection instruments; nature of data and statistics produced.

**Table 10. Australian festivals used to define best practices, by source**

<b>Festivals</b>	<b>References</b>
Adelaide Fringe Festival	Caust and Glow, 2011
Adelaide Festival of Arts	McCann, 2012
Adelaide Fringe Festival	
Womadelaide	
The Future Music Festival	Adelaide Festival Centre 2012 Report
Soundwave Music Festival	
OzAsia Festival	
Adelaide International Guitar Festival	
Adelaide Cabaret Festival	
The National Multicultural Festival	Ruhanen and Whitford, 2012
The Sydney Festival	
Brisbane's Annual Sports and Cultural Festival	
Brisbane Festival	Gattenhof and Hadley, 2011
Big Day Out	Gibson et al., 2010
Goodiwind Spring Festival	Reid, 2011
Allora Blue Cow Country Music Festival	
Inglewood Olive Festival	
Tamworth Country Festival	Polkinghorn et al., 2013
Queensland Music Festival	Stadler, 2012; Stadler, 2013
Peats Ridge Sustainable Arts & Music Festival	Lanranjo et al., 2012
Bleach Festival	MacKellar, 2012
Abbey Medieval Festival	Robinson and Clifford, 2012
Gympies Country Music Muster	Edwards, 2012
Winery Walkabout Festival	Bruwer, 2012
Bowen Seafood Festival,	Lee and Arcadia, 2011
Gladstone Seafood Festival	
National Cherry Festival	
Oysterfest in Ceduna	
Tin Can Bay Seafood Festival	
St Kilda Festival	The St Kilda Festival Review Report 2010
Live Music Festivals	Richardson, 2012

**Table 11. South African festivals used to define best practices, by source**

<b>South Africa</b>	
Jazz Festivals	Taylor and Slabbert, 2011
Klein Karoo National Arts Festival	Loots et al., 2011
Aardklop National Arts Festival	Slabbert and Viviers, 2011
Aardklop National Arts Festival (Potchefstroom, North-West Province)	Ciná van Zyl, 2011; Pacey, 2011; Kruger, Saayman and Ellis, 2011
National Festival of the Arts (Grahamstown, Eastern Cape)	
Klein Karoo National Arts Festival (Oudtshoorn, Western Cape)	
Innibos Arts Festival	Van Niekerk and Coetzee, 2011
Robertson Wine Festival	Marais and Saayman, 2010
Wacky Wine Festivals	Kruger, Rootenberg and Ellis, 2012
National Arts Festival	Snowball, 2011
Grahamstown National Arts Festival	Kruger et al., 2011; Snowball, Jamal and Willis, 2010; Saayman and Rossouw, 2011
Roxette Live	Kruger and Saayman, 2012
Arts Alive Festival	Pacey, 2011
Wine Festival	Kruger et al., 2011



### 3.4.1 Effective approaches to measuring festivals

Although there has never been an explicit universal approach to measuring festivals, it appears that impact assessments are regarded as among the more effective approaches. The most common model for gathering festival statistics in Australia and South Africa, based on the festivals reviewed, is results driven. As **Table 12** shows, determining economic impact is considered a high priority in measuring festivals, while environmental impact analysis is seen as less of a priority. While pre-2011 literature, studies and reports strongly advocated for the inclusion of other impacts, such as social and environmental, the content analysis conducted herein reflects recognition of the importance of measuring social impacts but not to the extent that it is considered necessarily more relevant or useful than economic impact assessment.

**Table 12. Sample of prevailing approaches used in impact assessments in Australia and South Africa**

Type of impact assessment	Advocated approaches	Festival measured
Economic impact Social impact Cultural impact	<b>A triangulated research strategy hinged on three tools:</b> (1) a desk-based review of both domestic and international indigenous festivals to identify potential socio-cultural and economic impacts; (2) a quantitative survey questionnaire with 29 questions to obtain demographic data, economic and expenditure patterns, and socio-cultural aspects of the festival. Random sampling was employed over the three days of the festival. 481 attendees polled by the research team within the parameters of the event venue. Results were analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 15 for Windows, Microsoft Excel 2007 and the Encore Festival and Event Evaluation Kit developed by the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre; (3) qualitative in-depth interviews with 18 key festival stakeholders, undertaken either via telephone or face to face and focused on the social and economic importance and contributions of the festival and motivations for funding/supporting the festival. All interviews were recorded with each participant's permission, transcribed verbatim and the data analysed using Neuman's (1997) principles of manifest and latent content analysis.	Brisbane's Annual Sports and Cultural Festival (Australia)
Economic impact Social impact Cultural impact	<b>A qualitative approach to gathering data was used to investigate the perceptions and attitudes of Fringe artists and festival staff</b> hinged on: (1) recorded semi-structured interviews with participating artists in focus group discussions; (2) one on one interviews with individual artists, Fringe Festival staff and Board Members. Participating staff and board members were interviewed prior to, during, and after the 2009 Festival to understand how the Fringe organisation itself viewed artists who participated in the Fringe; (3) an Exit Survey of Artists polled 60 artists participating in the Fringe, during and after the 2009 Fringe Festival. Participating artists were asked to comment on any benefits and further opportunities they gained from participation; whether and how the Fringe differs from other platforms	Adelaide Fringe Festival (Australia)

	for the production of their work; and to make an assessment of how they 'valued' their participation in the Fringe festival from the point of view of their careers and their practice as artists; (4) Immediately after post-interviews, the data was sorted and coded to find key concepts and phrases and their inter-relationships.	
Economic impact Socio-cultural impact Environmental impact	<b>Information was gathered and analysed through a combination of quantitative and qualitative research approaches</b> , viz.: (1) market research (host community); (2) Festival Sunday attendance survey; (3) economic impact assessments; (4) Council policy and strategy documentation analysis; (5) Festival complaints data analysis; (6) telephone and in-person interviews; (7) content analysis of an online forum, written submissions; (8) review of literature related to event management	St. Kilda Festival (Australia)
Socio-cultural impact	<b>Mixed method design combining qualitative data collected through an extensive interview with the Festival Director, and on-site questionnaires to poll festival attendees.</b> Audience surveyed face-to-face over the entire period of festival using a convenience sampling technique, as used by other event researchers in circumstances where the size of the population is unknown or difficult to estimate. As many events were in non-ticketed, open access venues it was not possible to undertake a systematic sampling technique. Review of other relevant documents such as newspaper articles, artist testimonials and website forums to enhance the researcher's wider understanding of the event context.	Bleach Festival (Australia)
Personal impacts Organizational-level impacts	<b>Ethnographic case study</b> that focused on knowledge management practices and involved all members of the organisation through work interaction with staff and teams between February and August 2011, and involved attending various meetings, workshops, rehearsals, performances and other key events. To explore different views on knowledge management and organisational culture three methods of data collection were used: ethnography, in-depth semi-structured interviews and textual analysis). The field notes and interview transcripts as well as other texts and documents were analysed using NVivo and several themes around knowledge management and organisational culture were identified.	Queensland Music Festival (Australia)
Economic impact	<b>Visitor survey was conducted over a period of six days at the Grahamstown National Arts Festival during June/July 2009.</b> Sampling was based on the availability and willingness of visitors to complete the questionnaire.	Grahamstown National Arts Festival (South Africa)

<p>Economic impact Social impact</p>	<p><b>Spectator survey</b> was administered to capture inter alia: demographic details of spectators; spectators' satisfaction with the event, spectators' awareness of sponsors. There was also an assessment of aspects of the economic contribution of the festival through measurement of non-ACT resident spectator spending. Survey used a Postcode collection method: six organisations at eight vendor locations were recruited to collect 100 postcodes from customers buying goods from their stalls at the Festival (on any of the three days from 5th to 7th February). Postcode collection forms were provided to vendors, along with instructions for requesting the information and an information and contact sheet for customers requesting more information. Vendors were instructed to ask customers: "Can I get your postcode for some Festival research?" Vendors were advised that the information would be used to help to determine how many visitors from interstate attend the Festival; that this information will be combined with other survey information about how much people spend, to work determine the Festival contributes to the ACT economy.</p>	<p>National Multicultural Festival (Australia)</p>
<p>Socio-cultural impact</p>	<p><b>Questionnaire</b> administered that consisted of three sections: Section A — where five questions introduced participants to the different life domains and their influence on quality of life (QoL) and sought to determine the impact of the wine festival on participants' various life domains. Section B comprised 7 questions on satisfaction with the festival services, products and experience. Sections A and B used a Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. Section C measured demographic and psychographic information, asking participants about their age, gender, residence, reason for visiting the festival and personality type.</p>	<p>Wine Festival (South Africa)</p>
<p>Socio-cultural impact Environmental impact Economic impact</p>	<p><b>An explanatory study was conducted to utilize the VICE model (visitor, industry, community, environment) for the sustainable development.</b> The study was conducted from a positivist paradigm, which holds that the world is guided by scientific rules that explain the behavior of phenomena through causal relationships) An inductive approach was followed that allowed the researcher to pursue data collection within a theoretical framework.</p>	<p>Innibos Arts Festival (South Africa)</p>

### 3.4.2 Methods of data collection

Analysis of the studies, reports and evaluations on festivals indicate that a mixed methods approach, i.e. quantitative and qualitative, yields more productive festival statistics. Most often a multi-dimensional research strategy was used to present a comprehensive assessment of the festivals under review (see **Table 13**). The studies suggest that a mixed methods approach satisfies several conditions: it reflects a wide and varied population; yields rich descriptive detail lending deeper meaning to otherwise static responses; and benefits from the combined strengths of qualitative and quantitative approaches while counteracting the limitations.

**Table 13. Methods used for data collection for select festivals**

Methods of data collection	Festivals
Surveys, interviews, focus group	Adelaide Fringe Festival (Australia)
Ethnographic fieldwork, interviews, textual analysis	Queensland Music Festival (Australia)
Survey	Grahamstown National Arts Festival (South Africa) National Multicultural Festival Innibos Arts Festival (South Africa) Wine Festival
questionnaires, interviews, secondary data analysis	Brisbane's Annual Sports and Cultural Festival (Australia) St. Kilda Festival (Australia)
Surveys, interviews, secondary data analysis	Bleach Festival (Australia)

There appears to be some movement towards improving the validity of economic impact studies with greater attention being paid to which economic data are collected and how they are collected so as to standardise them and mitigate some of the shortfalls. 'In-scope expenditure', as exemplified by McCann (2012) in evaluating several festivals from South Australia, is a method that has gained currency. This method tracks 'event-induced' expenditure to gauge the economic viability of a festival, as well as the value of festival activities/events to the community and/or state. It is a common approach to benchmarking the economic performance of events over time and between events without becoming side-tracked by the debate over which multiplier to use. (McCann, 2012:14-15).

### 3.4.3 Indicator frameworks

Care is taken to specify what is actually measured and collected to devise appropriate indicators (see **Tables 14 and 15**). Common variables include audience size; growth of the festival by increase in attendance, activities and/or duration; financial viability so as to secure funding/sponsorship; social and cultural benefits; and environmental effects.

**Table 14. Variables used in festival impact analyses in Australia and South Africa**

Festival	Impacts assessed	Variables measured
Brisbane's Annual Sports and Cultural Festival	Economic Social Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revenue generation</li> <li>• Visitor expenditure</li> <li>• Visitor motivation and satisfaction</li> <li>• Sustainable community development</li> <li>• Festival demographics</li> </ul>
Adelaide Fringe Festival	Economic Social Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual level effects</li> <li>• Income and employment change</li> <li>• Development of artist participants</li> <li>• Influence of and on culture</li> </ul>
The St Kilda Festival	Economic Socio-cultural Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Festival participation</li> <li>• Attendees' residence, education levels, income</li> <li>• Host participation</li> <li>• Amenities</li> <li>• Community strengthening</li> <li>• Public value</li> </ul>
Queensland Music Festival	Personal Organizational-level effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Festival management</li> <li>• Organisation capabilities</li> </ul>
Bleach Festival	Socio-cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of festival service quality</li> <li>• Visitor satisfaction</li> </ul>
National Multicultural Festival	Economic Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographics</li> <li>• Visitor satisfaction</li> <li>• Awareness of sponsors</li> <li>• Perceptions of festival quality</li> <li>• Value added</li> <li>• Revenue generation</li> </ul>
The Innibos Arts Festival	Socio-cultural Environmental Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographics</li> <li>• Visitor satisfaction</li> <li>• Tourist related impacts</li> <li>• Benefits to the community</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of the environment</li> </ul>
Grahamstown National Arts Festival	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic value of festival</li> <li>• Festival contribution to revenue generation, job creation</li> </ul>
Wine Festival	Socio-cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Festival service quality</li> <li>• Visitor satisfaction</li> <li>• Festival attendance</li> </ul>

**Table 15. Festival domains matched to indicators and variables used to assess festivals in Australia and South Africa**

<b>Festival data domains</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Variables measured</b>
Festival demographics	Quantitative festival profiles	Patron size Number of visitors by event
	Qualitative festival profiles	Theme/type of festival Purpose of festival Duration of festival
Individual-level effects	Economic impact indicators	Increased job opportunities during the festival Opportunities for artists' employment as a result of the festival
	Socio-cultural impact indicators	Benefits accrued to volunteers Motivations for attending the festival Perception of cultural value
Community-level effects	Economic impact indicators	Visitor spend Spending apart from festival related items Employment generated by the festival Tax revenue derived from the festival
	Socio-cultural impact indicators	Level of crime Level of participation by host community/residents Construction of new facilities/ new infrastructure
	Environmental impact indicators	Noise pollution Use of green energy Level of traffic congestion Level of crowding Land and air pollution Recycle measure Waste management
Organizational-level effects	Sustainability	Structure of festival organising body Sources of funding Festival income Festival expenditure Awareness and implementation of green initiative and policy Patrons' repurchase intent Changes/developments in the festival

#### **3.4.4 Data collection instruments**

Open interviews are the usual way to collect qualitative information. Sometimes they include a brief formal questionnaire which may collect statistical data, in which case they are termed semi-structured interviews. When a formal questionnaire becomes the main instrument of data collection, this is known as a survey. It is most common at festivals to survey those attending an event, either when they enter (to ascertain their expectations) or when they leave (to ascertain whether their expectations were met and to gather the activities in which they participated). Sometimes surveys take place throughout the activities at the event. Responses can vary considerably depending on where and when in the festival participants are interviewed.

If a festival lasts for more than one day, it may well be that some of the same people are interviewed on more than one day. It is rare that festival surveys record that the same people were interviewed multiple times, which may introduce a certain element of double-counting (e.g. of demographics), even though it is legitimate to consider one family participating on two consecutive days as two visits since organizers aim to establish a cumulative number of visits to the site. Responses on a particular day may also be strongly influenced by intervening factors, such as bad weather, problems travelling or parking, or a mild illness (e.g. a cold or headache).

Other forms of survey are also possible. Ticket purchases or enquiries may be linked to a web-based questionnaire or to a follow-up telephone/postal survey if potential visitors have left their telephone number or address with the organizers. All types of survey, but especially the web-based variety, can be 'self-selecting', meaning that people may choose not to take part which they will be more likely to do if they are busy, ill or otherwise occupied.

All of the studies under review that use surveys and questionnaires endorse their reliability, validity, accuracy of results and easy administration. Self-administered questionnaires that require no more than approximately five minutes to complete during the events and do not detain visitors or online surveys with more focused semi-structured interviews are the preferred instruments. Interviews are highly rated for the ease with which primary data can be captured. In-depth interviews, telephone interviews and semi-structured interviews are common. Nevertheless, surveys can be very sensitive to the different circumstances of respondents as set out above, and great care needs to be taken in their interpretation.

**Table 16. Survey instruments used**

Festival	Collection instruments used
Adelaide Fringe Festival	Semi structured interviews, exit survey of artists
Queensland Music Festival	Direct observation, in-depth interviews, semi structured interviews
Brisbane's Annual Sports and Cultural Festival	Stakeholder interviews, festival attendee questionnaires
The St Kilda Festival	Attendance surveys, economic impact surveys, telephone interviews, in-person interviews
Bleach Festival	In-depth interviews, onsite questionnaires
National Multicultural Festival	Self-completed spectator surveys, telephone surveys, customer postcode collection
Innibos Arts Festival	Self-administered questionnaires
Grahamstown National Arts Festival	Structured questionnaire
Wine Festival	Structured questionnaires

### 3.4.5 Nature of data

The key elements within the festival for which data tends to be collected are demographics, socio-economic patterns, motivations and performance/festival quality. The main data generated are: patron attendance, spending at the festival, total direct expenditure, expense patterns, direct and indirect economic contribution, contribution to employment and income, quantity and type of employment generated. Data on patron profiles, needs and motivations of stakeholders, social benefits of the festival, roles/function of festivals, sustainable organizational approaches to hosting festivals, festival quality and success are also produced (see **Table 17**).

**Table 17. Festival elements and corresponding statistics for select festivals in Australia and South Africa**

<b>Festivals</b>	<b>Festival elements</b>	<b>Kinds of data produced</b>
Adelaide Fringe Festival	Semi structured interviews, exit survey of artists	Cultural impacts, economic benefits gained by participating artists
Queensland Music Festival	Direct observation, in-depth interviews, semi structured interviews	Festival management practices, changes in organisational culture over the festival life cycle
Brisbane's Annual Sports and Cultural Festival	Stakeholder interviews, festival attendee questionnaires	Economic and socio-cultural impacts on locale, roles/function of festivals in community, contribution to development of host communities
The St Kilda Festival	Attendance surveys, economic impact surveys, telephone interviews, in person interviews	Contribution to development of host community, festival sustainability, economic and socio-cultural impacts on locale, patron profile
Bleach Festival,	In-depth interviews, onsite questionnaires	Measurement of success of the festival based on stated objectives, patron profile, destination branding, socio-cultural impacts on locale
National Multicultural Festival	Self-completed spectator surveys, telephone surveys, customer postcode collection	Festival attendance, expense patterns, economic performance of festival components, economic impacts on locale, social benefits of the festival
Innibos Arts Festival	Self-administered questionnaires	Visitor profile Sustainability Destination branding Benefits to community businesses
Grahamstown National Arts Festival	Structured questionnaire	Profile of festival attendees Economic impacts on locale
Wine Festival	Structured questionnaires	Demographic and psychographic profiles Festival experience



## 4. Recommendations

This report has presented a wide perspective on festivals and their associated statistics. Festivals cover many different genres (e.g. music, theatre, dance) and have many different impacts, such as economic, environmental and social. It has been shown that, despite the multi-dimensional character of festivals, assessments often follow a one-dimensional, economic approach. Rarer examples of assessments have been presented which measure social and environmental impacts. None of these can be said to yet have found complete acceptance such that one would describe them as forming part of any standardised international methodology. However, they clearly demonstrate the direction in which festivals assessment and statistics are moving. Festival organizers, public bodies and local communities would therefore be well advised to take these approaches into account when deciding how their festivals should be assessed.

Based on the review of literature and an examination of best practices, this report would recommend:

- ***Festivals should be evaluated on multiple levels to allow for the inclusion of perspectives of all/most stakeholders***
  - Inclusion of a range of stakeholders maximises the use of the data.
- ***Festivals statistics reporting should have a range of baseline statistics***
  - Festival type, size, purpose/objective, locale (rural/urban) and status (private, public), festival owners/implementing body/festival organizers.
  - Administrative data: funds by donor, number of performers/exhibitors, employees, and ticket sales.
  - Intervening factors: weather, local and national economic contexts.
- ***Impact assessments provide a sound analytical platform for measuring festivals and allow for a range and quantum of data to be generated***
  - Impact assessments are to encompass social, cultural and environmental assessments, along with economic assessments, to achieve a comprehensive understanding of a festival's worth and potential.
  - Triangulation of methods (use of mixed methods) are to be followed in conducting any impact assessment.
  - Most effective mixed methods are: i) surveys, interviews, focus group; ii) ethnographic fieldwork, interviews, textual analysis; iii) questionnaires, interviews, secondary data analysis; and iv) surveys, interviews, secondary data analysis.

- ***Any festival-measuring exercise must specify what is actually being measured and that these variables are appropriately matched to indicators***
  - Common variables for measurement include: audience size; changes in attendance, activities and/or festival schedule/period; financial viability so as to secure funding/sponsorship; social and cultural benefits; and environmental effects.
  - Festival domains are to be suitably matched to indicators and variables to effectively conduct the measuring exercise.
  
- ***Surveys are the most commonly used data collection procedures***
  - Questionnaires of choice: i) self-administered questionnaires during the events, requiring no more than five minutes to complete; ii) online surveys; iii) telephone surveys; iv) structured questionnaires.
  - Types of interview: in-depth or semi-structured.
  - When/where interviewed? Before event, at event, after event. Surveys at guesthouses, local shops, competing/complementary local attractions.
  - Survey of shopkeepers and performers to assess their views/revenue.
  
- ***Festival statistics exercises should show clear indication of outputs for data and the type of data to be generated***
  - The key elements within the festival for which data is to be collected are: demographics, socio-economic patterns, motivations and performance/festival quality, duration of visit (hours or days), and expenditure.
  - Type of data to be generated: patron attendance, spending at the festival, total direct expenditure, direct and indirect economic contribution, contribution to employment and income, quantity and type of employment generated, patron profiles, need and motivations of stakeholders, social benefits of the festival, roles/function of festivals, sustainable organizational approaches to hosting festivals, and festival quality and success.

All festivals should carry out some statistical monitoring in order to check whether the number of participants rises or falls between one year or one day and another. This information is simply obtained at no additional cost from ticket sales or from counts maintained at entrances and exits, unless the event is completely free and open to all. Most festivals will want further information to help them identify their most common demographics. These can be combined with financial information to help determine which visitors, including tourists, are more likely to spend more. Beyond this, much has been said above regarding techniques to assess the contribution that a festival makes to the local economy (e.g. impact assessment or cost-benefit study). As has been observed, while impact assessment is popular, a correct analysis requires some expertise. Happily there are increasing numbers of specialists, including those cited here, who can help.

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Festivals can provide substantive income and generate tourism at both local and national levels. There is growing recognition of the importance of collecting data in this field, particularly to gauge the social and economic contributions of festivals to host societies. This requires a greater understanding of how festivals can be measured and data collected in a standardised, systematic manner based on existing models and current practices.

This handbook presents the theories, concepts and practices that are currently used in the effective measuring of festivals across the globe. It identifies prevailing theoretical perspectives on measuring festivals; current policy constructs concerning the collection of data on festivals; as well as best practices and processes for festival data collection and statistics based on experience from around the world.



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