

Evaluating social 'outcomes', or, some thoughts on how to think about the social and community benefits of visiting...

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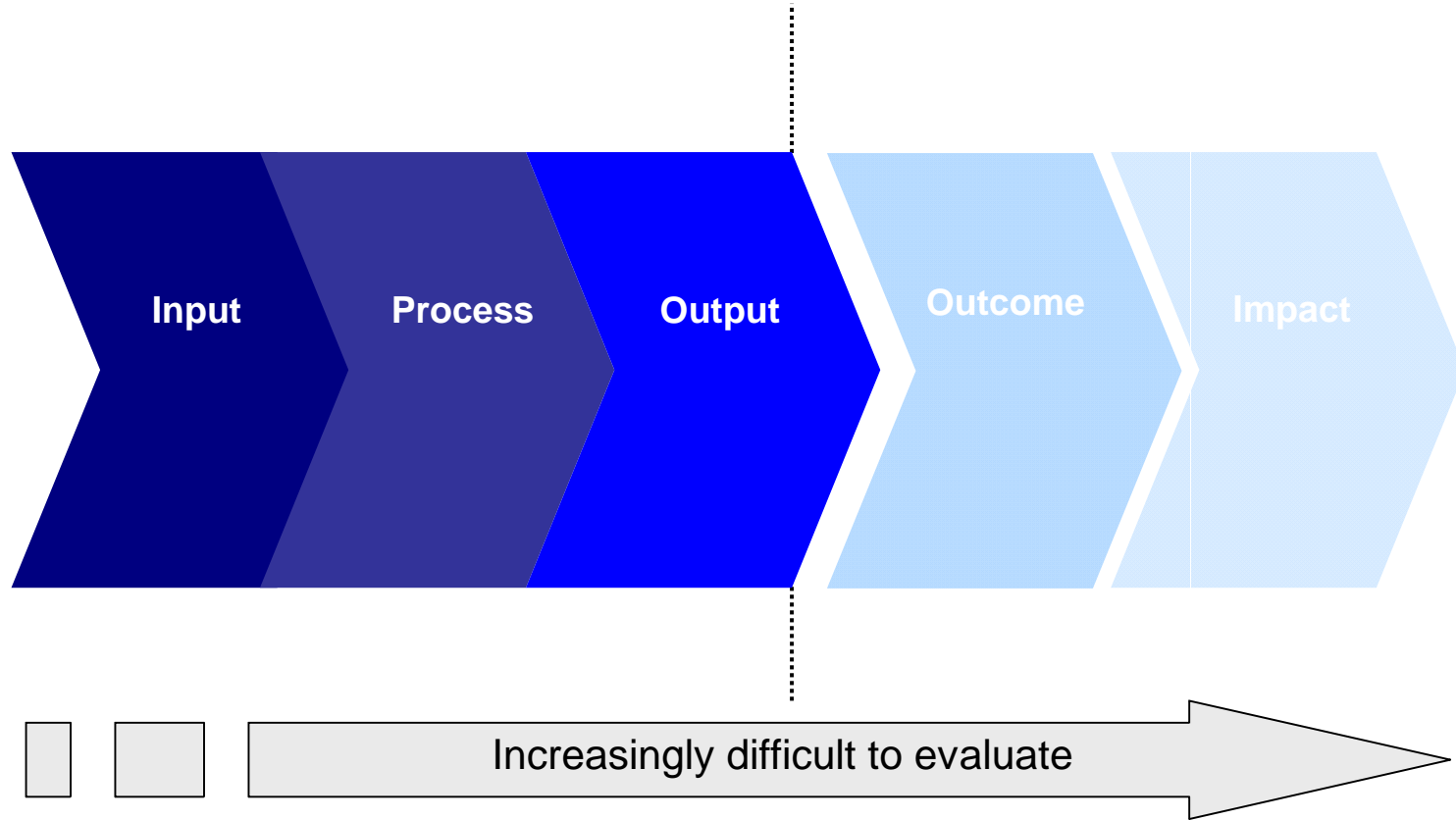
Summary

- What is evaluation?
- What are (social) outcomes?
- Why would you want to evaluate them?
- Why not just use ILFA/GLOs?
- A new approach: GLOs into 'GSOs'

What is evaluation?

- Assessment against a standard
- Can assess both the process of establishing a programme / service / initiative / intervention (inputs and outputs) to deliver an outcome and the outcomes themselves (i.e. the ultimate objectives of the project/programme)
- Relies on the standards of project/programme design to distinguish a programme's effects from those of other variables
- Often aimed at improving the project / programme /service through a modification of current operations

Outcomes: the evaluation continuum



On outputs and outcomes (i)

Outputs:

- The things that organisations produce:
 - Performances
 - Reference questions answered
 - Numbers of people participating in education and outreach programmes
- Very often measurement and evaluation focuses exclusively on counting the number of outputs produced (as these are the things that are easiest to count)

On outputs and outcomes (ii)

“Simply *doing* an activity is not enough – you have to make a difference”

Outcomes/impacts

- The short to long term results of applying outputs

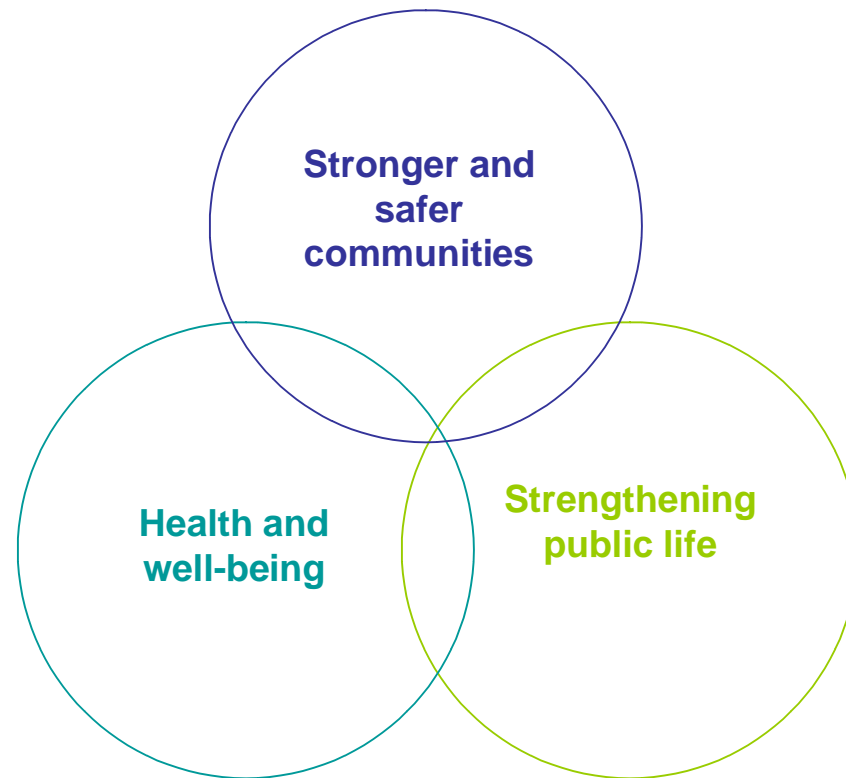
Short term:

- trust and legitimacy of a service/institution/event/experience
- increased motivation to learn more as a result of participating in literacy projects
- reduced feelings of social isolation arising from home library visits

Long term:

- increase in the number of old people able to live independent lives
 - reduction in obesity rates for under-11s
- Monitoring and evaluation *across* government is moving away from outputs towards outcomes

The framework: top level



Why evaluate social outcomes?

The *process* of undertaking an evaluation of social outcomes may lead to service improvement/organisational change, as it can help you:

- understand more about the relationship your organisation has with its users, community and with other service providers
- understand what works and what doesn't work - but in a wider context than simply VfM or quality/satisfaction
- plan projects, set aims & objectives, establish evaluation methods

The *results* of an evaluation of social outcomes can help develop evidence of your wider impact and value:

- For funders, stakeholders (or corporately)

Why do we need evidence?

- Culture now much more involved in education, outreach and community development work than ever before
- This has been driven by:
 - advocates from within the sector that have sought to re-position culture within wider agendas, e.g. *A Commonwealth*
 - New Labour's flagship cultural policies e.g. free museum entry, Renaissance, Creative Partnerships etc.
 - sector's own adeptness at bringing in additional mainstream funding (DfES, DH, ERDF/ESF, RDAs, Home Office)
- But, as with the rest of government, with rights comes ... evidence-based policymaking!

What does the existing evidence base tell us?

1. That it has important weaknesses, namely a lack of:
 - longitudinal research; clarity in the aims and objectives of projects, quantitative evidence, standardisation in terms of definitions, approach, methodologies
 - And: an over reliance on narrative-based case studies
2. But the evidence does still suggest that the sector makes a contribution to social outcomes in essentially two ways (which are often inter-related):
 - broad learning outcomes: developing individual human capital
 - participation outcomes: developing social capital through activities that facilitate links, connections and relationships

Why not the GLOs?

- Good at capturing learning (*‘what did you learn today?’*), less good at establishing the outcomes of this: *‘how have you/how will you use what you learnt today?’*
- Not designed to measure social capital formation
- Necessarily focused upon educational outcomes e.g. ‘knowing about something’; the generic acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, this means that:
 - Therefore hard to use the GLOs to communicate with govt and external service providers even if the specific content of the learning is relevant to wider social policy areas - e.g. if ‘knowing about something’ happens to be the cultural diversity of my local area, how to eat healthily, etc.

What a new approach needs to do

- i. Capture outcomes related to individual learning that is in some ways socially applied/socially relevant
- ii. Capture social capital formation, including institutions' own role in this
- iii. Aggregate and present the evidence of both (i) and (ii) in a form that demonstrates to agencies outside the sector how museums are contributing to a range of shared govt priorities related to social policy
 - *i.e. to use more of the language of govt while not getting too trapped by transitory agendas and not losing sight of the particular contribution that the sector can make*

Why social capital?

- A vogue term ... also related to 'trust', 'social cohesion', 'civil society'
- Social capital: the web of trust, associations, everyday contacts, cooperative skills, networking which act as 'social glue'
- Why is it in vogue?:

'The emphasis on social capital is not without good reason. There is a now impressive body of research that testifies to the importance of active communities and a strong civil society for individual and communal well-being. In particular, it seems clear that social capital has an important contribution to make to tackling poverty and disadvantage' (IPPR, 2006)

Social capital key to producing a range of social or public ‘goods’

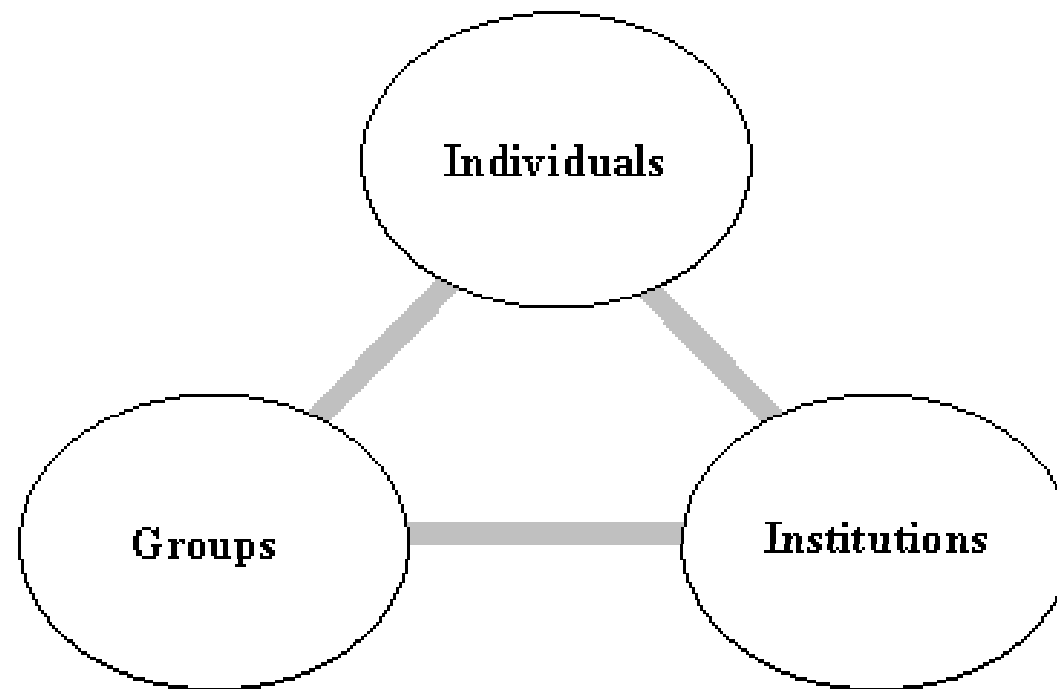
Type of Social Capital	Type of relationship	Contributes to
Bonding Ties among people who are similar in certain respects (age, sex, ethnicity, class)	Horizontal	Social support, especially in times of need
Bridging Ties among people who are different from one another (age, sex, ethnicity, class)	Horizontal	Social cohesion, democratic dialogue, civic identity
Linking Ties with those in authority or otherwise with resources	Vertical	Democratic life, responsive services, legitimacy of public institutions

Source: IPPR (2006), adapted from Jochum *et al* (2005)

Why is social capital useful for the cultural sector?

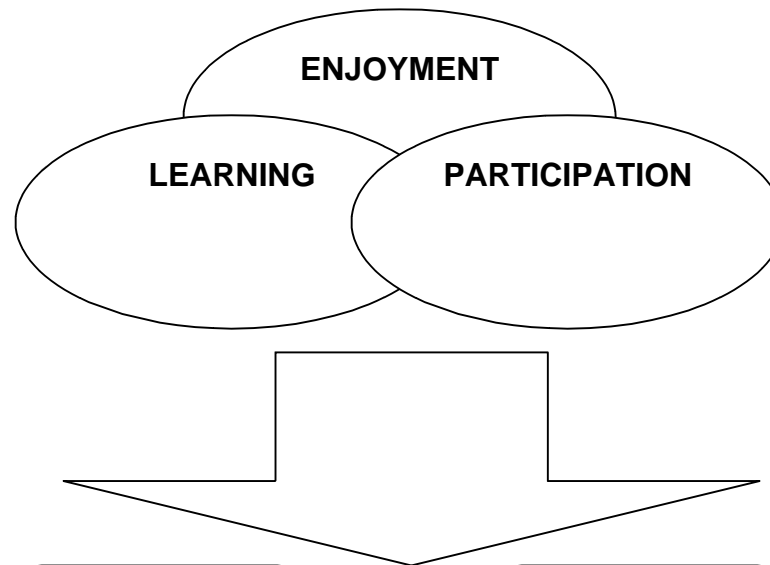
- Accepted as a factor underpinning socio-economic goals & policies
- More possible to demonstrate a contribution towards social networks and relationships than to longer term socio-economic outcomes and targets
- Potential fit with core cultural mission
- Enables a way to understand how individual learning has a wider social influence
- Provides a model for thinking about what happens when cultural institutions come into contact with people (and the nature of the social interaction that is taking place)

Measuring social capital: interactions between ...

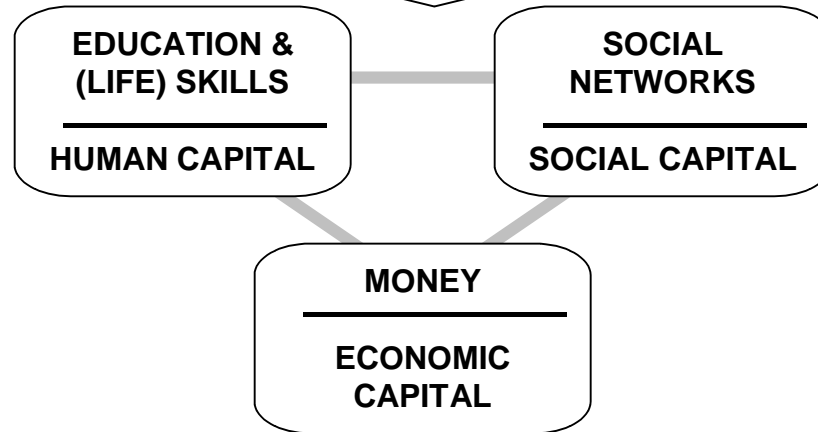


A model for how culture contributes to socio-economic outcomes

What the cultural sector provides ...



... That contributes to factors that underpin socio-economic outcomes (that are the goals of gov't policy)



Summary of the development of the GSOs Framework

- Review of existing research into the social impact of museums, libraries and archives (*New Directions*)
- ‘Bottom up’ process involving practitioners, staff from regional agencies and MLA’s Learning and Access team
 - Developmental workshops
 - Piloting
 - Revision/validation workshops/process
 - Also builds on the London Renaissance Hub’s in-depth work with refugee communities
- ‘Top down’ process of aligning the sector’s potential social contribution with key drivers of government policy – through consultation with external bodies (e.g. IDeA, Audit Commission, DCMS) and a review of relevant policy documents (LAAs, National Care Standards, etc.)

In-depth GSOs pilots: activities

Service	Programme strand	Level of conscious social intervention	Mode of activity	Type of delivery
Isle of Wight	Rhyme Time	Strong	Facilitated	Core service
Galleries of Justice	Mock Trials	Strong	Facilitated	Core service
	Recycle Project	Strong	Facilitated	Project
TWMS	Cinema India Exhibition	Light	Self directed (mainly)	Core service
	Making it Happen	Medium	Facilitated	Project
Lincolnshire	ESOL course	Strong	Facilitated	Project
	CulturED	Light	Facilitated	Project
Essex	Reminiscence Network	Strong	Facilitated	Project

Who/what to evaluate?

- There are potentially 5 'populations' from which we can gather data and information:
 - Cultural institutions themselves
 - Individual users
 - User groups/intermediaries (e.g. community groups, teachers)
 - Stakeholders/partners (e.g. PCTs, local authorities, Youth Service)
 - Non-users
- Best practice (and the requirements of funders) would indicate that robust evaluation/research should include at least two of these populations
- In particular, this will enable 'triangulation' to make sure, for e.g., that the views of practitioners or community leaders are an accurate representation of individual users
- Also, using a 'social auditing' or 'systems' approach as it is sometimes known may uncover more 'unintended' outcomes

In-depth GSOs pilots: research methods

Service	Programme strand	Date capture methods	User groups/audiences
Isle of Wight	Rhyme Time	Self completion paper questionnaire	Adult participants only Library staff Partners/stakeholders (health workers)
Galleries of Justice	Mock Trials	Self completion paper questionnaire	Child participants Intermediaries (teachers)
	Recycle Project	Self completion paper questionnaire	Children participants Intermediaries (teachers + peer educators)
TWMS	Cinema India Exhibition	1. Administered visitor survey 2. Follow-up telephone survey	1. Adult visitors 2. Adult visitors
	Making it Happen	TBC	TBC
Lincolnshire	ESOL course	Self completion paper questionnaire	Adult participants
	CulturED	Self completion paper questionnaire	Intermediaries (teachers)
Essex	Reminiscence Network	1. Focus group 2. Self completion paper questionnaire	1. Former trainees (not end users) + museum 2. Current trainees (not end users)

GSOs Framework: 2nd tier level

Provides a common language & a standard against which to evaluate

Health & well-being	Stronger & safer communities	Strengthening public life
1. Encouraging healthy lifestyles and contributing to mental and physical well-being	1. Improving group & inter-group dialogue and understanding	1. Encouraging & supporting awareness and participation in local-decision making/ wider civic & political engagement
2. Supporting care and recovery	2. Supporting cultural diversity & identity	2. Building the capacity of community and voluntary groups
3. Supporting older people to live independent lives	3. Encouraging familial ties and relationships	3. Providing safe, inclusive and trusted public spaces and services
4. Helping children and young people to enjoy life and make a positive contribution	4. Tackling the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour	4. Enabling community empowerment through the awareness of rights, benefits and external services
	5. Contributing to crime prevention and reduction	5. Improving the responsiveness of services to the needs of the local community, including other stakeholders

The framework in action: Nottingham (i)

Galleries of Justice: Mock Trials (77 participants, 6 group leaders)

Stronger and safer communities

1. Tackling the fear of crime and anti-social behavior
 - 92% of young people either understood a lot or a little more about how crime can affect and impact on the people in their areas
 - 100% of group leaders agreed that it increased young people's understanding of the consequences crime can have on their local communities
2. Contributing to crime prevention and reduction
 - 44% of young people understand a lot more about the process they will go through if they are arrested and charged for committing a crime, a further 48% understand a little more
 - 37% of young people came away with some ideas for making their area safer and nicer to live

N.B. The pilots were undertaken to pilot the process not the results – i.e. we are not claiming that the data are statistically significant. They are instead intended to be indicative of the kind of evidence that can be collected and how this would be aggregated and presented using the GSOs Framework

The framework in action: Nottingham (ii)

Health and well being

4. Helping children and young people to enjoy life and make a positive contribution
 - 57% of young people thought the contemporary trials were great fun
 - The group leaders also thought the young people enjoyed the day. On a scale of 1 – 5 (with 5 being the maximum fun possible), the mean score was 4.83

Strengthening public life

1. Enabling community empowerment through the awareness of rights, benefits and external services
 - 74% of young people understand their rights better
 - 83% of group leaders stated that the trials increased young people's understanding of their rights
5. Improving the responsiveness of services to the needs of the local community, including other stakeholders
 - 60% of groups were going to follow up this work with workshops, coursework and class room-based discussions
 - The group leaders stated that the mock trials met their citizenship requirements. On a scale of 1-5, (with 5 being the maximum possible) the mean score was 4.17

The framework in action: Isle of Wight (i)

Rhyme Time (40 adult participants, 2 health visitors, 6 C&YP librarians)

Health and well being

1. Encouraging healthy lifestyles and contributing to mental and physical well-being
 - Parents and carers feel that a benefit of coming to the Rhyme Time sessions is that it 'makes them feel less isolated'. On a scale of 1-10 (with 10 being the maximum score and 'extremely beneficial'), the mean score of the adult participants was 7.2
4. Helping children and young people to enjoy life and make a positive contribution
 - 88% of parents and carers that participated in Rhyme Time feel that the programme has improved their child's well being

Stronger and safer communities

1. Improving group and inter-group dialogue and understanding
 - 90% of parents and carers met new people through RhymeTime
 - 58% of the parents and carers met new people through RhymeTime that they intend to keep in touch with

The framework in action: Isle of Wight (ii)

Strengthening public life

5. Improving the responsiveness of services to the needs of the local community, including other stakeholders

- 20% of the parents and carers that participate in Rhyme Time were not members of the library at the beginning
- However, 75% of these non-members, have become library members since participating in Rhyme Time
- 90% of parents and carers have recommended Rhyme Time to others

5. Improving the responsiveness of services to the needs of the local community, including other stakeholders

- Health workers report that Rhyme Time has been very effective in terms of collaborating and joint working
- Health workers report that they are more likely to work with the library again as a result of their work with Rhyme Time

Addressing key challenges in measuring the contribution of culture to socio-economic outcomes

How does the GSOs framework measure up?

- ✓ ■ Aggregation – provide a model and a way of tracking how individual outcomes lead to/combine into social impact?
- ? ■ Longitude – capture outcomes that may happen a down the line?
- x ■ Causality – is it possible to attribute cause when individual and community circumstances are multi-layered and complex? (But attempting this should not be the responsibility of the cultural sector)

Observations to-date

- Fitness for purpose: GSOs will not always be relevant and are not the only evaluation framework to use, e.g. even the piloting combined GSOs and GLOs questions
- Works best with more ‘socially directed’ and more practitioner-facilitated activities (due to the ‘content’ and/or duration of participation/learning that is required to produce *change*)
 - This is no surprise as the evidence on social impact shows that it is cumulative and/or intensive use and interaction with culture that leads to change
- It’s a developmental framework – the GLOs took 4 years from inception to full rollout, we are about 18 months into the same process with the GSOs
- As with GLOs, practitioners will require support in order to be able to take it onboard and use it successfully

Concluding: evidencing the impact of the sector

- The framework and process can demonstrate that the sector '*has a bearing*' on a range of (mainly) short term social outcomes in the form of:
 - individual and group 'socially applied'/ 'socially relevant' knowledge, skills, understanding, values and attitudes (that occasionally translates into actions, behaviour and progression)
 - social capital formation (meeting new people, improved access to services/resources etc)
 - how museums, libraries and archives are changing and improving their own services and responsiveness for users

Concluding: service improvement

- Can help to set aims, priorities & objectives
- Has a potential fit with emerging performance management frameworks - in England that is (as a self assessment tool for outcome measurement)
- Can help to develop reflexive practitioners
- Helps to focus on shared local-national policy priorities
- Encourages partnership/multi-agency working

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