



08
IMPACTS
European Capital of Culture Research Programme

CULTURAL IMPACTS

■ Making an impact

Liverpool has long been renowned as a city of pioneers and innovators, people who dare to be different and lead the way among their peers.

The city's universities epitomise that spirit and are home to world-class academics and researchers who are constantly looking for new approaches that will push the boundaries of academic study even further and impact positively on the lives of people across the globe.

The status of European Capital of Culture in 2008 reflects that aspiration and aims to show the world the 21st century Liverpool – a modern city, driving forward both economically and culturally, proud of its 800 year history and celebrating its cultural diversity.

But what will be the impact of the Capital of Culture experience on the city and its people? Impacts 08, a joint research initiative between the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University, commissioned by Liverpool City Council, aims to find out.

Impacting on future regeneration projects

The aim of Impacts 08 is to develop a research model which can be used to evaluate the effects of culture-led regeneration programmes. One example is the London 2012 Olympic Games, which will also incorporate a four-year cultural programme, Cultural Olympiad, starting in 2008. Future European Capitals of Culture (ECoC) can also build on this research programme.

Impacting on research innovation

Impacts 08 offers an innovative approach to measuring impacts that goes beyond the usual quantitative indicators which are focused on measuring job creation and tourism growth to take into account the experiences of the event host city. It focuses on the four dimensions of impact - economic, social, cultural and environmental.

The programme also takes a longitudinal approach exploring change in outcomes, experiences, perceptions and understanding over time – from Liverpool's pre-bid period (2000), through the bidding and

nomination (2002-3), event lead-up (2004-7), the event year (2008) and beyond (2009-10).

Impacts 08 is different in several ways:

Recognising the breadth of areas of impact: Many evaluation frameworks are too narrowly framed, focusing on easily quantifiable measures. This approach underestimates the strengths of culture-led regeneration, as qualitative studies show that some of the main legacies relate to changes in perception and self-confidence, both of which defy 'easy' measures. Accepting that culture-led regeneration processes have economic as well as social, cultural and environmental impacts ensures that, while valuing them as essential components, we do not focus too single-mindedly on narrow and out-of-context economic measures alone.

Focusing on processes as well as outcomes: In developing a model for impact assessment, we must acknowledge that culture-led regeneration programmes are not discrete events but elements in an ongoing process. It is as important to look at why and how activities are carried out and how participation is

sought and achieved as it is to look at final outcomes. The full effects of a major cultural event are often not felt for several decades. For this reason, Impacts 08 will study the process of becoming European Capital of Culture from the bid stage onwards.

Separating the impacts of other programmes: In current city planning, it is unusual for a major cultural event to be the only intervention that is underway at any one time. This is the case in Liverpool, which has been the beneficiary of almost every major UK government urban regeneration programme since 1945, as well as European Union Objective One programmes. The effects of these, as well as economic and cultural changes in the UK and worldwide, will have an impact on Liverpool over the period under investigation. Separating non-ECoC impacts will be an ongoing challenge for Impacts 08 and will be at the heart of our theoretical framework and methodology development.

Allowing specificity and portability: Impacts 08 has the dual role of measuring the impacts of the ECoC for Liverpool and its stakeholders, while also developing a model for measuring

the impacts of other major cultural events and culture-led regeneration programmes. To establish a replicable research model, we will protect key elements of cultural impact research - such as the need for evaluation to be forward looking and concerned with sustainability and long-term development.

The need for policy oriented research: Impacts 08 is a partnership between the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University, with close links with UK and international researchers across the cultural, regeneration and urban studies fields. While drawing on the strengths of academic research, Impacts 08 is also closely associated with the policy context and will provide data and reflection that is directly useful in policy development, implementation and review.

An holistic research model: In assessing the four dimensions of regeneration, Impacts 08 moves away from the trend towards evaluating individual indicators and instead formulates the research programme in terms of seven key 'themes' through which impacts can be contextualised and measured.





ECONOMIC & PHYSICAL IMPACTS

Research Themes

Economic Impacts and Processes: The impacts of ECoC on the economy of Liverpool, Merseyside and the North West. Sub-themes include impacts on inward investment; tourism, employment and job creation; and the strength and quality of the business sector. We also consider relevant social dimensions to economic impact, such as potential inequalities.

The City's Cultural System: The vitality and sustainability of the cultural system and creative economy of Liverpool in comparison with the rest of the North West. Sub-themes include a profile of

the sector including the number and type of organisations, facilities and jobs; sustainability of the system, for example, skill development in the cultural sector; the Liverpool Culture Company's contribution including direct investment/funding of the city's cultural system; and contribution of other relevant institutions to the creative economy of the North West.

Cultural Access and Participation: Demographic and geographic data on participants and non-participants in cultural activities and access to opportunities for cultural involvement.

This theme places particular emphasis on the impact of direct or indirect participation and engagement with the ECoC on people's well-being and quality of life.

Identity, Image and Place: Sub-themes include the positioning/repositioning of Liverpool before and after becoming ECoC. It also assesses the strength of local identity and self-confidence.

Physical Infrastructure and Sustainability of the City: Sub-themes include impacts on the public realm; the heritage environment; quality and type

of the physical infrastructure of culture, such as buildings, venues, parks and public art; physical access issues including transport and parking; and the environmental sustainability of the programme.

The Philosophy and Management of the Process: The impacts of the processes and philosophies underpinning the management and development of the ECoC and how the strengths of these can be replicated in other culture-led regeneration programmes.

SOCIAL IMPACTS

Research Elements

The Impacts 08 research methodologies are longitudinal and will adapt to need and findings. The programme combines an assessment of existing data collected by established agencies and the generation of new datasets. Key strands include:

Benchmark indicators: Clusters of key indicators for each 'theme' across the four dimensions of impact have been selected and are being collected from baselines in 2000 through to 2010.

Secondary data analysis: Existing data, and that collected for and by the cultural programme organisers, is being monitored and analysed to reflect the

multiple impacts of the ECoC. This includes information from Liverpool City Council and the Liverpool Culture Company, as well as external evaluations of specific elements of the programme and general tourism, economic and cultural development figures.

Contextual data collection and analysis: Additional research will be carried out to fill relevant data 'gaps' and to shed light on the figures given by indicator mapping. This will include interviews with key stakeholders, local people and event participants; surveys; analysis of media clippings; participatory mapping techniques; and case study research.



The Impacts 08 team

Dr Beatriz Garcia, Director, brings expertise in the fields of urban cultural policy and major event impact assessment. She has completed a major retrospective study on the long-term cultural legacy of Glasgow 1990 and acts as academic advisor to the London 2012 Olympic Organising Committee.

Ruth Melville, Senior Research Fellow, brings expertise in the fields of regeneration, social inclusion and the development of monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

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