

Research Questions

1. How are evaluations used in relation to Science Festivals and how does **evaluation use** change within the context of a community of practice that creates its own multi site evaluation?
2. Which methods and reporting formats are associated with the greatest value in **building capacity** of individual festivals?
3. In what ways can a **community-created multisite evaluation** yield additional learning about public science events in particular and informal science education events in general?

Evaluation

Led by **Patricia Jessup, Ph.D.**,
Pat Jessup and Associates

Evaluation includes formative, process and summative components. Key methods include post-Festival surveys of directors and evaluators, quarterly reflection meetings with PIs and analysis of value creation stories (Wenger, E., Trayner, B., & de Latt, M. (2011).

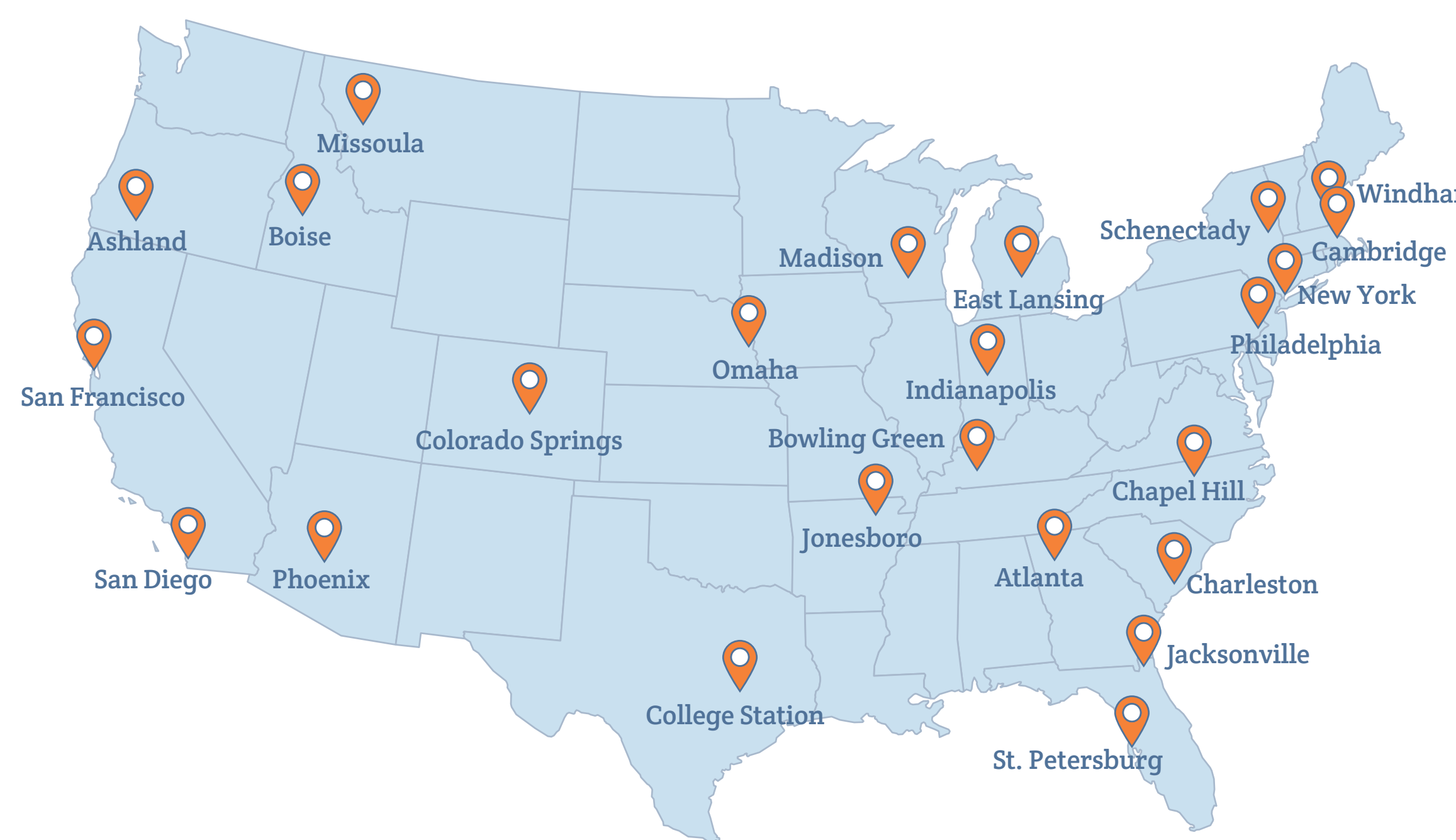
Year 1 comments about EvalFest from Festival directors and evaluators:

This year, my biggest takeaway has simply been learning more formally about program evaluation as a whole. I learned a lot about how questions can be interpreted, how to limit bias from researchers, and other ethical standards.

During the EvalFest annual meeting, we had an opportunity to organize a sub group around adult event evaluation - largely unexplored thus far. That led to a few experiments in 2015, very valuable and would not have happened without the in-person meeting catalyzing the experiment.

The EvalFest imprimatur made it easy to recruit a lot of data collectors. This led to the collection of a large data set and made meaningful demographic data analysis possible.

EvalFest



EvalFest is a community of practice designed to test innovative evaluation methods across 24 Science Festivals to measure their impact.

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EvalFest is...

- investigating whether a **multisite evaluation approach** is an effective model for creating common metrics for informal STEM education
- developing **common methods** to measure the impact of Festivals
- exploring and validating **new methods** for evaluating Science Festival impact, including mystery shopping, embedded assessments, social network analysis, polling and economic impact/ROI studies
- creating a **query-able database** of 50,000 attendees across 24 Festivals to share with the informal STEM learning field
- documenting whether these efforts also result in **new knowledge** related to informal STEM education



Project Consultant

Amy Grack Nelson, Measurement Specialist, Science Museum of Minnesota

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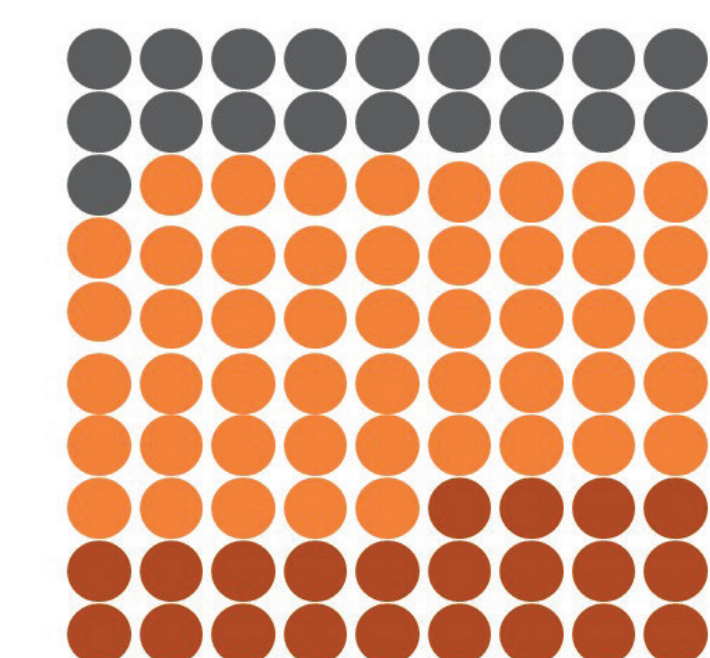
Savita Custead , Ph.D., Bristol Natural History Consortium	Leslie Goodyear , Ph.D., EDC, Inc.	Tina Phillips , M.Ed., Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology	Stacie Toal , Ph.D., Cannon River Consulting
Rena Dorph , Ph.D., University of California – Berkeley	Colleen Manning , M.A., Goodman Research Group	Robert Tai , Ph.D., University of Virginia	Ben Wiehe , Science Festival Alliance, MIT Museum

Insights from Year 1

Validation of The Engagement Survey (Science Learning Activation Lab, Lawrence Hall of Science) revealed that it is not an appropriate instrument for evaluating an overall Science Festival. It will be used for specific events, or specific booths, only.

Data from 2015 Spring/Summer Science Festivals

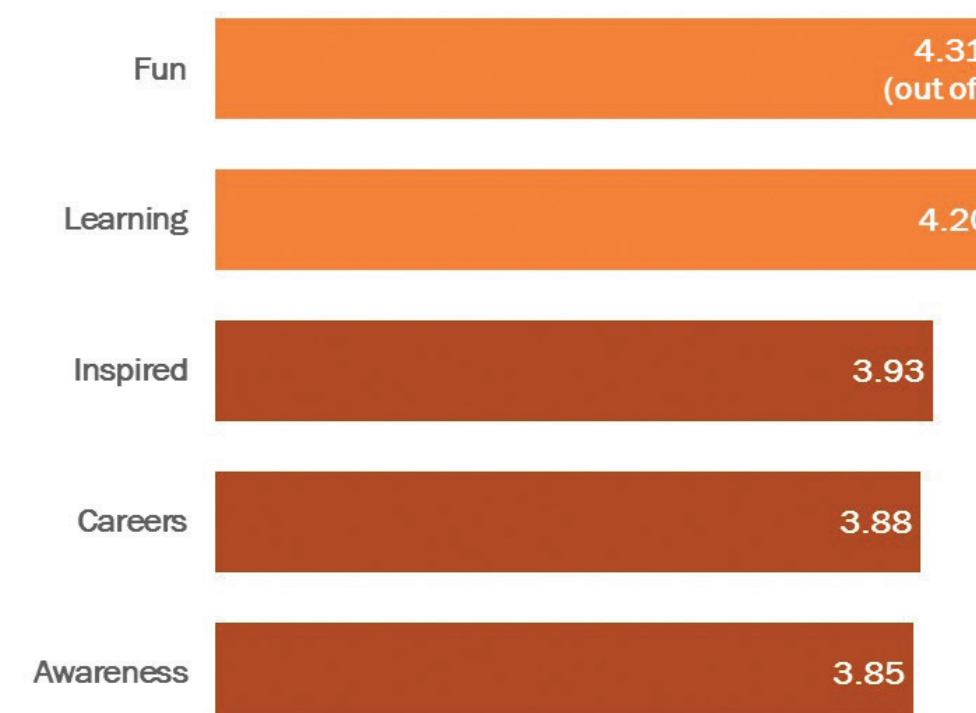
How long is this going to take?



79% **interacted with a STEM professional** at the Festival

For 25%, this was their **first encounter** with a STEM professional this year

Interacting with a **science professional** results in higher STEM outcomes and ratings



Science Festivals are a **fun** way to **learn** about STEM

They're pretty darn good at achieving **other outcomes** too

Challenges of Year 1

- Developing a core set of questions to be asked of attendees across 24 diverse Science Festivals over the five year project
- Ensuring that the project meets the needs and interests of both newer and seasoned Festivals
- Finding a way for directors and evaluators of all skill levels to explore their EvalFest data



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