



VITAL CONVERSATIONS



COMMUNITY WELL-BEING: ARTS, CULTURE, & HERITAGE CONVENING REPORT

This aspect of quality of life refers to the degree to which residents are actively engaged in the local culture and community, and are taking action to improve their community in terms of being a good place to live.

BERMUDA VITAL CONVERSATIONS

The Bermuda Community Foundation (the “foundation”) introduced Vital Signs® as an important step in identifying resident’s priorities related to their quality of life in Bermuda and the issues most important to them. The Vital Signs® programme has become a standard of excellence among community foundations around the world. It provides a methodology that evaluates community vitality and wellbeing and plays an important role in informing the allocation of resources. The reporting and prioritisation process is tailor-made to suit each jurisdiction’s needs.

In Bermuda, we conducted research on the community’s priorities, determined standardised outcomes based on that information and then sought further input from field experts in order to prioritise funding needs. This last step is carried out through convenings, known as “Vital Conversations”.

The foundation is hosting the Vital Conversation Series to further refine the valuable information gathered from the community. In this phase, local stakeholders convene to access public opinion, local, and international data for each of the Vital Signs® areas and prioritize the top outcomes that will guide the foundation’s funding strategy.

THE FINDINGS

The 2017 Bermuda Vital Signs Report revealed Community Wellbeing as one of seven priorities contributing to the quality of life in Bermuda. Community wellbeing is defined broadly by a variety of indicators, including those related to the community’s artistic, cultural, and heritage offerings.

Residents are highly engaged in their community and they particularly value its arts, culture, and heritage. In fact, this was one of the key drivers of quality of life in Bermuda. Most residents actively participated in various activities in the area. Residents were asked how often they attended events, festivals, or other types of cultural activities in Bermuda in the past year. Overall, less than a quarter (21%) of residents said that they frequently attended such events, while more

ARTS, CULTURE & HERITAGE



60%

← RESIDENTS RATE BERMUDA AS HIGH TO EXTREMELY HIGH →

than half (53%) did so occasionally. Nevertheless, household spending on entertainment and recreation increased in the recent past. At last reporting, residents spent approximately 11% of their household’s expenditures on entertainment and recreation. The frequency at which residents attend AVH events and the increased funds used to do so could indicate that the cost of participation may inhibit a broader engagement across the community. Additionally, arts and culture has been described as a uniting vehicle for cross-sections of the population, with the power to transcend race, gender, age, and social status.

THE PLAN

On May 11, 2018 the second in the series of Vital Conversations was convened with sector experts to examine the public opinion data from the Vital Signs® Report as well as relevant local and international data. The Bermuda Community Foundation selected a list of outcomes and indicators for the group to examine and prioritise. The result of this collaborative prioritisation effort yielded the following key outcomes and indicators that the foundation, and potentially other funders can use to guide its, funding decisions through 2021.

\$213K

BERMUDA GOVERNMENT GRANTS FOR
CULTURAL PROGRAMMES & SERVICES

2017-2018

VITAL CONVERSATIONS PRIORITISED OUTCOMES & INDICATORS

• ARTS, CULTURE, & HERITAGE •

Public and corporate policy and expenditure that supports the arts, culture, and heritage

Improved government investment, expenditure and procurement

- Corporate expenditure (giving) toward arts, culture, and heritage activities with a social purpose
- Government expenditure/funding for programmes in arts, culture, and heritage activities and services
- Government investment in arts, culture, and heritage
- Procurement practices and public sector contracts that are designed to improve social outcomes (e.g. contracts that enable social enterprises and smaller SMEs to bid, outcomes-aligned contracts)

Improvements in policy and legislation

- Changes in policy and legislation that support improvements to arts, culture, and heritage services
- Changes to regulation
- Level of relevant parliamentary activity (e.g. white papers published, committees formed, consultations or reviews conducted, citations made)

Increased exposure to arts and culture industry (i.e., employment, volunteering, media, etc) (leads to an increase in social interaction, which allows for a greater sense of community)

Increased number of people working within arts, culture, and heritage

- Number of businesses operating in Creative Industries
- Number of businesses operating in sports-related industries
- Number of participants in arts, cultural, and heritage volunteering schemes
- Number of people with arts, culture, and heritage-related jobs
- Number of people working within Creative Industries
- Number of young people and adults regularly volunteering in arts, culture, and heritage

Increased Positive media coverage

- Positive media coverage of Bermuda as a culturally distinctive or innovative country

Strong public awareness of and engagement in arts, culture and heritage

Improved public awareness and engagement

- Change in public perception and improved attitudes toward arts, culture, and heritage
- General availability of information relating to arts, culture, and heritage
- Level of media exposure (e.g. number of articles published on the subject in mainstream media; exposure on tv, radio; internet traffic)
- Positive media coverage as a culturally distinctive or innovative community
- Public donations to related charities
- Public events, rallying and campaigning
- Public volunteering on projects and initiatives related to arts, culture, and heritage

Improved stakeholder participation with decision making and with issues

- Innovation of new ideas, technologies and approaches for promoting the availability and enjoyment of arts, culture, and heritage
- Research and evidence relating to arts, culture, and heritage
- Support for the sector through quality umbrella bodies
- Uptake of new ideas by other organisations or government

Key Outcome Category

Specific Outcome

• Indicator(s)

We are pleased to make more detailed outcome and indicators reporting available to BCF fund holders. Special terms and conditions apply. Contact info@bcf.bm

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAID

Participants in the Arts, Culture, and Heritage (ACH) conversation were on one accord in their belief that the prioritised outcomes would advance community wellbeing, with 80% being very confident and the remaining 20% extremely confident. One field expert shared that *“Arts, Culture, and Heritage are important to the well-being of our community. If we can ensure that they are a regular part of our lives and access is available for all in some form, lives will be all the richer.”* Moreover, participants expressed the idea that the proliferation of ACH would lead to specific social outcomes such as tolerance and harmony, *“All Bermuda residents will understand their own personal contribution to the overall well-being of our island and understand and respect our differences to allow total harmony within the community.”* Increased participation was seen as the ultimate outcome. If ACH is valued, the participation levels will increase. One participant stated that, *“increased participation should be a more important outcome. It is a key indicator that demonstrates, what the community feels is important enough to show up for, where their interest lie and in turn how good the sector is doing in providing these services. It’s a reflection and a meter on the industry itself.”*

Some participants expressed the need for more government and corporate funding to help underwrite events. Many participants agreed with this statement, *“financial support is an essential requirement and is viewed as the most important as it has a trickledown effect on other key outcomes - with better funding comes the ability to focus on what is more important; the development of better programs, more accessibility and overall greater impact.”* On a more practical note, one participant noted that local ACH stewards need direct funding in order to help proliferate such a valuable resource in the community. *“Arts is very much a steward’s job. It’s a part-time not a full-time job. Therefore the argument could be made that more help is needed than in other sectors. There is a great need for grants to be made to cover the salary of a position or an officer who organizes the different cultural groups and major collaborative events.”*

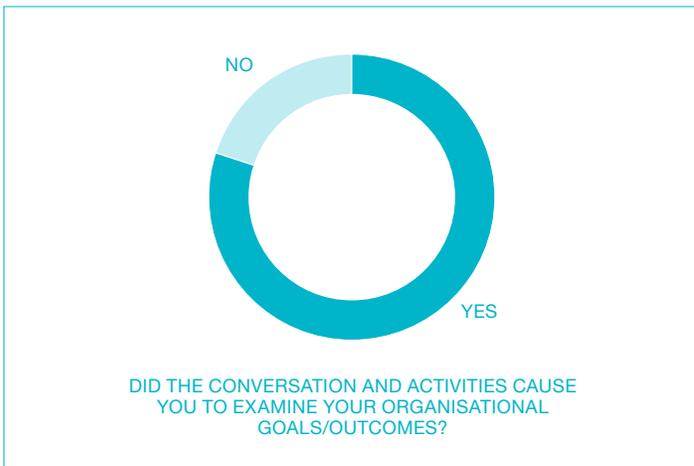
They felt that if events were more affordable, residents would have greater access and thus greater opportunity to experience the uniting affects of arts, culture and heritage events. There was also a sentiment that more efforts were needed to educate the youth and thus increase their knowledge and appreciation for arts, culture and heritage in Bermuda. They felt that this was a clear mandate for Bermuda schools. One participant suggested that, *“apprenticeships be created to spark youth engagement and ownership.”*

“Arts, Culture, and Heritage are important to the well-being of our community. If we can ensure that they are a regular part of our lives and access is available for all in some form, lives will be all the richer”
- Field expert



With such fidelity to a shared vision for the role of ACH in Bermuda, these Vital Conversation participants reported that they benefited greatly from the session. All (100%) participants reported that the conversation and activities expanded their understanding of ACH outcomes in the Bermuda context. The prioritisation exercise was thought to be elucidating for many, *“Although the outcomes were predetermined, the deeper discussion did elicit more understanding of their reach and the perspective of other stakeholders.”* Participants also valued the opportunity to exchange ideas with fellow field experts. Comments reflecting this included, *“It was interesting to get the different perspectives of different organisations”* and *“the combined expertise and knowledge around the table gave [me] great hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel and we are all truly looking for the same results.”* Participants also felt that the conversation helped them see where they, as a field, needed to pursue more shared ideas and understandings, *“Advocacy is needed to achieve policy and resources, but some common ground will need to be found between ACH organisations regarding assumptions made and key action points.”* It is those shared understandings and mutual outcomes that could lead to more effective advocacy.

The majority (80%) of participants reported that the session caused them to examine their own organizational goals. One participant shared, *“We are continuously examining our organisational goals and outcomes! The conversation did serve as an affirmation of our direction and also, more broadly, the importance of such conversations in the ACH sector... as organisations are starting from different perspectives as to what ‘Culture’ is, and the level of institutionalisation necessary.”*



Other participants stated that the conversation reinforced the essential correlation between community priorities and philanthropic funding, *"We've got to re-examine our mission, strategy, and goals to re-align with what is important, and further [what is] beneficial to the community as a whole, and therefore encourage better and more funding."* Another participant aptly stated, *"I believe that if our Bermuda residents are educated, aware, and engaged in our unique arts, culture and heritage, this will increase our social interaction and understanding of roles to play, creating a greater sense of community that will lead to greater public and corporate policy that increases expenditure and support for arts, culture, and heritage."*

Overall, these results are encouraging as it is the hope of the Bermuda Community Foundation that the Vital Conversation Series, and the Vital Signs Programme in general, would facilitate the necessary synergies that lead to shared and focused efforts that improve the quality of life in Bermuda.

WHO NEEDED TO BE IN THE ROOM

Representatives of key government entities, policy influencers and makers, nonprofits, vendors and service providers in the relevant field were invited to participate in the convening. They were also encouraged to nominate additional participants we may not have considered. The purpose was to ensure that the convening outcome would reflect input from those with the greatest experience and knowledge of the topic under review. This would include senior civil servants, nonprofit executives, industry leaders and community experts in their respective fields. At the convening, participants were asked to step aside from their individual affiliations and participate in the discussions as policy influencers, programme and service providers, researchers and other professionals for the benefit of Bermuda.

WHO WAS THERE

Heidi Cohen (regrets)	Bermuda Arts Centre at Dockyard	Representative
T.J. Armand	Bermuda Festival of the Performing Arts	Executive Director
Nancy Smith	Bermuda Festival of the Performing Arts	Programme Director
Garry Phillips	Bermuda National Gallery	Chair
Irving Minors	Bermuda Society of Arts	Board Member
Nzingha Ming (regrets)	Bermuda Society of Arts	Gallery Director
Susanne Mayall	Kaleidoscope Arts Foundation	Development and Administration
Peter Frith	St. George's Foundation	General Manager
Gavin Smith	The Chewstick Foundation	Executive Director
Diedra Bean	The Chewstick Foundation	Operations Manager
Graham Mawer	Government of Bermuda – The Department of Community & Culture Affairs	Cultural Liaison and Development Officer
Robin Dowling (regrets)	Troika Bermuda	Representative
Ginny Masters	Bermuda Festival	Event/Officer Administrator
Bill Zuill (regrets)	Bermuda National Trust	Executive Director
Amanda Outerbridge	Bermuda Community Foundation	Board Member (Observer)

Regrets = Confirmed but not in attendance

The Vial Signs Convenings are facilitated with the support of the BCF Vital Signs team: Research Coordinator, Dr. Tamara Gathright Fritz of Strategic Evaluation Consulting; BCF Managing Director, Dr. Myra Virgil; BCF Programme Associate, Michelle Grant; and BCF Interns.

AN EVOLVING PROCESS

We strive to inform these convenings with high-level field and content area expertise. We ask participants to use their knowledge to inform this work at a national level. We appreciate the participation of the attendees of this convening. Also considered for participation, and therefore, potential community resources on this issue are:

Bermuda Arts Centre at Dockyard	Government of Bermuda - Department of Community & Cultural Affairs	Scribbles Art Shack
Bermuda Arts Council	In Motion School of Dance	Simons Music School
Bermuda Festival of the Performing Arts	Kaleidoscope Arts Foundation	St. George's Foundation
Bermuda Festival Purpose Trust	Long Story Short	The Chewstick Foundation
Bermuda Folk Club	Master Works	The Chewstick Foundation
Bermuda Historical Society Museum	N'tertainment Bermuda	The Menuhin Foundation
Bermuda Musical and Dramatic Society	Pegasus Express - VCS Productions	Troika Bermuda
Bermuda National Gallery	Portuguese Cultural Association	United Dance Productions
Bermuda Society of Arts	Sabor Dance School	
DanceSations School of Dance		

