

ENVIRO EVOLUTION REVOLUTION

Impact Assessment Business Report

Envirolution have been hosting community engagement events for 10 years, interacting with 785 volunteers and 189,440 attendees of events over this time. Despite this significant engagement with a range of individuals, Envirolution as a group has never fully quantified or evaluated the impact that their events have had on these individuals. By understanding the different ways in which Envirolution and their unique model of engagement have impacted individuals, this research project will support further development of the group.

Research team:

Debapriya Chakrabarti, PhD researcher in Architecture and Urban Studies (University of Manchester, School of Environment, Education and Development)

Eugene Boadu, PhD Researcher in Management (Keele University, Business School)

Abderrahim Nekkache, PhD Researcher in Business and Management (University of Manchester, Alliance Business School)

Ami Crowther, PhD Researcher in Human Geography (University of Manchester, School of Environment, Education and Development)

Rui Cepeda, PhD Researcher in Arts and Cultural Management (University of Manchester, School of Arts, Languages and Cultures)

Paloma Yañez Serrano, PhD Researcher in Social Anthropology with Visual Media (University of Manchester, School of Social Sciences)

Business:



1. Executive Summary

This report evaluates the impact of Envirolution as a community festival for raising climate change awareness in Manchester. This report presents the findings from a mixed-method research investigating the participation of the community, and provide evidence-based recommendations to enhance future engagement (see Sections 2, 3 and 4 for details).

It includes existing quantitative data collected by Envirolution over 11 festivals, and a literature review conducted by the research team using Google Scholar and the University of Manchester library database to obtain access to academic journal articles against predefined eligibility criteria framed by the ideas of audience impact and engagement, event practices, and climate change. Key search themes, such as “community engagement”, “community empowerment”, and “festivals”, provided the scope for situating the novelty of Envirolution’s approach and impact. The online questionnaire survey designed by the research team, with both open- and closed-ended questions, was used to collect information on individuals’ experiences, perceptions and views of Envirolution events, and to understand the impact Envirolution events on them. A total of 40 responses were obtained, divided amongst stallholders/workshop leaders and speakers (35%), Envirolution volunteers (22.5%), and Visitors (40%).

2. Recommendations

2.1 Diversify participant base

Envirolution should diversify the channel of communication of its activities through better use of social media to advertise and engage more people. Greater engagement with a wider range of individuals across age groups will be possible by having more activities and opportunities for all age groups and incentivising engagement of young people (see Section 2.4). This could also be done through by associating the festival with local schools and community centres.

2.2 Diversify through media channels

Develop an online festival strategy alongside the in-person festival to improve the sustainability of the Envirolution festival and promote inclusivity. Not only will this engage Manchester's local communities but the message can be spread through internet. The online INvirolution festival was a huge success and has triggered new ways of future engagement programmes.

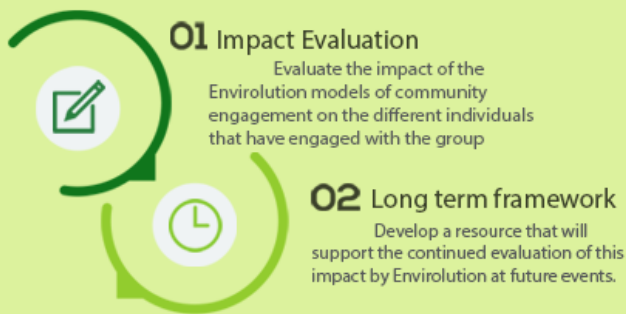
2.3 Engage visitors in climate change activism

Envirolution should work more on engaging visitors in climate change activism and encouraging them to join the fight to save the environment and share what they have learnt with their community.

2.4 Develop an Ambassador Scheme

Envirolution could develop an Ambassador Scheme whereby individuals that have previously engaged with Envirolution promote the organisation and share lessons they have learnt. 'Ambassadors' will be able to reach out to the community and encourage them to engage and participate with Envirolution, its events and environmental action more broadly.

3. Project objectives



4. Approach

To achieve the proposed objectives, a multi-method approach was undertaken, including a scoping literature review, analysing existing quantitative data (Appendix 3), and an online questionnaire (Appendix 1). The literature review helped situate and synthesize existing understandings of topics related to Envirolution, including community engagement and empowerment. The quantitative data collected at previous events was analysed with trends being identified. The online questionnaire including both open and closed questions, was used to collect information on individuals' experiences of Envirolution events. In order to align with Envirolution's purpose and model, within the coding framework (Appendix 4) and subsequent analysis, there is a focus on the social impacts of these festivals and events - considering how they have influenced the understandings, interactions and behaviours of individuals. Both the questionnaire and the coding framework (Appendix 1 and 4) have been provided to Envirolution as resources they can use at future events, to enable the continued evaluation of the impact that the group has on individuals that engage with them.

Key themes from data analysis that highlight Envirolution's impact on individuals:



Key areas which Envirolution could use for engage in future:

Promoting and providing means for climate change educations among young people

Widening the connectivity with local community groups and policymakers

Promoting and raising more awareness regarding climate change

Changing perceptions of climate change across a wide spectrum

Distribution of Survey Respondents

23.1% VOLUNTEERS

35.9% STALLHOLDERS

38.5% VISITORS

Figures on Envirolution since its launch

189440 ATTENDEES
engaged with Envirolution festivals and events exploring creatively how to reduce our impact on the environment

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS 52

- 11 Envirolution festivals
- 8 Chorlton Big Green Festivals
- 6 Beatherder festivals
- 5 Eden Festivals
- 5 Green Gatherings
- 4 Greeniversity events

785 VOLUNTEERS

Build our community, making possible the logistics of our outdoor and online events

PERFORMERS AND WORKSHOPS 1142

Continue to work together to build environmental consciousness in the community through the arts

5. Findings

5.1 Current Perceptions and Future Thoughts

It is evident from the survey (Appendix 2) that Envirolution is perceived as a fun and friendly community engagement event with educational and informative aspects that enrich people's awareness and inspire them to make positive changes for a green future. Also, people have highlighted that the event is free to attend and is perceived as a hopeful and inclusive event for enabling connection and collaboration between various community groups. The future visions of the respondents can be differentiated into two segments:

5.1.1 The future of the Envirolution festival with its future growth and engagement activities

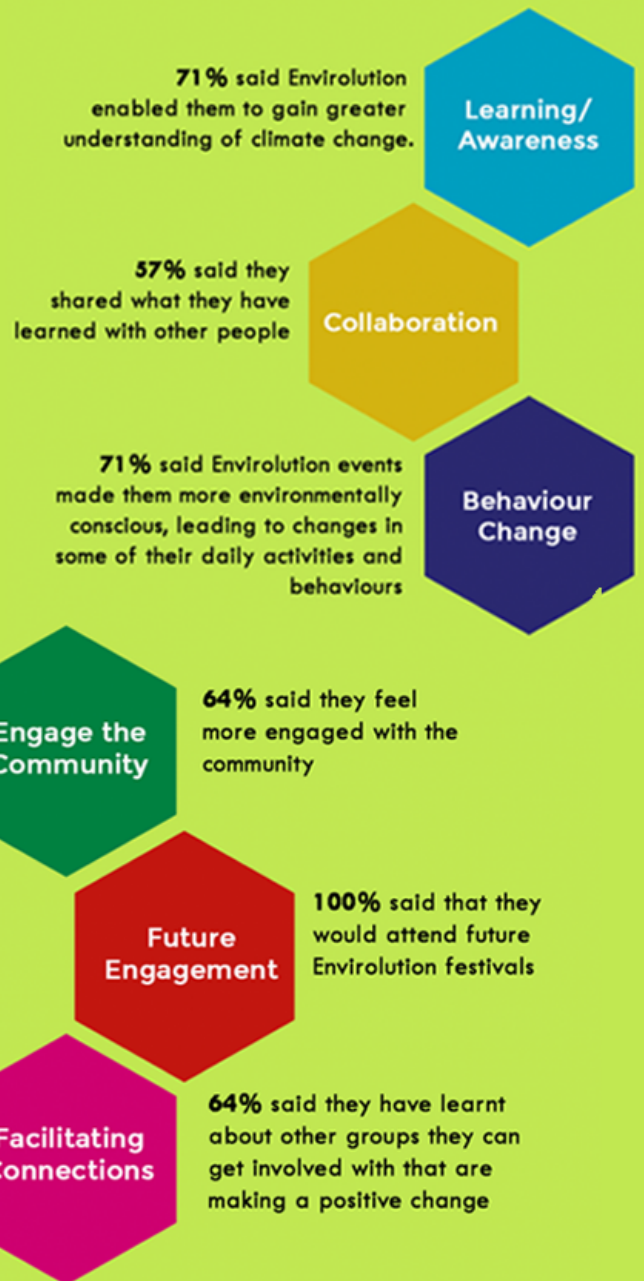
The engagement and learning experience shows a positive effect on the attendees; 100% of visitors indicated that they would attend future Envirolution festivals. However, 93% of visitors have become aware of Envirolution through friends or family, 18% through social media, and 25% through Posters/Flyers (respondents were asked to highlight all the ways in which they saw Envirolution events advertised). This indicates that Envirolution needs to work more on reaching the wider public using different channels of communication, potentially improving their social media presence.

5.1.2 The future of climate change activism and community awareness programmes

In general, most stakeholders have shown a positive awareness of climate change and expressed hopes of greater global awareness through local climate action networks such as Envirolution. The respondents also recommended various ways to improve Envirolution's performance.

- i. To use social media channels for advertising more and to include all the communities and age-groups in their future endeavours in more sustainable ways,
- ii. To influence the local elected representatives to make a positive policy change,
- iii. To include more young generations to fight for climate causes.

However, respondents are hopeful that similar engagement programmes could be a way to inspire and educate young people into actively taking up climate causes for a better future.



AWARENESS AND LEARNING

"Envirolution brings a clear understanding of our environment" (Volunteer 6)

"Spreads the message of climate change" (Stallholder 4)

Provides "engagement and guidance to the community" on climate change and environmental issues (Stallholder 1)

BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

"Envirolution affects the engagement of people from our community that do not know about the climate emergency or what active roles they can play" (Volunteer 4)

"Envirolution encourages people to become actively involved in making the necessary changes to protect our ecosystem" (Visitor 1)

COLLABORATION

"I have developed more confidence and am now a climate activist" (Volunteer 3)

Envirolution encourages and creates the platform for community connection (Volunteers 4 and 6)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

"Envirolution heighten awareness in environmental issues and promote community spirit" (Visitor 9)

Visitor 7 explained that Envirolution has achieved its purpose of engaging the community with sustainable living initiatives.

5.2 Four Strands of Impact

Combining the understandings developed through the different research methods has supported the evaluation of the impact of Envirolution's model of community engagement. The analysis undertaken highlighted four key ways in which Envirolution has had an impact on the different individuals who engage with the organisation, their festivals and events. individuals that engage with them.



Awareness and Learning

Envirolution has impacted the different individuals who engage with the group and its events by creating a space that facilitates environmental learning. By engaging with Envirolution and its events, individuals have been able to develop their knowledge of climate change, its issues

and potential behaviour changes to mitigate its impacts; a statement supported by attendees (77%) and Envirolution volunteers (75%). Furthermore, Envirolution has enabled individuals to develop the skills and knowledge base to share what they have learnt at the events with others. Both attendees (54%) and Envirolution volunteers (84%) have shared their learnings at Envirolution events with others demonstrating the impact that the Envirolution approach, of presenting information in an accessible, engaging and proactive way, can have.

Envirolution could consider developing an 'Ambassador Scheme', as suggested in Section 2.4.



Behaviour Change

Behavioural change has emerged as one of the major impacts that Envirolution has had on the community as stressed by many respondents. When they were asked about their thoughts of the impact that Envirolution has made, 10 out of the 12 stallholders from the survey believe that their activities support positive changes in people's daily activities and behaviours. In support of this statement, 90% of volunteers and 69% of visitors confirm that engaging with Envirolution made them more environmentally conscious and incorporated their learnings to make some changes to their daily activities.

Some of the environmentally friendly behaviours that have been promoted by Envirolution are as follows: avoiding the use of vehicles, use second-hand clothing, seek a plastic-free environment, and use of social media advertising and digital marketing to save papers.



Collaboration

Envirolution creates a platform for collaboration with people who share similar interests with regards to climate change and environmental protection. From the survey response, 8 out of 16 visitors indicated that they have collaborated and shared their learnings with others. Similarly, responses from stallholders and volunteers confirmed that they have either collaborated with another participant of the festival or they have shared their understanding with other members of their community.

Except for one, all stallholders attested Envirolution has helped them to be aware of other groups with similar interests. Inference from these responses demonstrates that Envirolution, through its festivals, consolidates as a space for attendees, volunteers and stakeholders to meet other members of their local community with whom they might not have engaged before.



Community Engagement

One of the aims of Envirolution is to push the agenda for community engagement through its festivals. Analysis from the survey illustrates that 64.3% of the Visitors who responded said, by attending Envirolution festivals, they feel more engaged with their community. Also, 100% of visitors found activities and events organised by Envirolution engaging.

Similarly, all of the volunteers confirmed that Envirolution achieves its aim of engaging with the local community about climate change and 90% of them said they had encouraged people in the community to volunteer with Envirolution. With regards to personal community engagement, 80% explained they feel more engaged with their community. Stallholders provided similar responses highlighting the impact of Envirolution with regards to bolstering community engagement; 75% said they were able to engage with a wider audience by participating in Envirolution.



6. Conclusion

What has ENVIROOLUTION achieved and how can it SCALE?

What Envirolution could change with more support...

Envirolution CLIMATE EDUCATION MODEL



Raise awareness on Climate Change issues

Transform our environmental future

Inform how party politics can help or impair positive changes

Show how we can work together as humanity

Envirolution COMMUNITY DIALOGUE MODEL



Expose the problems of a growth based development model

Raise awareness and lobby for positive policy change

Discuss how resources are being weaponised

Explore how progress can be achieved with less accumulation

Inform about social problems like migration and starvation

Continue working online when crisis like Covid-19 arise

The existing data that Envirolution provided showed an increasing number of stakeholders, suggesting an overall growth and widening engagement. However, this data was not enough to examine the impact of Envirolution's activities on the local and wider communities. Results from the survey, therefore provided the means to assess the community impact of Envirolution. The impact analysis identified four strands of the impact of the Envirolution model of community engagement on individuals who have engaged with them (Section 5.2). Together with these strands, the questionnaire and coding frameworks used in the analysis has been developed as a resource that will support the continued evaluation of the impact of Envirolution. Participants of the survey also recommended four key ways in which Envirolution could engage in future. Those are, promoting their work among young people as a means to provide climate education, widening their connectivity with community groups and engage in a dialogue, promote more awareness and, most importantly, change perceptions of climate change across the spectrum.

In broader terms, the key message that the interview participants tried to convey is that, yes, they have learnt and made positive behavioural changes, but it is now important to spread the message to more community groups and policymakers to take climate action. Envirolution role in delivering this agenda remains pivotal. In summary, recommendations will provide guidance and support on how Envirolution can continue their community engagement and raise awareness about climate change among a wider audience.

Appendices

Annexes



1. Survey questionnaire



2. Survey Data



3. Quantitative Data from previous years



4. Coding framework table



1. Research Report