

Measurement and Evaluation

**Learning Report Guidelines for Partners**

*February 2023*

# Why are Learning Reports valuable; what we expect to see and how we will use them?

Reporting is only useful if it informs learning, adaptation and ultimately improved results, and in doing so is used by the partner organisation [you] and the foundation together.

### Reporting should help answer three key questions:

**1**

**How well are we doing?**

**2**

**What are we learning?**

**3**

**How can we improve?**

We expect Learning Reports to provide an assessment of progress towards outcomes (early and later changes), as well as on the process. They should:

* Encourage reflection about impact and related explanatory factors;
* Highlight challenges encountered, including how these were overcome and those which remain to be addressed;
* Distil lessons learned and recommendations to guide improvement for the partner organisation and Laudes Foundation.

The content of the Learning Reports are used to improve the quality and impact of Laudes Foundation's programming.

# On the reporting process

### For initiatives above €100K:

* Learning Reports are requested once a year, including the evaluative rubrics.
* If the initiative is up to 18 months, one evaluative report at the end of the initiative is sufficient. If the initiative is over 18 months, an annual report and end-of-initiative report will be submitted.
* When Laudes is joining others to co-fund an existing initiative, the partner organisation can submit reports aligned with those funders. However, this reporting will include rubrics.

### For initiatives under €100K:

* One Learning Report at the end of the initiative is sufficient. Rubrics are not required.

For any partners that request follow-on funding, the end-of-initiative Learning Report must be submitted prior to submission of a new grant proposal. After partners submit a Learning Report, foundation staff conduct a review and provide feedback and questions, as appropriate. Informal conversations around progress, challenges and learning between partners and programme managers are encouraged, as needed.

# On content and format

Reports should be up to 10 pages in length (excluding annexes), as they should be discussion and thought-starters between the partner and programme manager. Both the annual and final Learning Report should include the following:

1. **Cover sheet** Initiative title; organisation legal name; geographical reach of the initiative; total grant value; co-financing1 expected and realised; grant award date and end date.

### Initiative snapshot of process

Self-assessment of the initiative on process, based on the A rubrics framework (see Annex A).

### Initiative snapshot of outcomes (changes):

**For Initiatives below 100k (not reporting on rubrics):** Please provide a summary of key achievements (focusing primarily on outcomes, not just outputs and activities).

**For initiatives above 100k (reporting on rubrics):** Assessment of the current situation where you are intervening for each relevant rubric related selected (see Annex B) and the organisation’s contribution to change. Each rating requires a short justification, including an explanation of any changes in the rating since the previous report and evidence of contributions.

### Unintended changes

Please provide a summary of any unintended changes not covered in section 3.

### What are you learning?

What key lessons are emerging?2 Do you have there any recommendations for Laudes and other partners in the wider field? If this is an ongoing initiative, how can Laudes Foundation staff better support you going forward?

### Financial report3

Brief financial report including:

* + Initial (or adapted) budgetary plan, expenditure so far, explanations for under/over expenditure or reallocation of funds, plus decisions made on remaining balance.
  + Co-funding secured (source and amount), including for any failures to secure expected co-funding.

### Annexes

**(as appropriate)**

* Additional or complementary information on the evidence supporting the rubrics ratings;
* Any case studies related to the initiative’s contribution to outcomes;
* List or description of the most relevant, recent publications, press coverage or external communications relating to the initiative.

1 Co-funding is defined as financial or in-kind resources that are additional to the foundation grant and directly support the implementation of the initiative and achievement of results committed at approval. Types of co-funding are: grants, loans, equity investments, committed in-kind support.

2 If helpful, please consider “What has worked well and why? What did not work and why? What could be done differently?”

3 A template can be provided if helpful.

# Annex A: Initiative Snapshot of Process (using A rubrics)

## Please find the A rubrics and guiding questions to help your reflection.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rubric** | **Previous Rating**  (insert the baseline/initial or previous rating according to the rating scale for each rubric) | **Current Rating**  (insert the current rating as per the rubric description) | **Current rating justification**  **(evidence & reasoning), including why & how ratings have changed**  (the following include the main questions you should try to answer when justifying the current rating) |
| **A1.**  **Design addresses the important issues and/or needs** |  |  | *Briefly state the initiative objectives and what if any, adaptations have had to be made so far?*  *To what extent does the initiative include the right mix of approaches to produce the most significant systemic impact on climate and/or equity, especially*  *to the most vulnerable? Are there any important gaps limiting its potential to produce systemic impact?* |
|  | *How well resourced, budgeted and staffed is the initiative?* |
|  | *To what extent does the initiative include the right choice of partners and have the necessary support to build their capacity to deliver on the work?4* |
|  | *How well does the initiative build on past lessons? How does this initiative link to other efforts and organisations?* |
|  | *How well does the design of the initiative allow for appropriate identification and management of risks (both internal and external)?* |
|  | *If the design has been adapted or improved since the last report, and especially if this has led to a different rating, please explain the most important changes and how they justify the current rating.* |
| **A2.**  **Implementation is inclusive, enabling, empowering and capacity- enhancing** |  |  | *What, if any, adaptations were made during implementation and why?*  *To what extent has the initiative been implemented with professionalism? Elements to consider: efficiency, thoroughness, good ethics, cultural appropriateness, inclusion, consistency with relevant legal and professional standards.* |
|  | *In ways that play to the strengths of the organisations involved or supporting the initiative?* |
|  | *How effective are the strategies adopted by the initiative to engage with the wider community and include, enable, empower and enhance the capacity of participating organisations and groups, especially the most vulnerable?* |
|  | *If implementation has been adapted or improved since the last report, and especially if this has led to a different rating, please explain the most important changes and how they justify the current rating.* |

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4 Particularly important for regranting organisations, or initiatives that rely on multiple implementing partners.

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| **A3.**  **Monitoring informs adaptive management** |  |  | *Does the initiative have a monitoring plan? How well is the initiative being monitored and adapted (by the partner organisation and by Laudes)? This includes:*   * *Gathering a strong mix of evidence that covers all important requirements and is useful, without inappropriately straining staffing and other resources.* * *Succinct, user-friendly, engaging and straight to the point monitoring reports.* * *Regular sensemaking meetings to discuss monitoring findings, with sufficient time for collective learning and reflection, involving all key people.* * *Ongoing real-time adaptive management, acting on the monitoring findings, going beyond simply meeting regular reporting requirements.*   *If the monitoring and adaptative management approach has changed or improved since the last report, and especially if this has led to a different rating, please explain the most important changes and how they justify the current rating.* |
| **A4.**  **Communication promotes internal and external collective learning** |  |  | *How clear, open, transparent, purposeful and well- targeted is communication within the initiative, and with implementing partners? Is there openness to reflect, learn and to be challenged?*  *What worked well when communicating and collaborating with partners and other stakeholders, and why? What has not worked well and why?*  *What could be done differently?*  *How well have external communications been used to maximise effectiveness, impact and to share learning?*  *Please explain the most important changes related to communication and learning (if any) and how they justify the current rating.* |
| **A5.**  **Organisational and network capacity5** |  |  | *In your reflection, does your organisation have the right knowledge, skills and capacity it needs? Is there any aspect that needs strengthening? Key aspects to consider:*   * *Clear vision, mission and strategy* * *Strong, credible and inclusive leadership (including succession planning)* * *Governance* * *Strong mix of staff with the needed knowledge, skills and capacity* * *Positive and inclusive organisational culture* * *Financial stability and fund-raising capacity* * *Strong capability to assess organisation’s capacity development needs, implement strategies to address those needs and improve their own performance* * *Strong organisational learning culture*   *If organisational and network capacity has changed or improved since the last report and especially if this has led to a different rating, please explain the most important changes and how they justify the current rating.* |

5 This rubric is where organisations that receive Organisational Development (OD) support describe changes related to the areas being strengthened.

# Annex B: Initiative Snapshot of Outcomes (or Changes)

## Please refer [here](https://www.laudesfoundation.org/grants/rubrics) for the complete list of B and C rubrics, their definitions and ratings.

### Which B and C rubrics does the report need to cover?

The initiative will have selected between one to four outcome rubrics (early/later changes ([B rubrics](https://www.laudesfoundation.org/grants/rubrics/b)) and/or 2025 outcomes ([C rubrics](https://www.laudesfoundation.org/grants/rubrics/c)), which represent the main effects the initiative is seeking to influence and contribute to that align with the changes Laudes is seeking to influence in the system.

In the baseline, you have described what and where are changes the initiative has been seeking to influence. Your report should then document, based on the evidence available:

1. what **specific changes** have been seen since the previous rating (and the evidence for those),
2. **how substantial and valuable** the changes are relative to what is ultimately needed (please include the evidence and reasoning that led you to these conclusions), and
3. the evidence showing **how we know that the initiative contributed** to those changes (alongside the efforts of others, the context and situation, as well as other factors influencing the change).

### How do we arrive at ratings?

Each outcome will have two ratings – a **baseline or previous rating** and a **current rating**. This shows what the situation was previously and how much traction has been made to this point. **Bear in mind that influencing change in these systems is difficult to do, so the size of the shift may feel disappointing.** However, it is important not to lower the bar of the outcomes to make them more achievable or to rate an outcome high because a lot of effort went into it. We understand the challenges of aspirational goals and invite you to reflect openly on those challenges with us and help figure out how to address them.

When discussing **lessons learned** and **recommendations**, Laudes is particularly interested to understand what has been learned about the barriers and sticking points that have *not yet* allowed the needed outcomes to be fully achieved. **What else might help unleash the kind of impactful change the system really needs?** Your reflections may help Laudes to identify additional initiatives that could run alongside your efforts, addressing an adjacent aspect of the system that would then help your efforts better succeed. Your reflections may also serve as input for Laudes to plan convening and collective learning opportunities.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rubric** | **Initiative Outcome(s)** | **Previous Rating6** | **Current Rating** | **Current rating justification (evidence & reasoning), including why & how ratings have changed** |
| **Selected B or C rubric** |  |  |  | Specific changes; |
| How substantial and valuable are they; |
| How the initiative contributed to them. |

6 Please insert the baseline (initial) rating if this is the first annual Learning Report.