**Episode 3 Transcript - The art of asking: effective audience surveys with Jack Roscoe**

**James Akers:** Welcome to the Digital Culture Podcast, a podcast for people working in the creative and cultural sector and wants to know more about digital. I'm your host, James Akers.

Welcome to the third episode of the Digital Culture Podcast. We're recording this on the 8th of January 2025 and the reason we're doing this podcast is so you get to know the team at the Digital Culture Network about what we do, learn more about our specialisms and how we can help you on your digital journeys.

We've got several guests as we go through this series. Firstly, we're interviewing all the Tech Champions in our team. And if you've not listened to them already, please go back and listen to our first episode with Katy and Nicola about social media.

And episode two was with Ollie, our digital marketing and strategy Tech Champion. Which was a really good conversation.

I'm James. I'm one of the Tech Champions at the Digital Culture Network. I'm a white man with brown hair. I'm in my blue room still, in Preston in the North West of England.

And my guest today is our Tech Champion for Audience Data Collection and Evaluation, Jack Roscoe.

**Jack Roscoe:** Hi James, so I'm a white man in my early thirties. I've got short brown hair, glasses, and I'm wearing a sort of white checked shacket today.

**James Akers:** And it's lovely to have you on the podcast, Jack. I suppose the first question is, how long have you been with the team?​

**Jack Roscoe:** About a year and a half and have just had such a wonderful time. Such a nice bunch of people, so friendly, so positive, it's great.

**James Akers:** And what were you doing before you joined?

**Jack Roscoe:** I've been in market research and audience research for about 11, 12 years, something like that. For a few years I was field work manager at a cultural consultancy, which was called Morris Hargreaves McIntyre. Field work in research is the act of collecting research data. I used to look after a team of about 40 interviewers and researchers around the UK, helping them to collect visitor surveys at cultural and creative venues.

We collected all of the audience surveys at the London National Museums, which is like the British Museum and Tate and all of those, for a few years, which was very exciting, sometimes stressful, but good fun.

I've got a background in audience research and survey design, as well as actually collecting the data. I saw this role for a Tech Champion come up at the Digital Culture Network with audience data collection as a new specialism, and I read the job description and it just was exactly me.

I thought, this is perfect, it's never been, there's never been a better opportunity than this, so I'll go for it.

**James Akers:** We're so glad that you're with us now. It's really great to see the way that the team has developed. We had conversations with people across the sector, and one of the questions we got a lot was around how to, survey your audiences.

 I think it's amazing how rapidly you've integrated yourself into the team and you've got out there and making an impact straight away, which is really nice to see.

**Jack Roscoe:** Oh, thank you so much.

**James Akers:** We've got several Tech Champions in each region of England. Although we work nationally, we do build those relationships with organizations and whatever's going on in each region.

It's great to have you on the team, but one of the most important things for me is that you're in the North West, which is obviously the best one.

**Jack Roscoe:** I am, I'm here just south of Manchester. It's a really exciting region to work in. We have, obviously, the big cities of Liverpool and Manchester, and I think both have such a rich and diverse and amazing offer of cultural and creative things going on, at the big venues and down to the sort of local community festivals and all the little towns that are dotted around them.

Obviously, the North West is huge. It's not, Just the cities and I think a lot of people would often be quite annoyed that people jump to think about the cities as well. You're based up in Preston yourself and we have The Lake District and Cumbria, which is very much its own beast and something you're more familiar with I think.

**James Akers:** Yeah, I think you're right. When there is that discussion about the North West, it does automatically go to those big places like Manchester and Liverpool. And it's like how London is to the rest of the UK the country

 A lot of the focus is on that area, but there's so much going on across the whole region. And it's something that we can highlight a bit more in things like this, the podcast, the case studies we do and the Digital Culture Awards are a

 big part of highlighting those really good organizations and things going on in all areas of the country.

So onto your specialist area. There is lots and lots of data out there. My specialist area covers some of that. We have Adam, who is our Customer Relationship Management and Ticketing Tech Champion.

There's loads of data that sits in those systems and sometimes the data is categorized into different pots. We have things like qualitative, the thoughts and feelings, and then quantitative is the numbers and the count of things. Where does your specialism sit and what does it align to?

**Jack Roscoe:** It covers both of those mostly I support people with, the design and execution of their audience research and evaluation activity. Mostly that's to do with surveys and forms that are sent to audiences. That's what most people are doing, and what is easy to do with limited resources and you can have your surveys out there and hopefully be generating them all the time.

I like to break my specialist area down into two main topics, which is audience research, and that's finding out about audiences. And probably you're trying to look for opportunities to develop and grow your audience. And then the second big area is evaluation, which is trying to understand the success and impact of what you've done.

Ideally you're learning from it and improving in future. And I think it's really important to say that funders don't necessarily just want to hear about success and about things that did reach and did impact. I think increasingly nowadays there's a real recognition amongst funders that it's nice to see artists and practitioners learning and admitting what they got wrong and how they can develop in future and seeing that reflection, happen.

I think sometimes people feel a pressure to just report the good things and the success and to almost structure their research and their surveying to, show that, almost encourage people to give good answers if possible, because they don't want the negative ones. But I think it can be really useful to get that learning and negativity in there as well.

**James Akers:** With those two areas then, when people get in touch with you about support and the things that they want help with, what does that look like?

**Jack Roscoe:** So it really depends on who you're speaking to, we support such a range of organizations. We do support a lot of Arts Council England funded organizations, particularly there's the National Portfolio Organizations, so those are I think over 900, nearly a thousand organizations that get regular funding, to do their work.

And there are obviously some kind of requirements around receiving that funding.

For those National Portfolio Organizations, a lot of my conversations tend to revolve around something called Illuminate. And Illuminate is an Arts Council, data platform. Organizations have to report some data to it. Things like their attendance figures and the event schedule that they have.

And Illuminate can also be used to collect audience surveys as well. So, a lot of the organizations getting in touch with me are trying to collect more surveys on Illuminate. And I can support them with various ways and tips and tactics to do that. I run training sessions for their volunteers and staff, and just help them get all of their ducks in a row to improve what they're doing and get better results, hopefully.

**James Akers:** And when you talk about the survey, what is it? Is it filling out a form? Is it a bit of paper? What are the different methods?

**Jack Roscoe:** Yeah, it can be many things. It could be on paper and many organizations do still choose to do that It might depend on their audience and what they're comfortable with doing. So then audiences will complete a survey on paper and then that data is entered in to Illuminate or another platform.

It could be through a, like a tablet or a computer or some kind of kiosk that an organization has on site, completing a survey directly, through digital means. Or it could be something called self-completion, where a member of the audience or a visitor will complete the survey on their own device, so they'll scan a QR code, or they'll enter a link in on the web browser or something.

**James Akers:** And I imagine with all those methods that actually improving the survey collection can be quite different for each organization that you speak to?

**Jack Roscoe:** Yeah, it's hugely dependent on the different organizations in terms of, the, what sort of type of audience they have, what kind of art form that they do. So art form, for example, a street festival, survey collection for those audiences, it's going to be very different to, a ticketed theatre or a museum or a gallery.

The setting is very different, the audience is different, and the sort of potential delivery mechanisms for the survey and how you might optimize those are a bit different.

**James Akers:** You mentioned different platforms, do national Portfolio Organizations have to collect their surveys on Illuminate?

**Jack Roscoe:** At the moment, they aren't required to collect audience surveys on Illuminate. And they won't be required to next financial year either. So from April 2025 all the way to the end of March 2026, it's been paused as a requirement.

A lot of organizations still choose to do surveys on Illuminate. For some it just works fine for their needs, there's templates with the survey, you just get the link and send it out. You don't have to create a survey yourself necessarily. There are National Portfolio Organizations who do struggle to get enough people to fill in their Illuminate audience surveys.

It might be because of, like we talked about, the way that they do their work, the art form that they have, or the audience that they have. Maybe they work with quite small numbers of people in participatory workshops or settings. Or maybe there's a lot of demographic questions in the Illuminate survey, and maybe they are struggling to get people to complete all of those and finding that they'd prefer to ask less.

Those organizations might be considering different ways to collect their audience data. And that's where my support might be more similar to someone who is not funded by the Arts Council and doesn't have those kind of reporting requirements. Where I might be helping them to design a more bespoke survey tailored to them and their needs.

Or, because you need hundreds of responses to get good survey data, they might be better off working in more qualitative ways, more open types of audience feedback collection or research methods that involve fewer people. Or they might end up with a much shorter survey or feedback card. And I've helped many organizations come up with shorter focused surveys that better address the specific needs and priorities that they have.

And there's just nothing like a short five minute survey that perfectly covers everything that you need it to. It's such a beautiful thing and it makes me so happy to see that through from design to fruition.

**James Akers:** For someone approaching surveying for the very first time, is there an optimal number that they should be collecting?

**Jack Roscoe:** So the number you collect is important when we're talking about statistics and kind of those quantitative questions, multiple choice and ratings and things like that. Getting a higher number of surveys makes that data more representative of a kind of wider range of people.

It makes the data more accurate and reliable, and it reduces something called the margin of error, which is just how wrong the data is, like how incorrect it could be in statistics. The number is different for everyone. organizations are different sizes and shapes. They have different numbers of audiences.

They have different levels of resource. It's so dependent on kind of their situation, like what feels appropriate and achievable for them that will still result in a sort of useful amount of data, a useful level of reliability and accuracy. So there is a Digital Culture Network article that I've written about this, which is on our Knowledge Hub.

It's called, How to Decide Your Survey Targets and Improve Your Sampling. And it will run you through this process, step by step, of looking at your audience numbers and assessing what target of surveys might be appropriate for you.

**James Akers:** Amazing. So yeah, please go on our website at the digitalculturenetwork. org. uk. We'll put a link in the show notes for you so you can see that.

So if organizations do choose to develop their own approach or set up their own surveys, what kind of platforms can they use?

**Jack Roscoe:** Illuminate itself does have some optional questions. There's a bank of about 80 or so that you can, you can go through and you can choose to add the ones that you like to your survey. But you still have to include all of those mandatory questions, which is about 16 or 17 demographic questions, I think.

 If you still want to report your survey data into Illuminate but have more flexibility, I would recommend something called the Impact and Insight Toolkit, which is freely available to Arts Council National Portfolio Organizations and Creative People and Places projects.

And the advantage of using the Impact and Insight Toolkit is that it has templates with all of the mandatory Arts Council questions, but unlike on Illuminate, you are completely free to write your own bespoke questions. You can change the order of questions. You can add text to explain and add more context, particularly those demographic questions, which people might find sensitive.

That can be useful. And then to get your survey data into Illuminate, if you email Counting What Counts, who are the people who operate that toolkit, they will produce a spreadsheet for you, which you can upload straight into Illuminate without any messing around.

**James Akers:** And what about if people want to write their own survey, or reduce the number of questions being asked?

**Jack Roscoe:** If you want to reduce the number of questions overall, you might choose to build your own survey on another platform. So there are some really, it's actually never been a better time to do that. There are so many free and cheap tools that have really democratized, audience and market research.

What you'll increasingly find beyond the arts and culture sector is, organizations and businesses are doing it in house. More than ever before, because these tools are so good and so freely available now. Something really basic like Microsoft Forms is a fantastic place to start. It gives you a few more options than Google Forms that a lot of people like to use.

So for instance, on Microsoft Forms you can have questions that appear based on answers to previous questions. So if someone says, I live in this town, you can ask them a question that says, As a local, what do you think about this? You can customize the flow of the survey based on previous responses and ask different people, different questions.

And that is so useful, and you can't do that with Google forms. A slightly more, advanced option is something called Qualtrics, which is, it begins with a Q, we'll have a link in the show notes. and that is professional grade market research software. But during the COVID pandemic, they introduced a free tier, which has pretty much all of the features, but you're just limited to 500 responses for your survey.

 It does more than Microsoft Forms, but you need to get used to and maybe it's a bit less accessible with stuff like screen readers as well. You might also consider bringing in, if you've got budget for it, it's always good to bring in someone external, someone who can take the load off you a little bit.

Most of the people who are engaged in audience research are actually marketing or operations people who have had this responsibility added to their existing workload. So from a resource perspective, it's great to have someone else to look after your audience research for you. And they also bring expertise from, working with a range of organizations and audiences and previous projects.

There are so many freelance consultants out there, working in this sector, kind of freelance evaluators, freelance audience researchers. The Arts Marketing Association has a really good listings page, where you can look at all sorts of freelancers doing this and all sorts of other things as well.

**James Akers:** Oh yeah, I use that all the time. It's really good.

**Jack Roscoe:** Yeah, it's so good, and you know that people are trusted and have a reputation as well, which is really important for this because sometimes with, outsourcing your audience research and evaluation. I'll sometimes read the reports that are generated and you think, this is all a really interesting examination of what has happened to us, but it can sometimes be a little bit short on recommendations; What should we do next? Where are the opportunities for us? And being able to look at the past work of an evaluator or a consultant and see what they've done, see what's resulted from their work and from their evaluations. That is so helpful. And there are also agencies who work in this space as well. There are people like The Audience Agency, Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, MEL Research and DJS Research, and many more, all really good, proven, trusted suppliers who are have a specific focus on this sector.

Baker Richards, of course, as well.

**James Akers:** And from those different agencies and freelancers, is there any good research that you want to highlight?

**Jack Roscoe:** Yeah, so there's loads in the sector at the moment. A lot of good stuff which is being done for the sector as a whole rather than for specific organizations that you know it's freely available that everyone can look at and learn from, a really good example of that is Indigo Limited who I neglected to mention on that roundup of suppliers but they run Hot Topics, which are periodic, surveys that go out to audiences at I think up to a hundred organizations, tens of thousands of people are filling in these surveys, and, they ran one in 2023 , I think, called Tomorrow's Audiences, which was all about how to bring in new audiences, which is always the kind of the big hot button issue for organizations.

How do we reach new people, get them through the doors, and get them to come and attend? And it was all sorts of stuff about, some of the barriers that put people off and how you can alleviate those things like threshold anxiety about being scared to enter the space and not knowing what to do, and the kind of what you can do about that.

And just generally the sort of, marketing channels and the things that are most likely to get new audiences in. I thought it was such a fantastic piece of work. And also the Other Tech Champions in the team were really excited about it. And we kept referring people to it and pointing them to it.

And, yeah, it was fantastic stuff. Katy Raines, who I think she's the founder of Indigo, she is the judge on our Digital Culture Awards Using Data category. So she has the final say of, who is the best at data in the sector, and we're so happy that she's with us and helping us spotlight that work and kind of talk about data and how it can transform organizations and have an impact.

**James Akers:** Oh yeah, Katie's amazing. I really can't wait to see the winners of the awards in, what is it, mid March? It's gonna be really exciting. So, onto the next section of the podcast, based on your one and a half years as a Tech Champion and your previous job roles doing all the wonderful surveying that you do, are there any top tips that you have for people approaching this for the first time?

**Jack Roscoe:** It's very much a sort of start to finish process. I think you have to begin at the beginning and think about your research objectives. Try to work to the absolute minimum of what you really need to know from your audience. What three things will most help you and your colleagues? What can you actually act on if you were to find it out?

What will your team find most useful to know? And how can you make that list of objectives as short as possible? Because those will turn into survey questions, and if you have too many survey questions, people won't want to do your sort of horrible 15 minute long survey, which is what often happens.

It will be so much easier to collect your research data if the tool or the form that you're asking people to fill in is really short and it's well designed. When you're setting research objectives, you're trying to do two things that are slightly at odds with each other. You want to learn surprising things that you wouldn't have expected to find out, and it's really useful to have data that backs those surprising and unexpected things up.

But on the other hand, you're also trying to set yourself up with the biggest and most impactful opportunities, and to some extent that will probably be informed by what you already know. or suspect about your audiences, you might not want to invest a lot of research resources into an audience group that isn't likely to pay off for you.

For example, organizations will sometimes decide to expend a lot of effort chasing younger audiences, and if you don't already cater to them, that's going to be quite difficult. You won't be getting many of them visiting, so you can't survey very many of them anyway. If you're not already good at catering to them, it's less likely that they'll present a big opportunity to grow as an audience group.

And I'm not saying organizations should never chase new audience groups, but it usually requires a huge investment, going out and consulting those unengaged potential audience groups directly and being prepared to spend a long time chasing them and developing that offer.

So you might be more likely to find opportunities in your survey data with audience groups that you're already familiar with and you're achieving some success with. So you can work out from the research what smaller investments or changes you need to make to really excel and expand on that success with that audience group.

 The second thing is the design and the method of the research. So thinking about what is the best type or format of research method to find out those research objectives. And that might be a survey, but it could be something different. It could be more qualitative methods, things like open conversation or, a small focus group, or, kind of short interviews with audience members where you're writing down notes or recording it with a dictaphone or something like that.

So think about what are your capabilities and capacity. Can you collect enough surveys to make a useful data set? If you're only able to collect about sort of 30 or 40 surveys, statistically that's not providing a lot of, really robust data. So maybe those other more qualitative methods might work better for you, for your audience and your staff.

And the final thing is about the actual execution of the data collection and the research activities. So you need to be proactive. You need to do everything you can to make a success of it. Once you've designed and put those materials out into field,it's practical stuff. It's thinking about the different distribution methods that you have, seeing if they're working for you, are people scanning the QR codes, people preferring the tablets.

Are your volunteers and staff members approaching enough people? Are they comfortable doing it? The biggest single thing you can do to get more surveys is to make face to face approaches to audience members or visitors, and that's because you've got a real person approaching someone, making a connection, selling the benefits of the survey, asking for help, and it's quite a human response then to want to help that person.

So it's so different to a, a poster with a QR code on or an email that just politely asks you to take a survey. It's much more direct and effective. But to make those face to face approaches happen consistently, you obviously need a level of buy in and motivation from your staff and colleagues.

So things like regular monitoring of your survey progress and reporting that back to the team, sharing the data with the colleagues, pointing them to useful things that you're learning, and insights that you have. And if you aren't learning useful things or having insights from the data that you're gathering, again, maybe that's a steer or maybe that's telling you that you are not asking the right questions and that maybe there's alternatives that will be more useful to people and your colleagues.

**James Akers:** Brilliant. They are three fantastic top tips. I think there is that real tension between the type of data that you would like to collect or you're required to collect and the capacity you have as a team, skills and confidence of your staff members as well.

I think there's something in all of that. That's something you help with all the time, isn't it? You help people through that whole journey. About what they'd like to do and how they can put that into practice.

**Jack Roscoe:** Yeah, it's a support process often and I'll check in semi regularly with people to see how things are going, what's working, and just giving them someone to just someone to, vent to, maybe, or bounce ideas off and reflect on what's been happening to them.

And that's so useful, and it's been great to build up those relationships as well over the last year and a half.

**James Akers:** I suppose for some of our specialist areas, they are purely digital, like Social Media, for example. It's just online. Whereas yours, you have to have that in person, face to face, people doing things, workshops, sessions, hands on, as well as the technical things, the digital things that sit behind it.

Theres both sides a bit in your specialist area.

**Jack Roscoe:** Absolutely.

**James Akers:** So, Jack, what have you found are good questions to ask audiences? It's a bit of a big question.

**Jack Roscoe:** I think, you need to ask people about their motivations, like why they're doing the things that they're doing or why they might want to attend a performance or come along to something. By understanding what motivates people that gives you the language and the kind of concepts that you can use especially for marketing, to communicate with people and speak to them and make a pitch to them, but also to just to understand like what they're looking for from the content as well like what, what they are what they were hoping to get out of it? What they expected? And I like to pair it with a question that kind of asks; So of the things that motivated you or could have motivated you, what were the outcomes that you had? And maybe even show them the same list again, but in the past tense so people might for instance have come to a theatre performance just to do something with a friend, but then what they got out of it as an outcome might have been. They might have been touched emotionally, they might have felt something really real and vivid, and then they've gone away and reflected on something quite big.

And that's a wonderful thing to have happened, and that, just that pair of questions alone can help you chart those stories and transformations that people are having. And also, it might be a multiple choice question, it might produce a load of statistics, and you can track that in a sort of really mathematical way as well, and look at different audience groups.

The other thing to think about is how you will group the responses in your survey. So it's especially useful if you can put people into pots or we sometimes call them audience segments, these key audience groups that make up the different constituents of the people who access your offer.

So it might be there are families with young children who are coming along to certain events and sessions. It might be that there are kind of intellectual highbrow metropolitan visitors who are coming along for your French new wave cinema portion of your offer.

And that's they're looking for something very different. You need to speak to them differently, but you also need to measure their responses and their survey answers separately, because they're going to have very different responses and require different things. And being able to separate them in your survey data is very useful.

**James Akers:** And looking back over the past few months, you've been really busy, haven't you?

**Jack Roscoe:** I have, I did a webinar about three or four months ago that was all about some of those concepts I talked about before. How to increase your audience survey numbers and improve the data that you're collecting as well. There's some stuff I haven't talked about today about, making it more representative, making sure that you are asking a wider, more diverse set of people, and doing that scientifically.

So that's really useful if you want to dig into those sorts of ideas. That's also led to me doing audience survey training with quite a few organizations. Some I've travelled to in person here in the North. Others, I've done it on Zoom or Teams remotely. And those are sessions with staff and volunteers.

 Helping them to, you know giving them an overview of why we do audience surveys and what the point of it is why it's useful. Making sure that they're on board with it and motivated by it. And also giving them kind of an explanation and the tools and the ideas of how to approach people and, what to say to them, how to make a pitch, how to explain parts of the survey that are maybe a bit more, difficult, things like sensitive personal questions and how to get around fatigue and respondents who are starting to tail off and lose interest.

So that's been really helpful for a lot of organizations and quite a few have come back to say, we've seen an uptick in the number of surveys we're getting and our team has coalesced around it and they're a bit more excited and enthusiastic about it now.

I've also produced, what was actually quite a fun article, for our Knowledge Hub to write, which was a case study, but was also not.

It was an interview, or some thoughts from, a lovely fellow called Wez Thistlethwaite, and he is the...

**James Akers:** Oh, I love Wez. He's brilliant.

**Jack Roscoe:** Yeah, you can't not love Wez.

Wez is the Insight Manager for National Museums Liverpool. And Wez embodies everything that, someone doing audience research and insights should have as characteristics. So he is, he's bouncy, he's enthusiastic, he's endlessly fascinated with digging into things. he's an excellent communicator.

So a big part of that article is him talking about how to, win people over and get decisions made in an organization. So getting the data and turning it into a chart, is not the whole job. The whole job is actually making your organization make the right decisions and almost political capital and being in the right meetings and telling people the right things and appealing to people's different needs.

 It's all of that kind of soft social stuff. And it's such an interesting article to see his process and how he approaches his role.

**James Akers:** And both things are available on our website at digitalculturenetwork. org. uk. So go to the Knowledge Hub and you'll find those there.

Another thing that you've been up to, for anybody who's interested to see, please connect with Jack on LinkedIn because he creates these slightly unhinged LinkedIn short videos about various topics and they are hilarious and fun and quite brilliant.

**Jack Roscoe:** Yeah, I don't think I'm following sort of Nicola and Katie's advice about having a regular cadence of posting or anything like that. So periodically every two or three months I'll have a free afternoon. an idea will just occur to me in the shower and I'll think that will be stupid. I should film a video of that. I think I did something to promote our Digital Culture Awards, Which was like me and my loft kind of wearing like a demon mask and like haunting myself. the most recently I was there in a Christmas jumper, like festooned and lights, and talking about, Christmas polling data, like the nation's favourite Christmas chocolates and films, and there was a very forced educational angle to it where I was explaining about cross analysis and representation and stuff. I think it's quite nice because when you post a video on LinkedIn I think I notice that you get a lot more people looking at it and especially if it's extremely stupid.

That seems to work as well. And so I will be keeping an eye open for opportunities for more of those as we go forward.

**James Akers:** Before I wrap things up, I just wondered if you had anything you've done over the last six months, any support cases or organizations you've worked with that you wanted to highlight?

**Jack Roscoe:** Yeah, so I think my personal favourite organization, although I don't know if we're allowed to have favourites, but I, have loved working with the Barber Institute in the West Midlands, the Barber Institute of Fine Arts. I have been working with, one of their marketing team, Nadia there on and off for about a year and a half at this point, like right from when I started, developing a survey from scratch. They did all the work, I just I would occasionally turn up to meetings, but, designing the survey from scratch, thinking about their approach to field work and getting all their staff and volunteers on board, thinking about events and how to have a survey that really serves the needs of different people in different roles.

And also the University of Birmingham, where they're based, the things that they might need to know. And show that having this art museum on site is such an asset to the university, and being able to communicate that with data, and inform some of the renovations and changes that they're making there as well.

So it's just been amazing working with them and seeing just the volume of surveys they've managed to collect. They got, I think, 600 in three months with a tiny team, which is huge. No one gets that, so I don't know how they did it, but yeah. Hats off to them.

**James Akers:** Listening to all the things you talked about in your specialist area, I thought we could roll it up into three key takeaways. I suppose firstly for me, it seems like it's an exciting time for surveys in the sector.

**Jack Roscoe:** Yeah, regardless of whether you are, not funded or funded by local councils or some other system, or if you're an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation, you have an enormous level of freedom right now, and for the next, year and a half or so, to, research whatever you want, whatever you think is most appropriate and find the tools that are most appropriate for you to do that and the methods that will work best for you.

So the tools that are available are incredible, they're free or cheap, and obviously you have my support if that's useful for you, you can talk to me in one to one support to help you get along that path and do something amazing.

**James Akers:** The second thing I took away was when you were saying about needing to be very focused on what matters to you in your organization and the context of what you're doing. We see that across all the specialist areas as well, but I thought you put that across really well.

Yes, absolutely. You need to think about how your research objectives support your strategy. You need to come up with a small set of questions that will work together well in combination. to give you powerful insight. And what I mean by that is, you can analyse the results of one question against the results of another question.

**Jack Roscoe:** So like I said before, you can look at whether people who attended one of your events had a different experience to someone else attending a different event. That combination of questions is incredibly powerful. So setting yourself up with the right ones is so important and keeping that list short.

**James Akers:** And finally, I thought the message throughout the whole thing was: surveying is a really useful thing to do and if you stay the course and you commit to doing the research you will get really interesting insights about your audiences.

**Jack Roscoe:** I think that's the thing you have to commit to it, whether that is improving your methods, keeping an eye on them and adjusting things where necessary, building the support of your colleagues and your team to help you help you deliver that work. You have to go all in and collect a useful and consistent set of data over time and you have to believe in what you're doing and that it is going to make a difference but the insight that you will get from that is so worth it.

**James Akers:** Brilliant, thank you Jack for joining me on episode three of the Digital Culture Podcast.

**Jack Roscoe:** Ah, thank you, James. It's been a pleasure.

**James Akers:** If you want support from Jack in any of these areas he's here for you. If you're in England and you work in a non-profit creative and cultural organisation or you might be an artist or practitioner. It's free, so get in touch with us on our website at digitalculturenetwork.org.uk.

**Jack Roscoe:** Thanks for listening. Bye!