

Evaluation of IKEA Foundation-funded Purpose Climate Lab (PCL) Projects

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Executive summary

Purpose Climate Lab (PCL) works to accelerate and build the ambitions of climate solutions around the globe. It executes this mission through dynamic public mobilisation campaigns that result in the deployment of critically needed climate solutions. PCL has pioneered an innovative model of climate campaigning that is rooted in an ability to remain highly flexible and responsive and to move at the optimum moment and on those issues that can create the maximum change. Through the use of new technology and data, new narratives, and a host of creative engagement tactics, PCL leans into a culture of experimentation, focusing on tested as well as novel ways to motivate the public to take action, create the politics of the possible, and share the outcomes of their learnings with peers in the sector. Since 2014, the IKEA Foundation has supported PCL to build momentum around climate action through inherently people-centred campaigns. With IKEA Foundation's current grant (2019–2023) support for PCL, the focus is on the key geographies of Europe, India, Indonesia, and Brazil.

In late 2022, the IKEA Foundation tasked the Dala Institute to conduct an independent evaluation of their grant to PCL. The evaluation took place from the end of 2022 to June 2023 and focused on the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of PCL's work, based on either the four Global Logic Model (GLM)-based goals: (1) narrative change, (2) capacity building, (3) diversity and inclusion, and (4) action and policy, or the project-based Theories of Change and country/geography-specific outcomes from 2019 to 2022 inclusive. Which approach was utilised depended on the timelines for the cases as the GLM is a new initiative that was not in place at the grant project outset.

The evaluation approach consisted of a portfolio review, case studies, an online survey, and digital media analysis. The portfolio review was based on PCL projects datasets. The portfolio review assisted in the identification of the projects to be included as case studies. Case studies were used as a tool of analysis to provide in-depth insights and to show the nuances of the various types of PCL projects. Case comprised one or more campaigns. Together, the portfolio review and the case studies provided both the broad perspectives and the specific in-depth experiences of the actors affected by and adjacent to the IKEA Foundation-funded PCL projects. Cases for the case studies were randomly selected from the entire portfolio of IKEA Foundation-funded PCL projects spanning the years 2019 to 2023. Over 200 interviews were conducted related to 12 cases with PCL staff, IKEA Foundation, PCL partners, specific audiences, and independent observers. Overall, 147 partners from across the portfolio responded to an online survey set up to collect data and provided information to help generalise the case data. Digital media analysis was used to examine social media and to search for additional data on the selected cases.

PCL's projects are designed to be relevant to the specific audiences they target. They use a data-informed approach to map and test different audiences' responses to climate information and messages. PCL also creates open fora to bring together individuals with different perspectives and attitudes, with an aim to reduce polarisation and stimulate debate. By incorporating relatable and engaging content, PCL makes climate action more accessible to a wider and more diverse audience.

Overall, PCL's projects are relevant to their target audiences and have been effective in raising awareness of climate issues. However, there is a need for PCL to improve their long-term planning and evaluation, a process which is already underway.

PCL has been effective at raising awareness of climate issues across all countries. However, there remains a "missing middle" between logic and behaviour change, particularly at the global level. This means that while PCL has been effective at raising awareness, there is less evidence of their impact on capacity and action.

PCL has been effective at building relationships and increasing participation. The hyperlocal approach they promote has been particularly effective in this regard. However, PCL's short-term projects have not met the desired long-term outcomes as prescribed in the logic model. This suggests that PCL needs to improve their long-term planning and evaluation.

The following are the key recommendations for improving the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of PCL's campaigns:

- Better balance the resources applied for longer-term engagement with privileged audiences while also supporting frontline marginalised communities. This means ensuring that PCL's work is inclusive and that it reaches all of the people who are affected by climate change. This means revisiting their expectations, design, and strategy. This is especially important to effectively engage more conservative and right-wing audiences, who are a challenging audience to reach, but it is important to do so in order to build a broad coalition for climate action.
- Apply more resources for monitoring project results, and for evidence generation. This will help PCL to better understand the impact of its work and allow them to make necessary adjustments as they go along.
- Focus implementation on action-oriented goals, with longer-term campaigns targeting shifts towards behavioural change. This means making sure that PCL's campaigns are designed to motivate people to take action on climate change. It also means focusing on campaigns that can have a lasting impact.
- Treat rapid-response projects differently in terms of the goals, impacts, and resources. This means recognising that rapid-response projects may have different goals and objectives than other types of campaigns. It also means ensuring that PCL has the resources it needs to implement these projects effectively.
- Short-term campaigns would be more effective if they were better linked to proof of concept and clearly operated under a 'strategic' or test category to avoid a potential disconnect with the long-term strategy. This means making sure that short-term campaigns are aligned with PCL's long-term goals and that they are designed to test new ideas.
- Ensure sufficient capacity within co-creators (i.e. PCL's partners) is available and that they are aware of the time commitments and capacity required to implement campaigns.
- Consider branding some of the global work to build brand recognition in the climate sphere. This means making PCL's work more visible to the public. It also means building relationships with other organisations working on climate change.
- To address potential intersectionality issues, and those linked to Goal 3, PCL should consider utilising long-term projects that may be able to have a better impact on the cultural shifts that are required to recognise and appreciate intersectionality. This means using long-term projects to address the intersectionality of climate change. It also means working to change the culture around climate change so that it is more inclusive.
- Build on existing relationships to leverage networks to scale-up programming. This means using PCL's existing relationships to reach more people, and also working with other organisations to scale up PCL's work.