

ENRICHING LIVES THROUGH DANCE



Information pack

Who we are and what we do

How to support us and our Board of Trustees




Table of Contents

04

Who We Are

05

Our Community, Our Passion

06

We Work In Three Areas

07

Personal Engagement

12

Talent Development

17

Professional Artist Support

20

How You Can Help Support Us

WHO WE ARE

We're more than just a charity; we're a catalyst for dreams and transformation, a thriving Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, and one of only nine Centres for Advanced Training in dance across the UK. As a not-for-profit, we're dedicated to nurturing talent, embracing diversity, and creating an inclusive space for all—whether you're a seasoned artist or a curious newcomer.

Housed in the Grade II listed *Old Town Hall*, our building stands as a symbol of our commitment, made possible by the generous support of Swindon Borough Council, who have provided a peppercorn lease and ongoing in-kind support for its maintenance.

Our vision? It's simple but powerful: *to enrich lives through dance*. Dance, for us, is more than an art form; it's a means to spark creativity, foster connection, and fuel personal growth. We champion personal engagement, talent development, and artist support, reaching far beyond our local community to inspire and empower people regionally, nationally, and globally.

Here, people come first. We believe in removing barriers and celebrating every dream—whether it's taking your first step in a dance class or mastering complex choreography.

“No” isn't in our vocabulary; instead, we're here to say “yes”—yes to dreams, to freedom of expression, and to lives filled with the richness of art and culture. We thrive on the thrill of taking leaps of faith, pushing boundaries, and keeping the arts dynamic, fresh, and fun.

We're on a mission to make every experience memorable and every encounter extraordinary. Join us, and let's create lives brimming with creativity, connection, and joy.

OUR COMMUNITY, OUR CREATIVITY, OUR PASSION FOR DANCE

At our core, we are a place where people from all walks of life can enjoy the physical and mental benefits of dance. We nurture creativity and encourage artistic expression, supporting young dancers to develop their passion and talent. Here, professional artists find a space to be heard, and we work tirelessly to foster an environment where dance as an art form can grow, develop, and thrive.

We take great pride in being part of our local community, collaborating with cultural, educational, and welfare organisations in our town and nearby areas. We welcome people of all ages and abilities to engage in a range of high-quality dance activities, from projects and events to performances. Rooted in the community, we are dedicated to bringing the joy of dance to as many people as possible.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DANCE

We bring dance directly into schools and community spaces, reaching areas where arts engagement may be limited. For many, our programmes offer a social, enjoyable way to enhance their physical health and mental wellbeing, connecting with people from diverse backgrounds. For others, it may be the first step towards a lifelong career in the arts, contributing to the UK's vibrant dance industry. Our ethos of inclusivity and high-quality arts experiences drives our work with schools, cultural partners, health organisations, and artists. Through these partnerships, we aim to create meaningful, inclusive dance experiences that inspire creativity, support wellness, and bring communities together.



WE WORK IN THREE AREAS

**PERSONAL
ENGAGEMENT**

**TALENT
DEVELOPMENT**

**PROFESSIONAL
ARTIST
SUPPORT**



PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT

OUR SUPPORT
COVERS THE
FOLLOWING AREAS

COMMUNITY
DANCE
PROGRAMME

SALTO!
INTEGRATED
PROGRAMME

FESTIVALS

DANCEOUT
ACTIVITIES

COMMUNITY DANCE PROGRAMME

PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT



We offer a wide range of projects in a variety of different contexts, needs and venues. They offer access, encourage participation, creativity and excellence. This programme includes, **DanceOUT** - taking dance outdoors, into educational and community venues. **Community Dance Programme** based in our building, it offers a weekly programme of dance classes, workshops, and events. It includes classes in a range of styles for fun, physical health, mental well-being, creativity, skills progression, and performance opportunities. **SALTO! Integrated Programme** for children, youth and adults with learning disabilities giving them a full and enriching dance programme. **Street Dance** includes a yearly 5-day international street dance festival and battle, a regional Youth Street-Dance Platform, and LiteFest weekend festival.

SALTO! INTEGRATED PROGRAMME

PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT



Our SALTO! Programme is an inclusive dance programme for those who are differently abled. It offers weekly dance classes and occasional projects for children aged 7 years all the way up to adulthood. The classes are creative, fun and aim to develop confidence and self-esteem as well as fitness and friends.

SALTO! JUNIORS is an inclusive dance class for children aged 7-10 years with learning disabilities.

SALTO! YOUTH is an inclusive dance class for children aged 11-16 years with learning disabilities.

SALTO! STEPS is an inclusive performance led group of older (16-18 years) dancers from within the programme who have more confidence and experience and want to work at a different pace and level of creativity.

SALTO! ADULTS is an inclusive dance class for people with a learning and/or physical disability. It is an all-dancing fun class exploring a range of styles through creativity with opportunities to perform. This class has live music.



Photo: Sally Dunne, professional integrated dance programme

FESTIVALS

PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT

THE JAM FESTIVAL & WEST COUNTRY CLASH

Celebrate the roots of street dance with The Jam Festival & West Country Clash! This five-day international street dance festival, held at Swindon Dance during the Easter school holidays, features workshops and battles led by pioneering dancers who shaped the culture of 'Jam!'.

Organised with The Jam Movement, Your Next Move, and Swindon Dance, the festival attracts top talent from across the UK and beyond.

The highlight? West Country Clash—the South West's biggest battle event! Dancers showcase their wildest moves in electrifying showdowns, delivering unmissable energy and creativity for participants and spectators alike.

Open to dancers aged 10+ (or younger with experience), this is your chance to connect with the heartbeat of street dance.



LITEFEST

The world's biggest LITEFEET event happens at Swindon Dance each year. It is the ultimate showdown as Litefeet battles take centre stage. This is the event that connects a global community where the dance floor becomes a clash of titans as dancers go head-to-head and unleash crazy moves.

It is a weekend to hon skills, meet and make friends, to showcase their best moves and get named a Litefest Champion! Although no minimum age, we recommend a minimum age of 10 years for the workshops or to have some experience if a younger dancer.

OUR LOCAL SWINDON COMMUNITY

PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT

Our team takes DanceOUT into the community and schools, offering exciting and diverse projects and dance activities.

We aim to offer everyone, regardless of age, ability or background the chance to experience and participate in the richness of dance, whether they are stumbling across it for the first time at one of our community events or taking part in a dance residency, performance opportunity or working with a visiting professional dance artist or company.

Our projects offer a rich mix of dance styles, the chance to meet new people, have fun and opportunities to make and perform work.

Our projects are for people with or without dance experience, are age appropriate and are designed to support individual and group development, providing that perfect springboard for progression and enjoyment.

We are dedicated to maximising the opportunities in dance for adults, children, and young people.

For example, we ran in association with Swindon Library & Information Service, a family fun day 'FAMILY FIESTA!' Activities included 'have-a-go' sessions in Bharatnatyum, Lindy Hop, Breakin' & Street dance, Jazz Boogie, Yoga, Jazz/Contemporary Fusion and a Manga workshop. Plus, other themed family crafts and activities. The event culminated in a performance by Vanhulle Dance Theatre in the courtyard joining the two buildings that was watched by 103 people.



TALENT DEVELOPMENT

**PRIMARY
STEPS**

STEPS2

**SWINDON
YOUTH
DANCE
COMPANY**

**CENTRE
FOR
ADVANCED
TRAINING**

Our Talent Development programme opens doors for young people from all backgrounds to explore and nurture their creative potential in dance. Starting from the earliest steps, we build strong foundations for a future in the arts, helping shape the next generation of creative leaders in the UK.

The programme provides exceptional young dancers with access to specialist coaching and a clear path to progress their skills. It includes:

Primary Steps (in partnership with the Royal Ballet School): introducing children aged 7-9 to the joy of dance,

STEPS2: the next stage for aspiring dancers aged 9-13,

Swindon Youth Dance Company (SYDCO): a performance company for young dancers aged 13-19, and

Centre for Advanced Training (CAT): a pre-vocational programme for dancers aged 11-19 across the southwest.

With these programmes, Swindon Dance is committed to making dance training accessible and welcoming to our community.

PRIMARY STEPS STEPS2

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

PRIMARY STEPS

Our Primary Steps programme is run in partnership with the Royal Ballet School, Dance Partnership and Access Programme and supported by the Department for Education.

It is a national junior schools' programme that aims to provide year 3-6 class groups (7-11 year olds) with a positive introduction to creative ballet training for selected children who would not otherwise have the opportunity.

STEPS2

STEPS2 is a training programme for children aged 9 – 13 years and provides a stepping stone for aspiring young dancers to develop their dance skills and natural ability.

STEPS2 aims to develop physical confidence, inspire creativity, musicality and an individual's performance and dance skills in contemporary, ballet, jazz, and creative dance. It encourages potential and prepares them for the next step in their training.



SWINDON YOUTH DANCE COMPANY

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

SYDCO

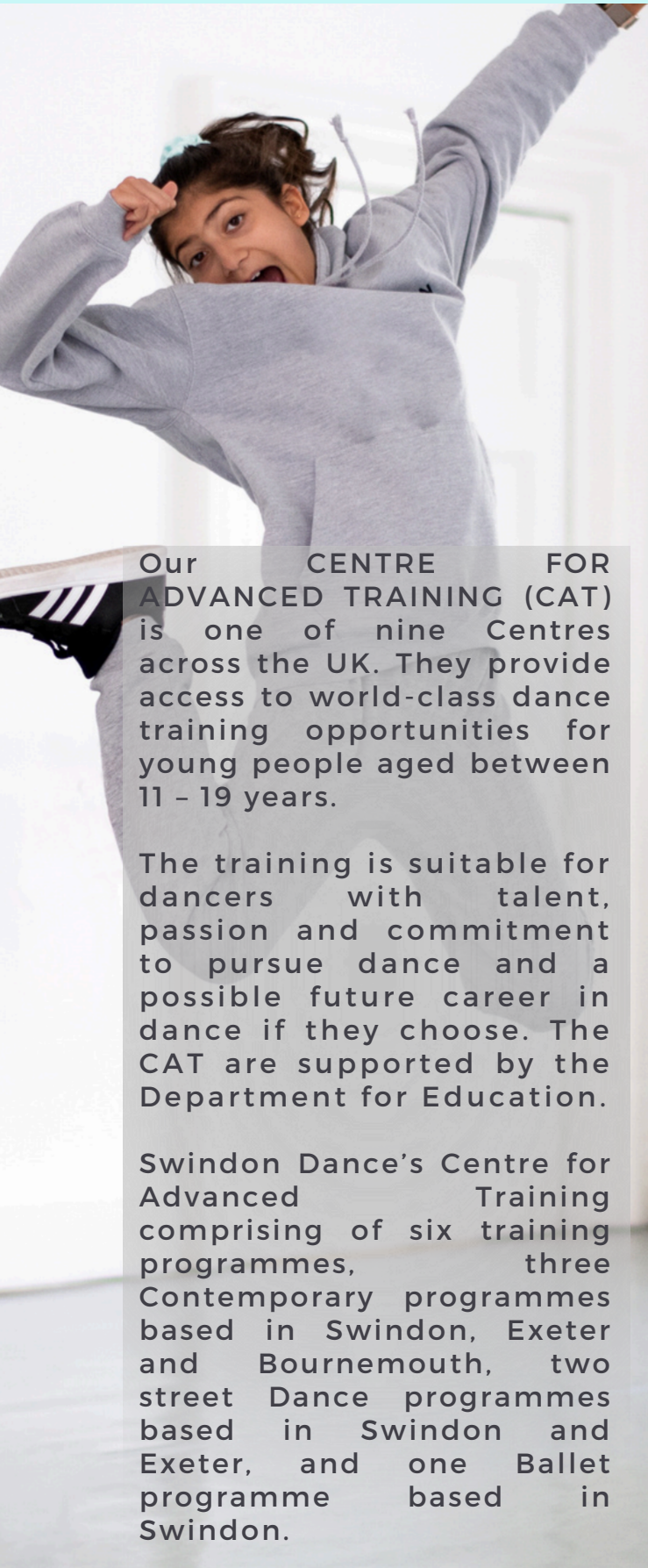
SWINDON YOUTH DANCE COMPANY (SYDCO) is our flagship youth dance company offering technical, choreographic and extensive performance opportunities across the Southwest. It provides a unique pathway for aspiring young dancers aged between 13 – 19 years.

The company aims to develop confidence and physical ability in contemporary dance, inspire creativity, technicality and musicality, encourage choreographic input and offer high quality performance opportunities.



THE CENTRE FOR ADVANCED TRAINING

TALENT DEVELOPMENT



Our CENTRE FOR ADVANCED TRAINING (CAT) is one of nine Centres across the UK. They provide access to world-class dance training opportunities for young people aged between 11 - 19 years.

The training is suitable for dancers with talent, passion and commitment to pursue dance and a possible future career in dance if they choose. The CAT are supported by the Department for Education.

Swindon Dance's Centre for Advanced Training comprising of six training programmes, three Contemporary programmes based in Swindon, Exeter and Bournemouth, two street Dance programmes based in Swindon and Exeter, and one Ballet programme based in Swindon.



Access to student grants makes our training accessible, often free or at a subsidised fee. We are also committed to alleviating additional financial burdens, covering travel, class reimbursements outside of those offered by CAT, performance tickets, and physiotherapy sessions when necessary.

PROFESSIONAL ARTIST SUPPORT

YOUNG
PROFESSIONAL
PROGRAMME

ASSOCIATE
ARTISTS
PROGRAMME

PERFORMANCE
PROGRAMME

SOUTHWEST
ASSOCIATE
ARTIST

FREE
STUDIO USE

MAKING
CONNECTIONS

REVERSE
PITCH

PROFESSIONAL ARTIST SUPPORT

Our Professional Artist Programme is designed to support young to mid-career artists, choreographers, and producers at various stages of their career journeys. It reflects the range of genres within today's diverse dance landscape, helping them grow and thrive in the industry.



The Young Professional Programme is a two-year initiative designed to ease the financial pressures young dancers face as they begin their professional careers, providing crucial support during this pivotal time.

The Associate Artist Programme is ideal for artists seeking space and time for 'creative play'—a chance to research and expand their practice without the pressure to produce finished work. Each participating artist or company receives a £2,000 bursary, mentoring support, and two years of access to studio resources.

The Performance Programme aims to bring live professional performances to new audiences in innovative ways. Artists collaborate with Swindon Dance on custom educational and community projects that engage specific target audiences, alongside developing or creating new work. Each project culminates in a live performance tailored to the project—whether informal, a group sharing, site-specific, outdoors, or part of an event or festival—rather than in a traditional theatre setting.

PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS SUPPORT



Southwest Associate Artist is a collaborative initiative between Swindon Dance and Pavilion Dance South West, united by a shared commitment to nurturing the careers of professional dance artists in the Southwest. This programme provides enhanced regional support to young artists, empowering them as they develop their craft and careers.

The Reverse Pitch is a unique red-carpet event empowering young people to have a say in shaping the arts. Exclusively for 14-20 year-olds (no adults allowed), four emerging choreographers pitch their ideas for a live performance piece. An audience of 100 young dancers then decides who will receive a £2,000 commission. The winning choreographer also gains mentoring, rehearsal space, and the chance to collaborate with our young talent.

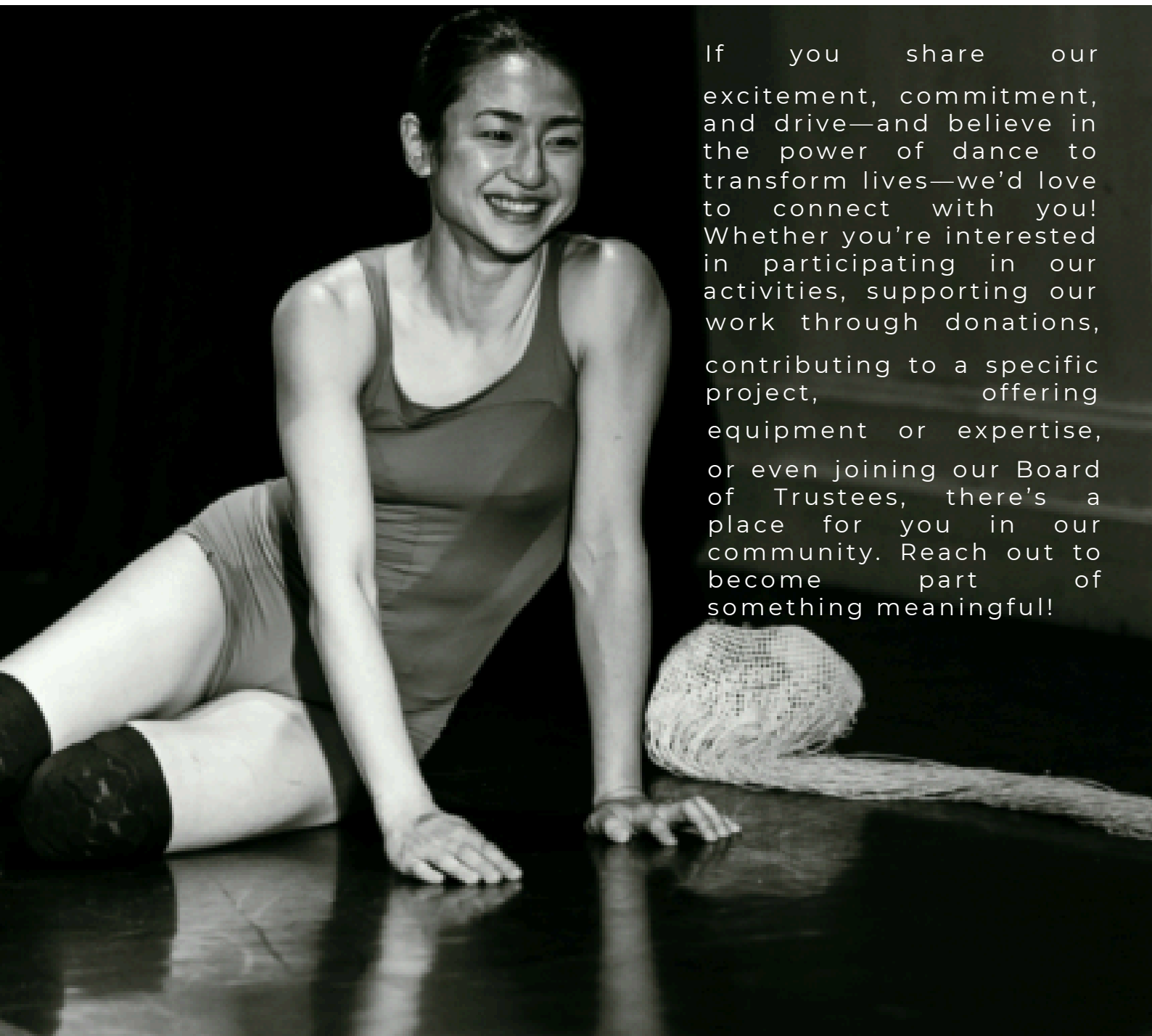


Making Connections is a free monthly drop-in event for creatives from Swindon and the Southwest, designed as a welcoming space for arts professionals and community artists to come together. Each session features a practical component—a two-hour workshop led by a guest artist—followed by a relaxed networking session facilitated by the Making Connections team, including Adrienne Hart, Artistic Director of Neon Dance, and Sarah Ferris, dance artist and teacher.

Free Studio Space for Artists!

We're excited to offer our dance studios at no cost to artists, choreographers, and dance companies for research, development, or rehearsal purposes. Choose from a range of studio spaces, including one with an adjoining meeting room and a cosy kitchen, as well as our studio theatre; The Court Theatre, which can be adapted as a dance studio or an intimate, professional theatre.

HOW CAN YOU HELP SUPPORT US?



If you share our excitement, commitment, and drive—and believe in the power of dance to transform lives—we'd love to connect with you! Whether you're interested in participating in our activities, supporting our work through donations, contributing to a specific project, offering equipment or expertise, or even joining our Board of Trustees, there's a place for you in our community. Reach out to become part of something meaningful!

**Become a member on
our Board of Trustees**

Our Board of Trustees

We value diversity in culture, knowledge, experience, and creativity and believe that to fulfil our aim to becoming an all-inclusive and diverse dance centre that this must be reflected in our team and Board. We are a supportive and collaborative team who embrace new ideas and challenges and are open to constructive criticism and big-picture thinking. We respect one another and value generosity, honesty and a sense of humour.

We aim to have more diverse voices and lived experiences represented on our Board and welcome those with a different skillset and/or from a diverse background to enrich and expand our pool of creative and organisational knowledge.

We are seeking people with broad experience (not necessarily from within dance or with Board experience) from ALL walks of life to join the Board. This includes those with protected characteristics, disabled people (including hidden disabilities or neurodiversity such as autism and dyslexia), people from the global majority, LGBTQIA+ and young people amongst others.

We are also interested in hearing from those from a Legal background and/or with experience in Finance to help us fill a gap in our experience base.

You should be passionate about our work and be a strong advocate of our vision to enrich lives through dance. Externally, you will champion our reputation and articulate our value and relevance.



Just for Boys | community dance class | credit: Joseph Dart Photography

What's in it for you

We offer the chance to give back to your community, to support the future of the arts and cultural industries, to hone and share your leadership skills through collaboration to develop a strategy that will take the charity forward, enabling more people to benefit from the transformative power of dance.

You will bring to the table your own views and experiences, which you will use generously to enrich and expand our pool of creative and organisational knowledge. In return, you will gain a wealth of transferable personal and professional skills that will empower and enrich and extend your network in the creative, cultural, public, voluntary, education and health sectors.

Alumni Tyler Attwood, Dance leader and
Producer of our West Country Clash |
photo courtesy of Tyler



Dance for Parkinson's | health & wellbeing |
credit: Joseph Dart Photography



Your Role and Responsibilities

The Chair and trustees have overall control of the charity (Swindon Dance) and are responsible for making sure it is doing what it was set up to do.

The trustees are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run. Being a trustee means making decisions that will impact on people's lives. Depending on what Swindon Dance does, you will be making a difference to your local community or society.

Trustees use their skills and experience to support Swindon Dance, helping it achieve its aims. Trustees also often learn new skills during their time on the board.

Becoming the Chair of our board will give you an opportunity to engage in the evolution and development of one of the UK's leading dance development organisations. You will be responsible, along with the other Trustees, for ensuring the strong and effective governance of the organisation and its financial sustainability and compliance with all relevant legislation. You will be involved in strategic planning and help shape the organisation's vision, advocating and championing the organisation and helping us build on our successful track record and realise of goals and aspirations.



PLitefest | street dance event | credit: courtesy of The Jam Movement

Eligibility

You must be at least 18 years old. You must be properly appointed following the procedures as outlined in the organisations governing documents i.e., mission statement and charity commission guidelines. You must not act as a trustee if you are disqualified under the Charities Act, including if you:

- have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception (such as fraud);
- you are bankrupt or have entered a formal arrangement (e.g. an individual voluntary arrangement) with a creditor;
- have been removed as a company director or charity trustee because of wrong doing.

You may require a DBS check, and if required, any offer is made conditional upon the result of the check being satisfactory.

Chair - main duties

Ensure Swindon Dance is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit

- You and your co-trustees must make sure that Swindon Dance is carrying out the purposes for which it is set up, and no other purpose. This means you should:
- Ensure you understand Swindon Dance's purposes as set out in its governing documentation;
- Plan what Swindon Dance will do, and what you want it to achieve;
- Be able to explain how all of Swindon Dance's activities are intended to further or support its purposes;
- Understand how Swindon Dance benefits the public by carrying out its purposes.

Spending charity funds on the wrong purposes is a very serious matter; in some cases, trustees may have to reimburse Swindon Dance personally.

Comply with Swindon Dance's governing documentation and the law

You and your co-trustees must:

- Make sure that Swindon Dance complies with its governing documentation.
- Comply with charity law requirements and other laws that apply to Swindon Dance;
- You should take reasonable steps to find out about legal requirements, for example by reading relevant guidance or taking appropriate advice when you need to;
- Registered charities must keep their details on the register up to date and ensure they send the right financial and other information to the commission in their annual return or annual update.

Act with reasonable care and skill

As someone responsible for governing a charity, you:

- Are expected to work considerately and respectfully with all Swindon Dance stake holders and to respect and promote diversity;
- Must use reasonable care and skill, making use of your skills and experience and taking appropriate advice when necessary;
- Should not make public comments about Swindon Dance unless authorised to do so.

Failure to attend three consecutive meetings may result in other trustees asking for your resignation.

Ensure Swindon Dance is accountable

You and the trustees must comply with statutory accounting and reporting requirements. You should also:

- Work considerately and respectfully with all Swindon Dance stakeholders and respect and promote diversity
- Ensure appropriate accountability to members if Swindon Dance has a membership separate from the trustees;
- Ensure accountability within Swindon Dance, particularly where you delegate responsibility for tasks or decisions to staff or volunteers.

Act in Swindon Dance's best interests

You must:

- Do what you and your co-trustees (and no one else) decide will best enable Swindon Dance to carry out its purposes;
- With your co-trustees, make balanced and adequately informed decisions, thinking about the long-term as well as the short-term;
- Avoid putting yourself in a position where your duty to Swindon Dance conflicts with your personal interests or loyalty to any other person or body;
- Not receive any benefit from the charity unless it is properly authorised and is clearly in Swindon Dance's interests; this also includes anyone who is financially connected to you, such as a partner, dependent child or business partner;
- Contribute to the recruitment and appointment of suitable candidates for trusteeship.

Manage Swindon Dance's resources responsibly

You must act responsibly, reasonably and honestly. This is sometimes called the duty of prudence. Prudence is about exercising sound judgement. You and your co-trustees must:

- Make sure that Swindon Dance's assets are only used to support or carry out its purposes;
- Not take inappropriate risks with Swindon Dance's assets or reputation;
- Not over-commit Swindon Dance;
- Take special care when investing or borrowing;
- Comply with any restrictions on spending funds;

You and your co-trustees should put appropriate procedures and safeguards in place and take reasonable steps to ensure that these are followed. Otherwise, you risk making the charity vulnerable to fraud or theft, or other kinds of abuse, and being in breach of your duty.

Making decisions

The trustees make decisions about Swindon Dance together, working as a team. Decisions do not usually need to be unanimous if the majority of trustees agree and the minimum quorum is met. They are usually made at Swindon Dance board meetings. When you and your co-trustees make decisions about Swindon Dance, you must:

- Act within your powers;
- Act in good faith, and only in the interests of Swindon Dance;
- Make sure you are sufficiently informed, taking any advice you need;
- Take account of all relevant factors you are aware of;
- Ignore any irrelevant factors;
- Deal with conflicts of interest and loyalty;
- Make decisions that are within the range of decisions that a reasonable trustee body could make in the circumstances;
- Respect board confidentiality;
- Never use confidentiality as an excuse not to disclose matters that should be transparent and open.

You should record how you made more significant decisions in case you need to review or explain them in the future.

Chair and treasurer trustee roles

Some trustees have special roles, such as the chair and the treasurer. They are known as officers. You must comply with any specific provisions in your governing document about officers. Officers do not automatically have any extra powers or legal duties than the other trustees but may carry out specific roles or have specific responsibilities delegated to them.

When trustees can be personally liable

It is extremely rare, but not impossible, for charity trustees to be held personally liable:

- To Swindon Dance, if they cause a financial loss by acting improperly;
- To a third party that has a legal claim against Swindon Dance which the charity cannot meet.

Understanding potential liabilities will help protect yourself and Swindon Dance by taking action to reduce the risk. This includes complying with your duties. It also includes deciding whether Swindon Dance should become incorporated (for example as a company or CIO).

Swindon Dance is a company limited by guarantee; registered in England & Wales No. 5467343; and a registered Charity No. 11114761.

How to join us

If you are as excited, committed and driven as we are; value collaboration and have a founding desire to improve people's lives through their experience of dance, please submit your Expression of Interest.

In the spirit of creativity there is no application to complete from Swindon Dance for you to submit your Expression of Interest. We would like to hear from you, in your own unique voice, why you are interested in joining our Board of Trustees, what you will bring to Swindon Dance and the Board and what you would like to gain from joining the team.

If successful you will meet with the Director and CEO of Swindon Dance for an informal meeting to discuss in more depth the work of Swindon Dance and its Board and the next stages in the recruitment process. This will then include a formal application and a meeting with the current Board.



Photo: SYDCO | talent development
credit: Savannah Photographic

Email your Expression of Interest to:

Viv Slayford
Director & CEO
Swindon Dance
viv.slayford@swindondance.org.uk
01793 601700 ex. 104
swindondance.org.uk