

What is our why? Why does Ausdance WA exist for Western Australia?

Mission

Lifelong Dance

Purpose:

Provide leadership for dance in Western Australia as an informed and active advocate and service provider, supporting capacity building for the sector

Why:

The dance sector in Western Australia is relatively small and under resourced and Ausdance WA can provide the support required to make a collective impact:

service organisations help their participants act as if they had achieved a larger scale of operations while freeing them to focus on their core mission and programs.

[The Boston Foundation, Arts Service Organizations: A Study of Impact and Capacity, 2005]

How:

Current capacity building projects include:

West Australian Indigenous Dance Network

Establishment of The Nest – the West Australian Indigenous Dance Network - to build the capacity of Indigenous dance artists and community groups to increase employment and performance opportunities, build the profile and develop audiences.

Current research based advocacy and services include:

Safe Spaces for Dance Policy

Establishment of a studio owners advisory committee to work towards developing sample resources and documents on Safe Spaces for Dance, to support the industry, in readiness to implement state government responses to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Tertiary Teacher Training in Dance Teaching

We are currently researching the level of dance teaching training provided through tertiary teacher training degrees, with a view to lobbying the tertiary institutions to increase the training to ensure that graduating teachers have adequate capacity and skills to teach the syllabus. Given that dance is one of the arts learning area subjects, it is important that teachers are offered sufficient training to deliver the curriculum.

Recommended Voluntary Guidelines for Pay Rates for Dance Teachers

In the absence of Award Rates and at the request of a number of member teaching artists, we are reviewing rates of pay for teachers of dance with a view to establishing Voluntary Recommended Industry Guidelines. Currently, industry rates are only available for performers.

Impact Study: The value of Service Organisations

We are working on a proposal to support the commissioning of research into the impact and value of service organisations, with a view to providing governments and philanthropic foundations with accurate information on which to base their financial support for this

sector of the culture and arts industry. There is no current industry wide information or statistics documenting our impact on the sector.

Future projects:

A nation wide outdoor publicity campaign to raise the profile of dance in all contexts – professional, recreational, educational – and promote the physical, mental, social, emotional and educational benefits of participation in and engagement with dance.

Production of a sector wide statement for distribution to politicians and philanthropic trusts to promote dance.

Past capacity building achievements include

- Establishment of STRUT Dance to support the independent dance sector
- Leading the MoveMe promotions, including the biennial MoveMe Festival (2012-2018) to build the profile of and audiences for the contemporary dance sector
- Producing the Future Landings Projects for regional communities across the state. Between 2011 and 2016, Ausdance WA delivered ground breaking community dance projects in regional and remote communities across Western Australia, achieving national recognition for best practice project delivery for the communities.
- Lead support organisation for the Regional Arts Partnership Program for contemporary dance, 2017-2019.

Purpose:

Educate, train and support the dance community.

Why:

Ausdance WA is recognised as the principal provider of professional learning for dance teachers across the state.

Through our Dance Education Program, we aim to ensure that teachers of dance across all genres and contexts have access to current best practice teaching methods and techniques, information about industry regulations and legislation, and resources. Ultimately, we invest in dance teacher professional learning to ensure that students of dance receive the best possible teaching in a safe and positive environment. There is an increasing body of evidence demonstrating the many positive benefits of dance for participants. Best practice teaching of dance will ensure that the positive benefits are delivered.

Research by the Australia Council and the University of Sydney found that students who are involved in the arts show more positive academic and personal wellbeing outcomes than students who were not involved in the arts.

Academic outcomes included motivation, homework completion, class participation, enjoyment of school, and educational aspirations, while personal wellbeing measures considered such factors as self-esteem, life satisfaction, and a sense of meaning or purpose.

The study provided compelling evidence that the arts should be central to schooling and not left on the fringes. Providing professional development for teachers of dance in all contexts has the added benefit of ensuring that students experience the benefits of participation.

How:

Ausdance WA is recognised as the principal provider of teacher professional learning through our Education Program. Our practical program provides:

- PD workshops for teachers of the dance curriculum in both primary and secondary schools;
- PD workshops and information sessions for private dance studio managers and teachers;
- Specialist training for teachers for Dance for Parkinson's, seniors and people with restricted mobility;
- PD for regionally-based teachers;
- Regional Residencies for regionally-based dance artists – teachers, dancers and choreographers;
- Business information workshops and resources.

Purpose:

Facilitate participation and develop audiences for dance.

Why:

The current structure of the state subsidised dance companies and organisations is such that, whilst they fill many roles in delivering dance activities and events to the people of Western Australia, gaps remain. Ausdance WA regularly scopes the sector, identifies gaps, and develops and implements projects to fill the gaps.

Providing opportunities for the general population to participate in and engage with dance also builds audiences for performances, supporting the growth of the professional performance companies and independent artists. Research indicates that 30% of participants in our participation and access program are likely to become audiences for the producing companies and organisations.

How:

Ausdance WA runs a significant access, participation and engagement program for people of all ages and abilities, across the state.

Monkeyfunk

Workshops for pre schoolers and their parent/guardians

Regional Engagement

Landing Ground – a program of in schools classes and workshops in remote communities across the Pilbara, culminating in an intra-region performance

Future Landings – a two-year community driven program of workshops, leading to creative development and performance of a dance work with, by and for the community

Dance in Country Week – a week long program of dance workshops, creative development and information for regionally-based students and their teachers

Monkeyfunk - Workshops for pre schoolers and their parent/guardians

Dance Fit

A program of dance classes promoting wellness in the workplace

Revelator

Dance for PD Classes – specialist classes for people living with Parkinson’s Disease

Dance for Seniors – specialist dance classes for seniors

Given our current capacity, gaps remain. However, they have been identified and will be addressed as our resources can be built over the forthcoming three years.

Purpose:

Promote the lifelong benefits of engagement with dance

Why:

Alongside the creative enjoyment of engagement with dance, there is significant and growing evidence-based research testifying to the physical, mental, emotional, social and educational benefits of participation in dance, for individuals and communities.

International research studies have demonstrated that dance can:

- *Increase people’s motivation to participate in physical activity and maintain that participation, because they see dance as fun, expressive, non-competitive and sociable;*
- *Increase people’s physical fitness, strength and abilities, often more effectively than other forms of exercise;*
- *Assist recovery from illness, reduce pain and the perception of pain*

- *Build self-esteem and elevate mood;*
- *Support people to develop positive social interactions and encourage them to engage in new social, leisure and physical activities;*
- *Improve quality of life.*

[COOL FACTS, HOT FEET: Dancing to Health: a review of the evidence, published by Dance SouthWest and the Department of Health, March 2011, UK.]

Promoting the lifelong benefits of engagement with dance delivers on West Australian state government priority policies and strategies across a range of portfolios. We’ve commissioned *The Lifelong Dance Program – The Evidence*, which identifies the relevant state government policy priorities and provides the research evidence for dance participation to deliver on those priorities. Our Lifelong Dance Program is supported by research evidencing the deep impact of the physical and mental health and wellbeing benefits of the program for individuals and communities.

How:

The Lifelong Dance Program – outlined above - engages with people of all ages, reaching socio-economically disadvantaged communities across the state, all underpinned by an education program to ensure excellence in the delivery of dance in safe environments.