

# Easier Read Version

## Research Tender - Barriers to Progression & Employment in Dance for Disabled People

**Invitation for expressions of interest to undertake  
this new research | Deadline: 3 June 2024**



Photographer: Philip Hatcher-Moore. Dancer: Krystal Lowe  
11 Million Reasons to Dance: Cymru, commissioned by People Dancing



## The Working Group

The Working Group is the name given to five dance organisations who are working together. They are Candoco Dance Company, Coralii Dance Company, People Dancing, Stoppgap Dance Company & TIN Arts.

We are working as a group because we want to increase the amount of disabled people who work in dance and those who are leaders in dance.

Only 9% of the people who work in dance are disabled, 8% being artists.

The Working Group want to help more disabled people work in dance.

**For the purposes of this document when using the term ‘disabled people’ we mean this to include but not be limited to, people who define as D/deaf, disabled, neurodivergent, or who are chronically ill, have a learning disability or live with impairments or mental health conditions. We also understand that our terminology and language may not fully represent or be the preferred descriptive definition for all individuals who define as having a disability, condition or impairment.**

**When using or referring to the term ‘dance’ in the context of this document and the research more broadly, we mean this to include disabled people dancing, disabled artists, disabled producers, arts professionals and leaders working in dance, disabled people working within dance organisations, freelance disabled dancers, and disabled dance participants and volunteers, paid or unpaid.**



Photograph right – Photographer Philip Hatcher-Moore, 11 Million Reasons to Dance: Cymru – commissioned by People Dancing

# The Research Brief

The Working Group wants to make change to increase disabled people working in dance.

The evidence says that the work we have been doing over the last thirty years has not been enough. We need action from other dance organisations to make sure things change for the better.



The Working Group wishes to hire an independent disabled researcher/s (or co-led with a disabled or person/s with lived experience researcher/leader) or organisation or agency which has a disabled person within the team, to do a nationwide investigation that asks lots of questions about why there are so few disabled people in dance.



This project is funded by Arts Council England, and it will give us some data that gives us evidence of why the numbers are low.

This data will help us to have conversations that will lead to changes for the better.

We will plan to use this data to do a project or activity that helps more disabled people work in dance. This might take a long time, but we will work with lots of organisations and people to make positive changes over time.



Photographs – three pictures, all a mixture of stock images of office workers

We want the research to do these things:

- Make sure lots of different disabled people have had their say about why they think not many disabled people work in dance
- Make sure we have listened to lots of professional disabled dancers
- Talk to people who employ dancers and ask if they employ disabled people
- Find out what the main reasons why disabled people don't work in dance
- Write down disabled dance artists and leaders from across the UK in one document.
- Come up with some ideas about what we might need to do now to get more disabled dancers working in dance.

People Dancing is one of the five organisations and is managing the project. That means we will help people involved with what they need.



Photographer Sean Goldthorpe. Dancer Sian Green



## Who else will be involved

### 1) Member organisations of the Working Group:

The Working Group make sure the research goes well and ask other people who work in dance and or work with disabled people in dance to help us make sure we do a good and well thought out job. This might mean asking opinions or others, and checking that we have included everyone that we want to talk to

### 2) Steering Group

This will be some of the people from the Working Group and also some invited people who work in this area and that includes disabled people. The Steering Group will help the people doing the research to make sure that they are capturing the correct information and including appropriate people.

### 3) Disabled artists and groups

It's important that we speak or communicate with disabled dancers who already work in or want to work in dance. This will help us to get a good idea of why some disabled people can't or don't work in the dance sector. The voices of disabled people are very important to this research.

### 4) Dance Organisations and training providers

We will contact dance organisations who are funded and non-funded to try and get data that helps our research. This will include asking them how often they employ disabled dancers, and if they help and support disabled dancers in their communities.

## Other resources

The research should also think about how it might link in with some reports that other researchers have already made earlier. They won't be the same, but they might be helpful with this work. There is a list at the end of this document for reference.



Photograph – A stock images of office workers making data

## Timescale

It is expected that our activity to make change will run for a while over the years 2024 to 2026 and we will do more after that once we've made plans. We are all National Portfolio Organisations funded by Arts Council England, and so we will make sure that this work supports other work that we might do as part of our funding agreements in the future.



The Working Group will contract a researcher in June 2024. The researcher/s should aim to start the work in July 2024 but this is flexible depending on that person/s needs.

We aim to present the results in Nov 2024 which won't be all of it, but will be a taster. The Working Group will host a national event in 2025 in which findings will be presented in full and will be shared within the dance sector and with everyone else who might be interested.

The final report will be published in February 2025.

We will have an evaluation report out in March 2025.

We will have a national event sometime in 2025 to bring everyone together and talk about the findings.

Here is the timeline that will be followed. This might change and is flexible.

May 2024	Call out for researchers. (advert for the work)
June 2024	Interviews and pitches. (a pitch tells us how they will do it)
July/Aug	Meetings with Working Group.
Oct 2024	Share findings and present to Working Group.
Nov 2024	Share findings presented at industry wide seminar.
Jan 2025	Draft report shared with Working Group.
Feb 2025	Final report and call to action presented & disseminated across sector.
March 2025	Evaluation and wrap up.
During 2025	Shared findings through joint symposium with NPO partners.

Even though the timeline is planned, the Working Group understands that this might have to change because people involved have access needs or want to make changes. We will need to agree changes with Arts Council England, our funders, but it's important to us that the schedule works for everyone.



## What skills the researchers must have

- An individual, or a team of researchers, or agency with at least one individual with lived experience of disability.
- Experience of leading similar research studies, or have done a similar job.
- An understanding of [Theory of Change](#) and the [social model of disability](#), and other relevant models
- Experience of collating and presenting data and evidence in such a way as to support a steering group to make informed decisions.
- Experience of leading consultations, workshops and feel confident to facilitate discussions and or 1-2-1s with a diverse range of people with differing access and communication needs.
- Be outstanding in their approach to inclusion within their work, this includes thought in applying that to the collation, communication of, and presentation of the data with access considered.
- Excellent written and communication skills
- Excellent project management skills
- Available for the dates and deadlines specified.
- Relationship management experience and working within multi-partnership projects.
- Able to report to a working group and steering group.



## Fee

The fee for this research is up to £25,000 inclusive of expenses and VAT.

There is a separate budget available to support access costs for disabled researchers and others involved in the research.

Photographs - Stock images, photograph one - of a group of people in an office.

Photograph two, two people talking in an office in suits

## Expression of Interest

Interested candidates are invited to make an [expression of interest](#).

This is a short online form for you to tell us about who you are and your experience and how you meet this brief. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to pitch how they will meet the brief.



The pitch is like an interview. It will be in person in Leicester and **or online** if more suitable or accessible for selected candidates.

Please fill in our expression of interest form [here](#) You can also submit a video expression of interest no longer than 7 minutes stating how you think you/your team meet the brief. Send MP4 video applications to [louise@communitydance.org.uk](mailto:louise@communitydance.org.uk) by the **3 June at 5pm**.



If you face barriers in putting forward an expression of interest, or would like an informal chat please email Louise Wildish – Head of Inclusion at People Dancing [louise@communitydance.org.uk](mailto:louise@communitydance.org.uk) A BSL and audio version of this pack is available on our website [www.communitydance.org.uk](http://www.communitydance.org.uk)

Photographs – Stock images, photograph one - an image of a form with a pen, photograph two, a camera and someone filming themselves



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**ARTS COUNCIL  
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# A selection of reference materials:

## **Changing Perceptions**

2013 report into barriers to training for disabled people. Has a few more research papers to look at in the bibliography

<https://www.dance4.co.uk/projects/changing-perceptions/>

## **Impact of Stopgap Dance Company's inclusive dance syllabus**

<https://www.stopgapdance.com/learn-and-practice/dance-teachers-and-artists/inclusive-dance-and-iris-teacher-training/iris/>

## **ISTD trial of 'adapting' syllabi**

ISTD piloted adapting their syllabus for disabled learners and the process was evaluated

<https://www.istd.org/teach/inclusive-dance-practice/accessing-pathways-to-training/>

## **11 Million Reasons to Dance evaluation report**

Includes useful content and data from national inclusive dance project.

<https://www.communitydance.org.uk/programmes/disability-and-inclusion/11-million-reasons-to-dance>

## **Making a Shift**

Arts Council England report from 2017 into barriers into creative industries employment for disabled people.

## **Research into inclusive dance training and education in UK, Greece, Sweden and Netherlands**

Commissioned by Onassis Cultural Centre.

## **Time to Act by British Council**

How lack of knowledge in the cultural sector creates barriers for disabled artists and audiences.

## **Reflectors – experience of co-mentoring within dance and disability**

The personal stories of disabled and non-disabled dance practitioners working together in a shared learning experience.

## **Invisible Difference research**

The InVisible Difference project via Coventry University seeks to extend current thinking that surrounds the making, status, ownership and value of work by contemporary dance choreographers.