



Application Pack

Independent Reviewer Community Dance Training in Wales

Rubicon Dance
Nora Street
Cardiff
CF24 1ND

02920 491477
info@rubicondance.co.uk
www.rubicondance.co.uk

Dear Applicant

Thank you for expressing an interest in working with Rubicon Dance in the role of Independent Reviewer for Wales Wide Training Programme.

Rubicon Dance exists to unlock self-expression so that people discover their potential, feel motivated and connected to the world. We believe everyone should have the opportunity to nurture their individual talents. This is why we have made it our mission to challenge traditional views of what it means to dance; whether this is where we dance, who we dance with, or what artistic expression looks like.

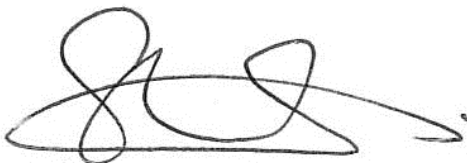
The Wales Wide Training Programme (WWTP) is managed by Rubicon Dance and in March 2026 it celebrated 13 years of serving the dance sector in Wales. Primarily a training programme for those working in dance, WWTP aims to inspire and sustain community dance in Wales by providing training which is responsive to sector need. The 2025/2026 programme was supported by a Create grant from the Arts Council of Wales with match funding from The Waterloo Foundation.

Like many arts organisations, Rubicon has weathered some challenging times in recent years but we have been undertaking an extensive process of renewal and restructuring that has led us to regain a positive perspective, and the confidence to create dynamic new roles in the organisation.

In this pack you will find some background information, along with the practical details you need to apply for the post. Should you have any queries, or if you would like a confidential and informal conversation about the role, please contact us to arrange this by emailing tracey@rubicondance.co.uk. For more information about Rubicon Dance and Wales Wide Training Programme, please visit our website www.rubicondance.co.uk.

Thank you again for your interest in Rubicon Dance. We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Simon Morris', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Simon Morris
Chief Executive Officer
Rubicon Dance



Tender for Independent Review of Community Dance Training in Wales

Rubicon Dance is leading on the commissioning of an Independent Review of Community Dance Training in Wales and is seeking to appoint a consultant(s) to carry out this work. The Contract will commence in June/July 2026 and run up to the 30th November 2026. The budget available is **£11,500** (inclusive of travel, materials and VAT).

Background:

Dance practitioners, artists and organisations working in community settings across Wales play an important role in advancing creativity, wellbeing, cultural participation, and lifelong engagement with the arts. Their work spans health, education, early years, disability, mental health, and wider community contexts. The majority of practitioners and artists working in this field are freelance, and their ability to sustain high-quality practice relies on access to ongoing, relevant professional development and strong peer networks providing connection and support.

The current *Wales Wide Training Programme* has been delivered by Rubicon Dance since 2013 and has ensured sustained professional development, sector connection, and practical training for community dance practitioners and artists across Wales. The well supported programme has demonstrated clear demand for structured CPD, training, sharing and learning and with both in person and online blended options. It has strengthened professional networks and has supported and connected practitioners and artists working across diverse and inclusive settings and specialisms from across Wales.

Thirteen years of growing, learning, relationships, and infrastructure have been developed through this programme which provide a strong foundation for future provision in an ever changing community dance sector. Recommendations emerging from the Wales Dance Review and wider strategic priorities around Climate Justice, Welsh Language and Anti-Racist practice, requires a period of reflection on the programme.

In order to achieve this, Rubicon Dance proposed a two pronged six-month programme of work to Arts Council Wales and this now forms the basis for this reflection and review. A programme of continuing delivery - which is crucial for the community dance sector in Wales – will run alongside a structured future-focused period of reflection that can critically assess the current model and collectively shape what community dance training in Wales could look like in the next decade.

Scope of the Work:

We recognise that the scope of the work is complex because of the parallel strands of delivery and review and yet we believe they are co-dependent and essential. The training programme will ensure continuity of support for the sector whilst simultaneously shaping a clear and shared vision for its long-term development. This combined approach of continuity of delivery (which is crucial for practitioners and artists) alongside independently guided reflection and collaborative sector-informed re-imagining for the future is both timely and exciting for the WWTP programme.

To date WWTP hasn't had an opportunity to carry out a structured independent review of its work, despite regular evaluation and we really welcome this. Our hope is that working with the Independent Reviewer will enable us to re model the programme and determine what might be needed to develop and implement a relevant training programme that will be a part of Community Dance training in Wales for the next decade.

Rubicon Dance will be responsible for contracting the Independent Reviewer but will ensure that the review process operates at arm's length from delivery whilst drawing on some of the learning from the delivery to inform the conclusions and recommendations of the review. The consultant(s) appointed will retain autonomy in consultation design, analysis and recommendations.

We are committed to forming an open, transparent, and collaborative partnership with the independent reviewer. Our approach will ensure they have the autonomy, access, and insight needed to deliver a rigorous and impartial review, while enabling learning to be integrated into delivery processes effectively.

In order to support the process, Rubicon will:

- Continue to monitor and evaluate the planned continued training programme and share data, insight, and learning ensuring the reviewer has timely and meaningful access to information across the delivery process. We will provide data to the Independent Reviewer as required. Evaluation methods will capture both quantitative data (e.g. participation levels, regional engagement) and qualitative insight (e.g. changes in confidence, artistic development, employability, connection, support and network strength);
- Facilitate access to practitioners, organisations and stakeholders to enable the reviewer to engage meaningfully with those involved in the programme by arranging interviews, observations, focus groups, and meetings as needed. Whilst allowing the reviewer to engage independently with stakeholders to ensure feedback is unbiased;
- Provide access to historical data accrued over the period of time WWTP has been operational;
- Incorporate access to training delivery to ensure the reviewer can engage directly with it to gain authentic insight into practice, context, and participant experience. This might include observing live training sessions, workshops, or classes and access to a representative range of sessions across different facilitators, cohorts, and formats.
- Take part in the consultation as a partner and stakeholder whilst ensuring no conflict of interest – see Appendix two;
- Respond to emerging findings - We will take a proactive, reflective approach to engaging with findings by welcoming interim insights and early recommendations, using them to strengthen ongoing delivery, participating in learning conversations to support shared understanding and explore implications, making delivery adjustments where emerging evidence indicates opportunities for improvement and developing an action plan to implement final recommendations and embedding learning into future practice and long-term delivery models.

The Independent Process will be led by the Independent Reviewer working collaboratively with stakeholders including organisations and freelancers from across Wales to share learning from delivery and contribute to co-design conversations. The consultation will include both those leading the existing WWTP and Arts Council Wales.

We anticipate that the review will:

- Engage freelance, early career and established practitioners and artists, bilingual and Welsh speaking artists as well as those from diverse cultural backgrounds, disabled artists, and practitioners working in both rural and urban communities ensuring representation across geography, language, career stage, and protected characteristics.;
- Through clearly defined consultation stages and methods (e.g. gatherings, roundtables, surveys, focus groups, advisory groups – both in person and online) facilitate meaningful co-design and shared ownership in shaping the future training model;
- Analyse and articulate key learning emerging from consultation and delivery to produce This should also demonstrate how this future model strengthens sector infrastructure, progression pathways, quality and national connectivity.

Outputs:

- An agreed **scoping document** that outlines the approach and which is shared with the sector to ensure ownership and clarity of expectations about the process and the planned outputs;
- **Interim milestone reports** (verbal) that are iterative and which can inform the development and improvement of the delivery programme as the work progresses;
- Defined vision and **delivery framework** for a future facing Wales-wide community dance training model aligned with Arts Council of Wales priorities and sector needs. This should include proposed delivery principles, governance considerations, partnership models, and sustainability approaches.

Our hope is that the work will achieve the following **outcomes**:

- Stronger sector confidence and shared ownership of future direction;
- Strengthened infrastructure, progression pathways, quality and sustainability;
- A more coherent and strategically aligned national training model

The final delivery framework for community dance training in Wales will be shared widely with the dance sector including current organisations and freelancers as well as reaching those who currently are not familiar with the programme. The final report should make the need for training in community dance in Wales clear to the sector and funders and potential new partners (eg local authorities and health boards).

A breakdown of the **proposed training programme** is contained in Appendix One and we hope that the Independent Reviewer will join a selection of the events. The schedule may be subject to revision when working alongside the independent reviewer and being responsive to research findings and the dynamic reimagining process.

The expected outputs of the planned training programme are:

- A coherent programme of CPD and networking opportunities;
- Broad geographic reach and inclusive participation;
- Engagement across multiple areas of community dance practice.

We hope that this will achieve the following outcomes:

- Increased artistic quality, confidence, and employability of participating artists;
- Stronger, more connected and supportive dance networks across Wales;
- Improved equity of access to regular and affordable training and professional development;
- Clear articulation of a Wales-specific training model that supports values led practice.

Criteria for the Independent Reviewer:

We are looking to appoint a consultant(s) or company able to carry out the work within the six month timescale.

Essential criteria include:

- Knowledge of the community dance sector in Wales;
- Extensive experience of a wide range of consultation, evaluation and research methods leading to publishable outcomes;
- Ability to gather and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data and draw conclusions that can be actioned;
- Knowledge and expertise in training provision and skills development;
- Knowledge and experience of working in cross sector ways with other key stakeholders for example, the health sector and local authorities;
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills;
- The ability to write clear and concise reports.

Desirable criteria include:

- Welsh language speaker;
- Knowledge of government in Wales and the policy and political contexts;

Submission Guidelines:

Tenders to undertake this brief should be submitted to Tracey Brown, Stakeholder Manager, Rubicon Dance by **5.00pm on June 16th 2026**.

Interviews of shortlisted candidates will be held on **June 24th 2026** and we would hope to commence the work as soon as possible thereafter.

Submitted tenders should include:

- A short statement outlining your experience, knowledge and skills - how it equips you to fulfil the brief and why you're interested in carrying it out;
- A proposal outlining your approach to this complex brief with an outline of your proposed workplan;
- A budget breakdown linked to this, including the proposed number of days and your day rate;
- An outline of what support you might need from Rubicon Dance to ensure the successful delivery of this contract;
- Examples of previous relevant evaluation reports for similar projects;
- Two references, including one that we can contact prior to the interview.

For an informal discussion please contact tracey@rubicondance.co.uk

APPENDIX ONE: The Training Programme – June/July to November 2026

A breakdown of the proposed training programme is below and we hope that the Independent Reviewer will join a selection of the events. The schedule may be subject to revision when working alongside the independent reviewer and being responsive to research findings and the dynamic reimagining process.

Throughout the programme we will focus on some of the following:

- Dance for Parkinson's
- Welsh language
- Dance and health including falls prevention
- Mental health of practitioners and artists and boundaries whilst working in challenging/difficult contexts
- Working with children with life limiting illnesses
- Anti-racism in dance
- Dance in primary schools/teacher development
- Climate justice in the arts
- Early years focus/working in nurseries/schools/child development
- Creative Practice & Wellbeing Support for freelance dance artists/practitioners

Where possible our workshop leaders, presenters and facilitators are practitioners and artists who have lived experience (eg those with disabilities, mental health challenges, are neuro-divergent, autistic, of the global majority, are deaf, have a visual impairment) as well as those skilled and respected practitioners and artists who have a wealth of knowledge and experience in sector specialisms that is inspiring for others to engage with through the training programme.

June 2026

A focus on;-

Dance practitioner wellbeing/creative practice

Climate Justice in the Arts

Dance for People living with Parkinson's

Welsh language

X2 Creative Practice Support Sessions with a Dance Psychotherapist/Dance Artist. The sessions will be led Bilingually, in Welsh or English language – in person or online.

X2 Online presentations/talks to share, inspire, connect and motivate both emerging and experienced practitioners.

X1 Welsh language one to one/small group session – tailored session that supports practitioners to be confident in using Welsh language in their own work

July 2026

A focus on;-

Upskilling dance practitioners through an in person training to focus on dance in schools including early years

Dance practitioners' wellbeing/creative practice

Welsh language

Dance in care homes and assisted living facilities

Falls Prevention

X1 in person CPD day – urban area of Wales

X1 Creative Practice Support Session with a Dance Psychotherapist/Dance Artist. The sessions will be led Bilingually, in Welsh or English language – in person or online.

X2 online presentations/talks to share, inspire, connect and motivate both emerging and experienced practitioners.

X1 Welsh language one to one/small group session - tailored session that supports practitioners to be confident in using Welsh language in their own work

August 2026

A focus on;-

Dance practitioner wellbeing

Welsh language

X1 Creative Practice Support Session with a Dance Psychotherapist/Dance Artist. The sessions will be led Bilingually, in Welsh or English language – in person or online.

X1 Welsh language one to one/small group session - tailored session that supports practitioners to be confident in using Welsh language in their own work

September 2026

A focus on;-

Dance practitioner wellbeing

Welsh language

Dance for early years

Shared/Best Practice Forum - celebrating strengths in areas of work from partners in WWTP

Evaluation support for freelancers

Graduates and emerging practitioners and artists

Dance and disability

X2 Creative Practice Support Sessions with a Dance Psychotherapist/Dance Artist. The sessions will be led Bilingually, in Welsh or English language – in person or online.

X1 online presentation/talk to share, inspire, connect and motivate both emerging and experienced practitioners.

X1 Welsh language one to one/small group sessions

X1 Shared/Best Practice Forum - current themes/issues for the sector where partners share an element of their work with others

X2 One to one tailored sessions with an evaluator. These online sessions will offer tailored guidance and support in terms of evaluating a programme, session or project and are aimed at freelancers.

X1 Graduate/emerging artist information session re training in Wales

X1 Guest Talk

October 2026

A focus on;-

Upskilling dance practitioners through an in person training to focus on what are the needs of rural dance practitioners working in community contexts

Dance practitioner's wellbeing

Climate Justice in the Arts

Anti racism in dance

Welsh language

Shared/Best Practice Forum – celebrating strengths in areas of work from partners

Evaluation support for freelancers

Dance and young people

X1 in person CPD opportunity - rural part of Wales

X2 Creative Practice Support Sessions with a Dance Psychotherapist/Dance Artist. The sessions will be led Bilingually, in Welsh or English language – in person or online.

X2 - Online presentation/talk to share, inspire, connect and motivate both emerging and experienced practitioners.

X1 Welsh language one to one/small group sessions

X2 One to one tailored sessions with an evaluator. These online sessions will offer tailored guidance and support in terms of evaluating a programme, session or project and are aimed at freelancers.

X1 Guest Talk

November 2026

A focus on;-

Dance practitioner wellbeing

Dance and Disability

Welsh language

Community Engagement

Shared/Best Practice Forum – celebrating strengths in areas of work from partners

Film to capture an in person CPD programme and the needs of dance practitioners working in rural areas

Marginalised groups men and dance/mental health, dance in prisons

X1 Creative Practice Support Session (wellbeing of practitioners and artists/reflect on their own practice with a Wales based (first language Welsh) Dance Psychotherapist/Dance Artist) Bilingually, Welsh or English language – online or in person.

X2 online events to inspire and motivate practitioners - both emerging and experienced practitioners -

X1 Welsh language one to one/small group sessions

X1 Shared Practice Forum - current topics for the sector where partners share an element of their work that might not be visible to others.

X1 Graduate/emerging artist information session re training in Wales

X1 Short film produced focusing on one element of the training programme

X1 Guest Talk

Total events – 39

Evaluation:

Feedback will be requested after each event from the speakers and workshop leaders, practitioners, organisations. This will be gathered and used for continuous improvement across the programme. On an ongoing basis we will look at who is attending the sessions, the combination of in person and online delivery, the current needs and issues of the sector whilst remembering that this is a programme for dance practitioners so what do they need whatever level of experience they might be whether they are emerging practitioners and artists or have a wealth of knowledge for community dance delivery. We would like the Independent Reviewer to lead gatherings, send surveys and have round table discussions with those involved in the programme.

APPENDIX TWO: Preserving Independence

Rubicon will safeguard the full independence of the reviewer by:

- Maintaining a clear separation between programme delivery and the reviewer's evaluative role.
- Declare and manage conflicts of interest, ensuring no prior involvement or relationships compromise objectivity.
- Providing unrestricted, unfiltered access to information, stakeholders, and evidence, without influencing interpretation.
- Avoiding involvement in their methodology, analysis, or conclusions, offering factual clarification only when requested.
- Guarantee confidentiality and autonomy, enabling the reviewer to conduct interviews, observations, and analysis without supervision or presence from project staff.
- Allowing the reviewer to conduct interviews, observations, and analysis without staff presence unless required for safeguarding or access reasons.
- Managing conflicts of interest proactively and upholding confidentiality to protect the integrity of the review.
- Committing to transparent reporting of findings in the reviewer's own words.

To ensure clarity, accountability, and smooth coordination, we will implement the following structures:

- **Single Point of Contact (SPOC):** A designated lead responsible for communication, scheduling, and information flow along with **clear escalation routes** and a defined process for addressing risks, concerns, or issues promptly with senior leadership.
- **Structured meeting schedule:** An inception meeting, periodic check-ins, and a final review meeting to support alignment and transparency.
- **Communication protocols:** Agreed standards for response times, documentation, confidentiality, and data-sharing.
- **Light-touch governance group :** Bringing together key partners ie ACW and Rubicon Dance to oversee progress and support access while maintaining independence.

ABOUT RUBICON DANCE



Rubicon Dance is the oldest community dance organisation in Wales and has been delivering dance to people of all ages and abilities since 1975. We provide dance opportunities for people and communities across Cardiff, Newport, and the Vale of Glamorgan, and we have built a strong, nationally recognised reputation for our work in schools, health and social care settings, and community venues of all kinds, as well as at our own dedicated studios in Adamsdown.

Rubicon develops and supports the dance sector in Wales by discovering, nurturing and curating talent wherever it may be. We provide a variety of progression routes for dancers of all ages, allowing them to explore their love for dance and thrive creatively. Through our formal and informal education courses and performance groups, we encourage individuals to develop their artistic skills, and we provide continuous professional development and networking for the dance workforce across Wales through our Wales Wide Training Programme.

Our vision is an inclusive, vibrant, and diverse Wales in which anyone, anywhere can experience the joys and benefits of dancing, to their full potential and aspiration. Our community work brings engaging, safe, inclusive, and inspiring opportunities for dancing and movement to people in Cardiff and South Wales, especially those who may face barriers to dance. Through our education and career work, we provide excellent dance education, career progression routes and skill development for aspiring and existing professionals.

Our charitable activities

The charitable objects of Welsh Dance Theatre Trust trading as Rubicon Dance are:

For the benefit of the public, to foster, promote, and increase the interest of the public in the knowledge, understanding and practice of dancing (including but not restricted to contemporary dance, community dance, and other modern dance forms) and to promote, assist and provide facilities for presentations of such dancing and training of dancers and choreographers.

To fulfil our purpose, we undertake activities within three main programmes:

Education

This work includes our Young Dance Programme, in which we provide GCSE dance training as well as our full-time dance course (BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma), both of which prepare talented young people from Wales at different stages of their development for entry to higher education and the major conservatoires. The GCSE programme is also designed to detect talent by working with secondary schools and providing high intensity dance training to encourage more people from diverse backgrounds to consider careers in the sector. The full-time course has run since 1986 and provides students with the technical skills as well as the necessary UCAS points to progress to the degrees offered by the conservatoires. Since its inception, we have trained hundreds of people and take immense pride in following the progress of their careers, and the course is an important part of the dance ecosystem in Wales.

Community Dance

In this programme, we engage with communities – in general, but also in specific settings such as schools, hospitals and elsewhere – to enable them to dance. We nurture participation and interest in dance, self-expression of our participants and provide opportunities to move with joy where they may be scarce. We challenge traditional views of what it means to dance, be that where we dance, who we dance with, or what artistic expression looks like. It goes beyond performance in traditional theatrical settings and encompasses an ever-growing list of alternative ways of artistic expression.

Wales Wide Training

Our Wales Wide Training Programme seeks to inspire and sustain community dance in Wales by providing training to any sector participant in a strategic way, responsive to the needs of the dance ecology. It addresses the development and support needs of freelance community dance practitioners within the broader context of the community dance landscape across Wales. Through this programme, we contribute to the dance sector's workforce development and enhanced community dance provision through the provision of relevant, regular and varied opportunities for dance practitioners at all stages of their career journeys.

Performance and achievements

Community work

During 2023-2024 we held 1,672 sessions which were attended by 15,451 participants who physically attended the sessions and 531 who attended virtually. The scope of the community work we undertook included working with young people in schools and at our dance studios based in the heart of Adamsdown in Cardiff. In addition to this, we have provided excellent and greatly appreciated programmes in care homes and hospitals, online sessions for people recovering from serious medical conditions, and our regular dance classes for adults at Rubicon Dance Studios.

The work we undertake in hospital-based sessions included neuropsychiatry, brain injury, stroke rehabilitation, mental health services for older people, and integrated medicine for patients with dementia and confusion. We also continued to work with disabled participants of all ages offering a range of sessions which are designed to suit the needs and abilities of participants.

Education and career work

We provided 436 curriculum-based sessions to 19 schools in 2023-2024 which were attended by 857 pupils with a total attendance figure of 7,998. In the last year we were proud to get 19 young people through their Dance GCSE and a further 15 through the BTEC programme. Our end-of-year show was a superb display of the skills and creativity of these remarkable young people and was well received by all those who attended. The Leverhulme Trust have continued to support Rubicon's programme of talent detection by working with secondary schools – the programme provides high intensity dance training to encourage more people from diverse backgrounds to consider a career in the dance sector.

Wales Wide Training Programme

Rubicon has continued to bring the Welsh professional dance community together by leading on the Wales Wide Training Programme and hosting regular network and strategy meetings across Wales. We provided 96 sessions attended by over 500 professional participants, with shared Practice Forums running alongside additional one-to-one Creative Practice & Wellbeing Support sessions, Welsh language sessions aiming to boost confidence in using Welsh within dance settings, and a Guest Talk series looking at key people working in the dance ecology in Wales.

The extensive reach of the Wales Wide Training Programme has enabled us to connect with dance practitioners across the nation, including in Abergavenny, Bangor, Caernarfon, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Cardigan, Carmarthen, Ceredigion, Narberth, Neath, Newport, Port Talbot, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea, and Vale of Glamorgan.

Some of the feedback we received in 2023-2024

"People can forget about their disabilities, they can forget about their pain. There is an escapism in it. Music is deeply wired despite brain injury and taking part makes them happy"

- *NHS Staff member*

"What I find with WWTP is that there is an all-inclusive approach.... Regardless of age or experience there is something that all of us can tap into. ... These sessions are giving opportunities to freelancers ...(and).. they are listening to what we need and doing everything they can to offer resources..."

- *Participant, Wales Wide Training Programme.*

"I found Rubicon when I was 17 years old and at a crossroads with what path to take. Rubicon welcomed me in with open arms and nurtured me through some of the most important years of development for a young aspiring artist. At Rubicon my individuality was celebrated, my creativity was challenged & I gained the technique and knowledge to secure a place at degree level vocational dance schools.

Since graduating I have travelled all over the world performing. I have danced on the prestigious Queen Mary 2 world voyage, performed on television series and adverts, danced in Dubai's royal opera house, and for the last 3 years toured the U.K. with strictly come dancing professionals making my west end debut in 2022. I am currently dance captain on Johannes Radebe's sell out U.K. tour 'House of JoJo' and I am absolutely loving every second. I am so blessed to do what I love for a living, and I will be forever grateful to Rubicon for making it all possible"

- *BTEC Alumni Student*

"I feel I have another group of friends now in your class and a few of us have been going for coffee afterwards! Thank you, Sophie, for your enthusiasm enabling me to be distracted from my pain for a little while!"

- *Community Session Participant*

"I have never felt so connected to dance across Wales as I have through Wales Wide Training Programme"

- *Participant*

"Coming dancing is fabulous. It is good for the brain, combats loneliness, with a great teacher who always has a smile"

- *Participant community session*

"Patients might have physical weaknesses, may have lost speech or be non-verbal. The sessions give them a 'voice' and they are able to show their personality"

- *NHS staff member*