Australian Government

Australia Council for the Arts

Dance sector plan **2012-2013**

STRUT dance
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1.1 Dance Sector in Australia

The Dance sector is vibrant and the artform developing. There are currently at least 50 dance companies, 1400 professional dancers and more than 200 choreographers in Australia taking the artform into new territory through exciting collaborations. Individuals, groups and companies are using and investigating a range of techniques, culturally diverse forms, contexts and media creating high quality, inspiring work, with many companies commissioning and producing the work of emerging artists. Work is made by companies and by independent artists across the country. Choreographic skills are developed and innovation is supported both within companies and by choreographic development organisations and projects. Dance work is presented by venues large and small, within festivals, through touring networks and in public spaces.

In 2012 more than 418,000 children participated in organised dance activities outside of school hours. According to the ABS, the participation rate for children aged 5 to 14 years continues to grow over time - increasing significantly from 10.4% in 2000 to 15.0% in 2012. Over 652,000 adults participate in dancing, representing 3.7% of all Australians aged 15 and over. The ABS reports that adult attendance at dance performances is also steady. Around 1,768,400 people or 10% of Australians aged 15 and over, attended a dance performance in 2009-10 – similar to the levels seen in 2005-06. Of those attending in 2009-10, 44% went twice or more.

Australian dance artists and companies have the ability to produce work of extraordinary quality. However, this work does not always reach its audience potential locally, nationally or internationally. Audience and market development are therefore still major priorities for presenters, dance companies and independent artists. Many Australian dance companies and artists have a significant presence and profile internationally and we believe it is important that we continue to provide mechanisms to support that. Consistent national touring is still challenging for dance. Inroads have been made with programs such as Mobile States and Road Work and the support of Playing Australia, but some of the best work of Australian dance companies and artists cannot be seen by interstate audiences. This year we will introduce an exciting new program to address this challenge.

Ausdance National is an important peak body for dance. Ausdance National and the state and territory network of Ausdance offices has been supporting dance in Australia since 1977. The high standard of dance training in Australia is acknowledged here and overseas. The Tertiary Dance Council enables connections between member organisations and ensures that there are strong connections with the dance industry

Maintaining a career as a dance artist can be challenging with opportunities for paid employment insufficient to meet demand. Many artists teach or pursue non-arts related employment to support their practice. Many dance artists go overseas in search of greater employment opportunities or to develop their practice in locations where the critical mass of dance activities and support services are greater. Building audiences for dance can only succeed if the quality of work is maintained and where necessary improved. This is one of the reasons that investment in the current and next generation of choreographers and dancers is so important.

Many of the major objectives of the Australia Council's dance sector plan align with Dance Plan 2012 which was developed in partnership with Ausdance National following forums held across the country during 2008 and endorsed by all state and territory arts agencies. The Dance Plan 2012 was an action plan for the entire dance industry.

Consultation in developing the plan

The Dance Sector Plan is built on the foundations of the Dance Plan 2012 which was developed in 2008, partly through roundtables held in six locations across Australia. The Australia Council updates this Dance Sector Plan annually. The staff of the Australia Council and the members of the Dance Board engage with members of the diverse dance sector throughout the year, through meetings, events such as the Australian Performing Arts Market, issue specific forums, at arts summits and conferences. The Dance Board and staff keep abreast of issues that can impact on dance through such engagement, as they also attend performances and showings of work where they can. In 2011 the Australia Council entered into a partnership with Ausdance National to develop and present a two-day National Dance Forum during Dance Massive in Melbourne. Events such as these are a really important opportunity for the Australia Council to ensure it is engaged with the concerns and needs of the dance sector.

Once a year the Managers of the regularly funded dance companies arrange a one or two day meeting, usually to coincide with the Australian Dance Awards. The Chair and the Director of the Dance Board attend these meetings to discuss priority matters for dance. The Director of Dance attends the annual meeting of the Ausdance National Council meeting which provides an opportunity for discussions across the network. Dance section staff travel interstate on a fairly regular basis which provides an opportunity to meet up with a diverse cross section of people who support dance including , choreographers, dancers, companies, venue managers, staff of dance support agencies, producers and our counterparts in State and Territory arts agencies. The Chair of the Dance Board often takes part in these interstate visits.

We maintain regular in contact with grant applicants and staff of the many companies we support on a regular basis as Key or Major Organisations. Their feedback, knowledge and input are all used to help develop the Australia Council's Sector Plan for dance. We plan to undertake sector consultation in 2012 in alignment with the development of a new strategic plan for the Australia Council.

1.2 The Dance Sector and the Australia Council

Financial support to the sector is provided by governments (federal, state and local), the corporate and philanthropic sectors and from income earned from performance fees, box office income and workshop/training activities.

The Australia Council invests in the dance sector as follows:

- The Dance Board provides annual funding of $2.96 million to 14 companies and invests a further $1.76 million via project funding and initiatives. In 2011 the producing companies supported via the Dance Board's Key Organisations category reached a combined paid audience of 94,677. Building the profile and audiences for contemporary dance will continue to be a priority area for dance investment and development across the Australia Council.
- Major Performing Arts Board of the Australia Council (MPAB) provided annual funding of $10.36 million to five ballet/dance companies, and state governments contributed a further $6.46 million. In 2011 the 5 MPAB dance companies reached a combined paid audience of 401,083 people.
- Funding and initiative support for dance is provided annually by other areas of the Australia Council, in particular the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts board, Market Development and the Community Partnerships and Inter-Arts sections.

Examples of companies and artists producing new work, including those funded by the Australia Council:

Major Performing Arts	Key Organisations – Multi-year	Key Organisations - Emerging	Project companies/artists including:
Bangarra Dance Theatre (NSW)	Australian Dance Theatre (SA)	BalletLab (Vic)	Stalker/Marrugeku (NSW/WA)
West Australian Ballet (WA)	Expressions Dance Theatre (Qld)	KAGE (Vic)	Sue Peacock (WA)
Queensland Ballet (Qld)	Chunky Move (Vic)	Shaun Parker and Company (NSW)	MADE (Tas)
Sydney Dance Company (NSW)	Force Majeure (NSW)		Ros Warby (Vic)
The Australian Ballet (Vic)	Dancehouse (Vic)		
	Lucy Guerin Inc (Vic)		Antony Hamilton (Vic)
	Dance North (Qld)		Sue Healey (NSW)
	Restless Dance (SA)		Luke George (Vic)
	Tasdance (Tas)		Marilyn Miller (Qld)
	Tracks Inc (NT)		

1.3 The Australian Dance Sector Ecosystem

Cultural and Artistic Capital
Independent dance artists, dance companies, dance training, producers and presenters and artform development

Training and Skills Development
- The Tertiary Dance Council
- Dance Studios
- Youth dance companies
- STRUT (WA), Dancehouse (Vic), Critical Path (NSW)
- Dance company classes for the dance and general community
- Business development and capacity building

Professional Support
- Ausdance network
- Artslaw and copyright organisations
- MEAA
- Australian Major Performing Arts Group
- Australian Performing Arts Centre Association
- ABAF (training and Board Bank)

Audience and Market Development
- Roadwork
- Australian Performing Arts Market
- International Performing Arts Markets Touring Fund
- Go See Fund
- ADVICE, the annual Marketing Summit
- Touring subsidy – Going Global, Playing Australia, Australian International Cultural Council

The intangible value of the sector

Key areas of activity/orgs that build

Research and Development → Creators → Distribution → Retailers → Critique/Audience Engagement

Key Stages in the Value Chain

Research and Development
- Research and strategy AC
- University performing arts units
- Critical Path, Dancehouse Strut
- Programs run by producing companies including The Next Move, Maximised, Ignite
- Programs run by Ausdance state offices – Belltower, Choreolab

Creators
- Independent dance artists – dancers, choreographers, designers
- Small to medium companies
- Major companies
- Commercial producers domestic and international
- Independent producers
- Festivals, Major Festivals Initiative
- Organisations in the arts and culture sector

Distribution
- Touring programs - Mobile States, Roadwork
- State based touring organisations – eg Arts on Tour NSW
- Performing arts booking mechanisms Long Paddock /Blue Heeler network, Kultour
- Broadcast media
- Internet

Retailers
- Performing Arts Venues – eg QPAC and the Sydney Opera House
- Contemporary Performance centres including Malthouse (Vic) and PICA (WA)
- Local government venues such as the Geelong PAC and Illawarra PAC
- Cultural/Tourism sector with public programs
- Corporate sector – entertainment and promotion
- Ticketing agencies
- Arts Festivals – Australian, international, State Fringe, Local

Critique/Audience Engagement
- Newspaper reviews
- Real Time
- Blogs and dance specific websites
- Dance specific publications – eg Brolga
- Australian Dance Awards and related Symposia
- Dance/Performance Research
- Dance specific summits and Forums – local and national

Key Players in each Stage

LEGEND:
Funded by the Dance Board
Funded by other Australia Council Areas
Not funded by the Australia Council

Grants
- Artists
- Projects
- Companies
- Venues

Strategic Development
- Industry overview
- Planning & Coordination
- Research & Analysis
- Leadership & Advocacy

Legislation – Policy
- Copyright
- Censorship
- Education

Other Instruments
- Tax Concessions inc DGR and ROCO
- Subsidies
- Diplomacy/AICC

Key areas of Government activity that influence

Government policies and initiatives

Sector issues of concern

Creation of Innovative Work of High Quality

- Investment into new dance works of a high quality must be maintained if audiences are to be built.
- More producing and management support is needed for the independent dance sector.
- We need to support the development and creation of more new work by Indigenous choreographers.
- Whilst there are now more choreographic and artform development organisations and programs, access can still challenging due to factors including geography.

Opportunities to see and participate in Australian Dance

- There are a limited number of high quality contemporary dance works being toured nationally and regionally.
- There is capacity for growth in programming of Australian contemporary dance by many venues and festivals.
- Audiences for contemporary dance still need to grow. Initiatives such as Dance Massive and Spring Dance provide new models to achieve this.
- Marketing capacity and capability needs to be improved – particularly in the independent and smaller companies.

Career Sustainability and Artform Development

- There is fragmentation of the eco-system, with a high concentration of dance professionals and resources in some geographical areas and under provision in other areas.
- Greater support could be provided to help freelance/independent choreographers develop company leadership skills
- Participation in dance does not always reflect Australia's cultural diversity.
- Maintaining a career as an independent dance artist is still challenging.
- More support is needed to nurture the next generation of exceptional choreographers.
- There are a relatively small number of national and international residencies available to dance artists.
- Career pathways need to be stronger in all areas of dance and at different stages in a dance artist's career.

Sector Investment and Development

- Connections between sectors – major to small, grant aided and commercial – should be stronger.
- The lack of funding growth for companies in the small to medium sector...
- Smaller dance companies have very lean staffing structures which can lead to burnout and loss of expertise.
- There is inconsistent engagement with the philanthropic sector, particularly by independent dance artists.

1.4 Dance Board Goals & KPIs 2010 – 2012

The Dance Sector Plan has 4 goals and associated performance measures. Goals 1 – 3 align with the Dance Plan 2012

We will have more excellent and innovative Australian Dance evidenced by:

- More dance companies supported as Key Organisations
- An increase in the number of new works that are remounted and /or toured
- An increase in philanthropic support for Australian dance
- Evaluation and extension of the Managing and Producing Services projects
- Companies and artists empowered to evaluate and benchmark their artistic work

We will have more opportunities to see and participate in Australian dance evidenced by:

- An increase in national and international touring and co-productions of Australian dance.
- An increase in the local, national and international audiences for our Major and Key Organisations.

The range of sustainable careers for dance artists will have grown evidenced by:

- An increase in the number of dance artists and artsworkers who access professional development initiatives supported by the Australia Council
- An increase in the number of Indigenous dance artists applying to and receiving funding support from the dance board via its standard grant categories
- A review and extension of dance specific Fellowships and residencies
- Artstart grants for recent graduates to support dance artists to be successful in their dance careers
- The JUMP mentoring program's support for young and emerging dance artists

We will maximise our resources and work effectively across the Australia Council to improve our support of Australian Dance

- The Dance Board and Community Partnerships project in Tasmania will be evaluated and the model considered for other areas in Australia.
- An increase in the number of music and dance projects supported by the Australia Council.

1.5 Dance Work Plan

1. We will have more excellent and innovative Australian Dance as a result of:

- Investment in companies through Key Organisations and Major Performing Arts Board funding
- Project funding for the independent dance sector – emerging and established – from the Dance, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Community Partnerships and Inter-arts sections
- The Dance Board's Western Australian Contemporary Dance Initiative (3 years, $300,000)
- The Dance Board's Screen Dance Initiative (3 years, $300,000)
- Expansion of the Artsupport program to increase philanthropic investment
- Managing and Producing Services for Artists programs
- Major Performing Arts Board Artistic Vibrancy projects including artistic evaluation resources.

2. We will have more opportunities to see and participate in Australian dance as a result of:

- the Mobile States national touring program
- the Road work regional touring program
- A new scheme to support dance presentations interstate by Key Organisations –Project Capital
- investment for dance companies, artists, producers and presenters including Going Global international touring program and the International Performing Arts Market fund
- investment in a broad range of market and audience development initiatives including: ADVICE, the Go See Fund and the annual Marketing Summit
- support for Dance Massive including an international and national presenters visitors program
- The National Dance Forum

3 The range of sustainable careers for dance artists will have grown as a result of:

- Increased investment in dance companies producing new works
- An increase in residencies and fellowships available for dance artists
- ArtStart for recent graduates
- JUMP mentoring program for young and emerging artists
- Investment in new publications about Australian dance.

4. We will maximise our resources and work effectively across the Australia Council to improve our support of Australian Dance

- A two year Community Partnerships and Dance Board Tasmanian Community Dance project with total investment of $300k.
- The Dance and Music Initiative
- Annual dance meetings with state and territory arts agencies.
- Support for an annual meeting of dance company managers and artistic directors.
  Actively promoting all funding and development within the Australia Council to the dance sector.