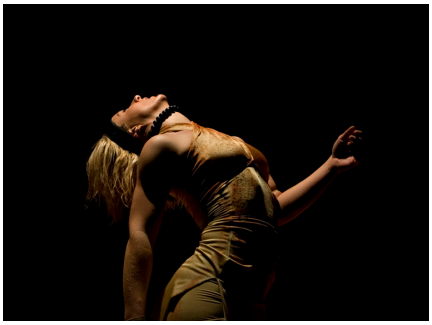
AUSTRALIAN DANCE COUNCIL -

AUSDANCE VICTORIA INC.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020

(EDITED SUMMARY)

"Dance a small word that covers many genres and contexts" (Michelle Silby)

Photo (clockwise from top left):
Neda Rahmani, The Australian Ballet, Weave Movement Theatre, The Alice Project, Australian Dance Theatre, Australian Dance Awards 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ausdance Victoria is the peak professional body for dance in Victoria and the lead agency for dance education nationally. Ausdance Victoria exists to support, enrich, advance and advocate for dance in all its forms. The organisation has been operating for over 39 years and has established itself as a leader for the dance sector by developing vital infrastructure, building strong partnerships and increasing opportunities for professional dance practitioners and the dance sector across the state.

A vibrant arts community in Victoria needs a vibrant dance sector. Dance is an integral part of the cultural life of any community and is currently going through an expansion in interest and popularity, as evidenced by its greatly increased profile on television and in other media**.** The Victorian dance sector is diverse and growing in size, as are its needs.

Ausdance Victoria aims to see dance thrive with more people from metropolitan, regional and remote areas being able to access quality dance opportunities. Ausdance Victoria strives to achieve this by providing; advice, advocacy and facilitation as well as directly delivering dance services and programs across the broad spectrum of dance participants and audiences. Ausdance Victoria's own projects and program of activities have continued to contribute to the long-term capacity and reach of the professional dance environment through a range of landmark initiatives, reports and advocacy campaigns.

Ausdance Victoria is the sole peak body for dance in Victoria and plays a key role in providing high-level strategic advice and vision for the sector. Ausdance Victoria supports individuals, companies and organisations in a coherent ecology of arts services and enables its members and partners to flourish, creating connections and opportunities to increase the capacity of the sector. The organisation works across all levels of dance practice to promote health, lifelong learning and social wellbeing agendas, all of which contribute to the wider community's physical and economic health.

The organisation provides an impartial reference point for the sector that supports and encourages diverse artistic visions and goals and provides industry relevant information and networks to strengthen its capacity. Ausdance Victoria works in partnership with individuals and organisations to provide a voice for the sector and has had a major impact on the development of dance both in Victoria and nationally and the delivery of both state and federal government policies and programs.

The Strategic Plan is focused primarily on the period 2017-20, but with the knowledge that several of the key goals are longer term and will stretch beyond the next four years, subject to ongoing evaluation and future shifts in the sector. The plan is written in alignment with Creative Victoria's current program goals and guided by the initial findings of the Creative Industries Taskforce Report (2015), Australia Council funding priorities and aspects of the City of Melbourne's Arts Strategy 2014-17.

2017 will mark the 40th birthday celebration of Ausdance Victoria and the Ausdance National Network.

Vision

To be the leading agency for dance in the state, providing all Victorians with opportunities to experience and engage with dance.

Mission

To create, support and promote opportunities for dance in Victoria, and invest in its ongoing development by:

- Championing innovation, creativity and diversity in dance
- Advocating and demonstrating high standards of professionalism in the dance industry
- Mobilizing cooperation in support of dance development (art form and sector)
- Promoting dance creation, presentation and participation
- Promoting the interaction of Victorian dance within national and international arenas
- Ensuring the stability and sustainability of the organisation

GOALS AND PRIORITIES

1. Strengthen sector networks and access to resources

1.1 Expand and strengthen strategic partnerships and initiatives

2. Improve capacity building and industry sustainability

2.1 Identify and respond to industry issues and needs
2.2 Provide and facilitate programs and projects to support sustainable sector and art form development
2.3 Provide and develop resources and information to improve sector capacity
2.4 Capitalise on existing dance opportunities and partnerships

3. Increase access, engagement and participation

3.1 Facilitate and develop programs that enable participation and cultivate a dynamic dance environment
3.2 Promote and market the work of members and the organisation both nationally and internationally
3.3 Raise membership and subscribers, deepen their engagement

4. Advocate for art form and sector development (most priorities and strategies contribute to this priority)

4.1 Provide representation for Victorian dance to key government and Industry decision makers across sectors

Develop lifelong learning opportunities

5.1 Deliver formal and informal training & professional development programs
5.2 Promote and provide direct learning opportunities across all ages and skills levels
5.3 Provide professional development opportunities for professionals in dance
5.4 Develop Registered Training Organisation (RTO) activities further as a part of core business

Build Ausdance Victoria's organisational capacity and sustainability

6.1 Strengthen the organization through the skills base of staff, board, and volunteers
6.2 Ensure clear operational, financial, marketing, and specific project plans are in place
6.3 Secure sustainable and diverse revenue streams for the organization
6.4 Partner with Ausdance NSW by aligning leadership and maximizing resources and opportunities

CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

Ausdance Victoria has grown considerably since the organization first gained state government funding in the mid-1980s. In 2001, Ausdance Victoria became a Registered Training Organization (RTO) and remains the only Ausdance state office to do so. Ausdance Victoria is an independent organization that benefits from and contributes to being part of the Ausdance National Network that is made up of eight state and territory based organizations. From 2016 onwards, Ausdance Victoria will be sharing some staff and resources with Ausdance NSW to maximize the benefits for members and participants.

The Ausdance Network grew out of a 1977 conference by leading dance artists and educators. At the time, there was no organization that embraced professional practitioners and dance educators as well as all forms of dance and cultural diversity. Ausdance National worked to 'professionalize' the state networks across Australia through lobbying for funding, formalizing policies and procedures and providing ongoing advice and support.

Ausdance Victoria is a leader in the dance sector both in the areas of creative practice and education and has contributed to many landmark reports, programs and events that include:

- Created and established one of the first RTO's for dance and became leader in Arts Education creating many projects and training opportunities delivered across the state
- Key partner in NAAE, successfully lobbying government to put arts on the national curriculum
- Heavily consulted with the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), to create national dance curriculum framework, dance became a mandatory subject for first time
- Partnership & consultation with Innovation Business Skills Australia (IBSA)
- On-going, engagement with, and mentoring of many multi-cultural artists and groups
- The National Australian Dance Awards were presented Melbourne in 2007, 2008 and 2009 and will be hosted again by Ausdance Victoria in 2017
- The Regional Dance report – Core Strength 2010
- Many regional / community projects e.g. 'DANCE WITH ME' with La Trobe City Council, 48 community workshops, 2,379 learned joint dance, 7 flash mob performances, 420 performed at special celebration, 19,469 watched on YouTube
- Dance Education in Australian Schools (DEAS) National Conference 2013
- The Australian Youth Dance Festival (bi-annual) since 1997
- 2014 & 15 White Nights, Curated 'I could of danced all night' 2015, over 100,000 people watched several stages, with over 26 groups performing
- Partnered /funded by Regional Arts Victoria, Victoria Health, created the Alice project, thousands of participants regionally (early years children, their families)
- Part of Dance Massive Consortium, successful bi-annual dance festival since 2009

Ausdance played a crucial role in lobbying and forming the Arts Curriculum, working in partnership with other organisations through National Advocates Arts Education (NAAE). The new National Curriculum endorsed the arts as mandatory subjects and gave dance parity with other art forms. This will in the long term raise appreciation of dance, build the future audience base and increase participation in dance and the arts. This will also provide more jobs for dance artists who can teach and share their craft in schools.

INTERNAL SITUATION

Over the last 5 years the organisation has continued to build its capacity by diversifying income streams, improving its IT and digital capabilities (in 2011), refreshing the board, changing the staff structure and undertaking many key partnerships.

In response to the shifting funding climate and the incremental pressure of small organisations trying to do more, and more, on no more money or time, the board engaged Michelle Silby in the role of Executive Director at the end of 2015. Silby is highly experienced in the dance sector both in Australia and the UK. The new Executive Officer will lead the strategic direction of both Ausdance Vic and Ausdance NSW, having identified that they have similar pressures and needs. Silby will lead the organisation on how to work smarter not just

harder. This presents many opportunities that enable both organisations to share resources, build their capacity and support the dance sector.

A key strength is Ausdance Victoria's reach across its members, partners, collaborators, RTO clients (schools, teachers, students and parents) government relationships, alumni and the national Ausdance Network, which provides a state and national overview. Ausdance Victoria has the ability to share knowledge and skills and keep government and key decision makers informed of trends and sector needs. Where appropriate the organisation has played the role of match-maker to enable pathways, connections and partnerships to develop, resulting in real outcomes; skills development, art form development, new partnerships, employment, raised participation and raised awareness of dance.

The organisation has a committed Board, strong management processes and a small number of highly skilled staff at different points in their career (early, mid, established). Ausdance Victoria has had significant staff turnover over in the past few years due in part to pressure caused by trying to deliver too much. However, the organisation's program has now been revisited and rationalised and under new management Ausdance Victoria continues to be a vibrant and critical part of the dance ecology.

The organisation has the facility to build fundamental strategic partnerships that bring new resources and additional funding avenues to the field. This in turn would offer essential marketing capabilities to increase the profile and value of dance throughout Victoria. Ausdance Victoria is extremely well placed to identify and respond to the needs and issues facing the dance sector in the state. As a peak body, the organization is in a unique position to work strategically with state government on delivering key policy objectives and undertaking industry research initiatives to identify sector needs and inform the development of sustainable programs for Victorian dance.

To be able to leverage this position of strength it is vital for Ausdance Victoria to be able to have enough core funding to support the basic staff and infrastructure costs. The staff and board can then activate diversified income streams and seek project funding from other arts and non-arts sources to deliver specific programs.

STRATEGY

Ausdance Victoria's strategies have been developed with reference to Creative Victoria's OIP, the recent Industry taskforce report, state plans, and awareness of the national funding and political climate. A snapshot of how they are delivered through partnerships, business innovation, programs, projects and initiatives are outlined below. To note, the organisation has a detailed KPI Framework chart for 2017-20 program that is used internally and contained in all our funding applications.

PARTNERSHIPS

Ausdance Victoria will focus on expanding and strengthening their strategic partnerships**.** These relationships are a core part of the organisation's business and contribute to almost everything the organisation does. It is imperative that enough staff time and resources are allocated, to maintaining existing partnerships and ensuring the organisation can pro-actively seek new partnerships across the country.

BUSINESS INNOVATION

In partnership with Ausdance NSW, Ausdance Victoria will build the capacity of both organisations to enable effective front line delivery for and with the sector. Potential strategic alignments will be explored and the unique needs of each organisation and sector analysed to determine what can be delivered through shared resources (IT, legal, marketing) and staff. Over the next four years the combined knowledge, skills, time and passion of the two small organisations staff, board, alumni, ambassadors and members will be galvanised to deliver the programs of the two organisations.

PROGRAMS, PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES (A SELECTION)

Collectively they all contribute to the broader ecology of the arts and the wider benefit of Victorian communities.

Collectively they achieve the organisations goals and six priorities. Several have been designed to contribute across several priorities.

The Reach & Connect Project

Outline

It is vital in making the organization visible and fit for purpose with today's expectations of information, communication and engagement through digital streams. This will include creating a CRM, (Customer Relationship Management tool) to be able to track, engage and analyse sector needs. Update online membership tools, booking for events, renewing membership, having an automated system, to enable our small staff to be efficient and effective

The Reach & Connect project aims to:

- Raise online communication and drive traffic to our website (make it mobile friendly)
- Raise awareness of dance activities and the benefits of engaging in or with dance
- Raise the profile of dance artists, companies and organizations in Victoria
- Raise the profile of our organisation and the services we have to offer. (helping raise our potential to attract sponsorship, philanthropy, funding and partnerships)

Membership Engagement & Services 2017-20

(to be extended to Tasmania, date to be determined after consultation)

Outline

Review, revise, refresh. Build on the IT capabilities in above project. Identify needs, for each target market in the dance industry / sector. While this is 'core business' there is a need to really deepen this work and the level of engagement. To truly understand and respond to the current needs of the different archetypes; the dancer, choreographer, teacher, director, producer etc. at different stages of their career / age from different cultures and genres. This is quite a large piece of fundamental work. The building blocks of research started in 2016, with the deeper investigation to be followed by the creation /allocation of services, information and facilitation of programs to enable the various aspects of the sector to develop and thrive.

Benefits - Better services for members, raised connectivity with and between the different aspects of the sector. This fundamental piece of work will be done in partnership primarily with Ausdance NSW, and the respective members and sector.

Alumni / Ambassadors (Adult & Youth) 2017-20

Outline

Ausdance Victoria will select a range of high-profile artistic champions, patrons and ambassadors for this project, who will help us to present Melbourne as Australia's dance capital.

Benefits - Raising the profile of Ausdance Victoria and dance, creating connections, and celebrating excellence through philanthropy, partnerships and collaborations

Linkages 2017 -20

Outline

Aims to provide more pathways between the dance education sector and the performing sector. We will devise live and virtual projects and connections between these two aspects of the sector.

Benefits - higher standards, more employment, greater appreciation of dance and audience numbers.

New -Annual Industry Days / Events (Whole Sector)

Outline
Facilitate a day where the dance sector can come together to share, learn, network and discover potential collaborations both 'on the stage' and off. It is a crucial time in arts funding and there is a need to enable the sector to explore how to work effectively and efficiently in the current climate.

Benefits - builds sector capacity.

The Australian Dance Awards, 2017 return to Melbourne after 7yrs

Outline
The National Australian Dance Awards is a key part of the dance calendar. 13 awards are presented alongside performances from different genres. Ausdance Victoria will produce and host the industries awards night for the fourth time (last hosted in 2010). Ausdance Victoria will use this opportunity to showcase what Melbourne and Victoria has to offer, employing a key PR agency to highlight both the awards and a program of events around the awards showcasing artists, organisations and cultural venues in Melbourne.

Benefits - The chance for the dance sector to celebrate and recognise its achievements and to promote dance to the public, key stakeholders and broader arts industry. Raise the profile of dance and Victoria.

40th Anniversary of Ausdance in 2017 in partnership with the Ausdance Network

Outline
A chance to celebrate the organisation and what it stands for as well as the dance sector it supports. We will create a special 40th marketing, PR and online media campaign that promotes the past, present and future of dance. Highlighting live and online engagement though a program of activities that includes talks, seminars, workshops and exhibitions with the Ausdance Network locally and nationally.

Benefits – Raise the profile of dance and Ausdance Victoria

Dance Massive / National Dance Forum in 2017 & 2019

Outline
Dance Massive is a National Dance Festival that is well attended by the public, industry and international programmers and venue managers. The focus is on contemporary dance practice. Run by the Dance Massive consortium comprised of Dancehouse, Arthouse, Malthouse and Ausdance Victoria.

The National Dance Forum, NDF sits alongside Australian Dance Awards. Run by Ausdance National in partnership with the Australia Council. Ausdance Vic and the other states engage, promote and are involved with the NDF.

Benefits - local, national and international industry and public engagement with dance, employment and professional development for practitioners, performances, as well as, networking opportunities

New -Bridge Intensive Dance Lab – For Mid- Career & Established Dance Artists 2018 & 20

Outline
A lot has been done for the emerging artists in the last 10 years. The critical point for a lot of practitioners is when they reach mid-career. This program is a step to bring together exceptional artists and enable their development, and inspiration through this facilitated residential dance lab, with other artform practitioners invited. Finance will need to be sought for this. We will engage with key national and international partners.

Benefits – Support for mid-career and established artists

New -First Nations Program 2017-20

Outline
A series of capacity building opportunities that enable individual artists and the collective Indigenous dance community to connect, develop, thrive and share their knowledge and artistry with the wider industry and communities of Victoria.

The program will include talks, networking events, dance lab, choreographic lab and creative business and market development courses. While aspects will be tailored to and respectful of the states' cultural identities, this program will build on a model that has already been shaped, tried, tested and evaluated over 3yrs in another state. **Separate funding** will need to be sought to facilitate and run this essential program.

Additional specific opportunities for training, networking and performance will be developed through our partnerships with a)Tanderrum with whom we will be developing a Cert 2 qualification for and b)The Melbourne Indigenous Arts Festival, whom we will be working with to develop their dance program.

Benefits – Encourage creative vibrancy, new work and capacity building in the Indigenous dance sector.

The Australian Youth Dance Festival, AYDF, 2017 / 19

Outline
This is a biennial festival that lasts between 3-7 days at Easter time. It's a national project that is hosted in different states each time by Ausdance state offices and partners. Young people aged 14-25 and various youth dance companies and their leaders come from every state and territory to take part. This is a pivotal opportunity providing training, networking, and opportunities for creating new work for the next generation and current artists/ teachers/choreographers who also gain employment.

Benefits – Activating youth, creating industry networks for next generation, and employment.

Dance and the Child International Conference, DACI, 2018 in Adelaide

Outline
An international conference coming to Australia for the first time. To be held in Adelaide. Ausdance Victoria will facilitate a program for artists / teachers / students that can be presented at DACI**.**

Benefits **-** providing international engagement for Victorian dance sector and a chance to promote their work, share information and skills and develop networks.

Big Dance 2018 & the Commonwealth Games/ Arts Festival and International Youth Dance Festival

Outline
Big Dance is an on-mass participation project engaging people of all ages and backgrounds to attend free workshops, learn dance skills, appreciate dance and learn 'the big dance choreography' which will then be performed on mass in a public outdoor location, 2014 took place in Sydney & NSW, 2016 in NT & WA, 2018 will take place in Victoria and QLD.

Benefits – Employment, raised skills, networking international connections and collaborations

IDEW, International Dance Educators Workshop, Annual Event Run Over Two Days

Outline
This is a crucial event that enables teachers who are artists and artists who are teachers to come and 'be the student' and also 'be the expert' to learn and share ideas. IDEW brings together the best teachers, choreographers, speakers, researchers, health and science practitioners over a two-day period.

Benefits – Professional development across the education and performing artists' sectors

Skill Set for Teaching Dance, ASSTD

Outline
Building on research done in 2015 and 2016. Ausdance aims to develop "Skill set for teaching dance" qualification to blended online learning. This will enable the course to be offered in a new model that is part online and part face-to-face, making this opportunity more accessible. This approach will lower the cost to the participant and enable the growth of this dance qualification.

Benefits - Leading to better standards and enabling artists/ teachers to gain employment.

Registered Training Organisation, RTO delivers Cert 2 and other Certificates in Future

Outline
Ausdance Victoria renewed its license at the end of 2015 for a further 7yrs, a tremendous achievement. 2016-20 will see the consolidation and a process of continuous improvement put in place, alongside a program of added benefits, resources and training opportunities for artists, teachers and students.

Benefits - Raising professional standards, appreciation of dance and ultimately the next generation of 'dance lovers' potential audience and participants. Provides employment to dance artists, educators and companies.

Explore teacher registration– joint project with NSW to raise standards, provide a new income stream