



Annual Report 2020

aUSDANCE
VIC

Consider the Possibilities, Wagana and DUST Youth Dancers,
Australia, AYDF 2019.

Photo Credit: Shutterstock

Ausdance VIC RTO

Celebrating 20 Years
2000- 2020

4

**Accredited
Programs**

5,000+

**Certificate
II in Dance
Graduates**

150+

**Ausdance Skill
Set for Teaching
Dance Graduates**



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Foreword from the Chair

Advocacy.

It's a word, a purpose, that sometimes in the rush to make and present new work, develop a practice, deliver education programmes and serve audiences can be overlooked.

At Ausdance VIC advocacy has always been a driving force, and a consistent focus. In the past year as our sector faced the fallout from the pandemic, the importance of a skilled and passionate advocacy organisation for dance has come into sharp relief.

Over this last year we engaged with our growing membership base, dramatically increased our service provision, waived fees, and critically – we listened.

On behalf of the Board of Ausdance VIC, I extend sincere thanks to our members and the dance sector for your support and your active engagement, to our partners including Creative Victoria I thank you for your continued confidence and support for dance, and to our team I acknowledge all your hard work and the gains made.

The team, led by Executive Director Michelle Silby, has been tireless and dedicated in its approach, representing our sector's concerns to the highest levels of government to influence policy, secure commitments for dance, and ensure the right information was shared at the right time.

It has been truly inspiring to watch Victoria's dance sector respond to the pandemic, to lockdowns and to a variety of restrictions with creativity, innovation, collaboration and resilience.

As we turn our attention to the months and years ahead, it is hugely encouraging to see Ausdance VIC and the sector we serve well positioned to play a key role in the recovery, in re-connecting with communities and returning to dance.

I would like to extend my thanks to my colleagues on the Board Amity Jarvis, Alisdair Macindoe, Amy Jennings, Kate Denborough and Helen Haines.

Kelly Dickson

Forward from the Executive Director

The year that became COVID-19.

Dear members and broader dance sector... we stood together, and we will continue together as we look forward to 2021 and post COVID-19, as we start the road to recovery.

2020

Covid-19 hit worldwide, in Victoria all workplaces, venues, schools and retail closed down overnight, people lost contracts, jobs and the arts gig economy ceased. In 2020 we had the longest (and arguably strictest) lockdown in the world. Some fantastic Federal Government packages were put in place, however a large proportion of our dance and the broader arts sector were not able to access Job Keeper or Job Seeker, bringing economic, social and health challenges to a sector that is already under-funded and often works with high risk and small profit margins.

During this time, we listened, and responded to the sector's needs, advocating for and with them to the government. We provided free membership at this critical time as requests for help went up from 30-50 a week to 80-120 a week.

We ran and attended many; facilitated sector meetings, consultations, online professional development, forums, one to one support for individuals, organisations and companies, studios, schools. Created online resources for teaching. Pivoted our business model.

Advocacy

We negotiated appropriate exemptions and wrote the **COVID 19 Safe Re-Turn to dance guidelines**, for the dance sector to use across the state. Provided Information to the sector from government on the complex and ever-changing restrictions.

Dance Studios – we created a survey and business impact report - We shared this and its recommendations with and met several Ministers and areas of government collectively. Who invited us to put forward ideas to help or stimulate this part of the sector. One idea we put forward was a 'voucher scheme' for people to use to attend dance classes, redeemed at studios, including company studios. Result \$21m in 'Get Kids Active Scheme' that will be launched in April 2021.

Successful application to -Creative Victoria Strategic Investment Fund, Stage Two 40% of which was provided to assist Independent artists through TTDA, Think Dance Tank Assembly, a collective made up of over 200 artists.

Creative State Two - Ausdance VIC was invited to take part in road to recovery roundtables and also workshops for the future shape of Creative State two, strategies, priorities and funding for the state for the next 4yr period. My huge thanks to the board and the staff, a small team who are all part time who went above and beyond to work with and support our sector, the dance sector.

We all look forward to being, working and dancing together in 2021!

Best wishes to you all,
Michelle Silby

Executive Director
Ausdance Victoria

About Ausdance VIC

Ausdance VIC is the recognised peak body for dance supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria. Leading dance in the state, we offer high-level strategic advice and vision to the Victorian dance sector.

A membership based organisation, Ausdance VIC provides a platform for the state's dance sector needs to be heard and creates an environment for dance to thrive.

Our work includes:

Advocacy

We advocate on behalf of the dance industry to raise the profile of dance and increase investment in the arts. We also represent the dance sector as part of the Arts Industry Council of Victoria.

Education

We provide a range of options to people looking to further their dance practise. As a Registered Training Organisation, Ausdance VIC provides accredited VET training, and we sit on state and national industry-training advisory boards tasked with oversight of professional dance development, courses, and accreditation.

Special Projects

Ausdance VIC has a successful and sustainable program of projects and events. These include Australian Youth Dance Festival, Big Dance (large scale community dance event), Dance Massive, Teaching Dad to Dance, Professional Development for Teachers and Industry Days.

Ongoing Sector Capacity Building

We support the capacity building of dancers, choreographers, companies, organisations, venues, education sector, dance schools and teachers by offering advice, information and training related to Dance.

Member Support

Ausdance VIC members become part of a vibrant community of Independent Dance Artists, Small to Medium companies, Dance Teachers and Dance Education professionals, Educational establishments, Arts professionals and Arts organisations. Additionally, we offer support to individuals and organisations to secure funding through lobbying, advocacy, research and informal advice.



Image courtesy Ausdance Vic member L2R Dance Dancer Yoande Arinda at L2R Dance Experience 2019 at Footscray Community Arts Centre. Image by Shutterstock

THE AUSDANCE NATIONAL NETWORK

Ausdance is Australia's peak body for dance. Ausdance has a 40-year history of educating, inspiring and supporting the dance community to reach its potential as a dynamic force within local, national and international communities. The Ausdance network is a federated association of separately funded state/territory organisations with their own priorities and programs including Ausdance National, QLD, WA, NSW, VIC, SA and ACT.

Pivoting During COVID-19

Throughout 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had a decimating and direct impact on the way the dance sector operates in our state. The financial impact on the sector has been devastating, with venues, organisations and studios closing doors and artists out of work. For a heavily interdependent sector, the flow-on effect for the broader dance ecology, in terms of negative economic, physical, and mental wellbeing, has been profound.

Over these tumultuous times, as the peak body for dance in Victoria, Ausdance VIC had been working with and for the dance sector in our state. In an ever-changing landscape, faced with unprecedented challenges, we kept our focus on meeting the critical needs of our entire sector. Our engagement with the sector fed into our advocacy work at both state and National level.

LISTEN

In March 2020, Australia, along with the rest of the world, got impacted by and started responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ausdance VIC team moved to working from home, pivoting our work, listening to and supporting our sector.

Our first step was to engage in various sector engagement activities focused on providing a forum for our sector to voice their concerns. We invited them to share the direct impact of the restrictions, to listen to their successes and pitfalls whilst adapting to an ever-changing situation and discuss avenues where we could provide meaningful support.

Ausdance VIC lead sessions: We organised sessions for three key cohorts

1. Dance Studio Owners and Teachers
2. Primary and Secondary School Dance Teachers (combined with Ausdance NSW)
3. Independent Artists.

Topics Covered:

1. **General update and legal advice for** Dance Studio Owners and Teachers. Joined by Sarah Eddison Rose, a lawyer experienced in human rights law, employment and labour law and insurance law
2. **Resources for online delivery and insurance.** Joined by James Schubach, Aon Insurance
3. **Open discussion on pedagogy in the online realm** for Dance Studio Owners and Dance Teachers and Dance Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools
4. **Mental health and wellbeing** with guest presenter Dr Jane Miskovic-Wheatley, a combined session with Dance Studio Owners, Dance Teachers and Dance Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools
5. **Returning to the physical space** A discussion on the Return to Dance Framework
6. **Dance studio owners impact on business:** A space for Dance studio owners to put forward their issues and concerns in light of impact on business

Quick Look		
TEN ZOOM sessions	800+ Attendees	5000+ Reach



I would like to thank you for your efforts in reaching out to the Victorian Dance Studio Owners. I truly believe and have always since my time on the board many years ago now that the communication between Ausdance VIC and Dance Studio Owners needs to increase for the benefit of the sector especially at grass root level”

Paul Malek, Transit Dance

Broader Engagement: The Ausdance VIC staff held weekly team meetings discussing the current needs and the impacts on the ecology of the sector, and discussion on guest speakers or key stakeholders to seek advice or present in upcoming sessions. We also participated in ongoing **Broader Sector Meetings** with organisations on and around impacts of COVID-19 including:

- Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centre
- Theatre Network Australia
- Department of Education and Training
- Victorian Assessment Software System
- Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School

Small to Medium Organisations Meetings

Ausdance VIC attended the Melbourne/ Victorian Small to Medium Contemporary dance companies biweekly check ins. These meetings were a great connection point for both the companies and Ausdance VIC. Ausdance VIC was able to receive critical information on the impact these companies were facing as a result of the pandemic and give specific updates to these companies on resources and outcomes of advocacy. The meetings were attended by Chunky Move, Lucy Guerin, Ballet Lab, Stephanie Lake, Dancehouse and Independent Artists.



Image courtesy Ausdance Vic member Grace Kwobo. Image by Ricky Manso

“As an Ausdance VIC member I just wanted to reiterate how helpful and supportive I’ve found the work of Ausdance VIC for me personally and also for my wider dancing community over this challenging time. I just wanted to add another voice to today’s discussion to say how much I admire what Ausdance Vic is able to achieve for the sector despite the resource-constrained environment in which it operates, and my appreciation continues for what you’ve been able to offer us at this time too!”

Meah, Travel Art Dance Company

RESPOND

Each sector engagement provided us information and on the ground knowledge about the critical needs of the hour, as voiced by our sector. These needs were addressed by creating specific resources created by the Ausdance VIC to specifically support and address the challenges being faced. These were made freely available to the entire dance sector.

Resources Supporting Online Delivery

- 1. Online Delivery of Dance Classes and Tutorials.** Ausdance VIC Recommendations and Teaching Resources.
- 2. Dance Teaching Resources:** Links to videos, lessons, tools and reliable information which, together, may support the teaching of dance online.
- 3. Online Duty of Care: Older Dance Participants:** This document outlines some key considerations relating to Duty of Care and leading online dance activities. To be read in conjunction with Ausdance VIC's [Online delivery of dance classes and tutorials](#).
- 4. Big Dance Education Resource Online Edition:** For primary classes
- 5. Primary and Secondary online dance class resources** created for the *Victorian Department of Education (DET)*. Eight dance classes for Primary and Secondary dance students self-directed learning at home. Targeted at L5-6 and L7-8 students, they could also be relevant to students from L5-12.
- 6. Teaching Dad to Dance online edition:** adapted significantly for online environments in partnership with *Independent Schools Victoria*.



Some key considerations relating to Duty of Care and leading online dance activities.

written by Dr. Marina Park for Ausdance VIC in consultation with Ausdance Queensland, Ausdance National, SOCA, Mosaic Australia, Safe Practice and Love Victoria.

Sector Support

1. Letter of recognition as an artist to assist Independent artists in applying for Centrelink and other stimulus measures.
2. Safe Dance® Resource: Posters to communicate and encourage the adoption of two key tenets of Safe Dance® practice



Return to Dance Support

- 1. COVID-19 Cleaning Dance Studio Floors and Equipment:** Consultation of several floor manufactures to advise on best practise of increased cleaning due to COVID-19 without depreciating the value / quality of the flooring.
- 2. Return to Dance Guidelines:** Principles and framework for restarting dance activities post COVID-19. Created by Ausdance VIC in consultation with the greater Ausdance Network.

Managing COVID-19: Recommendations for the Victorian Dance Sector

Developed by Ausdance VIC with and for the dance sector, it refers to Victorian Government Restricted Activity Directions (RAD's) and

- recommends approaches
- provides checklists
- provides communication templates
- provides links to relevant and useful sites and resources



Thank you for all you are doing.. Thank you for your time in preparing these documents... Whilst I am a studio owner, I am also a Dance Teacher in the education sector and I am always receiving communication from Ausdance VIC. Keep going and thank you"

Colette MacLaren –Victorian Dance Teacher & Studio Owner

Victorian Dance Studio Owner COVID-19 Business Impact Survey

In response to the overwhelming sector feedback and call out for help by Dance Studios, decimated by the impacts of COVID-19 on Victoria's dance sector, Ausdance VIC initiated a survey among owner-operated dance studios. **Victorian Dance Studio Owner COVID-19 Business Impact Survey was conducted** between 28 July – 3 August 2020 and attracted 183 responses. Based on an estimated 1,000 – 1,200** dance studios across Victoria, this represented a response rate of approximately 15-18%.

This survey informed the report **Victoria Dance Studio Owner COVID-19 Business Impact Survey Report- Ausdance Victoria (August 2020)**. The report was broadly distributed and lead to high level conversations between AV and representatives of for the Victorian state government from the Office of Hon Martin Foley MP; Office of Hon Jaala Pulford MLC, Minister for Small Business; Department of Sport and Recreation; Department of Jobs, Precincts (DJPR) and Regions and Creative Victoria.

An outcome of this meeting was an invitation from the senior policy advisors to write 3 submissions to the government. These included:

- 1. re-TURN TO DANCE - Roadmap to Reopening (October 2020)**
- 2. re-TURN TO DANCE - Ensuring Victoria's Dance Studios Keep Dancing (September, 2020)**
- 3. re-TURN TO DANCE - Supporting the health and wellbeing of Victorians through dance (October 2020)**

"Dear Ausdance VIC Team, Thank you for all the hard work you are doing. You have the full support from all of us at Love to Dance School of Ballet and collectively send all our you at Ausdance a big bubble of protective light to carry you through".

Amba Hawley – Director, Love to Dance Ballet School

Victorian Dance Studio Owner
COVID-19 Business Impact
Survey Report
August 2020

“I am writing today with a shout out to thank you for all you’re doing and also for the grace, professionalism and style you’re showing under pressure as you do it presently. Your orderly processes and governmental discussions are our only lifeline for a pathway forward at the moment, so please consider this one big thank you.”

As a Victorian metro studio owner who has a very large commercial lease and is not receiving governmental support, things are very close to the edge and not having term 4 live classes whilst not receiving support from government does create a devastating future for myself, my staff and teachers - and I am only one amongst many, I’m sure. I am so grateful you are there in our hour of need, in our corner to negotiate with the specific and nuanced channels of government departments communicating in a way that I cannot”.

Ziggy Clements ADCRG

ADVOCATE

While the impact of the pandemic was felt across the country, in Victoria, the impact was harsher and deeper due to the longer duration of restrictions and lockdowns.

To ensure that the situation on ground in Victoria was provided to all relevant Government and sector platforms, Ausdance VIC communicated with and fed into the following bodies on a regular basis.

- AICV, Arts Industry Council Victoria: Ausdance VIC jointly sent letters and shared information
- to several state and federal government ministers, departments and agencies.
- IAG, Industry Advisory Group Business, representing Arts & Culture for Victoria
- IRC, Independent Reference Committee, Arts & Culture, National
- Australia Council for the Arts
- Creative Victoria
- Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres (VAPAC)
- Small to medium dance companies
- Independent Artist and Independent Organisations

New Arts Minister: The Hon. Danny Pearson

Michelle Silby (our Executive Director) met with the Hon. minister Pearson soon after his appointment in October. It is great to see that Minister Pearson is keen to build on the legacy of Martin Foley MP. We are looking forward to working with him in the post COVID-19 recovery.

AICV: A Leap Forward in Collaboration

Over 2020 this pivotal group has been meeting weekly (a marked increase from every few months!) to ensure the peak bodies are supporting and strengthening the arts sector together. The support within this group has been invaluable. The AICV has had great dialogue with ministers and key individuals in government departments and local councils across the state, including making submissions and being invited to present to the [Public Accounts and Estimates Committee Inquiry into the Victorian Government’s Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

Making Change

We engaged in high level discussions with many important bodies, one of which is the **Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission**. Ausdance VIC contributed to an ongoing major research project to further pay and employment equity for women and CALD communities.

Review of Creative Arts and Culture Training Packages

A 2-year process has been completed for the **Review of Creative Arts and Culture Training Packages**. This review was conducted by the Independent Reference Committee for The Culture and Related Industries of which our Executive Director is the Deputy Chair. This was a huge undertaking to approve **150 units from 55 Certificate 1-4, Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses**. These units add to the important skills development and training for dancers, actors, community arts and cultural development practitioners and more.

Creative Victoria's Strategic Investment Fund Stage 2

Ausdance VIC submitted Next Steps:

Towards the Revitalisation of Victoria's Dance Sector as an EOI for the Creative Victoria's Strategic Investment Fund Stage 2 grant.

The application included financial support for Think Tank Dance Assembly, an assembly of Independent dancers who were allocated 40% of the organisational funding be received by Ausdance VIC.

The Next Steps strategy is Stage One of a longer-term strategy designed to stimulate Victoria's dance industry post COVID-19 and make diverse dance practices accessible to all Victorians. A targeted response, *Next Steps* aims at not only enhancing the operational capacity of Ausdance Victoria, re-model and re-launch programs, but also address immediate sector needs - laying the necessary foundations for fostering greater self-determination, equity, and access among dance practitioners.

Advocacy Milestones: State

- **Ausdance VIC submitted a letter to the Minister of Health** seeking an exemption to the "20 people allowed per separate enclosed space, subject to the four-square metre rule, with up to 10 people per group or activity." restriction which directly affects the Dance studio sector in the state. We also urged all members to write their own letter to the Minister and their Local MP's. Draft letters were provided to facilitate the same. [Read here](#)
- **Ausdance VIC issued a statement in response to the Federal Government's rescue package.** \$250 ARTS PACKAGE - IT NEEDS TO GO FURTHER. "Ausdance VIC is very concerned that loans will place artists and arts companies at higher risk of insolvency in an untested, post COVID-19 landscape in an already under-funded industry. Particularly as the re-opening of venues, the impact of social distancing, and return to operating at full capacity is still unknown". [Read here](#)
- **Presented to ministerial advisors to the Hon Martin Foley (Creative Industries) and Hon Jaala Pulford (Small Business), as well as departmental heads and senior policy advisors from Creative Victoria and the Experience Economy Recovery team: results of the Victorian Dance Studio Owner COVID-19 Business Impact Survey** and its recommendations.
- **Submission to Tim Mayfield, Senior Advisor, Office of Hon Jaala Pulford MLC, Minister for Small Business: re-TURN TO DANCE Ensuring Victoria Keeps Dancing targeted assistance for dance studio businesses** to in consultation with dance studio owners.
- **Submission to Holly Cooper, Ministerial Advisor, Office of Hon Martin Foley MP: re-TURN TO DANCE Supporting the health and wellbeing of Victorians through dance** in consultation with dance studio owners.
- **Presented to Creative Victoria and the COVID-19 response team Return to Dance ROADMAP TO RECOVERY Dance Industry Recommendations.** Developed in consultation with key stakeholders Dancehouse, Chunky Move, Lucy Guerin Inc, Stephanie Lake Company, Ballet Lab, Dance Studio Owners, the Royal Academy of Dance and Cecchetti Ballet Australia.

"Thanks to Ausdance VIC for all the work you've done and openness you've shown during this process. It is greatly appreciated".

Tom Pritchard, Studio Producer - [Lucy Guerin Inc](#)

" Thank you for your continued advocacy on our behalf. Thank you for your well measured response to current events. While it is important that the Government understand our industry and where it should fit in the roadmap this needs to be done within the context of the expert health and scientific advice that the Government is using to plan our way to a sustainable 'COVID normal.' Please, keep up the good work and again, I am sorry to hear that your job has been made harder by having to deal with unpleasantness. All the best"

Ana Mitsikas – Stage Left Performing Arts School

National Advocacy: We worked alongside our National Peak Body to feed the impacts on the dance sector at the federal Level.

The strength, collaboration and integrated focus of the Ausdance network was invaluable in a combined, interstate response to urgent need for communication, advocacy and a coordinated approach. As in other states, part of the COVID-19 response was federal with Jobseeker and Jobkeeper supporting people and businesses, while other initiatives were made available at a state and local government level. Ausdance VIC was one of the first ports of call for people wanting information that was relevant for them, that simplified the language and was current and accurate.

Advocacy Milestones: National

- **COVID-19 impact survey:** The Ausdance National COVID-19 impact survey specifically collected information pertaining to the impact on the Dance Sector and these figures fed into making our case at all levels of advocacy.
- **Roundtable:** Ausdance National attending the weekly roundtable with the Australia Council Arts Ministry, Treasury Peak Orgs Roundtable teleconference. Ausdance Vic fed impacts on the dance sector and points to be raised through the Ausdance representative Julie Dyson, Vice President Ausdance National.
- **Letter to The Hon Prime Minister Scott Morrison, 26 March, 2020:** Ausdance National and the Ausdance Network signed a joint submission from 40 other organisations coordinated by NAVA to the Prime Minister. [Read here](#)
- **Open letter to The Hon. Minister Paul Fletcher:** Ausdance National and the Ausdance Network was also a signatory to an open letter to Minister Paul Fletcher along with other org's. [Read Here](#)
- **Joint advocacy for Arts Specific funding:** Ausdance National joined other peak arts organisations in advocating for an arts-specific funding package. 'Live an entire day without benefiting from the work of actors, directors, musicians, writers, dancers, choreographers, designers, developers and animators who, largely freelancers, contribute to a vibrant Australian society.' ['A day without art? Movies? Music? Try it ... then write to PM'](#)
- **Submission to the Senate Select Committee on COVID-19.** This submission recommended that "the government supports individual artists and non-profit arts companies to get back on their feet by providing a Stabilisation and Recovery Fund of \$70m to the Australia Council for the Arts, and an ongoing \$50m per annum uplift to stimulate recovery for Australia that is led by the arts and cultural sectors. This recommendation is in line with those of Theatre Network Australia and other peak arts organisations. We also request a full day of hearings to allow detailed advice from various arts and entertainment sectors." [Read here.](#)
- **Open letter to the National Cabinet:** Ausdance National and the Ausdance Network including Ausdance Victoria sent an open letter to the National Cabinet to bring to attention the qualifications status of dance studio teachers and their businesses across Australia. [Read here](#)
- **National statement on \$250 M Arts Package:** Ausdance National issued a statement welcoming the \$250m arts, entertainment and screen industry package. However, we also highlighted "Ausdance National has major concerns about the significant number of casual, freelance dance workers who are still without any safety net." [Read here](#)
- **Ausdance National and the Ausdance Network including Ausdance Victoria responded to the \$250M Arts Funding Package in a letter to Arts Hon. Paul Fletcher.** "Ausdance National and its professional network across the nation identified that further tailored support measures are needed to enable the full scope of dance businesses to return to work, and to do so efficiently." [Read here](#)

COMMUNICATE

As the peak body for Dance, Ausdance VIC always disseminates only accurate, verified and direct from source information to our sector. In times of uncertainty, it became more imperative for us to prevent unnecessary panic and alarm fuelled by conflicting and confusing information. Ausdance VIC sourced its information directly from Creative Victoria, the DJPR and other relevant government departments before widely distributing it via our various communication platforms.

- 1. Website:** We pivoted our website to reflect the latest news from direct government sources. The website has a dedicated COVID-19 section with updated information on Advocacy, Resources, Grants, Online Classes and much more.
- 2. Social Media:** Our social media platforms emerged as a strong source of authentic and reliable source of information for the sector in light of the ever-changing restrictions, and government directives.
- 3. Direct Newsletters and News Blasts:** During 2020, we increased the frequency of our communications to ensure the sector was always updated with authentic information.
- 4. Emails / Enquiries:** Throughout the pandemic Ausdance Victoria has been responding to emails and enquiries of support. These range from enquiries seeking information on restrictions, the impact on their business, what support Ausdance VIC and Ausdance National is providing to the sector and can assist with in seeking exemptions, as well as advice on how to effectively adapt to the changing environment. Collectively, the team handled over 100 queries on a weekly basis.

Quick Look		
40+ newsletters and newsflashes	400+ social media posts	5000+ emails and direct enquires

Quick Look: Statistics (as of December 2020)			
Facebook		Website	
Followers	3171	Users	15k users
Growth	+19.4%	Increase	+29.2%
Reach	Max 25,500 (organic)	Sessions	22k
		Increase	+33.4%
Instagram			
Followers	1757		
Growth	+16%		
General Newsletter			
Subscribers	2793		
Growth	+20.8%		
Membership Newsletter			
Subscribers	1000		
Growth	+90%		

“Hiya Ausdance VIC Crew!! I’m super dooper grateful for all you’re doing to support our community! It’s wonderful!!”

Danielle Cresp – Sector Member

SUPPORT

Bolstering the Self-determination of Independent Dance Artists by supporting the Think Tank Dance Assembly (TTDA)

While the health crisis affected everyone in the sector, Ausdance VIC was cognisant of the fact that one of the most affected sub-sectors have been the Independent dance artists. Like much of the arts sector, these dance artists rely heavily on freelance contract work, which dried up in the face of public health restrictions.

Ausdance VIC recognised the urgency to address this immediate sector need; to lay the necessary foundations for fostering greater self-determination, equity, and access among dance practitioners. As part of our application, Next Steps: Towards the Revitalisation of Victoria’s Dance Sector, we secured financial support for a porous assembly for independent dance artists Think Tank Dance Assembly (TTDA) through Creative Victoria’s Stage 2 funding grant.

The grant allows Ausdance VIC to practically support **Think Tank Dance Assembly (TTDA)**, through the use of funds, direct payment to independent dance artists, administrative and marketing support, so TTDA can undertake its own research, advocacy, and strategy development, as well as produce *Dance Artists Melbourne Narrm (DAMN)* - a report that identifies, issues, needs and ideas for the future. The document will elaborate on ideas posed during discussions, both within TTDA, and with the broader sector. DAMN will be made available for anyone interested in gaining insight into issues surrounding independent dance practice.



Image by Alice Dixon.

“Thank you for your detailed email with many reference materials and a strong voice of leadership as a representative of the Dance arts Sector here in Victoria.”

Catherine Fennell, DanceStruck

“Sending you lots of encouragement and thanks from us at Creative Learning Centre – particularly our Leap into Dance program!!!!”

Lee Francis – Sector Member

Education

1. National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association (**NAISDA**) **consultation** Ausdance VIC consulted with National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA) to develop assessment tools and instruments for NAISDA's new Advanced Diploma. This work deepened our association with NAISDA which was renewed through Big Dance Heart in 2018. It allows Ausdance to show its commitment to the importance of Indigenous studies in dance. NAISDA is attended by indigenous students from across Australia, including Victoria.
2. **Training package review:** The Education team reviewed a large portion of the Creative Industries revision of the training package. They focused on the Dance qualifications, the Teaching qualification and the Health and Arts and Creative Ageing skill sets. They conducted a Zoom consultation with the industry to get feedback on our comments as well as their own additional feedback. Our RTO Co-ordinator was invited to speak to Cecchetti Ballet Australia National Council re: Training Package Review. We also sent an Ausdance VIC submission with a great deal of feedback on qualifications, Units of Competency with both big picture commentary and explicit detailed feedback.



Image Courtesy Ausdance Vic member Studio J.



'Rewa: The Unseen' (2019), Devika Bilimoria. Sangam Performing Arts Festival of South Asia and Diaspora. Photo by Arun Muñoz. Image courtesy Sangam

3. Online Resources for Victorian Department of Education and Training

Our Director of Education, Dr Katrina Rank was approached by the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET) to create 8 online lessons, lesson plans and worksheets for at-home dance classes for Year 5-6 and Year 7-8. 8 online lessons, lesson plans and worksheets supported by Victorian Department of Education for Year 5-6 and 7-8 students were created and made available on DET's ARC and FUSE resource repository.

4. Creative Ageing

During 2020, we developed learner journeys for participants of the Creative Ageing through Dance Program, creating a distinct journey for:

- experienced dance professionals,
- people without dance experience but already working with older people.

We engaged Jennifer Barry to support this work which has informed our communications and marketing around this project. In response to COVID-19 we developed guidelines for duty of care when working with seniors and the elderly online, to support and enable our members to continue their engagement with older cohorts.

Quick Look	
NAISDA	32 Assessment Tools for Training and Assessment 32 Assessment Tools for Recognition of Prior Learning
Training Package Review	60 Units reviewed for the CUA Training Package review
DET Resources	8 videos created

RTO

Ausdance VIC's RTO responded quickly and efficiently to the many changes introduced to support student learning over the COVID-19 restriction periods and to communicate with our teachers and students about new requirements for assessment. Our RTO Co-ordinator worked tirelessly to provide accurate and timely information and increased newsletters to weekly missives and supported teachers via phone, email and Zoom.

1. Communicated with RTO partnership schools through weekly emails, group and one to one call.
2. Kept teachers updated via newsletters and direct conversations about the latest restrictions and the impacts on the course.
3. Set up online learning for students from metropolitan and regional schools and supported the reworked delivery.
4. Liaised with VASS, VCAA, VCE VET and the Department of Education to provide feedback on the impacts and concerns of the sector.
5. Provided confidential emotional and practical support to dance and education peers in leadership roles

Quick Look
500+ students, 35 schools
7 Professional Development days
30+ newsletters and newsflashes
100+ emails, 50+ calls and meetings per week

"It was a great experience even if it was through zoom."
"I learnt quite a bit about the industry from asking questions."
"The choreographer was super nice with great choreography."

Masterclass Students, Mill Park Secondary College

Professional Development for VET teachers

- Validation 22 October
- Moderation: 26th & 30th October and 4th November
- 2021 End of Year Teacher meeting 8th December
- New Teacher and administrative processes Inductions 9th & 10th December

I loved....

"Learning a different style of contemporary and hip-hop to what my teacher usually teaches, using a different concept to approach the dance and gaining more skills from someone else."

Masterclass students, Craigieburn Secondary College

Industry Days for RTO Partner Schools

Industry Days are designed for our VCE VET Students (530+) over 42 partner schools, to experience a 'real world experience' with a masterclass and mock audition.

Due to the ever-changing landscape of the COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines, Industry Days were reimagined from their normal collective workshop style delivery to school incursions.

The first reimagining saw Ausdance VIC plan for our Industry Professional to attend our partner schools to deliver face to face workshops in their studio. Unfortunately, Victoria went into heavy lockdown restrictions and this interaction had to be reworked.

The second reimagined Industry Day design was reworked to be held online and live streamed into the school's studio space and or students' homes. These Industry Days were held across Term Three.

2020 Industry Day saw:

- **Employment of eight industry professionals as teaching artists**

- Ngioka Bund-Heath
- Efren Pamilacan
- Samuel Gaskin
- Kyall Shanks
- Luke Alleva
- Foloue Tap
- Scott Estrein
- Daiske

Delivering masterclasses in Contemporary, Jazz, Street dance, Siva Soma, Commercial and audition techniques.

- **19 Incursions:**

- 1 Victorian on sight incursion in March pre lockdown,
- 17 online incursion sessions across 13 schools and
- 1 Western Australia Onsite incursion in July

- **Attended by**

- 151 students for the online incursions
- 52 for the face to face incursion in VIC
- 13 for the face to face incursion in WA

The 2020 numbers represent 43% of the Ausdance VIC student cohort and is the best outreach AV has had historically in terms of Industry incursions. To our knowledge, no other RTO offers industry engagement to their students as part of their vocational training. By offering this program, Ausdance VIC provides a) an experience of 'working' in the industry b) professional learning for our teachers c) work for professional dance artists.

Quick Look		
19 Incursions	8 Teaching Artists	250+ Students

“ I learnt Ngioka Bunda- Heath’s story on how she became the amazing dancer she is today.”

“I learnt another way to warm-up my body in a unique way and I practised learning and performing in the contemporary style.”

Masterclass Students, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

VETtrak Online Enrolment Portal

The student management system VETtrak was updated with a connection setup between VETtrak and VETenrol. The migration to this new system was a process involving training and supporting all teachers, students and parents from our studio partners and VET cluster schools. The system has been embraced and welcomed by all.

VET Dance

- Total of just over 500 students in 2020: Partnerships with 35 schools
- Supporting the transition to online delivery in Term 2
- Ausdance VIC team supporting sector to transition to online teaching though guidelines, resources and meetings

20 years as an RTO (Registered Training Organisation)

Since our beginning on 17 November, 2000, our programs have enabled thousands of dancers to complete qualifications and skill sets in dance and dance teaching. We celebrated this achievement with a whole week of exciting content including a look at the history of the RTO, an interview with our RTO Coordinator and some fun experiences as shared by our teachers and students from over the years.



I loved....

“ ~ having inside knowledge about the dance industry.”
 ~ learning other styles of contemporary.”
 ~ learning new experiences.”

Audition Students, Mill Park Secondary College

Image courtesy Ausdance Vic member Dancehouse’s Emerging choreographers program ‘Future City Inflatable’ (2018), Ellen Davies & Alice Heyward. Photo by Jacqui Shelton.

“I was able to learn from a teacher I had never learnt from before.”


“I was able to ask questions about the industry and was given answers that have helped me understand better.”

“I was overall more confident in myself.”

Masterclass Students, Kallista Dance Academy

RTO Anniversary

Ausdance Victoria RTO
Celebrating 20 Years



“
It is impossible to choose a favourite moment of my time teaching VCE VET Dance when it has been such a wonderful experience. VET Dance is an exceptional subject that gives students an insight into the dance industry and an experience they will never forget!”
Tasha Esteves,
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College

ausDANCE
VIC

Ausdance Victoria RTO
Celebrating 20 Years



“
Thank you to all at Ausdance Victoria for everything that you do for the dance community and for the support and encouragement you provide, especially to VET teachers. Congratulations on your 20 years as an RTO and we look forward to our continuing association.
Best Wishes from the Dance Team at VCASS

ausDANCE
VIC

Ausdance Victoria RTO
Celebrating 20 Years



VET Certificate 3 in Dance graduate,
Francesca Busonni

ausDANCE
VIC

Ausdance Victoria RTO
Celebrating 20 Years



Kate Kaleb

ausDANCE
VIC


Ausdance Victoria RTO
Celebrating 20 Years



Rose Godde, the founder of our RTO with Kath Pappas,
Director of Ausdance from 2003-2009.

ausDANCE
VIC

Ausdance Victoria RTO
Celebrating 20 Years



The first Industry Day with VCE VET Students in 2003

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Ausdance Victoria RTO
Celebrating 20 Years



Rose Godde

ausDANCE
VIC

20 Years

Sector Engagement

Glance at Dance, Industry Networking Event: Diversifying Audiences, Challenges and Opportunities:

February 2020, The event ended up being the only live event hosted by Ausdance VIC in the year 2020 as the team and the sector moved into COVID-19 restrictions from March 2020. Responding to new guidelines, Ausdance VIC moved all its activities to the online realm.

Our first (and last) live event of the year was a scintillating panel discussion followed by a networking evening over wine and cheese. The panel consisted of Priya Srinivasan, Gülsen Özer, Veronica Pardo (Multicultural Arts Victoria), Irine Vela (Outer Urban Projects) and Janice Florence (Arts Access/ Weave Theatre). **Supported by Arts Centre, Melbourne.**

With over 40 attendees, it was heartening to see the immense diversity in the audience. The discussion was animated and very well received by all attending. Kick-starting from delving into the **meaning of Audience Diversification** the discussion moved to the **relationship between Audience Diversification and Programming** and the **need for fairer distribution of resources around differential aesthetics**. We also explored **using consultants from within different kinds of communities to inform best practise, examples of best practise** and the **critical importance of ensuring that communities and artists who represent these communities are leading the way.**

Top right image: MonCriefand Cast in Poetic License2 -Miguel Rios. Image courtesy Outer Urban Projects.

Middle image: Photograph by: Paul Dun. Image courtesy Wanna be a Rabbit, WEAVE

Bottom right image: "Serpent Dreaming Women" Bunjilaka Melbourne Museum December 2017, Priya Srinivasan. YaraanBundle, PriyadarsiniGovind, Priya Srinivasan Photo courtesy Priya Srinivasan



Top image: Tarrawarra, GülsenÖzer. Photograph courtesy GülsenÖzer.

Bottom image: Contact Gonzo CHOREOLAB Photo by Kristina Arnott

What is Access in Dance?

July 2020

A free public forum on accessible dance education, training and practice. Presented by Ausdance NSW & Ausdance VIC, supported by the Sydney Opera House, with Arts Access Victoria & Accessible Arts NSW

With over 185 attendees, the public forum “What is Access in Dance” witnessed valuable and much needed discussions around the notions of access and inclusion and what they really mean in dance contexts, whether in education and training or professional practice. The panel including disabled choreographer Caroline Bowditch, musician composer Liz Martin and deaf contemporary dancer Anna Seymour had a lively discussion with Performance Researcher Kate Maguire Rosier.

Presented by Ausdance NSW & Ausdance VIC, supported by the Sydney Opera House, with Arts Access Victoria & Accessible Arts NSW



Photo Credit: Murmuration ‘Days Like These’ (2018), artists Matt Shilcock and Melinda Omokaro. Photo by: Giselle Vollmer.

Image Caption:
Two dancers are intertwined together through their arm movements. From the left the dancer is bent over with his arms stretched downwards and they are linked with the hands of the dancer on the right. Her head is facing upwards with her body leaning backwards. To the right of the image is a wheelchair. Coloured image on a blacked-out stage, stage lighting shining on the artists.

Street Dance Roundtable Sessions:

August and November 2020

Ausdance VIC supported Independent artist, Producer and Moderator Efen Pamilacan and Street Dance Roundtable Sessions. Developed with the support of Theatre Network Australia, Street Dance Roundtable Sessions is a virtual round table discussion series that unpacks topics affecting the street dance community and looks at ways of strengthening connections.

Volume 1- Strengthening Connections

Bringing together eleven street dance artists for a virtual round table discussion. Volume 1 unpacked topics affecting the street dance community and looked at ways of strengthening connections. With panelists from a range of Street Dance forms the session was a hugely productive melting pot of ideas, discussions and lively exchanges.

Panelists:

Daisuke Benson (Jigsaw Sneakers), Cat Pwiti (Burncity Qweenz), Anthony “Lamaroc” Lawang (Fresh Sox, \$7 & MZK), David Prakash (Jam on Toast), Oliver Le (Jam on Toast), Andy Kuramoto (Burn City Waack & IHOW), Vlad Akhchin (Trip Fam), Jack Wardana (Stale Biskitz, EB Fam, 603 & Popping Nation), Jackie Laso (3Step & House of Luna), Kiki Devine (House of Devine), Dennis “Nasa” Pennalligen (Fresh Sox & MZK)

Volume 2- Education and Pathways

A conversation between venues, institutions and grassroots orgs on the topic of education, pathways and looking into the future.

Speakers included:

VCA - Dr. Carol Brown, Dancehouse - Jonathan Homesy, LAB & Cypher Culture - Dennis Pennelligen, Jam on Toast, L2R Dance - Jacinda Richards, Ausdance Vic- Dr. Katrina Rank Street Dance Roundtable Sessions was supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria.

Quick Look			
Initiative	Attendees	Panelists	Reach
G@D	40	5	1000+
Whats Access in Dance?	150	3	3000+ across NSW/VIC
Streetdance	150+	18	2000+

Image left:



International Dance Day and Australian Dance Week:

April-May 2020

29 April is celebrated globally as International Dance day. And the week following is celebrated as Australian Dance week (30 April to 6 May).

International Dance Day is celebration day for those who can see the value and importance of the art form “dance” and acts as a wake-up-call for governments, politicians and institutions which have not yet recognised its value to the people and to the individual and have not yet realised its potential for economic growth. Globally, the intention of the International Dance Day Message is to celebrate dance, revel in the universality of this art form, cross all political, cultural and ethnic barriers, and bring people together with a common language - dance.

2020, as we all grappled with the effects of COVID-19, Ausdance VIC celebrated this week with a theme of “**Thankful for Dance**” delving into how thankful we are for this beautiful art form and all the value it adds to our own lives, our community and our culture.

Ausdance VIC ran an extensive social media campaign from 26 April to 6 May. We invited the sector to join in and received some great content from Chunky Move, Drill, Tasdance, Independents and others. We also shared content from our own projects like AYDF, Dance Massive, Big Dance, RTO / VET Dance, Teaching Dad to Dance and Creative Ageing.

The campaign reached over **12000 people**.

#thankfulfordance #dancewithus
#ausdancevicdw2020
#ausdancevic

Quick Look

- 7 DAYS
- 30+ posts
- Featuring 10+ organisations
- Reaching over 12,000 people

THANKFUL FOR DANCE
THANKFUL FOR DANCE
THANKFUL FOR DANCE



Dance has a habit of never leaving you. It is something the people carry with them throughout their lives. Whether the experience is brief or historical, whether on the dance floor or a stage the memory is forever. There is always a period in everyone's lives where movement is magical."

Bradley Chatfield, Head of Contemporary Dance, Transit Dance



"Sometimes words don't suffice when communicating your experiences, dance always seems to allow us the therapeutic release that we all need. Making and creating allows dancers to be their most authentic selves. There is nothing that I am more thankful for than sharing dance with so many amazing young people."

Jayden Hicks,
Head of Youth Development, Artistic Director Origins Dance Company

Awards

Australian Dance Awards 2020

Ausdance National held the Australian Dance Awards for the first time since 2018. The Australian Dance Awards celebrate the rich diversity and uniqueness of dance in Australia with national companies, performers and collaborating artists, dedicated studio, school and tertiary teachers, regional and remote artists, independents and astounding youth and community dance groups. The annual Awards recognise and honour professional Australian dance artists who have made outstanding achievements that raise the profile and prestige of dance in Australia. This year's Awards spanned these achievements across 2018 and 2019.

Ausdance VIC promoted the awards extensively through a social media campaign. We also hosted an awards watch party for the live streaming of the event.

“ Thank you so much for such a great job with the (RE)TURN party! Everybody had such a great time and really enjoyed being a part of the celebrations.

I had lots of feedback from my guests that the online Dance Awards with hosted guests is a fantastic way to do the awards. Lots of texts and posts were sent all over Australia to congratulate various recipients and nominees coming straight out of my lounge room!! Maybe this is a good model for sustaining the viability of future dance awards, whilst creating a more nationwide ceremony than the previous single venue approach?!

This was such a marvellous way to see the year out! - Cheers”

Alisdair Macindoe, Board Member, Ausdance VIC



Untitled 2019 Dancers: Pol Andrés Thió and Libby-Rose Niederer, Queensland Ballet Photography: David Kelly

(RE)TURN to Dance Party and the Australian Dance Awards

Ausdance VIC bid adieu to 2020 and raised a toast to relationships that have emerged stronger and closer in this turbulent year. A hybrid event, the event invited Ausdance members and the Victorian nominees to join us from their living rooms on a Zoom call. The evening then segued into the live streaming of a glorious celebration of dance, the Australian Dance Awards, 2020.

Trophy handover to Victorian winners

The Ausdance Vic team was delighted to be able to present some of our lovely Australian Dance Awards winners their trophy in person! Special thanks to Katy Mckeown from Ausdance National for handing over the gorgeous trophies to Fine Lines and Karen Malek. We missed the presence of Janet Karin and Philippe Charluet.



Untitled 2019 Dancers: Pol Andrés Thió and Libby-Rose Niederer, Queensland Ballet Photography: David Kelly

Victorian Winners

- **2019 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**
Janet Karin OAM
- **2019 AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN COMMUNITY DANCE**
Fine Lines for The Right, an intergenerational mature dance collective that presented a serious work about sacrifice for the greater good, explored through the lens of contemporary politics.
- **2018 AWARD FOR SERVICES TO DANCE EDUCATION**
Karen Malek for her inspirational work as a dance teacher for over 40 years, and as the President of the Australian Teachers of Dancing as a pivotal figure in dance education in Australia.
- **2019 AWARD FOR SERVICES TO DANCE**
Philippe Charluet for over 30 years of filming Australian dance productions from some of the country's most outstanding companies and choreographers, in particular for his documentation of the work of Graeme Murphy and Janet Vernon in his Heritage Collection



Left image:
Left to Right: Dr. Katrina Rank, Shannon Parsons and Belinda Cussens from Fine Lines.

Top right image:
The Right by Fine Lines. Winner Outstanding Achievement in Community Dance, Australian Dance Awards 2020

Bottom right image:
Karen Malek, Winner Australian Dance Award 2020 Services to Dance Education with Katy Mckeown Ausdance National Board Member. Image courtesy Ausdance Victoria



Special Projects

COMING IN 2021

2020 Planning For

Australian Youth Dance Festival 2021 Preparation

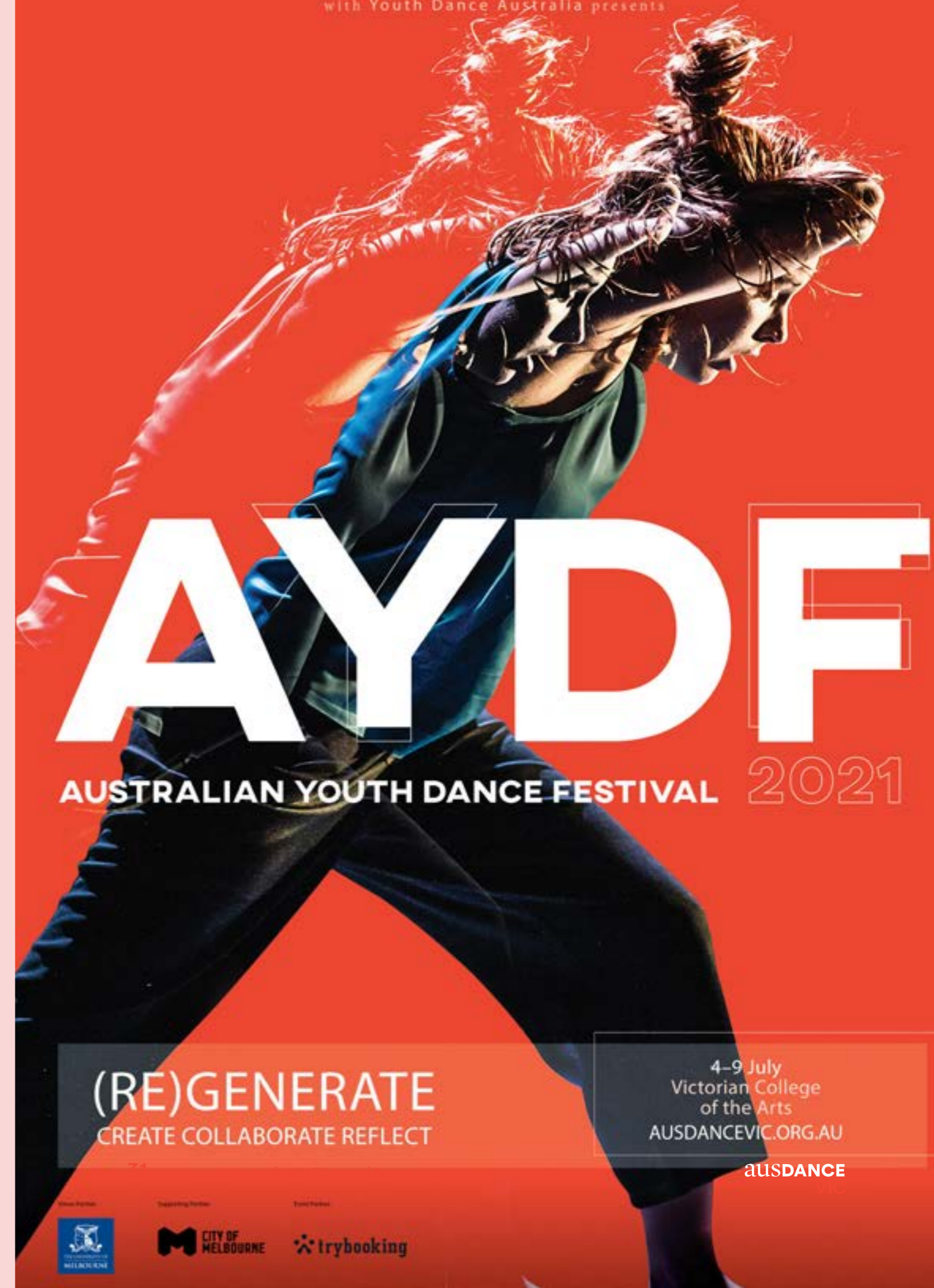
In association with Youth Dance Australia, we will be presenting the Australian Youth Dance Festival 2021: (RE)GENERATE in Melbourne. To be held at the Victorian College of Arts AYDF 2021: (RE)GENERATE will aid in the regeneration of the creativity and confidence of the young and emerging dance sector and its professional allies.

The week-long Festival features five streams:

- **Young dancers' program** - A full week of intensive workshops on different dance styles, choreography, repertory and improvisation sessions, keynotes and panel sessions.
- **A week-long intensive choreographic stream** led by five of Australia's most exciting choreographers and youth dance company alumni. Each of these artists has forged a successful and varied career in dance and will inspire young participants by sharing their own stories and expertise in youth dance practice. The choreographic stream will culminate in a studio-based sharing of work created during the week, with choreographers speaking to their creative process.
- **Live performance evening** - A performance evening of the attending youth dance companies work will also be presented to a live audience. Giving participants the invaluable experience of performing in a professional industry context and the audience a snapshot of the creative practise of each company.
- **Think tank program** - A 2.5 days' program for youth dance leaders, professional and emerging artists, dance educators and the broader industry with strong focus on best practices in youth dance and its development opportunities for young dancers working towards a sustainable career in dance.
- **Youth ambassador program** - Youth ambassador's initiative providing opportunities of youth dancers to connect and share poignant topics prior to the festival and converse with the festival AD. The Festival's Youth Ambassadors who are from each company attending, will play a vital role in the shaping of forums and panels, ensuring their voice is placed at the heart of the Festival.



AYDF 2019 Image by Shutterstock



AYDF

AUSTRALIAN YOUTH DANCE FESTIVAL 2021

(RE)GENERATE
CREATE COLLABORATE REFLECT

4-9 July
Victorian College
of the Arts
AUDANCEVIC.ORG.AU

Membership Update

Membership Report

2020 has been a pivotal year for Ausdance Vic and our relationship with our members. As the sector reeled with the challenges of a pandemic, it became even more imperative us to support our members through this crisis. While we provided all the resources created for the sector during the crisis for free, we also identified the need to open up the membership to ensure access to everyone in need.

Free Memberships

In June 2020, Ausdance Vic took the strategic decision to open free memberships to Victorians. The membership drive was launched in June 2020 and a membership co-ordinator was brought on board to manage this campaign and its administration.

Membership Drive

In July, a membership drive campaign was launched on social media and via direct emails. The program targeted a broad cohort including:

- Attendees of the sector connect sessions
- All non-member email subscribers
- All lapsed members

We also formed and leveraged relationships with Syllabus Organisations (including ballet, jazz, acrobatics and tap) to reach individual teachers and studio owners. The membership drive continued through October – November with a targeted resource-led membership campaign, which resulted in a marked increase in Free COVID sign-ups.

New Membership Benefit

A 10% off Demi Barre is now available to all Ausdance Vic members, thanks to our sister organisation Ausdance NSW.

Membership Review

In October we undertook an internal review of Ausdance Victoria's membership offerings- including value and benefits.

Member Communications

The review fed into a revamping of the member newsletter with value added content exclusively for members. This included two new sections:

- **Ask an Expert** column - **Your Questions**
- Deep dive into **advocacy**

Introducing Membership Numbers

We introduced membership numbers to ease the process of accessing discounted insurance with AON, or for membership enquiries and when members need to provide proof of membership of a peak body.

Member Survey

At the end of the year, we conducted a **Tell us what you want!** member survey with three winners getting an Aesop Pamper Pack. The outcomes from the Survey will feed into changes to membership benefits, infrastructure and process updates identified in the review, to be implemented in 2021.

Year-end Celebrations

We ended the year with two members targeted campaigns.

a. Invitation to an Exclusive member event: Celebrating Re(turn) to Dance. An online zoom party to bid adieu to 2020 and raise a toast to relationships that have emerged stronger. The evening segued into the live streaming of a glorious celebration of dance, the Australian Dance Awards, 2020.

b. End of the year gift memberships: Ausdance Vic ended 2020 by note expressing our gratitude to the dance world by gifting 4-month memberships to all in the holiday season. The 4-month extension was applied to all current members and everyone was also encouraged to share this gift with their friends and colleagues!



Membership Numbers at End 2020

- **Total Members: 1,128**

“Hello and Thank you for all your updates that I have received, even though I don't think I have subscribed before. It has been valuable reading and I was unable to access the sessions on offer, due to various reasons. I am a member of Ausdance and have been for years. I value the effort and time that others have put into the organisation and just wanted to say Thanks!”

Odette, Odette School of Dance



Board

Kelly Dickson Chair

Kelly Dickson has held a variety of roles in the cultural, government and sports sectors over a 25- year career, including marketing, communications, commercial, public affairs, stakeholder engagement, strategy and producing. As the Chief Operating Officer for the Victorian Major Events Company, she was Founder and Project Director for White Night Melbourne (2013-2016) and White Night Ballarat, in addition to leading bid teams for a range of cultural and sporting events.

Kelly currently provides consultancy services in strategy, major event creation and delivery, to host governments and councils, tourism organisations, venues and event organisers, both in Australia and internationally.

Helen Haines Treasurer

Helen Haines is the Director and founder of Dollars + Sense Consulting, a boutique bookkeeping company based in Cremorne. Helen is passionate about seeing small businesses succeed and takes a holistic approach to their business but getting to know why they do what they do, not just the what or how. Helen has a range of financial experience in compliance, small business advisory and operational administration. She helps businesses grow, thrive and achieve their goals every day.

In January 2018, her little girl, Francesca, arrived and outside of work family time is her favourite thing! Between her and her husband they are changing the stereotypical family roles and living the concept of work-life rhythm. She is passionate about the arts and being a part of the Ausdance community.

Amy Jennings Secretary

Amy Jennings is Senior Legal Counsel for the IRONMAN Group in Australia and New Zealand, the largest operator of mass participation sporting events in the world. Throughout her legal career, Amy has worked with a number of not-for-profit sporting organisations, including Tennis Australia and Football Federation Australia, and after starting out in the Sydney office of Herbert Smith Freehills.

In addition to her legal qualifications, Amy holds a Bachelor of Communication from the University of Newcastle and a Master of Arts (Broadcast Journalism) from University College Falmouth, having worked as a broadcast journalist for the BBC, ABC and Austereo. Prior to her time in television and radio, Amy also worked as a freelance photographer and writer for Dancetrain Magazine.

Growing up in Newcastle, NSW, Amy is passionate about dance and the opportunities and sense of community it can provide for people in regional areas – young and old.

Amity Jarvis

Amity is an experienced legal professional and arts advocate with extensive engagement in the legal and arts sectors spanning a decade.

Amity is a senior commercial lawyer in private practice at a large firm with particular expertise in commercial transactions drafting and review, contract negotiation and corporate advisory. Throughout her practice she has provided legal and business advisory services for the creative sector assisting artists and arts organisations, and has accumulated broad experience in not-for-profit board governance.

Amity also has expertise in arts media and marketing having worked with flagship performing arts companies The Australian Ballet, as Publicist, and Bangarra Dance Theatre, as Marketing Manager. She has also worked as a Marketing Consultant managing the strategic marketing activities of Cirque du Soleil, Luna Park and Sydney Dance Company.

Amity holds a double Bachelor degree in Law and Arts with Honours from The University of Melbourne. She is committed to artistic and cultural expression in Australia and loves all forms of dance.

Kate Denborough

Kate is recognised as one of Australia's foremost choreographers and directors of dance-theatre. She is an award-winning creator of original performances, which integrate the mediums of dance, theatre and visual artistry. From 1997-2017, she was the Artistic Director of KAGE, which she co- founded with Gerard Van Dyck. As the Artistic Director of KAGE, Kate devised, directed and/or performed in all the Company's works. Kate has choreographed new work for Australian Dance Theatre, Chunky Move, Victorian College of the Arts, Fling Physical Theatre and Tasdance. Many of her works have won industry awards and national and international recognition. In 2013 Kate was recognised in The Australian Financial Review and Westpac Group 100 Women of Influence Awards. Kate's final work for KAGE, Caught in the Middle toured Scandinavia in 2018 and continues touring throughout Norway in 2020. Kate is currently studying a Master of Teaching at Swinburne University.

Alisdair Macindoe

Alisdair Macindoe is an Australian dancer, sound designer, coder and choreographer. His experience in these fields has taken his work to many countries world-wide, earning critical acclaim in the media and receiving local and international awards including five Melbourne Greenroom awards, an Australian Helpmann, and a New York Bessie. Notable collaborations include his work as a dancer for Lucy Guerin, Chunky Move, Antony Hamilton, Stephanie Lake and DanceNorth, and his work as a sound designer for Chunky Move, Antony Hamilton, STOMPIN and Dancenorth. His choreographic work includes commissions for Dancenorth, Lucy Guerin Inc, Next Wave, Performance Space, and STOMPIN.

Alisdairs' unique multidisciplinary interests extend into the digital realm, and in 2018 he presented a major commission/exhibition NONCOMPETE at the Substation exploring electronics, creative coding and physical computing. As a multidisciplinary artist, whose work spans performance and technology, the intersection of humans and technology in both dance and music is one of his recurring interests.

Staff

Jennifer Barry Independent Arts Consultant

Jennifer is a creative professional with 25+ years' experience leading arts and cultural organizations, managing projects, devising public arts and cultural programs, and producing the work of artists, nationally and internationally. She has held a range of leadership positions including Footscray Community Arts Centre (Director/CEO), Shunpike (Executive Director /USA), Chunky Move (Executive Producer/Co-CEO), the Australian Institute of Arts Management (Executive Director), and the Arts Management Advisory Group of Victoria (Executive Director), among others. As a consultant and project manager, she has worked with all levels of government, and numerous organisations, undertaking strategic, marketing, and business development planning, and conducting stakeholder engagement and feasibility studies. Clients have included the Australia Council for the Arts, Arts Victoria, the City of Melbourne, the Australian Art Orchestra, the Australian Network for Art and Technology, and Royal Children's Hospital, among others. Jennifer has served on numerous Boards and Sector Advisory Committees and is currently the Board President of Liquid Architecture.



If I were to use a simile I would compare Ausdance to my relationship with my mother, who for most of my life thanklessly assured and secured my ability to grow and flourish, and as I grow older, I become more and more thankful for.

ALISAIR MACINDOE
Ausdance Vic Board Member,
choreographer and designer

Michelle Silby

Executive Director

Michelle Silby has an extensive career in dance in both creative and administrative functions. She is the Executive Director of both Ausdance NSW and Ausdance VIC. This dual role leads the teams, through strategy, operational efficiencies and large-scale outcomes; the Director of Big Dance Australia (2014-), and the was the Co-convenor of the Arts Industry Council Victoria (2017-2019). Currently Michelle sits on the following Industry and government committee's; ACFIBS for NSW, Industry Advisory Group, Victorian Skills Commission (VIC), Independent Reference Committee, Arts & Culture related Industries, Vice Chair (National training and professional development) Previously Chair, Regional Arts NSW funding 2014-17, Several Arts NSW funding panels, Churchill Fellowship 2013-16.

Over the last 25 years, Michelle has worked across a variety of contexts as a dance performer, teacher, choreographer, educator and management roles: as a director, festival director, company manager and education consultant in the UK, Europe, and the last 14 years, in Australia. After successfully leading Ausdance NSW since Oct 2012, she was appointed Executive Director, Ausdance Victoria in Nov 2015. She is inspired by the opportunities that leading both states will bring to the dance sector, wider communities and respective organisations. She has held roles as the Program Manager, Dance at the Australia Council for the Arts, where her responsibilities included; working with the board, policy and strategy, dance funding programs, key dance initiatives, such as Tasmanian Community Dance Project and Young Emerging opportunities for example, JUMP (2010-2012), Executive Producer for the 2014 Australian Dance Awards and is also an Independent Consultant for Arts and Dance with various clients across Australia.

As an arts leader, she is strategic, entrepreneurial and generous with her time and support of others. Michelle was born in the UK, where she studied dance at Arts Educational Schools London, followed by a post-graduate year at London Contemporary Dance School, The Place in 1992. Later in 2000-1, after moving into management and leadership roles, she undertook an intensive arts and business management course for arts leaders and was most recently awarded a subsidised place to attend short course in Australia for not-for profit leaders by Harvard Business school.

During her 15 year professional dance career in the UK and Europe, Michelle worked across a variety of contexts as performer, touring Europe for over a decade, educator, choreographer, director, festival director, company manager and consultant. A particular highlight of her career in the UK included making a significant contribution to the dance infrastructure for the North East of England, through the formulation and delivery of a dance development plan with secured funding.

Robbie Carmellotti

General Manager (November 2020 onwards)

Robbie is a passionate advocate for the ongoing development of Australia's dance, arts and entertainment industries with an ardent focus on progressing diversity and equality within the sectors. Robbie's extensive portfolio of experience within the arts industry includes being a producer with Opera Australia overseeing the delivery of key commercial events such as the Sydney Opera House New Years Eve Gala and associated events, Mazda Opera in the Bowl, Mazda Opera in the Domain, Anthony Pratt and OA's Opera for the People and the return season of West Side Story. A further thirty commercial production credits can be attributed to his time as Executive Producer and Director of Operations with StageArt Australia, with highlights being the Australasian premiere of The Color Purple the Musical, Memphis the Musical, Dreamgirls, In The Heights and the Victorian premiere of Spring Awakening.

Robbie's enthusiasm for the industry has grown from his beginnings as a dancer which saw him become an Australian and International champion in Latin American Dancesport.

Dr. Katrina Rank

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

Dr Katrina Rank is a leading Australian educator and dance artist, contributing to national and international movement education outcomes. A ballet and contemporary dancer by training, Katrina maintains a performance and teaching practice and received an Australian Dance Award for Services to Dance Education in 2018.

Katrina has worked in various roles for Ausdance since 2008 including acting Director, Education Manager and consultant. She is currently Director of Education and Lifelong Learning. Katrina was the author and project leader of Teaching and Leading Dance to Older People, a research program and report which has been distributed widely. Her extensive background in education and community arts also saw her work on the Knowing You Knowing me Project with the City of Whittlesea in 2017-2018 and the hugely successful Alice Project. The Alice Project was a community dance initiative that reached across four regional Victorian municipalities and more than 15,000 participants over two years, as part of the VicHealth MOTION program.

Her recent dance focus has been on dance for health, with particular reference to ageing and Parkinson's disease. In 2013, Katrina initiated Fine Lines, intergenerational dance and projects. Fine Lines began with contemporary dance classes for experienced mature dancers.

Shweta Kawatra

Marketing Communications Manager

Shweta is an Integrated Communications Specialist with over 15 years of experience in Indonesia, Australia and India across a range of industries including Lifestyle (Johnnie Walker, Guinness, Smirnoff, Levi's Indonesia), Education (Australian International School, Indonesia), Arts and Culture (Tasmanian Regional Arts, Interweave Arts Tasmania), Not for Profit (Help for Refugees, Jakarta) and Film and Television (MTV, Channel V, Indian Film Industry).

Shweta has a post graduate degree in marketing and a Graduate Certificate in Cinema Studies from the University of Melbourne. She is a passionate Human Rights Advocate and is on the Board for a learning centre for Refugees in Jakarta.

Alison McIntosh-Deszcz

Membership and Engagement Co-ordinator (Since June 2020)

Alison is a performing artist and marketing and communications professional. Her career spans work in Marketing Communications and Development within the Arts and Culture industry, Grant Writing for independent artists through to large established organisations, Performance and Teaching. Alison is a qualified ballet teacher and trained opera singer performing in chamber music and opera events in Australia.

Kate Kaleb

RTO and Education Coordinator

Kate has been a professional ballet dancer, independent contemporary dancer and a conceptual artist, performing in Australia and the USA. After retiring from performing, Kate completed a Bachelor of Science in Psychology/ Psychophysiology. Since completing her degree, Kate has worked in health policy and education, as well as in a range of dance education roles, including teaching, writing teaching materials, and VET administration. As well as her role at Ausdance, Kate teaches ballet and runs a not for profit dance school.

Fiona Hulands

Dance Development Officer

Australian born, Fiona begun dancing at the age of 9 in jazz, ballet, modern and contemporary. At the age of 16 she was accepted into the New Zealand School of Dance completing her Diploma in Dance Performance and seconding to the Royal New Zealand Ballet for their 2007 season of Swan Lake.

Fiona's professional career saw her perform in Australia, Japan, the United States of America and New Zealand. In 2015 Fiona completed her Professional Dancers Postgraduate Teaching Certificate through the Royal Academy of Dance and has enjoyed teaching all ages ranges in Australia, New Zealand and Germany. Upon retiring from professional dance Fiona entered the fitness industry where she worked as fitness consultant and Gym Floor Manager for Les Mills Extreme Wellington New Zealand.

Amy Fox

Office Manager (January to April 2020)

Amy has extensive experience working in the not-for-profit community services sector, hospitality and direct service delivery in disability with skills in project management, compliance and regulatory review and training development and delivery.



Image Courtesy Sangam. Jhoom Bollywood Dance Company

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