

Ausdance VIC August 2022 Policy Consultation

Ausdance VIC is the government-recognised peak body for dance in Victoria and the subject association for dance in the school curriculum. We aim to provide all Victorians with opportunities to experience and engage with dance. As 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.

The purpose of this consultation is to hear direct feedback and input from members into policy for presentation to State government and candidates in the forthcoming state election.

Our focus is on state responsibilities and policies. Ausdance National is currently preparing a submission document to the new federal Labor government and any relevant policy issues that arise through this process will be communicated to Ausdance National for inclusion.

After the focus groups and written feedback are received, Ausdance VIC will prepare a formal letter with policy recommendations to the parties and candidates in the state election. We will be seeking to represent our members' expressed views and your questions to all parties prior to the election with the aim of promoting the interests of dance and the Victorian dance community during the campaign and during the next term.

Priority Areas have been drawn from our 2021 Annual Sector Survey, meetings with key government and sector stakeholders, emerging research and direct feedback from members. Please provide your suggestions via email to membership.vic@ausdance.org.au if you are not able to attend an online focus group session.

Below are some questions to help guide your thinking around state government policy. We are interested to hear about current policy settings that are working, settings that aren't, and new ideas to address issues and challenges facing you, your community, organisation or business.

Area 1: Health

What could the government do to proactively support physical and mental health in dance?

What policy (if any) is currently working for you?

Would you benefit from dance prescribing? *

Area 2: Access and Culture

What are the current barriers around accessibility you see within the dance sector?

- focus on diversity
- focus on all abilities access
- focus on gender and sexual diversity

- focus on location
- focus on CALD communities

What would a realistic policy look like that would help you better support and include First Nations people and culture in your dance practice?

Area 3: Advancement

Do you believe the current education pathway from childhood - adulthood is functional?

What works and what doesn't?

Should dance qualifications that lead to (or are required for) employment be accredited (eg: VET or AQSA)? **

What policy settings could better support individuals and businesses engaged in the dance “gig economy”?

What does a regulation body for dance look like to you?

*Note on Dance Prescribing

Dance prescribing is the idea that a GP can write a prescription for a patient to gain subsidised access to a dance program that might benefit their physical or mental health. The patient would be provided with several dance sessions at a local studio or other suitable venue. This is not such a crazy idea!

Dance prescription is being actively trialled in the United Kingdom by the Dance Network Association. In Australia, many dance professionals are active in the delivery of Creative Ageing and Dance for Parkinson’s disease programs. A dance prescription program could expand these services to other communities or cohorts who might benefit from dance but who have limited capacity to access services.

There are real benefits for medicinal dancing. Not only does it improve general fitness it leads to improved eye-brain-hands-feet coordination which is beneficial for older people and dancing is clinically proven to lift mood and contribute to mental health.

Dance prescribing could be added to the list of approved Medicare services and included in individual health and wellbeing plans, similar in process to the currently supported Mental Health Plans that patients devise in consultation with their GP.

**Note on accredited training

Accredited training and education refers to courses or units of competency that have been independently assessed by either federal or state agencies as meeting a required standard of intellectual and practical learning. Federally, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) validates and renews the accreditation for VET and TAFE level units of study and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) has a similar function at the state level, and also provides accreditation for some schools and apprenticeships or trainee positions.

At the tertiary level all university courses are subject to accreditation and assessment by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Authority (TEQSA). Certificates and Diplomas in aspects of dance education offered through the VET system are accredited for delivery by registered training organisations (RTOs). Accredited qualifications are recognised nationally and internationally across many jurisdictions.