



DU DANCE (NI)



# Artistic Director APPLICATION PACK



## A message from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in the role of **Artistic Director at DU Dance (NI)**. This is a significant moment in the company's journey, as we look ahead to a new chapter of leadership following the stepping down of our founding Artistic Director, **Mags Byrne**.

Mags has been the driving force behind DU Dance (NI) for over 24 years, building on decades of experience in community dance across Northern Ireland and internationally. Her vision and commitment have shaped a company that is now recognised for its **inclusive ethos, high-quality participatory practice, and powerful, socially engaged performance work**. As Mags prepares to step down, we are seeking a new Artistic Director who will honour this legacy while bringing fresh energy and ideas to lead us into the future.

Our recently published **Strategic Plan 2024–2028** sets out a bold and values-led direction for the company. At its heart is a commitment to:

- **Advancing dance** as an art form that is inclusive, relevant and transformative
- **Building community connections** across generations, cultures and geographies
- **Championing tolerance**, respect and social inclusion through creative practice
- **Ensuring access** to high-quality dance experiences for those who have traditionally been excluded.

We are proud to work with some of the most **marginalised young people in Northern Ireland**, delivering **non-competitive, collaborative** dance projects in both conventional and unconventional spaces — from youth centres to cathedrals, from car parks to international stages. Our work is rooted in **partnership, co-creation** and a belief in the **power of dance to inspire change**.

You might be a choreographer, producer, programmer – what matters most is your ability to **lead with vision and integrity**. You will have experience at a **senior level** in an arts or community organisation, have worked with communities engaging in **participatory dance and arts practices**, and you'll have the ability to **identify and nurture talent** and artistic collaboration. This is a role that offers the opportunity to **shape the artistic direction** of the company, build strategic partnerships, and advocate for the **value of dance** across sectors and communities.

As Chair, I can say with confidence that you will be joining a **passionate and experienced team**, supported by a committed board and a wide network of collaborators. We are looking for a leader who is **artistically ambitious, socially engaged, and excited by the opportunity** to shape the future of a company that is small in scale but rich in impact.

If this resonates with you, we would be delighted to welcome your response.

**Rosamond Bennett**  
Chair, DU Dance (NI)





## About DU Dance (NI)



**DU Dance (NI) is Northern Ireland's only dedicated dance development company and has been in operation for over 24 years.**

It has a **legacy** of working with communities across Northern Ireland, the island of Ireland, UK and internationally. Our activities are recognised for their **best practice and creative excellence**.

The primary focus of DU Dance (NI)'s work is **young people**, but programmes may involve people of all ages. We **introduce them to dance** and the creative arts and advocate for **dance as a tool for facilitating personal and social development**.

A critical part of our process is **bringing individuals and communities together** to seek creative solutions to artistic challenges. This demands and develops **sophisticated social interaction** and encourages **personal growth**.

With **performance** as an integral part of the work, we provide access to **innovative contemporary dance workshops** and projects across communities which may often have **limited or no dance provision**, challenging traditional views of the relevance and **value of dance**.

Read more

[Annual Report  
2023/24](#)



## Our work

Here are some **recent highlights** of the work of **DU Dance (NI)**



### SHIFT 2024

Through dance and music, this immersive event explored young people's perspectives on the climate crisis, migration, and human resilience.

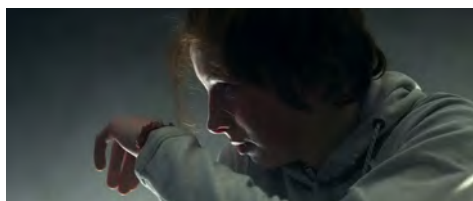
► [WATCH - Hear from those who took part](#)

► [WATCH - All about SHIFT!](#)

### UNANIMOUS 2024

Ten of the best youth dance theatre groups from across the island of Ireland performed in this celebratory, non-competitive event.

► [WATCH - Unanimous 2024 highlights](#)



### What If I Told You 2024

Our Youth Steering Group made this film about the environment.

► [WATCH - What If I Told You](#)

### Primary School Dance Festival 2023

The festival offers children of primary school age the opportunity to perform in an exciting, supportive, non-competitive context.

► [WATCH - Primary School Dance Festival Highlights](#)



### A Chance To Dance 2023

Our Alternative Energies intergenerational project brings together young people aged 15-18 years with elders 65+.

► [WATCH - Alternative Energies - A Chance to Dance](#)

### Day of Dance 2023

All those involved in our Youth Engagement Projects, as well as our intergenerational project gather annually for a day of sharing and dancing!

► [WATCH - Day of Dance Highlights](#)





5

youth  
engagement  
projects

2

international  
projects

389

volunteer  
hours

31

performance  
events

999

participants

2023-  
2024

6

film  
screenings

15076

audience  
members

356

workshop  
sessions

3

summer  
schools

24

project  
partners

81

professional  
contracts



## Our Vision and Values

### Our VISION

**To advance dance as an art form, build community connections and foster tolerance and respect.**



### Our VALUES



#### **Accessibility**

– a quality dance experience for individuals and groups, including those where access has traditionally been limited.



#### **Respect**

– we value and respect everyone, regardless of experience, cultural, social or economic background, encouraging all staff and project participants to value and respect each other.



#### **Quality Experience**

– we are committed to providing a high-quality artistic experience that is holistic and encourages physical, emotional and cognitive development.



#### **A Safe Environment**

– we provide a safe, caring and empathetic working environment, both in the company's office and in our places of delivery.



#### **Knowledge**

– we share knowledge and expertise with stake-holders and project partners to build capacity and sustainability for the company's work



#### **Openness**

– we operate with open and transparent management practices in the interest of funders, stakeholders and participants.

## Our Key Programmes

Read more

[Strategic Plan  
2024-2028](#)

### Opening the Spectrum

– focuses on developing opportunities for young people, encouraging them to connect to the wider world. The programme promotes networking, nurtures aspirations, and looks to combat the geographic isolation that often limits potential.



### Building Bridges

– benefits marginalised young people socially segregated due to cultural identity, behavioural difficulties or challenges around their mental and physical wellbeing. The programme seeks to build connections between individuals and groups, and encourage a viewpoint that celebrates difference.



### Crossing the Divide

– focuses on cross-community work and those experiencing inter-community conflict. This programme uses dance with its physical, emotional, and cognitive demands as a tool to provide people with a safe environment to let go of fears and prejudices.

### Closing the Gap

– concerns itself with inter-generational work, bringing people of different generations together. It seeks to address the lack of opportunities to connect and advocates for dance as a vehicle for personal, social and community growth.





# Our Team

DU Dance (NI) has a staff of full-time **Artistic Director**, alongside part-time **Programme Director** (Youth Engagement Projects), **Finance Manager**, **Marketing Officer** and **Administration Officer**, alongside other freelance staff.

The company is supported by a network of **freelance artists and collaborators**.

DU Dance (NI) has an active and engaged **Board of Directors** who meet quarterly.

There is also a **Youth Steering Group** and **Intergenerational Steering Group**.

[dudancenl.com](http://dudancenl.com)

## Our Board of Directors

Rosamond Bennett (Chair)  
Valerie Catterson (Company Secretary)  
Tom Hughes  
Claire Flynn  
Liz Kelly  
Ian Moore  
Marie O'Donaghue

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) is our Principal Funder with Belfast City Council providing core operational funds. Project funding comes from a variety of sources, including charitable trusts and foundations.

Our registered office is:  
The Crescent Arts Centre,  
2-4 University Road,  
Belfast BT7 1NH

DU Dance (NI) is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee.

Limited Company number: NI063813  
CCNI Charity number: 102765





# DU Dance (NI) Artistic Director

The **Artistic Director** will be responsible for setting the **artistic vision** and **strategic direction** for the company and ensuring the **successful delivery** of DU Dance (NI)'s work.

Ultimately reporting to the board, this is a leadership role requiring **artistic excellence**, **advocacy**, a strong **personal drive**, inspiring and inclusive **team leadership** and the ability to **work** and **communicate well** with our artists, communities, participants and stakeholders.



## THE ROLE

### KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

# KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

## Leadership & Strategy

- Devise and implement DU Dance (NI)'s organisational strategy in partnership with the staff and Board.
- Develop and deliver DU Dance (NI)'s artistic programme alongside the company staff team
- Set and instil a clear vision and drive performance across the DU Dance (NI) team to achieve strategic goals and the organisation's ambitions.
- Act as an advocate for DU Dance (NI) and dance development at all levels – across communities, government, corporate, arts, and media – in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and across the UK.

## Stakeholder Engagement

- Build strong partnerships across our communities, government, public and private funders, corporate and arts sectors and other key networks relevant to DU Dance (NI)'s strategy
- Represent the organisation at external forums, building strategic networks, profile and intelligence to inform our work and identify opportunities for collaboration and raising income
- Passionately advocate for the organisation's purpose, cross-sectoral partnership and act as a champion for the value of dance, dance development and creativity in driving wellbeing and community cohesion in Northern Ireland.





# THE ROLE

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### Income Generation & Financial Management

- Lead income generation efforts from private and public funding sources.
- Identify and cultivate new income streams and funding opportunities.
- Oversee and ensure sound financial planning, budgeting, and management.

### Organisational Culture & People Management

- Lead and inspire a mission-led and inclusive team culture based on DU Dance (NI)'s values.
- Support staff development and performance through effective talent management.
- Promote diversity, equality, inclusion and wellbeing across the organisation in alignment with the staff handbook.
- Undertake other duties reasonably expected by the board.

### Governance

- Work with the Chair and Board to ensure that DU Dance (NI) operates in line with its charitable purpose and complies with all its statutory, regulatory and charitable responsibilities.
- Ensure that the organisation complies with the conditions of its grants and manages relationships with all key funders and stakeholders, meeting all delivery, reporting and budgetary requirements.
- Act as the primary liaison between the Staff and Board.
- Act as Safeguarding Lead for the organisation.

### Communications & Profile

- Act as the lead spokesperson for DU Dance (NI).
- Working with the marketing officer to ensure DU Dance (NI) develops high-profile and modern PR, branding, and an external communications strategy that reflects our values and ambitions.
- Strengthen the organisation's profile and influence in Northern Ireland and beyond.





# THE PERSON

Job title: **Artistic Director**

Reports to: **Chair and Board of Trustees**

## Essential Criteria

- Experience of leading an organisation, team or strategic programme at a senior level in the arts or community sector.
- Experience leading community programmes and working with participatory dance and arts practices.
- Experience developing and executing artistic and organisational strategies, including measurable outcomes and stakeholder engagement.
- Awareness of specific cultural and political sensitivities working in the Northern Ireland community and arts sectors.
- Ability to communicate, advocate and build partnerships with a range of stakeholders including communities and their leaders, funders, local council and government officials.
- Ability to inspire others, as well as foster and champion creativity and innovation.
- Experience of safeguarding policy and practice.

Continued on next page



## THE PERSON

continued

- Financial literacy and understanding of non-profit financial management and fundraising.
- Understanding of charity board governance and of how to work with a board.
- Digital literacy.
- Will commit to living and working in Northern Ireland - hybrid and flexible working available.

### Desirable Criteria

- Knowledge and experience of fundraising in the arts sector.
- Understanding of youth development and intergenerational projects.
- Experience of dance development practices, including artist support, sector advocacy, and programme innovation.
- Inclusive people management and talent development experience.
- Understanding of the dance sector beyond Northern Ireland and internationally.

**Location:** The Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast - with work taking place across Northern Ireland, and potentially internationally.

**Salary:** £35,000 including pension contribution.

**Hours:** Full-Time with potential for flexible working arrangements.

6 month probationary period.



# HOW TO APPLY

**Closing date for applications is  
11am on  
Monday 10th November 2025**

To apply, please send the following documents to [board@dudanceni.com](mailto:board@dudanceni.com) with the subject heading:

Subject: DU DANCE (NI) - Artistic Director APPLICATION - <Insert Your Name Here>

- **Written personal statement**

- Please send a written personal statement outlining why you want to be the Artistic Director of DU Dance (NI), outlining the qualities and experiences you would bring, and how they meet the criteria included in this document.
- Statements should be no longer than 3 A4 pages.
- Links to examples of your work can also be included in your application and will be welcomed.

- **Your CV** (max 3 A4 pages)

- **Referees**

- Names and contact details for two employment/professional referees.
- References will not be contacted until candidates are invited to a second interview.

- **Completed monitoring form – [download here](#)**

Documents can be in Microsoft Word or pdf format.

If you would like an informal and confidential conversation about the role with the Chair, Rosamond Bennett or one of DU Dance (NI)'s Trustees prior to submitting your application, please contact [board@dudanceni.com](mailto:board@dudanceni.com)

If you have questions specific to the dance and community sector in Northern Ireland, please contact [board@dudanceni.com](mailto:board@dudanceni.com) and we will endeavour to answer any queries.

As an Equal Opportunities Employer, we collect data to measure the effectiveness of our recruitment methods, to ensure that they are fair. Applicants for this post are therefore requested to complete and return the attached Equal Opportunities Monitoring Questionnaire as part of the recruitment process.

DU Dance (NI) is an Equal Opportunities Employer, and we are committed to being a welcoming and inclusive place to work. If there are any barriers to you completing the application form or taking part in the interview process, please let us know. We can make adjustments to enable us to meet your needs throughout the recruitment process, as well as during your employment in the role.

Following a blind screen short-listing process, online interviews will be held in late November/early December. Assessing the candidate against the desirable criteria will take place if necessary during the short-listing process.

In-person second interviews may be conducted as part of the final decision-making process.

Please note that this role requires an Enhanced Access NI background in accordance with our safeguarding policy.





DU DANCE (NI)

