

The Arts Council of
Northern Ireland

Development of a
Dance Strategy

Final Report

Scottish
Cultural
Enterprise

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Scottish Cultural Enterprise was commissioned by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) to develop a new dance strategy in January 2008. The brief for the study was to establish a clear vision for the development of dance within Northern Ireland, with priorities and key actions for ACNI to implement over the next four years.

1.1.2 Work on the study has been undertaken following the publication of ACNI's overall strategy, *Creative Connections: A 5 Year Plan for Developing the Arts 2007 – 2012*. The new dance strategy is required to complement the objectives of this overall strategy, and to enable all those involved in dance in Northern Ireland to:

- Secure high standards in their work;
- Create a higher profile at home and internationally;
- Engage a greater number and wider range of people than is currently being achieved as participants and audiences.

ACNI also seeks to make a contribution to the growth of dance in Northern Ireland by creating partnership and collaboration, developments that may ultimately influence the earning potential of practitioners.

1.1.3 During Phase 1 of the study, Scottish Cultural Enterprise:

- Analysed a range of secondary material relating to the dance sector in Northern Ireland.

1.1.4 During Phase 2 of the study, Scottish Cultural Enterprise:

- Assessed the various external forces likely to impact on the sector in the years ahead;
- Identified the most important drivers of change affecting the sector.

1.1.5 During Phase 3 of the study, Scottish Cultural Enterprise:

- Issued an online questionnaire to production companies and venues to create an overview of the context for the new dance strategy
- Issued an online questionnaire for individual practitioners and members of the public to contribute to the process
- Conducted short interviews with representatives of dance organisations in receipt of regular funding from ACNI focusing on the issues raised in the earlier studies and on their specific concerns

- Developed an overview of dance in Northern Ireland
- Compared the dance sector in Northern Ireland to the rest of the UK and the Republic of Ireland
- Undertook an analysis of external factors impacting upon the sector
- Organised a consultation event for organisations and individuals engaged with dance in Northern Ireland. This was held on 10 March 2008 at the Echo Echo Dance Studio at the Waterside Theatre, Derry
- Undertook a SWOT analysis of the sector

1.1.6 The culmination of Phase 4 is the dance strategy that concludes this final report.

2.0 CURRENT DANCE PROVISION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

2.1 Key information

2.1.1 The following bullet points set out some key information concerning Dance in Northern Ireland:

- In 2006 ACNI spent £396,340 on dance related activities. This was 19% less than in 2005.
- The amount of Arts Council money spent on dance related activities expressed as a per capita percentage of the population is lower than in the rest of the United Kingdom and RoI, at £0.18 per person. The next lowest is Wales with £0.48 per person. In Scotland the expenditure is £1.18.
- The percentage of the population who say they take part in dance activities is lower in Northern Ireland than any other part of the United Kingdom or RoI, with less than 2% participating. The next lowest which is Wales at 5% while in England 10% of the population take part.
- The percentage of the population attending either ballet or contemporary dance is lower in Northern Ireland than in Wales or Scotland, but similar to levels of attendance in Yorkshire and RoI.
- Attendances at traditional and other forms of dance are higher in NI than the rest of the UK and RoI
- 45 community groups in the Community Arts Forum database offer dance related activities.
- ACNI gives regular funding to three dance companies, representing 78-85% of their turnover, which makes them dependent on continuing ACNI support
- SCE's survey revealed 8 companies offering dance participation activities with 356 separate activities available in 2006/7 which involved 1,802 people.
- SCE's survey revealed that 7 locally based companies presented 17 separate production runs comprising 59 performances to audiences totalling 7065 in Northern Ireland and beyond.
- SCE's survey of venues and festivals suggests that, between them, they offered 2316 classes a year with participation totalling 78,111.

- On average, venues outside Belfast presented dance 1-6 times a year. In Belfast, the Grand Opera House showed 14 dance performances in 2006/7.
- A survey of the box offices of 10 leading venues in NI shows the following occurred in 2006/7:
 - 42 performances runs
 - 4,706 households attended dance/ballet (0.7% of population)
 - This represented 16,965 tickets issued with a box office income of £314,778
 - 10% of tickets were free or complimentary
 - The Voluntary Arts Network database shows the geographic location of groups, which range from 31 in Antrim, 11 in Co Down, 5 in Co Londonderry and 2-4 elsewhere.

3.0 EXTERNAL CONTEXT

3.1 PEST analysis

3.1.1 The key context issues which have a bearing on the development of a new dance strategy for NI are:

Political	Resumption of devolved government is proving durable, providing a publicly agreed framework for future planning, allocation of resources and accountability
	Settlement within NI continues to evolve and there will be a new dynamic in the political settlement arising from the retirement of the First Minister
	Relationship with RoI continues to evolve
	Post-conflict generation of younger politicians emerging with different outlook and formative experiences
	'Greening' of politics – shift from obscure visionaries at the margins to central recognition and 'hard' responses by world governments, setting out new objectives (Kyoto agreement) with new burdens (Carbon trading), for example
	Instrumentalism remains a key concern in NI achieving wider social goals through public investment in areas such as the arts rather than 'arts for arts sake' (this is not mirrored in the same degree in RoI)
	Political awareness that arts/culture is capable of delivering these objectives in unique ways – particularly in respect of health agenda for dance sector.
	The 2012 Olympics and ensuring their successful delivery will be a major priority for UK Government at DCMS level.
Economic	EU Lisbon Treaty gives increased prominence to Creative Industries and this is reflected in funding programmes/permissible areas of funding intervention for the period 2007-2013. Education also seen as being central to ensuring a high calibre, world competitive workforce.
	After a long period of economic expansion and sustained growth, Western Economies now facing prospect of sustained adverse conditions, which could impinge on corporate sponsorship/giving as well as limiting access to finance.
	Property prices in NI in terms of both commercial and domestic property remain high, creating challenges for the sector as whole in terms of access to space and individual dance sector workers at a personal level
	Pressure on public receipts via taxation could increase in economic downturn making public funding decisions at a macro level more competitive and pressurised
	Scope for public/private investment in major capital projects may be curtailed by downturn in economy.

Social	NI Population is changing
	<i>Age Profile</i> : - % of young people declining and % of oldest section of population increasing
	<i>Ethnicity</i> – increase in former soviet block migrants exceeding ‘old’ minorities of Chinese and South Asian origin, but NI becoming more diverse as a result
	<i>Returning NI residents</i> – post ‘Good Friday’ return of former NI residents.
	NI “Lifestyle Trends” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predominance and pervasiveness of popular culture in leisure priorities • Wider range of demands competing for people’s leisure times • Growth of the high quality ‘experience’ as a primary objective in investing valuable leisure time • Solo sports/exercise prioritised over team activities • Social divide between cash rich/time poor and cash poor/time rich
Technology	Migration of cultural/entertainment/leisure activities to digital domain continues for younger age bands
	New cultural model delivered by commercial market place as opposed to subsidised, and based on interactivity rather than passive consumption. Could result in divide between ‘new’ and ‘old’ culture: one widespread, popular and privately funded, the other of narrower appeal and dependent upon public funding and the goodwill of political/decision making classes.
	As a result of digital development, 20 th Century media under pressure (TV, print journalism). Cultural coverage not generally seen as a means of boosting popular reach/appeal
	Marketing/advertising sector is re-structuring to take advantage of these new ways of reaching people
	Business structures are changing to take advantage of more effective ways of doing business through world wide web (access to customers; suppliers; market information about competitors; operating methods and cost savings).

3.2 Dance development – the EU/UK/RoI Context

3.2.1 Each country surveyed has arrived at a form of the European Dance Development model, which often manifests itself in the form of a dedicated dance space, perhaps with a resident professional company, rehearsal studios and ancillary services. This might also have at least one space which is capable of doubling as a public presentation space; professional development and support services for professional dancers spanning classes, workshops, dancers health, career development and access to information and other resources; coupled with a public advocacy role on behalf of the sector and the provision of community and education services for amateur, schools and social dance of all genres.

3.2.2 Although each have achieved this by their own routes, and starting from slightly different places, the hallmarks of success in England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland have been:

- Consistent and strategic approach to having professional dance development workers in place at both community and professional levels, and a fitting volume of work to maximise this investment and their individual potential
- A commitment to make resources available to sustain and inspire professional performance and choreographic development
- A commitment to supporting new work, nurturing 'domestic' talent and taking it to a wider public
- A willingness to commit significant levels of funding to provide the physical infrastructure to support all aspects of the above
- A desire to foster international exchange and collaboration to combat isolation and enhance the depth of knowledge and understanding within the domestic dance community, and to raise awareness of dance in the respective home countries abroad
- A commitment to youth dance

4.0 PRIMARY RESEARCH

4.1 Survey findings

4.1.1 The primary research for the study was designed to uncover the key issues which the new dance strategy required to address on behalf of the dance production companies, individual dance artists and venues presenting dance.

4.1.2 The key findings from the online survey are as follows:

- There appears to be very significant correlation between interested individual and production company responses to dance-related issues in Northern Ireland. This suggests the priorities of each group in relation to the ACNI dance strategy are broadly similar.
- A perceived lack of professional productions and performances for audiences in Northern Ireland is a source of widespread dissatisfaction among surveyed individuals and production companies.
- There is a strong general sense amongst respondents that audiences cannot access a satisfactorily diverse range of dance in Northern Ireland.
- Respondents to the dance survey overwhelmingly feel that demand for dance activity in the community is not met.
- Survey responses indicate significant dissatisfaction with the provision of dance space for creating and developing dance in Northern Ireland.
- There is an overall sense emanating from survey responses that Northern Ireland does not have satisfactory provision of spaces in which dance can be performed.
- A clear majority of survey respondents believe there is inadequate fitness and peak performance provision for dance artists in Northern Ireland.
- There is very significant discontent with current promotion and marketing provision in Northern Ireland among respondent individuals and production companies.
- There is considerable consensus among interested individuals and production companies that a formal network of dance promoters would have widespread benefits for dance in Northern Ireland.

- Survey respondents strongly feel that the position of dance in school education in Northern Ireland is currently not strong enough.
- There is a strong feeling in survey responses that vocational dance training opportunities within Northern Ireland are insufficient.
- The survey responses suggest there is a very strong feeling that opportunities for dancers to continue professional development within Northern Ireland are overly inhibited.

4.2 Consultation event findings

4.2.1 Community participation

- **Strategic approaches**

Workshop participants provided a variety of strategic recommendations for community dance development in Northern Ireland. A recurring theme placed emphasis on professional involvement with community-level promotion of dance. However, the nature of such involvement was not entirely agreed upon – some felt professional dance should simply inspire and therefore feed into community-level participation, while others wanted professionals to visit community groups or even for professionals to deliver community dance activities. These ideas fit into a wider desire for greater coherence and collaboration in the delivery of community dance activities in Northern Ireland, with a joined up approach incorporating contributions from dance professionals, universities, schools, community groups and public organisations being advocated. It is hoped such approaches could encourage a cultural shift in the understanding and interpretation of dance at the community level.

- **Widening access**

In order for any strategic approach to work in practice, it is imperative that the way in which it is delivered at the ground level is carefully considered. Workshop participants provided a number of suggestions for widening access to, and participation in, community dance activity, and these incorporated several overlapping themes. First, the geographic spread of 'community dance' should be broad, and all communities in Northern Ireland should be encouraged to provide access. Second, this breadth of access should incorporate all social and economic backgrounds, ages and abilities, as well as a wide range of dance forms. Suggested ways of encouraging such involvement include extensive outreach work with non-traditional groups, dance taster days, and workshops, as well as improving the attractiveness of venues and activity groups to new potential participants.

- **Delivery of community dance**

In thinking about how community dance projects should be delivered, participants offered several important contributions. Again, the perceived importance of establishing links between dance professionals and community participants was prominent. Many contributors felt that by pushing up standards of community dance activities, engagement of participants would increase overall expectations and the health of dance in Northern Ireland. Similarly, by employing dedicated dance development workers and

promoters, many felt community participation would be stimulated, and that stronger links within and beyond community boundaries would be established. There was also considerable focus on youth dance activities, with many feeling that, by encouraging interest in dance among young people, it would stimulate continued and hastening growth in the sector in future. Suggested ways of doing this include the development of festivals to engage and attract participants and audiences.

- **Training and facilitators**

While participants wholeheartedly agreed that community dance activity needs to be stimulated and encouraged in Northern Ireland, there was also widespread acknowledgement that the personnel to deliver this is lacking. Several therefore endeavoured to highlight the important role of facilitators and of training in order to plug this gap. In general, there is desire for more training courses for all levels of dance. This includes vocational courses to produce experienced qualified dancers, as well as intermediate and advanced courses at community level for those looking to move beyond basic training. In addition, the relatively low rate of remuneration for dance professionals was highlighted as a cause of concern.

- **School education**

Workshop participants were very keen to stress the importance of increasing the emphasis placed on dance in school education at all levels. Many believed it should have its own place on the core curriculum, with several emphasising the importance of not tagging it on as an addition to Physical Education. As well as stimulating interest in dance, contributors felt it would have additional benefits such as providing children with stimulation and engagement, improving physical and mental wellbeing, and increasing cultural awareness. At secondary school level, it is important to many involved with dance in Northern Ireland that greater access to dance is provided, especially through the provision of GCSE and A level courses. While it is an option in some schools, access to such courses is limited at present and there is scope for significantly widening it.

- **Further and Higher Education**

While many workshop participants were keen to highlight the benefits of new university and further education courses available in Northern Ireland, most felt this should only represent the beginning. In particular, and for consideration in combination with the issues highlighted about dance in school education, a prominent theme focused on dance teacher training. While many want a greater focus on dance in school education, they also want PGCE opportunities made more freely available to dancers in Northern

Ireland to allow them to qualify to teach the subject in schools. Beyond teaching dance, it was also widely felt that Northern Ireland would benefit from more postgraduate opportunities in dance to prevent dancers from being forced to travel away from the province that would prefer not to, and also to attract dancers from outside Northern Ireland. There was also considerable focus on the issue of providing greater educational and training opportunities in dance to interested adults below degree level. While there is a BTEC course offered at Belfast Metropolitan College, many felt the opportunities could and should be widened to provide wider access and more diverse opportunities.

4.2.2 Public Presentation

- **Audience Development**

Focus group participants highlighted a variety of audience development issues relating to the public presentation of dance in Northern Ireland. Their contributions have been divided into three sub-categories dealing with ACNI's strategic approach, wider issues of audience awareness and diversity, and the role of publicity and media.

- **Strategy**

The participants were keen that dance is prioritised in ACNI's overall strategy, and that it secures the appropriate audience development funding and support to achieve larger and more inclusive audiences. The workshop participants were also keen to make the case for contemporary dance featuring prominently in this audience development strategy

- **Audience awareness and diversity**

The workshop feedback gave a strong sense that those involved with dance in Northern Ireland feel it should educate potential audiences and raise their awareness of dance in its broadest form, placing importance on its diversity as an art form as well as on the diversity of the audience it should seek to attract.

- **Publicity and media**

A number of participants highlighted what they viewed as the key role of publicity and media in encouraging audience development. By incorporating this into a central position in its strategy, encouraging a more joined-up approach within and beyond the Northern Irish border, and securing greater press coverage in the form of advertising, promotion and reviews, it was felt that dance could secure larger and more diverse audiences.

- **Showcases, festivals, and celebrations of dance**

A key component of dance development in the eyes of workshop participants is the use of showcases, festivals and celebrations of dance to engage with participants and break down traditional barriers to access. For the purposes of this report, site-specific and integrative projects will be considered first, and contributions relating to the role of festivals and annual showcases will follow.

- **Site-specific and integrative projects:** Several contributors highlighted site-specific dance projects as having a central role to play in developing dance. It was felt that, by providing support to facilitate such projects on a regular basis, ACNI

could challenge audiences and performers, encourage creativity, and widen access to all forms of dance among non-traditional groups. In addition, there was also significant focus on the issue of integrating different dance forms and wider art forms, as well as performers and audiences, to push boundaries of expression and thereby encourage wider enjoyment of dance in Northern Ireland.

- **Festivals and annual showcases:** There was widespread concurrence among many participants that annual or regular festivals could help to create strong foundations upon which dance in Northern Ireland would have the opportunity to grow and develop. As well as focusing on the importance of regularity of such events to particular geographic areas, participants were keen to emphasise the importance of establishing a working format for these events incorporating the promotion of participatory workshops and talks, small, medium and large-scale productions, local, national and international showcases, and the potential resultant impacts on audiences and participation across the province.
- **Regional venues:** When thinking about regional venues, the participants provided a range of contributions. These have been divided on the basis of specialist dance facilities, touring productions, and venue-specific dance provision.
 - **Specialist dance facilities**

There was widespread agreement among participants that specialist facilities provision for dance is quite limited and that many venues throughout Northern Ireland lack suitable equipment and structural provision. Among the components most frequently mentioned were flooring, heating, lighting, and rehearsal space.
 - **Touring productions**

The future of dance in the regions could very much depend on the emphasis placed on touring productions to regional venues, according to workshop participants. The nature of such tours is potentially wide-ranging, with all levels of production, from local to international, perceived to have an important role to play. By establishing a tour circuit, it is anticipated dance in Northern Ireland could be developed considerably over the coming years.

- **Venue-specific dance provision:** Many workshop participants felt that regional venues have an important role to play in fostering dance locally and widening access to it. Suggestions include encouraging venues to include regular dance productions in their programmes, incorporation of a range of levels and forms of dance, encouraging audiences to engage with dance performance, and employing staff to publicise venue events, including dance ones.
- **Emerging talent:** A number of participants specified ways in which they felt young people could be encouraged to become involved in dance and ways in which their performances could be accessed by audiences. Of particular importance appears to be emphasis on collaboration between schools, groups and organisations working with young people to develop collaborative projects and outputs, and expanding these beyond local boundaries. Some participants also saw public performance as an important tool for developing dance among young people.
- **Type of work:** In thinking about the types of dance presentations encouraged by a dance strategy, participants were keen to emphasise diversity generally, audience development issues, and geographic factors of importance.
 - **Diversity**
Many participants placed particular emphasis on encouraging diversity and variety of dance performance output. Of particular note was the consideration that, while large-scale popular performances are important, smaller productions must also be encouraged. These should include a diverse range of dance forms, including experimental and innovative ones, and ones that are traditionally less commercially successful, and provide better opportunities for independent companies. In addition, a number of participants were keen to stress that when we think about 'dance' we think about the actual physical movement more than other 'non-dance' production elements such as lighting and music.
 - **Audiences:** Some participants felt it was important to consider dance work from audience perspectives when thinking about what the dance strategy should aim to deliver. There were suggestions that productions must appeal to audiences, but that audience tastes themselves can also be developed and influenced by the way in which dance in Northern Ireland develops in its own right. For example, one contributor stressed that by including dance on the school

curriculum, potential audiences for performance output would be grown.

- **Geographic context**

Participant contributions contained a significant focus on the role of local communities in developing dance in Northern Ireland generally. A mix of bottom-up and top-down approaches to encouraging community interest in dance were favoured by participants, with some suggesting that emphasis on the local in performance could foster sector growth, and others prioritising the role of international and professional performers in stimulating dance engagement in local communities. In truth, most participants would probably agree that both approaches have potential positive benefits.

4.2.3 Dance Profession

- **General issues of working in dance**

In thinking about an ideal future for dance as a profession, workshop participants were keen to emphasise the importance of providing opportunities for individuals to flourish in a career in dance. In general, they hoped a wholesale cultural and attitudinal shift could be encouraged that recognised dance as a respectable career choice, and that the prevailing economic circumstances surrounding this allowed such a choice to be realisable.

- **Recognition and awareness of professional dance**

Workshop participants focused considerable attention upon considering how society would view the dance profession in an ideal world. These perspectives highlighted a number of common aspirations. These included the idea that Northern Ireland would become recognised as a hub of professional dance activity, where audiences were aware of a wide range of productions available to them, and where there is a dance scene that is dynamic, engaging, inspirational and innovative. Several placed considerable importance on the role of publicity and promotion in print and broadcast media in achieving this aim through stimulating interest and demand.

- **Strategic approaches**

In the eyes of workshop participants, there are a number of strategic issues that must be grappled with in order to promote and develop professional dance opportunities in Northern Ireland. Central to many suggestions was the importance of securing appropriate funding, and support structures and mechanisms. Of particular note is the idea that a coherent joined up approach, and one that is not overly burdened by bureaucracy or inflexibility, is necessary. With regard to the promotion of dance activity, many participants felt that regular and well-publicised festivals could provide an important platform from which professional work can be showcased. Similarly, regular programming of dance activities in venues, and incorporation of these into popular touring networks, were mooted as ways of potentially stimulating interest and demand in professional dance in the province.

- **Company issues**

Workshop participants saw the role of individual companies as crucial in developing professional dance in Northern Ireland. By building a base of quality, respected companies through the provision of appropriate support and funding, it was felt that dance in the province could cater for diverse tastes and develop and promote dance more widely.

- **Facilities**

A central theme to emerge from the workshops was the focus on creating a facilities network to develop and promote professional dance in Northern Ireland. By separating the creative and administrative aspects of producing and showing quality work, it was felt by many that dance in general could benefit significantly. In essence, by creating a network for facilities management and promotion, audiences can be extended without impinging upon the output of individual dance producers. While appropriate facilities are available in Northern Ireland, the workshops suggested that access to these for dance could be widened, and this was a particularly important issue for many when considering developing dance in the province.

- **Emerging talent:** Of particular importance in the minds of workshop participants was what to do about emerging dance talent, and how best to satisfy the needs and requirements of such individuals within Northern Ireland. The role of education programmes was central to many suggested approaches, as well as the provision of opportunities for continuing professional development. Most felt this would require wholesale changes to the treatment of dance in education and society, with greater emphasis placed on the important role it has the potential to play.

5.0 OVERVIEW OF DANCE IN NI

5.1 Strengths

Theme 1: Promoting the value of the arts	
1	Within the community dance sector there are examples of good practice in using the arts instrumentally to achieve wider public goals in areas such as: helping alienated young people to develop their self confidence and social skills; helping improve health and wellbeing particularly with the over 65s; integrating people with disabilities through community arts activities; and building inter-community understanding and cohesion.
2	Dance is central to the various communities in Northern Ireland, in particular with Irish dance and Ulster Scots dance as a cultural medium (Irish dancing is especially central for many young people).
3	There is recognition at Government level of the value of the arts, particularly as an instrument of delivering wider policy objectives
Theme 2: Strengthening the arts	
4	A number of examples of good practice in dance development are already on the ground in Northern Ireland, although they are operating within isolated pockets and are not coherently linked together.
5	There are only a small number of dance organisations in Northern Ireland, and they are producing good quality work in spite of low levels of funding. These organisations are outward looking and have ideas, energy, drive and persistence.
6	There is a sense of common endeavour in the sector, the potential to share resources, and a disposition to take initiatives of this kind forward.
7	Northern Ireland now has a dance degree course at the University of Ulster and a further education course at Belfast Metropolitan College. The UU works closely with the main dance artists resident in NI and has an ambitious vision for future development.
8	Capital development projects at Old Museum Arts Centre and Crescent Arts Centre Belfast will enter their building stages in 2008. Both contain high quality provision for dance studios.
9	OMAC has a proven track record of supporting locally based dance companies and showcasing their work within a broader dance programme with work from outside NI.
10	Dance Ireland offers people in Northern Ireland a good range of networking, information and support services on an all Ireland basis.
11	Dance organisations in Northern Ireland have access to international showcasing opportunities for their work through the all Ireland initiative, Culture Ireland.

12	Dance Resource Base exists, has a membership of approximately 300, and has the potential to become an important source of information, advice and resources to dance people throughout NI.
13	Crescent Arts Centre has a substantial history of supporting dance activities at community levels through a wide range of classes and events.
14	Community Centres throughout NI offer various ethnic dance activities and have resources that could be more widely accessible to the dance sector.
15	OMAC and Maiden Voyage have jointly promoted Dance Lab which provides continuing professional development for dancer and community engagement with contemporary dance
16	There is a nascent critical mass for dance forming in Derry that could form the foundations for a national dance development resource, akin to the European Dance House Model.
Theme 3: Growing audiences and increasing participation	
17	Northern Ireland has a good network of purpose built venues outside Belfast, which is still in the process of expanding. They all have facilities suitable for dance performances and rehearsals
18	OMAC has just concluded a three-year audience development programme that focused on dance and it was successful.
19	A number of dance freelancers have established good working relationships with, and are respected by, the formal education sector.
20	Belfast Grand Opera House is on the 'Number One Touring Circuit' for theatre in the UK, and can benefit from cross border financial and other touring support, which goes with this status. As a result it is able to bring in a regular programme of ballet and contemporary dance.
21	Belfast Festival already programmes approximately three high quality performances by top contemporary dance companies from outside NI each festival
22	Some theatre venues in NI have direct relationships with local dance practitioners/companies and work in partnership with them. Examples include Armagh, Fermanagh, Lisburn and Downpatrick.
23	There are two specialist schools in NI that offer dance GCSEs.
24	There is a youth dance company in Derry and there are a number of youth groups that make use of dance as part of their wider work

5.2 Weaknesses

5.2.1 The weaknesses of the dance sector in Northern Ireland are shown below.

Theme 1: Promoting the value of the arts	
1	A number of good dance initiatives have been undertaken in NI over the years, but they frequently collapse without being properly evaluated. The positive achievements are not recognised, sustained or encouraged to grow.
2	Dance has a very low profile in mainstream print and broadcast media in Northern Ireland
Theme 2.1: Strengthening the arts – Infrastructure	
3	Communication within the dance community and into the wider community is generally weak and opportunities are therefore missed
4	There is limited scope for new publicly funded capital developments in the current environment.
5	Dance organisations in Northern Ireland are not making a significant international impact.
6	Dance organisations in NI lack administrative capacity and have difficulty recruiting suitable people who are interested in dance. The remuneration of staff within funded dance companies is low and requires staff to undertake freelance work in order to sustain their livelihood. Companies report that they are unable to sustain round the year activity or achieve momentum between projects.
7	There is a high demand for dance tutors to present community classes, but there are insufficient suitably trained people to satisfy this demand
8	There is a network of suitable performing spaces throughout NI outside the Belfast area. However, they are not programming dance on a regular basis and are not available to the dance community for rehearsals, etc at an affordable price, or necessarily at the times that they require them.
9	The loss of ACNI funding to regional theatres appears to have made them less inclined to programme high risk work such as dance
10	The dance community is limited in its capacity to be outward looking and ambitious because of its history, geographic position and funding structure.
11	There is a very limited range of dance performances available to audiences in NI (in terms of type, genre, scale and frequency) with only OMAC and GOH consistently programming dance throughout the year.
12	There is no physical hub where dance people can come together such as the Place in London or DanceHouse in Dublin.
13	Dance artists are tending to move out of performing and

	choreography because they cannot make a living, and are working exclusively within community settings rather than practicing their art.
14	Links between the dance community and other art forms are under-developed.
15	Relationships between the majority of dance people and venues outside Belfast are weak.
16	Many of the current generation of dance artists came up through the youth dance initiative in the 1980s, and there is nothing similar to encourage a new generation to emerge. There is no umbrella body coordinating and encouraging youth dance.
17	There is no consistent level of dance production activity from locally based companies.
18	ACNI has increased funding available to dance in recent years but the sector lacks the capacity to access the opportunities available. There is a feeling in the sector that the funding available is not sufficient to permit a similar depth of creative development, such as in-depth rehearsal afforded to the drama sector.
19	There is lack of a comprehensive dancer health policy, and associated provision.
20	There is insufficient volume of work to sustain a healthy dance ecology that makes full use of existing talent, stretches them, and increases the appetite of audiences.
	Theme 2.2: Strengthening the arts – Training
21	There are no clear ‘paths of progression’ for dance talent to follow after formal education and training has ended. For example, young girls interested in Irish dancing may not be able to seamlessly progress to other forms of dance should they wish.
22	There is an absence of a comprehensive Northern Ireland-based programme of continuing professional development opportunities for dance practitioners.
23	It is difficult to fill vacancies in dance administration in Northern Ireland.
24	The degree course at the University of Ulster would benefit from better resources, and the aspirations and expectations of the university and the wider dance sector are not congruent in terms of the courses delivered and the employment opportunities on offer.
25	Community centres play an important and welcome role in supporting a wide range of social/communal/health-related dance activities, but practitioners feel that other forms are generally given higher prominence than contemporary dance.
	Theme 2.3: Strengthening the arts – Funding
26	The dance community perceives itself as under-valued and demoralised because of the poor pay and conditions they work under.
27	Dance companies in Northern Ireland receive lower levels of

	public subsidy than comparable companies in other parts of the UK.
28	The funding of a number of dance initiatives are about to end or has recently ended – Dance Lab, audience development at OMAC, dance artist in residence at University of Ulster. There does not appear to be an exit strategy in relation to these projects and they could fall by the wayside.
29	Organisations such as OMAC and Belfast Festival find it difficult to sustain the cost of high risk, loss making activities such as dance at current levels
30	The financial planning framework for Northern Ireland dance companies is last minute, but venues and festivals operate on different timescales.
31	The dance community feel unable to take risks because of a lack of resources.
32	Forecast reductions in Lottery funding will decrease the levels of money available to support new work in future
Theme 3: Growing audiences and increasing participation	
33	Although there is a network of venues suitable for dance outside Belfast, it does not have sufficient programming or audience development budgets to realise its full potential.
34	There is a perception that audiences for professional dance are particularly under-developed (compared to Scotland and the Republic of Ireland).
35	Northern Ireland has an under-developed youth dance provision, with few formalised groups. An earlier initiative, Ulster Youth Dance, ceased in the 1980s due to a lack of funding.
36	The potential role of dance in working with people with disabilities is under-developed compared to other parts of the UK
Theme 4: Improving ACNI performance	
37	There are concerns about ACNI amongst dance people that ACNI does not have in-house dance expertise in the form of a dedicated officer and as a result appears not to understand their concerns and needs
38	ACNI funding procedures are seen as inflexible, overly restrictive, and out of kilter with the processes and realities of the way small companies and individuals operate compared to other national funding bodies support dance in the British Isles.

5.3 Opportunities

5.3.1 The opportunities available to the dance sector in Northern Ireland are shown below.

Theme 1: Promoting the value of the arts	
1	ACNI is already lobbying for the funding of the arts to catch up with the rest of the UK.
2	There is recognition in government of the instrumental value of culture, which the dance sector can build on in its advocacy

	efforts.
3	The Olympics offers an opportunity to build new partnerships and secure alternative resources for dance in NI.
Theme 2: Strengthening the arts	
4	Technological development offers scope for improved sharing of information, providing it is properly supported.
5	Capital development projects in Belfast can still align with and help take forward the new dance strategy for the whole of Northern Ireland. (Although noting that there are sound reasons for prioritising initiatives in Derry).
6	Dance organisations in the Republic of Ireland share many of the problems encountered by the dance community in Northern Ireland, although the infrastructure in the south is much more advanced. This presents the possibility of setting up cross border initiatives to deal with common problems.
Theme 3: Growing audiences and increasing participation	
7	The increasing success of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination will create new potential audience segments for dance in Belfast and elsewhere.
8	The Northern Ireland economy is continuing to grow.

5.4 Threats

5.4.1 The threats facing the dance sector in Northern Ireland are shown below.

Theme 1: Promoting the value of the arts	
1	The intrinsic value of culture is not fully accepted and/or understood by all spheres of government in Northern Ireland. Because of the comparatively low numbers of people engaged with dance at either a community or professional level, there is a commensurately greater challenge in advocating the sector's interests publicly and to government.
Theme 2: Strengthening the arts	
2	The reduction of ACNI funding to some regional venues may not have the desired effect of leveraging more money from local authorities – the result could be a permanent loss of programming capacity
3	In a consumer society, quality is a key factor in driving consumption – if venues/companies are unable to achieve the highest quality of work they will suffer decline.
4	Declining levels of Lottery funds are a threat to all art forms but the already fragile level of funding available to dance is very susceptible to further reductions.
Theme 3: Growing audiences and increasing participation	
5	Audiences NI has yet to work at an optimum level in partnership with the dance sector and a certain degree of scepticism therefore persists as to its true value.

6.0 TOWARDS A STRATEGIC VISION

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This section builds on the SWOT analysis by providing an overview of the possible future shape of the dance sector in Northern Ireland. As in the SWOT, the section is organised using the four strategic aims developed by ACNI in *Creative Connections – A 5 Year Plan for Developing the Arts 2007-2012*. The following sections summarise the needs of the various segments identified within the themes on the basis of the evidence gathered during the study.

6.2 ACNI Theme 1: Art at the Heart – Promoting the Value of the Arts

6.2.1 The evidence suggests that the diverse forms of dance enjoyed in Northern Ireland can do the following:

- Make people feel good about themselves
- Improve health and physical wellbeing
- Help build cohesion
- Help people know who they are and engage with other cultures
- Counter exclusion
- Challenge negative perceptions of Northern Ireland internationally
- Help with regeneration to make Northern Ireland an attractive place to live and work
- Help strengthen the economy
- Help add value to tourism products
- Boost the creative economy by developing skills

6.3 ACNI Theme 2: Strengthening the Arts

6.3.1 The evidence suggests that *individuals* working in dance in Northern Ireland need the following:

- Sufficient volume and variety of work to sustain their creative lives
- Access to infrastructure of companies producing dance in Northern Ireland
- Opportunities to widen their practice through working with a wide range of other artists
- Opportunities to develop their professional skills
- Provision for maintaining their physical health as dancers
- The stability to plan professional life routes
- The flexibility to respond creatively to new opportunities which arise without undue restrictions
- Funding organisations who appreciate and understand their world and how it functions
- Support mechanisms which foster a spirit of collaboration and peer group respect
- The physical infrastructure to enable them to focus on their work;
- To be able to make a living

6.3.2 The evidence suggests that *organisations* producing dance in Northern Ireland need the following:

- Sufficient volume of work
- Adequate levels of preparation time
- Relationships which underpin their creative process, i.e. choreographers, and other creative inputs (peers working in design, lighting, music, costume making for example)
- Access to sufficient levels of funding so that they can maintain continuity between separate dance projects
- Opportunities to tour and showcase their work outside Northern Ireland on an equal basis with other European companies
- Access to adequate sums of money so that they can be creative without the obligation to present the work undertaken immediately or as a condition of the support granted
- Access to venues well equipped for the presentation of dance, and to be welcomed into these
- The ability to ensure that staff skills are developed
- The ability to attract and keep good administrative staff
- The capacity to offer employee benefits and support available in the mainstream employment sector

6.3.3 The evidence suggests that drama in Northern Ireland needs the following *infrastructure*:

PHYSICAL	HUMAN
Good quality rehearsal spaces	Audience development expertise
Access to IT/Offices	Marketing expertise
Office Equipment	Education expertise
Good access	Community outreach expertise
Equipment (sound and video)	Networking
	Traineeships
	Effective lobbying

6.4 ACNI Theme 3: Growing Audiences and Increasing Participation

6.4.1 The evidence suggests that the *general public* in Northern Ireland seek the following:

- High quality work, which includes the best the world has to offer and that interests them
- A complete experience which is 'good' in all respects

- To gain insights and learn something
- To become actively involved themselves
- High quality informative marketing
- A celebration of their traditions
- Entertainment that is geographically accessible

6.5 ACNI Theme 4: Improving ACNI Performance

6.5.1 The evidence suggests that ACNI needs to consider the following in developing the new Dance Strategy:

- Continuing to advocate for levels of funding that will bring dance in Northern Ireland proportionately in line with dance in other parts of the UK
- Building on current strengths in the dance community whilst addressing weaknesses and avoiding short-term initiatives which cannot be sustained in financial terms
- A funding framework that relates the level of funding for various dance initiatives with the contribution they are expected to make to take forward ACNI themes
- Communicating with the dance community in relation to long-term strategy
- Ensuring that funding mechanisms operate in such a way as to enable companies and individual dance artists to plan their work in relation to venues
- Advocating the new dance strategy widely with other stakeholders such as local authorities
- Re-opening dialogue with the Arts Council in the Republic of Ireland with regards to how dance can develop on an all-Ireland basis

7.0 PROPOSED ACNI DANCE STRATEGY

7.1 Vision

7.1.1 The following vision is the recommended means whereby the objectives of ACNI, as set out in its 5-year-plan and articulated in its CSR submission, can be achieved.

7.1.2 ACNI seeks a situation in Northern Ireland where a wide range of high quality dance activity is supported, with commensurate opportunities to create, perform, participate in and enjoy dance. Everyone in Northern Ireland should have reasonable access to these opportunities either as participants, performers or audiences.

7.2 Principles

7.2.1 It is recommended that the vision embraces the following principles:

- Quality – ranging across the spectrum from learning and participating to creating and presentation
- Access – geographical, physical, social, intellectual and cultural
- Diversity – dance in Northern Ireland should embrace the widest possible range of work, recognising that dance embraces many genres and works across disciplines.

7.3 Partnership Working

7.3.1 Progress on achieving the vision should proceed on the basis of ACNI working in collaboration with other agencies and organisations (local authorities, Sport Northern Ireland, economic development agencies, health boards, British Council, tourism bodies, Audiences NI and other UK arts councils).

7.4 Aims and Objectives

- Aim 1: develop the infrastructure for professional production and performance
 - The single most important strategic development for moving the dance community forward would be development of the infrastructure of professional production and performance in Northern Ireland. This requires the following objectives:

7.5 Aim 1, Objective 1 – Support professional production and performance

7.5.1 This will involve ACNI reviewing the level of its investment in regularly funded producing companies to ensure they have the resources to realise artistic ambitions, and assess touring capacity to meet demand from promoters. ACNI should expect regularly funded organisations to produce high quality work that is demanded by promoters to increase audiences. Given the fragile structure of companies that currently exist, it may be necessary to start with a capacity building process for the companies involved.

7.5.2 ACNI should also seek to increase its project funding budget over time so that a larger number and wider range of projects can be supported, while ensuring that individual projects are funded to a level that is conducive to producing high quality work. Until additional resources are available, this could mean funding fewer projects to a higher level.

7.5.3 Over time, and when resources permit, it should be possible to develop a multi annual funding mechanism so that new project based companies can come forward for long-term support.

7.5.4 There is also the need to look closely at the detail of what existing funding is able to achieve, with particular attention paid to the depth of the creative process available to the sector. There is a real sense that there could be a significant increase in quality of work on offer if the creation/development process could be extended and enhanced.

7.6 Aim 1, Objective 2 – Develop a network of spaces in which to create and develop dance

7.6.1 The Old Museum Arts Centre and Crescent Arts Centre capital development projects both include appropriate spaces for the creation and development of dance. During the period during in which they are being built, it is important for ACNI to ensure that financially sustainable

plans are developed for running appropriate dance activities in these spaces when they re-open.

7.6.2 There is an opportunity to develop a new facility in Derry for dance, and ACNI should encourage the various dance-related organisations and individual dancers in Derry to work together to bring forward a viable proposal based on the European model of a dance centre.

7.6.3 As a prelude to any further investment, however, it would be very helpful to map the full range of spaces available throughout Northern Ireland that might prove suitable for dance education, development, rehearsal and performance. These may reside in a wide range of places from community centres to privately owned spaces. This information will not only ensure that any new development is truly additional, but also provide the means for the dance sector to take full advantage of the spaces currently available to avoid clashes/conflict over dance spaces.

- Aim 2 – ensure that people throughout Northern Ireland have the opportunity to experience and enjoy dance as audiences
 - The next priority should be to ensure that people throughout Northern Ireland have the opportunity to experience and enjoy dance as audiences

7.7 Aim 2, Objective 1 – develop the programming of dance throughout the network of regional theatres outside Belfast

7.7.1 ACNI should work with Audiences NI to develop a dance promoter support fund, lowering the risks associated with programming dance within an audience development programme. This should eventually become a rolling programme of three-year investment at a number of venues. It should be run on a competitive basis for locally based dance development programmes embracing performances from local companies alongside companies from outside NI, as well as complementary activities such as dance artists in residence and workshop classes in association with community groups. In the first instance it may be necessary for ACNI to offer support with capacity building within the regional theatres so that they can respond to this ‘challenge fund’.

- Aim 3 – ensure that people of all ages and abilities have the opportunity to learn about and participate in dance, and that there are routes through to professional involvement
 - The next priority should be to ensure that people of all ages and abilities have the opportunity to learn about and

participate in dance, and that there are routes through to professional involvement.

7.8 Aim 3, Objective 1 – Promote dance in education

7.8.1 Work with key partners within education to see how dance might be strengthened within the physical education curriculum and how the number of schools offering Dance GCSE could be increased. Explore options for getting more professional performances into schools.

7.8.2 Explore ways of increasing the number of youth dance initiatives throughout Northern Ireland by offering financial support to establish groups, particularly where they relate to Aim 2, Objective 1.

7.9 Aim 3, Objective 2 – Develop dance activity in the community

7.9.1 Work with local authorities to ensure that community dance activity continues to be supported throughout Northern Ireland. Explore the possibility of responding to requests for dance artist in residence posts throughout NI, particularly where they are part of initiatives coming forward under Aim 2, Objective 1 and Aim 3, Objective 1

7.10 Aim 3, Objective 3 – Ensure access to vocational training

7.10.1 Work with existing vocational training providers to ascertain development needs and undertake advocacy accordingly. Liaise with specialist schools to audit provision of, and demand for, specialist training for pupils under the age of 16. This is with a view to ensuring that talented individuals are able to access appropriate training. Work with the Northern Ireland Executive to ensure that dance students have access to the necessary support to continue training.

- Aim 4 – encourage an environment that values and supports professional development
 - The next priority should be to encourage an environment that values and supports professional development

7.11 Aim 4, Objective 1 – Encourage opportunities for skills development beyond vocational training provision

7.11.1 Encourage organisations such as Old Museum Arts Centre and Crescent Arts Centre to continue to develop professional workshop and residency opportunities with visiting companies and to share expertise,

and, if a new dance centre becomes a reality in Derry, to encourage it to do likewise as a key element of its work.

7.11.2 Explore the possibility of developing an international-standard professional summer school programme, possibly in Derry, or some other inspirational seminar/event programme.

7.11.3 The capacity to work outside Northern Ireland, with all of the structured and informal development that can flow from such opportunities, is something that should continue to be supported

7.12 Aim 4, Objective 2 – ensure that dance professionals have access to information resources related to further training and opportunities to work in the community

7.12.1 Ensure that Dance Resource Base has sufficient resources to:

- Establish good communications within the dance community in Northern Ireland
- Ensure there is a database readily available to community groups seeking a dance artist to work with them.
- Organise networking opportunities
- Offer information services so dance artists are aware of training opportunities available in the UK and elsewhere
- Develop shared resources accessible to all dance artists and companies

In the first instance this may require ACNI to offer support with capacity building within the organisation to prepare it to develop and grow.

7.12.2 DanceHouse in Dublin is an outward-looking organisation that is keen to extend its links with the dance sector in the North, and has where possible ensured that its services are available to all. Given the fragility of the dance scene in NI, such resources should be carefully evaluated with a view to ensuring that any barriers to uptake are addressed.

7.13 Resources

7.13.1 Northern Ireland has a small professional dance sector, but this reflects the level of investment rather than an inherent lack of potential. ACNI will need additional investment if it is to fully utilise the comprehensive programme of development laid out in this strategy, particularly in terms of professional development, production and performance. There is an urgent need to improve the quality and availability of homegrown work, and to complement this with work produced elsewhere in the UK, and abroad. This will ensure that audiences in Northern Ireland have access to a wide range of high quality dance. ACNI has currently only £0.18 per capita to spend on dance activities throughout the whole of Northern Ireland, which is much less than is available throughout the rest of the British Isles. In order to take forward the proposed strategy, the gap in funding dance needs to be narrowed.

7.13.2 In the next section of the report, an action plan is proposed together with an indication of resource implications, and whether they can be supported by one off investment, fixed term investment, or if long term funding will be required.

8.0 ACNI DANCE STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS: ACTION PLAN AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Aim 1 – develop the infrastructure for professional production and performance

Outcomes	Objectives	Actions	08/9	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Dance talent is developed and sustained in Northern Ireland and recognised for the quality of its work	Support Professional Production and Performance	<p>1. Review level of investment in regularly funded producing companies to ensure that they have the resources to realise artistic ambitions and meet demand from promoters.</p> <p><i>Resource implication: additional finance</i></p> <p>2. Offer support with the costs of building capacity within selected companies, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring • Staffing • Specialist services • Equipment • Access to resources <p><i>Resource implication: additional finance</i></p> <p>3. Introduce multi-year funding to selected companies and projects to enable longer-term planning and audience development.</p>	<p>*</p> <p>*</p>				
				*	*	*	*
			*	*	*	*	*

		<p><i>Resource implication: more effective use of existing finance</i></p> <p>4. Seek to increase project funding budget to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage new initiatives to develop. • Create work of higher quality by increasing development and rehearsal processes. <p><i>Resource implication: additional finance</i></p> <p>5. Review funding eligibility guidelines to ensure that people keen to work in northern Ireland are not arbitrarily excluded.</p> <p><i>Resource implication: officer time</i></p>	*				
Provide facilities and support for Northern Ireland based professional dance artists	Develop a network of spaces in which to create and develop dance	<p>1. The new premises of OMAC and Crescent Arts Centre open in Belfast and receive support with running appropriate levels of dance activity.</p> <p><i>Resource Implication: achieve results through existing funding</i></p>				*	*

		<p>agreements</p> <p>2. A feasibility study is undertaken to explore and, if appropriate, take forward the setting up of a dance centre in Derry operating as a partnership between the existing dance companies and University of Ulster, plus the venues in the city based on the European model of dance centres.</p> <p><i>Resource implication: additional finance</i></p> <p>3. Support a mapping exercise of spaces throughout NI that are suitable for dance practice, creation , rehearsal and performance (in consultation with Dance Resource Base) taking into account community centres, other general performing arts spaces and those in both the private and public sector, then ensure that this information is widely accessible.</p> <p><i>Resource implication: additional finance or achieved through funding agreement with DRBase.</i></p>	*	*	*	*	*
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8.2 Aim 2 – ensure that people throughout Northern Ireland have the opportunity to experience and enjoy dance as audiences

Outcomes	Objectives	Actions	08/9	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Improved access for audiences throughout Northern Ireland to a wide range of high quality dance	Develop the programming of dance throughout the network of regional theatres outside Belfast	Explore viability of the setting up of a dance promoters support scheme in association with Audiences NI, lowering the risk of programming dance within an audience development programme. <i>Resource Implication: ACNI officer time plus achieve results through existing funding agreements</i>	*				
		Offer support with capacity building within regional theatres so that dance audience development work can take place. <i>Resource Implication: achieve results through existing funding agreements</i>	*	*	*	*	
		Set up and run a dance promoter support scheme. <i>Resource Implication: additional finance</i>		*	*	*	*

8.3 Aim 3 – ensure that people of all ages and abilities have the opportunity to learn about and participate in dance, and that there are routes through to professional involvement

Outcomes	Objectives	Actions	08/9	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Increased opportunities for people to participate in dance and for young talent to be nurtured	Promote dance in education	1. Work within education to see how dance might be strengthened within the physical education curriculum and how the number of schools offering Dance GCSE could be increased. <i>Resource Implication: Officer Time</i>	*	*	*		
		2. Explore options for getting more professional performances into schools. <i>Resource Implication: Officer Time</i>	*	*	*	*	*
		3. Explore ways of increasing the number of youth dance initiatives throughout Northern Ireland by offering financial support to establish groups particularly where they relate to Aim 2, Objective 1. <i>Resource Implication: additional finance</i>	*	*	*	*	*
Increased opportunities for people to participate in dance	Develop dance activity in the community	1. Work with local authorities to ensure that community dance activity continues to be supported throughout	*	*	*	*	*

		<p>NI.</p> <p><i>Resource implication: officer time</i></p> <p>2. Explore the possibility of responding to requests for dance artist in residence posts throughout NI, particularly where they are part of initiatives coming forward under Aim 1, Objective 1 and Aim 3, Objective 1.</p> <p><i>Resource Implication: officer time, then additional finance</i></p>		*			
<p>People in Northern Ireland have access to the highest quality vocational training opportunities</p>	<p>Ensure access to vocational training</p>	<p>1. Continue to offer support to the dance degree course at University of Ulster.</p> <p><i>Resource implication: maintain existing financial support</i></p> <p>2. Work with existing vocational providers to ascertain development needs and undertake advocacy accordingly.</p> <p><i>Resource Implication: officer time</i></p> <p>3. Liaise with specialist schools to</p>	*	*	*	*	*

		<p>audit provision of and demand for specialist training for pupils under the age of 16. <i>Resource Implication: officer time</i></p> <p>Work with the Northern Ireland Executive to ensure that dance students have access to the necessary support to continue training.</p> <p><i>Resource Implication: officer time</i></p>	*	*	*		
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8.4 Aim 4 – encourage an environment that values and supports professional development

Outcomes	Objectives	Actions	08/9	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Creative talent is developed and sustained in NI	Encourage opportunities for skills development beyond vocational training provision	<p>1. Once OMAC and Crescent Arts Centre re-open, make funding available for running professional workshop and residency opportunities with companies to share expertise.</p> <p><i>Resource Implication: additional finance</i></p> <p>2. If a new dance centre develops in Derry, ensure it has adequate funding to offer professional workshops and residencies.</p> <p><i>Resource Implication: additional finance</i></p> <p>3. Support a programme of inspirational seminars/workshops drawing on the best talent worldwide, in consultation with the sector, perhaps as part of the preparations of developing a role for Derry as a key hub for Dance in Northern Ireland.</p> <p><i>Resource implication: additional</i></p>				*	

		<p>finance</p> <p>4. Continue to support initiatives to take excellence originated in NI outside the locale so as to create greater awareness of dance in NI.</p> <p><i>Resource Implication: continue to make funding available for such promotional activities</i></p>					
<p>1. Dance artists are aware of training opportunities available in the UK and abroad and their needs are being met.</p> <p>2. Community groups who want to establish contact with a dance artist have access to an informative database</p>	<p>Ensure that dance professionals have access to information resources related to further training and opportunities to work in the community</p>	<p>1. Ensure that Dance Resource Base has sufficient resources to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish good communications within the dance community in NI • Ensure there is a database which is readily available to community groups seeking a dance artist to work with them • Networking events are organised • Information services are available so that dance artists are aware of training opportunities available in the UK and elsewhere • Shared resources are 		<p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p>			

		<p>developed which are accessible to all dance artists and companies</p> <p>In the first instance this may require ACNI to offer support with capacity building within the organisations to prepare it to develop and grow.</p> <p><i>Resource implication: Officer time, coupled with additional finance</i></p> <p>2. Support the dance sector in NI to take advantage of services available in RoI that are offered on an all-Ireland basis and consider making specific funding available to make such provision strategic rather than opportunistic.</p> <p><i>Resource implication: officer time in engaging with Dance Ireland to explore an equitable basis upon which NI dance sector can make use of these resources, followed by additional funding if required to make this viable. (This may need to be viewed as part of a wider NI/RoI initiative)</i></p>	*				
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Appendix – People and organisations consulted

ACNI dance strategy interviews

Name	Position/organisation
Sandy Cuthbert	Lecturer in Dance, Belfast Metropolitan College
Anita Clark	Dance Director Scottish Arts Council
Sophia Preston	Dance Lecturer, University of Ulster
Sandy Fisher	Dance Artist in Residence, University of Ulster
Rosemary Kelly	Chair, ACNI
Ailbe Beirne, Stephen Batts, Anita Villa	Echo Echo Dance
Aine McVerry, Gillian Mitchell	Old Museum Arts Centre
Nichola Curry	Maiden Voyage
Jill Black	Dance Resource Base
Jan Branch	Consultant
Moya Henry	Dance Officer, Crescent Arts Centre
Vicky Macguire	Ex Dance NI
Mags Byrne	Dance United
Anthea McWilliams	Dance Artist
Dylan Quinn	Dance Artist
Janet Frame	Dance Director, Arts Council England
Maggie Singleton	Dance Officer, Glasgow City Council

Consultation event attendees

Name	Organisation
Graeme Stevenson	ACNI
Deborah Hamilton	Belfast Met
Sandy Cuthbert	Belfast Met
Heather Floyd	CAF
Caroline Temple	CRDM
Dylan Quinn	Dance artist
Paul Johnson	Dance Ireland
Jill Black	Dance Resource Base
Juliette Lindsay	Dance Resource Base
Ailbe Beirne	Echo Echo Dance Theatre Company
Ayesha Mailey	Echo Echo Dance Theatre Company
Elle Fae	Echo Echo Dance Theatre Company
Sarah Young	Echo Echo Dance Theatre Company
Stephen Batts	Echo Echo Dance Theatre Company
Suzannah McCreight	Freelance/University of Ulster/BMC
Nicola Curry	Maiden Voyage
Aine McVerry	OMAC
Gillian Mitchell	OMAC
Dennis Golden	Participant
Neil McCaughen	The Playhouse
Sandie Fisher	University of Ulster - faculty
Sophia Preston	University of Ulster - faculty
Aoife Toner	University of Ulster - student
Breda McNulty	University of Ulster - student
Bridget Madden	University of Ulster - student
Donna Magee	University of Ulster - student
Katie Harkin	University of Ulster - student
Kelly Quigley	University of Ulster - student
Stacey Murnaghan	University of Ulster - student

Survey of individuals (from contacts list)

Name	Responded obtained?
Hannah Curr	Yes
Rachael Lindsay	Yes
Ayesha Mailey	Yes
Leonie McDonagh	Yes
Rupa Palchowdhury	Yes
Gillian Jones	Non-deliverable email address
Anthea McWilliams	Non-deliverable email address
Cuthbert Arutura	No
Nick Bryson	No
Eileen McClory	No
Stephen Prickett	No

Survey of individuals (accessing survey through Dance Resource Base)

Name	Responded obtained?
Jill Black	Yes
Sarah Collyer	Yes
Ruth Cowley Glass	Yes
Janice Crowe	Yes
Alice Jackson	Yes
Jennifer Jordan	Yes
Bernie Kirrane	Yes
Sylvia Lyle	Yes
Suzannah McCreight	Yes
Anthea McWilliams	Yes
Rana O'Brien	Yes
Cheryl O'Dwyer	Yes
Michaela Temple	Yes
Linda Wallace	Yes
Julia Lyn Waters	Yes

Production company survey

Name	Organisation	Response obtained?
Tillie Hay	Bright Lights	Yes
Margaret Byrne	Dance United Northern Ireland	Yes
Carie Houston	Derry Youth Dance	Yes
Ailbe Beirne	Echo Echo Dance Theatre Company	Yes
Grainne Woods	Kids in Control	Yes
Nicola Curry	Maiden Voyage	Yes
Sorcha McVeigh	Music Theatre 4 Youth	Yes
Kate Ingram	Open Arts	Yes
Jenny Elliott	Self-employed /Artscare	Yes
Majella Flanagan	Share Centre	Yes
Dee Conaghan	Stage Beyond Theatre Company	Yes
Maria McAlister	Youth Music Theatre	Non-deliverable email address
Jaci Wilde	Share Music	No
Tom Finlay	Youth Action	No

Venue and festival survey

Name	Organisation	Response obtained?
Eamonn Bradley	Ardhowen Theatre (Fermanagh District Council)	Yes
Graeme Farrow	Belfast Festival at Queen's	Yes
Liz Donnan	Crescent Arts Centre	Yes
Denise Griffith	Down Arts Centre	Yes
John Botteley	Grand Opera House Belfast	Yes
Jill McEaney	Market Place Theatre and Arts Centre	Yes
Iain Barr	Maydown Youth Training Project Ltd - Waterside Theatre	Yes
Gillian Mitchell	Old Museum Arts Centre (OMAC)	Yes
Jeremy Lewis	Riverside Theatre	Yes
Max Beer	Playhouse	Partial
Tony McCance	Cookstown District Council (Burnavon)	No
Eimear Ni Mhathuna	Culturlann McAdam O'Fiaich	No
Sean Paul O'Hare	Feile an Phobail	No
Alison Gordon	Open House Traditional Arts Festival Ltd	No
Sean Kelly	The Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival	No
David McLaughlin	The Derry Theatre Trust (Millennium Forum)	No