

# FESTIVAL PRINCIPLES

## **Principle 1**

THE FESTIVAL is an opportunity to come together, compare, discuss, witness, expand, participate and connect with dance and its plurality of voices.

## **Principle 2**

THE FESTIVAL is for audiences. A public engagement and invitation for artists and communities to celebrate and appreciate dance.

## **Principle 3**

THE FESTIVAL Partners contribute multiple projects and curation, which incorporates artist-led, self-determined, and ongoing partner-artist relationships and projects.

## **Principle 4**

THE FESTIVAL'S Partners commit financial resources to both their projects, and wider resources that are shared and support the Festival's viability and independence.

## **Principle 5**

THE FESTIVAL'S presenting Partners pay award rates to artists for their work.

## **Principle 6**

THE FESTIVAL is an expression of a Partners' ongoing commitment to growing and strengthening the dance sector. It will not be the only time each Partner supports dance and dance artists in their programming year.

## **Principle 7**

THE FESTIVAL welcomes new networks, people and voices each edition. It doesn't feel like the same people every time.

## **Principle 8**

THE FESTIVAL is realised through active participation in a collectively organised festival. This means Partners contribute to regular, collaborative meetings working across advocacy, stakeholder management, marketing, ticketing, digital and administration.

## **Principle 9**

THE FESTIVAL is accountable. Partners commit to self-evaluation, transparency and feedback throughout the festival's life cycle.

## **Principle 10**

Everyone is equal at THE FESTIVAL table. Once committed to this agreement a Partner has equal responsibility, and equal decision-making, in the realisation of the festival.

# FESTIVAL FRAMEWORK

## **Self-Determination**

The festival prioritises First Nations leadership and artists at the beginning of its program (opening weekend), and at the core of its program. It collectively creates space and resources for First Nations-led companies and artists to enact the culturally appropriate pathways and mechanisms for the development and presentation of First Nations' projects and voices.

Further, artists from marginalised and multiple marginalised groups are a priority for the Festival's equity goals, decision making processes, and programming. This framework of evaluation, transparency and accountability drives this commitment.

## **Transparency**

The festival will conduct a single nation-wide Expression of Interest process for artists and companies interested to contribute projects to the festival: shows, talks, masterclasses, public programs, showings and events.

These EOIs will be critically appraised and evaluated against the priorities outlined in this agreement, by the independent artistic Curatorium.

The Curatorium comprises artists identified and waged by the Partners, with respect to the priorities outlined in this agreement. Additional appointments to the Curatorium may be required to ensure equity of community representation in this group.

Partners will present their programs to each other and the Curatorium for feedback.

## **Equity**

The festival's program will set targets and measure its success against clear quotas for representation which will be publicly available, and continually assessed.

## **Accessibility**

The festival is committed to making projects accessible, and presenting work by Australia's leading Deaf, disabled and or neurodiverse dance artists.

## **Locality**

With a concentration of cultural infrastructure and long-term investment in audience development for dance, the festival's home is Naarm/Kulin Country. Should national or regional partners identify with the principles and framework outlined in this document, they are very welcome contributors.

## **Resourcing**

The festival is primarily resourced through leveraging the existing resources of the Partners. It is highly attuned to a broader funding landscape and does not seek to replicate or compete with existing or emerging festival platforms. Competition for resources between partners and across the festival is inevitable but should consider the best outcomes for the festival as a whole.

The festival's collective resources are focused on Australian independent dance artists and small-medium companies.

Dance companies led by making artists are encouraged as Partners. All Partners adhere to the Principles — specifically Principle 2 to realise multiple projects by multiple artists. This could be a project by the making artist and at least one other artist independent of the organisation.

### **Wellbeing**

The safety and wellbeing of artists, staff and partners in the festival is fundamental to operations.

All Partners and participants adhere to responsible, ethical and professional behaviour and to uphold and protect the name and ethos of the festival. We share a collective responsibility to work to improve, learn and develop the festival together.

### **Sustainability and Growth**

The festival's growth can and must align with a sector recovering from, living through and preparing for climate crisis and the lasting impacts of Covid-19. It is unlikely the festival can fulfil its principles, and represent a large program of shows and events, in its first year. We seek to understand the festival's role in the sector using a lens of a minimum 10-year commitment.

### **Decision-Making**

The Festival utilises collective organising and regular meetings (in person and virtually) to produce and program the Festival. Decisions are by consensus of the attending people.

### **Collective Producing**

Collective producing a festival is a challenge. If resources are available, engaging staff temporarily across the Festival will be useful.

Some Partners will be required to take responsibility and lead in particular areas of producing e.g. secretariat, ticketing, branding, website, marketing.

### **Guests**

It's likely the Festival will welcome visiting national and international artists, producers, presenters and colleagues in the future. Neutral partners and stakeholders may be better placed to facilitate future delegations. Market development and industry activities are not the priority in the pilot first year of the festival in 2023.

### **Audience Experience**

This festival is for audiences. The festival is a way for audiences to engage deeply with dance and dance artists outside of "regular dance programming".

The function of the festival is not to be a marketplace for the dance industry although this function may grow over time.