

DANCE EAST

A person is captured in a dynamic handstand pose, balancing on one hand. They are wearing a red t-shirt and blue shorts. The background is dark, with a blue light source creating a strong shadow of the person on the floor. The overall mood is energetic and artistic.

**CHIEF
EXECUTIVE
& CREATIVE
DIRECTOR**

MARCH 2025

DANCEEAST.CO.UK

CHIEF EXECUTIVE & CREATIVE DIRECTOR

FULL TIME - BASED IN IPSWICH

- £65,000 to £67,000 per annum + benefits
- 25 days' annual leave + bank holidays
- Applications close Monday 28 April at 09:00
- Preliminary interviews online Thursday 8 and Friday 9 May
- Second round interviews at DanceEast Thursday 15 May



WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive & Creative Director of DanceEast.



This is a newly configured leadership position as Brendan Keaney OBE steps down following 14 years as our Artistic Director & Chief Executive. Brendan has created a thriving building and programme, a committed staff team and sustained connections with a range of important partners across the East of England, in the UK and internationally.

We are now seeking a dynamic and visionary leader who will guide us into the next decade. Our new Chief Executive & Creative Director will be entrepreneurial to their bones; they will identify and cultivate partnerships and broker relationships with potential co-commissioners and producers as well as supporters. Excellent with people, our

Chief Executive & Creative Director will inspire and nurture our high-performing leadership team. They will also need to be externally focused on audiences, key stakeholders and strategic partners to ensure the sustainability of the organisation.

These are challenging times for arts organisations in the UK. While DanceEast is well managed and financially stable, the Board is aware that we need to remain agile and to be proactive in seeking new sources of income and in exploring sustainable operational models.

Your career could have been in the dance sector, but it is not a deal breaker if you haven't worked in dance previously. As the new Chief Executive & Creative Director you would be expected to draw on your previous experience and you would be bringing high-level transferable skills to DanceEast. An enjoyment of dance and an excellent understanding of its unique transformative power as an artform is essential.

If this could be you, please get in touch. We look forward to hearing from you.

SHREELA GHOSH
Chair of the Board of Trustees



ABOUT DANCEEAST

Established as Suffolk Dance In 1983, DanceEast has more than 40 years of experience in bringing the best artists, performances, and participatory dance opportunities to East Anglia. We pioneered the establishment of a rich dance ecology in this rural region, and raised £9million for the purpose-built Jerwood DanceHouse which opened in 2009.

Today, we are the home of dance in the East of England. From our state-of-the-art building on the Ipswich Waterfront, we operate in our region and beyond,

and the impact of our work is felt locally, regionally, and nationally.

We are guided by our **vision of a world where everyone can benefit from the vital and life-enhancing power of dance.**

Our mission is to create new and exciting ways for people to move or be moved, through experiencing dance at its very best. We promote dance as an avenue for self-expression, discovery, and fulfilment, to enhance health and wellbeing, and to unite people and communities.

WE WORK THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Working through more than 100 partnerships (including English National Ballet, Akademi, National Youth Dance Company, National Dance CATs, Suffolk Libraries, Collusion, and First Light Festival), we record up to 75,000 attendances to our programme each year. This includes participatory activities and performances.

WE WORK WITH PEOPLE ACROSS THE REGION

Our outreach activities engage people facing disadvantage and those traditionally under-represented in arts engagement. We remove barriers and address needs to give more people the

opportunity to experience the highest quality dance, for the greatest benefit of all.

WE CHAMPION THE UK'S DANCE SECTOR

We nurture artistic talent, invest in new work and technologies, and grow audiences for dance. Artists we work with include: Luca Silvestrini's PROTEIN, Far From the Norm, Jasmin Vardimon Company, Shechter II, Chandenie Gobardhan, Dickson Mbi, Jess & Morgs, Joseph Toonga, Stopgap Dance Company, and more.

DanceEast is a company limited by guarantee [03463592] and a registered charity [1066825].





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OUR STAFF TEAM

Dance East has a core staff team of 28 people working both full- and part-time. Company policy allows home working for one day a week. The average length of service across the team is six years and 40% of our colleagues have worked with us for more than ten years. In the November 2024 staff survey the team gave DanceEast a score of 83/100 for its company culture, 81 for employee development and 82 for diversity and inclusion.

OUR FUNDING

DanceEast is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation with an

annual grant of £825,000 guaranteed to March 2026. We are about to enter the preparation and application phase for the next NPO period. DanceEast operates on a mixed financial model where public funding, grants from trusts and foundations, income from classes and performances, and donations come together to make our annual programme possible. As a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity our annual accounts are in the public domain.

Our Trustees' report and financial statements for 2023-24 can be seen [here](#) or on the charity commission website.



© Rachel Cherry

OBJECTIVES AND VALUES

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- To be a leading voice in dance and a principal talent and ideas incubator - delivering an accessible, inclusive, and relevant creative programme.
- To be a national leader in digital dance innovation.
- To be an exemplary organisation, with strategic governance, model financial and operational management and a dynamic approach to business planning.
- To minimise our environmental impact.
- To remain a beacon of excellence, enhancing the profile of Ipswich, Suffolk, and the East of England.

VALUES

- **QUALITY:** As one of the UK's leading dance organisations, we create opportunities to take part in, experience or produce dance at its very best.
- **ACCESS:** We broaden access to dance, so that people of all ages, backgrounds and circumstances can participate in inclusive, joyful, life-affirming activities and experience extraordinary performances.
- **IMPACT:** We invest our resources where it matters most, to ensure a sustainable future for dance.

OUR PROGRAMME

Our broad, year-round programme ranges from sessions for people with dementia across Suffolk, to holiday activities for children in receipt of free school meals and providing artist advisories and residencies. We focus on three priority areas where we can have a transformational impact:

- Contributing to a thriving UK dance sector, investing in new work and growing audiences for dance.
- Supporting the health and happiness of our communities, including through targeted creative health projects.
- Providing opportunities for children and young people from all backgrounds to experience the positive benefits of dance, in and out of school hours.

Examples of our work:

CENTRE FOR ADVANCED TRAINING (CAT): high-quality pre-vocational dance training for children and young people aged 10 – 18 across the East of England, including the provision of means-tested grants.

DIGITAL PRIMARIES: live-streaming curriculum-linked dance sessions into primary schools, overcoming barriers to access and affordability.

DANCE FOR PARKINSON'S: one of five national hubs delivering regular, impactful dance sessions for people with Parkinson's, in partnership with English National Ballet.

COMMISSIONS: commissioning the UK's foremost dance makers to create new work, including Dickson Mbi and Jess & Morgs, with support from Jerwood Foundation.



OUR IMPACT



**REACH UP
TO 75,000
ATTENDANCES
ANNUALLY**



**UP TO 40,000
ATTENDANCES ARE
CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE**



**75%
PARTICIPATE
25%
WATCH**

IN 2023-24.....

27 staff
members
and **52**
freelancers

31
performances by
19 companies
at the Jerwood
DanceHouse

Programming
for **3** regional
festivals – **15**
artists and
companies

94 artists
delivering in
participatory
sessions

680
classes at the
DanceHouse in
2023/24

Over 80%
audiences rated
performances at
the DanceHouse as
'high' or 'very high'
quality

9
commissions, **50**
artist advisories
and **58**
residencies

WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT US

- 'We are a low-income family, and the child attending is disabled. I am unable to work more hours than I already do because of my daughter's needs. The bursary is vital in ensuring that X gets to attend. She absolutely loves the creative class, and her confidence has increased so much! It also improves her social and emotional skills... This is vital for our family, and we are very grateful!'
Parent of Bursary recipient
- "[DanceEast] actually understand you as an artist... not just the work, but you as a person."
Joseph Toonga, Royal Ballet Choreographic Residency 2023/24
- "Dance is everything to me. Dance is expression, recovery, it's a kind of beautiful art form."
DanceEast Centre for Advanced Training (CAT) student
- when I was diagnosed with Parkinson's... I couldn't live independently... It was the Dance for Parkinson's class, which allowed me to become an independent person again... I don't need to see my GP so often, or my neurologist or the Parkinson's Nurse. I don't fall over so often so I'm less likely to trouble A&E."
Dance for Parkinson's participant





THE JERWOOD DANCEHOUSE

The Jerwood DanceHouse is one of the best facilities for dance in the UK, with a 181-capacity theatre, café, and five outstanding studios, and a state-of-the-art green-screen and virtual production facility. A member of the European DanceHouse Network, it is one of only five DanceHouses in the UK, and the only one outside a major city. It is a linchpin in the UK's cultural infrastructure.

The DanceHouse is a dynamic international dance hub where artists explore, create and present work, and a thriving community hub with performances, classes, workshops, and

more. It is an extraordinary asset in the delivery of our programme and a symbol of aspiration and investment for Ipswich and the Eastern region.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

As a registered charity DanceEast is governed by its Board of Trustees who are also directors of the limited company. Trustees are unremunerated and bring their skills, expertise and time in support of the organisation on a voluntary basis. There are currently nine Trustees:

Isis Clunie, Fleur Derbyshire-Fox, Sarah Gamblin, Shreela Ghosh (Chair), Chris Gribble, Margaret Holder, Daden Hunt, Magnus Spence, Ben Morton Wright.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Chief Executive & Creative Director leads and works closely with three experienced department heads who form DanceEast's senior team. Together they are the key decision-making group for the organisation.



© Alicia Clarke



BILL ARMITAGE
Head of Operations & Resources

Bill joined DanceEast in 2011, having worked in a number of multi-arts venues for over 20 years. He is passionate about contemporary dance.



LUCY BAYLISS
Head of Creative Programmes

Lucy has been working in the arts sector for 20+ years, across dance participation, programming and training and is passionate about arts engagement and access.



BRYONY HOPE
Head of Communications & Development

Bryony has been a cultural sector fundraiser since 2013 and has secured millions in investment. She believes in the power of storytelling and the importance of demonstrating impact.



YOUR LIFE IN... IPSWICH

Ipswich is a thriving town (population approx. 139,600) where a diversity of cultures and communities combine to create a vibrant and multicultural place. An hour from London by train, it is the base for a range of cultural organisations including fellow NPOs New Wolsey Theatre, Suffolk Libraries, Eastern Angles, Gecko, Ipswich & Colchester Museum Service and SPILL.

The live music scene is a particular cultural gem. There is a strong, supportive community of independent shops, businesses, and community spaces.

DanceEast is situated along the Ipswich Waterfront, a regenerated area which is home to the University of Suffolk, local

restaurants, cafes and bars. Ipswich is also home to expansive green spaces and parks, including Christchurch and Orwell Country Parks. The river Orwell is on the doorstep for beautiful walks; the closest beach, Felixstowe, is less than a 20-minute drive away.

Ipswich is accessible by train and car from other beautiful places in Suffolk, including coastal areas like Dunwich and Aldeburgh, historic sites including Sutton Hoo and Framlingham Castle, and bustling, artistic towns like Woodbridge, Hadleigh and Bury St Edmund's.

For more information about Ipswich, check out Ipswich.co.uk and All About Ipswich.



© Chris Parkes

CHIEF EXECUTIVE & CREATIVE DIRECTOR

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

The Chief Executive & Creative Director holds the most senior post at DanceEast, unites the creative and strategic functions of the organisation, and is accountable to the Board of Trustees for the good management of the charity. The Chief Executive & Creative Director leads and works collaboratively with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure that DanceEast creates opportunities for people to create, produce and experience dance at its very best. The Chief Executive & Creative Director is based in Ipswich and plays an active role in the Town's social life and cultural community.

KEY DELIVERABLES

- Lead on DanceEast's vision, values and organisational objectives, and on its dynamic creative programme.
- Ensure the creative and strategic ambitions of DanceEast are aligned and delivered to the highest possible standards, on time, to plan and within budget.
- Ensure a strong profile and reputation for the organisation and for dance practice locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Sustain and strengthen partnerships with existing and potential funders, partners and key stakeholders.
- Motivate, inspire, support and enable development opportunities for the staff team.
- Be accountable to the Board and to funding bodies, ensuring the sustainability and responsible stewardship of DanceEast, and future-proofing its finances.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

INTERNAL: Reporting to the Chair of the Board, the Chief Executive & Creative Director line manages the Head of Operations & Resources, Head of Creative Programmes, and Head of Communications & Development, who constitute the organisation's SLT. The postholder also has overall responsibility for, and interaction with the entire staff team.

EXTERNAL: Arts Council England, Ipswich Borough Council, and other local authorities and funders including the Department for Education. Working with the Head of Communications & Development, major donor relationships, local businesses, and Suffolk Chamber of Commerce. Working with the Head of Creative Programmes, artists, dance and cultural organisations and networks, and key strategic partners including We Are Ipswich, Norfolk & Suffolk Culture Board and the European Dance Development Network.

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

- To develop the organisation's strategic plan with the SLT and Board, and to evaluate the plan annually.
- To work closely with the Chair and Trustees to ensure the good governance of the organisation.
- To support Trustees in being an effective Board, ensuring it is comprised of the appropriate range of skills and has access to training and development opportunities.
- To support and develop the staff team.

ADVOCACY, PROFILE, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- To shape, co-create and communicate the creative vision for DanceEast.
- To promote the profile and reputation of DanceEast locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- To initiate and enable constructive debate about dance and its development by artists, policy-makers and the public, and to promote DanceEast's role in dance leadership.
- To ensure DanceEast is part of national and international arts discussions and networks, and represented at key events.
- To be the face of DanceEast in professional and community networks and at events in Ipswich and Suffolk.
- To contribute to civic and placemaking initiatives and ensure that DanceEast is represented in local and regional decision-making.

CREATIVE: WORKING WITH THE HEAD OF CREATIVE PROGRAMMES

- To develop an offer which appeals to a wide range of audiences, demonstrates excellence and aims to grow appetite and demand for diverse dance experiences.
- To build and sustain partnerships which will promote and enhance the commissioning, programming and presentation of dance within and beyond the Jerwood DanceHouse.
- To ensure that new work is commissioned through a collaborative approach and within agreed financial and operational parameters.
- To oversee the evaluation of the

programme, to ensure quality, to engage in reflection and implement learning with colleagues.

- To maintain an overview of the local and national dance ecology in order to inform advocacy and planning.

OPERATIONS: WORKING WITH THE HEAD OF OPERATIONS & RESOURCES

- To be accountable for the financial operation of the organisation, ensuring budgets are set and monitored, appropriate financial policies and procedures are in place, compliance with appropriate legal and fiscal frameworks is followed, and that there is timely reporting to the relevant funders and authorities.
- To ensure the smooth and efficient management of the Jerwood DanceHouse facilities and infrastructure.
- To ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place for recruitment, induction, appraisals and the professional development of staff.
- To ensure the organisation upholds its core values of equality, diversity and inclusion, and valuing the wellbeing of all colleagues.
- To ensure DanceEast and the Jerwood DanceHouse remain a visible champion of environmental responsibility.
- To ensure the organisation is fully compliant with all legal requirements, including health and safety, and that all staff are trained appropriately.

DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS: WORKING WITH

THE HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

- To ensure that marketing and communications strategies are developed and effectively delivered, to retain existing and grow new audiences for dance in Ipswich and the region, and to manage and promote the DanceEast brand.
- To be proactive in the development and delivery of effective fundraising strategies for DanceEast and to ensure that contributed income grows and is diversified.
- To play a role in identifying and approaching prospects for donations and investment, with a focus on HNW individual donors and the organisation's Endowment campaign.
- To develop, maintain, and strengthen relationships with existing and potential supporters and to lead on key relationships.
- To communicate and advocate for DanceEast's plans and ambitions effectively to the widest range of people including politicians, the media, funders, artists, audiences and the public.

PERSON SPECIFICATION PROFILE AND PRACTICE ESSENTIAL

- Recognised as a leading professional in and beyond the cultural and creative industries.
- An inclusive leader and consultative decision-maker.
- Understanding of the specific needs of dance as an art form and its

transformative creative and social potential.

- Entrepreneurial flair and a track record of successful fundraising and income generation from a range of sources.
- Excellent interpersonal, spoken and written skills.
- A strong advocate and compelling storyteller, able to network, represent the organisation, communicate its vision and inspire confidence among existing and potential peers and stakeholders.
- Able to think and act strategically and to prioritise while managing multiple tasks and complex demands.
- A commitment to best practice in dance and/or the arts and to promoting inclusion and equality of opportunity.
- A commitment to living locally, able to travel regionally, nationally and internationally, and to work some evenings and weekends where there is reasonable expectation to attend events.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL

- Experience of contributing to high-quality arts programming and audience development initiatives.
- Understanding and experience of talent identification and development from initial engagement through to professional career, and developing artists at all stages of their careers.
- Understanding of the legal, fiscal, social and political context within which

the arts operate, and the contribution they make to health, education, social cohesion and civic pride.

- Track record in relationship building and working in partnership with a range of funders, agencies and organisations.
- Experience of working effectively with a Board of Directors, understanding of best practice in governance and organisational development.
- Experience of line-management, team building and staff motivation, management and development.
- Evidence of achievement in fundraising and maintaining effective relationships with public, corporate and individual funders.
- Strong financial literacy and skills, knowledge of charity governance and relevant financial policies and procedures; experience of senior financial accountability.

DESIRABLE

- Experience of running a building with a diverse and impactful arts programme.
- Experience of significant national / international cultural partnership projects.

At DanceEast we believe that voices from a range of backgrounds and lived experiences make our understanding of the world and the arts more relevant. We believe that difference is our strength. Therefore we actively encourage applications from people from all backgrounds and those that are under-represented in our region and in dance leadership.

HOW TO APPLY

DanceEast has engaged independent consultant Gregory Nash as its search partner for the recruitment of the Chief Executive & Creative Director. If the role is of interest to you, we ask that you contact him in the first instance at

creative@gregory-nash.com to arrange a confidential conversation prior to considering an application for the role. Gregory will be able to advise on the application process and formats should you decide to proceed to a submission.

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VISIT DANCEEAST.CO.UK TO FIND OUT MORE

**DANCE
EAST**



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



E D N

European
Dancehouse
Network