

auSDANCE ACT

2026 YOUTH DANCE FESTIVAL

PRODUCTION MANUAL



CONTENTS

3. Welcome

4. Getting Started and Fees

5. Communication

6. The Theme 2026: *The Metaverse*

7. The Process

Teacher roles, Child Safety & Age Appropriateness

Mentor visits

Music & Lighting

Dance Film, Projection & Multimedia

Props & Sets

The Stage

Practical rehearsal tips

Copyright

Production Week

Introducing Your Piece

The Team

22. Event Etiquette.

Stay Connected on Socials and Our App

23. Venue Guide

24. Guidelines

25. Ausdance ACT

26. Image Credits

Welcome to Youth Dance Festival 2026!

Thank you for your participating in the ACT's biggest, most inclusive, non-competitive, student-driven celebrations of dance.

Since 1984, Ausdance ACT's Youth Dance Festival has been a regular highlight of the Canberra arts scene, and for the participating schools from Canberra and the surrounding areas. There is something magical about the unique opportunity it provides as well as vibrancy, fun, and energy.

Translating a concept into dance using live theatre and presenting the work on Canberra's premiere stage is a lifetime memory for the 45,000+ students who have been involved since it first began. Celebrating a second generation of participants and with proud alumni and legacy, Youth Dance Festival is now in its 42nd year, taking place at Canberra Theatre Centre in October 2026.

The students do the creative part - the choreography, selecting the music, costuming, props, lighting concept, with the teacher's guidance and administrative support. While live performance is essential, we encourage you to use dance film and multimedia as contemporary theatrical media. Is there a student who can compose, sing, or play an instrument? Consider incorporating live music. A solo instrument can be a beautiful and effective accompaniment, allowing a piece to stand out.

While the pieces themselves are student led, Ausdance ACT's team produces the event.

We believe that the creative process is one of the most important elements of this festival. Our Ausdance creative team will work with you to ensure each participating group has assistance and support with the entire process with our mentors and sound designer giving dedicated sessions.

Every year we have a theme to be used as the provocation of the student pieces, so students understand that dance can tell stories and is an expressive medium, not just technical.

This year it is, " **THE METAVERSE** "

We are excited to see what you bring to the festival this year!

Dr Cathy Adamek
Creative Director



Getting Started

PRODUCTION MANUAL

This Production Manual is your informative guide designed to make your Dance Festival experience as easy and hassle-free as possible. It covers general expectations and information you need to know to put your piece together, as well as specific guidelines for production elements, staging, multimedia, video-dance, and theatre etiquette. If you have any questions regarding any points made in the manual, please do not hesitate to contact us so we can assist and support you.

WHAT FEES ARE INVOLVED?

There are two fees payable to Ausdance ACT to be involved. The first is the school entry fee of \$375 plus GST per piece entering (both live performance, multimedia, and video-dance production).

This fee is invoiced after we receive your entry form via the following [link](#) . Fees are not refundable after the deadline established by the organisation. (This gives direct access to Ausdance ACT membership! [MEMBERSHIP | Ausdance ACT](#)).

The second fee is the student entry fee of \$30 plus GST per student performing live. It is the teacher's responsibility to receive student payments prior to the deadline. **Ausdance ACT will invoice schools at the end of Term 3. Fees are non-refundable.**

Communication

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

We are here to help you through all stages of the journey, so please don't hesitate to contact us!

Email: ydf.act@ausdance.org.au

Phone: 6182 0061

Website: www.ausdanceact.org.au

In the past email communication between Ausdance ACT and YDF teachers has been troublesome due to education IT security systems. Our update emails were being diverted to junk mail or being blocked altogether. To fix this issue and to receive future correspondence, it is advised that each teacher contact their school's IT department and ensure the following YDF email addresses are safe/whitelisted through the Barracuda program:

ydf.act@ausdance.org.au

support.act@ausdance.org.au

act@ausdance.org.au

Each year new security protections can be added to school email addresses, so we ask that everyone follows this step, even if they have not been affected by this issue previously. Please contact us if you haven't received any correspondence.



+



The Theme: “The Metaverse”

Step into a world where the boundaries between reality and the digital universe no longer exist. The Metaverse invites you to explore how technology, gaming, social media and online connection are reshaping the way we move, communicate and experience the world around us.

This choreography task asks you to investigate the relationship between the physical body and the online world. How does life online influence the way we behave in real life? For more information/inspiration on the theme, go [online](#) on our webpage and click on the link: “Theme Information”.

Creative Tips: To get started

SEARCH IT

Start the process through a basic research process. In your preferred search engine, online music or video store, research the theme. We suggest also trying Soundcloud, iTunes/Spotify, Google Images, YouTube, Google Videos, etc. Research the theme and its concepts so you can draw on this research in your final product.

Find images, music, keep a mood board or a journal to record inspiring or cool ideas/looks/sounds/colours/movements/images/poems.

TALK ABOUT IT

With your class, discuss or brainstorm the theme. Ask them what things first come to mind when you discuss the overarching theme of the festival. These points of discussion can act as further catalysts for deeper research.

LOVE IT

Be passionate about and/or interested in your chosen theme. This curiosity will keep you alive to new possibilities, make you fearless when things get tough, and ensure you're always digging deeper.

The Process

IT BEGINS...

You are encouraged to enter as many pieces as practical from your school.

There is no right or wrong way to choreograph, rehearse and polish your work.

Every school, every teacher has their own process. We recommend finding as much time as you can for all stages and preparing a timeline for the piece to be created. For example, by Week 2, music must be finalised, by Week 4, choreographers must have created the choreography, by Week 7, everyone has learnt the choreography etc.

We love any and every style of dance! Think about what genres or style you want to choreograph in. We also love it when your dance has meaning and strong thematic concepts. We strongly suggest you explore all your ideas about the theme and refine them throughout the process. Great movement can come from a random spark of inspiration – it could be literal (like a prop) or abstract, it could be narrative or non-fiction. You are creating a piece of theatre so think about what props or costumes you might use to tell the story.

If you get stuck, contact Ausdance ACT. There are many resources in the office including previous DVDs, which can assist with the process and provide inspiration. There is also material to be purchased [online](#).

At the Ausdance ACT Office, we have a back catalogue of previous Dance Festival footage to help with your planning and preparation for your school piece. It can also give you a clearer insight into the production levels of the festival, including what the lighting states look like on stage with dancers. For more information contact ydf.act@ausdance.org.au

HOW LONG SHOULD IT BE?

Your piece should be a maximum of five (5) minutes inclusive of the introduction and a minimum of three (3) minutes.

HOW MANY DANCERS?

We recommend the minimum number of (6) performers. Maximum (45), contact us if you have any variance.

WHO CHOREOGRAPHS IT?

Youth Dance Festival is a student-led; student-performed festival. All pieces must be created by students or be an 80:20 collaboration between students and teachers. Teachers can contribute and collaborate with students to create their piece. It is the role of the teacher to introduce and facilitate discussion surrounding the theme and guide their student choreographers and performers towards their final piece.

Ausdance ACT defines a teacher as anyone who is not a student at the participating school and is working with and directing students. This includes teachers employed at the school, any external teachers, designers, choreographers, etc. who are paid or volunteer their time.

WHAT'S MY ROLE AS THE TEACHER?

The teacher's role is to keep their school's dance piece on track. This involves checking and completing the technical forms to be sent to the theatre, reading the rules and guidelines, understanding the processes contained in this manual and ensuring the information is shared as required.

If anything is unclear, contact Ausdance ACT. Please emphasise to your students that dates must be met so the whole process goes smoothly. These dates are important for working with Canberra Theatre Centre and the production team: performance scheduling, running of the show, etc. We know that sometimes it's hard to meet deadlines, so please contact us if you anticipate delays or difficulties. We want your Dance Festival experience to be enjoyable and fulfilling.

CHILD SAFETY & BEING AGE APPROPRIATE

Ausdance ACT is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing our services and programs and the welfare of the children in our care will always be our priority. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where all children are valued and feel safe and secure.

Ausdance ACT monitors content and takes child protection and Safe Dance Practice seriously. We draw information from several sources including the new [ACT Child Safety Standards](#). We will monitor choreography, content, and music for age appropriateness and will work with teachers to achieve a family friendly show.

For example, if there are moves that are inappropriately sexual, dangerous, or music with lyrics that we deem unsuitable for public broadcast to a family audience, then we reserve the right as producers to request changes before the dance is performed.

Important links:

- [Ausdance ACT Child Protection Policy](#)
- [Ausdance Child Safe Dance Practices](#).
- [Safe Dance Practice](#).
- [ACT Child Safety Standards](#).

MENTOR SCHOOL VISITS

During the process, a mentor will come out and visit your school. This visit is primarily to help YOU! The support artist will provide you with helpful suggestions and feedback, discuss your ideas and assist in how to realise them. The mentor may verify with you if you are following the various steps required to prepare for the show such as booking your music session, discuss costume and light design, fill all the necessary forms etc. They will watch your work; they may workshop ideas. But they won't choreograph your work.

The school visits also provide an opportunity for the YDF team to get a feel for your dance piece so that it has the most suitable place in the running order to facilitate a smooth and entertaining show. To do so the mentor will be taking a video of your dance (for the creative director's private view only). We like to promote the festival, so the Mentor will ask to take some photos of you for social media promotion, please make sure to verify your photo permissions.

BOOKING YOUR SESSIONS WITH THE MENTOR

School visits will take place in terms 3 and 4 from August 10th to October 20th. Contact the Ausdance ACT at: ydf.act@ausdance.org.au to arrange your school visit.



Music

MUSIC EDITING SESSIONS

Every school has a maximum of one hour of editing/mixing time with our Sound Engineer to make the soundtrack for each five-minute dance piece.

Please bring in a backup of music or Sound FX on USB or physical CDs. Phones carrying music are not a reliable way to receive good-quality sound. Do not rely on cloud sources like Dropbox, Google Drive, etc. as downloading will eat into your session time.

Complete and bring with you a copy of your completed *Music Cue Sheet*, this will ensure your session runs smoothly and that you have plenty of time. The Music Sheet is available on our webpage, just follow the Production Information List on our [web-page](#) and download the from.

It is safest to bring in original CDs or buy your music online (for example Apple Music) and then save it to your USB. Bring the original files you have downloaded.

BOOKING YOUR SESSIONS WITH THE SOUND ENGINEER

We suggest that you make an early booking with Kimmo Vennonen via email: kimmo@kvp.net.au

Kimmo will not be available from June 15th to July 20th. You can find his studio at the Ainslie Arts Centre: 30 Elouera St., Braddon ACT 2612, Room 5B. Please make sure you come with an accompanying teacher or supervised adult.

QUALITY

When working with our Sound Engineer, ensure what you bring into the studio is of high quality. All sound must be of good quality as anything substandard will be obvious in the theatre. Poor-quality sound brings down the tone and energy of an entire piece. All supplied audiophiles should be AIFF, wav, or m4a (otherwise known as AAC) format. Please do not bring mp3s unless the bitrate is at 256kbps or better.

Important note:

You will have to contact Kimmo and sound-proof any video-projection file.

At the end of your music session, we will transfer the final product to your USB free of charge. The final mix will be used for the show compilation.

Things to consider

- We encourage live music and original composition.
- Think about using Australian music rather than US.
- Is there someone in your group who plays an instrument or can compose?
- Use something that inspires you
- Relate the music to your piece and keep it captivating.
- Try to find tracks that enhance your concept within the piece.
- Use a medley or music with a journey.
- A good idea is to draw a map of your music to understand its structure. Try to align your basic story to the map before starting the steps.
- Music can be the springboard to the creation of your work

Questions to ask yourself:

- Does the music express what you need it to say?
- Will the tracks mix well when edited
- Is the soundtrack varied enough in tempo, style, etc.?

TRACK LENGTH

Your piece should be no longer than 5 minutes all inclusive. Within that, we recommend each piece use around four pieces of music. Once completed, add up the time total to check the track is under 5 minutes inclusive of the presentation of your work by the MC.

LANGUAGE & CONTENT

We need to make sure everything is acceptable for a family audience (think G or PG rating), therefore explicit language will be monitored.

It's not always possible to edit this out nicely. The best idea is to ensure all music cuts contain no explicit language. It is not possible in all cases to reliably remove voices to make "karaoke" versions of a song within the one-hour studio session.

We advise you to check the lyrics online (Google "Lyrics [song title]"). Sometimes the context of the song is suggestive, and this may not be suitable. If there is anything that the Creative Team deems inappropriate, we will work with you to find an alternative option.

VOICE RECORDINGS

Our Sound Engineer can record voices in the studio. It is the preferable way to incorporate voice into your music track compared to a poor recording done in a noisy school room on a phone. If it's well organised, five minutes is all it takes to record in the studio in really good quality. If you do elect to record elsewhere, here's some advice:

- In the recording app, set the quality to the highest i.e. biggest file size
- Speak closely to the microphone but not directly into it to avoid breath pops.
- Avoid all echoey rooms & background noise, especially air conditioning, other people & traffic.
- Always check the result after recording & repeat, if necessary, as you record, monitor on headphones so you can hear everything.
- Avoid making mp3 files as the quality is often poor, mp4 or m4a is better, wav or AIFF is best.
- Voice Memo on iPhone works well, use the email option to send the recording for best quality.

When compiling please make sure you are working in a non-compressed file format (not mp3!) and export the result to AIFF or wav or mp4/m4a (not mp3) or burn an audio CD.

Lighting

Lighting can be used to get the audience's attention, to express energy or moods.

Learning basic lighting is an important part of stagecraft. The lighting grid will be of a standard theatre configuration, consisting of spots, movers, and floodlights with various colour, patterns, and moving capabilities.

The Look Book is a collection of pre-packaged lighting states in a catalogue, that you can choose from, this form can be uploaded to the google drive link we will provide you with. Both Lighting Look Book, Lighting Plot Sheet, and other forms can be found on our [website](#).

The states will be built before the tech- rehearsal. During your Tech Rehearsal only minor changes and necessary adjustments can be made.

Please be reminded you have **MAXIMUM 6 lighting/ state changes** within your piece; we will have to cut your states if there are too many. You can use the glitter ball. We have a projector.

We can cater to some specific lighting specials or requirements 2 weeks before production week. If you have something specific in mind, please contact the Ausdance ACT Team to discuss these possibilities.

Please upload your Lighting forms to the CTC Google Drive Link by 16 October.



Dance Film

Dance Film is an exciting new medium that has accelerated in dance production over the last few years. Since our 2021 Digital Dystopia/Utopia Youth Dance Festival, we strongly encourage students to experiment working with dance film either by making a stand-alone short film or incorporating multimedia into their pieces. Screen skills are essential tools for performance today.

As part of our YDF artist support, we offer specific mentoring sessions with professionals in the field of screen dance to help you storyboard your ideas and get great tips on choreographing for the camera and shooting strategies. It's not about filming a performance on stage.

Find all technical information and other tips for your Dance Film works on our [web-page](#).



Projection & Multimedia

Rather than a stand-alone film, think about how you can incorporate projection and filmic elements into your piece. There will be one fixed point projector at the rear of the backstage area that will project onto the back of the cyclorama (cyc). The projected image size may be limited.

Be mindful of your audience's viewing experience. Will you interact with your multimedia by dancing in front of it, or will you pause and pull focus your multimedia. Avoid small text and fine detail in your footage.

Multimedia is also subject to the Ausdance ACT Protection Policy, so it must be appropriate to a family audience. Multimedia must also be carefully recorded and/or compiled to ensure your dance piece looks and sounds its best.

NOTE: you will need to choose lighting states that compliment your projection (no cyc wash, no front lights). The projection quality may be compromised slightly depending on your choice of lights, and vice versa- your lighting may be compromised to enhance your projection.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO PROVIDE?

Images or videos must be provided in an MP4 video file format. PowerPoint presentations do not work with our system. If you can't export to the correct file format, please reach out for assistance. Files must be submitted prior to production week so we can ensure all is in working order in advance.

Please send labelled files to ydf.act@ausdance.org.au

Your projection needs to run for the same duration as your music. If you only want images on the screen for a specific time, this must be automatic within your projection - we recommend a black empty screen. Please also bring a backup copy to your technical rehearsal on a separate USB just in case!



Props & Sets

These handy hints will help you if you decide to use props, sets. If you have sets or props that enhance your dance work, ensure that you rehearse with them.

We invite participants to be as creative as possible when developing set/s and props and encourage you to use recycled materials! Sets should not require construction on the day. Set pieces must be easily moveable by up to four people (our Work Experience Crew and stage mechs).

PLEASE DO NOT USE:

- Liquids including, but not limited to body oil, paints, water.
- Confetti, glitter, petals, talcum powder
- Naked flames, candles, or sparklers
- Straw bales, or any prop/set piece that leaves items onstage.
- Lasers or pyrotechnics
- Live animals
- Weapons
- White-soled shoes. If you intend to wear shoes, they must be black or tan soled/ rimmed.
- Helium balloons must be tied down/weighted to prevent rising.
- All sets and props must be non-flammable.

- All sets and props must be free-standing.

RESPONSIBILITY

Ausdance ACT retains the right to refuse the use of any props or set for safety reasons. If you are planning to use any props or sets, it is important you contact Ausdance ACT at the start of the process. Please ensure you let us know what you are planning to use!

DROP OFF & PICK UP

All sets and props must be with you to be plotted in with our crew during your technical rehearsal.

Large set pieces or props can be delivered to the rear dock door of the Playhouse Theatre on the times allocated by the theatre and Ausdance ACT on your production day.

Hand props and carry items can come with you for the tech. Please clearly label all pieces of your set with your school's name.

The backstage area is a high-traffic area. Please follow the directions of the backstage crew to ensure all props and set pieces are put in appropriate places, taking up as little room as possible.

They don't have storage space at the theatre for us. All sets and props must be collected immediately following the finale of your performance night. Collect everything immediately after your evening performance or they will be discarded by theatre staff, and CTC will invoice schools for the expense of this.



THE STAGE

We love creative use of the theatre space!

'Keep it simple but be creative' will always be our message.

WHERE DO WE PERFORM?

In 2026 the Youth Dance Festival will be performed on the Playhouse Theatre stage at the Canberra Theatre Centre. You perform each piece only once, on your allocated night.

Stage Dimensions

11m wide and 10m deep — to the curtain line.

There is an extra metre forward (ahead of the curtain line) that can be accessed once the curtain has lifted. Please note, your piece must start and finish behind the curtain line.

The stage itself has:

- a front curtain that flies up into the roof
- stage cloths down the sides ('legs') that create the wings (the entrance or exit point on or off stage)
- a large white soft sheet at the rear (the Cyclorama, or 'Cyc')
- a black curtain at the rear that can be flown in to create a "black box" look.
- a tab at the midpoint of the stage - this can reduce the size of the stage, or act as a reveal.

The Tarkett floor at the Playhouse is precious and expensive. Here are some guidelines, direct from Canberra Theatre Centre:

PROPS

Please ensure the feet of all your props are covered with fabric, so no sharp or uncovered edges will damage the floor.

SHOES

No white soled or white-rimmed shoes. Black or tan soled only.

Tap

If you are tapping, we ask all dancers to ensure their tap screws are tight and in place. This will stop any taps from falling off and the screws damaging the floor. As we are using tarkett be aware that it will absorb the sound of the tap-shoe.

Heels

If you choose to wear heels, any standard dance or chorus heel. Please do not wear any stilettos or thin point heels and ensure that the heel is padded/covered so it won't scratch the floor.

HOW DOES IT RUN?

You will have a call time to arrive at the theatre with your school you will enter off the main foyer and be allocated a dressing room. There will be a group warm up and you'll have an on-stage tech-dress rehearsal on the day of your performance. On the same day you will also have a theatre briefing.

AND OUR PERFORMANCE?

You will have a call time to return in the evening through the stage door and be reallocated dressing rooms. Due to backstage capacity, we are unable to give you the same dressing rooms as daytime. You'll wait backstage, warm up, run your piece then eventually be brought side stage.

Once the piece prior to yours has finished, you'll get the all-clear to head onstage.

One or two people from your school (or dancers in your piece) will introduce your piece side stage with a mic, the curtain will rise, you'll dance, and the curtain will come down.

Practical Rehearsal Tips

- Rule up your rehearsal space with the Canberra Theatre stage dimensions. (Measurements: 11m width by 10m deep)
- Remember to stage your beginning and end back from the curtain line.
- There are 5 wings but only wings 2-5 can be used to enter and exit the stage.
- Keep dancers hidden from the audience by standing back in the wings. See the * for where to stand.
- There is more space on the prompt side of the stage for dancers to enter.
- Make sure your dancers keep clear of the cyclorama. The cyc is very expensive and fragile so make sure your dancers keep their distance.
- During the piece, dancers can enter and exit on both sides of the stage **and** cross behind the cyc.
- Mark the stage out on the floor that you will be rehearsing with marks including centre, ¼ stage and wing entrances.

Copyright

Ausdance ACT works with OneMusic licensing to approve all your music and images for live performance with the music information supplied by you during the process.

Ausdance ACT manages the permissions for the use of your music, but images can also have a copyright. There is a national website to assist teachers in understanding more about copyright: www.smartcopying.edu.au, phone 9561 1204.

Most use falls under an educational purpose that is acceptable. Please be aware the music used in the video has different and much stricter copyright requirements.

Please note that copyrighted characters or themes (e.g. Avatar, Disney, or Star Wars) should not be used unless you can show you have permission from the copyright holders, which is usually tricky, so you are better off avoiding them.

MUSIC CLEARANCE FOR DANCE FILMS/ SCREEN DANCE

An Educational APRA AMCOS license for music and sound does not give permission or rights to use/play/sync tracks on a film. An educational/school license is NOT a synchronisation license for film.

It's not legal to use media excerpts like news reports unless you know you are the copyright owner.

Your content will be banned if it goes on-line by third-party platforms.

More info: <https://creativecommons.org/about/program-areas/arts-culture/arts-culture-resources/legalmusicforvideos/>

Solution

All schools participating in the film projects for YDF need to either use original commissioned music by a local composer (with a synchronisation license granted by the composer) or CC0 (Creative Commons Zero: ONLY) music from a library.

There are several Creative Commons licenses

- only permit CC0. CC0 Libraries include (with plenty of choice): <https://freepd.com/> and <https://opengameart.org/content/cc0-music-0>

You can credit the library/URL and composer at the end of your dance film.

Production Week

Production Week is a big, exciting and wonderful week where Youth Dance Festival truly comes to life. Here's an overview of what happens during the week!

SHOW DAY WELCOME & INDUCTION

Every group performing in the show that night will be given either a morning or an afternoon call to the theatre. On arrival you will be given an overview of the day, discuss the rehearsal process, safety guidelines, teacher briefing, changing room allocation and of course to warm up and have a little fun!

TECHNICAL REHEARSALS

Your rehearsal will run on the day of the show unless otherwise specified.

The technical rehearsal gives performers an introduction to the stage and wings, lets them hear the sound and see the lights, position themselves, and have a mark-through. The Rehearsal Manager is there to assist the performers with spacing, a walk through, and a run with music.

WARMUP

We follow safe dance practice guidelines. During the dress rehearsal and shows, you will be guided through a brief warmup and focus before going on stage. Please take time to ensure you are properly warm for your piece before this!

THE SHOW

The performance will commence at 7:00pm. A 20-minute interval will be held halfway through the evening.



Introducing Your Piece

The student introduction is an opportunity to introduce your school, set the scene and create a mood for your performance. Here are some tips for creating an exciting, engaging introduction for your performance:

WHAT DOES THE SPEECH NEED TO INCLUDE?

The introduction should include your school's name, the title of the piece & a brief description of the piece. Keep it simple, keep it concise.

HOW MANY SPEAKERS CAN WE HAVE?

One or two. There is only one microphone onstage or side-stage. We advise that whoever introduces your piece is ready and fast in positioning themselves for the start of the performance (or on the Prompt Side of the stage if starting off-stage).

The introductory speech can be as creative as you like (within reason!). Speak to the Creative Team to discuss what you'd like to do.

- Deliver your introduction prompt side off stage (or onstage if you wish – let us know)
- Wait for a blackout before exiting, then leave the same way you entered.
- If you are dancing in the piece, quickly walk to your starting position.
- If you are presenting a Dance Film, insert your Introduction at the beginning of the video (1-minute max length).

The Team

Creative Director (Ausdance ACT) Is responsible for the creative and production delivery of the festival liaising at all stages with Canberra Theatre Centre. From the theme, right through to the finale song. The Creative Director looks after the content, including working with the Mentors on school visits, and the show running order. The Creative Director has ultimate responsibility and decision making for the smooth running and coordination of the festival.

E: director.act@ausdance.org.au

Program Manager (Ausdance ACT) Coordinates the paperwork, forms and files for every piece involved in Youth Dance Festival. Co-ordinates the Mentors and in school visits. The main point of call for communication between schools and the Youth Dance Fest team. Overall coordination and logistics of YDF.

E: ydf.act@ausdance.org.au

Marketing Manager (Ausdance ACT) Manager of all marketing, media, sponsorships, communications, photography, filming, and front of house of Youth Dance Festival.

Mentors The Youth Dance Festival mentors work closely with the Creative Director to ensure the successful creation of the festival. You can book mentor school visits by contacting our Program Manager.

E: ydf.act@ausdance.org.au

Stage Manager (SM)

Runs the technical rehearsals, dress rehearsals, performances, and calls the show.

Rehearsal Manager

Runs the onstage rehearsal, placing & spacing groups on stage.

Assistant and Back Stage Managers (ASMs) Assists the Stage Manager with backstage coordination and dressing room allocation.

Canberra Theatre Backstage Crew Professional theatre technicians in charge of the venue including sound, lights, on-stage, and OH&S.

Work Experience Crew

Student crew from various Colleges. Takes direction from the Stage Manager and the Back Stage Managers

Sound Engineer (Kimmo Vennonen) Produces the master show music and works with every school to edit each track.

Event Etiquette

Dance Fest encourages collaboration, friendship, teamwork, and cooperation in all aspects of participation. Students, teachers, and all Ausdance ACT Crew are expected to be supportive and friendly towards all participants and Dance Festival personnel.

ON THE DAY OF THE EVENT

1. When in the theatre, any directions or instructions from any Canberra Theatre Centre, Ausdance ACT staff, or Dance Festival crew member must be adhered to.
2. It is the responsibility of the teacher/(s) in charge to ensure that all participants are being always supervised. Teachers are asked to ensure that a high level of behaviour is maintained.
3. If a situation arises with the venue or venue staff, please notify a member of the Ausdance ACT team.
4. The dressing room space is limited. Please maintain a tidy, clean dressing room at all times
5. Ausdance ACT takes no responsibility and cannot be held liable for any theft or damage to valuables and personal property.
6. All participating students must attend the Show Day Welcome and Induction, and the Tech- Dress Rehearsal on the Show Day. Please inform the Ausdance ACT staff if any performers are unable to attend the Technical Rehearsal.
7. Ausdance ACT's Youth Dance Festival is an inclusive and diverse event. We encourage and expect respect for all participants of ability, race, religion, and gender.

Ausdance ACT encourages responsible use of social media.

Stay connected on socials.

[facebook.com/dancefestACT/](https://www.facebook.com/dancefestACT/) and <https://www.facebook.com/ausdanceact>

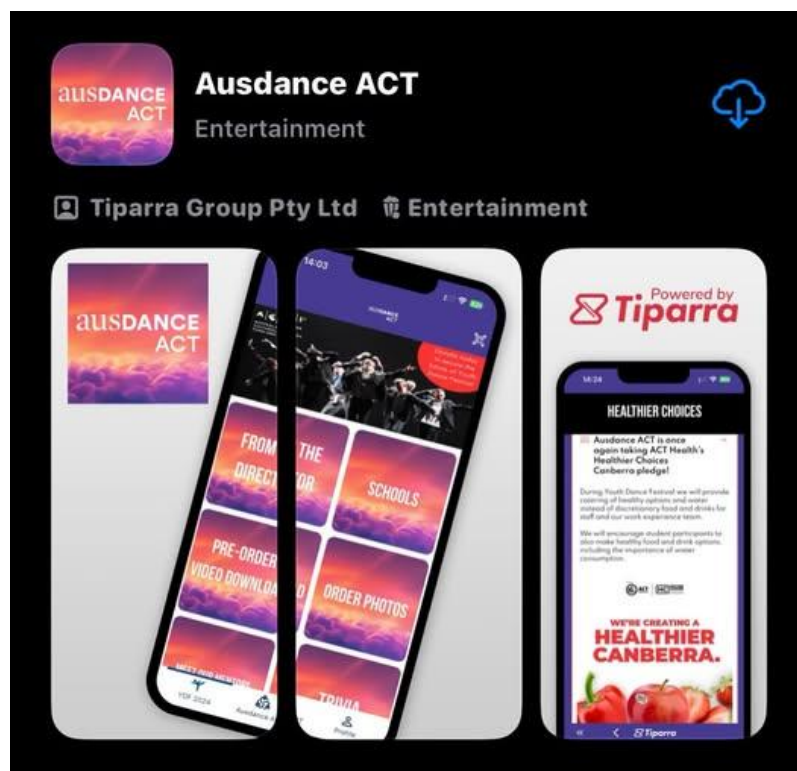
Stay connected on Facebook for updates, behind the scenes snaps and show pics.

[instagram.com/ausdanceact](https://www.instagram.com/ausdanceact)

See behind the scenes snaps and show pics on Instagram. Tag @ausdanceact and #welovedancefest to keep us in the loop with all your Dance Festival experiences!

Ausdance ACT app

Thanks to our wonderful sponsor [Tiparra](#) we have our own app! To download the app, just search for 'Ausdance' in your App Store. Your one stop shop for Youth Dance Festival trivia, video downloads, interviews, program information and more.



Venue Guide

[Getting Here](#)

Guidelines

- Youth Dance Festival is open to all high schools and colleges within the ACT and surrounding areas.
- Schools may enter more than one group (dependent on the festival participation limit of 45 (maximum) performers per school on stage (live performance) per night.
- Dance Fest pieces must be a minimum of three (3) minutes and a maximum of five (5) minutes in length, inclusive of speech introduction.
- We recommend the minimum number of performers is six (6) and the maximum is 45 per group.
- Choreography and music must be appropriate for a family event. Anything deemed inappropriate or unsafe by the Creative Team or Ausdance team may need to be amended. The show operates as a family-friendly event, with G or PG ratings.
- All performers must attend Technical and Dress rehearsals, Show Day Welcome, and Induction.
- Ausdance encourages inclusive participation in YDF. If you are working with students with a disability in your group, you must advise Ausdance ACT during the mentoring process and before coming to the theatre so we can properly support the creative journey of all young people safely and respectfully.
- Dance Festival is a student-initiated and driven performance project. All pieces must be created by students or be an 80:20 collaboration between students and teachers. Teachers can contribute and collaborate with students to create their piece. It is the role of the teacher to introduce and facilitate discussion surrounding the theme and guide their student choreographers and performers toward their final piece. Ausdance ACT defines a teacher as anyone who is not a student at the participating school and is working with and directing students. This includes teachers employed at the school, any external teachers, designers, choreographers, etc. who are paid or volunteer their time.
- The participating teacher(s) will be the main communication link between the school/ participating groups and the Ausdance ACT Office. Please make sure your contact details are kept updated. We send regular update emails in the lead-up to Dance Festival. Please make sure our Ausdance ACT email addresses are added to your school's IT safe list.
- As per the Directorate of Education and Training Excursion Guidelines and Dance Festival Guidelines, each school is to provide a minimum of one teacher/guardian during tech rehearsals, and two teachers/guardians for performance days. One nominated teacher will always be responsible for all participants from their school.
- Only nominated teachers/guardians and performers will be always allowed backstage. Parents and friends will not be allowed backstage to see students. Please make sure all teachers and students are aware of this rule. All nominated teachers/guardians and performers will be checked in and identified before dress rehearsals and performances.
- Dance Festival is a drug-free, alcohol-free and smoke-free event. Any students breaking this rule will not be allowed to perform and may result in your school not being included in the festival.
- As producers of Dance Festival, Ausdance ACT reserves the right to ensure that all participants and pieces meet the Dance Festival guidelines and objectives. Failure to meet the criteria could result in further action. Please be assured we will work with the teachers first before any action is taken.

Please note: Ausdance ACT may change the festival dates, information and format at any time at their discretion.

Ausdance ACT

Part of a national network, Ausdance ACT is the peak body for dance in the ACT, headed by Director Dr Cathy Adamek.

Ausdance ACT provides high-quality, accessible, and inclusive dance programs, from across all genres, which engage and inspire dancemakers, performers, audiences, and other participants in the ACT and surrounds. Our services include support for independent professional dancers; help with career pathways for emerging artists; professional development and performance opportunities; and promotion. Ausdance ACT has special interests in the professional sector, youth, dance education, and inclusive access to dance opportunities. Ausdance ACT is proud to be supported by the ACT Government through program Funding from artsACT. to find out more visit www.ausdanceact.org.au



Image Credits

Photo Credits: Dance Festival by Andrew Sikorski, Art Atelier Photography from schools participating in YDF 2025.

auSDANCE
ACT