U.DANCE 2027

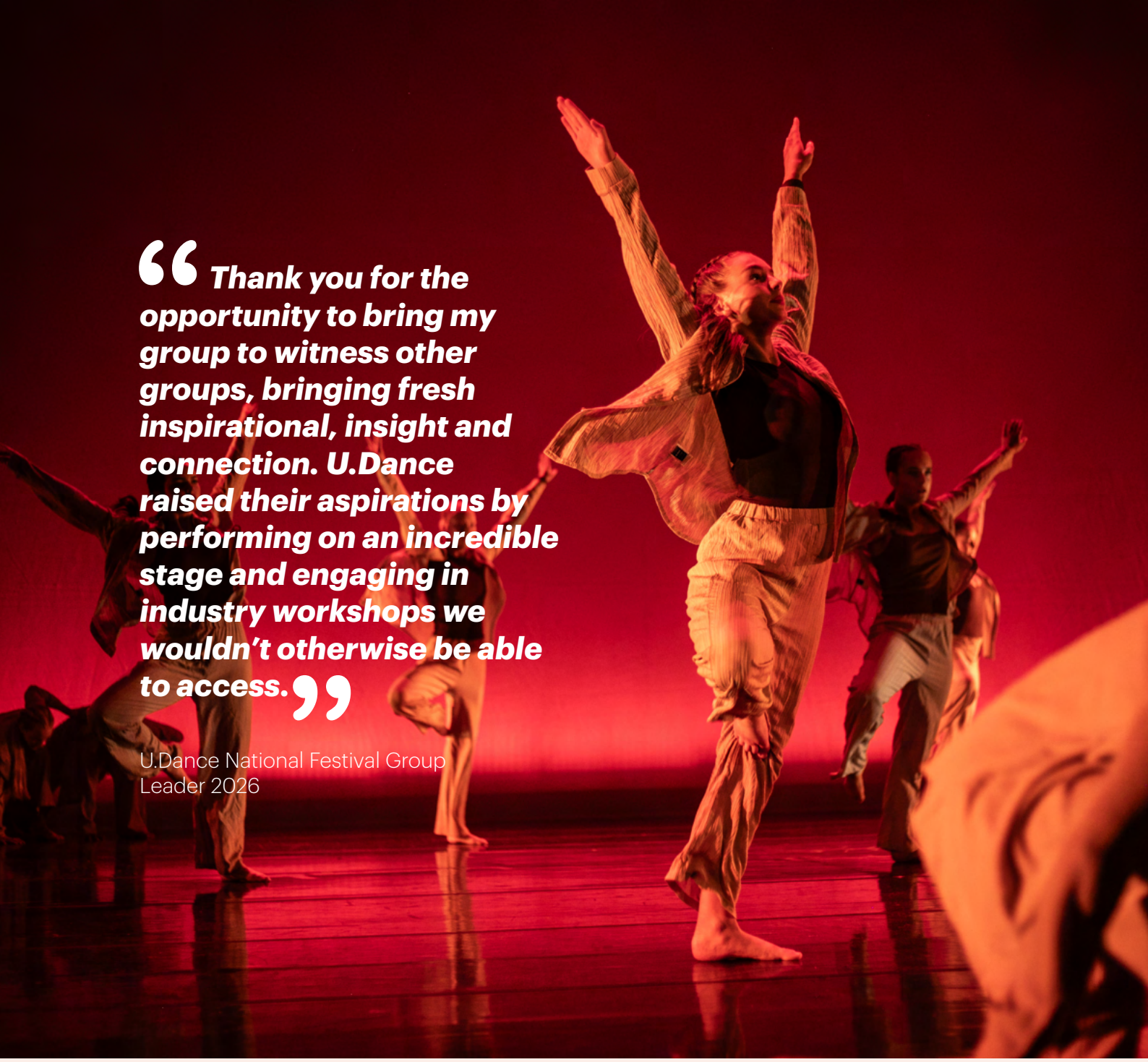
Regional Platforms and National Festival
Application Pack



This U.Dance 2027 Application Pack contains all the information you need to know if you are applying for a U.Dance Regional Platform in 2027, and for consideration for the U.Dance National Festival 2027.

If you require this document in larger print or another format, please contact u.dance@onedanceuk.org.

Image: One Dance UK, Dani Bower



“Thank you for the opportunity to bring my group to witness other groups, bringing fresh inspirational, insight and connection. U.Dance raised their aspirations by performing on an incredible stage and engaging in industry workshops we wouldn’t otherwise be able to access.”

U.Dance National Festival Group Leader 2026

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Next Door Dance Youth Company. Photo: Point of View Photography.

WHAT IS THE U.DANCE PROGRAMME?

U.Dance is a national programme of events offering high quality dance opportunities to young people, presented by One Dance UK. Each year, our nation's young dancers can explore their creativity, learn more about dance careers, and experience the thrill and sense of achievement of performing!

One Dance UK and partner organisations are working to present an exciting dance festival programme for young people aged 11 to 19 (and disabled young people up to the age of 25) in 2027.

U.Dance 2027, at Regional Platform and National Festival level, offers an incredible opportunity to be part of showcases demonstrating the breadth of youth dance choreography and performance, and where possible will offer workshops and industry insight with leading dance professionals.

One Dance UK and partner organisations aim to present youth dance that is high quality, innovative and ambitious. We want applications to best reflect the commitment and creativity of your work. Groups from a variety of settings are welcome to take part, including:

- School and college groups
- Youth dance companies
- Private dance schools
- Individuals



Image: One Dance UK, Dani Bower

2027 ELIGIBILITY AND ACCESS

U.Dance is a fully inclusive programme celebrating dance for and by young people. All forms and styles of dance are welcome - whether you do hip hop/street dance styles, jazz, theatre styles, ballet, South Asian dance styles, contemporary dance, folk dance, you name it: U.Dance is for everyone!

To be considered for U.Dance Regional Platforms and the U.Dance National Festival in 2027, groups/individuals can:

Create and submit a screen dance piece for consideration in the '**U.Dance on Screen**' strand, with no upper limit on dancer numbers.

OR

Create and submit a piece made for the stage, for consideration in the '**U.Dance on Stage**' strand, with a maximum of 30 dancers.

The following eligibility criteria also apply:

- Pieces must only include dancers who are aged 11 to 19 years (or up to and including age 25 for disabled dancers) on 31 July 2027.
- Pieces must be between 2 and 7 minutes in duration.
- Groups/individuals must be based in the UK and involve dancers who live in the UK.

One Dance UK and partners strive to make U.Dance Regional Platforms and the U.Dance National Festival welcoming and inclusive events. We encourage applications from young people with disabilities and underrepresented groups, and we welcome conversations with group leaders around how we can support you and your group make the most out of your experience.

Financial considerations

We appreciate that taking part in U.Dance Regional Platforms and the U.Dance National Festival activity can incur various costs including travel, accommodation, food and costuming.

All U.Dance partners are committed to making the programme accessible for all and can advise on fundraising ideas and other ways to help those in particular need access the events.

U.DANCE REGIONAL PLATFORMS

England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

U.DANCE Regional

Between February and April 2027, exciting U.Dance events will take place across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Collectively these are referred to as 'U.Dance Regional Platforms.'

They offer a brilliant opportunity to showcase your dancers' work and connect and learn from other dance groups in your area.

The structure and exact timeline of each U.Dance Regional Platform is unique, and each will have its own application and selection process. Please contact your U.Dance Regional Platform representative for details using the contact information below.

A National Panel will select a small number of groups from each U.Dance Regional Platform to have their work showcased at the U.Dance National Festival 2027. Further information relating to the National Panel and criteria is detailed later in this Application Pack.

Applications to be considered for the U.Dance National Festival are completely optional. If you only wish to be showcased at the U.Dance Regional Platform level, and not be considered for the U.Dance National Festival you may indicate this on the application form.

If you wish for your group to be considered for selection for the National Festival, it is compulsory that a Group Leader or other representative attends a short briefing, led by the One Dance UK team, which will take place on your Regional Platform day.



Image: One Dance UK, Dani Bower

REGIONAL PLATFORM REPRESENTATIVES

Find out more about your U. Dance Regional Platform using the contacts below. If you are unsure of who to contact, please email u.dance@onedanceuk.org with your dance group's home postcode and the team will direct you to the correct point of contact.

ENGLAND

REGION	ORGANISATION	MAIN CONTACT	EMAIL
East	DanceEast	Katie Byford	u.dance@danceeast.co.uk
North East	Dance City	Lissie Ogden	lissie.ogden@dancecity.co.uk
East and West Midlands	FABRIC	Zara Portlock	zara@fabric.dance
North West	The Lowry	Sally Wyatt	udance@thelowry.com
London	Trinity Laban	Colette McAskill	C.McAskill@trinitylaban.ac.uk
South West	Pavilion Dance South West	Katie Neal	katie.neal@pdsw.org.uk
South East	South East Dance	Sarah Kearney	sarah.kearney@southeastdance.org.uk
Yorkshire	Yorkshire Dance	Ione Barton	ionebarton@yorkshiredance.com

NORTHERN IRELAND

Jack Philp, DU Dance
jack@dudanceni.com

SCOTLAND

Rachel Carscadden, YDance
rachel@ydance.org

WALES

Jamie Jenkins, National Youth Arts Wales
nyaw@nyaw.org.uk

U.DANCE NATIONAL FESTIVAL 2027

July 2027, Wales

The U.Dance National Festival 2027 is One Dance UK's flagship youth event, providing the focal point for the U.Dance framework. The festival will showcase the incredible range and talent of hundreds of young dancers through selected entries from both stage and screen, with additional digital elements so all young dancers around the country can experience the thrill of the festival.

The U.Dance National Festival 2027 is scheduled to be held in **July 2027 in Wales**, in partnership with National Youth Arts Wales. Dates and location are to be confirmed.

It promises to be a stunning and exciting showcase of the UK's youth dance talent, with groups from each U.Dance Regional Platform being selected along with special guests, as well as incredible opportunities for young people to meet, learn from and dance with some of the country's leading dance professionals.

More details will be shared in the coming months from One Dance UK and event partners.



Image: One Dance UK, Dani Bower

U.DANCE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL CRITERIA

Groups are assessed based on the below criteria:

1. **Demonstrate excellence in performance.**
2. **Present excellent and engaging choreography*.**
3. **Show dancers taking clear ownership of the choreography, which is appropriate for their age and experience*.**
4. **Demonstrate respect and consideration to all (demonstrated through both the group's conduct and the appropriateness of performance content).**

**A note on choreography: Excellent work selected for the U.Dance National Festival in previous years has been created by group leaders, teachers, young people, professional choreographers and any number of collaborations. There is no preferred 'type' of choreographer and no weighting in the selection process is given to who created the piece.*

The selection panel at Regional Platforms will create a shortlist of groups that meet these criteria. These shortlisted groups will be assessed with those from other regions as part of the programming process for the U.Dance National Festival.

U.Dance National Festival Programming Considerations

The selection panel will consider all shortlisted work and select dance pieces for the U.Dance National Festival which combined as a performance programme will:

1. **Reflect the diversity of dance styles practiced by young people across the UK.**
2. **Create an interesting and varied performance.**
3. **Showcase excellent and authentic work from range of settings.**

The selection panel for both U.Dance on Stage and U.Dance on Screen is made up of a pool of approximately 10 youth dance experts from across the UK, with specialisms spanning a wide range of dance styles and settings. The panel lineup is being finalised, and will be announced in early 2026.

APPLICATION PROCESS

STEP 1. PIECE CREATION
October 2026 – January 2027

Your piece should be created to fulfil one of the following application strands:

U.Dance on Stage – a dance piece that is designed to be performed live, on stage, in front of a live audience.

U.Dance on Screen – a screen dance piece that is designed to be viewed in this medium i.e. specifically created to be viewed on screen.

All movement content, costumes, music choices and lyrics must be age appropriate and suitable for a family audience.

STEP 2. SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION
October 2026 - January 2027

Application deadlines vary and are available via your U.Dance Regional Platform organisation.

Complete and submit your U.Dance Regional Platform organisation's application form and submit your piece for consideration. Find contact details on page 5.

Each U.Dance Regional Platform may have different requirements for submission – e.g. some may ask for a recording of the final piece and others may be able to accept work in progress. Please check the requirements from your U.Dance Regional Platform carefully.

If you would like your piece to be considered for the U.Dance National Festival ensure you tick the relevant box on the application form. This option is available for both U.Dance on Stage and U.Dance on Screen submissions.

STEP 3. REGIONAL PLATFORM SELECTIONS AND PERFORMANCE
February - April 2027

U.Dance Regional Platforms will take place between February and April 2027. They may include a live or digital showcase, industry information and workshops. Please contact your U.Dance Regional Platform representative for further details.

Members of the selection panel will watch the U.Dance Regional Platform performances and/or films, shortlisting approximately three groups from each platform.

STEP 4. U.DANCE NATIONAL FESTIVAL PROGRAMMING
April - May 2027

The selection panel will then meet in late April 2027 to review videos of all shortlisted pieces, and make final selections to programme the U.Dance National Festival 2027. Selections are based on the National Programming Considerations listed above.

Groups will be informed by One Dance UK if they have been programmed for the U.Dance National Festival by early May 2027.

STEP 5. U.DANCE NATIONAL FESTIVAL 2027
July 2027

Join the UK's young dancers for a three-day celebration of dance! Your group might be selected to be part of the national showcases on stage or screen, and other exciting opportunities at this unique event.

MUSIC

THE BELOW GUIDANCE APPLIES TO U.DANCE ON SCREEN ENTRIES

With some U.Dance on Screen pieces being streamed online at U.Dance Regional Platforms and at the U.Dance National Festival 2026, there are strict rules and legal requirements surrounding music licensing and rights. This is different to using music solely in class or on stage. This ensures musicians and composers are credited and compensated appropriately for their work. This matter is taken very seriously and PRS (the music copyright collective) can, and often does, take legal action where music has been used without permission, even in charity and educational settings.

Groups entering for U.Dance on Screen should not assume they can use any piece of music for free – the rights must be secured, and the rules vary depending on if your piece will be performed live or streamed online. U.Dance partners are unable to pay to secure rights to any music accompaniment to pieces, and will not be able to stream the piece online if the rights are not secured.

See One Dance UK's Digital Music Licensing Best Practice Guide here.

If you are creating a piece of screen dance, options include:

- Using royalty-free music. Various online libraries are available, with some options listed on the Digital Music Licensing Guide via the link above.
- Using original music composed solely for the piece.
- Contacting the music publisher of the piece and accessing rights directly with them, and providing evidence of this with the application.

If music rights are not secured, for the online showcase the U.Dance Regional Platform organiser will overlay the track with similar royalty-free music.



Image: One Dance UK, Dani Bower

GROUP LEADER CONSIDERATIONS

One Dance UK and partners take the health and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults seriously. There are certain considerations that Group Leaders need to take into account to ensure they meet artistic, health and safety and pastoral requirements when applying. These include:

- Ensuring children and young people have appropriate consent for their image to be shown and for appropriate care to be taken with that image.

- Having a suitable number of chaperones and/or supervising adults who have been through Safer Recruitment checks present when working with their group, including online. See the NSPCC's Safer Recruitment guidance here.

- In England, group leaders must have an Enhanced DBS certificate and, where required, a Chaperone Licence issued by your local authority. See information on applying for Chaperone Licences here. These can take some time to process so **please apply as soon as possible.**

  Did you know...? One Dance UK offers free online safeguarding training in partnership with High Speed Training. See here.

- Ensuring chaperones/supervising adults match the gender of their group.

- In the event that a Body Of Persons Approval (BOPA) licence needs to be obtained for either a Regional Platform or the National Festival, agreeing to provide necessary information to event organisers.



Image: One Dance UK, Dani Bower

CHECKLIST

Before applying, please ensure you:

- ☑ Are creating a piece between 2 and 7 minutes, containing movement content, music and lyrics which are age-appropriate and suitable for a family audience.
- ☑ Have cast dancers who will be aged between 11-19, or up to 25 with a disability, on 31 July 2026.
- ☑ Have read the selection criteria carefully.
- ☑ Have checked with your Regional Platform representative for your application dates and any processes they require.
- ☑ **IMPORTANT:** Ensure all supervising adults/group leaders looking after participants have undergone Safer Recruitment checks, including that all have Enhanced DBS/ PVG certification and have undertaken safeguarding training. This is regardless of if they are a parent of a participant. All adults accompanying young people backstage at U.Dance events must have undergone Safer Recruitment checks.
- ☑ **IMPORTANT:** Ensure that, if you have dancers of under school leaving age and your group's participation is not part of a school trip, that you have adequate chaperone licensing in place for your supervising adults/group leaders. Contact your Regional Platform organiser for requirements in your region. Information on becoming a licensed chaperone for child performers can be found here.

> ***"I have a particular fondness for the U.Dance programme. Over many years, I have seen how important it is, how inspiring, for young people from all over the country to meet each other to perform, share, and learn."***
>
> Sir Richard Alston,
> Champion of the U.Dance framework
>
> We are grateful for the unwavering support of Sir Richard Alston, Champion of the U.Dance framework for many years. His dedication to educating and inspiring dancers of all ages has lasting impact.



Image: One Dance UK, Dani Bower

U.DANCE Regional

U.DANCE National Festival

THANK YOU FOR READING.
GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR APPLICATION!

For further information, please contact us:

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Email: u.dance@onedanceuk.org
Web: www.onedanceuk.org

U.Dance National Festival Sponsors:

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