



PRESS RELEASE

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Dance Research Matters Networks

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Five AHRC-funded Dance Research Matters Networks Established

The ecosystems created by the Networks traverse across South Asian dance, digital black dance, future dance ecologies, critical dance pedagogies, and pluriversal dance practices and will be mapped for reach and impact in and beyond the sector.

The five networks that were successful in their bids for the AHRC Dance Research Matters Network funding have been established. The projects run from October 2023 to March 2025.

The aims of the Programme are to:

- raise the profile and value of dance as a research area
- catalyse wider interest in dance research
- include early career researchers and artists to empower them
- promote the diversity of dance cultures
- connect dance disciplines and cultures together to enable future collaborations
- consider holistically the dance agenda from the ground up
- diversify the approaches to sector issues by sharing knowledge and expertise
- build towards the future of dance research and practice-based disciplines
- understand better the challenges facing the practice-based community
- engage the public in dance as a research field through community interaction

The Networks, their Leads and Co-Leads, and a brief description of the Networks are as follows:

Critical Dance Pedagogy through Discourse and Practice

[Professor Angela Pickard (Canterbury Christ Church University), Dr Kathryn Stamp (Centre for Dance Research [C-DaRE], Coventry University)]

The network will connect academics, dance educators, researchers, artists, industry stakeholders in the UK with international peers in Scandinavia/Nordic and US as guest speakers, to support collaboration, and maximise opportunities for new thinking on the topic of Critical Dance Pedagogy, particularly understandings of equity, diversity and inclusion and student-centred pedagogy, through practice (Artist Lab) and discourse (four hybrid symposium events).

The Dancing Otherwise Network: Exploring Pluriversal Practices

[Professor Victoria Hunter (Bath Spa University), Dr Daniela Perazzo (Kingston University), Michelle Elliott (Bath Spa University)]

The network explores how practices created by artists from diverse backgrounds and artistic perspectives, produce new understandings, new positionalities, and new modes of knowing spatially/geographically thematically, and practically. The Network's main contact is Professor Victoria Hunter (v.hunter@bathspa.ac.uk).

Digital Black Dance Ecologies Network

[Dr Tia-Monique Uzor (The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London)]

The network centres the embodied epistemologies of digital Black dance across the intersections of social and environmental injustices and seeks to catalyse digital Black dance research and practice by nurturing creativity, community, and collaboration among artists and researchers within and beyond the field.

Future Ecologies: Producing Dance Network (FE:PDN)

[Professor Chris Bannerman (London Contemporary Dance School), Dr Efrosini Protopapa (London Contemporary Dance School), Professor Vida Midgelow (University of the Arts), Dr Sarah Hopfinger (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland), Dr Rachel Krische (Leeds Beckett University), Dr Funmi Adewole, (De Montfort University), Dr Stefanie Sachsenmaier (Middlesex University)]

FE:PDN brings together academics and arts professionals to reimagine an inclusive, extended and sustainable ecosystem for dance. Encompassing dance as a broad and diverse practice and academic discipline, the network recognises the need for strategic development at a time of significant challenges. FE:PDN will address the changed landscape resulting from the unprecedented convergence of Brexit and Covid-19, coupled with acute concerns regarding diversity, social justice and climate change, exacerbated by economic instability and war.

South Asian Dance Equity (SADE): The Arts that British South Asian Dance Ignores

[Dr. Prarthana Purkayastha (Royal Holloway, University of London), Professor Royona Mitra (Brunel University London), Dr Anusha Kedhar (University of California, Riverside)]

SADE will examine systemic inequities within British South Asian dance, focusing on five key areas of minorisation: the dominance of Indian/Hindu dance forms and artists; LGBTQI+ artists; caste-oppressed artists; disabled artists; and folk and Adivasi (indigenous) arts and artists. Working with five British South Asian arts organisations (Akademi, Baithak UK, Balbir Singh Dance Company, Nupur Arts, and Sampad) and The Place Theatre as project partners, the network aims to build a more equitable dance sector through exchanges between artists and scholars from South Asia and the UK.

The Networks will have their own approaches to sharing updates and events e.g. with a website, but updates on Network research events and activities will be collated and posted regularly at @DanceResMatters on X and <https://danceresearchmatters.coventry.ac.uk/>.

The Dance Research Matters Networks have also partnered with dance research podcast ResDance™: <https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/resdance>. The podcast focuses on research in dance practice, intended for students, educators, choreographers, artist-makers, practitioners, performers, and interdisciplinary researchers curious to learn more about dance research in action. Podcast episodes with the Network leads and co-leads will be regularly released across 2024-2025.

Dr Vipavinee Artpradid (Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University) has received AHRC funding for the project 'Mapping the Dance Research Ecosystem – Network Mapping, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning'. The work maps the system created by the funded Networks and monitors and evaluates their impact. It also facilitates knowledge exchange between the Networks and stakeholders, disseminates progress and results, and provides recommendations for the AHRC and the dance research sector for future direction and strategy. Updates on the mapping work will also be shared at @DanceResMatters on X and the Dance Research Matters website.

Questions about the Networks in general or the mapping work can be directed at Vipavinee Artpradid at ad5896@coventry.ac.uk.