



DANCE
UMBRELLA
MOVING LONDON

CURATORIAL FELLOW

2026-27

Application Pack

About Dance Umbrella

Dance Umbrella is London's annual international dance festival – 48 years in the making and always moving with the times. Every year, the festival ignites the city with bold, boundary-pushing work from artists who reflect the diversity of our global city and bring world-class work to London for the first time. Reaching audiences across the four corners of London, the Dance Umbrella festival is committed to making world-class dance accessible to the whole city.

Dance Umbrella is a commissioner of new work, co-producing with partners in the UK and abroad to invest in the next wave of international choreographic talent. Alongside the annual festival, the organisation offers audiences the chance to experience work online through a curated programme of dance films and artist encounters.

About Diversifying Curatorial Stewardship (DCS)

Diversifying Curatorial Stewardship (DCS) is Dance Umbrella's major multi-year initiative (2026–2028) designed to transform curatorial leadership within the UK and international dance ecology. With a steering group of national and international partners — Dance East, Lowry, FABRIC International and Aerowaves - together, we are invested in building a more diverse and equitable curatorial landscape in dance across the UK and internationally.

DCS responds to a clearly evidenced sector gap: the absence of visible, supported career pathways for curators — particularly Black/Brown Global Majority, predominantly female-identifying and non-binary practitioners — and the resulting lack of diversity within those who shape artistic programmes, narratives and decision making.

DCS aims to create structural, long-term change by widening who curates, how curation is practiced, and who has access to networks, resources and influence. The programme builds on Dance Umbrella's sector-facing research (2023/24), which identified five recurring barriers to diverse curatorial leadership: lack of pathways, undervaluing of lived experience, unequal access to networks, freelance precarity, and limited spaces for honest dialogue about power and representation.

Between 2026 and 2028 the following opportunities are available for practitioners (artists, producers, curators) to develop their curatorial practice in dance:

- Guest Curator roles — one in 2027, two in 2028 — each with hands-on curatorial experience at either NottDance (Nottingham), Lowry (Salford) or Dance East (Ipswich) and Dance Umbrella (London).
- Two Curatorial Fellows — one in 2027, one in 2028 — embedded in the Dance Umbrella festival cycle, will develop their practice and expand their professional networks.

DCS is supported by Arts Council England, British Council, Backstage Trust and The Performing Arts Fund NL.

At a glance

Role: Curatorial Fellow

Time period: 14 months (September 2026 to October 2027)

Commitment: Flexible; built around specific professional development opportunities in January 2027, April 2027 and October 2027

Stipend: £3,000 plus travel and access budget

Location: Remote / flexible with travel to London, Ipswich and Limerick

Deadline to apply: Monday 13 July 2026, 10.00 BST

Start date: September 2026

About the Curatorial Fellow role

The Fellowship runs for 14 months, from September 2026 through to October 2027. You will observe the arc of the festival from early programme development through to delivery and evaluation. The commitment is flexible and part-time, built around the rhythm of the festival and the programme's key moments. We understand that Fellows will have other professional commitments running alongside this. That said, there are fixed dates — including the festival itself, residentials and travel opportunities — which will require your attendance.

What you will do

Across the year, you will:

- Attend Dance Umbrella's 2026 and 2027 festival
- Shadow the DU team at key points in the development and planning phases of the festival
- Attend a four-day professional development residential at Dance East (Ipswich) w/c18th January 2027 (with a separate stipend provided)
- Participate in national and international professional development and networking opportunities brokered through Dance Umbrella's networks — including the Aerowaves' Startup Forum for emerging dance presenters, which takes place during the Spring Forward Festival (14-17th April 2027 in Limerick, Ireland)
- Access the Dance Festival Network Europe's Visiting Artist programme, offering creative exchange and networking at host European festivals
- Build relationships with the DCS steering group partners — Aerowaves, Dance East, Lowry and FABRIC International, as well as DU's festival venue partners

The exact shape of your involvement will be developed with you at the start of the fellowship. An example of what the year might look like is as follows:

September to November 2026 — Induction, research and planning phase

The cycle begins with induction, attendance at Dance Umbrella 2026, starting your mentoring sessions, researching the international dance festival calendar and planning your professional development objectives and travel.

December to May 2027 — Development intensives and travel

You will attend a professional development residency at Dance East in January, and Aerowaves' Start Up programme in April.

June to October 2027 — Festival delivery

This part of the year builds toward and includes observing delivery of, and attending events during, Dance Umbrella 2027 festival.

What you will gain

Fellows who complete the programme will have:

- First-hand experience of how a major international dance festival is programmed and delivered
- Expanded national and international networks, including connections with artists, curators, presenters, festival makers and the wider cultural sector
- Access to mentoring and professional development tailored to where you are in your career

What we are looking for

You do not need to have previous curatorial experience to apply for this role. The Fellowship is designed for someone who is curious about curation and wants to develop a deeper understanding of how dance and performance programmes are shaped, produced and presented.

You may be an artist, producer, arts worker, organiser or cultural practitioner with an interest in dance and performance. You might be considering a future in curation, or looking to expand your existing practice by developing new knowledge, skills and professional networks.

Essential

- You are based in the UK
- You are a dance and performance practitioner, or a cultural practitioner, who wants to grow their dance curation knowledge and skills, and networks
- You have a genuine interest in curation and in the live performance and dance ecology
- You are available to attend the Dance Umbrella 2027 festival (October 2027, London) the residential (January 2027, Ipswich) and Start-Up (April 2027, Limerick)
- You are able to travel internationally as part of the professional development opportunities

Access information

Access information and further detail about the role are outlined below. This is to provide further clarity on what the role will entail and some factors that may impact the person applying. Dance Umbrella (DU) is committed to making reasonable adjustments and not to disadvantage anyone based on disability or access needs.

Travel

Dance Umbrella festival takes place across different venues in London. International and national travel is a key part of the fellowship experience.

Physical access - Somerset House

The Dance Umbrella office is located in the mid basement of Somerset House. Either a spiral staircase or a lift can be used to reach the mid basement. Please note that the ground outside Somerset House is made of cobblestone. Parking is not available on site.

Gender neutral and accessible facilities

The mid basement has two gendered bathrooms and one accessible facility. The public parts of the Somerset House building have some all gender facilities and some gendered facilities. There are further accessible facilities available throughout the building.

Information session

An information session will be held **online at 11.00 BST on Monday 29 June 2026**. This is an opportunity to hear from Dance Umbrella's Artistic Director, Freddie Opoku-Addaie about DCS and ask questions you may have about the advertised Open Call.

Please fill in this form if you would like to attend.

How to apply

To apply, please submit the following:

- A **CV** (no longer than two sides of A4, with font no smaller than size 11) outlining your experience and practice to date.
- A short written statement of no more than 400 words telling us:
 - who you are and what you do currently
 - what your next step looks like professionally, and how this fellowship would help you take it
 - what you would bring to the fellowship.
- **Two referee contacts**. Please let us know if referees may be contacted in advance of interview.
- The **Equal Opportunities form**, which you complete [here](#).

If you would prefer, you are welcome to submit your supporting statement as an audio or video recording of no more than three minutes. Please send the file as a link.

Email applications to:

KatieT@danceumbrella.co.uk

Subject: APPLICATION - CURATORIAL FELLOW (DCS)

Deadline for applications: **Monday 13 July 2026, 10.00 BST**

If you have any access requirements or would like to discuss the role before applying, please contact KatieT@danceumbrella.co.uk. We are happy to make reasonable adjustments throughout the process.

Next stage

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted by email and invited to a conversation with members of the Dance Umbrella team and an independent sector professional. We will not be able to provide individual feedback to applicants who are not shortlisted. These conversations will be held in-person at Somerset House (central London) on **Thursday 30 July 2026**.

Ahead of this, Dance Umbrella will share photos of the meeting space and photos of who the conversation is with.

We encourage applications from those who identify as Black, Brown or Global Majority, and who are female-identifying or non-binary. This opportunity is part of the Diversifying Curatorial Stewardship programme aimed at addressing underrepresentation in curatorial leadership in dance.