

**JOB OPPORTUNITY**

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# We Need You



Find out more at:  
[www.dancesyndrome.co.uk/  
news/](http://www.dancesyndrome.co.uk/news/)



**DanceSyndrome**  
Dancer Led, Disability Inspired

Registered Charity No:1152664



## THE OPPORTUNITY: Chair of the Board of Trustees

This is an exciting time to be joining DanceSyndrome where inclusivity and equality create a vibrant energised connected 'family'. We aim to maximise our impact on a big scale. We have bold ambitions to become a North-West leader in inclusive dance, to develop a pathway of opportunities for people with learning disabilities from early years to adulthood and to develop a best practice social replication model.

DanceSyndrome, a charity since 2013 has established itself as the leader of inclusive dance in the North-West and is considered to be one of its kind with its 'unique selling point of dancers with learning disabilities at the forefront of all activities and decisions from workshop delivery to choreography and performance to providing feedback to the board and as trustees themselves.

The current focus is to work in the heart of our communities developing strong partnerships and links with local day services and support providers, local councils, schools, colleges, NHS services, community and voluntary groups and local businesses engaging a wide range of individuals to access, interact with and support DanceSyndrome in a variety of ways.

**We are currently looking for a new Chair of the Board of Trustees to work with our Board and Managing Director on the strategic direction and good management of the charity.**

## ABOUT US:

DanceSyndrome is an inclusive award-winning North-West dance charity led by dancers with learning disabilities.

DanceSyndrome believes that everybody belongs and that people with learning disabilities have skills and assets which can contribute to and inspire an equitable civil society.

DanceSyndrome was created in response to the determination of Jen Blackwell, a dancer with Down's Syndrome who wanted to share her passion for dance and get the world dancing.

She wanted to engage with other dancers, to lead workshops, to choreograph and deliver performances and inspire others to believe in themselves. Supported by her parents Jen spent 10 lonely years searching for opportunities to train to become the community dance worker she sought to be.

Established in 2009 as a limited company, DanceSyndrome became a charity in 2013. Under the current Managing Director, the charity has experienced an exponential increase in demand both regionally and nationally. Using dance as a vehicle for positive change, our vision is to empower learning-disabled individuals through inclusive dance.

All activity is led by a Dance Leader with learning disabilities supported by a professionally trained Dance Artist. Using a co-production model, DanceSyndrome delivers five weekly community workshops and training for the core company. On demand the dancers regularly engage in performances, training, university seminars, conferences and are developing and piloting a social franchise model.



## THE ROLE:

DanceSyndrome has an exciting and unique opportunity to join us as Chair of our established Board of Trustees.

The role is unpaid and part-time (approximately 10 hours a month) and will include virtual working as well as face-to-face meetings in and around Manchester, Preston and the North West.

The length of the appointment is 3 years with the possibility of extension for a further 3 years. The maximum length of the appointment is 6 years.

The Chair will lead the Board of Trustees and work closely with the Managing Director to determine the strategic direction of the charity and ensure that the plan to deliver that strategy is implemented. The Chair with the Board of Trustees is responsible for the good management of the charity and ensuring that all legal responsibilities are met.

This is a really exciting time for our charity with a new ambitious Managing Director who joined the organisation in 2021 and the creation of an Artistic Director role who together make up the senior management team. In April 2022, we launched our 3-year strategy: Vision 2025 with three key strands:



**The formal Trustee Job Description and Person Specification follows with the application process on the final page.**



**Role Title:** CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Part 1: ROLE PROFILE**

**MAIN PURPOSE OF ROLE:**

Trustees have overall control of a charity and are responsible for making sure it's doing what it was set up to do. They are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run. Being a Trustee means making decisions that will impact on people's lives.

Trustees use their skills and experience to support their charities, helping them achieve their aims.

As Chair, you will be expected to lead the Board of Trustees and be the main point of contact between the Board and the Managing Director.

**TIME COMMITMENT:** Approximately 10 hours per month.

**REMUNERATION AND TENURE:**

The role of Chair is not accompanied by any financial remuneration.

The length of the appointment is three years with the possibility of extension for a further 3 years. Maximum tenure being 6 years.

**Part 2: MAIN DUTIES & KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

**TRUSTEE DUTIES:**

Trustees make sure the charity is running well and is doing what it was set up to do. This includes ensuring the charity:

- has the money it needs
- spends its money sensibly, on the activities it was raised for
- follows the law, including preparing reports and accounts to send to the Charity Commission
- doesn't break the rules in its governing document (its constitution, trust deed or articles)

As a trustee, you will use your skills and experience to make sure the charity runs efficiently.

**Legal responsibilities of trustees**

Trustees must:

- follow the law and the rules in the charity's governing document
- act responsibly and only in the interests of the charity
- use reasonable care and skill
- make well-informed decisions, taking advice when you need to

**ADDITIONAL DUTIES OF THE CHAIR:**

- Leading the board and the organisation to enable it to fulfil its purpose.
- You will be required to chair quarterly board meetings virtually as well as face to face in Preston or Greater Manchester. You will be required to ensure that:
  - A balance is struck between time-keeping and space for discussions.
  - Business is dealt with, and decisions made.
  - Decisions, actions, and deliberations are adequately recorded.
  - The implementation of decisions is clearly assigned and monitored.
- Board papers are usually issued one week in advance of a board meeting and are taken as read at the meeting itself.
- Plan and prepare the board meetings and the AGM with others as appropriate.
- You will be required to chair one annual strategy away day.
- You will also be invited to share your expertise at task and finish groups or sub-committees as and when required.
- Attend ad hoc events as appropriate to represent the DanceSyndrome Board
- Acting as a spokesperson and figurehead as appropriate.
- The Chair will be expected to be in contact with the Managing Director on a regular basis to provide 1-1 support and appraisal. Occasionally more frequent contact when required.
- To ensure an effective relationship between:
  - the board and the staff/volunteers
  - the board and the external stakeholders/community
- Ensure adequate support and supervision arrangements are made for any staff/volunteers directly managed or reporting to the committee.
- Seek a successor before the term of office finishes.

**Part 3: PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Essential**

- DBS check
- Educated to at least Level 2 or equivalent
- Able to attend quarterly board meetings
- Leadership skills and experience in a senior position
- Understanding gained from Trustee experience of good charity governance
- Passionate about making a difference to and improving the lives of people through dance
- Experience of developing a vision and executing strategic plans
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Impartiality, fairness, and the ability to respect confidences
- Must be legally eligible to act as a registered company director and charity trustee
- Experience of charity finance (knowledge of SORP)
- Experience of chairing effective board meetings and ensuring effectiveness of board members to deliver good governance.
- Strong commercial acumen
- A flexible approach to working and experience of working positively in a diverse environment
- Good organisational skills
- Good sense of humour and strong team player



## Equal Opportunities:

The DanceSyndrome family is filled with passionate and motivated people. We are keen to hear from applicants who identify as Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic, LGBTQIA+ and those with a disability. You do not need specific experience of dancing or working previously with people with learning disabilities, we are looking for people who believe in what we do and want to support DanceSyndrome to grow its impact and to help create a fairer, more inclusive and equitable society for everyone.

## To Express An Interest In Applying:

To apply for the role, please send a letter expressing your interest to the Managing Director, Julie Nicholson on [julie@dancesyndrome.co.uk](mailto:julie@dancesyndrome.co.uk) with "Chair Role" as the email subject.

If you would like an informal chat about the role, the current Chair, Vice Chair or Managing Director would be happy to talk to you. Please contact Julie, as above, to make arrangements.



Registered Charity No:1152664

[info@dancesyndrome.co.uk](mailto:info@dancesyndrome.co.uk)

[www.dancesyndrome.co.uk](http://www.dancesyndrome.co.uk)

Tel: 07597 942494

