

Making an Application for a Retraining Grant to the Independent Dancer Fund

Updated April 2024

ELIGIBILITY

To apply to DCD, you must have been a professional dancer for a minimum of eight years, with at least five years of your career spent based in the UK. Freelance dancers should be able to demonstrate that they earned an income as a dancer for a minimum of 16 weeks in each year, on average. DCD is usually able to offer only part of the full cost of retraining, but it may be able to give some advice on other sources of funding.

DCD has a number of special bursaries, designed to support exceptional retraining applications. All applicants are automatically considered for bursaries which are available at the time of their application. Where a bursary can be awarded up to £4,000 they will be. We therefore recommend you apply for a maximum of £4,000.

First applications must be made to the DCD within 10 years of retirement from professional performing.

If you have been unable to complete our eligibility criteria (see above) due to injury or illness, you may still be eligible to apply for funding. You are welcome to discuss this in a 1-2-1 conversation with DCD staff.

WHAT ARE RETRAINING GRANTS?

The DCD Grant Giving programme is supported by a number of Trusts, Foundations, Organisations and Individuals. The Grants Committee work to an annual Retraining Grant Budget, as set by the DCD Board, and all funding decisions are at the discretion of the Grants Committee.

Retraining Grants are available for the purpose of supporting professional dancers to make a successful transition into a post-performance career. Their intention is to support dancers to develop and expand their skillset and qualifications, and sometimes purchase necessary items, which will enable them to work towards a fulfilling and financially secure post-performance career.

Where an application features course fees and other costs, the course fees will always be prioritised when awarding funding.

Dancers' Career Development considers applications for the following:

- Accredited courses worldwide, including registration and exam fees
- Non-accredited courses, provided the programme has clear and measurable learning outcomes
- Internships and apprenticeships, providing there are clear and measurable learning outcomes

- Self-study programmes (covers shadowing, work experience, mentoring, life coaching, workshops, for example. You must provide a full plan including dates, locations, contacts and provide regular updates throughout the programme)
- Equipment (computer up to maximum of £500)
- Maintenance costs up to a maximum of £1,000
- Travel and accommodation costs to get to course/internship/apprenticeship/self-study programme in the UK or abroad
- Childcare costs, up to a maximum of £1,000
- Entrepreneurial grants (see notes below)

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

The following list contains all notes and stipulations as set by the Board of Trustees to making an application to DCD. Any applications that do not follow this guide will not be considered.

1. A one to one conversation with a DCD member of staff is compulsory before submitting an application. These are available via telephone, Teams or Zoom.
Contact dancers@thedcd.org.uk to arrange.
One to ones should take place at least two weeks before the deadline.
2. Wherever possible, courses of study should lead to a recognised qualification.
3. Applicants wishing to take part-time tuition or tuition in an unrecognised institution must present a proposal which gives full details and timetable of the commitment.
4. Your retraining should normally take place in the United Kingdom. However, you may apply for an overseas course if:
 - It is your country of residence
 - There is no equivalent course in the UK
 - The qualification is recognised in the country in which you will seek work afterwards
 - You can demonstrate that it is more cost effective to study abroad.
5. Before an application can be approved complete details of all associated costs will need to be known. The DCD **cannot** consider extra costs presented at a later date.
6. Maintenance can only be applied for if undertaking a full or part time course of study.
7. We do not fund anything retrospectively.
8. Successful applicants will have a one year period to **start** their award. If you cannot commence your training/career development programme within 12 months of being granted the award, you may ask for an extension of up to a maximum of one year. After 2 years the funds will be redistributed.

9. Purposes of grants cannot be changed once agreed. If you wish to pursue an alternate retraining programme after an award has been made, you should contact DCD as soon as possible and you will be required to either complete a redirect request or if the course is too different from the original application a new application may need to be made.

10. If successful, you must sign and return a Funding Agreement before any monies are released. All successful awardees must submit a progress report to DCD no later than 24 months following the grant approval.

SUPPORT WITH EQUIPMENT

The cost of purchasing equipment necessary for retraining or new career may be met by the DCD. There are limits to the amount in funding an applicant may request for equipment and capital items:

1. Funding towards the purchase of computer equipment for study support:

Maximum awarded in this area: **£500.00**

This is for those applicants undertaking full or part time study or starting a career or business in which computer equipment is needed. Items such as printers, scanners, software etc are included in this section. Please make it clear in the application the need for the equipment and details of any currently owned equipment.

In some professions, such as graphic design, website design, film-making and occasionally choreography, a more sophisticated, developed computer is required in order to do their job properly. In these cases, the computer would be classified as Career Support Equipment and the cap of £500 is removed.

2. Other Equipment:

This is for those applicants undertaking a practical career that requires basic equipment for them to be able to work as a practitioner in that chosen field.

Examples of this are:

- Photographer (camera equipment, lights, memory cards etc)
- Independent ballet teacher (barres, sprung flooring, sound system)
- Pilates instructor (mats, exercise ball, reformer, pulley tower)
- Make-up artist (make-up kit)
- Personal trainer (small weights etc)

We do not provide funding towards clothing.

ENTREPRENEURIAL GRANT

Where possible, we wish to support you as an individual, rather than your business. If you are setting up a business, you might wish to consider asking DCD to support you to complete training around business, rather than actual business costs.

However, DCD will consider applications for entrepreneurial grants if you are able to provide the following:

- A business plan and
- Evidence that you have completed a business course or have undertaken business consultancy/mentoring
- A reference letter from business consultant/mentor/course leader/potential investor supporting your business plan

Should you be applying for support to join a franchise, we require:

- Substantial information about the Franchise company in the Business Plan. E.g. Proof of its track record, perhaps include recent filed accounts and a statement from management at the company.
- Clarity on what the costs of the franchise provide the applicant with (breakdown)
- You can apply for up to first 6 months of set up and subscription costs only.

DCD will consider funding the following elements:

- Website, business cards, logo design, flyers, filmmaking, photoshoots and other promotional materials
- Computer equipment, software, to a maximum of £1,000
- Desk/office space hire for a maximum of 6 months (by reimbursement, not direct to landlords)
- Professional online subscriptions for a max of 6 months eg: Mailchimp, Zoom etc
- Equipment rental for a maximum of 6 months
- Insurance
- Company registration
- Portable equipment eg. ballet barres, music playing equipment
- Costume design and making
- Office stationary
- Other necessary business-specific equipment

DCD does not fund:

- Mobile phones or mobile phone contracts
- Vehicles
- Construction work
- Cosmetic decoration
- General furniture
- Clothing
- Cleaning products/toiletries
- Telephone/internet costs
- Maintenance costs, except for those in full or part time study (for tax reasons)
- Performance or not-for-profit projects directly
- Staff salaries
- Property purchasing or property development

MAKING AN APPLICATION

You must make your application using our online system here:

<https://portal.thedcd.org.uk/user/register>

Please find below a checklist for submitting an application for funding, which should include **all** of the following:

1. A completed application form
2. A Dance Career CV – Please list the most recent dates first
 - Your CV should demonstrate that you fulfil the eligibility criteria as required by DCD (for further information on this please see the ELIGIBILITY section above, or contact dancers@thedcd.org.uk)
 - The CV should include a **full** performance history
 - If you wish to include alternative work experience as well as your performance history (i.e. teaching, choreography, non-dance work) please ensure that you keep them separate to your Performance CV.
 - You should include dates as far as possible, **showing months and years** e.g. Jan 2010 – Mar 2010, for each job.
 - DCD operates spot-checks on contracts based on your CV in order to confirm eligibility, so please ensure your information is as accurate as possible. Inaccurate information may result in your application being withdrawn.
3. A Personal Statement addressed to the Grants Committee members – Please see the Personal Statement Guide
4. Detailed list of costs – Please see the Budget Guide
5. Information on the course/equipment – This should include:
 - The name of the course and duration
 - Place of study and detailed information on the course (include copies of info downloaded from website or course prospectus)
 - Details of the equipment you wish to purchase and the reasons for requiring that equipment in relation to your retraining
6. A professional reference detailing your suitability for your new career. This should be from someone who can vouch for your skills and qualities which are relevant to your new career. Please ensure the following questions are answered, as a guide:
 - a. What was/is the context of your professional relationship with the applicant?
 - b. What are the applicants unique strengths and capabilities, are there any notable accomplishments or impacts they made during your working relationship?
 - c. In your professional experience how well equipped/prepared is the applicant to undertake this new career pathway/training?

7. Extended Applications

If you are applying to DCD again following a previously successful application, you will need to demonstrate your development since receiving your previous award. This could be included in your personal statement and your professional reference.

Any applications received after the deadline **cannot** be considered and will have to go forward to our next available meeting.

PERSONAL STATEMENT GUIDE

Two important parts of your application for funding are the budget and personal statement. Below are suggestions on how to complete these sections:

Personal Statement:

We advise that the statement is around one side of A4 (Maximum 1000 words). The statement should cover the following points:

WHAT I WANT TO DO

- Description of the course/career development programme
- What it involves & offers to you in terms of progression and development

WHY I WANT TO RETRAIN IN THIS CAREER

- Why this career path appeals to you
- Any relevant experience you have already gained
- Demonstrate your commitment to the training

HOW THIS WILL HELP ME LONG-TERM

- What opportunities will this training/career development provide?
- How will you use what you learn/receive?
- What is your long term plan and how will your requested funding be a part of this?

You should also include details of how you intend to support yourself through your studies, *in addition to* any support you may receive from DCD (i.e. bank loan, living with family/friends, savings etc)

The statement is an opportunity for the dancer to demonstrate a genuine commitment to their retraining plan, excitement for the future and a pro-active approach. Dancers should demonstrate authenticity, honesty, passion and a practical and realistic approach, demonstrating that they have taken the time to pause, reflect and consider.

BUDGET GUIDE

The budget should be a separate document to your statement. Your budget should include all expected, necessary costs involved with undertaking the chosen training or career development programme. If applying for equipment, please list the equipment, supplier name, costs and remember to include shipping and VAT costs where relevant. Please use the budget template provided. A copy can be downloaded from the website or by emailing **dancers@thedcd.org.uk**

Please note: If your application involves payments outside the UK via foreign bank transfers or bankers drafts, the cost of bank charges which DCD would incur to process these payments needs to be included in the amount for which you are applying for funding. This is

currently set at £20 per transfer. Please note that International payments take a minimum of 3 weeks to process.

FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have any further queries about your application please contact

dancers@thedcd.org.uk

All grants are awarded at the discretion of the Grants Committee and funding cannot be guaranteed under any circumstances. All decisions made by the Grants Committee are final. Unsuccessful applicants may reapply. All applicants are entitled to Appeal decisions by the Grants Committee as outlined in our Appeals process. More information on our Appeals/complaints procedure is available [here](#)