

AWA
DANCE

ADVANCING
WOMEN'S
ASPIRATIONS
WITH
DANCE



Charity Report

11 Brindley Place, Brunswick Square
Birmingham, B1 2LP | Registered Charity Number 1188235

awadance.org

2024 - 2025

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MAKING A CHANGE SINCE
28TH FEBRUARY 2020

5 YEARS OF MOVEMENT & GROWTH

WE ARE THE
LEADERS
OF THE
PRESENT,
NOT THE FUTURE.

Letter From Our Director

Five years can feel like a lifetime when you're building something from the ground up. When AWA DANCE was founded on 28th February 2020, I was full of bold dreams and determination. I believed, and still do, that dance has the power to transform lives. Today, five years on, some of those dreams have taken flight, growing, transforming, and reaching new communities. Others remain grounded, waiting for the right financial support to take off. But they are still very much alive!

This last chapter in AWA DANCE's life has been one of shaping, refining, and deepening. We've strengthened our vision and learned to communicate it more clearly and powerfully. We've formed a dedicated and passionate team of freelancers and volunteers: committed women who believe, like I do, that we can do more, and better.

In that same spirit, we are thrilled to be embracing a co-chairing leadership model, an exciting and bold step that reflects our feminist commitment to shared power, collaboration, and collective growth. This shift coincides with enlarging our board, a group of inspiring individuals whose commitment and belief in AWA DANCE is already propelling us forward. I feel incredibly proud and reassured knowing that our charity is now supported and guided by such a strong and thoughtful group. We are truly in good hands.

Sadly, the dreams and aspirations of women and girls around the world continue to clash with 21st-century systems that prioritise violence, inequality, and the erosion of human rights. On both micro and macro levels, women and girls are disproportionately affected. And yet, I deeply believe that AWA DANCE has a role to play in reshaping our societies. Through dance, we offer hope, amplify voices, and support the emergence of courageous, compassionate leaders.

I'm particularly proud of having launched our pilot Safeguarding Training for Teenage Girls. This initiative empowers young people to recognise, report, and take action when they see or experience harm. Knowledge is power, and we believe in equipping the next generation with the tools they need to protect themselves and others.



I want to express my heartfelt thanks to our funders, partners, and individual donors. Thank you for believing in our mission. Thank you, too, to those who challenged us along the way, your questions made us sharper. And yes, thank you even to those who said "no." Your rejections made us stronger. You may not be ready for us, but we will be ready for you.

AWA DANCE will not give up. We are ready for the next phase and to grow, we need your support. More than ever, we invite you to join us in building a world where women and girls lead their lives, careers, their dreams, with courage, with clarity, and with care.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Avatâra".

Avatâra Ayuso
Founder & Director

Letter From Our Co-Chairs

As Co-Chairs we are proud to present the 2024-2025 annual report, and to reflect on a year of purposeful advancement and demonstration of resilience through the achievement of major milestones. The year 2025 marked AWA DANCE's 5th anniversary, and offered us the opportunity to review and celebrate the great impact that our small charity has been able to generate. Since its establishment, AWA DANCE has reached near to 5k participants across the UK through a rich and diverse programme of activities, all designed to champion the leadership of women and girls through dance, reaching a peak of 1,671 participants in 2024-2025 alone. The overwhelming positive feedback and increasing numbers are a testament to the dedication of our team, volunteers, partners and freelancers who all continue to collaborate to deliver our mission and put our Theory of Change into practice.



Internally, AWA DANCE continues to evolve. This year we have worked on strengthening our governance by onboarding 6 new Trustees, exploring new ways to diversify income to continue funding our programmes, reviewing our policies and embedding learning across all areas of our work. We thank our Director, team and facilitators for their tireless commitment, creativity, and care. We also extend heartfelt thanks to our fellow Trustees, whose insight and support have been invaluable in stewarding the organisation through this period of growth.



Most of all, we thank the girls and women who participated in our activities. Their voices and aspirations drive everything we do and continue to inspire us. As we look to the future - amongst the mounting geopolitical unrest, ongoing economic instability, and a troubling erosion of human rights, we remain fully committed to amplifying girls and women's leadership, challenging gender inequalities, and creating space for transformation through dance and beyond.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Rosa Cisneros & Vanessa de Ruggeris
Co-Chairs of AWA DANCE

LEAD FROM WITHIN

5 Year Impact

We delivered workshops to

472 young people
in

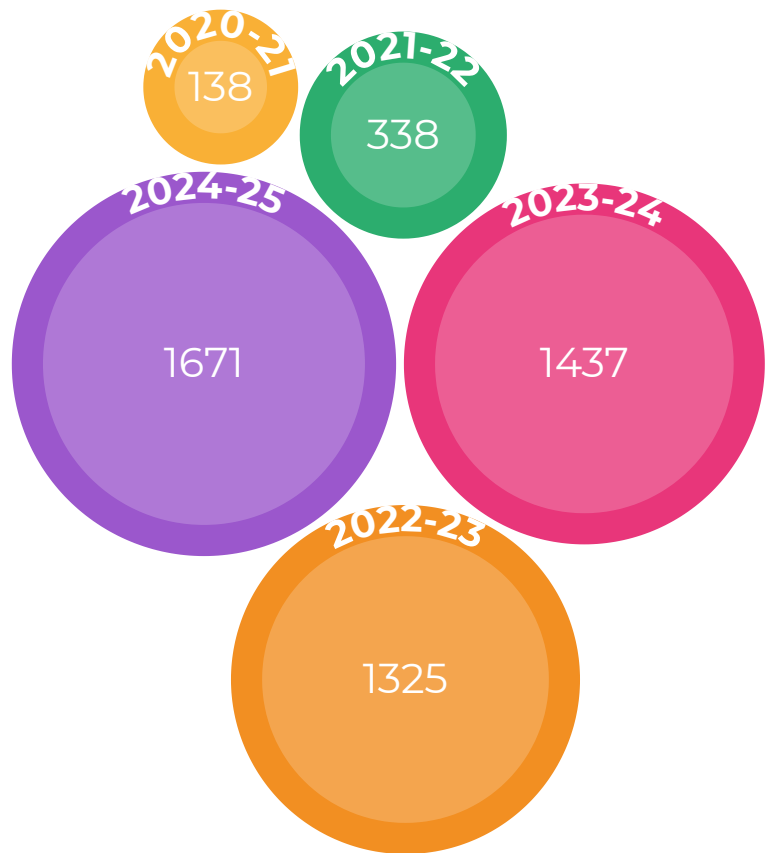
13 venues

schools, dance
organisations, community
centres around the country
and online.

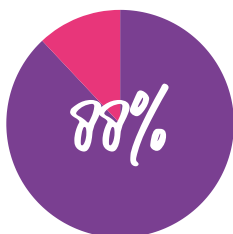
4939 participants

have been part of our three
strands of work during
2020-2025, across the UK

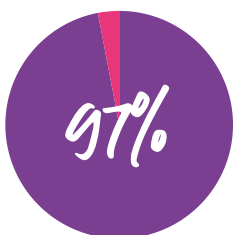
Number of Participants



Organisations we worked
with in 2023-2025 rated our
workshops 'excellent' or
'very good'



Of girls attending our
workshops in 2022-2025
said the session was worth
their time



Of women participants
would recommend AWA
DANCE's programmes

**Empowering
&
Supportive**

Top 2 words chosen by our
Mentees after our
Mentorship programme

**Confident,
Empowered
&
Energised**

top 3 words chosen by our
young participants after
our workshops

LEAD FROM WITHIN

OUR VISION
A WORLD WHERE EVERY
WOMAN & GIRL IS AN
**EMPOWERED,
BRAVE
LEADER**
BOTH IN THEIR PERSONAL
& PROFESSIONAL LIFE.

OUR MISSION
PROMOTE A NEW
UNDERSTANDING OF
**LEADERSHIP
THROUGH
DANCE**
IN SAFE SPACES, WHERE
WOMEN & GIRLS BECOME
THE CHANGE THEY WANT
TO SEE IN THE WORLD.

Who We Are

AWA DANCE (Advancing Women's Aspirations with Dance) is a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) based in the UK, founded by the choreographer, Avatâra Ayuso. AWA DANCE is dedicated to the leadership development of all women and girls, using the transformative power of dance as the tool to empower their voices. We are also a network of creative, confident and inspirational leaders that contribute to the progress of the dance sector and 21st century society, by sharing and embodying our five core DANCE values.



Dream

Navigate

Empower

Act

Create

We are also a certified Arts Award Center by Trinity College London. We are winners of the Acquisition International Non-Profit Awards 2023 as “Most Empowering Women in Dance Charity” and “Most Empowering Women & Girls Advocacy Organisation”

DARE TO DREAM

Our Core Principles

**Dance & Leadership
Activities for Girls**

Research & Data

**Leadership
Opportunities
for Women**

We invest our time into every single woman that enters our network, equipping them with leadership tools to prepare them to confront today's challenges. To make a change on a global scale, we know that our focus must first be on the individual.



Today I celebrate who I am. I feel very confident and calm

Our commitments remain:



Intersectional Feminism

If it's not intersectional is not feminism.



Our Values

Core of all we do to guide our decisions and develop new ideas & partnerships



Gender Equality

Sustainable Goal 5 United Nations - Achieve Gender Equality & Empower all Women and Girls

DARE TO DREAM

Our Team



I've learnt I can
be whatever I
want to be

Core Team

Avatâra Ayuso Founder and Director
Vittoria Butti Programme Administrator
Amy Hession Community Outreach Lead
Ana Neve Digital and Communications Officer
Claire Bingham Communication Strategy
Hannah Thomas Fundraiser
Sherisse Bisram Dance and Leadership Facilitator

Associates

Sam LeBihan Educational and Safeguarding Consultant
Melanie Whitehead Smith Research Associate

Board of Trustees

Rosa Maria Cisneros Co-Chair
Vanessa De Ruggeris Co-Chair
Arunima Kumar
Jane Ralls
Jordan Hazrati
Monique Springer
Sophie Spink
Susan Wyatt

WE SUPPORT WOMEN &
TEENAGE GIRLS IN THE UK,
OFFERING A PLATFORM FOR
THEM TO BECOME THE

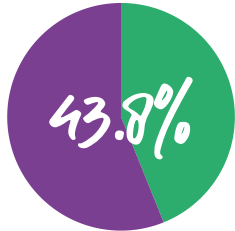
**LEADERS
THEY WANT
TO BE.**

**YOU ALL
HAVE A
PLACE HERE**

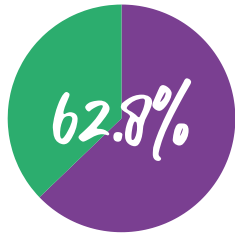
WE AIM TO MAKING THE
WORLD A BETTER PLACE
FOR EVERYONE.

Equality & Diversity Data

Our Participants



Of Participants that are Global majority

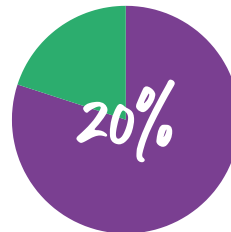


Of Board is Global majority

Our Team & Board



Of our team and board are Women



Of our team is Global majority



I feel very inspired and positive. I feel I'm important and loved by other women around me (we are all sisters!)



Activities For Girls

Dance and Leadership Workshops

In 2024-25, AWA DANCE delivered Dance & Leadership workshops to a number of schools, community centres and youth groups, including: St John Wall Catholic School, The Compass Group, Birmingham Childrens' Trust, Priory School Lewes, St Paul School for Girls, and Girls Friendly Society.



Festival of the Girl

For International Day of The Girl 2024, we were invited once again to take part to the Festival of the Girl in London. The Festival counted 1250 participants. We interacted with girls at our stall and delivered two dance and leadership workshops.



Safeguarding in Dance Training for Girls aged 13-21

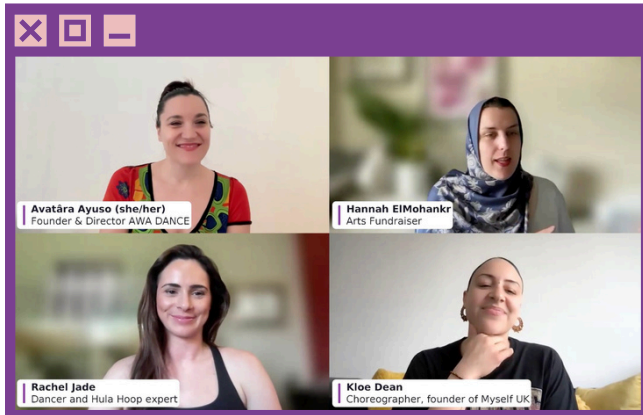
We launched the first Safeguarding in Dance course designed for teenage girls (up to 21 years old). This Level 1 training equips girls in the dance sector with the tools and confidence to recognise Safeguarding concerns and report them. The session includes discussions on appropriate touch, safe boundaries in the dance studio, and how to take action safely.

LEADERS OF NOW



Activities For Girls

Girls in Dance Bootcamp



In April 2024 we hosted our online Girls in Dance Bootcamp, a free event for girls aged 13-19. The 2 hours bootcap, hosted by Avatâra Ayuso, included: a K-Pop workshop with Sunbee Han; an interview with Ballet Black Senior Artist, Isabela Coracy, and our former Junior Ambassador Tara Darlami; a panel with choreographer Kloe Dean, Hula Hoop artist Rachel Jade and arts fundraiser

Hannah EIMohankr; and a dance mantra workshop with Sherisse Bisram. This event served as a pilot for our in-person Girls in Dance Festival 2025, and served as an opportunity to share our survey in which we asked girls to tell us what they wanted to see in the Festival.

Junior Ambassadors

Our Junior Ambassador programme is designed for girls aged 13-21 & runs from September 2024 to July 2025. Throughout the programme, the Junior Ambassadors have the chance to learn soft skills and practical tools to become a changemaker, receive mentoring from the Charity Director Avatâra Ayuso, and connect with other girls who share their passion.

The Junior Ambassadors were also part of our Youth Advisory Committee, a group of girls that meets throughout the year to co-design our Girls in Dance Festival 2025.



The programme surpassed my expectations and has really had a huge impact on the way I view myself and my work



LEADERS OF NOW

Leadership Opportunities For Women

Women in Dance: Let's Talk About Money

For International Women's month, we delivered a webinar for women in the dance sector to discuss money & support them taking control of their finances. The webinar included sections on feminist and ethical investment, how to get paid on time, gender pay gap and how to put value to the work you do. The event was hosted by [Avatâra Ayuso](#) and featured Rebecca Marshall, Sherisse Bisram, Kathryn Stamp and Dance Data Project as guests.



Safeguarding in Dance Training

AWA DANCE offered one online session of Safeguarding in Dance training Level 2, held by expert dance educationalist Sam LeBihan. The course equipped participants with understanding of safeguarding within a dance setting. A section of the training focused specifically on working with girls and women, understanding what risks they may face and what safeguarding measures should be in place to protect them from harm. Participants got a Continuous Professional Development certificate.



I feel more confident in the word because I have become empowered to lead in a way that is authentic to ME, whereas previously I had a vision of what a leader had to be and so I always felt I wasn't really 'there yet

Mentoring Programme

The 7-month mentorship programme gave participants access to some of the most successful women in the UK dance sector. Participants received one-to-one sessions with a matched mentor, group sessions and individual time and feedback from our Director, Avatâra Ayuso. AWA DANCE provided mentees with tailored information and resources including a private online Hub.

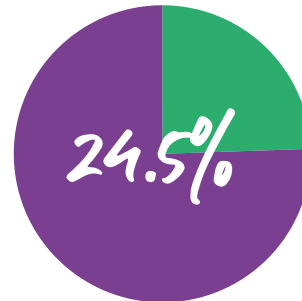
Our 2024 mentors were Eva Martinez, Louise Richards, Kloe Dean and Rebecca Evans.

Research

Women in Dance: Let's Talk About Money

AWA DANCE, in collaboration with Coventry University's C-DaRE, carried out the second round of their research project exploring leadership in the UK dance sector, concentrating on gender balance in artistic, executive and board positions.

This research looked at regularly funded organisations in the UK, focusing on a snapshot of three months - from January to March 2025. It only uses quantitative data. We shared our findings with the general public in an online webinar on the 31/03/25.



24.5%
of organisations have
adopted shared
leadership models



100%
of Artistic Director in
the highest funding
organisations are men



I think it is incredibly important to get more dancers - particularly women - talking about money. It is exactly these sorts of events that enlighten individuals and help remind them of their personal power. Here's to more!



DURING 2024-2025

WE IMPACTED

1621
PARTICIPANTS

ACROSS OUR ACTIVITIES

SINCE 2020 WE

IMPACTED

4939
PARTICIPANTS

ACROSS THE UK

Key Highlights



Our 2025-2026 Goals

**Implement
feminist co-
leadership model
on our board**

**Increase our
partnerships with
schools and youth
community centres**

**Girls in Dance
Festival 2026**

**Design & deliver
Safeguarding
training for teenage
girls**

**Financial
Sustainability**



EMPOWERED JOURNEY

Funders & Supporters

We are incredibly grateful to our partners, funders, supporters & donors for this year. We would also like to thank our generous anonymous donors that believe in our work and support our vision



We are also grateful to our previous funders, those that have helped us get where we are at right now



EMPOWERED JOURNEY

Governance & Legal

AWA DANCE ('the charity') is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. We registered as a charity on 28 February 2020. Our charity registration number is 1188235. Our registered address is 11 Brindley Place, Brunswick Square, Birmingham, B1 2LP.

The organisation is run and managed by a Board of Trustees who meet five times a year to review activities, the financial management of the charity and undertake all governance responsibilities for the charity. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefit from the charity.

The Board of Trustees are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. The Board is made up of five Trustees with a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the charity's work. The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Trustees

- Monique Springer - Appointed on 19 November 2020
- Rosa Maria Cisneros (Co-Chair) - Appointed on 8 March 2022
- Arunima Kumar - Appointed on 6 December 2022
- Vanessa De Ruggeris (Co-Chair) - Appointed on 26 September 2024
- Susan Wyatt - Appointed on 26 November 2024
- Jane Ralls - Appointed on 26 September 2024
- Jordan Hazrati - Appointed on 26 November 2024
- Sophie Spink - Appointed on 18 March 2025

Trustee recruitment

Trustees are recruited based on skills and experience required for the running of the charity. Apart from the first charity Trustees appointed on 28 February 2020, every Trustee must be appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity Trustees. In selecting individuals for appointment as charity Trustees, the charity Trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the charity.

Objectives & Activities

The object of AWA DANCE, as stated in its constitution, is, for the benefit of the general public, to promote and advance the education of the arts through the provision of dance and other training to women, including young women between 12 and 18 years of age ('the Beneficiaries') in such ways as the charity trustees think fit.

The Trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake. The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives. The charity is fulfilling its role by providing dance and leadership training through dance to beneficiaries identifying as women and girls over 12 years of age.

Independent Examination Report

HBA SOLUTIONS

Independent Examiner's report on the accounts

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

AWA DANCE

On accounts for the year ended

31st March 2025

Charity No

1188230

Set out on page

2

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity (AWA DANCE) for the year ended **31 March 2025**.

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date: 17 July 2025

Name:

Helen B Amaefule

Professional qualification:

FCCA MSc

Address:

20-22 Wenlock Road

London

N1 7GU

Accounts 2024-2025

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|-----------------|------------|--|
| AWA DANCE | | Charity No | 1188235 | | |
| | | Company No | | | |
| Annual accounts for the period | | | | | |
| Period start date | 01/04/2024 | To | Period end date | 31/03/2025 | |

Section A Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)

Recommended categories by activity

Income (Note 3)

Income and endowments from:

Donations and legacies

Grants (ACE, Trust, Foundations, etc)

Other trading activities

Investments

Separate material item of income

Other

Expenditure (Notes 6)

Expenditure on:

Raising funds

Charitable activities

Separate material expense item

Other

Net income/(expenditure) before tax for the reporting period

Net income/(expenditure) after tax before investment gains/(losses)

Net gains/(losses) on investments

Net income/(expenditure)

Extraordinary items

Transfers between funds

Other recognised gains/(losses):

Gains and losses on revaluation of fixed assets for the charity's own use

Other gains/(losses)

Net movement in funds

Reconciliation of

Total funds brought forward

Total funds carried forward

Guidance Note

| | Unrestricted funds £ F01 | Restricted income funds £ F02 | Endowment funds £ F03 | Total funds £ F04 | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| S0 | 12,748 | - | - | 12,748 | |
| 1 | 25,000 | 20,137 | - | 45,137 | |
| S0 | 4,306 | - | - | 4,306 | |
| 2 | - | - | - | - | |
| S0, S05 | - | - | - | - | |
| 3 | 42 | - | - | 42 | |
| S0, S06, S07 | 42,096 | 20,137 | - | 62,233 | |
| 4 | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|----|--------|--------|---|--------|--|
| S0 | 1,484 | 412 | - | 1,896 | |
| 8 | 47,689 | 27,376 | - | 75,064 | |
| S0 | 1,020 | - | - | 1,020 | |
| 9 | 8,077 | 145 | - | 8,222 | |
| S1 | 58,269 | 27,932 | - | 86,202 | |

| | | | | | |
|----|----------|---------|---|----------|--|
| S1 | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | |
| S1 | - 16,173 | - 7,795 | - | - 23,968 | |
| 2 | - | - | - | - | |
| S1 | | | | | |
| 4 | - 16,173 | - 7,795 | - | - 23,968 | |
| 5 | - | - | - | - | |
| S1 | - 16,173 | - 7,795 | - | - 23,968 | |
| 6 | - | - | - | - | |
| S1 | - | - | - | - | |

| | | | | | |
|----|----------|---------|---|----------|--|
| 7 | | | | | |
| S1 | | | | | |
| S2 | - | - | - | - | |
| S1 | - | - | - | - | |
| S2 | - 16,173 | - 7,795 | - | - 23,968 | |
| 1 | | | | | |
| S2 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| S2 | 22,310 | 8,834 | - | 31,144 | |
| 3 | 6,137 | 1,039 | - | 7,176 | |
| S2 | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | |



Vanessa De Ruggeris
Co-Chair AWA DANCE



Rosemary Cisneros
Co-Chair AWA DANCE