



Applause Youth Dance Festival

Your U.Dance Regional platform for the Midlands

Application Guidance

This guidance is for dance groups and individuals based in the Midlands wishing to apply for Applause Youth Dance Festival and the U.Dance 2025 National Festival.

1. What is U.Dance?

U.Dance is a national framework that develops dance performance opportunities for children and young people across England, led by One Dance UK (ODUK).

2. How will U.Dance in the Midlands happen in 2025?

This year, FABRIC will lead on one regional-wide event called Applause Youth Dance Festival, happening in one venue over one weekend with performances taking place on both the Saturday and Sunday.

The Applause Youth Dance Festival weekend will celebrate youth dance from across the Midlands, giving young dancers the opportunity to perform with their peers in a professional venue, watch other youth groups' work and take part in workshops with professional dance artists.

This year Applause Youth Dance Festival will take place in Birmingham, with the intention that the event will alternate between venues in the East and West Midlands each year.

We hope that the event will be able to support up to 25 groups, with places divided equally across the East and West Midlands and the Saturday and Sunday programmes respectively.

3. What can I apply for?

Groups or individuals can apply to perform at Applause Youth Dance Festival and to be considered for the U.Dance 2025 National Festival. Applause Youth Dance Festival is the only route into the U.Dance National Festival for the Midlands.

Applause Youth Dance Festival

Location: Birmingham Hippodrome

Date: Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 March 2025

Groups can apply for:

- Applause Youth Dance Festival only **or**
- Applause Youth Dance Festival **AND** U.Dance 2025 National Festival.

Groups can choose to be considered for U.Dance 2025 National Festival as part of this application. The U.Dance National Festival 2025 is scheduled to be held on 25-27 July 2025 in partnership with Sadler's Wells, at their fabulous new venue, Sadler's Wells East in London's Olympic Park.

The U.Dance National Festival will form part of a weeklong celebration of youth dance, including other high profile events such as the NYDC premiere of Guest Artistic Directors Boy Blue's work, Making Moves Showcase, Young Creatives Showcase and more.

Groups selected to attend the U.Dance National Festival will be responsible for funding their own travel, food and accommodation, so please consider this when applying.

4. Applause Youth Dance Festival - Good Practice Guide

A good practice guide has been created to support all group leaders working with young people towards this U.Dance Regional platform in the Midlands.

Please read this document and refer to it throughout the creation of your choreography.

5. Selection Process

Following the deadline of **9PM, WEDNESDAY 29 JANUARY 2025** a selection panel of dance professionals will shortlist groups to take part in Applause Youth Dance Festival.

- a) Successful groups will be notified the week beginning **Monday 3 February 2025**.
- b) Applause Youth Dance Festival will be professionally filmed on stage. A panel of regional dance professionals will select four groups in total to be considered by the National panel to be part of the U.Dance National event (two from the East Midlands and two from the West Midlands that opted to be considered for the National Festival).
- c) Following this selection process, a national panel of dance professionals will consider the four shortlisted groups. One group from the East Midlands and one group from the West Midlands that will be offered a place at the U.Dance 2025 National Festival. The successful group will be notified in April 2025.

6. Who is Applause Youth Dance Festival and the U.Dance National Festival open to?

Any youth dance company, school dance group, community dance group or individual that meets the criteria mentioned in point 7.

We welcome applications which include groups working in different dance styles, with young people in different settings including schools, youth centres, community groups and youth dance companies. We'd like to strongly encourage groups that include disabled dancers with physical or Special Educational Needs (SEN) to apply.

These opportunities are open to any dance forms including but not limited to South Asian, African, street, contemporary and classical styles.

7. Criteria

The selection panels will be looking for dance groups that:

- a) Demonstrate excellence in performance
- b) Present excellent and engaging choreography*
- c) Show dancers taking clear ownership of the choreography, which is appropriate for their age and experience
- d) Demonstrate respect and consideration to all (demonstrated through both the group's conduct at the regional event and the appropriateness of performance content).

*A note on choreography: Excellent work selected for the U.Dance National Festival in previous years has been created by group leaders, teachers, young people, professional choreographers and any number of collaborations. There is no preferred 'type' of choreographer and the creator(s) of the piece will have no bearing on the selection process.

The selection panel for the U.Dance National Festival will select dance pieces from all Regional platforms which combine to make a National Festival that will:

- a) Reflect the diversity of dance styles practiced by young people across the UK
- b) Create an interesting and varied performance
- c) Showcase excellent and authentic work from both schools and youth dance settings.

8. Group Eligibility

- Group Size: no more than 30 dancers
(Please consider that groups of 16 dancers or more will need three chaperones instead of two to perform at the live events).
- Age range: Dancers must be aged 11 to 19 on Monday 21 July 2025. Disabled dancers must be up to age 25 on Monday 21 July 2025.
- Length of piece: Minimum of 2 minutes and maximum 7 minutes

Leaders must organise the administration (consent forms, performance licencing requirements, parent liaison and technical information), chaperoning at the live events and transport needs for their group.

9. To Apply

- Complete and submit an online application form – via the link below:

<https://fabric.wufoo.com/forms/zjld3du1ivdu8n/>

- Submit a film of your completed piece as part of your application.

In the event of live performances being cancelled, your film will be used to make selections for the National Festival if you opt in to be considered. This footage should be filmed to the best of your ability, the full-length piece that your group intends to perform, in costume if possible.

Please note:

- a) Applications will be acknowledged via an automatic email.
- b) Film footage should be provided within the application form using a password protected Vimeo link. Alternative methods can be discussed with FABRIC where Vimeo is not possible, but it is the preferred method.
- c) FABRIC takes no responsibility for unreceived applications or film footage that is faulty or not of a quality to view by the selection panel by the deadline given.
- d) In the event of any of the live events being cancelled (for reasons beyond our control) the event will not be rescheduled or take place digitally, but your film will be used to make selections for the U.Dance National event 2025.

10. Guidance for Filming Your Dance

- Make sure that your dance is well lit and clearly visible, don't film in the dark.
- Clear the space (no bags or chairs around the edges), don't distract the panel with clutter.
- Make sure the whole group is present for filming.
- Use a sound system or loud speaker so that music can be heard, don't use a phone to play music while filming or have people chatting in the background.
- Film the work from the front, not the back or side.
- If filming on a phone -position the phone in **landscape**
- Check that film footage plays the correct way up (you might need to change the orientation of the film).
- Check your Vimeo link works before submitting.
- Send any passwords needed to view the links.
- Check that we have received your footage if you do not receive a confirmation email. Don't feel like you are pestering us, we would rather make sure all applications come through successfully.
- Call us if you have any questions, don't let submitting the film be stressful.

11. Costs

Applause Youth Dance Festival

There is no fee to apply for Applause Youth Dance Festival. Groups will need to be prepared to cover the cost of:

- Transport to and from the performance venues (some costs will be covered for East Midlands based groups)
- Food and refreshments (young people to bring packed lunches)
- Cost for leaders to be present at the event/s.
- Costs for chaperone licences if required.

U.Dance 2025 National Festival

The groups successfully selected to attend the national event will need to raise their own funds to cover:

- Transport costs to and from the venue
- Food and refreshments throughout the event
- Accommodation costs for the group and their Chaperones for 1 or 2 nights.
- Costs for leaders and chaperones
- Chaperone licenses/training if required.

12. Access Funds

a. Applause Youth Dance Festival

A small access fund is available to support groups attending Applause Youth Dance Festival, available through FABRIC, which will be prioritised to support those traveling the furthest.

b. National U.Dance 2025 Festival

A small access fund is available to support the group attending the national festival, available through One Dance UK.

APPLY HERE: <https://fabric.wufoo.com/forms/zjld3du1ivdu8n/>

For any queries or questions about the information above or applying for Applause Youth Dance Festival, please get in touch with **Jerry Dawson**:

Email: jerry@fabric.dance

Phone: 0121 667 6730 (Monday to Friday 10am till 5pm).