

ISTD AGM 2023 Candidate and Trustee biographies

Candidates standing for election as Trustees:

Mary Cooke

Mary Cooke has been involved with the ISTD for many years. Starting with her own early training where love of the work of many genres began. This was then incorporated into her teaching career and her role as Examiner for the ICB faculty.

Her teaching career began after gaining her LRAD at the renowned Bush Davies School. This taught her the value of the exchange of knowledge, how this is passed on and how that then builds the young teacher's teaching skills toolbox. Further development continued as Principal of a large school in Sussex. New experiences were added to the list when initiating and creating start-up schools, when family job relocations demanded, and many the difficulties noted.

She also found a very rewarding role supporting teachers in her area, including organising several "Day of Dance" for all. Mary's goal was to build relationships, so teachers feel supported and not isolated, just as she had experienced in her young teaching days. From 2017 Mary has been a Mentor on the Diploma in Dance Pedagogy for unit 2 and she has been delighted to witness the development of teaching skills and confidence in the mentees.

As an Imperial Ballet Examiner for 38 years, Mary has witnessed many changes. This gives a unique insight into the delivery of exams on the ground. This kaleidoscope of knowledge will allow Mary to bring her firsthand understanding of the many stakeholders to the board. She is committed to supporting the ISTD, taking forwards a strong, vibrant Society offering dance for the future for all. As a supporter and participant in creative dance projects in her local area Mary understands the power of dance and the joy that it can bring.

Christina Fotinaki

Christina Fotinaki is an award-winning choreographer, FISTD and Examiner in Modern Theatre, Imperial Ballet and Contemporary Dance, in addition to her roles as a Tutor and Assessor for the Diploma in Dance Education. Christina is a member of the ISTD Modern Theatre Grades, Jazz awards and Advanced 1 teaching teams.

Enrolled as a full-time student, Christina pursued her studies at the Maya Sofou Professional School of Dance and successfully completed her graduation in 1992. Christina extended her educational pursuits globally by participating in courses across Bern, Zurich, Vienna, New York, and Los Angeles. Her studies encompassed disciplines such as Graham, Cunningham, Hawkins, Limón, and Release techniques, with a particular focus on choreography, improvisation, musical jazz, commercial jazz, hip-hop, and contemporary jazz from 1993 to 2007.

Following her graduation, Christina embarked on her teaching journey, instructing diverse groups and levels of students, ranging from foundational to Advanced 2, DDE, Licentiate, and Fellowship levels in both Modern Theatre and Imperial Ballet. As a co-founder and Director of Dance Texture, Christina spearheads a comprehensive, full-time professional training program designed for both dancers and dance teachers. This initiative is established in Athens, Greece.

Christina's achievements as a choreographer within the performing industry are equally remarkable. In 2000, she took on the role of assistant choreographer for "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream coat" directed by Gillian Gregory. Additionally, she served as an assistant choreographer in 2003 for "Victor-Victoria," also directed by Gillian Gregory, and in the same year, contributed as an assistant choreographer to "Musical Nights," directed by Derrick Lassala.

From 2003 until the present day, Christina has been involved in choreographing as well as being a part of the production teams in major musical productions, theatre performances, dance group showcases, video clips, television programs, TV series, film, music stage productions, and music awards ceremonies in Athens. In 2018 Christina was awarded the Imperial International Theatre Award.

Trustees standing for re-election: Tom Hobden

Tom Hobden has built a diverse and impressive career in the dance industry since 2002. He is a Suffolk-based independent choreographer, educator, mentor and founder and CEO of UNIT. Tom is regarded as a national leader in community dance practice and most known for his intergenerational performances, mentoring and breadth of knowledge across digital arts and creative businesses.

Within his role in UNIT, he has created touring productions involving participatory casts, standalone films presented in film festivals across Europe and creative learning projects and consultancy for young dancers, graduates, and dance organisations as well as a flourishing YouTube channel.

Tom has significant experience in leading work with professional performers, dance educators, young people, FE and HE students, beginner and intermediate adults, older adults, young males, youth offenders and prison work as well as experience in inclusive practice and health and wellbeing settings.

As an educator and choreographer, Tom has worked on behalf of organisations including the New Adventures, Royal Ballet School, Royal Opera House, Ballet Boyz, Dance East, Stopgap Dance, Studio Wayne McGregor, One Dance UK, Suffolk Art link, Dance United, Trinity Laban, Big Dance, Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing and University of Suffolk. Tom has also had the opportunity to work alongside: Matthias Spurling, Tom Dale, New Art Club, Darren Ellis, Jasmin Varidimon Company, Luca Silvestrini, Etta Murfitt, Hofesh Schechter Company, Gecko Theatre, Alexander Whitley amongst others. Tom was associate artist at Dance East (2015 - 2017), Questlab Artist for Studio Wayne MacGregor (2018 - 2020), a Clore Short Course graduate (2017) and Guildhall Creative Entrepreneur (2019 - 2020).

Most significantly in his career, Tom has led five large scale (250+ participants) intergenerational performances, curated Re:bourne's 'Overture' Programme (a national CPD programme for young leading community artists) and is a lead artist on the Chance to Dance programme for the Royal Opera House.

'When I think of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing's ecology I think of its ambitious vision, its dynamic management and its dedicated members and education staff, all leading to an aspirational dance organisation and society. As a trustee I am always looking to see where both my values and vision align and how I might be able to add value to the board and organisation with support, provocation, and growing networks. With Ginny Brown's innovative new vision for the Society, combined with its long standing history of excellence, I

could not think of a better organisation in which to support through a trustee's role. With my long-standing experience in community, education and independent dance at a national level, I recognised my potential to support the society with its growing future.'

Jeremy Kean FCCA

Jeremy was born in Buckinghamshire and educated at Rugby School. He first worked on the floor of the Stock Exchange for Akroyd & Smithers in the early 1970's before leaving the City to qualify as an accountant in 1981.

Jeremy's career included working at Aviva, Willis Faber and then Robert Fleming, before becoming the Finance and IT Director at the Financial Ombudsman Service. During his career he spent time abroad working in Paris, which enabled him to learn to speak French, and also travelled the world extensively in his other roles.

Retiring in 2010, apart from being the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee (F&A) at the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing, he now spends his time as the team leader of the Oxted Community First Responders with the South East Coast Ambulance Service, and driving for a local charity that enables people to attend medical appointments. He is a trustee of the Mitchell City of London Charity & Educational Foundation as well as a past master of the Worshipful Company of Curriers.

Keith-Derrick Randolph

Living and working in Europe for 33 years, native New Yorker Keith-Derrick is a choreographer, teacher, and dance administrator. He has a broad dance education which includes ballet, modern, jazz, African, Afro Caribbean and Brazilian dance, as well as studying drama, music and lighting. In addition to his early education, in 2005 Keith-Derrick received his Didactic Teacher's diploma and in 2010 a master's degree in choreography.

Keith-Derrick has been a choreographer in the Dutch independent dance scene, as well as choreographing and teaching abroad. For fifteen years he had a successful career as a dancer and choreographer with Scapino Ballet, Rotterdam. For nine of those years, he was on Scapino's artistic staff where he gained a wide and varied knowledge of all aspects of company management. As a ballet master, teacher, and administrator, he managed and coordinated Scapino's workshops, the education program, apprentices, and the yearly auditions.

Keith-Derrick is now on the staff of Codarts, Rotterdam – Batchelor performing dance coordinator (practice and academic subjects, repertoire, and performances) and teacher (ballet and partnering) and répétiteur. He is also member of the core team that runs Master Choreography – COMMA, a joint degree between Codarts and Fontys School of Fine and Performing Arts in Tilburg.

Keith-Derrick has also served on committees in key organisations within the Dutch dance world and is an accomplished costume designer.

Trustees in office:

Michael Elliott (Chair of Council)

Michael Elliott is a Trustee of the Birmingham Royal Ballet, a member of the Governing Body of Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, Company Member of the Greenheart Learning Partnership, and a Pro-Chancellor and Chair of the Fundraising Board, of the University of Wolverhampton.

In the last 20 years he has served as the Chief Executive of both the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra; as Director, Culture in the senior civil service of the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS); and, until his retirement, as Chief Executive of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), the world's leading music exam board at the end of 2020. In 2022 he acted as Interim Chief Executive of the Arts Council of Wales for nine months.

His early professional career spanned policy development in Europe, higher education, arts funding, and tourism, and he was appointed to his first Chief Executive role in 1989.

Michael has held voluntary roles in the arts and education sectors, including serving as a governor of schools and colleges in Sheffield and the West Midlands; as Chair of the Belgrade Theatre Coventry and Deputy Chair of the Sheffield Crucible Theatre; and as Chair of the Governing Body of the University of Wolverhampton. He has been awarded Honorary Doctorates by Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Wolverhampton.

He has acted as an advisor to both the DCMS and the Department for Education on key developments and has chaired national groupings of regional agency Chief Officers in arts funding and tourism at key moments of government driven sectoral change. He also served as Cultural Director for Liverpool 08.

Lynn Chandler

Lynn Chandler has spent nearly all her professional life in the education sector and enjoys bringing financial discipline and process to companies as they grow and scale.

Lynn graduated from Essex University in Economics in 1982 and qualified as a Chartered Accountant with Ernst & Young in 1985. She joined BPP Holdings plc, a professional education group which had just floated on the Stock Exchange, as Group Financial Controller in 1988; was promoted to Group Finance Director in 1995 and retired from full-time employment in 2005. Whilst at BPP, the group grew from a UK business with £6M turnover and 125 staff to an international group with turnover of over £130m employing 1,600 staff across 40 offices throughout Europe.

Since 2005 Lynn has worked part-time. In 2007 she was co-founder of a government sponsored vocational training business which was sold in 2014 to an AIM listed company. In 2014, Lynn joined Virtual Class, an educational start-up, as Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary.

Lynn is currently a trustee of the Dance Professionals Fund (formerly the Royal Ballet Benevolent Fund) and previously served as a non-executive committee member of A2Dominion Housing Group (a registered social housing group with over 34,000 homes under management and an asset base of over £2bn) and as a non-executive director of an NHS Hospital Trust.

Lynn believes the Society is well placed to achieve its aspiration of being a world leader in dance education. She considers it to be an exciting and interesting time to become a Trustee of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing and to be part of ensuring it succeeds in securing its future by expanding the Society's influence and status as a high quality, multi-genre dance examination board world-wide.

Juliet Diener

Juliet Diener is Founder and CEO of icandance, a dance movement psychotherapist and a clinical supervisor. Juliet is an inclusive dance specialist, who is a qualified Cecchetti ballet teacher and specialist educator.

Juliet's love for dance began in her early childhood as she trained in the Cecchetti Classical Ballet method with the ISTD in South Africa. Having moved to London in 1999, she worked as a ballet teacher in various dance schools and has remained a member of the ISTD throughout. Alongside her love for dance Juliet has worked in education for over 25 years in mainstream, special and higher education. Her career includes teaching and lecturing, leadership, and consultancy roles. Exploring the interface between wellbeing, creativity and learning, Juliet completed a master's degree in dance Movement Psychotherapy.

Bringing together her expertise in education, dance, and psychotherapeutic approaches, Juliet founded the charity icandance in 2006. icandance is a creative, therapeutic community which empowers disabled children and young people through dance and performance.

Juliet integrates her expertise to create, lead and research inclusive communities and is currently pursuing a Doctorate study researching the approach developed at icandance. She supervises, lectures, and leads training, combining her various areas of expertise, and runs a private clinical practice in North London. She also works as an inclusive dance specialist for the ISTD. Juliet is a regular research contributor for the disability advocacy magazine, Disability Living, and continues to research and publish focusing on areas of creativity, embodied practice, dance, and inclusion.

Juliet is a registered member of the UKCP and ADMPUK.

Leanne Kirkham

Leanne is originally from Blackpool where her dancing life began under the guidance of ISTD Fellows Ruth and Joan Langley, she then went on to train at Performers College, completing ISTD Associate qualifications. Upon graduating, Leanne performed in various productions including the UK Tour of 42nd Street, before returning to her hometown.

Leanne spent 10 years teaching at various dance schools, and whilst developing her teaching practice, was keen to ensure that dance was accessible to everyone. She undertook training in inclusive theatre with Chickenshed, which enabled her to broaden her knowledge, skills and confidence in teaching students of all abilities. Leanne then worked alongside teaching artists from The Royal Ballet School as part of the Primary Steps programme in her role as Joint Director of Dance at Bispham High School Arts College.

In 2010, Leanne undertook her BA (Hons) in Community Dance Practice, graduating in 2011 with First Class Honours. She then worked as Dance Education Officer at Northern Ballet in Leeds, before taking up the role of Director of Learning in 2016, and is now Director of Academy Operations and Learning. As part of the Senior Leadership Team, Leanne is Designated Safeguarding Lead, and has responsibility for the Academy of Northern Ballet, and the Learning and Outreach programme. Her team have developed an in-school programme to support children to develop their physical and emotional wellbeing through dance, and recently launched a similar pilot programme for SEND schools. Leanne is a proud advocate of inclusive dance, ensuring the programmes at Northern Ballet are accessible to all. Alongside her team, she recently worked with inclusive companies in Madrid and Rotterdam to develop new pedagogy in inclusive dance, with a focus on hyper-mobility and safe practice.

Peter Meager

Pete hopes to bring to Council his wealth of experience as an Operations Director for Compass Group UK & Ireland and will assist driving the organisation forward – focusing specifically on diversity, sustainable growth, and enhanced stakeholder relationships. Pete is a qualified Dancesport teacher, trained under the guidance and support of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing, and a recognised British Dance Council competition adjudicator.

When Pete is not teaching, he works as a professional Master of Ceremonies for both national and international dance competitions. With his vast experience of the equality dance scene, Pete is often at the helm of large Championships such as the IFSSDA World Championships which were last held in Paris in 2018 as part of the 10th Gay Games. Pete regularly supports the European Championships and has been an active board member of United Kingdom Equality Dance Council (UKEDC), European Same Sex Dance Association (ESSDA), and Federation of Gay Games (FGG). He also organises two equality dance competitions here in the UK: the 'UK Equality Open' and the 'Equality Fun Competition' and supports both the social and competitive dancer, working voluntarily for Out4Dance and Out4Sport to promote equality dancing around the UK.

Sho Shibata

Sho was actively involved in the performing arts in Japan as a child, performing in various children's television and film productions as well as on stage with 'Les Miserables' directed by John Caird and 'Waiting for Godot' directed by the late Yukio Ninagawa. He then moved to UK in 1995 and graduated from London School of Economics and Political Science in 2005 with a degree in Philosophy and Social Psychology. His studies gave him a theoretical understanding of how discrimination and segregation come about in social settings. After graduation, Sho worked at Arts Council England, South East and joined Stopgap Dance Company in 2008 to manage touring, outreach and dance development projects. Sho began producing Stopgap's outdoor productions in 2009 with 'Tracking' and built its profile in the outdoor arts sector. His endeavours culminated with a Cultural Olympiad tour of 'SPUN Productions' in 2012. After successfully completing 'SPUN', Sho joined the company's senior management as the company's full-time producer.

Sho is a trustee of Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing and a member of the Regional Council for Arts Council England.

Frederick Way

Frederick is a civil and commercial mediator and the Head of the CEDR Foundation, the charity and innovation arm of CEDR (the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution), Europe's largest provider of dispute resolution services.

Prior to becoming a mediator, Frederick trained as a barrister and was called to the Bar of England and Wales in 2012. He has also previously worked in medico-legal and property disputes as an advocate.

Frederick has been a trustee of the ISTD since 2019 and was made Vice Chair in 2020. In 2021, Frederick was interim co-Chair of the ISTD with Erin Sanchez, prior to the appointment of Michael Elliot as Chair of the ISTD.

As well as being a trustee for the ISTD, Frederick is also the Deputy Chair of Access All Areas, a leading National Portfolio Organisation theatre charity for performers with autism and learning disabilities.