



Imperial Society of
Teachers of Dancing

Teaching the world to dance

ISTD Strategic Plan 22–27





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Our vision

To make teaching and learning dance accessible to all.

Our membership is recognised as the mark of quality dance teaching around the world. We support teachers to develop their careers and businesses through progressive training, performance qualifications and events. Together, we aim to build a diverse and sustainable dance profession by championing inclusion and increasing access to dance teaching.



Our values

Our values shape everything we do.

▶ Quality

We are trusted to provide excellent dance teaching, training, qualifications and services to our members and students.

▶ Inclusion

We are a global family that is committed to improving diversity and equal opportunity.

▶ Innovation

We strive to be creative in our thinking and to deliver dynamic solutions that make a difference to dance education.

▶ Passion

We are dedicated to inspiring future generations of dancers and teachers.

▶ Integrity

We strive to always do the right thing.

About us

The Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) exists to inspire, teach and support dancers and dance teachers around the world. Our world-renowned quality in teaching gives our members a passport to artistic and professional progression.

We represent dance teachers and their communities, supporting and celebrating their artistic brilliance. For over 117 years we've provided quality dance training across a diverse range of genres – enabling our members to inspire their students with a passion for dance.

Dance is universal, and it should be for everyone.

We provide the qualifications that certify teachers to engage with an increasingly varied, demanding, and globalised dance world. By providing frameworks which enable teachers to apply their knowledge and skills, we create opportunities for our members to grow their teaching and inspire their students to excel. Today the ISTD has approximately 6,000 members in over 59 countries throughout the world and typically conducts over 120,000 examinations each year.

The ISTD is a registered educational charity (250397), regulated examinations board and membership association.



Supporting your journey through dance – our offer to teachers and their students

Progressive dance training

We are renowned for the wide variety of genres and styles on offer. From Ballet to Bharatanatyam, Modern Theatre to Modern Ballroom, and Street Dance to Salsa, we have a dance style to suit everyone. We offer a suite of dance syllabi that are carefully structured to support both children and adults in developing and progressing their technical dance skills.

Examinations

Our clearly defined structure allows learning to take place in the context of safe dance practice and is designed to cater equally for those who wish to progress to making dance their profession, either as a performer or dance teacher, and for those pursuing dance purely as a leisure activity. Our suite of examinations includes Ofqual regulated grades and vocational grades as well as more informal medal tests.

Teacher training

We offer a range of teacher training routes, including qualifications regulated at Levels 4 and 6. Once qualified, we provide dance teachers with clear pathways to progress their careers, with options to specialise as a teacher trainer or examiner.

Membership

Membership to the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing unlocks access to our world-renowned syllabus, best practice training and everyday practical tools and resources. From student to full teaching membership, we provide industry-leading advice and access to on-going professional development.

Defining our charitable purpose

The Society's charitable purpose is 'to educate the public in the art of dancing, in all its forms'. We recognise that this is a very broad purpose and that to be effective we need to focus on a few key areas of public benefit:

- **Setting and maintaining professional standards**
- **Advocacy for the value of dance education**
- **Equipping teachers to broaden access to dance**



Strategic review – our vision for the future

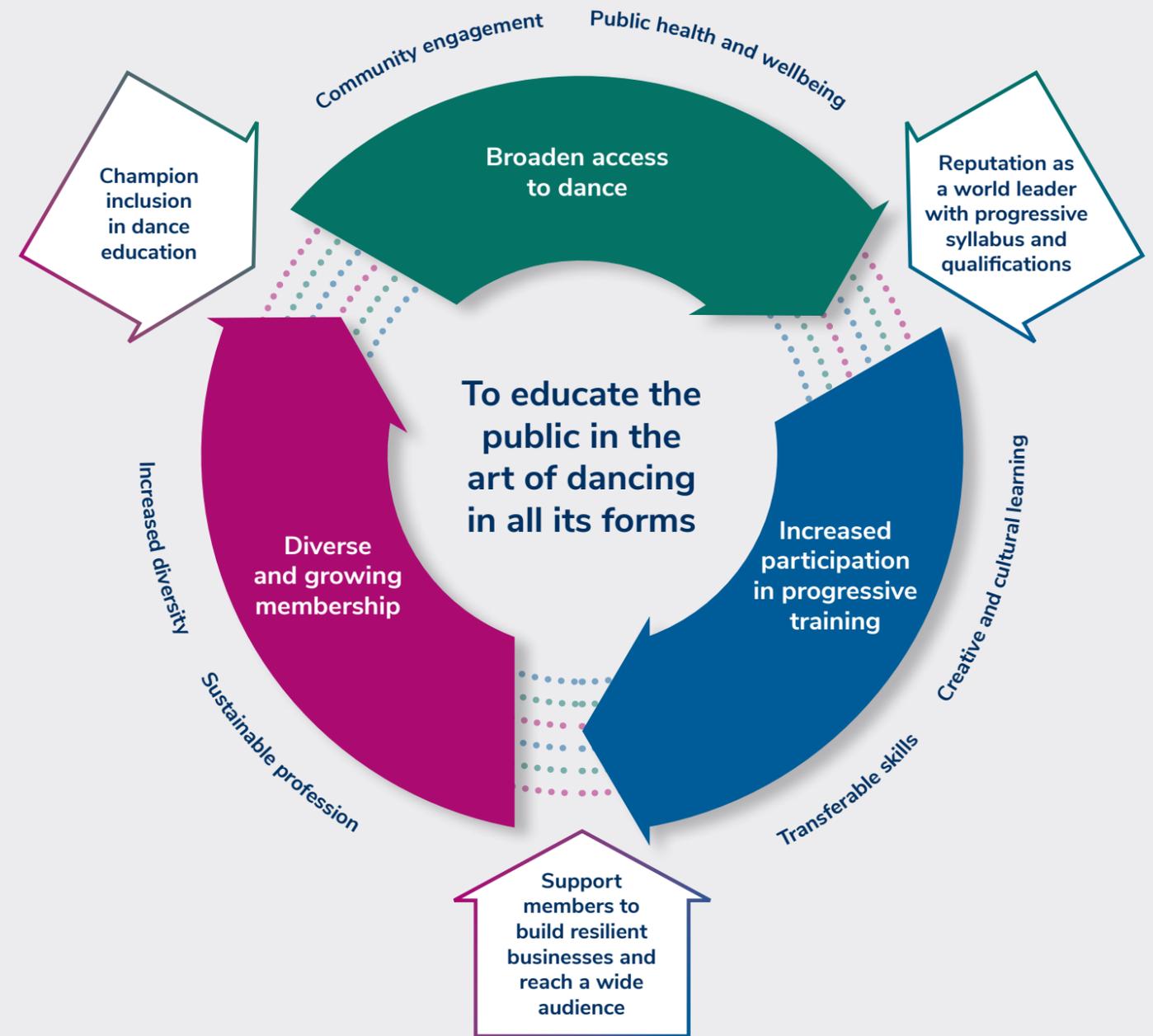
The Society undertook a strategic review in 2021 to understand the needs of our members and the current perceptions of the organisation, as well as to develop strategic priorities for the next five years. In particular, we wanted to consider how to improve equity, diversity and inclusion in our work as an educational charity as well as dance teaching and the wider sector.

The findings of the strategic review clearly identified several key themes we needed to address: a crisis in arts education; the dire financial impact of Covid on dance teachers; an era of digital acceleration and opportunities arising from growing international markets. Our members told us that business recovery, inclusion and nurturing the next generation and maintaining standards should be our priorities.

Our five year strategy 2022–2027 – making teaching and learning dance accessible to all

Creating a sustainable future for our members is our priority. To do this, we aim to increase the scale and impact of the Society. This will be achieved by reaching a broader range of beneficiaries and providing opportunities for them to advance through our training routes. Given the progressive nature of our syllabi, this activity is focused on broadening access to dance for children and young people.

Our members are the conduit for reaching these beneficiaries, so we will provide our teachers with the knowledge, skills and support to broaden their reach. Our teachers provide vital cultural education to young people who may not have a career in dance but will contribute to the greater public awareness of the value of dance.



Driving the business forward

Our strategic plan focuses on three drivers for success over the next five years.

- Broadening access to dance
- Increased participation in progressive training
- Diverse and growing membership

Together these will enable both members and the Society to thrive and grow. We believe the drivers contribute to the broader public benefits of promoting health, wellbeing, and community engagement, as well as developing creative and cultural learning with all the associated transferable skills this offers. More participation in dance will contribute to the diversity and sustainability of the dance profession.

Thriving businesses and community connections

ISTD will support dance teachers to build resilient and growing businesses. We will do this by supporting our members to become the dance business leaders of the future, to allow them to make a significant contribution to cultural education in their communities.

We will support members to re-build financially sustainable businesses by developing a national advocacy campaign that will promote the social and health benefits of dance education alongside the quality of our teachers. This will result in greater awareness of dance and the ISTD, driving more students ISTD schools – and helping our members' businesses to thrive and grow. In turn, this will support our business recovery as more students take our examinations.

We will support members to become active dance ambassadors in their local communities by providing frameworks through which they can enhance their profile and community networks. This will result in members having a stronger presence in their communities and feeling supported by, and connected to, a professional network.

We will create a vibrant and engaged community of dance teachers, connected by passion and quality, so that we can support dance teachers to thrive throughout their careers. By guiding and supporting members' career development we will build a stable, loyal and growing membership.

Inclusive and diverse profession

ISTD will champion inclusion by opening up dance education. This driver is focused on actively addressing barriers to the Society and the dance sector as a whole so that more people access our work, and we contribute to building a diverse dance profession.

We will introduce a broader range of people to dance by providing members with training and tools to reach under-represented groups. This will result in members with the skills, knowledge, and motivation to broaden access, thereby encouraging a larger, more diverse student group.

We will establish new entry points and progression routes through the Society by developing products that engage new audiences, with the outcome that barriers to access and progression will be reduced.

We will embody our values within our conduct, activities, and products by recruiting a more diverse range of contributors, resulting in the development of current and relevant products.

World leading syllabi and training

ISTD will innovate to secure our reputation as world leaders in dance education through progressive, inclusive syllabi and exams so that we remain current to future generations of dancers and teachers.

We will develop industry-leading products and services, inspired by our heritage, by establishing an annual cycle of research and product development. With the result that our products will remain high quality and relevant.

We will future proof the organisation by building an ethical and environmentally sustainable business model, creating efficient, sustainable, and inclusive digital services for our global community.

We will build a financially sustainable business model for growth, by innovating to ensure high quality, compliant and customer-focused services. This will ensure business resilience through diversification of income streams.

We will also develop a targeted international growth strategy so that we become a well-established presence in key markets. This will result in engaged members and international growth.



Measuring success

We will measure the success of our strategy quarterly with key performance indicators (KPIs) in these areas and will review and adapt the strategy as appropriate to meet the challenges and opportunities that arise over the course of the five years.

- Growth
- Engagement
- Stakeholder diversity
- Profile and reputation
- Member satisfaction
- Efficiency and compliance



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