Healthy Dancer Canada

The Dance Health Alliance of Canada

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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2025 Board of Directors

Officers:
Sarah Kenny (President)
Louis Laberge-Côté (Past-President)
Andrea Downie (Secretary)

Directors:
Meghan Critchley
Nathalie Gérard
Nicole Inica Hamilton
Jo-Anne La Flèche
Natasja Macdonald
Rufi Oswaldo
Karine Rathle
Christy Stoeten

Cover photo courtesy of HDC member Claudia Moore, Kelowna BC Community Dancers, Photographer Unknown, Oct. 2025

Message from the President

It has been a privilege to serve HDC as the organization's President in 2025. I express my sincerest gratitude to the Executive –– our immediate Past President, Louis Laberge-Côté, and Secretary, Andrea Downie –– for their mentorship as I transitioned into this leadership role. Over the past year, our 11-member volunteer Board, along with our 30+ volunteer committee members, have been hard at work.

Some highlights of what transpired in 2025 include onboarding a new bookkeeper for regular financial administrative support. We are very grateful to Lucy Milner for joining our team. We've been updating our Board Manual and Policies and Procedures, which are guiding documents that help us stay on track of specific tasks, and support consistency in our work when members come and go. HDC was very active in participating in government Call to Action advocacy alongside the Canadian Dance Assembly and Canadian Arts Coalition. Montréal based dance artist, Sandra Samba was awarded our annual BIPOC scholarship. The hybrid, bilingual annual conference was organised with our host L'École supérieure de ballet du Québec (ESBQ). Attendees took in two keynote presentations, twelve lectures, four panels, and five performances from emerging artists. And we've got some new merch! 2025 Conference delegates may already be wearing their new HDC branded socks, by Canadian company, Outway, helping spread awareness of our important organization.

I look forward to continuing my service as HDC President in 2026 and am most grateful to you, our remarkable community, for your ongoing commitment to empowering all who engage in dance and nurturing a culture of wellness.

Mot de la présidente

Ce fut un privilège de servir HDC à titre de présidente en 2025. J'exprime ma plus sincère gratitude à l'équipe de direction – notre président sortant, Louis Laberge-Côté, et notre secrétaire, Andrea Downie – pour leur mentorat lors de ma transition vers ce rôle de leadership. Au cours de la dernière année, notre conseil d'administration bénévole de 11 membres, ainsi que nos plus de 30 membres bénévoles de comités, ont travaillé sans relâche.

Parmi les faits saillants de 2025, mentionnons l'arrivée d'une nouvelle comptable pour le soutien administratif et financier régulier. Nous sommes très reconnaissants à Lucy Milner de se joindre à notre équipe. Nous avons mis à jour notre manuel du conseil d'administration ainsi que nos politiques et procédures, deux documents de référence qui nous aident à assurer le suivi de nos tâches et à maintenir la cohérence de notre travail malgré les changements de membres. HDC a participé activement à l'appel à l'action du gouvernement aux côtés de l'Assemblée canadienne de la danse et de la Coalition canadienne des arts. L'artiste de danse montréalaise Sandra Samba a reçu notre bourse annuelle pour les personnes PANDC. La conférence annuelle hybride et bilingue a été organisée en partenariat avec l'École supérieure de ballet du Québec (ESBQ). L'auditoire a assisté à deux présentations plénières, douze conférences, quatre tables rondes et cinq spectacles d'artistes émergents. Et nous avons de nouveaux articles promotionnels ! Les personnes participantes à la conférence de 2025 portent peut-être déjà leurs nouvelles chaussettes HDC, de la marque canadienne Outway, contribuant ainsi à faire connaître notre importante organisation.

Je me réjouis de poursuivre mon mandat de présidente de la HDC en 2026 et je vous suis profondément reconnaissante, à vous, notre remarquable communauté, pour votre engagement constant à soutenir tous ceux et celles qui pratiquent la danse et à promouvoir une culture du bien-être.

Sarah Kenny, HDC President (2025 & 2026)

About HDC

Healthy Dancer Canada –– The Dance Alliance of Canada (HDC) is a federal non-profit organization. Our members, volunteers, and supporters include dancers, dance students, dance educators, health professionals, researchers, and dance enthusiasts from across Canada and beyond, interested in collaborating to improve the health, well-being, and performance of people who dance. We achieve our mission through the work of our committees.

Vision

Healthy Dancer Canada envisions a dynamic culture that welcomes everyone to experience and share the art of dance in all its significance and greatness. We imagine a movement in which healthy practices honour and support the diverse roots, forms, and expressions of dance.

Mission

Healthy Dancer Canada's mission is to empower dancers and all who engage with the art of dance by nurturing a culture of wellness within a vibrant dancing community.

Values

With a dancer-centered and sustainable approach, HDC values:

<u>Wellness, safety, and care</u>
We promote approaches, activities, and processes that protect and encourage the ongoing holistic health and wellbeing of individuals and groups.

<u>Equity, diversity, inclusivity and accessibility</u>
We celebrate the many ways of being, knowing, learning, and dancing. We are committed to positive experiences and outcomes for all. We strive:

- to fairly distribute the organization's material and non-material opportunities;
- to create welcoming and supportive interactions, programs, policies, and practices that recognize, respect, and leverage diversity;
- to remove barriers to participation in dance, our organization, and its endeavours.

<u>Community and collaboration</u>
We foster ecosystems that bring people together to share knowledge and resources as we address current issues and opportunities.

<u>Integrity, accountability, and transparency</u>
We recognize the importance of:

- being open and honest;
- being responsive and responsible to our dance community;
- exposing complexities that underlie the decision-making of our organization.

History

The Dance Health Alliance of Canada Inc., operating as Healthy Dancer Canada, is a non-profit organization formed by ten founding members in 2008 to help strengthen the national voice of dance health promotion, prevention, and treatment in Canada. In 2010, the mission was articulated, and the organization took on a more formal structure to create a solid foundation to grow HDC. We incorporated federally in 2012 to increase our reach nationally. In 2016, the mission statement was revised and the organization's vision and values were also defined. Following a Strategic Planning process funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, the vision, mission, values and committee structure were revised again in 2023.

History

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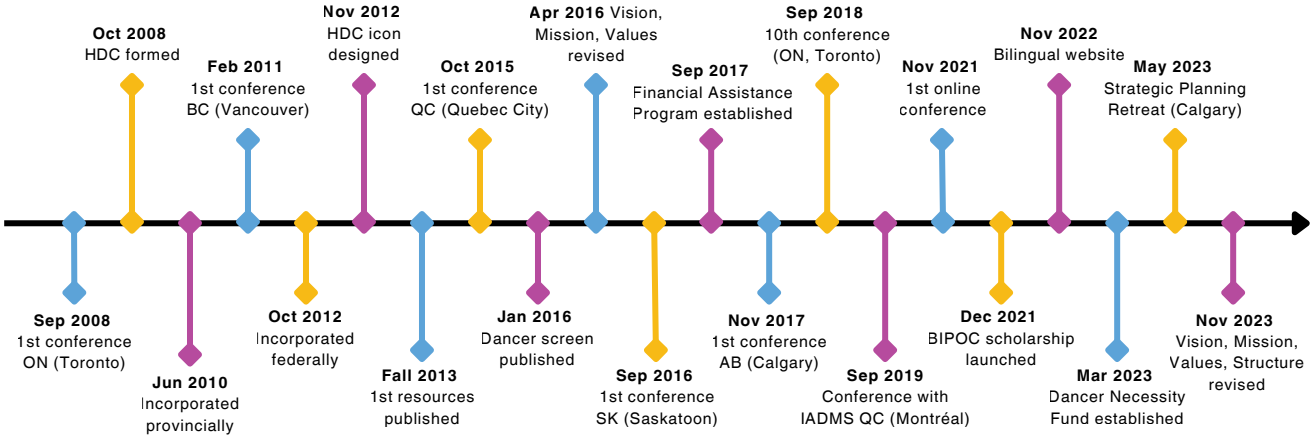

The dancing icon in Healthy Dancer Canada's logo was created in 2012 from a sketch by founding member Andrea Downie and with graphics by Alessia Soppelsa. The icon was designed with the goal of being an inclusive representation of dancers and all dance forms. The colours surrounding the dancer symbolize our goal to have equal representation from dancers, dance educators, health professionals and researchers within our organization. HDC's official poster and company of website dancer graphics were created in 2015 by Lisa Dickson in the spirit of these original principles. In 2017, we added more dancers to the "company," to represent more body types and dance forms. We also updated the HDC logo with bolder text while preserving the original dancing icon.

Services & Membership

Healthy Dancer Canada and its members contribute to improving the health, well-being, and optimal performance of dancers. We provide networking opportunities, access to current information and educational events for both our members and the public.

HDC Services & Support

Public Services

HDC provides public access to research-based information to help enrich, empower and sustain the dance community. We now have 19 peer reviewed open-access resources on our English website, and 12 in French. We provide links to relevant information, events and organizations through our bilingual website and social media platforms. Our Annual Conference, continuing education webinars and outreach initiatives provide dance communities across Canada and abroad with access to current information. The BIPOC Scholarship, Dancer's Necessity Fund and Financial Assistance Program support dancers as they pursue their goals and cope with life's challenges.

Financial Support

In 2025, HDC provided financial support to the dance community through paid dance performances at our annual conference, totalling $1900; one BIPOC Scholarship amounting to $1200; one Dancer Necessity Payment of $150, and a research award of $500.

Services & Membership

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Sandra Samba
2025 BIPOC Scholarship Recipient
Photographer: Diana Rodriguez

Member Benefits

A membership to HDC demonstrates a commitment to dancers' health and wellness. HDC members can network with other dancers, dance educators, healthcare professionals, and researchers interested in dance health. We feature a Member Directory with members' names and contact information. Members can share their news and events on the HDC website, social media platforms, and Newsletters. Members can also serve on our committees, vote at our Annual General Meeting of Members, and collaborate with key organizations within the global dance community.

Members can access funds and other supports through the Healthy Dancer Canada Financial Assistance Program. Members also receive significant savings on Human Kinetics books through the Newsletter Book Club. Additionally, our members can access continuing education and professional development through our quarterly Newsletters and Annual Conference. In the Members-Only area of the website, members have exclusive access to the HDC Pre- Professional Dancer Screen: Healthcare Professional Version and Dance Educator Version, an archive of newsletter articles, and advanced access to all new HDC Resources.

Operations

Outreach & Communications Committee

The Outreach and Communications (O&C) Committee shares dance health information and initiatives with the HDC membership and broader dance community. Objectives include: 1) to have a strong national and international presence in the global dance community, and 2) to responsibly elevate the work of HDC, our partners and supporters, and other healthy dance initiatives. Activities include:

- presenting and promoting the work and services of HDC at dance events across the country and internationally;
- bringing awareness of dance health information and initiatives to our international audience via our website (which is accessibility checked annually and updated bimonthly) and social media platforms;
- designing, editing, and distributing a quarterly HDC newsletter for the membership that shares information, articles, and members' news. The Newsletter archive now contains 43 articles.

<u>2025 Social Media Stats & Analytics</u>

- Facebook: 1.9K followers, 171 following, 12.3 K views for the year (Reflects the number of times content was played or displayed)
- Instagram: 2031 followers, 1415 following, Approx. 6300 views per month
- LinkedIn: 11 Profile Viewers, 27 Post Impressions, Connected with 670 + members, 4,354 Impressions for the year (Reflects the number of times content was displayed on someone's screen)
- TikTok: 8 followers, 8 following, Approx. 703 views per month
- Website views: average of 744 views/month in 2025

2026 goals include: Building upon social media engagement through collaborations with other artists and/or organizations

outreach@healthydancercanada.org

Committees

Outreach & Communications
Nicole Inica Hamilton (Chair)
Louis Laberge-Côté (Newsletter coordinator)
Andrea Downie (Website coordinator)
Maria Haralambis (Social media manager)
Natasja Macdonald (Incoming Newsletter coordinator)
Ally Trask

Sustainability
Sarah Kenny (Chair)
Alex Thompson
Anastasia Gambill
Christy Stoeten

EDIA
Andrea Downie (Co-Chair)
Karine Rathle (Co-Chair)
Natasha Poon-Woo
Rufi Oswaldo
Rhonda Roberts Smid
Suzanne Liska

Membership
Meghan Critchley (Chair)
Alissa Lee (Coordinator)
Bonnie Robson
Jo-Anne La Flèche
Natasja Macdonald

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Operations

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Sustainability Committee

The Sustainability Committee is responsible for ensuring the long-term operation of HDC. Specifically, our objectives are to maintain financial stability within the organization, and to manage human resources.

Key activities achieved in 2025 include ––

- meeting with the HDC Executive and consultants to discuss the feasibility and rationale in applying for charitable status; overall, it was deemed that HDC does not have sufficient annual revenue at this time to justify charitable status and so the decision was made to remain a non-profit organization for the time being
- launching a sock design contest on HDC socials, with the purpose of encouraging member engagement, promoting the organization, and generating some revenue; crew socks with the HDC logo were printed by Outway, a brand based in Victoria, BC, and were well received at our annual conference in Montréal for all in-person delegates

Moving into 2026, important goals for our committee are to ––

- increase revenue through fundraising efforts, sponsorships, and expanding our membership base
- continue sourcing Canadian suppliers for new and exciting HDC merchandise available for conference delegates and HDC members

sustainability@healthydancercanada.org

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility (EDIA) Committee

The goal of the EDIA Committee is to champion equity within Healthy Dancer Canada and broadly within the dance community. The committee's objectives include conducting an internal equity review, making connections with currently underrepresented and equity-deserving communities. The committee can be reached at: equity@healthydancercanada.org.

Key achievements of the EDIA Committee in 2025 ––

- Updated and oversaw the application procedures, vetting process, and awarding of the BIPOC Emerging Dance Artist Scholarship. This scholarship aims to address existing barriers faced by BIPOC artists and improve access to supports that will further racialize artists in their professional pursuits. Sandra Samba (Montreal) was the sole recipient of the 2025 scholarship.
- Updated the application process and paired two dancers who applied to the BIPOC Dance Artist Mentorship Program with mentors.
- Provided assistance to one dancer who applied to the Dancers' Necessity Fund. This fund, supported by and established in partnership with Conditioning-with Imagery for Dance and Enhance Dance, aims to assist dance artists who are going through a difficult period and offers one-time non-permanent financial and healthcare service assistance.
- Worked with the Continuing Education Committee on their anti-oppression and reconciliation/reconciliACTION efforts, and to deliver an accessible conference experience for both in-person and virtual attendees.

Committee objectives for 2026 ––

- Organize and deliver equity training for the Board of Directors in spring 2026, focusing this year on gender and sexuality in dance.
- Make new connections to equity-deserving dance communities and organizations within and outside of Canada.
- Develop a process for HDC's internal equity audit.

equity@healthydancercanada.org

Committees

Continuing Education
Andrea Downie (Co-Chair)
Jo-Anne La Flèche (Co-Chair)
Nathalie Gerard (Conference Lead)
Jamie Hawke (Conference Lead)
Sam Beckman
Linda Bluestein
Marla Eist
Chiarra Garet
Maria Haralambis
Alyssa Hughes
Kiah Hughes
Sheahan Keinick
Donna Krasnow
Erika Mayall
Hayley Ng
Karine Rathle
Bonnie Robson
Karen Sudds

LTD Framework for Dance
Sam Beckman (Chair)
Alex Thompson
Andrea Downie
Erika Mayall
Karen Sudds
Marlene Stirrett-Matson
Sarah Kenny

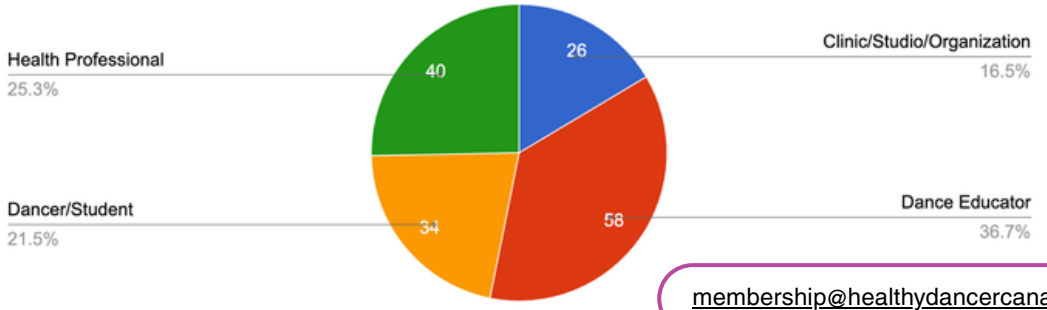
Operations

continued...

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee endeavours to promote the benefits of membership with Healthy Dancer Canada. Committee members receive and process memberships, update the Member Directory on our website, welcome new members, and communicate with members regarding membership renewal. In 2026, we will continue our efforts to broaden the membership of HDC, with the goal of more representation from our dancers/students and maritime provinces. Additionally, the membership committee is committed to retaining active memberships. The committee can be reached at membership@healthydancercanada.org.

We currently have 155 active members. We had an increase of 13 active members, from 2024 to 2025. We have seen an increase this year in the number of dancer/student members. Membership continues to be strong internationally, with members in the United States, United Kingdom, Cyprus, Germany, Switzerland, and from coast to coast within Canada.



membership@healthydancercanada.org.

Long-Term Development (LTD) Framework for Dance Working Group

The LTD Framework for Dance working group was created in 2022 to design and adapt what has been developed in sport for dancer populations –– a guide that describes what dancers need to be doing at specific ages and stages across the lifespan –– with direction from LTD Advisors at Sport for Life Canada, and relationships established with similar organizations (e.g., Cheer Canada).

Key activities achieved in 2025 include ––

- supported continuing PhD student, Sam Beckman, who is leading this project under the supervision of Dr. Sarah Kenny and Dr. Laura St. John at the University of Calgary
- maintained relationships with LTD Advisors at Sport for Life Canada
- established new relationships with Canada DanceSport Breaking Sports Director

Moving into 2025, important goals for our working group are ––

- to continue supporting PhD student, Sam Beckman, in a mentorship/consultancy role as she moves through the next phases of her doctoral research, establishing foundational evidence that will inform a future LTD Framework for Dance

Continuing Education Committee

The Continuing Education Committee's aims to share evidence-based knowledge and practice with HDC members and the dance community at large including dancers, educators, directors, researchers, and healthcare professionals from diverse dance milieus. The committee pursues two objectives: 1) to offer accessible and diversified research-based publications, tools, and activities on dancer health and safe practices; 2) to identify effective strategies to make our educational services known within the dance and healthcare communities in Canada and abroad. Two sub-committees support these objectives.

education@healthydancercanada.org

Operations

continued...

Continuing Education Committee (continued)

1. ***The Educational Resources Continuing Education Sub-Committee*** organizes webinars and workshops, develops, translates and updates educational material as well as screening tools, to enhance dancer health and safe practices.

Webinars and Workshops

This year, HDC presented one well received webinar. On May 23rd, Rest and Recovery was offered by Erika Mayall and hosted by Chiarra Garet. A special thanks to our two facilitators! We also presented one well-attended interactive panel discussion and workshop. On July 12th, Teaching the 21st Century Child was facilitated by Andrea Downie (HDC Past President) in discussion with Jane Davis-Munro (Pegasus Dance Studios, Toronto, CA), Alexander Campbell (Royal Academy of Dance, London, UK), and Brett Taylor (Shelly Shearer School of Dance, Winnipeg, CA), and the many enthusiastic and knowledgeable dance educators in attendance at the RAD Canada / SunDance Teacher's Day in Toronto, ON. Thank you to everyone who participated.

No webinars were planned in the fall. A webinar on Self-esteem and Body Image should be held in April 2026. A list of available webinars/workshops can be found on the HDC website (consult the Conference and Events tab).

Peer-reviewed Print Resources

One print resource, available in both English and French, was published online in December. Members have early-access to Cultivating Mental Adaptability in Traditional Dance Training / Cultiver l'adaptabilité mentale dans la formation traditionnelle en danse (Laberge-Coté) on the Members' Dance Resources page of the English and French websites.

Already published in English, Developing Mental Health Care with Dance Companies and Vocational Schools (Robson, La Flèche & McGuire-Gaines) was translated and published in French in December. It can be found on the ressource en danse (accès libre) page on the French website, entitled Développement des soins de santé mentale au sein des compagnies de danse et des écoles de formation professionnelle.

Through the fall, the committee worked on a third resource, Exercise Recommendations After Screening. Content was added and edited and additional videos were filmed. A hired video-editor will prepare the new videos and upload them to YouTube in January 2026. Links will be inserted by the Committee and the resource shared with members Winter 2026.

2. ***The Conference Continuing Education Sub-Committee*** plans, promotes and delivers the annual conference. This year's conference was held in Montréal on November 8th and 9th. The theme concerned three core values for HDC, Integrity, Accountability and Transparency. In line with our theme, this hybrid and bilingual conference was organised with our host L'École supérieure de ballet du Québec (ESBQ). Thanks to our presenters, we offered a showcase of educational activities consisting of two keynote presentations, twelve lectures, four panels, and five performances from emerging artists. The great diversity of dance performances this year was broadly appreciated (3 live, 2 digital).

The virtual conference felt well connected and interactive. Simultaneous translation shown on the screen was generally efficient. Virtual participants commented on the high-quality sound due to professional AV material. The Conference Sub-Committee wishes to express deep gratitude to Outreach & Communications for helping generate great interest in the Call for Performances.

Continuing Education Committee Goals for 2026 ––

- Expand the webinar program to deliver quarterly webinars.
- Develop 2-3 new print resources.
- Finalize the 2026 conference location that should be held next Fall in Edmonton, in collaboration with the University of Alberta.
- Organize the conference based on HDC core values. The choice of values is undetermined for now

Financial Report

Healthy Dancer Canada is a volunteer-operated non-profit organization, with minimal paid contractors who support membership operations and social media management. Contractor expenses decreased by $846.59 between 2024 and 2025. The two-day 2025 conference experienced a loss of $2466.57, an increase of $1318.35 from the 2024 conference loss. Performance Honouriums increased $700 from 2024 to 2025. Membership dues increased by $3058.25 from 2024 to 2025. HDC ended 2025 with a net profit of $1000.27.

Healthy Dancer Canada

Profit and Loss

January1-December31,2025

	TOTAL
Income	
Donations	$1,200.00
Event Registration	$7,340.00
Interest Revenue	$72.51
Membership Dues	$10,168.25
Total for Income	**$18,780.76**
Gross Profit	**$18,780.76**
Expenses	
Bank Fees and Interest	$57.20
BIPOC Scholarship	$1,200.00
Conference Expenses	$7,266.57
Conference Performer Honorarium	$2,100.00
Conference Presenter Honorarium	$440.00
Dancer Necessity Payment	$150.00
Insurance	$306.72
Licenses and Memberships	$512.00
Membership Coordinator	$531.00
Outreach Coordinator	$22.00
Printing and Promotion	$676.82
Seminar Expense	$180.00
Social Media Coordinator	$1,225.71
Software	$1,273.23
Stripe Fees	$501.30
Website Platform	$1,406.53
Total for Expenses	**$17,849.08**
Other Income	
Bank Rebate	$68.59
Total for Other Income	**$68.59**
Profit	**$1,000.27**

2025 HDC Supporters

Healthy Dancer Canada gratefully acknowledges the support of our partners, sponsors, donors and volunteers.

Linda Gorman

Jo-Anne La Flèche

Robert Langlois

Connect & Contact

Website: www.healthydancercanada.org

Email: info@healthydancercanada.org

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