

A DAY FOR DANCE TEACHERS

**Inspire and Amplify Your Teaching:
Discover the Latest in Dance
Science from Australian Leaders**

SYDNEY • MELBOURNE • PERTH • VIRTUAL

FEBRUARY 22, 2026

IADMS Day for Dance Teachers 2026

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Event Description

Join us on Sunday, **February 22, 2026**, for a Day for Dance Teachers and connect with some of Australia's major dance companies and schools—and their influential educators and practitioners. Learn how they are integrating dance science into the studio and onto the stage through practical, research-informed approaches.

In collaboration with **Sydney Dance Company, Bangarra Dance Theatre, West Australian Ballet** and **the Australian Ballet School**.

Participate in person, at regional watch parties, or virtually from multiple locations across Australia. The program features bite-sized sessions designed for immediate classroom application, with each presentation offering 30 minutes of interactive delivery followed by 10 minutes of discussion and Q&A.

In-Person Watch Party Venues

Sydney Dance Company Studio

Wharf 4/5, Walsh Bay Arts Precinct
15 Hickson Road, Dawes Point, NSW

The Australian Ballet School Studios

2 Kavanagh Street
Southbank, VIC

West Australian Ballet Centre

134 Whatley Crescent
Maylands WA 6051, Australia

Registration Fees

- Members (IADMS / ISTD/ RAD): \$58.50 USD/\$89.40 AUD
- Non-Members: \$65 USD/\$100 AUD
- Students: \$20 USD/\$30.50 AUD
- + 3% service fees

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Schedule at a glance

| Session | Perth (WA) | Sydney & Melbourne (NSW/VIC) | Site of In-Person Presentation |
|---|---------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Welcome | 8:00 - 8:15 | 11:00 - 11:15 | Sydney |
| Session 1: <i>“Training inclusively: teaching the artist”</i> | 8:15 - 9:00 | 11:15 - 12:00 | Sydney |
| Session 2: <i>“Heads Up in the Studio: Concussion Awareness for Dance Educators”</i> | 9:00 - 9:45 | 12:00 - 12:45 | Sydney |
| Break | 9:45 - 10:45 | 12:45 - 13:45 | - |
| Session 3: <i>“The language of pain and injury: optimizing language and cuing for managing injury”</i> | 10:45 - 11:30 | 13:45 - 14:30 | Perth |
| Session 4: <i>Healthy bodies, healthy dancing: talking about food, energy, body image and self-esteem”</i> | 11:30 - 12:15 | 14:30 - 15:15 | Melbourne |
| Closing | 12:15 - 12:30 | 15:15 - 15:30 | Melbourne |

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DETAILED AGENDA

Welcome

In-person: Sydney

Opening remarks and orientation for all participants.

Session 1 (30 min presentation + 10 min Q&A)

Watch party venue: Sydney Dance Company, Sydney, NSW

Title: *Training inclusively: teaching the artist*

Speakers from Sydney Dance Company:

- Linda Gamblin: Head of Training
- Samantha Dashwood: Head of Open Programs and Learning
- Alexandria Panetta: Learning Associate

Through an exploration of movement principles, supportive language, and inclusive learning environments, this session offers a fresh perspective on dance training and instruction. By incorporating the science of movement, the art of teaching and an emphasis on importance of psychologically safe spaces, the session supports compassionate, collaborative teaching practices and effective pedagogy to foster individual technical growth and creative exploration.

Session 2 (30 min presentation + 10 min Q&A)

Watch Party venue: Bangarra Dance Theatre at Sydney Dance Company Studios

Title: *Heads Up in the Studio: Concussion Awareness for Dance Educators*

Speaker from Bangarra Dance Theatre

- Michelle Wong: Head of Performance Health, Bangarra Dance Theatre

Interpreting the latest research and insights on concussion prevalence in dance highlighting key signs and symptoms that dance educators should recognise.

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Session 3 (30 min presentation + 10 min Q&A)

Watch party venue: West Australian Ballet Perth, WA

Title: *The language of pain and injury: optimizing language and cuing for managing injury*

Speaker from West Australian Ballet

- Isaac Campbell: Head of Performance Health, West Australian Ballet

How we speak to dancers shapes the way they move, think, and feel. As teachers, our intention is always to guide students toward their best movement outcomes. Yet, in doing so, we can sometimes adopt language that unintentionally reinforces fear or harm.

This workshop explores the powerful role of language in managing pain and injury in the dance classroom. Together, we'll unpack the natural biases teachers may bring to their cues and learn how to reframe them in ways that empower students, not only to become healthier dancers, but also to develop stronger health literacy and resilience.

We'll also address the vital bridge between health professionals and dance teachers. Since dancers often turn to their teachers first for health advice, aligning our language helps prevent conflicting messages that can leave dancers confused, and teachers and clinicians frustrated.

By shifting to a more supportive and informed way of speaking, you'll discover how to:

- Avoid harmful or fear-inducing cues
- Replace catastrophising phrases with empowering ones
- Create a positive learning environment where dancers feel confident in their bodies
- Support better dance outcomes while encouraging long-term health behaviors

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Session 4 (30 min presentation + 10 min Q&A)

Watch party venue: The Australian Ballet School Melbourne, VIC

Title: *Healthy bodies, healthy dancing: talking about food, energy, body image and self-esteem*

Speakers from the Australian Ballet School

- Lyndelle Steer: Specialist Coach & Classical Ballet Teacher
- Teagan Lowe: Health and Wellbeing Manager
- Gabrielle Davidson: Lead Physiotherapist
- Bradley Smith: Strength & Conditioning Lead, Physiotherapist
- Sarah Perkins: Strength & Conditioning Coach

This presentation examines how to reframe the conversation around Healthy Bodies, Healthy Dancing. The Australian Ballet School team shares how nutrition, recovery, training load, body image, self-esteem, and studio culture are woven together to create a cohesive Healthy Dancing framework. The session highlights current research on Relative Energy Deficiency in Dancers (RED-d) and explores supportive, age-appropriate ways to talk about food and energy with young dancers. It also addresses body image, self-esteem, and identity development in pre-professional training, with particular attention to the psychological needs of adolescents in elite environments and the ways dance culture can either support - or hinder - their emerging sense of self. The team underscores why this work matters, the meaningful outcomes it can foster for pre-professional dancers, and how teachers, coaches, and therapists can all contribute to its success.

Closing Remarks

Wrap-up and acknowledgments.

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PRESENTER BIOS



Linda Gamblin trained at The Royal Ballet School (London) before performing soloist and principal roles with The Australian Ballet, The Royal Ballet, the National Ballet of Portugal and Sydney Dance Company. Alongside her international performing career, Linda developed specialist expertise in anatomy and biomechanics during her years of training and teaching Pilates in the UK. This foundation informs her distinctive approach to classical and contemporary dance training. Her ongoing professional development in mindfulness, psychology and mental health continues to shape her commitment to safe, sustainable and emotionally intelligent learning environments. As Head of Training, Linda pioneered Sydney Dance Company's Pre-Professional Year program in 2014, establishing an industry-informed, holistic and rigorous training model that supports the physical, psychological and artistic development of young dancers. This approach underpins all advanced training at Sydney Dance Company, including the nationally accredited Teacher Training Program. Linda holds the CUA60113 Advanced Diploma of Dance (Elite Performance), CUA50311 Diploma of Dance Teaching and Management, CUA40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, Level 3 Diploma in Anatomy and Physiology UK and current First Aid and Mental Health First Aid certificates.



Samantha Dashwood (Sam) is the Head of Open Programs and Learning at Sydney Dance Company, where she oversees Sydney Dance Company's RTO offerings as well as the delivery of programs that have over 90,000 attendances per year. Working collaboratively with the Head of Training and Learning Associate, Sam ensures that Sydney Dance Company's training curricula meet the highest national standards and reflect current best practice across dance, education and youth development. With a background spanning classical ballet, musical theatre and vocational education, Sam brings a holistic understanding of the sector to her leadership. She is deeply committed to fostering inclusive, respectful and psychologically safe environments for dancers of all ages, with a particular focus on safeguarding children and young people. Her leadership strengthens the organisation's culture of care, accountability and learner-centred practice. Sam holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance), the CUA50113 Diploma of Dance (Elite Performance), CUA50213 Diploma of Musical Theatre, CUA40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, and current First Aid and Mental Health First Aid certificates. Her combined artistic and educational expertise supports the continued excellence and integrity of Sydney Dance Company's nationally accredited training.

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Alexandria Panetta (Lexy) is a Sydney-based artist, choreographer and academic with a strong interest in dance performance, improvisation, writing and film. She holds a Master of Philosophy (MPhil in Creative Practice) from UNSW where she completed her thesis 'Enacting (Re)Actions: Affect Theory and Embodied Resonance in Improvisational Contemporary Dance and Compositional Pedagogy'. This scholarship-funded research contributes to the dance educational sphere in NSW and Australia by analysing the role of improvisation and highlighting its creative value and potential in choreographic development within creative and educational contexts. Lexy has completed a Bachelor of Arts, BA Dance and BA Education, BA Arts and Social Sciences, and Honours in Dance Studies at the University of New South Wales (UNSW). As a passionate academic in dance and education faculties at the Australian College of Physical Education (ACPE), Lexy continues her work as a dance researcher, incorporating theory, philosophy, and practice in her written work. As Learning Associate for Sydney Dance Company, Lexy offers her insights and perspective on educational approaches to dance and creativity within Sydney Dance Company's Teacher Training and Pre-Professional Year Programs.



Michelle Wong is a physiotherapist with over 15 years' experience with advanced training in strength and conditioning and manual therapy. As Director of Performance Health at Bangarra Dance Theatre, she leads the company's Safe Dance Program, drives holistic injury-prevention initiatives, and provides high-level injury management and rehabilitation for elite dancers. With experience spanning dance-specific physiotherapy, complex pelvic pain, and workplace injury management, Michelle is known for her clear clinical reasoning and calm decision-making. She is committed to developing future physiotherapists and continuously expanding her skills through ongoing professional education.



Isaac Campbell: The intersections between arts and expression, and science and care, are where Isaac Campbell's passion lies. Isaac completed his Bachelors in Elite performance (Ballet) at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) in 2015 and went on to dance as a soloist with Theatre Koblenz, Germany. After returning home, he studied his Bachelors in Physiotherapy at Curtin University and graduated with first class Honours in 2021. Simultaneously that year, his paper on psychosocial components of low back pain in male dancers was published in the Journal of Dance Medicine and Science. His clinical career began in private practice treating community level dancers and athletes before joining the West Australian Ballet in 2023 as a junior physiotherapist. He now heads the Performance Health Department at West Australian Ballet where his role is primarily injury and medical care but also extends to Pilates instruction and strength and conditioning. He pays particular attention to how ideas, culture and social connectivity play a role in health behaviors, injury economics and artistic impact.

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Teagan Lowe; Health and Wellbeing Manager



Teagan Lowe is a graduate of The Australian Ballet School, completing both the Junior Associate and Full-Time Programs and earning her Certificate III and Advanced Diploma in Dance. Upon graduating, she joined Sydney Dance Company, performing extensively as a Principal Artist in Graeme Murphy's repertoire across national and international stages. She later became an Artist with The Australian Ballet, debuting in Stephen Baynes' *Swan Lake*. Teagan has also contributed widely as a choreographer and creative director, including work on *Dancing With The Stars USA*, major global luxury events such as Sands Macao Fashion Week for Balmain Paris, and serving as Associate Artistic Director of a new company founded with Graeme Murphy AO. Alongside her performance and creative career, she has established herself as a respected teacher, coach, examiner, adjudicator, and counsellor in both Australia and the United States. In 2020, Teagan retired from the stage as Principal Dancer and Dance Captain at Opera Australia to focus on teaching, coaching, and mentoring while completing her Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology). In 2023, she was appointed Health & Wellbeing Manager at The Australian Ballet School, where she leads the school's world-class health team and drives best-practice wellbeing initiatives for emerging elite dancers. Teagan is currently completing her Master of Counselling through Edith Cowan University, continuing her commitment to integrating dance, health, education, and psychological wellbeing.

Gabrielle Davidson; Lead Physiotherapist



Gabrielle is the Lead Physiotherapist at the Australian Ballet School. Passionately involved in the dance industry for over 30 years, firstly as a student with the Australian Ballet School, then performing with The Australian Ballet for 10 years and now working with dancers as a physiotherapist. Completing her Bachelor of Physiotherapy with Honours, at La Trobe University, she undertook research looking at Stress Fractures at the Base of the 2nd Metatarsal in Elite Classical Ballet dancers. This led to presenting at IADMS in 2005, fuelling her interest in research and the benefits for the world of dance. Since graduating as a physio she has loved working with dancers of all levels and abilities.

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Bradley Smith; Strength & Conditioning Lead, Physiotherapist

Bradley Smith is the Strength and Conditioning Lead and Physiotherapist at The Australian Ballet School, where he oversees high-performance physical preparation for the next generation of elite classical dancers. His work focuses on long-term athletic development, dance specific load monitoring, and bridging the gap between artistic performance and applied sports science. He is passionate about elevating the role of S&C within classical ballet and helping mould resilient, high-performing artistic athletes.



Sarah Perkins; Strength & Conditioning Coach

Sarah Perkins is a Strength & Conditioning Coach with a Master of Strength and Conditioning from La Trobe University and a Bachelor of Exercise and Sport Science from Deakin University. Over the past five years, she has worked in a high-performance facility in Ballarat, coaching athletes across a wide range of sports and development pathways. With a background in dance from a young age – including pre-professional training, time with Queensland Ballet, and her current work with The Australian Ballet School – Sarah brings a refined understanding of movement quality, artistry, and long-term athletic development. Her coaching philosophy centres on holistic athlete growth, bridging the gap between performance, wellbeing, and resilience. She has a strong passion for supporting athletes, empowering them to build strong, capable, and durable bodies so they can thrive in both sport and life.



Lyndelle Steer; Specialist Coach & Classical Ballet Teacher

Lyndelle trained at The Australian Ballet School, graduating with an Advanced Diploma of Dance and a Graduate Diploma of Elite Dance Instruction. She danced professionally with The Australian Ballet, Hong Kong Ballet, and English National Ballet, performing extensively in Australia and overseas. She has taught across multiple levels at The Australian Ballet School and served as an assessor on the School's examination panel and is an experienced adjudicator and mentor. As a Specialist Coach, Lyndelle offers unique training tailored to meet individual student needs, empowering students with personalised support that caters to rehabilitation, and nurtures individual talent development. Her coaching also provides holistic training, committed to excellence, and building connections between Health and Artistic teams.