



A practical introduction to audience development for dance



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Cover image: 'Likes' by Núria Guiu Sagarra at Spring Forward 2018 in Sofia. Picture Yana Lozeva

Introduction

Aerowaves' audience development toolkit aims to give practical guidance to under-resourced dance organisations less familiar with the concepts and practice around audience development across Europe.

Most dance organisations are good at engaging with audiences but they may not do it in a planned way. This toolkit tries to help them articulate what they do and why they do it so they make best use of their limited time and money. Their audience development practice may be instinctive rather than evidence-based so it shows them how they can find out more about their existing and potential audiences. They may not evaluate their activity so it sets out ways of seeing what worked and what could be improved next time. The final section showcases the audience development activity of three Aerowaves partners.

What is Aerowaves

Aerowaves is a hub for dance discovery in Europe. Co-funded by the European Union's Creative Europe programme, our network of partners and presenters in 33 countries enables emerging dance

"It's a tricky thing, 'audience'. What is it actually? People waiting in their seats for a show to begin? Is it me when I am enjoying a performance or is it just other people around me? ... When the play is over what happens to the people who were part of the audience a minute ago - are they audiences no more? ... Is talking about audiences saying more about the audiences or about those who speak of them?"

Goran Tomka, Researcher and lecturer¹

artists to bring brand new dance to brand new audiences https://aerowaves.org/

Aerowaves Twenty

Each October, the partners meet to discuss more than 600 videos submitted by choreographers from across Europe before voting for the next group of Aerowaves Twenty artists.

Spring Forward

In 2011, Aerowaves created an annual platform for at least ten of the Aerowaves Twenty artists. It brings key programmers from across the world to discover the latest dance from Europe alongside local audiences.

Springback Academy

Professional critics mentor emerging dance writers at each year's Spring Forward festival to improve the quality of dance criticism online.

Springback Magazine

This new initiative reflects contemporary movements across Europe through the work of the Springback writers. It aims to increase the reach of contemporary dance and deepen engagement. "At its core, Aerowaves seeks to make connections between exciting emerging dance artists, international programmers, and audiences who would otherwise never have found each other"

John Ashford, Director.

Springback Live

Daytime TV for dance streamed from selected festivals created by the Springback mentors and writers with guests, interviews, features and audience participation.

Aerowaves Offspring

The newest audience is the youngest audience, but Aerowaves choreographers rarely make work for children. Aerowaves commissions Aerowaves Twenty artists to adapt their pieces for young audiences.

Aerowaves Away

Aerowaves partners and presenters collaborate with local producers to introduce dance to the audiences in galleries, theatres, museums, concerts, festivals, sports events and the street through the work of the Aerowaves Twenty artists.

Aerowaves Exchange

Each year, Aerowaves introduces selected Aerowaves Twenty artists to new markets and audiences beyond Europe, and presents a work from outside Europe at Spring Forward.

"Sometimes the work created by a new choreographer brings more politically or socially oriented viewpoints and issues that are interesting to younger audiences, but rarely touched upon in the work usually made for them. Sensitive re-working will bring new young audiences to Aerowaves and new markets for the artists."

Pirjetta Mulari, Aerowaves Partner for Finland

What is audience development?

Audience development comes in all shapes and sizes. It's anything that:

Deepens engagement

Widens audiences - reaching more people similar to existing audiences

Diversifies audiences - reaching people **different to** existing audiences

It comes naturally to most arts organisations but they all do it differently. That's because it's not a to-do list of projects and schemes but a way of thinking about what you do that puts audiences at the centre. Each arts organisation has different goals, works in the context of different cultures and communities and creates different work so of course its audience development looks different too.

In spite of the differences, all effective audience development activity:

Audience refers to anyone who engages with the arts including readers, listeners, visitors, attenders and participants.

Some organisations prefer the term **public engagement** to better reflect a democratic process in which both audience members and artists are involved in an exchange of ideas, opinions and skills.

- involves seeing every aspect of audiences' engagement with your organisation from their point of view so a good understanding of their attitudes and experiences is essential
- involves everyone in your organisation to make sure the experience you all offer meets audiences' needs that means that audiences are part every conversation
- takes a planned approach so time, energy and money are focused on achieving agreed goals and everyone in your organisation understands how they can help achieve them
- usually involves partnerships with other organisations inside and outside the arts who already have a strong relationship with the people you want to engage with
- engages with different people in different ways that fit best with their attitudes and experiences – it's not enough to simply remove the barriers you think stop people engaging
- is based on evidence not assumptions

Creating a road map

If you get public funding, you probably have a business plan and a marketing plan already. So how is audience development different?

Different kinds of audience
Research commissioned by the
EU found that cultural
organisations focus on three
broad groups, taking very
different approaches to each.

Established audiences are familiar with the idea of being a participant or an audience member and engaging with culture is part of their identity

Not persuaded – people who don't engage but don't have any particular social or cultural disadvantage that stops them

Excluded – people who don't engage for complex reasons to do with educational, cultural or social disadvantage

There is a big overlap with business and marketing planning. Audience development should focus on achieving the same big goals and it uses many of the same ways of thinking. But it looks at everything from your existing and potential audiences' point of view and involves every aspect of your audiences' experience so includes so much more than business and marketing. It gets all of your organisation's different functions to work together with the audience in mind. A plan means you can all focus on the things that get you the results you want rather than wasting time, energy and money trying to do a bit of everything.

All plans are like road maps. It's sensible to do a bit of thinking before you travel; it saves so much time and effort. An audience development plan sets out: where you are starting from, where you want to go, the route you will take to get there, the resources you will need for your journey and how you will know when you have arrived – it's all common sense.

"Planning is an unnatural process; it is much more fun to do something. And the nicest thing about not planning is that failure comes as a complete surprise rather than being preceded by a period of worry and depression."

Sir John Harvey-Jones, business leader

The Audience Development road map

What are your organisation's goals?

 How can audience development help achieve those goals?

Where are you now?

- Who are your current audiences?
- · Who's missing?
- What are their attitudes to your work?

Where do you want to go?

- Who do you want to engage? Why?
- What do you want to achieve?
 What is the most effective way of engaging them?
 What resources will it take?
 How will you tell if it worked?
- Is it worth doing again?What would you change next time?

Where do you want to go?

Fitting in with your organisation's goals

Every cultural organisation has different types of objective. Everything you do seeks to achieve cultural objectives. Some of your activity may also have educational, social or economic objectives. Your audience development needs to fit in with these objectives.

Each audience development activity will focus on different groups and use different ways of engaging depending on whether you are contributing to your organisation's cultural, educational, social or economic objectives.

So, the first step is to map out those goals and how they will impact on audience development.

Take a look at your organisation's mission statement and break it down into chunks. What does each chunk tell you about how you should develop audiences?

Why do we do what we do? Your organisation may already have written down your goals. This is often known as a vision or mission statement. A vision is what your organisation wants to become in the future. A mission is what you all want to achieve now.

If you haven't got a vision or mission, how do you know that your colleagues all have the same understanding of where you are going?

Now is a good time to get them together to agree one.

Worksheet 1: Implications of your organisation's mission for audience development

Your vision/mission	Implications

Renewing the vision

"As the world changes and art within it, Annantalo feels that it needs to renew its vision from time to time. At the moment, We are clarifying our mission and vision to better meet both the needs of our audiences and our context. Annantalo is surrounded by art institutions, major art galleries and new structures; so it is important to update where we stand now in terms of providing art context for audiences. Annantalo's art education is stable and current the need to update lies more in the overall programming" Pirjetta Mulari, Annantalo Arts Centre, Finland

Worksheet 2: Who you are

What do you do and why do you do it?

Who is it for?

Why are you different?

What do audiences value most about what you do?

What will audiences experience? (how will they feel? what will they think?)

Your organisation's identity

You will find it much easier to persuade people to engage with your organisation if you are clear and consistent about what you do and why you do it. They want to know exactly what they are engaging with.

Who you are is shaped by what you are all passionate about: your values, philosophy and approach. Also important is what makes you different to other organisations. What do you offer that audiences can't get elsewhere?

Think about your organisation from the audiences' point of view.

How can audience development help you get there?

Audience development can help you:

Deepen engagement by enabling established audiences to:

- Get more understanding and appreciation of dance in general or, more specifically, the work of a particular dance artist
- Engage with a more challenging or unfamiliar dance event
- Engage with dance more frequently
- Form a closer relationship with the arts organisation

Widen audiences (reaching more people similar to your existing audiences who are **not persuaded**) by enabling them to:

- Engage with dance for the first time
- Engage with dance more frequently
- Engage with an unfamiliar venue which may offer different types of events
- Start engaging with arts events again through dance
- Start engaging with dance again

Diversify audiences (reaching people different to your existing audiences) by enabling **excluded** people to:

- Engage with the arts for the first time
- Engage with dance for the first time
- Engage with an unfamiliar type of dance

Audience development goals
Your plan will focus on the
audience development goals
(deepen, widen or diversify)
that fit best with your
organisation's mission and
identity.

Where are you starting from?

Understanding your audiences

You need to find out about your existing and potential audiences to understand where there is potential. You may have already done this as part of your marketing plan – the same information is useful here too.

Start by using Worksheet 3 to create an information shopping list. Don't waste time and effort collecting information you won't use so ask yourself:

- What do you want to know?
- Why do you want to know it?
- What will you do with the information?

Find out what your colleagues want to know about audiences, asking them these three key questions, too. Be as specific as possible. Vague questions like "why don't families come to our events" are difficult to answer. Develop a list of hypotheses about what might be wrong. Families may find that your venue is not family friendly, for example. Or they simply may not know that you present events for families. Create your questions around this list.

Focus on useful information It's easy to collect a lot of information that doesn't tell you very much.

Attitudes: these drive people's behaviour so tell you a lot about their potential to get involved in culture Behaviour: you can make educated guesses about people's attitudes to culture from their attendance patterns **Description:** information like age and gender is rarely useful beyond monitoring who you are reaching. But social and educational background can drive people's attitudes Geography: similar sorts of people tend to live in the same street so location can also be a shortcut to attitudes.

Now decide what type of information will give you the answers to your questions. There are three different types of information:

Desk research: information about your audiences that already exists, it just needs finding and sorting

Secondary research: this could be information that someone else has collected about, say, your local community, or information about someone else's organisation or audience that is like your own so you can draw parallels

Primary research: information about your own organisation and audiences that you have to go out and collect.

Just write D for desk, S for secondary or P for Primary.

Complete your shopping list by identifying where you might find the desk and secondary research you need. You'll find some suggestions on page 16

Now prioritise the questions based on the money and time you have available.

Primary research is a last resort

Although you can do simple primary research quite cheaply, it still takes a lot of time and energy. Try and answer your questions using desk and secondary research first.

Worksheet 3: Information shopping list

What do you want to know?	Why do you want to know it?	What will you do with the information?	D, S or P	Source (desk or secondary research only)

Sources of desk research

- Analysis of customer data held on your ticketing system (this depends on which system you have, how much information you collect and the skills available in your organisation)
- Analysis of ticket data held on your ticketing system lots of information is captured automatically that will tell you about your audience like the number of tickets sold at a particular discount aimed at young people or how many tickets are sold in each transaction (this tells you how many people attend in couples or in groups)
- Past management reports eg to your trustees
- Reports to funders
- Past audience research

Sources of secondary research into dance audiences

- IETM's online library of research and writing on audiences is at https://www.ietm.org/en/node/4657
- A list of research reports and studies collected during the EUfunded Engage Audiences project looking at audience development across Europe is downloadable here http://engageaudiences_bibliography/

Decision makers and influencers

Sometimes the people you want to research will not even be the people who experience your activities. Parents are influenced by the views of their kids but often they make the final decision.

- and their overview of all that research is here:
 <u>http://engageaudiences.eu/materials/engageaudiences_literatu_re-review/</u>
- http://www.communicatingdance.eu/tools/think/audience
 shows you how to be curious about your audience, step by step
- National statistics agencies often collect information about cultural engagement and make demographic data about neighbourhoods publicly available. Local government may also publish demographic data. Arts Councils or Cultural Ministries may also publish information about cultural engagement.
- The EU's research into cultural participation in each of 27 countries is here:
 ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/ebs/ebs
 399 en.pdf

Overview of secondary research into audiences for dance

How big is the audience?

In large scale population surveys in Canada, England, Finland, Scotland and Wales between 6% and 7% of the population aged 15 or above said they currently attend contemporary dance.² Research commissioned by the EU showed that on average 18% of

What are they like?

Dance audiences are like arts audiences and tend to reflect the overall audience at the venue. Dance enthusiasts can't be distinguished by where they live or what they are like.³

The number of under 24s depends on the usual audience at the venue and the marketing campaign. In one study of the same show on tour, the percentage ranged between 2% and 66%⁴

Europeans had seen a ballet, dance performance or opera in the past 12 months.⁵

The potential audience for dance is much bigger. Even those who consider themselves non-attenders of dance watch dance on television. Many who say they do not participate in dance frequently engage in dancing in nightclubs or at home. The key task is to make a link between this kind of casual dancing and more formal opportunities to engage with dance. One large scale survey of attitudes to the arts says that 65% of London's population are in the market for dance.

How often do they see dance?

86% of ticket buyers for contemporary dance at 39 Welsh venues bought for one dance event a year. 8 68% of ticket buyers for dance in London bought for just one dance event over three years. 9 48% of dance attenders responding to a survey in Canada said dance is 'a vital activity for me' but another 48% said they only 'enjoy dance occasionally'. 10 Increasing the amount of dance programmed does not appear to increase the percentage of ticket buyers purchasing for more than one dance event per year. 4

Motivations

New audiences are motivated by narrative, music and the visual spectacle. The clearer the narrative, the more likely new audiences are to say they enjoyed the performance. ⁶

Are they dance attenders or arts attenders?

Three quarters of ticket buyers for dance said they attended dance once a year or less but drama at least once a month. ¹¹ 78% of attenders at Big Dance, a UK summer festival of free dance events, said they went to the theatre at least once a year, 81% said they went to a art gallery or exhibition at least once a year and 91% said they went to a museum at least once a year. ¹²

Why do they see dance?

This is the case in Canada too, with dance attenders reporting that they attended events by at least as many theatre organisations as dance organisations.¹⁰

We can't assume that we are a good judge of why and how audiences see dance because neuroscience has shown that trained dancers see dance in a different way to non-dancers.¹⁵

Research in Australia identified that 45% of contemporary dance attenders are 'experiential' in attitude: they love trying new things, supporting new groups, they mix with similar people, and they like being stimulated both visually and intellectually.¹³

"When I began choreographing I made work as I had felt it when dancing. I believed that an audience would sense the material of my body as I did. Having danced, then watched as a choreographer, I came to understand that the quality, texture and rigour of the sensations of dancer and observer are completely different. Choreography has to have feeling and thought."

Siobhan Davies, choreographer 14

Audiences are looking for a highly personal cognitive and emotional response to the mix of movement with the visual context and the music and the sound of the dancers moving.¹⁵

How do they experience dance?

Everyone can get meaning from movement. A particular part of the visual system is stimulated when we look at human bodies. It seems to recognise configurations of the body in the same way other parts of the brain recognise faces. 16

Mirror neurons, respond both when we make a movement and when we observe other people making that familiar movement. By watching dancers move, everyone can simulate and internalise the feelings and motivations that make them move as they do. 17 Nondancers can readily recognise the gender, mood and emotional states of performers in complex social interactions and even abstract dance movement as long as there is movement. They cannot, however, interpret static poses.⁶

This has implications for the images used in marketing material which, of course, show static dancers. How can we better illustrate emotion and meaning in the absence of movement.

"When you combine assumptions and lack of reliable information about audiences, what you often get is a very false image of the audience that does more harm than good. This is why learning about audiences should become an integral part of organisational cultures." Goran Tomka, Researcher and

lecturer¹

What encourages audiences to take risks?

Some audience survey results indicate that pre-show talks can add to the understanding and enjoyment of a piece. ¹⁸

Academic research into audience response to two contemporary dance works, however, showed that pre-performance talks just made respondents more likely to interpret the work according to the ideas expressed in those talks. Pre-show talks had little impact on their enjoyment of the pieces.

The research recommends that pre-show sessions give methods of interpreting and understanding dance to those worried they won't make sense of it. After the performance, give audience members a chance to reflect on the work they have just seen in a positive environment, exploring their thoughts, opinions and feelings.¹⁹

What should we say to persuade them?

Lots of research shows that new audiences are actively put off by most marketing communications. Communicating Dance 360° emphasises the importance of translating your core message in different ways so that different audience groups receive and understand it.

"Effective communication about contemporary dance performs important functions: enhancing the public's understanding of the art form, expanding the reach and impact of dance in society, and ultimately advocating more effectively for dance as an art form"

Communicating Dance 360°

Primary research on the cheap

Whether you employ a specialist consultant, work with academics or students or carry out your own research, you need a research brief. If you are working with other people, you need to tell them:

Who you are: use the information in Worksheet 2

Research aims and objectives: use Worksheet 3, your information shopping list. Focus on the questions you can only explore through primary research (you have marked them with a P).

Who do you want to know about?: all age groups or just young people? Frequent or occasional dance attenders? People who are hostile or positive about dance? Complete the "Who?" column in Worksheet 4.

If you are carrying out your own research, you also need to make some more decisions so you can fill in the rest of Worksheet 4.

Copy the questions you marked with a P in Worksheet 3 into the first column of Worksheet 4. In the third column, turn your questions into "research questions".

Finding the research question A dance company wanted to know why sales were dropping in some venues. Their hypothesis was "Are we losing out in a sea of light entertainment?" This question was too vague to answer. After discussion, they decided their research question was "Are sales worse in venues where there is a greater proportion of light entertainment?" This was easy to answer – they just needed to compare the number of tickets sold for their performances with the percentage of light entertainment events in that season at each venue.

Now decide what kind of research will answer those research questions:

Attitudinal or Qualitative research explores in-depth the attitudes and motivations of a small number of people. It has nothing to do with numbers

Quantitative research counts things (including the number of people who have a particular attitude)

Write A for Attitudinal or Q for Quantitative in column 4

Next, choose the most effective research method for each question and enter it in column 5.

The most frequently used attitudinal methods are focus groups and one-to-one interviews. They should always be carried out by professional researchers or in partnership with a university. You could organise informal chats known as customer circles to get an idea about what people are thinking. With a bit of advice from a professional, you and your colleagues could do observation-based research.

Choosing research methods
Keep it simple! It's easy to end
up with seven hours of video
interviews that no-one has the
time to watch and analyse or
dozens of cute drawings by
children which cannot be
interpreted.

The cheapest and easiest quantitative method involves selfcompletion surveys, either online or given out at an event.

Online surveys tend to get low response rates and are skewed towards the people who feel most at home online. You can only survey people that have some contact with you or with a partner organisation. There is free software that makes it easy to create, distribute and analyse online surveys. This is the most frequently used: www.surveymonkey.com

In-person surveys tend to get a better response rate but only reach people who are at one of your events or one hosted by a partner organisation. You will need to enter the data into a spreadsheet to analyse it.

You could also carry out face-to-face interviews where you ask people the questions and record their answers. This is the method that brings the best results but is time consuming. You could set up the survey on a tablet so you don't have to enter the data later.

Finally decide how you will find and get in touch with the kind of people you want to know out about (you identified them in column 2). Will you survey one event or a whole range? Will you send a

How many will you ask?
If less than 60% of the people attending your event answer your survey, then it's possible (and even likely) that what they say is not representative because only particularly committed people (or people who like responding to surveys) have answered. 100 completed from 200 distributed is more reliable than 200 completed from 2,000 distributed.

link to the survey to everyone on your emailing list or just to some of them?

If you want to compare results from different kinds of people eg first-time and frequent participants, you will need a larger overall sample.

Organising Customer Circles

- Groups of around eight work best
- Make sure that you do not mix incompatible people e.g. nonattenders with frequent attenders or youngsters with your more traditional audience. Single gender groups of young people work best
- Offer the incentive of wine, beer, soft drinks and nibbles
- Make everybody feel at ease by using an intimate, informal space with comfortable seating
- Make sure everybody has their say
- Keep to the point
- Direct the discussion to where you want it to go but without restricting it
- The session should last 45 60 minutes

Encouraging discussion

- Listen, don't talk
- Try to be detached (even when they are trashing the show – listen, never defend)
- Ask open questions that they can't answer with yes or no
- Don't ask leading questions that steer people towards the answer you want to hear

Worksheet 4: Primary research plan

Your question	Who?	Research question	Q or A	Research method	How will you choose them	How many will you ask?

Creating a survey

What questions will you ask?

- A long questionnaire means more work for you and a drop in the number of people filling it in
- Only include questions that help answer your research questions
- Make sure your questions are structured so that you can compare the results with the available secondary research eg use the same age bands
- Keep the questions simple
- The questions should be in a logical order with the boring, personal questions last
- Explain why you need the information, especially the boring, personal bits
- Make sure the survey looks attractive and is readable in the available lighting
- Try out the survey on colleagues and friends to check that it is easy to fill in

Audience Research Made Easy This guide for small organisations is more than ten years old but still the best. Sections 3 and 4 in Module B have lots more guidance on doing surveys, customer circles and observations. Download it at http://www.hkaaa.org.hk/uplo

ads/hkaaa/201208/20120821 135000 R3DQEivWow f.pdf

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These are tried and tested question structures for you to adapt to fit your research questions.
Don't ask too many open questions as they take a lot of time to analyse.
Notice how the last four question types all have an answer that is in the middle like "Neither" or "Fair". This is how most people think — "I'm somewhere in the middle about this issue" - so giving an odd number of possible options gives you more accurate responses.
Closed question
Have you seen a performance by this company before today?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure
Open question What kind of place is Dansens Hus? Write four or five words in this box that describe what you think. (Please feel free to write more if you want.)

Multiple choi	ce						
Have you bee	n to a perf	formance at Da	ansens Hus	in the past 12	months?		
□ No, never		ot in the past 1 onths	l2 □ Ond	ce			
☐ Twice	□ 3	to 5 times	□ 6 oı tim	r more es			
Likert scale							
Dansens Hus	is a welcor	ming place to v	risit				
		Neither					
Strongly		disagree		Strongly			
disagree	Disagree	nor agree	Agree	Agree			
Semantic diff	erential						
	Very	Some			Very		Don't
	much	what	Neither	Somewhat	much		know
welcoming						unfriendly	
hard to get						easy to	
to						get to	

Importance rating							
The welcom	e I get when	l visit a venue	e is:				
Very important □	Important	Somewhat important	•	Not at all important □			
Rating scale The welcom	e le I got when	I visited Dans	ens Hus was	:			
Excellent	Good □	Fair □	Poor Ver □	y Poor □			

What do we want to know?

"When Bora Bora last did a survey, we asked people the usual demographic questions and how often they attend Bora Bora, performing arts events elsewhere, sports events, cinema and museums. But then we wanted to know what they thought about what we do. We asked them to rate:

- the atmosphere in the theatre and foyer
- our communications
- our ticket prices
- our programme.

We also asked what would make them come to Bora Bora more often. And finally, we asked 'Do you dance?'"

Lars Kjær Dideriksen, Bora Bora, Denmark

How will you get there?

Who do you want to engage with?

Your organisation will rarely have the resources to have individual conversations with every single person you want to engage with. You have to take short cuts. One short cut is based on the idea that groups of people with lots in common have similar needs, like the same sorts of things and act in the same sorts of ways.

You need to engage differently with different groups based on their attitudes, not their description. You would never talk about dance in the same way to a 16 year old boy who is a member of your youth dance group and a 16 year old boy who is mad about football but has never danced before. It's the same with your different kinds of audiences: established, not persuaded and excluded

Choosing priority audience development groups

First, decide if you want to:

Deepen engagement focusing on existing audiences
Widen audiences focusing people similar to your existing audiences
Diversify audiences focusing on people different to your existing
audiences

Be specific

"Families" is not a useful audience development group. They come in all shapes and sizes with very different attitudes and needs.

"Families with at least one child under five living less than a ten minute walk from the workshop space" tells you exactly who to engage with and gives you clues about what their needs might be and how to find them.

You may want to achieve a mix of these. But each goal will need you to do different things to engage each audience development group so think about the energy, time and money you have available and prioritise. Consider:

- your organisation's goals (see Worksheet 1)
- your knowledge and experience of your audiences and the wider communities your organisation serves
- the information you have collected about your existing and potential audiences

Now identify audience development groups with enough in common that you can make some good guesses about what would persuade them to engage. Be specific. Write your definition of each group at the top of Worksheet 5, one group for each column. Continue on another copy of the worksheet if you want to prioritise more than three groups. Now add what kind of audience they are. What is the most appropriate audience development goal?

Summarise what you know about them. What are they like? What do they enjoy? What's their attitude to the arts? And dance? What negative preconceptions might they have? What would persuade them to engage? How do they find out what's happening in their community? Where and how will you find them?

Finding partners

Often, the best way to find people who don't know you is through partnerships with other organisations who already have a strong relationship with them. They may be other arts organisations or groups with roots in the community. Make sure you and your partners share values and goals or it will be difficult to work together.

Worksheet 5: Choosing priority audience development groups

Group			
Audience:* Goal:*	Established/Not persuaded/Excluded Deepen/Widen/Diversify	Established/Not persuaded/Excluded Deepen/Widen/Diversify	Established/Not persuaded/Excluded Deepen/Widen/Diversify
What are they like?			
What are their attitudes?			
What would persuade them?			
How do they find out?			
Where/how will you find them?			

^{*} Delete as appropriate

Choosing strategies

You can only change two things: what you do and who you do it for. This means you have four broad choices (see the diagram on the next page):

- Same people, same activity
- Different people, same activity
- Same activity, different people
- Different people, different activity.

The last choice is the most risky because everything is new and it needs the most energy, time and money. You are more likely to be successful if you choose a range of strategies, not just high risk ones.

Choose the most appropriate strategy for each of your priority audience development groups and write them into Worksheet 6. Think about:

- your organisation's goals (Worksheet 1)
- your organisation's identity (Worksheet 2)
- the information you wrote about each group in Worksheet 5

At this stage, don't worry about the detail of what you might actually do.

Being strategic

Each of the case studies in the last section of this guide involves lots of different activities. But all the activities focus on delivering one clear strategy:

Tanzhaus Zürich:

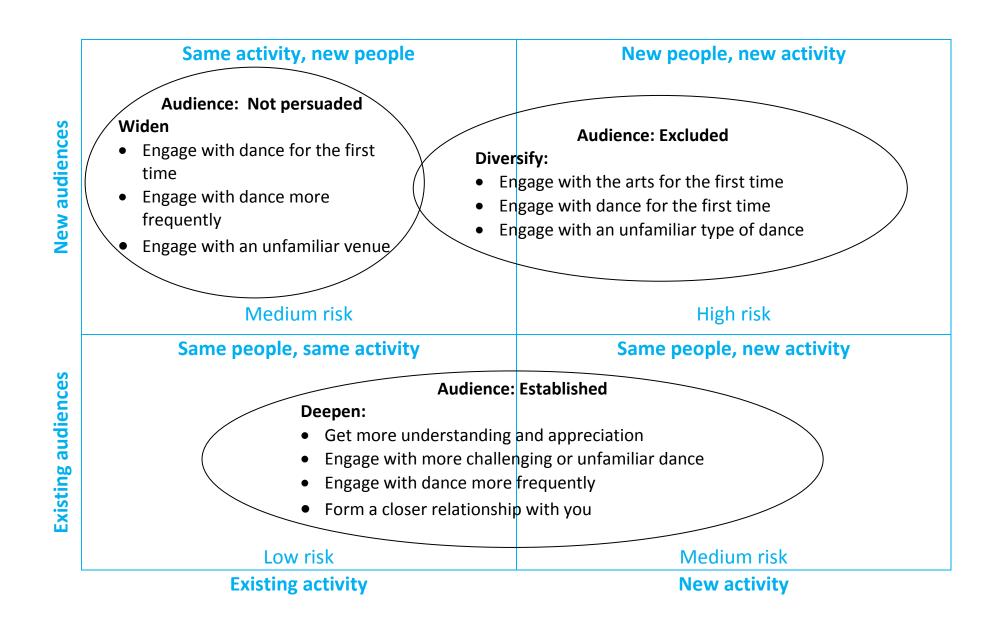
 Building a more diverse audience, enabling different people to meet and mix

D.ID Dance Identity:

 Engaging local communities in the creative process

The Place:

Developing an audience group motivated by the chance to talk about their experience of a new work



Set clear objectives

Now decide exactly what you want to achieve by setting specific and measurable objectives. The clearer you are now, the easier it will be to create your audience development activity and know if it worked. Your objectives need to be SMART:

Specific: everyone in your organisation needs to understand exactly what you're all trying to achieve

Measurable: this usually involves a number of some kind

Achievable: it's good to be ambitious but make sure it's not out of reach

Relevant: the link to your organisation's goals must be clear

Timescale: when will you have achieved your objective?

It's easiest to write a short sentence that includes all the elements of a SMART objective. You may need more than one for each strategy. Add them to Worksheet 6.

SMART objectives

- To raise awareness of our events for families in 1,000 households within 10 minutes walk of our workshop space at least three weeks before the sharing
- To persuade 50 people from these households to come to the free sharing at the end of the Aerowaves Offspring residency
- To persuade 10 people attending the sharing to buy at least one adult and one child ticket for the Aerowaves Offspring performance
- Children are engaged by the Aerowaves Offspring performance

Designing your audience development activity

Now you can design the audience development activity for each group. Consider:

- The **creative** elements including digital engagement: which bits of your existing activity are aimed at people like this group? What new activity do you need to add?
- Timing: before an event ('upstream' like the Aerowaves
 Offspring residency) or after ('downstream' like Springback Live)
- Where you do things: in your space or in spaces familiar to the audience? What changes do you need to make to the spaces?
- How much? remember that people use the price to judge quality so you need to signal the quality of free events in some other way
- **Promotion:** what will you say to each group to persuade them to engage? How will you say it online and offline? What are the most effective ways of getting that message across?
- Meeting their needs: what do you need to put in place to make your priority group's experience easy and enjoyable?
- People: which of your colleagues need to be involved? What would you like them to do?
- Partners: who will you work with from outside your organisation? What would you like them to do?

Looking for ideas?

Download the European
Dancehouse Network's 25 case
studies on how to make dance
relevant here:
http://ednetwork.eu/2016/12/23/conference-how-to-make-dance-relevant-5-catalogue-of-25-best-practices-on-relevance/

Download advice from Communicating Dance 360° at: http://www.communicatingda nce.eu/tools

Pivot Dance helped audiences develop a language for discussing creative work so they can support makers https://www.facebook.com/groups/938926912811109/

Don't fix your plans before discussing them with people from your audience development group – they are the best people to ask if your ideas will work. You could consult by:

- Bringing together a group of around eight people from the audience development group to talk informally about your ideas
- Employ someone to undertake more formal research
- Have a group from your audience development group involved in designing the activity from the beginning
- Talk to community leaders and other key figures individually (remember that they might have their own agenda, though)
- Ask teachers or group leaders to talk to small groups of their members for you
- Visit a meeting of your audience development group in their usual gathering place

Keep the relationship going

Think long term. Decide what you will do after this particular activity has ended to sustain your new relationship with the group. If you decide now, you can build a link into this current activity.

Building relationships

"Too often we think people will come to our dance events because we say they are good. Why then are we surprised when they don't show up? People choose for themselves what is of value to them. Our job is to open the door and help people make meaning from what they experience once inside.

At La Briqueterie, we spend time thinking about how to connect the artists we invite to different communities that would not meet anywhere else. It is not about pleasing everyone, rather encouraging people to find their taste so they will want to come back for more."

Elisabetta Bisaro, La Briqueterie, France

Worksheet 6: Your activity design

	T	
Group		
Broad strategy		
SMART objective(s)		
Description of activity		
How will you consult?		
How will you sustain the relationship?		
Measure of success		
Evaluation method		

Making it happen

Finally, create a simple action plan:

- What needs to happen?
- When?
- Who is responsible for doing it?
- How will this audience development activity link with your other creative, outreach, education and marketing activity?
- Who makes the decisions?
- Who do you need to keep informed?
- How much will each action cost, if anything? Whose budget will cover each cost?

Was it worth it?

It makes sense to evaluate your audience development activity. Usually, though, you and your team have to move on to the next project. Plan the evaluation now and you are more likely to make it happen.

The work you did to create SMART objectives will help you do that.

Ask yourself:

- How will you know if it worked?
- How will you know if it is worth doing again?
- How will you decide what you would change next time?

You need to add two things to Worksheet 6 for each objective:

- Measure of success: how will you know if you have achieved your objective?
- Evaluation method: how will you find out?

SMART objective	Measure of success	Evaluation method
To raise awareness of our events for families in 1,000 households within 10 minutes walk of our workshop space at least three weeks before sharing	Information delivered door-to- door to 1,000 households within 10 minutes walk	Door-to-door delivery completed three weeks before the sharing
To persuade 50 of those households to come to the free sharing at the end of the Aerowaves Offspring residency	50 people from that area come to the sharing	Address given when places at the sharing are reserved
To persuade 10 people attending the sharing to buy at least one adult and one child ticket for the Aerowaves Offspring performance	10 people from the sharing buy tickets	Number of tickets sold at sharing Cross reference addresses collected when tickets purchased and list from sharing
Children are engaged by the Offspring performance	Children show engaged behaviours	Observation during the performance

Evaluation methods

These are just some of the ways of collecting the information you need to evaluate each activity:

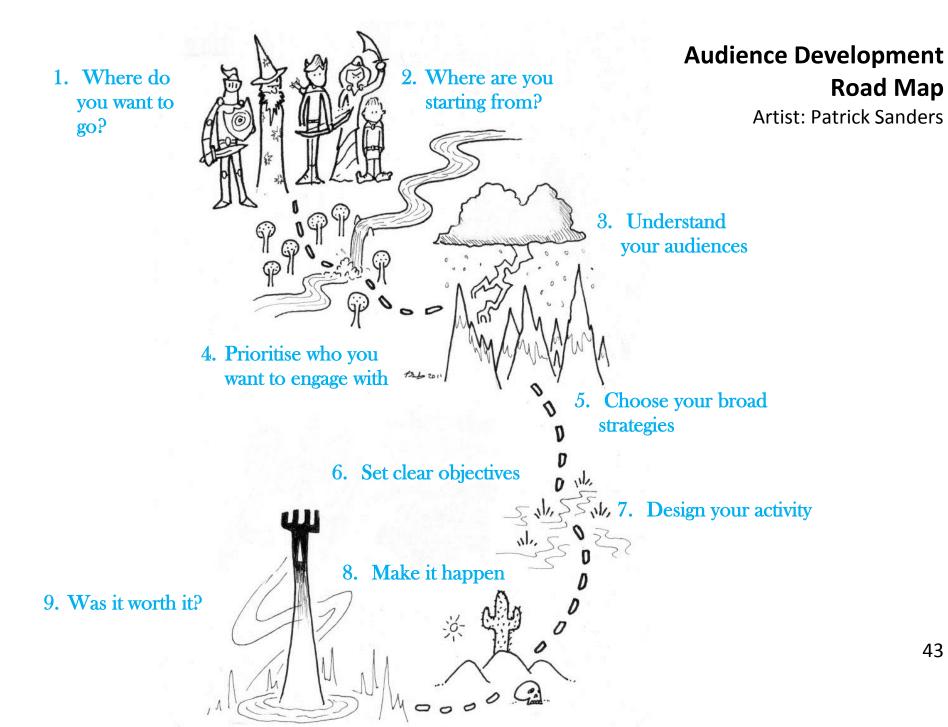
- Brief face-to-face interviews as people leave
- Customer circle after the event or activity (see page 24)
- Audience survey online or offline (see page 26)
- Observation of audiences and participants
- Booking forms
- Suggestion cards
- Feedback forms after the activity
- Information collected when people buy tickets
- Review meeting with everyone involved in designing and delivering the activity
- Website analytics
- Facebook Insights
- Twitter Analytics

Evaluating digital engagement

Measuring the level of engagement with your social media activity is easy.

For **Facebook**, this means the total number of likes, posts, reposts, clicks or comments for all the relevant posts. You'll find this on your Page's <u>Facebook</u> Insights dashboard.

For **Twitter**, it means the total number of likes, quotes, retweets and links for all the relevant tweets. You'll find this on your Tweet Activity dashboard





Tanzhaus Zürich, Switzerland

Tanzhaus Zürich is one of the most important places in Switzerland for artistic production and research; third level and professional training; information, guidance and networking; and discussion, promotion and presentation.

http://www.tanzhaus-zuerich.ch/home

Aim:

To welcome a more diverse audience. To invite anyone and everyone to live emotions and share their thoughts about current topics.

About us

We use dance as a tool to help people meet and mix with each other, establishing new communities. Our starting point is the research of our artists-in-residence and local artists. We want to gather a more diverse audience around these professionals. For

instance, we are signing up to a code of conduct to ensure we include people with disabilities.

About our activity

We strongly believe we need to combine several activities in order to build a fertile soil for contemporary dance. So here are a whole bunch of approaches.

- Sharings: welcoming a broad audience to the work in progress of our international residents and link them with the local scene
- No fear: providing a safe space, to exchange with the artists after their show. No question is dumb, anyone is welcome to speak. The talk is moderated by a specialist in a comfortable setting
- Lectures: offering a theoretical exchange with artists and scholars
- Physical Introduction: guiding the audience through a kinaesthetic understanding and sensibility before a show
- COOL-Tur/Wild Card/DanceAbility: dance workshops for primary/secondary schools, asylum

- seekers, people with disabilities, professional dancers and amateurs
- Kinderdisco: a party for children while their parents have the opportunity to watch a show
- Early birds: a series of interdisciplinary workshops for elderly people in collaboration with other cultural institutions of Zurich.
 Each sequence treats a special topic such as happiness, fashion, fiction
- A welcoming culture: the quality of service at our reception, the atmosphere and facilities of our foyer
- Tanzsalon: public presentation of a regular collaboration with the Swiss archive of performing arts
- Community events: the Flea market at the Tanzhaus or our presence neighbourhood events.

Results

We provide a tailored way to approach dance for many different audiences. As a result our public is growing. Our regular guests and our support club provide a special emotional link with us and so hope that we have brought people to feel closer to the performing arts.



D.ID Dance Identity Pinkafeld and Oberwart, Austria

Our goal is to nurture and facilitate the creation and production of movement-based art and relate this practice and the reflection upon it to a broader spectrum of the community.

www.dance-identity.com

Aim:

To bring dance directly to local communities by engaging them in the artistic process.

About our activity

Our base, Choreografisches Zentrum Burgenland, is situated in rural Austria near the Hungarian and Slovenian borders reaching across to Croatia. From there, we have engaged with partners from dance organisations in those countries to create Dance
Communication Labs (DCLs) so that
artists can collaborate on methods of
communication through body language.
These sessions are then made public so
that audiences can observe the process.
In addition we have founded Bus Clubs in
which local citizens in each of these
countries are driven for the day across a
border to watch the DCLs at the partner
festival whilst enjoying another culture.
The DCLs were part of the EU Culture
project Beyond Front@: Bridging New
Territories.

In addition we produce dance pieces for emerging choreographers and dancers which we perform either directly in schools or in our local theatre. After the performance which is around 50 minutes, we engage with the school classes in workshops led by the dancers.

We have also engaged with KulturKontakt Austria and hold movement based workshops directly in schools.

Another strong point has been the founding of a dance group for around 25 local citizens for whom we create a dance piece annually and which is shown

at our international dance festival, Burgenländische Tanztage.

Results

We developed a higher level of engagement by audiences and a stronger dialogue between artists and audiences, thus creating a mutual respect between artistic values and perceptions.

The three most important factors for our success:

- Welcoming audiences into new territories through verbal and physical dialogues
- Forming a dance group for local citizens to perform at our festival
- Bus trips with festival tickets

Our three top tips:

- Get active with local citizens
- Get active with local businesses and organisations.
- Help artists to understand they are being funded with state money and therefore must be open to sharing and communicating about their art with audiences.



D.ID Dance Identity, Austria Photo: Max Biskup

The Place London, UK

The Place is a creative powerhouse for dance development that is leading the way in dance training, creation and performance.

www.theplace.org.uk/

Aim:

To bring people together through their shared desire to learn and explore new ways of watching and responding to dance theatre. To try to develop an audience group whose motivation to attend the venue was driven by the opportunity to talk about their experience of a new work.

About our activity

Spectator School Social was a short course of three, weekly evening meetups, attended by 15 participants. The sessions were a combination of basic choreology, critical appreciation and facilitated social interaction with optional 'homework' tasks to encourage the participants to continue independently to explore the ideas raised.

Every week the participants took part in whole group 'lessons', smaller group tasks and individual reflections.

The first two weeks gave opportunities to analyse different contemporary art works: objects, images and screen dance, and to share personal perspectives on them. We explored a spectrum of responses to art: encouraging a shift from judgements towards observations.

Some of the theoretical elements of the sessions were delivered through watching The Place's Planet Dance short animation films, others through traditional teaching, and short practical movement workshops developed participants' understanding of the elements of dance (actions, dynamics, space and relationships). The final session was built around watching the performance of a new work by an emerging choreographer before meeting up to discuss it, applying the learning from previous weeks.

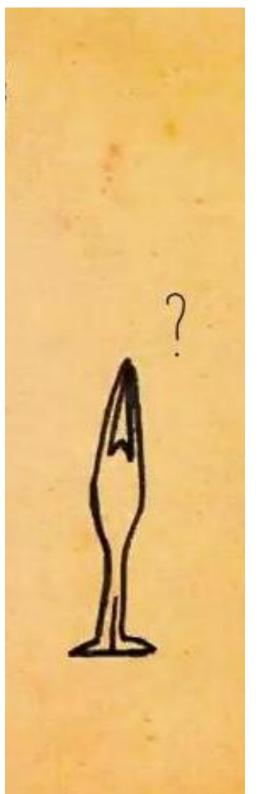
We provided free refreshments and participants were invited to arrive early and stay after the sessions had finished to continue their conversations with each other and with the facilitators.

We have already programmed our next Spectator School Social short course for Autumn 2018 and plan to test a different model, following a similar approach, in early 2019.

Results

People like a space to talk about their experiences of 'audiencing' – not just to share their responses but to hear from others who might challenge them to see work differently. Several participants cited how their initial reaction to the performance evolved following the discussion of it. All the participants said they would like more opportunities in the future to talk about dance performances as audience members.

For some people experiencing live performance on their own feels dissatisfying as they don't get the



enjoyment of sharing and reflecting on it with a companion. Many of the participants explained they can't always find someone who wants to watch contemporary dance performances with them, and this is often a barrier to them attending

Talking about contemporary dance as an audience member is appealing to a diverse range of adults and audience types. A third of the group identified as male with the reminder identifying as female, they ranged in age from 22-64 years old and were more ethnically diverse than previous contextual event groups. Box office data revealed that the group could be categorised into subgroups of around 20% each of new attenders, dance class participants, previous contextual event bookers, and long-term regular attenders.

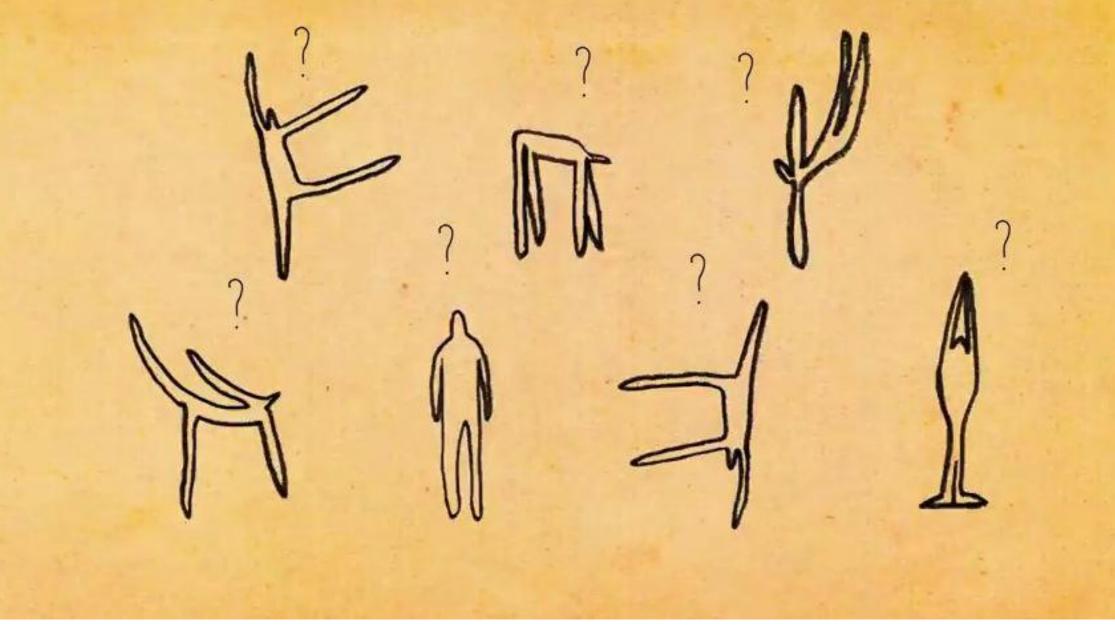
The three most important factors for our success:

 Investing time in making each individual feel welcome and valued: learn and use their names.

- Creating a clear structure for both the course and individual sessions but being flexible with how long each activity lasts- some conversations came to a natural conclusion very quickly but others need to continue so all the perspectives and ideas are heard.
- Employing a variety of delivery methods and resources helped make the sessions interactive and energised the group.

Our three top tips:

- Create the right atmosphere: a relaxed, safe space where people feel their different views are equally respected.
- Devise tasks and activities which enable the participants to get to know each other whilst practising the new skills: analysing, evaluating, reflecting, forming opinions, and articulating ideas to others.
- Relieve the participants of the perceived pressure to understand, or indeed like, every work of contemporary art – this will open-up the conversations.



ThePlace: Planet Dance Image: Magali Charrier

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