

Tuesday, November 18, 2014

Request for Research Proposals: Community Conversations on Disability and NYC Dance

Company: Dance/NYC

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REQUEST FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS: COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ON DISABILITY AND NYC DANCE

Dance/NYC requests proposals for an independent contractor to produce: a series of community conversations; and a research report based on lessons learned. These are primary deliverables for the second year of a three-year Dance/NYC initiative, Disability and NYC Dance (working title).

The goals of the contractor and the broader Disability and NYC Dance initiative are to advance inclusivity in dance and provide disabled people with increased access to the art form. Additional initiative deliverables include quantitative analyses and online information resources, which are currently in development, and will be released concurrently with the contractor's activities.

The candidate will have expertise in disability matters and be versed in the arts and cultural landscape. S/he will have relevant prior experience in planning, facilitating, and documenting community conversations and be able to provide examples of published writing.

Dance/NYC will give preference to proposals received by December 15, 2014 and aims to contract no later than January 1, 2015.

Interested researchers should submit proposals to Mr. Harwell (iharwell@dancenyc.org) and include: samples of published writing, relevant background, a statement on deliverables and planning methodologies based on the draft scope of work affixed, and a timeline and fee schedule. Note that the fee schedule should not exceed \$25,000 and that Dance/NYC welcomes pro bono contributions.

Please direct any questions you may have to Lane Harwell at (212) 966-4452.

SCOPE OF WORK: COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ON DISABILITY AND NYC DANCE

Organizing Principles

The contractor's deliverables, community conversations and a research report that builds on lessons learned, will serve to increase inclusivity in dance and access to the art form for disabled people in the New York City metropolitan area. The contractor may use areas of inquiry or stakeholder type as organizing principles.

Areas of inquiry may include but need not be limited to:

- A. Building dance education programs for disabled children
- B. Integrating disabled artists in dance practice and performance
- C. Making dance facilities architecturally and physically accessible and addressing their communications environments for disabled people
- D. Developing effective communications and program access for disabled people
- E. Training dance companies' staff, Board members, volunteers, and constituents on disability issues.

Alternatively, sample stakeholder may include but need not be limited to educators, facilities managers, audiences, and artists, both disabled and nondisabled.

Dance/NYC requires that the contractor also consider issues unearthed and questions left unanswered by quantitative analyses, online information resources development and task force discussions underway as part the Disability and NYC Dance initiative. The contractor may also consider established frameworks and successful case studies s/he independently identifies.

For reference, the quantitative analysis, which will be made available to the contractor in draft form by January 2015, includes the following areas of inquiry: the location and nature of both dance programs and services for disabled people in the metropolitan New York City area; educational programs for disabled people; program, communication, staff training, and service gaps and opportunities for development; the location and nature of accessible dance facilities; engagement of disabled audiences; and the role of disabled people in the dance workforce.

Primary Outputs

- A. Four to five (4-5) community conversations/town halls; or perhaps Symposium inclusive of 4-5 community conversations
- B. Promotional materials in accessible formats
- C. Documentation of community conversations—for instance, minutes and video—to be made available in accessible formats online (via DanceNYC.org)
- D. App. 10-20 page full research report (appendix and graphics not included), including:
 - i. A detailed methodology statement
 - ii. Introductions provided by Dance/NYC and stakeholders
 - iii. 1-2 page executive summary
 - iv. 1-2 page response connecting this research to quantitative analyses released earlier in 2015
 - v. 1-5 page recommendations for the application of findings, including recommendations for dance makers and companies, government and institutional funders, data providers and researchers, and service providers
 - vi. 1 page with recommendations for future Dance/NYC convening (Note: Dance/NYC plans to offer additional convening focused on disability matters in 2016)
 - vii. Substantive text and graphic content organized by area of inquiry

- E. Participation in at least 1 additional convening, likely the release of findings.

Process Work

- A. Setting overall plan and specific community conversation topics and agendas in line with organizing principles, with review by Disability and NYC Dance taskforce and sign off by Dance/NYC leadership
- B. Facilitating community conversations and/or identifying appropriate facilitators/speakers appropriate for each conversation
- C. Preparing promotional material in accessible formats
- D. Identifying and managing appropriate marketing and convening partnerships, including government agencies and disability service providers
- E. Identifying one or more accessible venues in the metropolitan area to host community conversations (attendance goal of 100+ on average for each conversation, or in aggregate for the full-day Symposium option)
- F. Securing assistive services onsite, for instance, sign language interpreters
- G. Executing documentation of conversations (e.g., minutes and video) to extend reach and impact through DanceNYC.org
- H. Drafting research report based on lessons learned
- I. Gathering and incorporating feedback from Dance/NYC leadership, the Disability and NYC Dance taskforce, and other key stakeholders
- J. Producing the final report and memorandum.

Notes:

Budgetary considerations will inform the scope of work. Dance/NYC has secured limited funding for community conversation expenses beyond the contractor fee, namely: facilities, speaker fees, marketing and collateral, and assistive services. Dance/NYC's Executive Director must approve expenses and the organization will bear them directly. Dance/NYC would separately engage a copyeditor and designer to prepare the research report for publication.

The contractor will liaise with additional initiative stakeholders, including a task force chartered to advise and assist on this initiative (see: <https://www.dancenyc.nyc/about/board-and-advisors>). In particular, the contractor will share the overall plan and final memorandum with the task force. The community conversations will also be coordinated to align with, and benefit, from the release of quantitative findings and online information resources.

Dance/NYC welcomes proposal that include additional research work.

TIMELINE CONSIDERATIONS

This project will proceed over a period of approximately nine months and be completed no later than September 2015. Dance/NYC welcomes alternative timelines, but proposes the following timeline that groups community conversations into a Symposium, which could coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, July 2015.

Month One (Ideally, January)

- Consultant reviews ongoing Disability and NYC Dance initiative material, including draft quantitative analyses, taskforce minutes, and additional organizational memoranda, and considers established frameworks for community conversations
- Consultant develops draft agenda for review by disability task force and approval by Dance/NYC (Dance/NYC will propose a task force meeting late January)

Months Two-Four

- Consultant identifies facilitators and speakers as needed
- Consultant prepares promotional material in accessible formats
- Promotional material distributed (at least 6 weeks in advance of event)
- Consultant identifies and manages appropriate marketing and convening partnerships (ongoing)
- Consultant identifies one or more accessible venues to host conversations
- Consultant secures assistive services onsite

Month Five-Six

- Consultant leads community conversations
- Consultant executes documentation to extend reach and impact
- Documentation/collateral released

Months Seven-Nine

- Consultant prepares draft research report
- Consultant shares draft report with Disability Task Force and Dance/NYC and incorporates feedback (Dance/NYC suggests a taskforce meeting for this purpose)
- Research report prepared for publication
- Consultant participates in release event.

Dance/NYC

For more information:

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