

Blog: Building Community and Shaping the Future of Dance A review of Dance Leaders group (DLG) Autumn Summit 2024 | By Tamar Dixon

Reading time: 3 mins

Please note a full version is available

Hello to all the dance enthusiasts of the Midlands! Have you ever wondered how joining a leader's group could benefit you and your practice?

The Dance Leaders Group (DLG) first connected in 2017, creating a platform where dance artists could voice their experiences, stay connected, and move forward together. It became a space for collaboration, and a place to explore how we can navigate the fast-changing world of dance today.

A Welcoming and Inclusive Space



- The autumn DLG summit at Trefoil House, Birmingham, was an open, accessible event for all.

- It brought together regulars and newcomers, building relationships and sharing reflections from April's spring summit.

- I joined in 2022, excited to learn, and I've seen how this community helps us grow as leaders and dance artists.
- Guest speakers like Jeanefer Jean-Charles MBE and Jamaal Burkmar shared insights that inspired everyone.
- Discussions were guided by Orit Azaz, making the day flow smoothly.

The Flow of the Day

- The summit encouraged group discussions using provocations (topics planned or suggested on the spot).
- I found that this sparked creativity and connected participants.
- Regular attendees find this format ideal, but newcomers might need a gentler introduction to feel comfortable.
- I feel a brief intro about DLG's mission would be ideal for first-timers.

"It was great to see so much engagement in the DLG - a really good place to connect and share."

*DLG participant
(Autumn 2024)*

Observations and Opportunities for Growth

- A focused theme for each summit could make discussions more productive.
- Should we keep a flexible format or have a specific theme?



- Regional subgroups help keep the dance community connected and growing.
- It's also important to celebrate our achievements, not just focus on challenges.

Building Connections and Embracing Opportunities

- DLG summits welcome everyone, from seasoned professionals to beginners.
- I feel that networking here feels supportive and inspiring, like therapy for the creative mind.

"Whether you're a seasoned professional or a newcomer to the dance world, being part of this space is important".

- Looking back, I'm proud to now have the confidence to join these spaces and conversations.
- The new African & Afro-Caribbean Diaspora Hub is a great example of growing inclusivity and representation.

Looking Ahead

- DLG summits are vital for shaping the Midlands' dance future.
- We can grow by setting clear goals, nurturing inclusive spaces, and fostering collaboration.
- **Questions to ponder:**
 - What makes a space feel truly safe and inclusive?
 - What changes do we want to see in our dance community?
 - Who needs to be part of this journey, and what outdated ideas can we leave behind?
- Let's work together to build an inspiring, inclusive dance community in 2025 and beyond.



Thank you for being part of this incredible journey.

(Please find sources below, thank you)

Author: By Tamar Dixon - unique tay: dance blog

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Sources

- Fancy joining the next DLG? [Sign up here](#)
- [Learn more about DLG](#)
- [Dance in Education Advocacy](#) and [Strength 2 Strength](#)

Steering Group Representatives of DLG

- Orit Azaz (Faciliator)
- [FABRIC](#)
- [Birmingham Royal Ballet](#)
- [Mercurial Dance](#)
- [Dancefest](#)
- [Black Country Dance Hub](#)
- [Shropshire Inclusive Dance](#)
- [FRONTLINE](#)
- [Brewhouse Arts Centre](#)
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The Author (this blog)

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 - *Please find a bio about the author below*

About the Author Tamar Dixon (Unique Tay)

- Tamar is a dance blogger, editor, and podcast host who champions dancers' voices and stories.
- Tamar is a dance entrepreneur and dyslexic.
- Founder of Unique Movez Dance Collective CIC, she's known for creating inclusive spaces and celebrating diversity.
- Her achievements include being a finalist for Creative Arts of the Year 2024 and receiving the Outstanding Contributions to Children and Young People's Award 2024.
- Tamar draws inspiration from cultural exchanges and international collaborations, sharing these experiences with the dance world.



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