

## FRAME: A biennial of dance March 2023

### PREAMBLE

FRAME is a dance festival for Melbourne. It's created through the collaboration and collective organising of independent artists, organisations and partners, who unite to celebrate with our audiences and communities in March, every two years from 2023.

FRAME is an evolving and transformative congregation: for audiences, makers and presenters. It seeks to represent dance artists from across forms, practices, cultures, histories, lineages, styles, disciplines, aesthetics and experimentations. The festival is interested in all kinds of dance projects, all of equal importance: shows, talks, films, public programs, sharings, and workshops.

FRAME is adaptive, and will respond to current conditions in its scale and ambition over a 10-year cycle. It aligns and supports an arts community both recovering from, and preparing for, large-scale shifts in how the arts, climate crisis, and global mobility intersect.

### THIS AGREEMENT

This document outlines two foundational areas of agreement by participating partners and presenters. It is the result of 18 months sector consultation, involving 518 people.

This document represents both an invitation, and a statement of accountability. Partners self-select their participation and contribution to FRAME through agreement of these principles and framework.

The **principles** of the festival are what we do.

The **framework** of the festival is how we work.

### KEY ROLES

FRAME, like its predecessor Dance Massive, is a festival created by the collective will, desire and need of the dance sector comprising artists, organisations, arts workers, presenters and advocates. It exists as the sum of many parts.

The Key Roles of FRAME are:

**THE PARTNERS:** the organisations who adhere to this agreement (principles and framework) for the next FRAME. They agree to contribute resources for the creation of the Festival and produce and present artistic projects.

**THE CURATORIUM:** are the artists paid by the partners (individually or collectively) with a responsibility to take a festival-wide-view. They appraise proposals and programs, identify gaps, consider ideas against this agreement, and provide oversight and feedback on the projects and contributions from Partners.

## FRAME PRINCIPLES

### **Principle 1**

FRAME is an opportunity to come together, compare, discuss, witness, expand, participate and connect with dance and its plurality of voices.

### **Principle 2**

FRAME is a festival for audiences. A public engagement and invitation for artists and communities to celebrate and appreciate dance.

### **Principle 3**

FRAME partners contribute multiple projects and curation, which incorporates artist-led, self-determined, and ongoing partner-artist relationships and projects.

### **Principle 4**

FRAME'S partners commit financial resources to both their projects, and wider resources that are shared and support the Festival's viability and independence.

### **Principle 5**

FRAME's presenters pay award rates to artists for their works.

### **Principle 6**

FRAME is an expression of a partners' ongoing commitment to growing and strengthening the dance sector. It will not be the only time each presenter supports dance and dance artists in their year.

### **Principle 7**

FRAME welcomes new networks and people and voices each edition. It doesn't feel like the same people every time.

### **Principle 8**

FRAME is realised through active participation in a collectively organised festival. This means partners contribute to regular, collaborative meetings working across advocacy, stakeholder management, marketing, ticketing, digital and administration.

### **Principle 9**

FRAME is accountable. Partners commit to self-evaluation, transparency and feedback throughout the festival's life cycle.

### **Principle 10**

In FRAME, everyone is equal at the table. Once committed to this agreement a partner has equal responsibility, and equal decision-making, in the realisation of the festival.

## FRAME FRAMEWORK

### **Self-Determination**

The festival prioritises First Nations leadership and artists at the beginning of its program (opening weekend), and at the core of its program. It collectively creates space and resources for First Nations-led companies and artists to enact the culturally appropriate pathways and mechanisms for the development and presentation of First Nations' projects and voices.

Further, artists from marginalised and multiple marginalised groups are a priority for the Festival's equity goals, decision making processes, and programming. This framework of evaluation, transparency and accountability drives this commitment.

### **Transparency**

The festival will conduct a single nation-wide Expression of Interest process for artists and companies interested to contribute projects to the festival: shows, talks, masterclasses, public programs, showings and events.

These EOIs will be critically appraised and evaluated against the priorities outlined in this Agreement, by an independent artistic curatorium.

The Curatorium comprises artists identified and waged by Consortium partners, with respect to the priorities outlined in this agreement. Additional appointments to the Curatorium may be required to ensure equity of community representation in this group.

Partners will present their programs to each other and the Curatorium for feedback.

### **Equity**

The festival's program will set targets and measure its success against clear quotas for representation which will be publicly available, and continually assessed.

### **Accessibility**

The festival is committed to making projects accessible, and presenting work by Australia's leading Deaf, disabled and or neurodiverse dance artists.

### **Locality**

With a concentration of cultural infrastructure and long-term investment in audience development for dance, the festival's home is Naarm/Kulin Country. Should national partners identify with the principles and framework outlined in this document, they are very welcome contributors.

### **Resourcing**

The festival is primarily resourced through leveraging the existing resources of the Partners. It is highly attuned to a broader funding landscape and does not seek to replicate or compete with existing or emerging festival platforms. Competition for resources between partners and across the festival is inevitable but should consider the best outcomes for the festival as a whole.

The festival's collective resources are focused on Australian independent dance artists and small-medium companies.

Dance companies led by making artists are encouraged as participating Partners. All Partners adhere to the Principles — specifically Principle 2 to realise multiple projects by

multiple artists. This could be a project by the making artist and at least one other artist independent of the organisation.

### **Wellbeing**

The safety and wellbeing of artists, staff and partners in the festival is fundamental to operations.

All Partners and participants adhere to responsible, ethical and professional behaviour and to uphold and protect the name and ethos of the festival. We share a collective responsibility to work to improve, learn and develop the festival together.

### **Sustainability and Growth**

The festival's growth can and must align with a sector recovering from, living through and preparing for climate crisis and the lasting impacts of Covid-19. It is unlikely the festival can fulfil its principles, and represent a large program of shows and events, in its first year. We seek to understand the festival's role in the sector using a lens of a minimum 10-year commitment.

### **Decision-Making**

The Festival utilises collective organising and regular meetings (in person and virtually) to produce and program the Festival. Decisions are by consensus of the attending people.

### **Collective Producing**

Collective producing a festival is a challenge. If resources are available, engaging staff temporarily across the Festival will be useful.

Some Partners will be required to take responsibility and lead in particular areas of producing e.g. ticketing, branding, website, and marketing.

### **Guests**

It's likely the Festival will welcome visiting artists, producers, presenters and colleagues nationally and internationally over time. Neutral partners and stakeholders will be best placed to facilitate future delegations.

### **Audience Experience**

The Partners and Curatorium will work actively together to create a rich, deep and exciting Festival experience for audiences, artists and communities.