

# ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE

Royal Academy of Dance offers young people in Wandsworth the chance to dance for Dame Darcey Bussell at first-ever open audition

Up to three budding dancers will be offered free tuition for a year



- Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) announces new bursary scheme which will allow up to three local, budding dancers to have free dance tuition at RAD's new state of the art facilities for one year, as well as cover the cost of uniform
- Young people aged between 4 and 17 from Wandsworth are invited to take part in an open audition, in front of a panel of dance professionals led by RAD President Dame Darcey Bussell on Sunday 8 May. They will be looking for students with no prior dance experience with potential and drive, who are looking to take their first steps into a dance studio
- This is the first time that the RAD has hosted an open audition and is part of an ongoing commitment from the organisation to increase accessibility to dance and strengthen its tie to the local community. This work will be expanded as part of a new partnership with Take a Part
- The open audition takes place as part of a special housewarming event for RAD's new global headquarters. Everyone is invited to step inside the RAD's new home in Battersea and take part in a range of free activities for all the family, including taster workshops, scavenger hunts, performances and arts and crafts.
- Find out more at: [www.homefordance.org](http://www.homefordance.org)

13 April 2022: The Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) today announced it is holding its first-ever open audition as part of a new bursary scheme designed to widen participation in dance for young people in Wandsworth. The RAD Community Bursary will allow the organisation to fund up to three students to take weekly dance classes in RAD's new state of the art facilities, as well as cover the cost of uniform. The RAD is looking for young people aged 4-17 with no prior formal dance training to come forward to take part in an open class, watched by a panel of dance professionals.

Led by RAD President Dame Darcey Bussell the panel also includes Joshua Tuifua, ex-dancer with The Royal Ballet and RAD Trustee and Joanne Ward, RAD Dance School Principal. Together they will be looking for passionate young people without previous dance experience, who show promise and a keenness to learn.

As part of the bursary scheme, up to three dancers will be selected and offered a place at the RAD's Dance School for one year. The panel may select one promising dancer from each age range: 4-7, 8-12 and 13-17. Those chosen to receive the bursary will be enrolled and will be able to take a weekly dance class at the RAD in whichever dance style they choose, including ballet, contemporary, musical theatre, jazz or street. By doing so, they will become a member of the RAD Dance School, located at the RAD's headquarters, which offers a variety of extra-curricular dance classes for young people and adults.

**RAD President Dame Darcey Bussell said:** "I am so looking forward to welcoming our local community into their new home for dance and to seeing the talent we have here in Wandsworth. I have experienced how dance can transform lives, making us happier and healthier and I cannot wait to share this with you. I look forward to meeting everyone at the Royal Academy of Dance in May - I will be looking for enthusiastic young dancers who are excited to learn and move more."

**RAD Artistic Director Gerard Charles said:** "At the Royal Academy of Dance, we believe that every *body* can dance and it is our mission to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to do so. I am so thrilled that we are launching this new bursary scheme, which will allow more students to be a member of our Dance School community at our incredible new building in Battersea."

The Royal Academy of Dance is one of the world's most influential dance education and training organisations, with over 100 years' experience in teaching the world to dance. At the heart of the RAD's work is the belief that the transformative power of dance can enrich, empower, and improve lives, and as such, that everyone should have the opportunity to learn to dance. Having just moved into a new global headquarters in York Road, Battersea, the charity is looking beyond the bricks and mortar toward building lasting relationships with the local community.

As part of this work, the RAD is delivering a cultural engagement strategy, which will put the local community at the centre of their work. The charity recently announced a new partnership with Take a Part CIO who will support them in delivering this strategy. Named 'The Good Neighbours Programme', Take a Part and RAD will work together to strengthen and deepen the RAD's commitment to Wandsworth and ensure their new state of the art home becomes a thriving cultural hub for local residents. Through the support of socially engaged arts practitioners and leading national organisation for co-creation, Take A Part and the team at RAD will work intensively

over the next year on a series of community engagement events, open days, talent development programming and mentoring to learn and test what it means to be a *good neighbour*.

The housewarming event on Sunday 8 May will be one of the first opportunities to experience everything the RAD has to offer. A full programme of free activities for all the family will take place throughout the day, including dance-inspired arts and crafts for children, scavenger hunts, taster workshops for all ages and in a range of dance styles, as well as performances and screenings.

To find out more about the RAD's housewarming event on Sunday 8 May and to register for the open audition, visit here: [www.homefordance.org](http://www.homefordance.org)

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## MEDIA CONTACTS

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## **Notes to Editors:**

### **About the Royal Academy of Dance**

Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) is one of the most influential dance education and training organisations in the world with a strong global membership in 85 countries.

Established in 1920 to improve standards and re-invigorate dance training, the RAD helps and encourages its teachers to perfect their teaching skills and pass on this knowledge to their students. There are currently over 1,000 students in full-time or part-time teacher training programmes with the RAD and each year the examination syllabus is taught to thousands of young people worldwide, with around a quarter of a million pupils per year going on to take RAD exams.

### **About the Royal Academy of Dance's global headquarters**

Created as a new international home for dance, the £19.5m Battersea-based project enables the RAD to realise the potential of the 60,000 sq. ft headquarters, and they are fundraising for the final, but crucial funds of £800,000 to meet their target. In this new space, the RAD will expand on its 100-year commitment to high-quality dance

education and will harness the transformational power of dance to reach more people, regardless of age, ability, or location.

Alongside enhanced education and training facilities for students and teachers, seven large dance studios, a café and a shop, the new building will be home to a long wished for 193-seat performance space, The Aud Jepsen Studio Theatre, to showcase the RAD's dancing talent, as well as a new performance space for local companies.

On display for the first time in its 100+ year history will be a fully accessible archive showcasing the RAD's extraordinary collection of 75,000 artefacts, books, programmes, letters, relics and costumes, which can be viewed by appointment with the RAD's Archives and Records Manager at the Wolfson Library and archive.

### **About Take a Part (TAP)**

Take A Part (TAP) are the UK's leading socially engaged arts organisation. TAP use creativity as a catalyst for community cohesion and to rebalance social injustices in this world. Based in Plymouth but with partnership organisations in Bristol, Somerset, Gloucestershire and Republic of Ireland, TAP take a long-form and Asset Based Community Development approach to working that honours the experiences and expertise of local residents and places them as leaders in their cultural futures. ([www.takeapart.org.uk](http://www.takeapart.org.uk))