

PRESS RELEASE

State government jeopardises the future of the internationale tanzmesse nrw and endangers the international networking of the NRW dance scene

Cologne, 17 December 2024 - After 30 years of successful international networking in contemporary dance, the internationale tanzmesse nrw, which has been organised by nrw landesbuero tanz since 1994, will no longer be funded by the NRW Ministry of Culture for the next edition in 2025/2026.

The budgetary crisis is also affecting the dance network IDAS NRW (International Dance Artists Service), which has served as an essential link between NRW's independent dance scene and international partners over the past 15 years. According to the state government, it will no longer be funded.

These decisions, should they remain in place, mark a crucial turning-point for the dance scene in North Rhine-Westphalia.

A loss for the world of dance and its international relations

The internationale tanzmesse nrw is a unique forum uniting around 1,500 dance professionals from over 50 countries in Düsseldorf every two years. It serves as a catalyst for artistic exchange, placement and knowledge transfer, international tours and co-operations. This platform is essential for maintaining networks and relationships that have grown over three decades and are irreplaceable for the global visibility of dance professionals from NRW. There is also a risk that the funding programmes of the participating countries and partners, which have contributed to making this global exchange in Düsseldorf possible, will be discontinued. The suspension of the Tanzmesse thus constitutes not only a cultural but also an economic and socio-political loss, tarnishing the image of NRW as Germany's foremost "dance region", especially in an international context.

The dance network IDAS NRW has been an indispensable part of dance promotion and funding for over 15 years. In addition to the Tanzmesse, IDAS is an important element for the international networking of dance professionals in NRW. As an interface between artists and presenters, it strengthens their visibility, establishes long-term contacts and supports artists with strategic advice.

As a result of the planned cuts, NRW is in danger of losing its role as a driving force and host of international dance.

Cuts with far-reaching implications

The nrw landesbuero tanz, organiser of the Tanzmesse and major point of contact for the professional dance scene in North Rhine-Westphalia, considers this decision a substantial threat to the cultural infrastructure of dance. For many years, North Rhine-Westphalia has positioned itself as the “No. 1 dance region” – a position it will no longer be able to hold in the future.

The planned cutbacks will hit professional dance in NRW particularly hard, as federal, state and municipal funds are threatened to be drastically reduced. The disappearance of IDAS NRW and the Tanzmesse will not only weaken the structural support of dance but also make international exchange more difficult in the long term.

Culture and art as a bridge in challenging times

In times of increasing nationalistic tendencies and challenges to democracy, international cultural exchange is of crucial importance. Over the past decades, the Tanzmesse has played an important role in promoting understanding and recognition across cultural and national borders. The loss of this platform would be a setback for contemporary dance and intercultural dialogue.

Appeal to the government and state parliament of NRW

The cutbacks in the cultural sector are disproportionate to the long-term impact they have for the cultural landscape of North Rhine-Westphalia. It is also hard to comprehend why dance, in particular, should be so significantly affected. The internationale tanzmesse nrw and IDAS NRW are not only important components of the state's cultural infrastructure, but also flagship projects with international appeal. We urge the state government and their supporting parliamentary groups to reconsider their decision and provide the necessary funding for the continuation of these unique institutions.

Contact:

Maike Lautenschütz

Communication and PR

nrw landesbuero tanz

maike.lautenschuetz@landesbuerotanz.de

T: 0221 888 95 394

www.landesbuerotanz.de

www.tanzmesse.com