

Candoco Curatorial Statement for Assemblies (in plain English)

Candoco makes dance that is **bold, transformative** and **unexpected**. We are interested in work that opens up what dance can be and who it is for. At the centre of everything we do is a simple belief: **dance is better when difference is celebrated**.

Candoco is a producing company. We don't work with one fixed group of dancers. Instead, we support different D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent choreographers and create the right conditions for them to make their work well, with the collaborators they need.

When we look at a piece of work, we are not only asking what the piece is, but what Candoco enables, what the artist's vision requires, why it belongs in this context, and what it will mean to make and share it through Candoco.

Candoco has a history of changing how people think about disability and dance. We use that to keep moving forward, not to stay the same.

Our work is carefully made and high quality, but it also leaves room for trying things out. Some work will be playful, some will take risks, and some may not fit into traditional ideas of dance.

We also recognise that there are tensions in what we do, between reaching more people and staying artistically ambitious, between our history and future change, and between having structure and allowing flexibility. We don't try to fix these tensions. We use them to help guide strong and thoughtful decisions.

Curatorial Priorities for Artistic Assembly Members

Assemblies should focus on work that expands what dance can be.

When discussing work, use these areas to guide your thinking:

Artistic Qualities

- Does it offer something new?
- Is it open to experimenting or taking risks?
- Does it feel relevant to now?
- Does it say something meaningful, even if not directly political?

Creative Leadership & Process

- Are D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent artists centred in leading and shaping the work?
- Is lived experience recognised as part of the expertise?
- Is the work made through collaboration and shared process?

Audience

- Is it clear who the work is for?
- Has the audience experience been thought about as part of the work?
- Has access been included for D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent audiences, as part of the artistic offer?

How we define excellence

We don't use one fixed idea of excellence, and bigger doesn't always mean better.

We look for:

- A clear idea behind the work
- Work that feels well thought through and consistent
- A strong experience for audiences
- Work that may challenge traditional ideas of what "good" dance looks like
- We judge each piece of work on its own terms.

The Candoco Difference

Not all work needs Candoco. We prioritise work that benefits from what we can offer.

This might include:

- Bringing different bodies, styles and ways of moving together
- Making sure D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent artists are properly centred

- Building access into the work from the start
- Creating real visibility for D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent artists
- Giving time and space to experiment
- Before making a decision
- Before agreeing, pause and ask:
- Artistic ambition: Can we properly support this artist's vision?
- Access: Is access built in from the beginning for both artists and audiences?
- Representation: Does this reflect a wide range of experiences?

Working Principles

Assembly members are there because of the perspectives they bring.

You are not expected to follow a strict checklist. Instead:

- Use your judgement
- Share responsibility for decisions
- Use these prompts to guide discussion, not to tick boxes

The aim is to support open, thoughtful conversations that stay aligned with Candoco's values.