The Representation and Equity in Dance (RED) project: Enhancing racial equity in dance education

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Imogen Aujla is a freelance dance psychology specialist from Dance in Mind. She works across three main areas: research, psychological coaching for individuals and groups, and education. Imogen's main focus with her work is mental health promotion, helping dancers develop the skills they need to flourish on and off stage.

Stacey Green is the founder of the TIRED Movement (Trying to Improve Racial Equality in Dance). She has dedicated her career to empowering people through education, dance, and meaningful conversations that inspire change. Stacey is a member of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Board of the Imperial Society for Teachers of Dance (ISTD).

Context and Rationale

Equity, diversity, and inclusion have gained increasing attention in many areas of society, including dance, in recent years. Many discussions about representation and racial equity have taken place in the dance industry, but action for real change has been limited. This issue is worsened by a lack of specific research evidence about racial discrimination in dance.

Anecdotal evidence highlights the unique challenges that Global Majority dancers face, such as perceptions about ideal body shapes and stereotypes that influence casting. For example, Global Majority dancers have described being cast in "exotic" roles rather than as the "princess."[1] These views stem from ballet's dominance as the "high art" of dance, which implies that Whiteness is standard[2], universal, and neutral. The roles of Global Majority dancers in shaping different dance genres are often overlooked.[3]

Individual accounts of racist experiences reveal that Western dance training can negatively affect the self-esteem, motivation, and ambitions of Global Majority dancers.[4] However, research on these effects has been limited until recently.

Stacey Green founded the TIRED Movement specifically to address the above challenges. She was tired of having the same conversations over and over again, with few real actions being taken. Stacey discussed her ideas with Imogen, an independent researcher with a commitment to inclusion in dance. To tackle the inaction in the dance world, the TIRED Movement launched the Representation and Equity in Dance (RED) research project to provide data that can lead to positive change by exploring two main objectives:

1. The effects of the lack of equity and representation in dance education on Global Majority dance students.
2. Create and test a framework to improve equity and inclusion in dance training.

The project supports TIRED's goal to enhance access and inclusion in dance and improve representation in the industry.

This article summarizes the main findings from the project and offers some practical tools for dancers and teachers to use in the studio. Racism can appear at both individual and organizational levels, and we hope that readers will feel inspired to take steps to make positive changes in their own settings. White dancers and teachers can become active allies by exploring the tools and resources presented in this article to support and advocate for Global Majority dancers across the industry.

Research Summary

TIRED teamed up with nine dance colleges in the UK for the RED project. While the focus was on Global Majority dancers, White dancers were also included to highlight how tackling racism is a shared responsibility. With 150 dancers (Global Majority 26%; White 74%) completing a survey about dancers' experiences of racial discrimination and their mental health, we found that discrimination, particularly exclusion and rejection, is strongly related to lower wellbeing among Global Majority dancers. Feeling ignored (e.g., views being ignored in a group), being excluded (e.g., not being chosen for pair or group activities), and being treated unfairly or made to feel different (e.g., being criticized more often than White dancers) were strongly related to lower wellbeing amongst Global Majority dancers. Even with the same ambitions as White dancers, Global Majority dancers expected to encounter more barriers when entering the profession due to systemic biases and discrimination. The negative impacts of discrimination include experiencing poorer life satisfaction, lower body appreciation, negative self-perceptions of ability, and poorer relationships with others.

Nineteen dancers (Global Majority 8; White 11) took part in a series of focus groups, discussing experiences of discrimination as well as how they coped with discrimination in dance and suggestions for change. The focus groups confirmed and supported the survey results. We found that:

- Teachers and peers exclude Global Majority dancers and treat them differently from White dancers:

> *"I just feel like they're picking on me, like, everyone else will make a mistake, but then when I make a mistake it's like, "Oh, why didn't you practice?... There were other people around me going wrong, but [teacher] didn't say anything about them."*

- White peers suggested that casting decisions were based on skin color rather than talent:

> *"I felt really invalidated, that I'd worked so hard this whole year, and then went through a really difficult audition process, and made it through, to be told it's only because you look different, like, it's nothing to do with your dance abilities."*

- Teachers making learning activities and casting decisions based on stereotypes:

> *"[the script] was very stereotypical ghetto... I don't feel comfortable doing it."*

From these findings, we learned that experiencing discrimination leads to self-doubt, isolation, and lower confidence. Dancers often hesitated to report incidents, as they were unsure if action would be taken.

Overall, the RED findings show that racism exists in dance training and affects Global Majority dancers' psychological wellbeing and mental health. During the final phase of the project, we aimed to create a framework to improve racial equity in dance training. Although data from pilot testing of the framework is not yet published, the framework is available through TIRED Connect, a platform that connects people and organizations, shares knowledge, and supports the TIRED Movement.

Application of Research Findings to Practice for Dancers and Teachers

Western dance training often treats White practices as normal and universal[4]. This appears in course content, syllabi, and teaching and assessment methods. The first step towards racial equity in the dance training environment is to be aware that Whiteness may be perceived as more important or superior to other cultures.[5] For instance, when discussing the "ideal body" in dance, it usually means a White balletic body, which can exclude Global Majority dancers.[5] Understanding the multiple ways in which Whiteness pervades dance training provides an important context for the other suggestions and tools in this article.

Before you explore the tools and resources in this article, we invite you to pause and reflect:

- Whose histories, bodies, and artistry are reflected in your curriculum or syllabus?
- Which aesthetic lens sets the standard for technique, feedback, and assessment in your setting?
- Does that lens give every dancer an equal starting point?
- Are Global Majority dancers included within that standard, or measured against it from the outside?

These questions are not easy, nor are they meant to be answered in a single sitting. They are offered as a starting point for the practical tools that follow, and we hope they help you read the rest of this article not as a checklist but as an invitation to notice, question, and perhaps begin to shift what happens in your dance setting. Your reflections can lead to open discussions with colleagues, dancers, and students about stereotyping, microaggressions, gaslighting, and allyship, and conversations about what terms like equity and inclusion mean can be equally productive and eye-opening. A glossary is provided at the end of this article.

The supplementary material, courtesy of The IADMS Bulletin Editorial Team, may be printed as posters for your studio or workspace, and we also invite you to listen to the ResDance podcast episode hosted by Dr Gemma Harman which offers further insights from the authors around racial equity in dance. While those facilitating these discussions may need

further training to hold these spaces sensitively, such conversations can help White teachers and dancers better understand the practical recommendations highlighted in this article.

Tools and Resources

Tackling racism can feel overwhelming and may leave us feeling powerless, but the following tools offer a starting point for dance teachers and dancers to begin embedding racial equity into training environments. These strategies include rethinking how dancers are grouped for tasks and assignments, ensuring uniform inclusivity, understanding or establishing zero-tolerance policies against racism, and facilitating access to mental health support.

Grouping Dancers for Tasks

Dancers	Teachers
• Think about who you're choosing to work with. • Choose someone you've never worked with before.	• Think about how dancers are grouped for tasks. • Take full ownership of grouping dancers to encourage interaction and collaboration focused on a common goal or task. • Change groups regularly to facilitate further interactions.

Uniform Inclusivity

Dancers	Teachers
• You should have the option to choose dancewear that suits your skin color and body type. • You should be allowed to keep your natural hair and manage it accordingly in a way that will not be obstructing your dance practice.	• Update uniform requirements to include skin-tone matching dancewear if you do not already do so. • Consider adopting the Halo Code (www.halocollective.co.uk), which aims to address hair-based discrimination.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Dancers & Teachers, A Shared Responsibility

• Have a clear zero tolerance policy and reporting procedures.
• All dancers (both Global Majority dancers and White dancers) are encouraged to engage with the policy and learn about reporting procedures.
• Take action following racist incidents:
  ○ Be explicit on what is and isn't acceptable behavior in your setting.
  ○ Clarify how unacceptable behaviors will be dealt with.

- Encourage the use of tools by which dancers can explain to each other why certain language or comments are unacceptable. McCarthy-Brown suggests the following protocol.[5]
  - *I heard you say _____ and it made me feel _____.*
  - *Thank you for letting me know what you heard and how it made you feel. I receive your words and feelings. I am going to think through this today and moving forward.*

Signpost Dancers to Mental Health Support

Dancers	Teachers
• Seek professional mental health services (e.g., in-house counselor or psychologist). • Check with teaching or administrative staff if you're unsure how to access such services.	• Dancers may see you as a safe person to talk to after a racist incident. Don't assume they know who else to approach or where to find support. Instead, try to listen with respect and without judgement, being mindful not to offer unsolicited personal advice. • Help dancers access mental health services but remember to stay within your area of expertise. For example, you could help them make an appointment with an in-house counsellor or psychologist or signpost them to external organizations such as the TIRED Movement if your setting does not have these.

Reflections and Invitations

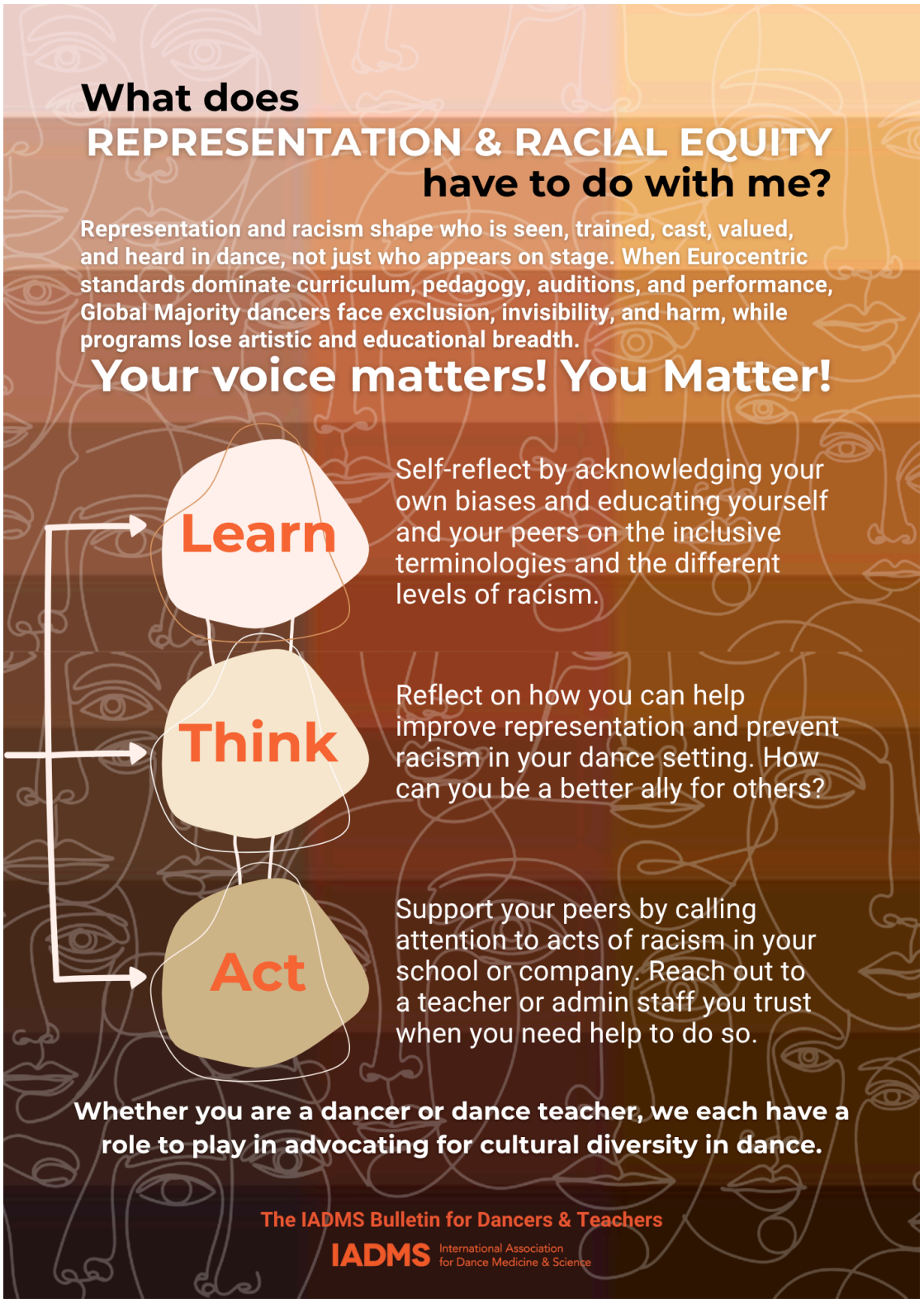


Figure 1: What does “Representation and Racial Equity” have to do with you? Learn, Think, Act.



Figure 2: Invitation for self-reflection towards racial equity in dance.



Figure 3: Levels of racism in dance.

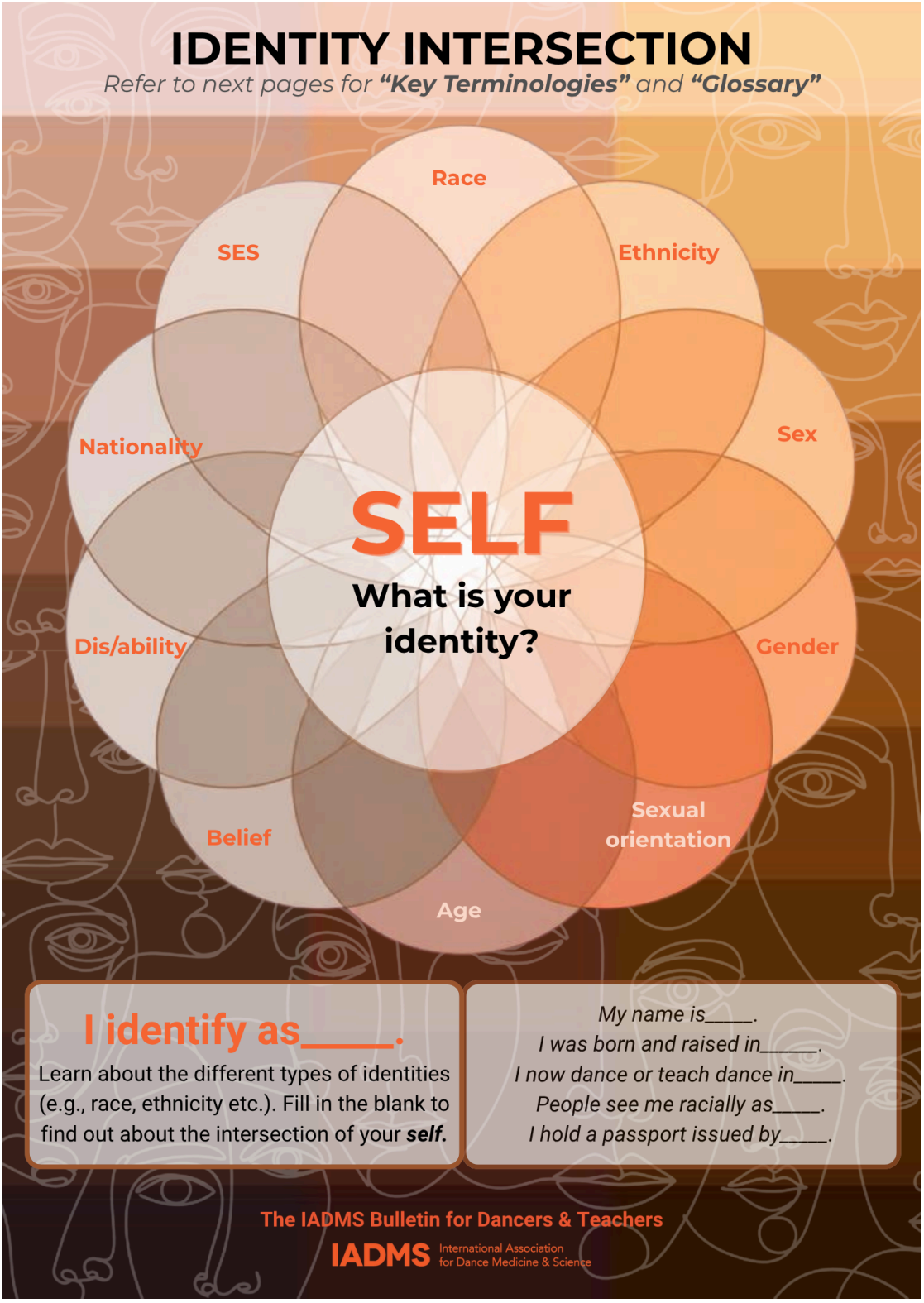


Figure 4: Identity Intersection: What is your self-identity?



Figure 5: Learn: Key Terminologies.

Conclusion

Dismantling longstanding biases, such as the privileging or favoring of White practices in dance education, is neither easy nor quick, but is essential in creating a better environment for Global Majority dancers. It is an ongoing effort, and it is everybody's responsibility. The tools and resources in this article invite teachers and dancers to reflect on racial equity inside your respective dance studios while suggesting some feasible actions you can take to influence a positive shift in the dance education environment where no one is left behind and everyone is included.



To help us create this change, the authors invite you to join both the TIRED Movement and TIRED Connect - a brand-new, global creative networking platform designed to help Global Majority artists, designers, musicians, makeup artists, filmmakers, dance photographers, creative organizations (and more!) connect, collaborate, and grow. TIRED Connect provides a dedicated space to showcase creative work, build professional relationships, and discover new opportunities within the creative industry. By joining TIRED Connect, you will also be able to access the RED Framework and be a part of the effort to ensure that Global Majority dancers feel safe and supported in their dance training.

Original Articles

1. Aujla IJ, Green S, Grant L. The impact of racial discrimination on the well-being of dance students. *Arts Commun*. 2024;3(1). doi:10.36922/ac.3165
2. Aujla IJ, Green S, Grant L. Lived experiences of discrimination among Global Majority dance students: A qualitative exploration of racial inequity. *Arts Commun*. 2025;3(4). doi:10.36922/ac.8530

Further Resource

Harman G. *ResDance*. Series 6: Episode 11: Racial Equity in Dance with Stacey Green and Imogen Aujla. Published June 7, 2024. Accessed October 23, 2026. https://open.spotify.com/episode/5WUlH2tuyfZu0Ncr1Zmbxe

Further Reading

Prichard R. From Color-Blind to Color-Conscious: Advancing Racial Discourse in Dance Education. *J Dance Educ*. 2019;19(4). doi:10.1080/15290824.2018.1532570

In this article, Prichard examines how approaches to race can shape teaching and learning in dance education. Drawing on social science, education, and legal scholarship, Prichard critiques color-blind racial ideology, which treats race as irrelevant or seeks to avoid discussing racial differences. The article argues that this approach can obscure racial inequities and contribute to harmful experiences for teachers and students. In contrast, Prichard advocates for color-consciousness, an approach that explicitly recognizes the significance of race and racialized experiences. The author identifies four strategies for developing color-conscious dance education: recognizing the role of race, openly identifying racist practices, questioning the perceived neutrality of Whiteness, and ensuring that Global Majority dancers are able to fully express their perspectives. Applying these strategies to dance education, Prichard highlights existing shortcomings and proposes ways educators can engage more directly with race, challenge inequities, and create more inclusive educational environments.

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Acknowledgements

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GLOSSARY

Identity

Race & Ethnicity

Race: Refers to physical differences that groups and cultures consider socially significant.
Ethnicity: Refers to shared cultural characteristics such as language, ancestry, practices, and beliefs.
Arab: People of Middle Eastern and North African (MENA), refer to person's specific country of origin (e.g., Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon, Israel) whenever possible. American with Arab ancestry may identify as "Arab American".
Asian: People of Asian ancestry. Asia is divided regionally, into South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. It is appropriate to use the terms "Asian American" (in US) or "Asian Canadian" (in Canada). The older term "Oriental" is primarily used to refer to cultural objects such as carpets and is pejorative when used to refer to people.
Black: People of African ancestry. "People of African Origin" is a more accurate term. Other term, "African American" should not be used as an umbrella term for people of African ancestry worldwide because it obscures other ethnicities or national origins in African continent. It is outdated and inappropriate to use the terms "Negro" and "Afro American".
European/White: People of European ancestry, the term "White" or "European" is appropriate. Adjust the latter term as needed for location, for example, "European American," and "European Australian". Use of the term "Caucasian" is discouraged because it originated as a way of classifying White people as a race to be favorably compared with other races.
Hispanic/Latinx: "Hispanic" is not an all-encompassing term; it often refers to Spanish speakers, while "Latino" may be preferred by those from Latin America, including Brazil, where Portuguese is spoken. "Latino" is gendered ("Latino"/"Latina"), with "Latin@" and "Latinx" used as gender-neutral or nonbinary alternatives.
Indigenous: Groups of people who lived in a region before colonization, have deep ties to their land, keep their own cultures, languages, beliefs, and ways of organizing society, and work to maintain their identity as a non-dominant group. It is most appropriate to use the names that they call themselves. In general, refer to an Indigenous group as a "people" or "nation" rather than as a "tribe."
Mixed/Dual heritage: Refers to individuals whose biological parents come from two or more different ethnic backgrounds, and who may navigate multiple cultural, national, or racial identities through their family lineage. This experience extends beyond race to include intersecting elements such as language, tradition, and religion. As with all identity terms, individuals should be allowed to self-identify and choose the language that best fits them.

Sex, Gender & Sexual Orientation

Sex: The characteristics and traits of biological sex.
Female: With "XX" chromosome, also refers to woman or girl.
Male: With "XY" chromosome, also refers to man or boy.
Intersex: Individual who exhibits sexual characteristics of both sexes.
Gender: Socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for different genders.
Cisgender: A term used to describe people who exclusively identify with the sex and gender they were assigned at birth.
Transgender: Both an umbrella term including many gender identities and a specific gender identity that describes those with a gender identity that's different from the gender or sex assigned at birth.
Queer: This nonbinary gender identity and term describes someone with a gender that can't be categorized as exclusively man or woman, or exclusively masculine or feminine.
People who are genderqueer experience and express gender in different ways. This can include neither, both, or a combination of man, woman, or nonbinary genders.
Nonbinary: Also referred to as "enby," this is a gender identity and umbrella term for gender identities that can't be exclusively categorized as man or woman. Individuals who are nonbinary can experience gender a variety of ways, including a combination of man and woman, neither man nor woman, or something else altogether. Some nonbinary individuals are trans, while many others don't. Whether a nonbinary person is also trans typically depends on the extent to which that person identifies, even partially, with the sex and gender assigned to them at birth.
Sexual orientation: a person's sexual and emotional attraction to another person and the behavior and/or social affiliation that may result from this attraction. Some examples of sexual orientation are lesbian, gay, heterosexual, straight, asexual, bisexual, queer, polysexual, and pansexual (also called multisexual and omnisexual).
LGBTQ+/LGBTQI: The acronym for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, questioning (or queer), intersex + other gender variants. This is the most inclusive, all-encompassing term for the gay community, including those with non-cis gender identities.

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Identity

Age
The amount of time that has passed since an organism's birth; that is, an individual's chronological age.

Belief
A system of spiritual beliefs, practices, or both, typically organized around the worship of an all-powerful deity (or deities) and involving behaviors such as prayer, meditation, and participation in collective rituals. Other common features of organized religions are the belief that certain moral teachings have divine authority, and the recognition of certain people, places, texts, or objects as holy or sacred.

Disability
A lasting physical or mental impairment that significantly interferes with an individual's ability to function in one or more central life activities, such as self-care, ambulation, communication, social interaction, sexual expression, or employment. For example, an individual with low vision or blindness has a visual disability.

Nationality
Legal status of belonging to a particular country or nation attained by by birth or naturalisation.

SES (Socioeconomic status)
Encompasses not only income but also educational attainment, occupational prestige, and subjective perceptions of social status and social class. SES encompasses quality-of-life attributes and opportunities afforded to people within society and is a consistent predictor of a vast array of psychological outcomes.

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EDI Concepts A-Z

A

Ableism: Discrimination and social prejudice against people with disabilities.

Access/Accessibility: The elimination of discrimination and other barriers that contribute to inequitable opportunities to join and be a part of a work group, organization, community, or services.

Accomplice: Encompasses allyship but goes beyond to advocacy. An accomplice uses their privilege to challenge existing conditions at the risk of their own comfort and well-being. Whereas an ally might work to make changes on an individual level, an accomplice aims to tackle injustices such as racial injustices on an institutional level. They aim to alter the structures and policies within society that place marginalized groups at a disadvantage.

Ageism: The tendency to be prejudiced against older adults, to negatively stereotype them (e.g., as unhealthy, helpless, or incompetent), and to discriminate against them, especially in employment and health care.

Ally/Allyship: People who recognize the unearned privilege they receive from society's privileging of Whiteness, male gender, Christianity, heterosexuality, ableism, and other identities and take responsibility for advancing equity. Allyship is defined and determined by the community an ally is advocating for, rather than self-defined.

B

Bias: Partiality, or an inclination or predisposition for or against something. Motivational and cognitive biases are two main categories studied in decision-making analysis. Motivational biases are conclusions drawn due to self-interest, social pressures, or organization-based needs, whereas cognitive biases are judgments that are contrary to evidence, and some of these are attributed to implicit reasoning.

Confirmation bias: Seeking out or only noticing information that reinforces our existing beliefs.

Implicit bias: An attitude, of which one is not consciously aware, against a specific social group, also known as implicit prejudice or implicit attitude. Implicit bias is thought to be shaped by experience and based on learned associations between particular qualities and social categories, including race and/or gender. Individuals' perceptions and behaviors may be influenced by the implicit biases they hold, even if they are unaware, they hold such biases. Implicit bias is an aspect of implicit social cognition: the phenomenon that perceptions, attitudes, and stereotypes can operate before conscious intention or endorsement.

C

Colonialism: Some form of invasion, dispossession, and subjugation of a people. The invasion need not be military; it can begin—or continue—as geographical intrusion in the form of agricultural, urban, or industrial encroachments.

Neo-colonization: The control of nominally independent countries, usually developing countries, by powerful developed nations through indirect economic, financial, and cultural means rather than direct military or political rule.

Culture: A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors and styles of communication.

Cultural appropriation: Theft of cultural elements—including symbols, art, language, customs, etc.—for one's own use, commodification, or profit, often without understanding, acknowledgement, or respect for its value in the original culture. Results from the assumption of a dominant (i.e. white) culture's right to take other cultural elements.

Cultural appreciation: Recognising and respecting cultural practices without exploitation or appropriation. It involves learning and engaging in meaningful exchanges to promote understanding and connection.

Cultural competency: The ability to collaborate effectively with individuals from different cultures; such competence improves experiences and outcomes in various disciplines. One can commit to the process of lifelong reflection to be aware, responsive, and accountable to the communities one is serving or working with.

D

Decolonization: The active resistance against colonial powers, and a shifting of power towards political, economic, educational, cultural, psychic independence and power that originate from a colonized nation's own indigenous culture. This process occurs politically and also applies to personal and societal psychic, cultural, political, agricultural, and educational deconstruction of colonial oppression.

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D

Discrimination: The unjust and differential treatment of members of different identities (such as age, gender, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, immigration status, language, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status). This unjust treatment favors certain groups over others, restricting opportunities for other groups. Identities can be actual or perceived; for example, a person may be discriminated against for a perception of disability or other marginalized status. At the individual level, discrimination may manifest as prejudice involving negative, hostile, and injurious treatment of the members of marginalized groups. At the institutional or structural level, discrimination may manifest as operating procedures, laws, and policies that favor one group over another.

Diversity: Involving the representation or composition of various social identity groups in a work group, organization, or community. The focus is on social identities that correspond to societal differences in power and privilege and thus to the marginalization of some groups based on specific attributes—for example, age, gender, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, immigration status, language, disability, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. There is a recognition that people have multiple identities and that social identities are intersectional and have different salience and impact in different contexts.

E

Essentialism: Assumptions that everyone belonging to the same social group have the same lived experience.

Equality: Treating everyone the same way while assuming that everyone starts out on equal footing with equal opportunities.

Equity: Working toward fair outcomes for people or groups by treating them in ways that address their unique barriers.

Ethnocentrism: The tendency to believe that your own ethnic group is centrally important and measure all others using the standards and customs of your own.

Eurocentrism: Describes an excessive focus on the cultural contributions and achievements of European societies, often at the expense of recognizing the richness of other cultures. This perspective is particularly notable in educational contexts, where curricula have historically marginalized non-European traditions.

E

Exclusion: The act of deliberately leaving out individuals or groups out of social, economic, educational, or organisational opportunities.

G

Gaslighting: A form of manipulation and psychological control. Victims of gaslighting are deliberately and systematically fed false information that leads them to question what they know to be true, often about themselves. They may end up doubting their memory, their perception, and even their sanity. Over time, a gaslighter's manipulations can grow more complex and potent, making it increasingly difficult for the victim to see the truth.

Generalization: The process of deriving a concept, judgment, principle, or theory from a limited number of specific cases and applying it more widely, often to an entire class of objects, events, or people, which can lead to mischaracterizations and stereotypes

Global Majority: Also known as people of the global majority (PGM), a collective term that encourages those of African, Asian, Latin American, and Arab descent to recognize that together they comprise the vast majority (around 80%) of people in the world. Understanding the truth that Whiteness is not the global norm has the power to disrupt and reframe conversations on race.

H

Harassment: A form of discrimination. It happens when someone experiences unwanted offensive or humiliating comments or behavior.

Hazing: Any activity associated with joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers individuals, regardless of their willingness to participate.

Human rights: Rights to which all human beings are inherently entitled.

I

Inclusion: An environment that offers affirmation, celebration, and appreciation of different approaches, styles, perspectives, and experiences, thus allowing all individuals to express their whole selves (and all their identities) and to demonstrate their strengths and capacity.

Intersectionality: The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination combine, overlap, or intersect—especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups—to produce and sustain complex inequities.

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EDI Concepts A-Z

M

Marginalization: Where a person, group or concept is treated as inferior; to put or keep (someone) in a powerless or unimportant position within a society.

Microagressions: The everyday verbal, nonverbal and environmental slights, snubs or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

N

Neurodiversity: A term used to acknowledge that everyone has different brains. This can manifest in many ways, perhaps in how people might process information, communicate, behave or function day-to-day.

Neurotypical: A person or group of people with similar mental or neurological function to what is considered typical or 'normal'.

O

Oppression: Occurs when one subgroup has more access to power and privilege than another subgroup and when that power and privilege are used to dominate the other to maintain the status quo.

P

Phobia

Homophobia: A strong dislike or fear of homosexual people.

Xenophobia: A strong dislike or fear of strangers or foreigners.

Islamophobia: A strong dislike or fear of Muslims.

Prejudice: Personal adverse and preconceived beliefs, opinions or thoughts about a group based on their skin color or race.

Privilege: One or a set of unearned benefits given to people owing to their membership in a specific social group relating to aspects of their identity. Those aspects can include race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and religion, as well as privilege related to wealth and class.

Psychological safety: The ability to freely express opinions, take risks, and be oneself without fear of negative consequences.

R

Racism

Internalized racism: Occurs when a racial group oppressed by racism supports the supremacy and dominance of the dominating group by maintaining or participating in the set of attitudes, behaviors, social structures and ideologies that undergird the dominating group's power.

Interpersonal racism: Occurs between individuals. Once we bring our private beliefs into our interaction with others, racism is now in the interpersonal realm.

Institutional racism: Refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. Creating advantages for one group while disadvantaging other racial groups.

Structural racism: The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics, historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal, that routinely advantage whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color.

Representation: Equitable representation is fair and proportional inclusion of people from diverse backgrounds across characteristics such as race, gender, disability, class, sexual orientation, and more within institutions, organisations, and public life.

S

Stereotype: A standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment.

T

Tokenism: The practice of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially by recruiting a small number of people from under-represented groups in order to give the appearance of sexual or racial equality within a workforce.

Trauma: The trauma of racism refers to the cumulative negative impact of racism on the lives of people of color. Encompassing the emotional, psychological, health, economic and social effects of multigenerational and historical trauma, trauma of racism relates to the damaging effects of ongoing societal and intra-social-group racial micro aggressions, internalized racism, overt racist experiences, discrimination and oppression within the lives of people of color. When repetitive and unresolved, these experiences rooted in racism can create severe emotional pain and distress that can overwhelm a person's and community's ability to cope, creating feelings of powerlessness.

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Disclaimer:

Definitions are adapted from the references listed below. This list is not comprehensive; it is intended as a guide and introduction to key terminology relating to cultural diversity, representation, equity, and inclusion in dance training and performance settings. We recognize that language in this area continues to evolve, and we invite the dance community—teachers, dancers, and organisations—to treat this glossary as a starting point for learning, reflection, and discussion, and to explore the references and resources provided for deeper understanding.

References and Additional Open Access Resources

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