



# SEETA PATEL DANCE

CHOREOGRAPHER  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME  
IN BHARATANATYAM 2023-24

INFORMATION PACK

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# WELCOME

**Seeta Patel Dance (SPD) is one of the UK's leading dance production companies, spearheaded by award-winning choreographer and dancer Seeta Patel. Acknowledging the importance of helping young artists identify and address challenges in their growth and training, and equipping them with the best tools for their professional and creative development, SPD is incredibly excited to launch the first iteration of this mentorship programme for early-career choreographers in Bharatanatyam.**

This programme is a first-of-its-kind programme tailored to upcoming choreographic talents in Bharatanatyam ensemble work. Known for creating ground-breaking Bharatanatyam ensemble work like Stravinsky's 'The Rite of Spring', Seeta will support 4 early-career choreographers to deep-dive and explore meaningful movement, and begin to create thought-provoking, exciting ensemble work.

Seeta says: "As a new National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England, we are really pleased to offer more meaningful and resourced talent development for Bharatanatyam dancer-choreographers. Having faced many challenges myself as a South-Asian dancer trying to make work, I hope SPD can offer encouragement and support to a cohort of artists trying to develop their practice. In our shifting landscape, we must create more space and visibility for those with the drive to make fantastic work - this requires both resource and disruption of existing structures'.

# WHAT'S ON OFFER

**As a dancer-choreographer on this programme, SPD promises you:**

**Space and dancing resource:** Each of the 4 mentees will get one week of paid studio time each to dive deep into creating movement - this can be intentioned around a specific seed-idea or simply to explore group choreography within the form of Bharatanatyam. You will also become a dancing resource for the other mentees during their development weeks - plus one professional dancer you can utilise for your choreography too.

**Tools and time:** Each mentee will have 6 hours of 1:1 coaching sessions with Seeta; a further budget is allocated for your use to seek 4 hours of mentorship with a mentor (of your choice or arranged by SPD) in an adjacent area such as lighting and stage design, music production, literature SPD, in an ad.

**Compensated upskilling:** Yes, this is a paid mentorship programme because we believe artists should be adequately compensated for their commitment and effort. Each mentee will be paid £500 per week for 4 weeks in the studio (one week of development work, three weeks as dancing resource for the other mentees). Studio costs are fully met by SPD; on top of this, SPD will contribute a total £100 of travel expenses per location per week, a contribution towards accommodation (up to £150 per week within London, up to £130 per week outside of London) and up to £100 per location per week towards food expenses.

**On-going commitment:** Mentorship should be a beautiful, long-term journey and SPD wants to invest fully in the onward growth of its mentees, complementing their personal training. At the end of the programme, you will have the opportunity to showcase your seed-work in front of a fantastic panel who you will be able to add to your personal network.

# PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

<p><b>24th November 2023</b></p>	<p><b>Welcome:</b> Onboarding &amp; Introduction to the successful mentees (remote)</p>
<p><b>December 2023- Early March 2024</b></p>	<p><b>Coaching:</b> 6 hours of 1:1 online coaching sessions with Seeta Patel.</p> <p><b>Getting ready for the studio:</b> Developing what you'd like to work on in the studio.</p> <p><b>Additional mentorship:</b> 4 hours of 1:1 online coaching with a mentor of your choice in a complementary area.</p> <p><b>4 weeks committed to the studio:</b> Each mentee gets 1 week of studio time to develop seed-work and will accompany other mentees as a dancing resource for the other 3 weeks.</p>
<p><b>End of March 2024</b></p>	<p><b>Showcase:</b> Closed showcase of mentees' seed-work with select panel, along with videography.</p>

# WHO IS THE PROGRAMME FOR

1. You are an early-stage choreographer and dance practitioner of Bharatanatyam, with 5+ years of stage experience.
2. You want to learn the process of delving deeper into creating movement within Bharatanatyam in an ensemble format, or you have an idea or thought that you would love to grow and take to stage.
3. You can be at any stage in your career - whether that's a full-time artist or looking to commit full-time.
4. You must be able to commit to 4 weeks of studio time between December 2023 and March 2024 and happy to travel to studio locations in the UK.
5. You are over 18 years of age and not in formal education (university / college etc.)
6. You are a resident of the United Kingdom and Crown Dependencies (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Isle of Mann, Channel Islands) - payment and expenses are detailed in the FAQs.

\*Unfortunately, we will not be able to support artists who reside outside of the UK and Crown Dependencies mentioned above and will also not be able to provide accommodation during programme dates taking place in London.

Whilst on the programme, SPD promises to take your other work commitments into account as much as possible to ensure the programme schedule is suitable for everyone - however, we do expect mentees to show a degree of flexibility as well.

# APPLICATION

To apply, please complete the [Expression of Interest form](#) here or on our website.

In the application form, we will ask for:

- An introduction to your creative practice
- The challenges you've faced in developing your career as a dancer-choreographer
- What are you hoping to take-away from this mentorship programme and what is missing for you in your journey right now?

We ask that you really take time to prepare your responses before starting the form and feel free to be as honest in your answers as you'd like. We are more interested in understanding you the artist and do not expect you to be in a certain pathway in your career at all.

The form should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete once your answers are prepared. If you are unable to answer the questions via the form for any reason, our team is on board to help you out - please see our Access Requirements section for contact details.

The Open Call for applications open on 26th September and you will have until midnight on 22nd October to submit your responses.

# SELECTION

The programme's mentees will be carefully selected by Seeta Patel and the SPD team. Successful expressions of interest will showcase clarity of thought, enquiry and be able to clearly convey what they are hoping to benefit from this mentorship programme.

By 27th October, successful applicants from the Expression of Interest form will be invited to **Stage 1** - an online interview with Seeta Patel and the SPD team. From there, **Stage 2** will be an in-person (location TBC) group assessment day conducted by Seeta and a select panel of artists, to test for choreographic instincts, ideation, drive, leadership and teamwork aspects.

At SPD, we are committed to being a diverse, inclusive and safe space and as such, will be offering at least one of the mentoring spots to an artist who comes from a systemically marginalized group, including and not limited to, artists with disabilities, artists from the global majority, LGBTQIA+.



# ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

We are committed to being open, inclusive and diverse - if you encounter any issues with completing the Expression of Interest form, have specific requirements related to access that we need to be aware of or have any questions about the process that is not clear - please reach out to us on the contact details provided below.

Regrettably, we cannot give individualised feedback on every Expression of Interest but understanding that this will be a highly competitive process, we aim to provide as useful, constructive feedback as possible that will be beneficial for your growth.

**A larger-print version and audio descriptive version of this information pack are available for download on our website:  
[www.seetapateldance.com/talent-development](http://www.seetapateldance.com/talent-development).**

## CONTACT

If there is any other information you need, please feel free to reach out to **Phylisia Watkis, Administrator at Seeta Patel Dance** via email on **[adminphylisia@seetapateldance.org](mailto:adminphylisia@seetapateldance.org)**. Please allow two working days for a response.

We will also be hosting a couple of remote group information sessions by Seeta Patel regarding the programme on the following dates:

**Wednesday 4th October, 6:30PM to 7:15PM - live on Instagram**  
**Thursday 12th October, 6:30PM to 7:15PM - via Zoom**

Please email [adminphylisia@seetapateldance.org](mailto:adminphylisia@seetapateldance.org) to sign-up to the Zoom information session and confirm your attendance.



# FAQs

## **Is the programme only for Bharatanatyam dancer-choreographers?**

As the force of Seeta Patel's choreographic work is rooted in Bharatanatyam, this programme will be highly beneficial for those who have a performing/creating background in Bharatanatyam - if you have training and performance experience across multiple styles (including Bharatanatyam) and wish to create work that connects these, we would still love to hear from you.

## **Is there payment for mentees or expenses covered for mentees during the programme?**

Yes, it is important to SPD that you are compensated for the time you dedicate to developing your practice. Each mentee will be paid £500 for each of the 4 weeks in the studio (one week of development work, three weeks as dancing resource for the other mentees). On top of this, SPD will also contribute a total £100 of travel expenses per location per week, a contribution towards accommodation per location per week (up to £150 within London, up to £130 outside of London) and up to £100 towards food expenses per location per week.

## **Do I have to pay for any part of this programme/ what are the financial conditions?**

You will not have to pay for any part of this programme, other than covering your own travel, accommodation and food expenses that go beyond the amount that will be covered by SPD.

## **Is there any kind of public-facing outcome to the programme?**

No - the seed-work you create will be presented in a closed sharing within the studio to Seeta Patel and a select panel of artists / art professionals only. You may wish to publicly share the video footage from the sharing but we recommend that you use this purely for building on your work, funding applications etc.

## **Are there any age restrictions for this programme?**

You must be aged 18 years and older and you cannot be in formal education or training during the duration of the programme.

## **Can I apply if I live outside of the UK?**

No, this programme is for residents of the United Kingdom and Crown Dependencies (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Isle of Mann, Channel Islands).

## **I am experiencing issues with the form / I have specific access requirements I wish to discuss - can you help?**

Absolutely, please see our section titled Access Requirements and Contact - you may get in touch with us via text, phone or email and will receive a reply from us at the earliest. Your specific access requirements will be discussed and implemented if you are successfully taken into the programme.