

Ethical Framework

Who we are

Candoco is a producing dance company and artist development organisation.

Why we exist

Candoco exists to expand what dance can be, who makes it, and who experiences it. We work to create the conditions for brilliance, by removing systemic barriers to dance for D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent makers, performers and leaders through our four activity pillars of performance and commissions, skills and leadership, partnership and advocacy.

What we believe

We do this because **we believe dance is better when difference is celebrated.**

How we work

Candoco's values are: **equitable, creative, nurturing, accountable.**

Candoco's Ethical Framework sets out how our organisational values are put into practice, particularly when decisions are complex or contested. It is practical and measurable. It strengthens accountability and consistency and guides decision-making at all levels, ensuring our commitments to D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent voice and talent, equity, accessibility and artistic ambition are enacted in practice across the organisation. And it is grounded in our belief that dance is better when difference is celebrated.

The change we want to make (our 5 strategic aims)

1. To **DEVELOP** the creative and professional capacity of D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent artists across career stages
2. To **EXPAND** the artistic and cultural impact of D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent-led dance

3. To **STRENGTHEN** capacity for inclusive practice across the dance sector
4. To **EMBED** inclusive and disability-led governance and organisational culture and sustainable practice
5. To **CHAMPION** systemic change for D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent artists in dance

Our Values in Practice

Candoco commits to being:

Equitable. We'll do this by:

- Proactively making the space for D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent artists and cultural workers to shape our artistic direction, organisational development, and decision-making structures.
- Recognising that equity does not mean identical treatment.
- Designing access and inclusion into our structures, processes, and programmes from the start to create the conditions for everyone to show up at their best. We aim for the highest

possible standards and pledge to be transparent where constraints require conversation, compromise, or prioritisation.

- Actively removing structural barriers in order to redistribute power, opportunity, and resources.

Creative. We'll do this by:

- Thinking differently about the way we do our work.
- Resisting the temptation to categorise people as 'operations' or 'artistic'. Everyone in our organisation and who we work with we see as creative.

Nurturing. We'll do this by:

- Seeing people whole. We are interested in who someone is, not just what they do for us. We stay curious about people's contexts, ambitions and needs and open to who they are becoming.

- Investing in people's growth, not just their output. We ask what each person needs to develop and thrive and we make space for learning and experimentation.
- Holding challenge and care together. Being nurturing doesn't mean avoiding difficulty. We are honest in ways that are kind and direct, treating feedback as an act of investment, not judgement.

Accountable: We'll do this by:

- Being clear about how and why decisions are made, naming tensions openly, and taking responsibility for their impact.

While personal histories shape reactions, harm to others is not acceptable.
- Avoiding overconfident or performative language. When we get things wrong, we acknowledge it and use those moments to learn and improve.
- Making decisions that support long-term cultural, environmental, and organisational sustainability.

Our four guiding questions

1. Why are we doing this and who is it for?

To answer this we think about the following

- Does this align with our mission and long-term aims?
- Does it meaningfully serve D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent artists and communities?
- Is there clear artistic and strategic value?
- Does it advance D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent leadership and expand who makes and experiences dance?

2. Who holds power and who benefits?

To answer this we think about the following

- Who is shaping this decision?
- Whose voice is missing?
- Has lived experience meaningfully informed this?
- Who benefits, and who may be disadvantaged?

3. Are we resourced, accessible, and financially sustainable?

To answer this we think about the following

- Do we have the capacity to deliver well?
- Is access embedded?
- Is everyone treated and paid fairly?

4. Can we stand behind this decision openly?

To answer this we think about the following

- Are we clear about how and why this decision is being made?
- Have compromises been named honestly?
- Does this model the inclusive and equitable practice we seek to embed across the sector?

Using this ethical framework

It applies to artistic, strategic, operational, communications, financial, and partnership decisions. It should be referenced explicitly in major decision-making processes. Tensions should be named, not hidden.

The framework will be reviewed regularly and remain adaptable.