

**Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy**

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## *Erasmus Policy Statement*

The Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy (BCDA) strategy for internationalisation is set out and implemented in accordance with the Institutional Development Plan and Quality Improvement Project. To meet 21st century professional standards, the Academy aims to develop artists and professionals who, equipped with wide-ranging and versatile qualifications based on a deep practical and theoretical study of traditions and latest innovations, can keep up in all fields of contemporary dance as human beings, intellectuals and artists.

The Academy is operated on the basis of three fundamental principles: the institution should remain personal, complex and human. These principles prevail in the field of establishing and managing international relations as well. The globalisation of the contemporary dance is a dominant phenomenon. Professional experience in the international environment is now essential for pursuing a successful dancing career. The Academy helps students and workers in this area in several ways: (1) inviting guest teachers; (2) supporting professional mobility; (3) participation in international professional programmes.

In our dramatically changing world at least every 4-5 years should the main directions and preferences be reviewed.

Three aspects must be defined and re defined in order to keep them in harmony:

- Tradition and innovation
- Dance language development and developing creativity
- Community and individual

When establishing international relations, we have two facts to bear in mind.

- 1) In an artistic meaning there is no country, including Hungary, and no culture that would 'lag behind', and none of them is in a privileged position either.
- 2) From a marketing point the opposite is true: there are preferred and disadvantaged areas.

The harmony between art and marketing considerations does not apply. This phenomenon is not new; it is our duty, along with other schools and professionals to do our best in order to create an international arts/cultural market where 'value for money' is realistically assessed.

a The Academy is open to individual (students, staff) initiatives when choosing its partner institutions. The selection of peer institutions is based solely on professional considerations.

b Apart from our existing, mostly Western European affiliations, there is a growing demand for strengthening Central and East European partnerships. Our main objective is, simultaneously with the heartening territorial development of the ERASMUS programme, to assess Non-European areas of potential cooperation, seeking collaborative partner institutions.

c All target groups supported by the ERASMUS programme can participate in mobility programmes.

Based on our positive experience, the Academy intends to continue its guest teacher programme, which proves the most cost effective way for ERASMUS programme objectives to be met. Thus, students can successfully get involved in professional processes, which pave the path for their individual mobility as well.

Teacher and staff study tours facilitate the process of sharing and disseminating good practices, exploring new opportunities, building new relationships as well as giving opportunities to professional self-assessment. Carrying out teaching staff mobility can be based on a higher level inter-institutional collaboration, which is hoped to be implemented in the next period.

Supporting BA and MA student mobility including study and training is also of high priority, since international professional student experiences substantially contribute to the on-going professional renewal of the national culture of dance and pedagogy as well.

In accordance with the principles of personality, complexity and human size, the Academy is open to participate in any project that fits its professional profile. Professional project planning is set up by the international ERASMUS Coordinator and Committee, taking national and international initiatives and proposals into consideration as well. Participation in the projects is equally available to any BKTF student or staff member involved. Each Academy student and staff member concerned is equally provided with the opportunity to participate in the projects. Depending on the nature of the project, participation is available in open or restricted procedures.

Art, science and human activity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century cannot be confined within national borders. It is the whole world with Europe in it, which provides the natural horizon for Hungarian contemporary dance. Without this perspective/horizon, there is no contemporary dance art or education. There exists an opposing view as well; that is why it is inevitable to join the ERASMUS community: to support deeds instead of words.

The professional and educational work within the walls of the Academy is of highest quality, which is ensured by the results of its graduates. Our dancers prevail on the stages of world-class companies of the world (Rosas, Ultima Vez, etc.) Their outstanding role is guaranteed by the number of Nominations for the Rudolf Lábán Prize, and the Prize itself. At least half of the freelance dancers of the national contemporary dance scene graduated in our school. After the era of 'pioneering', we can easily lose this predominant place unless we join the European and the world's artistic community at the appropriate artistic/pedagogic level. Our quality can only be developed by our international relevance.

In higher education it is impossible to join and contribute to international processes without the personal experiences of the artists preparing for life and that of the teaching and administrative staff providing their working environment. Hungary has connected and separated Western and Eastern Europe for 1000 years. It is up to us to be a trench or a bridge. The political state's walking out from art and education is a global phenomenon. Paradoxically enough, less money entails higher intellectual freedom, mobilizing more human creative power. Hungarian society still has very little willingness for financial subsidization and charity. Waiting the self-made power of the society unaided is a time-consuming experience. In this process the support by the ERASMUS community could provide some breathing space.

Sustainability of the artistic work requires becoming acquainted with and applying the good practices of Europe. It is worth for the wealthier part of Europe as well: they can learn a lot from the experience of the generations and their children grown up on Eastern European culture, isolated earlier.