Good Women Dance Collective created the following *Framework of Care* in 2023 as part of their Balancing Act Level UP! Pilot Project.

Please credit Good Women Dance Collective and Balancing Act if you use, cite, or share information from this resource.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss these materials, please contact Balancing Act at balancingact@theatredirect.ca.

GOOD WOMEN
DANCE COLLECTIVE

BALANCING ACT

GOOD WOMEN
DANCE COLLECTIVE

10515 111 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T5H 3E8

780.802.6867
info@goodwomen.ca
goodwomen.ca

Good Women Dance Collective's Framework of Care 2023

GWDC's Statement of Care

GWDC strives to operate with a care-centred approach to artist, worker, and volunteer relations. We acknowledge that equitable and anti-discriminatory operating practices cannot be carried out without addressing individual care needs. Care needs are impacted by each person's unique intersectionality and lived experience, and therefore we believe in a one-size-fits-one approach to care support. Having a framework in place allows us to approach our relationships with a holistic lens and provides a structure through which we can offer individualized support.

GWDC's Commitments to Care

Good Women Dance Collective commits to:

- Welcoming all aspects of a person's human experience when engaging with the organization, including those aspects that result in barriers to access
- Inviting ongoing conversations with project artists to learn about their care needs and generate solutions to provide support
- Addressing barriers that artists face through a combination of financial and practical solutions
- Embedding care-centred policies within the organization so that they inform day-to-day operations as well as artistic programming
- Holding ourselves accountable to these commitments through annual evaluations of our care policies and ongoing conversations with stakeholders

GWDC Pilot Care Policy and Procedures

This Care Policy is an invitation for you to ask for what you need from GWDC in our efforts to cultivate a working environment that cares for everyone.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to clearly outline our Care Support Program, how it can be accessed, and to keep GWDC accountable to the commitments we've made. It is GWDC's intention to be welcoming to artists with a variety of lived experiences and intersections. Through our pilot Care Policy and Request for Support Form, we commit to offering equitable support to programmed and contracted project workers so they can participate fully in our projects, regardless of their outside care needs or intersections.

Credit

In our 2022/2023 season, GWDC partnered with Theatre Direct's Balancing Act initiative for a limited pilot project of their Level UP! Pathways to Agreement strategy. GWDC would like to credit the work of Why Not Theatre, Neworld Theatre, and Toronto Dance Theatre (2021 Level UP! Strategy Partners) for providing source material, field notes, and inspiration for the creation of our Care Policy.

Scope

This pilot policy and procedure currently applies to all programmed and contracted artists in the 2023/2024 season. A programmed artist is any artist chosen to participate in the following: Space Share Program, Scholarship Program, Creative Incubator, and Convergence. A contracted artist is an artist contracted for a GWDC rehearsal and production project. All existing and new programmed and contracted artists will be provided a copy of this document prior to signing a contract with GWDC or upon confirmation of their participation in our programming.

Support Available Through GWDC

The following are examples of the environment you can expect when working with GWDC and the types of support available to you:

- Working conditions that are appropriate to the project artist's stamina, health, wellness, medical conditions, or injuries

- Flexible working hours
- Remote working
- Supportive care-centred conversations
- Reimbursement for accessible transportation costs for those who encounter barriers using standard means of transportation or have limited capacity engaging with normative modes of transportation*
- Support care workers welcomed in the studio
- Financial assistance to cover care-related expenses*
- Referrals for reliable caregivers or licensed daycares/drop-in centres
- Kids welcome in the studio when external care is not available
- Toys and craft supplies available in the studio
- Any combination of the above
- Alternative support not mentioned in this document

*At this time, due to limited funds, financial assistance is eligible only for contracted project artists.

Procedure for Accessing Support

1. You will be provided with this policy and invited to fill out a Support Request Form after confirmation of your involvement in a project.

2. Completed forms will be submitted to alida@goodwomen.ca and will be seen/reviewed by the following GWDC collective artists: Deviani Andrea, Molly McDermott, Rebecca Sadowski, and Alison Kause. Decisions will be made based on the evaluation criteria outlined in the following sections.

3. Support Plan created: A list of mutually-agreed-upon support offerings provided by GWDC to the project artist.

4. GWDC and the project artist will monitor the success of the Support Plan and attempt to address any changes in needs. Feedback from the project artist is a welcome and necessary part of the support process.

5. Information shared during this process will be confidential and will not affect your hireability or result in negative consequences.

Self-Evaluation/Selection

GWDC uses the below matrix to consider how to allocate available resources during a project and to have a better understanding of what we are able to offer. We ask that you honestly evaluate, to the best of your knowledge, where your support needs fall on the matrix and consider if there are other workers on the project who would benefit more from support.

A - I cannot participate in the project without these supports.

B - These supports will make it easier for me to participate in the project.

C - It would be wonderful to have these supports during the project.

Decision-Making Process for Allocating Support

In considering your support request of any kind, requests will be reviewed and considered if they meet the following criteria:

- Financial requests are not to exceed $500*, unless you are requesting support for more than one dependant**.
- The request does not impact GWDC's ability to carry out the project (allows us to maintain deadlines and does not put the project/organization at financial risk).
- The request does not interfere with the operational and logistical needs of the organization and project.
- The request does not create competing priorities in that it doesn't interfere with the needs of other artists involved in the project.

*GWDC will set an annual goal to allocate $500 per contracted artist per project to be available for care support, but this will not always be possible. If there are not enough financial resources to fulfil everyone's care support requests, neutral members of GWDC will assess where the greatest needs lie and allocate resources accordingly. A neutral party is a member of the organization who is not in a position of power over the person requesting support; for example, the choreographer of the project the artist is contracted for is not a neutral party. The Board of Directors may be consulted for third-party guidance.

**If you provide care to more than one person, you can request up to $500 per dependant.

Disclaimer: GWDC's annual budget fluctuates from year to year, as do the number of artists hired per project. Therefore, we cannot guarantee that there will always be $500 per artist per project available.

Limitations

- Support is project-based, i.e. temporary, and does not set a precedent for future projects.
- Support under this policy is not guaranteed.
- The amount of financial support GWDC can allocate varies project by project, year by year.
- Any financial support offered by GWDC cannot be used for rent/mortgage/deposits, emergency relief, credit card/debt issues, legal expenses, or long-term medical expenses.
- Financial support may be treated as taxable income and will be issued as a reimbursement upon submitting receipts or invoices.
- On rare occasions, if a support request requires changes to certain GWDC policies that would make projects unsustainable, create health/safety risks, or affect other workers' ability to perform their job, GWDC would be unable to provide support.
- This policy does not replace GWDC's legal duty to accommodate.