

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation

2025 Open Call for New tD Writers (Now Closed)

by Miryam Coppersmith

Deadline Extended to February 15th!

thINKingDANCE is seeking 10-15 new writers to join our Philly-based organization.

We encourage you to apply if you:?

- Want to be in a community of writers who develop writing and editing skills together
- Want to delve into salient questions in the field of dance writing
- Value risk taking and experimentation in the practice of dance writing
- Have lived experience and/or expertise in American vernacular dance, Indigenous dance forms, African diasporic dance, percussive dance forms, folk dance, social dance, and street dance, among others.
- ?Are committed to or interested in learning more about accessible writing practices
- Are aligned with our [mission statement](#)

thINKingDANCE recognizes the role that dance criticism has played in gate-keeping opportunities in the field, particularly through the hiring of majority white writers and editors. We encourage BIPOC writers, queer and trans writers, writers with disabilities, and writers who are parents to apply. We are committed to supporting our writers' diverse voices, needs, and interests in leadership within our organization.

More information about expectations and benefits for writers is listed under the Application Information. You do not have to be based in Philadelphia to apply. This year, we aim to accept 75% writers who plan to regularly review performances in Philadelphia and up to 25% based in other areas.

Compensation: Each writer is paid \$100 / article (\$125 for longer interviews and thINKpieces); each editor is paid \$40/ article; administrative labor is paid \$25 / hour; leadership roles are paid \$30 / hour

To Apply:

Send an email titled "tD Writer Call 2025" with the following materials to: Kalila Kingsford Smith, director@thinkingdance.net

- **Main Writing Sample:** Watch [this short dance video](#) and write a performance review, 500 words maximum. Demonstrate your ability to describe, interpret, and analyze what you see.
- **Statement of Purpose/Cover Letter:** In your cover letter, please address the following questions:
 - How are you engaging with our [mission](#)?
 - What perspectives do you bring to the organization?
 - What is your relationship with dance in Philadelphia?
 - How do you think your unique position would benefit our organization?

- Do you have any interest and expertise in working on any of the following within thINKingDANCE: Editorial, Finance/Bookkeeping, Operations, Special Projects & Outreach, Fundraising & Grant Writing, HR & Staff Development, Education & Workshops, Communications, Website Management. Your answer here does not affect your acceptance, but is good for us to know during the onboarding process.

- **Resume/CV**

- **Optional Additional Writing Samples**

- Feel free to include any additional reviews or other pieces of past writing. However, we will be focusing our review process on the main writing sample.

Deadline: February 15, 2025

We will communicate application results by March 15. Accepted writers will attend a new writer training in Spring 2025 and begin writing by Summer 2025.

Have Questions? thINKingDANCE leadership led a Q & A with prospective writers on Saturday January 18th. See the video at the bottom of this page and/or send your questions to Kalila at director@thinkingdance.net

Criteria for Selection:

- Writing sample demonstrates a distinctive voice, perspective, curiosity, evocative description, interpretation, and analysis.
- Potential for committed engagement and willingness to grow with and contribute to the internal culture of this Philadelphia-based organization.
- Demonstration of particular interest in our mission statement and/or a meaningful interest in uplifting or covering artists who are Indigenous, queer, artists of color, and/or artists with disabilities.

You are encouraged to apply if:

- you have previously applied to thINKingDANCE
- you have previously worked with thINKingDANCE, but have not been in the writer's room within the last 2 years
- you are interested in editing for tD
- you are interested in a leadership or administrative role at tD (the pathways to leadership start with writing for tD)

What do we expect of thINKingDANCE writers?

- Attend quarterly mandatory virtual meetings on a Saturday from 11-1pm ET.
- Communicate regularly with editorial board about capacity and writing interests between mandatory meetings
- Contribute 8-10 articles per year
- Writers are invited to participate as editors after completing an editor training.
- Writers are invited to participate in thINKingDANCE's administration (fundraising, communications, etc). This work is paid hourly. Leadership in these areas is open to any writer demonstrating an interest in sustaining our organization.

How do thINKingDANCE writers benefit from being involved?

- **Financial:** Each writer is paid \$100 / article (\$125 for longer interviews and thINKpieces); each editor is paid \$40/ article; administrative roles are paid \$25 / hour; leadership roles are paid \$30 / hour. tD Leadership is committed to regular increases in staff pay.
- **Development:** Writers engage in regular educational workshops with leading dance writers to support the development of writing practices. Each article published goes through a thoughtful editing process, with two editors providing supportive dialogue for each article's development.
- **Recognition:** Writers publish their work on the tD website (read worldwide).

- **Community:** Writers gain membership in a writing community that values collective leadership, access, engagement, creativity, innovation, and leading change in the industry of dance criticism.
- **Access:** Writers receive press access to tickets at a range of performances and film screenings in Philadelphia and beyond, and access to books when writing book reviews.
- **Impact:** Writers for thINKingDANCE make an impact on the local dance community, providing avenues for emerging, mid-career, and established artists to receive written coverage of their works. Writers have significant agency to choose topics to cover and can use their platform at tD to increase visibility for forms that are historically marginalized in criticism (e.g. drag, Indigenous dance, African diasporic dance, percussive dance etc.)

Mission:

thINKingDANCE is a collective of independent writers based in the Philadelphia area. Founded in 2011, we produce a digital journal about dance in its broadest sense. Our mission is to:

- Foster the practice of dance writing in traditional and experimental forms;
- Contribute to the creative ecosystem by building a historical and social archive of dance and movement-based art;
- Work to dismantle gatekeeping in dance criticism by engaging the voices of performing artists and writers who have historically been sidelined.

We pursue these goals by developing our writing through peer-critique sessions, workshops with guest educators, and a two-tiered editing process. thINKingDANCE is a place where ideas thrive; where editors, writers, and readers engage one another in transformative dialogue; and where we imagine a more vibrant and just dance media landscape.

By Miryam Coppersmith

December 30, 2024