



UKEDC Awards 2024 – Nominees and winners

UKEDC Inclusion Award: presented to a person or organization that has made an outstanding contribution to including equality dancers within the wider partner-dancing world in the UK

Bishopsgate Institute - Winner

The Bishopsgate Institute has provided a wonderfully inclusive space for equality dancing, in its many forms, to grow and thrive. This includes Lindy Hop, Queer Tango, Pink Dancers, Pink Jukebox, London Dance Studio and much more. It is also home to an extensive archive of equality dancing materials. The Institute kept many of its dancing activities going at a time when it sadly had to cut back on many of other activities.

Ian Saville and Linda Collier - Nominee

Past British champions, Ian Saville and Linda Collier, are regular promoters of mainstream competitions, including the prestigious Home Counties Championships. Since 2018, Ian and Linda have led the way in including equality events at their competitions. They firmly believe that dancing is for all to enjoy and that equality dancers should be included, welcomed and given the same opportunities as mixed couples. As a result, some other promoters are now adding equality categories events to their events.

National Association of Teachers of Dancing - Nominee

The National Association of Teachers of Dancing (NATD), one of the teaching and examining organisations in the UK, is inclusive and welcomes equality dancers, especially in its medal tests and related competitions. The NATD has updated its professional and amateur syllabus as well as its competition categories to use the terms Leader and Follower, making them inclusive regardless of the sex or gender identity of participants.

Strictly Dance Cardiff - Nominee

Strictly Dance Cardiff, run by Alun Richards and his partner Ian, organise regular social dances in Cardiff. These are mainstream events, but the organisers make an effort to welcome equality dancers. This can be challenging for organisers outside London, where the equality dance scene is mostly based at present. LGBTQI+ dance friends are invited with confidence to Strictly Dance Cardiff events, knowing they will be warmly welcomed.

The Dance Lab - Nominee

The Dance Lab team has established the school as a welcoming and inclusive space for competitive and social equality dancers alike. Many equality dance competitors choose The Dance Lab for practice sessions, private lessons, and advanced technique group classes. Social dance events are frequently organised or led by equality dance community members. With Charles Chan as the regular DJ at the monthly social dance night, increasing numbers of equality social dancers are attending. The Dance Lab team leads by example, leading and following at social dance events with anyone, regardless of gender identity or sex.



UKEDC Community Development Award: presented to a person or organization that has made an outstanding contribution to strengthening and/or expanding the equality dancing community in the UK

Ralf Schiller - Winner

Ralf Schiller has been teaching equality dance classes since 1989: at the London Lesbian and Gay Centre, at the Bell, and as co-founder of the Pink Jukebox. He was one of the first teachers to use the terms leader and follower, which has eventually changed the culture. He has been running the Pink Dancers since 1992 and promoted equality dancing by encouraging Pink Dancer performances all over the globe. He has been co-chair of both ESSDA and UKSSDC and has organised competitions, including the Pink Jukebox, and at the Gay Games and Eurogames.

Bristol Equality Dance - Nominee

Bristol Equality Dance has increased its programme considerably over the last year. There have been three weekend events with a workshop on Saturday and a tea dance on Sunday. These events are now scheduled twice a year. The group performed at three Pride events in 2023 (Bristol and Usk), and performed again at Bristol Pride this year. Class numbers have grown as a result. Norma Daykin from Bristol Equality Dance has been instrumental in setting up a women's equality dance weekend in September, along with Louise Sampson. These activities have served to promote equality dancing, both locally and nationally.

Michael Sandwich - Nominee

Since 2017 Michael has organised a dance weekend and social dances for men who dance with men. This provides a great opportunity for male equality dancers to dance together, to learn from some great teachers, and to build their network. The event requires significant organisation and Michael also takes on the related financial risk. The events are hugely appreciated by participants, including several from overseas.

Sanura Dance - Nominee

Sanura Dance are creating a wonderful new community for LGBTQ+ salsa and bachata in London, with classes and socials which are fun, teach both roles to everyone and are inclusive of beginners - and they've had huge success in just a year! They also offer a specifically feminist space which prioritises FLINTA (female, lesbian, intersex, non-binary, trans and agender) dancers.

Savoy Entertainment Ballroom and Latin Dance Club - Nominee

Savoy Entertainment Ballroom and Latin Dance Club, run by Jo and Louise, offers welcoming and fully inclusive classes, workshops and social dances on the south coast. Jo and Louise have trained an equality show dance team and couples for equality competitions. They have also competed themselves. Jo has been the dance teacher for equality dance club Cheek2Cheek (Brighton) for a number of years. Jo has made considerable improvement to equality dance communications and publicity via social media and web content.

The Ballroom Barn - Nominee

The Ballroom Barn opened in Lamberhurst (Kent) in April 2022, providing a vibrant and welcoming space for the equality dance community and others to dance. It is the creation of Tori and Yvonne who have been active in equality dancing, both socially and competitively, for many years. They have developed new dancing opportunities via their seasonal balls, attracting equality dancers, dancers from the local community and further afield, thus fostering understanding and acceptance of equality dancing. They offer workshops and practice space for equality dancers and run a weekly dance class highlighting equality dancing and non-gendered language.



UKEDC Champion Award - presented to an individual or organisation who has made a significant, but potentially unacknowledged, contribution to the equality dance community in the UK.

Penny Johnson - Winner

Penny has been an ambassador for equality dancing for many years. Since 2000 she has competed in ballroom, Latin and with the Pink Dancers at equality competitions throughout Europe. Penny leads and is often the only female leader in mainstream and medallist competitions. She has won major events, including the Open Worlds Solo at Blackpool and the Bournemouth Summer Festival with her dance partner Debby. This has raised the profile of equality dancing and demonstrated that leading or following is not defined by sex or gender. Penny also generously gives up her time to volunteer at equality dance events.

Don Wheeler - Nominee

Don has volunteered his time and put considerable effort into organising hosted housing for overseas competitors attending the Pink Jukebox Trophy for many years now. Not only has this ensured free of charge accommodation for those who have requested it, but friendships have been formed across the international dance community and some hosts have enjoyed reciprocal arrangements at international competitions, such as Eurogames.

Tony Bird and Phil Marsden - Nominee

For many years, Tony and Phil have organised a group of equality dancers to rehearse and take part in the annual London Pride march, which increases the visibility of equality dancing in the UK and provides another opportunity for equality dancers to build their community. Phil has built a trolley, together with a sound system, to provide the music during the parade. Every year, he reassembles the equipment and pulls it by hand from his home to the parade and back. Tony manages the group registration, distributes participant wristbands, and deals with on the day logistics and assembly.

Yvonne Settle - Nominee

Involved with equality dancing over many years as a ballroom and Latin competitor, Pink Dancer and committee member, Yvonne continues to be hugely supportive of the equality dance scene. She helps to run social events, organises classes and workshops, and support competitors throughout the year. She deserves specific recognition because so much of her support is often behind-the-scenes enabling more dancers to participate both socially and competitively.