



SHARING DANCE

BUSINESS PLAN

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction 3
- 2. The Social Purpose Organization 4
- 3. Theory of Change / Social Impact..... 5
- 4. Environmental Scan 8
- 5. Operations..... 9
- 6. People 11
- 7. Communications 12
- 8. Project Costs 13

1. INTRODUCTION

The health costs and lost productivity of increasing inactivity and childhood obesity affect all Canadians, especially children at risk. Obesity is a key driver of chronic disease in Canada and currently one-in-three Canadian children are overweight or obese.¹

We all know that physical activity is essential to a healthy lifestyle but for many Canadians, the “typical” physical activities, like running on treadmills, lifting weights at the gym, and playing organized sport, just don’t hold everyone’s attention and therefore, don’t keep everyone as motivated to remain active. To increase physical activity levels, and decrease the growing strain on our health care system, it is important that Canadians of all ages are exposed to a range of activities that are interesting, engaging, and accessible.

Dance is an excellent form of physical activity that has exertion levels rivaling many of the “typical” physical activities more commonly utilized. Arizona State University and the National Cancer Institute produced a website compendium representing a wide-range of activities with the respective metabolic equivalent (MET) intensity levels. Dance in the form of styles and relative intensity of the Sharing Dance routines have met MET rankings that far exceed standard gym and sporting activities.²

What’s better is that with Sharing Dance, anyone can learn while showing progress in achieving their personal activity goals. Furthermore, as a fun exercise, someone engaged in dance is more likely to want to participate for longer than a typical recreational activity.

Dance has the additional benefits of promoting mental and emotional well-being. Unfortunately, it is often far too expensive for many youth to take classes, and for those teachers who are required to teach dance in schools, it is often outside of their comfort zone and area of expertise.

We know dance is an inclusive, high quality physical activity, with cognitive, social and emotional benefits too. We know that 85% of Canadian kids do not access any kind of formal dance programs and that all public school teachers must teach dance and introduce more physical activity into the classroom, yet a great many lack support to do so. We’re determined to tackle these issues through the Sharing Dance program.

Sharing Dance is a multifaceted initiative providing opportunities for youth and adults to get active that encompasses:

¹ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-625-x/2012001/article/11712-eng.htm>

² Compendium of Physical Activities website
<https://sites.google.com/site/compendiumofphysicalactivities/Activity-Categories/dancing>

- An ongoing, in-classroom program engaging teachers and youth in high-quality, accessible dance activities delivered through innovative digital technologies
- Resources and activities for teachers to use that meet the needs of the curriculum they are required to teach in every province
- Freely available community dance routines for all Canadians to build up to an annual “Sharing Dance Day” community dance performance each year.

Working with key partners across the country, we also plan to engage the community in a pan-Canadian dance celebration in 2017, Canada’s 150th birthday. Our goal by 2017 is to have up to a million youth and adults across Canada participating in Sharing Dance to mark the sesquicentennial.

2. THE SOCIAL PURPOSE ORGANIZATION

THE PROGRAM

“Learn to. Love to.” That is the motto of Sharing Dance, the community engagement platform of Canada’s National Ballet School (NBS). Through Sharing Dance, the pedagogical expertise of NBS is shared with the broader community. It is an initiative of national scale that aims to motivate hundreds of thousands of Canadians, the young and the young at heart, to participate in healthy, fun and creative dance activities.

To celebrate International Dance Day in 2010, (a UNESCO designation to encourage all people to participate in and enjoy dance), and the 50th anniversary of NBS, we organized and performed a flashmob at Toronto’s Eaton Centre. Over 300 people ranging in age from 6 - 82 performed the routine, resulting in a video posted on YouTube. The enthusiastic response from participants, audience members and viewers of the video led NBS to develop the Sharing Dance website as an innovative way to engage a broader community in the joy of dance.

Sharing Dance is now leveraging digital media and key partnerships to develop a rich suite of dance training resources that will be accessible to all skill levels and indispensable as a tool for public school teachers. This platform is also being used to overcome barriers facing underserved communities and share the many health related benefits of dance with people in special need, as well as with the general public.

Sharing Dance is now established as an annual event that encourages Canadians of any age, mobility, and fitness level to experience the joy of dance.

THE ORGANIZATION

Sharing Dance is a project of Canada's National Ballet School (NBS), a world leader in the training of professional dancers and teachers and whose mission is "Moving the World." Established in 1959, NBS is one of the world's foremost training institutions for aspiring young dancers and teachers, attracting students with rare talent and the drive to perform at the highest level, from across the country and around the world. NBS graduates can be found as dancers, choreographers, artistic directors, teachers, and administrators in over 80 dance companies world-wide.

At NBS we have a greater range and diversity of community programs than at any other professional ballet school in the world. From our weekend/after school program and adult ballet classes to our in-classroom outreach to underserved youth and growing number of health and wellness programs for aging populations, NBS is committed to making the Olympic calibre training we deliver broadly available to participants from any walk of life or ability level.

With our plans for Sharing Dance we will target the known need to get school-aged kids in Canada more active and we will leverage digital video, social media and other technologies to enable the growth of the program in dramatic fashion. There is no other program of this type and proposed scale in the country and it offers an opportunity to make a significant impact, positively affecting the health and well-being of hundreds of thousands of Canadians.

3. THEORY OF CHANGE / SOCIAL IMPACT

THE PROBLEM

Children and youth aged 5 - 17 years spend an average of 9 hours, or 64% of their waking hours, being sedentary each day. Girls aged 12 - 17 spend more hours on sedentary behaviour than boys (10 hours a day).³

Dance is a terrific form of physical activity that also promotes mental and emotional well-being. It is also the number one recreational activity for girls in Canada with fifty percent more Canadian children enrolled in recreational dance programs than in minor hockey.

Unfortunately, it is often far too expensive for many youth to take classes. For many teachers, who are required to teach dance in schools, it is often outside of their comfort zone and area of expertise. While dance is a part of the physical education curriculum in public

³ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/130530/dq130530d-eng.htm>

schools across all provinces, most schools do not have the resources to hire specialized teachers.

THE SOLUTION

Through Sharing Dance, we offer the community and teachers a wealth of online content that includes resources to actively engage youth and students in the Sharing Dance program. In doing so, we aim to empower Canadians to collectively experience the joys and health benefits of dance and make fun and accessible dance activities part of their daily lives.

Sharing Dance targets students of dance of all ages and demographics. In particular, we are able to reach children and youth in K-8 public schools who are required to learn dance through the physical education curriculum. That means that Sharing Dance has the potential to affect more than 5-million schoolchildren across Canada.

Sharing Dance provides educators with practical, accessible and inspiring resources, as well as interactive live-streaming capability to link up with NBS teachers and other partner schools through existing broadband connectivity. This is an unprecedented opportunity that greatly enhances and supports delivery of the dance curriculum to students of all ages. In our pilot projects it was clear that Sharing Dance directly supported the efforts of teachers to bring more physical activity into the classroom, just as it motivated all of the students involved to actively participate and get their bodies moving.

Sharing Dance is also designed to empower mentors, or youth leaders, who work with children in high-risk and priority neighborhoods to effectively deliver uplifting and culturally diverse dance programs to under-served communities. We will also reward those youth who, as chosen by their peers and teachers, display exceptional leadership and collaborative spirit through dance, with a chance to participate in the Sharing Dance Leadership Conference to be held annually at NBS.

All of these activities build to and come together in the annual "Sharing Dance Day" community performance event, held in cities and communities across Canada.

LOGIC MODEL



SOCIAL IMPACT

We have already had a demonstrable impact introducing dance to three Toronto public schools, Beaumonde Heights, Rose Avenue and Church Street, and the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Toronto's Go-Girls program; their teachers/mentors have been trained by NBS' passionate and gifted dance faculty. One of those teachers, Laurel Toto, learned how to dance while taking classes offered to the less privileged at the Williamsburg Settlement House in Brooklyn. She understands the impact that dance can make in a young person's life, such as instilling confidence in their ability to make healthy choices, promoting wellness, and fostering social skills and emotional development.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

STRENGTHS

NBS is uniquely positioned to scale Sharing Dance across the country. With an unparalleled reputation in Canada, a well-established infrastructure, and existing partnerships already in place (i.e. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet School), we are in an advantageous position. There is no other program of this type and proposed scale in the country and it would be the first true community engagement partnership with professional dance schools across the country.

Sharing Dance also allows NBS to expand its reach. While NBS is at its core an elite ballet school, Sharing Dance opens doors to all Canadians who are interested in learning to dance, making this physical activity fun and accessible to all. With more than 850,000 kids, roughly 15% of Canadian children, already enrolled in recreational dance, this initiative is likely to increase those enrollment numbers for individuals interested in continuing to dance beyond their annual Sharing Dance experience.

NBS has initiated a partnership with Physical and Health Education Canada (PHE) to ensure the instruction content on Sharing Dance specifically meets the curriculum needs of teachers in K-8. As more teachers begin to interact with the digital platform and access live video streaming with their students, Sharing Dance will become an indispensable tool in schools.

NBS has secured a strong technology partner, Waterloo-based D2L, to help build and support the innovative technological infrastructure that is required to deliver the rich suite of content online and create long-term, ongoing engagement with teachers, youth and other participants through the Sharing Dance Web resources. With D2L we are exploring new e-learning and learning management systems that will allow us to roll out to up to one million participants by 2017.

WEAKNESSES / CHALLENGES

There are two key challenges that we are facing that a financial investment would help us overcome: 1) funding to create the many additional resources and learning materials we envision to engage teachers and promote in-classroom and in-community physical activity to as many as a million participants; and 2) staffing support to create and manage that learning content, integrate and maintain the technology platform, build and liaise with our network of regional partners, and work with communities to support dance activities and encourage uptake and participation in Sharing Dance.

With our technology partner in place we can lay the groundwork for a nation-wide infrastructure for Sharing Dance, but we need rich, evolving content to deliver on that

network to support teachers and motivate Sharing Dance dancers. Creating content requires trained personnel with experience in distance learning and creating e-resources, as well as some specialized AV equipment. Managing the complex technological underpinnings to maintain a seamless experience for participants also requires additional dedicated staff resources.

Based in Toronto, it is essential that we reach out to and empower regional partners across the country to make Sharing Dance a fully pan-Canadian program. Establishing those partnerships and sustaining them requires the attention of dedicated staffing to make sure communication channels are clear and opportunities to enhance and expand the program in communities are fully realized. We also need to provide in-kind and direct financial support where required to enable partners to champion the program in their area.

We also need to work with all partner networks to manage the intake and uptake of new participants in the Sharing Dance program and steward existing communities. The technology we will employ with Sharing Dance will allow us to scale the levels of participation up exponentially with minimal cost sensitivity. The content we develop can work as well for one class as it would for 50,000 and using technology we can scale up to that level of engagement using the same initial content. Where we need support is to manage the marketing of this free program to schools, teachers and communities to ensure every effort is made, at a strategic and grass-roots level, to encourage participation.

5. OPERATIONS

The goal of Sharing Dance is to annually encourage groups across Canada to make dancing a regular part of a healthy, active lifestyle. People of all ages and abilities, but especially young people, will be motivated to dance in every province and territory. They will feel the joy and freedom that dance can bring. They will make friends and have fun. They will be part of a cultural project that spans the nation.

Whether dancing in the classroom or the community, Sharing Dance will use technology to connect an entire nation in a dance celebration. The Sharing Dance program provides opportunities to engage in dance activities all year long and the initiative culminates annually in a Sharing Dance Day each May when all participants are encouraged to take part in a public performance of what they've learned. By 2017 there will be a Sharing Dance Day celebration in major cities across Canada and smaller regional events in communities from coast-to-coast-to-coast.

Sharing Dance offers special resources for teachers and dance troupe leaders as well as a blog, to further encourage interactivity between all participants, regardless of their

geographic location. It supports performing groups through the learning/rehearsal period and encourages all participants to post their performance videos online, allowing widespread audiences to view performances by groups across the country.

A key strategy to drive uptake in participation is to further develop the content delivered on the site to directly address the curriculum mandates of the provincial Ministries of Education across grade levels. With the technology platform recognized as an indispensable teaching aide, the adoption rate by educators alone will directly relate to increases in overall participation as their students also adopt the platform through their required lessons.

A key to scaling Sharing Dance will be the activation of new and existing regional partnerships across Canada. NBS is joined by two national partners: Physical and Health Education Canada and The Royal Winnipeg Ballet School. Working collectively in 2015 we will identify key Regional Partners in each province who will deliver the Sharing Dance program and connect with participants, schools and other partners at the community level. These partners will include local dance schools as well as community leaders who champion recreational activities for youth. Ambassador Schools in each province will also be identified.

Additionally, we are working with three leading charities: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Toronto, Parkinson Society Canada and World Animal Protection to expand participation in Sharing Dance and help them raise money for their worthy causes. Just as with a walk or run or bike race, all participants in Sharing Dance (be they individuals or a class) can, if they wish, collect pledges as they learn the routine to directly support our charity partners. The local chapters of each of our charity partners will help us roll the program out across Canada as well. All Partners will be prepared to engage their stakeholders throughout 2016 as a build-up year to a massive pan-Canadian celebration in 2017. The legacy of 2017 will position the program for continued growth and expansion for years to come.

Another strategy to build toward a critical mass of online and in-community participation is our annual “Sharing Dance Day.” The build up to this event, when groups perform in front of a live public audience, allows us and our partners an opportunity to actively promote the larger Sharing Dance movement. The event offers a number of opportunities for partners and sponsors to activate their participation and connect with a larger audience.

We are in the process of developing a sponsorship strategy to invite a national corporation to sign on as a presenting partner with Sharing Dance. With well-known corporate sponsorships catering to boy-oriented activities, dance provides a compelling vehicle to reach girls and boys who do not engage in sporting activities. Currently, an equivalent to Tim Horton’s affiliation with hockey does not exist in the dance space. With dance being the most popular

recreational activity for girls and with growing popularity for boys, this is a considerable opportunity to explore further.

A leading media partner will be targeted upfront. This will help extend the reach of Sharing Dance and in turn help to provide value back to corporate sponsors who will also be making a significant investment of their own to ‘tell the story’ and leverage their association with Sharing Dance.

Having successfully piloted Sharing Dance over a 4-year period in Ontario, we know we have demonstrated a proven track record with local impact. With additional support, we can establish Sharing Dance in every community in Canada and have a lasting positive impact on the increased health and physical activity levels of all Canadians.

6. PEOPLE

NBS is an established organization with a 55-year history and the foundation Sharing Dance needs to build from to be successful. While supported by NBS, our Sharing Dance team consists of just seven key staff who divide their time between NBS and Sharing Dance responsibilities. Sharing Dance is a “start-up” enterprise within a larger organization and we need additional financial support to realize our goals for growth.

The Director of Strategic Initiatives leads the project with support from the Director of Marketing and Communications and the Coordinator of Strategic Initiatives. There are three Community Engagement Co-Managers who support program development and delivery, and a Digital Media Coordinator supporting content development needs.

If successful in obtaining additional funding, we plan to hire dedicated, full time staff for Sharing Dance in 2015 who will focus on:

- Project Coordination (ensuring the effective coordination of planned activities)
- Course Design and Content Management (to design dynamic teacher’s resources and educational content)
- Digital Media (creating rich video and interactive content)

As we continue to grow, we see the need to expand the Sharing Dance team beyond 2015 to include a full-time Artistic Faculty position, a Participant Development / Uptake role (to help recruit and support new participation), as well as the following part-time and contract roles:

- Central Technical Administrator (to manage the complex technology pieces)

- Fundraising Systems Administrator (to help support programs to ensure long-term funding of Sharing Dance)
- Regional Partnership Liaison (to ensure effective deployment of our partner network)
- Content Partnership Liaison (to work with partners to generate content for the online learning environment)
- LMS Community Liaison (to help build and support a vibrant online community of learners and dancers)
- Software Developer (contract) (to customize and integrate technology solutions)
- Subject Matter Experts (contract) (to provide content and resources for the program)

7. COMMUNICATIONS

Moving forward, we will need to consider the following key communications strategies to support our growth:

- In all of our communications, we need to be driving the public to our online platform / website where access to all of our tools and resources are readily available to support and encourage their efforts.
- Reach out to our existing network, including Ministries of Education across Canada, to promote Sharing Dance and the opportunity, ease, and accessibility of utilizing the program within public school physical education curriculum. This will drive a large new population of users to the online platform and increase participation in Sharing Dance relatively quickly.
- Continue to create a sense of urgency around “Sharing Dance Day” and the annual community performance. Our messaging will gradually build as the event date draws closer. We will work with industry professionals to drive compelling digital media marketing campaigns to build participation numbers.
- We will continue to utilize social media and look at online advertising opportunities to engage new potential participants and drive them to the website to find out how to get involved and host a flashmob in their own community.
- Enhance our communications strategies and tools as part of a larger Healthy Schools Communications Toolkit. This toolkit would enable each Sharing Dance community to better promote their own local activities while leveraging the brand recognition of the national event.

- Cross promote NBS and Sharing Dance to increase awareness and brand recognition of both programs across Canada. Also, by leveraging our regional partnerships with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School, for instance, Sharing Dance can gain access to a new population of potential participants. In turn, by providing the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School with a toolkit, they can more effectively share the initiative with their network and better position themselves as community engagement partner with their own stakeholders.

8. PROJECT COSTS

Sharing Dance is one of six finalists chosen from The Play Exchange, a national online challenge to find and support innovative ideas to get Canadians healthier and more active. This business plan and estimate of projected costs have been developed to support Sharing Dance's entry in The Play Exchange. The information within this plan was provided by Sharing Dance unless otherwise noted.

Attracting new sources of financial support will be increasingly important for us to scale and, long term, to become self-sustaining. The broad reach, scalability, participatory nature and community focus of Sharing Dance provides significant opportunities for us to leverage our success in order to draw upon untapped revenue sources. These include peer-to-peer (P2P) fundraising, sponsorships, and venture philanthropy.

By reaching into new communities and tackling a wide range of societal issues such as the long-term health and fitness of youth, as well as providing opportunities for creative expression to underserved communities, we will continue to demonstrate a compelling case for government funding. Throughout our growth, we will continue to look at innovative ways to engage funding partners to support our future sustainability.

	Phase I (2015) {2,000+ dancers}	Phase II (2016) {15,000+ dancers}	Phase III (2017) {1 million dancers}
Expenses	2015	2016	2017
Staffing/Support	\$ 304,000	\$ 542,160	\$ 761,800
Content Development	\$ 45,950	\$ 81,900	\$ 206,500
Technology	\$ 39,500	\$ 134,900	\$ 678,000
Promotion	\$ 31,000	\$ 126,000	\$ 159,000
Evaluation/Impact	\$ 10,500	\$ 21,500	\$ 30,000
TOTAL	\$ 430,950	\$ 906,460	\$ 1,835,300