



Kerstin Kallmann (Germany)

Application ESSDA Board

In 1997 I started to dance in a dancing school - first with a man, one year later with a woman and later only same-sex. In 2000 I danced my first competition only few months after becoming member at pinkballroom in Berlin. Whereas I first competed only in ballroom, some years later I became passionate about latin as well. I am competing frequently on national and international competitions for more than 10 years with Cornelia Wagner.

Since 2013 I am involved in the management of pinkballroom and in the organization of the Berlin

competitions: the Berlin Opens, the German Open 2013 and the European Championships 2017. For several years I am member at the sport committee of the DVET – and there I was involved developing the competition rules for the DVET, the action “save the role change!” and the action “starters wanted!”.

From the very beginning I enjoyed not being fixed on a single role and the familiar and appreciating atmosphere in the trainings and competitions. Though the same sex dancing scene changed a lot with the development of the quality of dancing, of the ambition and training intensity, I hope we can save this special atmosphere for us. I am very proud of being part of that very special sport, which has been created by organizations and single people. I would like to work within ESSDA for further developments of our sport: for fair cooperation between all players within the same sex community, for competitions which are appreciating the dancers, for diversity on the dance floor and in organizational issues and for improvements where same-sex dancing needs to become up to date.



Piia Korpi (Finland)

I started dancing and competing with my partner Santra in 2007. We were the first and for seven years the only Same-Sex Dancing couple in Finland. For a few years now we've been teaching our own Same-Sex Dancing groups, making the dance form more known, visible and popular in Finland. On the side of investing in our own dancing career, we've taken our professional exams and are also qualified dance teachers.

The international Same-Sex Dancing family is a crucial reference point for me and I feel privileged to be part of it.

Especially now that we have an active and growing community also in Finland, it feels a perfect time to raise my contribution to the next level and stand for the election for the ESSDA board. As a board member I would be a spokeswoman for the dancers. As I've been involved for over ten years and climbed the whole path from the last place of level D to the top A level, I feel I have a pretty good view on the subjects that concern us competitors. Being a pioneer in my country and having done a lot of work to give birth to Same-Sex Dancing in Finland gives me a good background for helping to make our dance form more popular and known in the future.

The values I want to advance in Same-Sex Dancing are openness, fair play and respect for the diversity in our dancing. Competitors on different levels and with personal styles and expression should all feel respected and treated fair at any time. The richness, and for me the undisputed ethical core, in our form of dancing is the freedom to express yourself according to how you feel and want to be seen as a couple. Rather than trying to build more norms as to how we should dance and present ourselves, we should be proud and celebrate the great diversity in our dance form and concentrate on promoting it further.

To make Same-Sex Dancing enduring and strong we need quality competitions welcoming also the new beginners and encouraging them to make their way forward over the years. High-class A levels in all categories are important for both setting an example and getting more recognition and visibility to our dance form. Established, secured and well-organized championships are crucial not only for the top competitors but, more importantly, for the overall credibility of Same-Sex Dancing.

Besides the dancing, I work in our national disability sport organisation. I've done my whole working career in sports organisations and gained a good understanding of the field. I've also held many official posts, being e.g. the chairwoman of our student association and dance club, a board member and the chair of the education committee in the Finnish Dance Sport Association and a member in the Finnish working groups on Gender Equality and Ethics in Sport. I did my master's degree in Philosophy in the University of Tampere and nearly finished also another one in Gender Studies, before dancing took my heart away from the books.

My background in Philosophy means I am always interested in hearing the points of view also differing from my opinion and also good at arguing my point when needed. I value good, open and respectful discussion, heading for a goal or a staging post that is in line with the shared, openly stated values and objectives of the group. Depending on the setting, I can both lead and follow, when it comes to discussion and decision making, and I rather take steps forward than backward, outside the dance floor.

Trix Macleod

ESSDA board motivation statement



When I joined the ESSDA board two years ago, I was a newcomer to same-sex dancing. I wanted to use this experience to help other new dancers considering entering their first competition. To that end, I created an ESSDA resource for newbies. This resource will be available at the upcoming AGM. It includes lots of advice and information that I would have benefitted from when I first joined the competitive dance world, and words of encouragement from other new competitors (thanks to all those who contributed!). I hope it proves useful for others in the future.

If elected to serve a second term on the ESSDA board, I would like to focus on the transgender and intersex inclusion work that was discussed at the 2017 AGM. Gender and sexual identities are changing, and we need to make sure that the same-sex dance scene isn't left behind. I identify as trans (non-binary) and feel strongly that our community should be doing everything it can to make our dance spaces as welcoming as possible to all LGBTQ+ people. I know that many groups, organisers and ESSDA members are committed to making same-sex dance events even more welcoming to trans and intersex people, but are unsure of where to start. Information from ESSDA on gender diverse inclusion could be really helpful in this regard. And a clear policy statement from ESSDA will be vital to ensuring trans and intersex people feel welcome in our dance spaces.

I believe the first step in this process should be a meaningful consultation with gender diverse members of our community, as well as a conversation with trans and intersex organisations and other sporting groups who have produced effective inclusion policies already. With these insights, we will be better equipped to come back to ESSDA members to discuss any barriers that trans and intersex people may face, and to work out if and how they can be addressed. With an MA (and soon to be completed PhD) in Gender and Sexuality research, I hope to lead this work.

Pete Meager (United Kingdom)

Most of our European members will know me very well and will have experienced the energy, commitment and delivery I have put into the same sex dance community over the past three years, both at a social and competitive level.

Having joined the UK competitive dance scene just over 2 years ago, I have immersed myself in voluntary work as a board member of the UKSSDC as well as Publicity Officer of Out For Sport London, growing the profile of Same Sex dancing in UK as a professional sport in a much larger multisport arena.



Last year, I co-founded 'Competitive Edge' – seminars and workshops specifically for our European same sex dancers. We have run successful sessions both here in the UK and in Germany and will be hosting a complimentary session in Paris during the Gay Games. We hope to enhance the Paris experience for all our world-wide competitors, whilst also aiming to raise voluntary donations for the ESSDA outreach fund at the same time – The Gay Games will be a momentous occasion for over 300 competitors and it is an honour to give something back to a community that has personally given me so much already.

The reason I was to join the ESSDA board is to bring energy and passion to the board, to build stronger links with its membership and add value to an organisation that I feel needs to engage and motivate its membership at a much higher level. I have strong networks both in Same Sex dancesport and other LGBT Multi-Sport organisations which I hope will give me greater opportunity to further develop and support the aims of ESSDA.

I would also like to offer greater support to dancers who want to join the European circuit for the first time, whilst developing those who have been valued ESSDA members for some years – growing the membership back to strength is a priority at this moment in time to be able to achieve what we all want to achieve.

I have been delighted to be part of three brand new same sex dance competitions through 2017/18 and being part of our very first Same Sex dance competition in Oslo just a few weeks ago was a hugely successful step forward for our European community. I have volunteered as the Public Relations Manager for the Gay Games Dancesport team over the past 12 months and very much look forward to supporting our community through the Games as the Competition Manager and Master of Ceremony. With at least two completely new European same sex dance competitions scheduled for 2019, I would like to be able to offer my full support to ensure these events are both successful and well attended by our members as well as other non-member competitors.

In summary, I would bring expertise, passion and a desire to move ESSDA forward in a positive manner with like minded people.



Diana Vinke (The Netherlands)

Dancing is and has been a connecting experience for me. Though I have been more of a social than a competitive dancer, the Gay Games of 1998 introduced me to the excitement and inviting atmosphere of same-sex dance competitions. I explored various sides of same-sex dancing: being a member of the board of Equality dance, co-organising Equality dance Dutch Open Championships in 2010 and 2011, and being a volunteer at the European Championships in Budapest.

When I joined the ESSDA board in 2012 I offered a swift and open mind, and strong hands. I have been the General Secretary for five years, 'being always on the ball', as one of the board members puts it, and combining this for several years with the role of Membership Officer and Treasurer. From the previous female co-president I learned what it takes to support organisers of championships with building and running high-quality large competitions that give competitors the time of their life. I also learned that there is no standard recipe for this and that support needs to fit in with organisers' experience and needs.

The same-sex dance community is in a transition in several respects: new dance associations and competitions are emerging, initiated by people with new and fresh ideas; the concept of inclusion has become much more comprehensive and challenges us to be truly inclusive in what we do, write and say; new members have joined the board, which has triggered sharing views of what each of us sees as the role of ESSDA and 'the greater good'. I would like to stay on as a board member to contribute to making this transition from current to new: cherishing values such as openness, trust and diversity at all levels, not only in how competitors express their identity but also in the adjudicator panels, in meetings, in how all parties involved communicate with each other and in the support of competition organisers; open-minded when it comes to new ideas that are intended to move ESSDA forward as well as to enhance what we already have; and still offering strong hands and a swift mind.