



**East London Dance and Urban Development secure £1 million  
GLA Good Growth Fund to match £1 million funding from Arts Council England  
to create UK's first National Talent House for Urban Culture in Stratford**

(Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2018) - Dance development organisation and creative producer **East London Dance** and music talent development organisation, talent incubator and educator **Urban Development** announced today that they have secured a joint funding bid from the **Mayor of London's Greater London Authority (GLA) Good Growth Fund** for £1 million, to create the UK's first National Talent House for urban culture in Stratford, east London.

The GLA funding will match £1 million (£500,000 per organisation) already secured from the **Arts Council England Small Capital Grants programme** in 2017 and will enable the fit-out of a 1,000+ square metre historic warehouse and modern extension as part of the Sugar House Island Development (formerly Strand East) adjacent to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park that will be delivered by developers **Vastint UK**.

Inspired by the need to ensure that diverse and disadvantaged young people from east London benefit from the legacy of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the centre will offer an aspirational space to unlock the potential of musicians, singer songwriters, composers, dancers, choreographers and producers and enable progression to further/higher education, employment and enterprise. It will also be an incubation hub with strong industry links for innovation in the creative industries, launching new projects, products and careers.

East London Dance and Urban Development are leading exponents of urban culture and drive the vital diversification of the dance and music sectors, through investment in nurturing and championing new authentic voices and providing platforms to gain recognition. Building on nearly two decades of collaboration, both organisations will share the building that will become their new permanent home - enabling the growth and sustainability of their vital work engaging and developing diverse young **talent aged 14–30 years**.

Award-winning east London-based architectural practice, **Citizens Design Bureau** has designed an interior which combines high performance recording suites and dance studios with spaces for collaborative working, creative conversation and performance; encouraging cross-fertilisation of talent and ideas between both organisations. Building works for the structure are underway and the internal works will commence later this year; estimated to finish in Spring 2019.

**Polly Risbridger, Director, East London Dance** said: *"As East London Dance celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018, we are overjoyed at the support and commitment the Mayor of London and Arts Council England have offered in helping us realise our ambitions for the next 30 years. This building will not only provide a new home for East London Dance and Urban Development but will be an authentic space that listens and responds to artists, young people and the local community. It will*

*spearhead the creation of a vibrant new creative hub at Sugar House Island and create a home and meeting point for the urban arts community.”*

**Pamela McCormick, Director, Urban Development** said: *“We are proud to team up with East London Dance for this, our biggest undertaking yet, that will be the catalyst for the emergence of a new creative community in the area. Our programme will complement and support a well-developed programme, building on our collective strong local community roots, the new neighbourhood at Sugar House Island and the creative industries. The new building will make us fit-for-purpose, it will allow accessibility to talent, it will encourage diversity and connect London’s sub-cultures to new audiences, markets and opportunities. We would like to give our wholehearted thanks to the Mayor of London, GLA and Arts Council England for allowing us to realise our vision.”*

**Jules Pipe, Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills, GLA** said: *“The Mayor and I are determined to use the Good Growth Fund to challenge preconceptions about how regeneration takes place. This project is a great example of how we can work with local communities and organisations such as Urban Development and East London Dance on projects in a way that will help ensure the benefits are felt by all.”*

**Joyce Wilson, Area Director, London, Arts Council England** said: *“I’m really excited about this partnership and what it means for talented urban culture artists. Talent need the opportunity to thrive and this development will be an important step in making that happen for so many people; one that we’re proud to make possible through our Small Capital Grants programme.”*

**Andrew Cobden, Managing Director, Vastint UK** said: *“Vastint is creating a new hub for the creative industries at Sugar House Island, a scheme that will bring over 2,500 new jobs in the area. We are delighted that this confirmation of funding will now enable us to conclude negotiations with two great organisations which are rooted in the local community. Both do so much for the young people of east London and will be fantastic assets at Sugar House Island. We hope they will be the first occupiers of Dane’s Yard, a collection of 8 buildings designed for, and dedicated to the creative industries.”*

Ends.

#### **Notes To Editors:**

- **About GLA Good Growth Fund:** More information on the Good Growth Fund can be found at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/funding-opportunities/good-growth-fund-supporting-regeneration-london>.
- **About Urban Development:** Urban Development was founded by Pamela McCormick in 2000 and is an Arts Council England RFO/NPO. Unique amongst youth music charities through its pivotal role within British urban music, as well as the wider UK music industry, the organisation, with its core audience demographic of 14 – 25-year old BAME, supports artists, music industry hopefuls and future music talent. Urban Development’s work stands at the crossroads where the creativity of underground music meets the industry, combining business acumen with an understanding of youth culture. Through industry-led business/employment support programmes, career guidance, access to resources and showcasing, UD has supported thousands of participants, with core demographic of 14–25 year old BAME, to access and progress within the music industry. The **Urban Development Music Foundation (UDMF)** was founded as a registered charity (number 1149090) in 2012, led by a board of trustees, chaired by Lord Adebawale CBE with songwriter Wayne Hector as patron. Operating in the country’s poorest and most diverse boroughs, the foundation’s aim is to establish a national accessible, structured and sustainable progression pathway in

popular/urban music, to advance education, develop skills, improve opportunities and relieve unemployment. Urban Development is located in London's Tileyard, with three regional centres in Derby/Nottingham, Manchester and Bristol, working in partnership with Baby People, Brighter Sound and Bristol Plays Music respectively.

<http://www.urbandevelopment.co.uk/>

- **About East London Dance:** Enriched by three decades of experience, East London Dance is the leading producer of creative dance experiences for the people of east London and beyond. We produce inspirational projects and events to engage our diverse local communities in dance, and nurture the next generation of artists and professionals. We champion enterprise, collaboration and innovation in order to create dance of exceptional quality that is seen regionally, nationally and internationally. We specialise in a tailored and responsive approach that places our communities and their needs, interests and ambitions at the centre of our work. In the last three years we have attracted diverse live audiences of over 120,000, of which over 50% are least likely to attend the arts. We have engaged and inspired over 11,000 people to participate in dance activities and launched the careers of many successful artists, choreographers and companies. East London Dance is currently based at Stratford Circus Arts Centre in the vibrant borough of Newham, and predominantly works across eight east London boroughs. East London Dance has driven the formation of a new collective of incoming dance organisations to Stratford and the surrounding area to create Dance Cluster East – a unique partnership of East London Dance, English National Ballet, Sadler's Wells and Studio Wayne McGregor, alongside a wide range of other dance providers, artists and companies based here. Together we are making east London a world-leading hub for dance.
- **About Vastint:** Vastint is an international real estate organisation with over 25 years of experience across Europe. The goal of Vastint is to create long-term value through property investments. Vastint UK specialises in unlocking the potential of large city sites to create truly mixed-use regeneration. We want to create distinct urban environments inspired by how people enjoy working and living in the modern world. We intend to maintain a long-term ownership and management interest in our developments, working with tenants and residents to curate them over time, ensuring they are successful. Our small, cosmopolitan team takes inspiration from best practice around the world. We work with organisations which share our aspirations and values. And most of all, we collaborate; we bring together specialists from different disciplines and challenge them to find new creative ways of reimagining and reinvigorating how we design urban landscapes. [www.vastint.eu](http://www.vastint.eu).
- **About Citizens Design Bureau** - Citizens Design Bureau are an award-winning Architecture practice led by Katy Marks, formerly a project Architect of the Stirling Prize winning Everyman Theatre in Liverpool. They bring a wealth of experience designing buildings for the Arts, with a design process focussed on drawing out the potential of a collaborative and creative community.

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