****

**WE CONNECT 2024**

**Speaker Biogs**

**Ousmane Drame**

Ousmane Drame is the founder and CEO of URBOND, a Portsmouth based charitable organisation. In Portsmouth, URBOND is driving opportunities, wellness and success, and advancing racial harmony, equality and diversity for the public benefit.

Ousmane founded URBOND in 2013. The primary purpose of URBOND was to help the local community thrive by bringing different people together. The organisation soon helped individuals and groups access support, tackling key issues as a community and seeing people work together from all walks of life irrespective of their beliefs, background and ideologies to help form a better community for all.

Further to this success, Ousmane established a Youth Development to provide young people with opportunities, help them learn new skills and find their place in the Community.

**Cllr Steve Pitt, Leader of Portsmouth City Council**

Born and bred in Portsmouth, Cllr Steve Pitt was first elected as a councillor in 2014 and is now the Leader of Portsmouth City Council and has cabinet responsibilities for Culture, Regeneration and Economic Development.

Steve has been involved in organising cultural events across the city for 20 years and is a champion of culture's ability to drive regeneration and positively change lives.

He has run his own business and has worked across several sectors within the arts including as a music manager and promoter, and theatre director.

He is on the regional council for Arts Council South-West and is a trustee of Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust. Steve is a Board Member of the Solent Freeport and is one of the Leaders of the Solent Growth Partnership (with IOW and Southampton), the successor to the Solent LEP.

**Zoie Goldman**

Zoie Golding MBE is a celebrated dance pioneer, social innovator, and cultural business leader who has made her mark on the UK and international events world over the past two decades. She is an accomplished Artistic Director, Executive Producer, and CEO, founding nationally acclaimed companies FuzzyLogic and ZoieLogic Dance Theatre who have redefined male dance engagement and created transformative, socially impactful dance experiences. Championing inclusion at Commonwealth Games 2022 and spearheading mass work that disrupts cities with its own communities.

Her work is driven by a passion for breaking barriers and increasing access to dance and arts, especially for underserved communities. Zoie's dedication to the arts has earned her widespread recognition, including an MBE for her contributions to dance.

**Majid Dhana**

Is the founder of 432 Nomads and an artist committed to amplifying the voices of refugees and asylum seekers in Portsmouth and beyond.

His work, informed by his experiences as a migrant, reveals the often-overlooked realities of those seeking refuge in the UK.

His artistic practice delves into the complex relationships between humans and their environments, as well as the interactions between individuals. By addressing both personal and universal themes, he aims to inspire positive change within my community.

Through his projects, he highlights the resilience and strength of local refugees, aligning with themes like 'The World We Live In,' 'Creative Responses and Sharing Stories,' and 'Hope and Celebration.' His goal is to create an accessible platform that not only shares these stories of struggle and triumph but also fosters a sense of empowerment, belonging, and integration within the community.

**Alicia Smith**

Alicia is a valued member of the Culture Liverpool Leadership team, heading up Arts, Heritage, libraries  & Participation and a leading force behind the strategic cultural development for the city in collaboration with many partners.

Her wealth of knowledge and experience pays dividends – with an innovative and impressive back catalogue including the European Capital of Culture 2008 programme of events, the Giant Spectacular trilogy, the Vitality Netball World Cup, RISE, UNESCO City of Music as well as studies into the social impact of arts.

More recently, Alicia led on the Eurovision EuroLearn and EuroStreets – a first for any host city and an integral part of success of Liverpool’s Eurovision journey on behalf of Ukraine.

An avid advocate for the arts, Alicia is a familiar face on the national and international networking circuit providing help and advice on best practice for culture programmes, cultural experiences, and cultural journeys.

**Sarah Vasey**

Sarah is an experienced Arts Development Manager with over 25 years of developing, delivering and commissioning multi-art form, arts development and community engagement programmes, events, happenings, installations and regeneration schemes. She has led on creative community engagement that responds to both local neighbourhood issues and the city’s major events programme, including European Capital of Culture 2008 Creative Communities programme, the Giant Spectacular Trilogy, Vitality Netball World Cup, Cunard T175, and World Gymnastics Championships 2022.

More recently she developed and delivered the Eurovision Song Contest 2023 European school’s programme. The highly successful programme has been seen as best practice for future Eurovision Song Contests. She also leads on the Creative Neighbourhoods programme, an ongoing collaborative project for communities throughout Liverpool.

She is passionate in creating opportunities with and for people who do not usually engage in the arts, to participate, create and lead their own projects.

**Dominic Jones**

Dominic Jones was recruited to the Mary Rose in 2019 as Chief Operating Officer and became CEO in 2021. He has an outstanding background in commercial visitor attractions (Disney, Merlin) and creative visitor experience development.  During his time at the Mary Rose, Dominic has driven commercial and operational performance. He worked closely with previous Chief Executive to create the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard joint venture with the National Museum of the Royal Navy.  This launched successfully in August 2020 and won the prestigious Museums & Heritage Award for Best Partnership in 2024.  Dominic led both the Experience 1545 Gallery and the award-winning Dive 4D theatre projects.

**Jodie Anthony**

Jodie started her career in Dance Development team at The Point in Eastleigh before studying at the Royal Academy of Dance, moving into teaching. That love of providing opportunities and helping people reach their potential prompted her move into outreach at the University of Winchester then onto the University of Portsmouth. After working on the outreach programme between the University of Portsmouth and Portsmouth Football Club, Jodie joined Pompey in the Community last year to look after partnerships and fundraising. She was part of the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics Victory Ceremony teams as well as a performer in the Closing Ceremony before leading greenfield site ceremonies as a Producer at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games in 2022. She is passionate about the importance of using sports and arts as a vehicle for opportunity and change, and can’t wait to build more networks at We Connect.