

Turkey's iDANS festival wins coveted funding from Europe

İstanbul's popular annual contemporary dance festival iDANS has been deemed worthy of funding by the Culture Program of the European Commission, becoming the first such event from Turkey to receive the prestigious support.

The iDANS International Contemporary Dance and Performance, organized by the İstanbul-based Bimeras Cultural Foundation, has been running since 2008.

Aydın Silier, the executive and artistic director of the four-year-old festival, said in a written statement on Thursday that iDANS became one of the 14 festivals selected this year by the program from among 275 applicants from 32 countries across Europe, making the support all the more important. Twelve of the 275 applicants were from Turkey, the statement added.

Among festivals that qualified for funding alongside iDANS this year were the London Jazz Festival, Berlin's Transmediale digital arts festival and Vienna's ImPulsTanz international dance festival.

The selection committee, in its announcement of the funding, billed iDANS as a "clearly defined, ambitious and professional festival," and added, "in spite of the difficulties of presenting contemporary performing arts in Turkey, the curators [of iDANS] insist on a precise and high-quality programming." The committee also praised iDANS for its "360 degree activity, ranging from stage performances to public space exhibitions and performances, workshops, residency programs, seminars and publications," the statement said.

The report of the selection committee evaluated iDANS as a "knowledge producer" with its range of activities and acknowledged that "furthering the quality of exchange among performing arts specialists in Europe is at the core of what iDANS does."

The sixth edition of iDANS is scheduled for Sept. 28-Nov. 3, with a program currently in the works that will touch upon the interaction between cultures via the metaphor "Dansın İpek Yolu," or the "Silk Road of Dance." **İstanbul Today's Zaman**