

ROLE GUIDE · LABELS & A&R

Labels & A&R

Connect artists, partners and release plans.

21-25 Oct 2026

Amsterdam · 30th edition

Pro Pass €795 + 3.77% fee · almost sold out

1,200+ events · 300+ venues

Programme checked 14 Oct

For a label, "everybody is there" means the distributor, the DSP editors, the publishers and sync agents, the rights bodies, your artists, the artists you want and the media, in one week and mostly within a ten-minute walk. This guide turns that into a release calendar the right people have agreed to, and a showcase decision made on purpose.



Record shop.

Barbara Burgess / Unsplash

Who this is for, and what to leave with

Three labels go to ADE with three budgets. The chapter separates them where it matters.

The release calendar for the next two quarters agreed with the people who can move it; two or three A&R leads that fit the sound; distributor and DSP relationships refreshed in person; and, if the budget allows, a showcase that makes the label a place rather than a logo.

Profile	What ADE is for, in this case
Two-person imprint	Six EPs a year, A&R and label manager in one body. Here for distributor and DSP conversations, demo tables and one daytime moment.
Mid-size independent	A roster, a release calendar and a distributor. Here to lock two quarters, refresh DSP editors and decide whether a showcase pays.
Major or large independent	An electronic division or a label like Armada or Defected. Here to be present with value: masterclasses, demo drops, a hub, a night that works by day.

Stage	Realistic goal for the week	First move
Exploring	Understand how distribution, DSP pitching and sync actually work.	Bandcamp and Spotify Insider Knowledge; Lab Discovery; one distributor conversation.
First releases	Test whether the catalogue fits a distributor and an editor.	Meet the DSPs & Distributors with one release plan; ask what would make it pitchable.
Building momentum	Lock the next two quarters with the partners who move them.	Book DSP and distributor meetings in September; host a listening session, not a party.
Established	Strengthen relationships; decide the showcase tier for next year.	A&R at the demo tables as host; label manager in the hubs; a debrief by January.

Numbers that shape the week

What was listed on the official programme on 14 October.

Meet the Labels & A&Rs

Wed 15:30

Rosewood. Twelve A&Rs listed (Sony, Universal, Believe, Monstercat, STMPD, fabric...). You are the one being met.

DSP day

Thu 13:15

Meet the DSPs & Distributors: twenty people from Beatport, Believe, SoundCloud, Deezer, The Orchard, AWAL, Bandcamp, LabelWorx and more.

Venue window

Closed

To host in 2026 you partner with a registered ADE venue. Registration reopens around January; the Festival Fund is applied for by e-mail.

Submissions a week

≈ 30,000

Beatport's figure at ADE 2023: the distributor's weekly priority list is what gets listened to.

Before ADE

The cycle repeats every year within a week or two. Reading this the week before? Start at "One week out" and diary the spring items for 2027.

Spring · six months out

☐ Showcase: yes or no, and at what tier. If yes, venue partner and lineup by June. [link ↗](#)

☐ Registered venue? Apply to the ADE Festival Fund by e-mail (2025 deadline: 31 August). [link ↗](#)

☐ If no showcase: plan a daytime moment, a listening session or a joint mixer with your distributor.

Summer · three months out

- ☐ Map the release calendar Q4–Q2; mark the priorities for the distributor conversation.
- ☐ Target list: distributor, two or three DSP editors, one publisher or sync agent, five artists, three labels, two journalists.
- ☐ Split the team: A&R at Lab and the demo tables; label manager at Pro, the hubs and the "Meet the..." rooms.

September · database opens

- ☐ Book the DSP and distributor meetings first; they are the scarcest diaries of the week.
- ☐ Ask ADE Lab about sitting at the demo tables or hosting a demo drop; if 2026 is full, for 2027.
- ☐ Pick sessions by the 2026 Pro themes: market consolidation and independence, big tech, collective action. [link ↗](#)

One week out

- ☐ Print the label one-sheet with a QR: roster, next six releases, who to contact for what.
- ☐ Brief the A&R: demos only in the designated slots, said kindly the other fifty times.
- ☐ Diary Wednesday 15:30 (Labels & A&Rs) and Thursday 13:15 (DSPs & Distributors); badge pickup is personal, bring ID.

Bring

Release calendar Q4–Q2

Label one-sheet with QR

Catalogue priorities

Support you can offer an artist

Demo-slot policy for the A&R

Two or three single tickets

The week, day by day

Fourteen sessions checked on the official programme on 14 October. Times and rooms still move: check the listing the morning you go.

Wed 21 Pro · Lab · opening 12:30-13:15 Bandcamp Essential Insider Knowledge Felix Meritis · Shaffyzaal 15:30-17:00 Meet The Labels & A&Rs Rosewood · Courtyard/Atrium 15:30-17:00 BMIM Meet the Sync Pros Felix Meritis · Koepelzaal	Thu 22 Pro · Lab · RE:UNION 12:15-13:00 Spotify Essential Insider Knowledge Felix Meritis · Zuilenzaal 13:15-14:45 Meet The DSP's & Distributors Rosewood · Courtyard/Atrium 13:45-16:30 The Chorus Showcase ADE Startup Class of '26 Felix Meritis · Concertzaal 14:00-19:00 Afro House Summit LuminAir · Oosterdoksstraat 4, level 11 14:30 → early evening RE:UNION · ADE 2026 Q-Factory · free with QR pass 16:45-17:45 30 Years of ADE Felix Meritis · Shaffyzaal	Fri 23 Pro · Lab · ADE Green 13:45-14:45 Artists on AI, A No-BS Roundtable Felix Meritis · Shaffyzaal 14:30-16:00 Meet the Publishers Rosewood · Courtyard/Atrium 16:15-17:00 Building an independent career with Mau P Rosewood · Ballroom	Sat 24 Pro · Culture Hub 13:30-14:15 The Brazil Boom Felix Meritis · Zuilenzaal 14:30-16:00 Meet the focus-region professionals Felix Meritis · Shaffyzaal 16:15-17:45 Demolition XXIX Felix Meritis · Zuilenzaal	Sun 25 Festival only Open day: meetings, lobbies, follow-ups
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- Pro Pass session
- Free or guest list
- Programme, screening or installation
- Night or festival ticket
- Time to confirm on the official listing
- RE:UNION

The shape of each day

Label managers work the hubs, not the panels. A&Rs take demos only in the designated slots.

Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening and night
Wed 21	Badge at Felix Meritis; distributor meeting; Bandcamp 12:30	Meet the Labels & A&Rs 15:30 (A&R in the room); Sync Pros if accepted	The independent-label mixers; your own roster first
Thu 22	Two DSP editor meetings; Spotify 12:15	DSPs & Distributors 13:15; RE:UNION, Q-Factory from 14:30; Afro House A&R sessions	Your artists' sets; stand near the booth
Fri 23	Publisher or sync agent coffee; rights and royalties sessions	Artists on AI 13:45; Meet the Publishers 14:30; Mau P 16:15	Showcases of labels you want to work with
Sat 24	Coffee with the week's best contacts	Brazil Boom 13:30; focus regions 14:30; Demolition 16:15	One night chosen for who will be there
Sun 25	Team debrief: demos taken, promises made, costs	Book the November listening day	Home

Sessions worth your time 14 picks

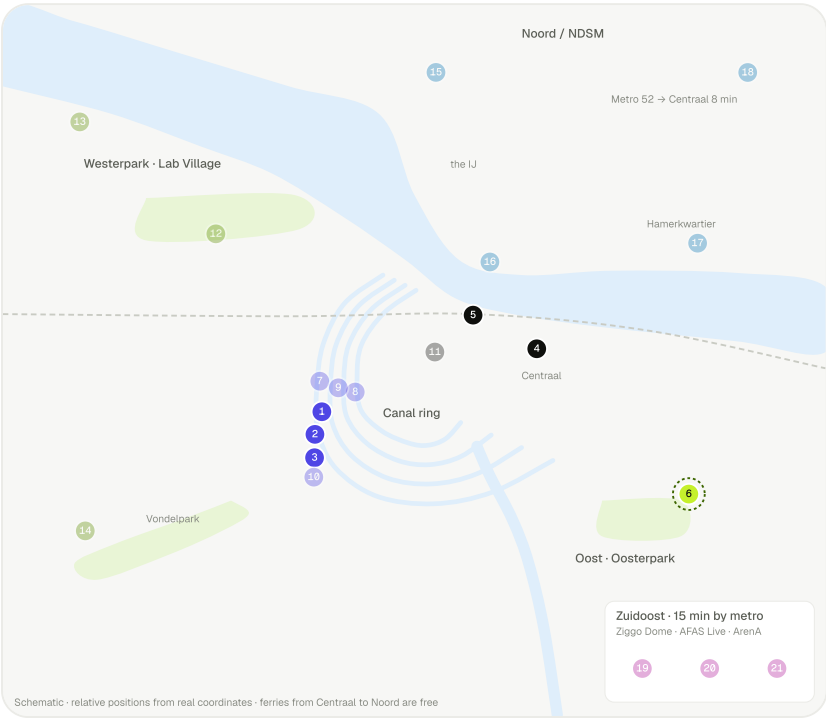
Why each one earns a slot, and what access it needs. A saved pick is not a ticket.

Day	Time	Session	Venue	Why go	Access
Wed 21	12:30–13:15	Bandcamp Essential Insider Knowledge	Felix Meritis · Shaffyzaal	Aly Gillani and Deniz Everling on Scheduled Release and Bandcamp radio. Time moved from 13:45.	Pro Pass
Wed 21	15:30–17:00	Meet The Labels & A&Rs	Rosewood · Courtyard/Atrium	You are the ones being met: a hundred prepared pitches in ninety minutes. Decide beforehand what one track you ask for.	Pro Pass
Wed 21	15:30–17:00	BMIM Meet the Sync Pros	Felix Meritis · Koepelzaal	Music supervisors and sync agents (Netflix, Position Music, Publicis). Applications closed 11 October; diary it for 2027.	Pro Pass + separate application
Thu 22	12:15–13:00	Spotify Essential Insider Knowledge	Felix Meritis · Zuilenzaal	Spotify's dance and regional editors on how local scenes reach global listeners. Bring one question.	Pro Pass
Thu 22	13:15–14:45	Meet The DSP's & Distributors	Rosewood · Courtyard/Atrium	The DSP day. Twenty platform and distribution people in one room; bring the release plan, not the catalogue.	Pro Pass
Thu 22	13:45–16:30	The Chorus Showcase ADE Startup Class of '26	Felix Meritis · Concertzaal	The 2026 startup cohort: tools your label will be sold next year, seen before the sales call.	Pro Pass

Day	Time	Session	Venue	Why go	Access
Thu 22	14:00– 19:00	Afro House Summit	LuminAir · Oosterdoksstraat 4, level 11	Sets, A&R sessions and an industry mixer for the afro house scene. Register for the guest list first.	Guest list · registration required
Thu 22	16:45– 17:45	30 Years of ADE	Felix Meritis · Shaffyzaal	Anna Knaup, Richard Zijlma and Maria Jimenez with Dave Clarke on what thirty editions taught the people who book.	Pro Pass
Fri 23	13:45– 14:45	Artists on AI, A No-BS Roundtable	Felix Meritis · Shaffyzaal	Mathame, BT, Portrait XO, Miss Kittin and Terrence Dixon with Dave Clarke. Time moved from 11:00.	Pro Pass
Fri 23	14:30– 16:00	Meet the Publishers	Rosewood · Courtyard/Atrium	Composition rights and catalogue conversations; only two publishers were listed on 14 October, so arrive early.	Pro Pass
Fri 23	16:15– 17:00	Building an independent career with Mau P	Rosewood · Ballroom	An artist, his label and his management on independence: the Pro theme of the year, from the inside.	Pro Pass
Sat 24	13:30– 14:15	The Brazil Boom	Felix Meritis · Zuilenzaal	The business context behind Brazil's scene, with Spinnin's Natalia Raul; a Portuguese-speaking market, not a Spanish one.	Pro Pass
Sat 24	14:30– 16:00	Meet the focus-region professionals	Felix Meritis · Shaffyzaal	Professionals from Brazil, Africa and the Middle East; more names to be announced.	Pro Pass
Sat 24	16:15– 17:45	Demolition XXIX	Felix Meritis · Zuilenzaal	Watch how A&Rs give feedback in public; the floor is where next year's demo-drop hosts are recruited.	Pro Pass

Where things are

The venues in this guide, plus the four zones everyone moves between.



- 1

Felix Meritis
Keizersgracht 324 · ADE Pro conference hub · info
- 2

Andaz Amsterdam
Prinsengracht 587 · Pro venue; the busiest lobby · info
- 3

Rosewood Amsterdam
Prinsengracht 432–436 · Pro venue; "Meet the..." sessions · info
- 4

LuminAir
Oosterdoksstraat 4 · Session venue 2026 · info
- 5

Amsterdam Centraal
Stationsplein · Trains, metro, free ferries to Noord · info
- 6

Q-Factory
Atlantisplein 1, Oost · RE:UNION · Thu 22 Oct · info

Faded pins are the other ADE venues from the guide. Canal-ring venues are a 10-minute walk apart; Westergas is 15–25 minutes from the canals; Q-Factory is 15–20 minutes from the canal ring by tram or metro (Wibautstraat / Weesperplein); Noord by free ferry from Centraal; Zuidoost by metro. A Pro Pass includes GVB transport for five days.

In the room

The label is pitched as often as it pitches. Both sides of the table in one week.

Moment	Do this	Say or ask
Meet the Labels & A&Rs, Rosewood	Listen for fit, ask for one track, decline kindly and keep the door open.	Send me the one track you would release first, and nothing else, in November.
A DSP editor, Thursday	Bring the next six releases and the story behind each; ask what they need to pitch it.	Which of these fits a playlist you actually programme, and what would make it pitchable?
The distributor, in person	Have the priority-list conversation you never have on the weekly call.	Which two releases would you put on the priority list, and why those?
A publisher or sync agent	One catalogue brief, cleared and tagged; ask about briefs, not deals.	What are supervisors asking you for this quarter that you cannot find?
Your artist's set, midnight	Stand near the booth; talk to the label managers who came to listen.	What did you release this year that surprised you?

Mistakes we keep seeing

Mistake we keep seeing	Instead
A night that is a party rather than a place.	An A&R plan, a guest list of buyers and media, a daytime element.
Sending the A&R to Pro and the label manager to Lab.	A&R at Lab and the demo tables; manager in the hubs and the "Meet the..." rooms.
No distributor meeting because "we talk every week".	The priority-list conversation is different in person. Book it first.
Ignoring the rights and royalties sessions.	The money sits there: BumaStemra, AFEM, publishers, sync.
Taking demos at 02:00 and losing them by 10:00.	Demos only in the designated slots; one dated line per promise.
Hosting without an official venue partner.	Partner with a registered venue; Pro Pass holders must get in within capacity.
A November inbox nobody answers.	A listening day with a reply to everyone. A no is a relationship too.

What veterans say

Verbatim, from public interviews and articles; the source is linked on each card.

“For music pros, the priority is to come back every year because everybody is there; we want it to be the best moment of the year to do business.”

Jan-Willem van de Ven · managing director, ADE, Billboard, 2025 · [source ↗](#)

“We want to be present, but we also want to offer up a lot of value. We don't just want to be a place for people to have a drink.”

Stephen Campbell · global head of dance, Apple Music, Billboard, 2025 · [source ↗](#)

“It's the distributors that send us their list of priorities every week... and we do listen to everything on that priority list.”

Helen Sartory · SVP Creator Services, Beatport, Billboard, 2023 · [source ↗](#)

“We believe in real, personalised artist building.”

Armin van Buuren · co-founder, Armada Music, DJ Mag, 2023 · [source ↗](#)

“Every time I crossed into the city, I felt a spark... And every ADE, I wanted to live here.”

Ilker Soyulu · founder, Zwart Goud (shop, distributor, label), ADE editorial, 2025 · [source ↗](#)

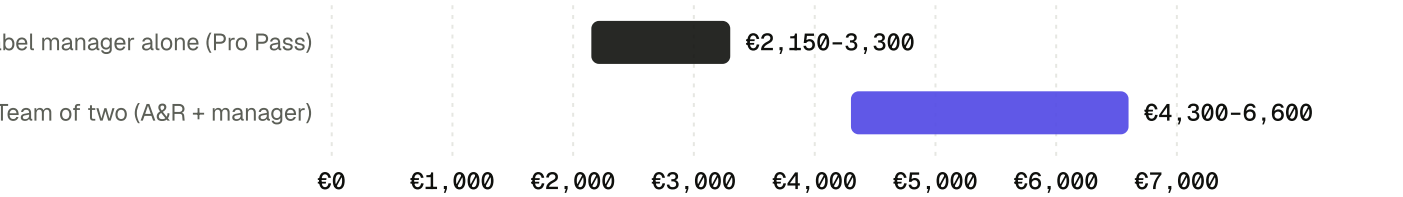
“Hands-on information... they need to take home value for themselves or their organization.”

Meindert Kennis · ADE, on what professionals want from the week, Billboard, 2023 · [source ↗](#)

Budget reality

Five nights from elsewhere in Europe. Planning bands, not quotes; the showcase is a project budget on top.

Indicative five-night totals using published 2025–26 ranges and the Pro Pass price on the official tickets page on 14 October.



Line	Label manager alone (Pro Pass)	Team of two (A&R + manager)
Pass	€795 + 3.77% fee (late rate, almost sold out)	2 × €795 + fees; ask ADE about a company discount
Flights / train	€150–350	€300–700
Bed, 5 nights	€800–1,500 canal ring or De Pijp	€1,600–3,000, or a shared apartment
Food and coffee meetings	€250–400	€500–800
Transport	GVB included with the pass	included with the passes
Event tickets	2–3 nights, €120–220	€240–440
Showcase or daytime moment	—	Project budget: venue, sound, staff, drinks are not published

What a venue pays to be official and what a showcase returns are not published. The free café showcase (DTLA × Purple Tea, 2025) shows the floor; Armada's takeover week shows the ceiling.

After ADE: the follow-up is the work

Deals are seeded at ADE and signed later. The November listening day is where the week pays.

Same night

One line per contact and per demo: who, what they need, what you promised, when.

Within 48 h

The release plan or the one track an editor asked for, with one sentence recalling the conversation.

2–4 weeks

Sync leads followed while the supervisor remembers the track; DSP pitch calendars aligned to what editors said.

November → January

Listening day with a reply to everyone; showcase debrief (cost, attendance, who came); next year's decision before venue registration opens.

Hi [name],

Good to meet you on Thursday – thank you for the note on [what they said about the catalogue].

Here are the two releases I mentioned, with dates and the story behind each: [private link].

If [their playlist / priority list / brief] is open for [quarter], could we take twenty minutes in November? [Two time windows].

[Your name], [label]

New in 2026, worth knowing

- Meet the Labels & A&Rs (Wed 21, 15:30–17:00, Rosewood) lists twelve A&Rs, from Sony, Universal and Believe to Monstercat, STMPD and fabric. Open to Pro Pass holders, no sign-up. [source ↗](#)
- Meet the DSPs & Distributors (Thu 22, 13:15–14:45) brings twenty platform and distribution people, including Beatport, Believe, SoundCloud, Deezer, The Orchard, AWAL, Bandcamp, LabelWorx and UnitedMasters. [source ↗](#)
- BMIM Meet the Sync Pros (Wed 21, Felix Meritis Koepelzaal) is matched by application; the 11 October deadline has passed. Twenty sync professionals, including Netflix and Position Music. [source ↗](#)
- Hosting: an official ADE event must be at a registered venue, and the 2026 venue window has closed, so you partner with an official venue. Pro Pass holders are admitted within capacity. [source ↗](#)
- The ADE Festival Fund is for registered festival locations, one application per event by e-mail, judged on urgency, innovation, diversity and inclusion, local talent development and impact beyond ADE. "Emphatically not a government subsidy." [source ↗](#)
- Pro Pass at the late rate: €795 + 3.77% fee, almost sold out; company discounts on request. The pass covers Pro, Green, Culture Hub and the Business Hubs, not ADE Lab. [source ↗](#)

OUR INVITATION

RE:UNION · ADE 2026

Conversations beyond the dancefloor

The Spanish-speaking scene and its international counterparts in one room during ADE: agencies, labels, promoters, media and the artists they work with. MavelPoint takes part as technology partner.

For labels with Spanish-speaking artists or partners, this is the one afternoon the agencies, promoters and media from home are in one room with their international counterparts. Bring the release calendar, not the catalogue.

When	Hours	Where	Access
Thursday 22 October	Doors 14:30 · programme from 15:00 into the early evening	Q-Factory, Atlantisplein 1 (Oost)	Free with a QR pass

- The MavelPoint Room: get your profile and press kit ready with the team, on site.
- "From EPK to Opportunity" workshop: what agents, promoters and labels actually open first.
- Local Circuit · ADE edition, live.
- A panel with MavelPoint's CEO and industry guests.

Get your free QR pass

reunionbeyond.com

Useful links

Official programme 2026

Times and rooms move; check before you go.

amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026

Meet the Labels & A&Rs

Wed 21, 15:30, Rosewood.

amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026/meet-the-labels-a-rs/2808154

Meet the DSPs & Distributors

Thu 22, 13:15, Rosewood.

amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026/meet-the-dsps-distributors/2808164

ADE Festival Fund

Criteria and how registered venues apply.

amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/festival-fund

ADE FAQ

Hosting rules, badge pickup, "full is full".

amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/faq-and-contact

Pro Pass and tickets

€795 + fees at the late rate; company discounts.

amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/tickets

RE:UNION registration

Free QR pass for Thursday 22.

reunionbeyond.com/register

MavelPoint

Roster profiles, EPKs and bookings in one place.

mavelpoint.com

Sources 22

Facts come from the official ADE programme and pages, MavelPoint's own research and the sources below. Check the official listing before you go: times and rooms move.

Meet the Labels & A&Rs 2026 amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026/meet-the-labels-a-rs/2808154

Meet the DSPs & Distributors 2026 amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026/meet-the-dsps-distributors/2808164

Meet the Publishers 2026 amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026/meet-the-publishers/2808166

BMIM Meet the Sync Pros 2026 amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026/bmim-meet-the-sync-pros/2808146

Demolition XXIX amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026/demolition-xxix/2831173

The Chorus Showcase, ADE Startup Class of '26 amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026/the-chorus-showcase-ade-startup-class-of-26/2813951

The Brazil Boom amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026/the-brazil-boom/2812171

Meet the professionals from the focus regions amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026/meet-the-professionals-from-the-focus-regions-brazil-africa-and-middle-east/2808160

ADE Pro themes 2026 amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/news/ade-pro-next-themes-market-consolidation-30-years-ade/2800878

ADE Festival Fund amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/festival-fund

ADE FAQ and contact amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/faq-and-contact

ADE tickets amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/tickets

Billboard: seven takeaways from ADE 2025 (Yahoo syndication) yahoo.com/entertainment/music/articles/amsterdam-dance-event-7-takeaways-194739843.html

Billboard: what we learned at ADE 2023 billboard.com/music/music-news/amsterdam-dance-event-2023-ade-what-we-learned-spotify-1235453270

DJ Mag: 20 years of Armada Music djmag.com/features/sailing-future-20-years-armada-music

ADE editorial: Zwart Goud amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/news/ade-editorial-zwart-goud/2761492

ADE news: PIV Records' A'DAM Tower takeover (2024) amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/news/piv-records-shakes-up-the-city-with-an-adam-tower-takeover/2523251

ADE news: Armada Music's ADE 2024 programme amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/news/armada-music-unveils-its-massive-versatile-program-for-ade-2024/2549647

Beatportal: DTLA x Purple Tea Records showcase (2025) beatportal.com/articles/1040044-dtla-x-purple-tea-records-ade-label-showcase

AFEM: activities at ADE 2025 associationforelectronicmusic.org/2025/10/20/afem-activities-at-ade-2025

CULTR: essential panels 2025 cultr.com/news/amsterdam-dance-event-essential-conferences-and-panels-to-attend-in-2025

TripProf: ADE 2026 budget guide tripprof.com/en/blog/amsterdam-dance-event-2026-budget-guide



Career tools for electronic music artists · mavelpoint.com

Get the most from ADE 2026 · A MavelPoint guide · version 1.0 · 14 October 2026

Official programme: amsterdam-dance-event.nl/en/program/2026

Photos: Unsplash (credited under each image). Map is schematic. ADE and Amsterdam Dance Event are trademarks of their owner; this guide is independent of the ADE organisation.