



Galway Community Circus



Annual Report 2019

Non-formal education happens outside the formal school system, in the community

Informal education occurs outside of a structured classroom curriculum and works through conversation, and the exploration and enlargement of experience.

Youth Circus offers a non-competitive arts education which enhances physical and social abilities in participants. At Galway Community Circus Youth Circus refers to our membership-based circus arts education programmes for children and young people which focus on the artistic, social and personal development of participants. Delivered in an out-of-school setting, our youth circus programme consists of regular classes, performance opportunities, masterclasses, exchanges, camps and outings.

Social Circus can be thought of as an umbrella term for the use of circus arts in any caring, supportive or therapeutic setting. It uses circus as a tool to work with youth who are marginalised or at social or personal risk, to contribute to the personal and social development of the participants. At Galway Community Circus, our social circus programmes are delivered through collaborative partnerships with schools and youth and community organisations, often operating for short, or defined, periods of time.

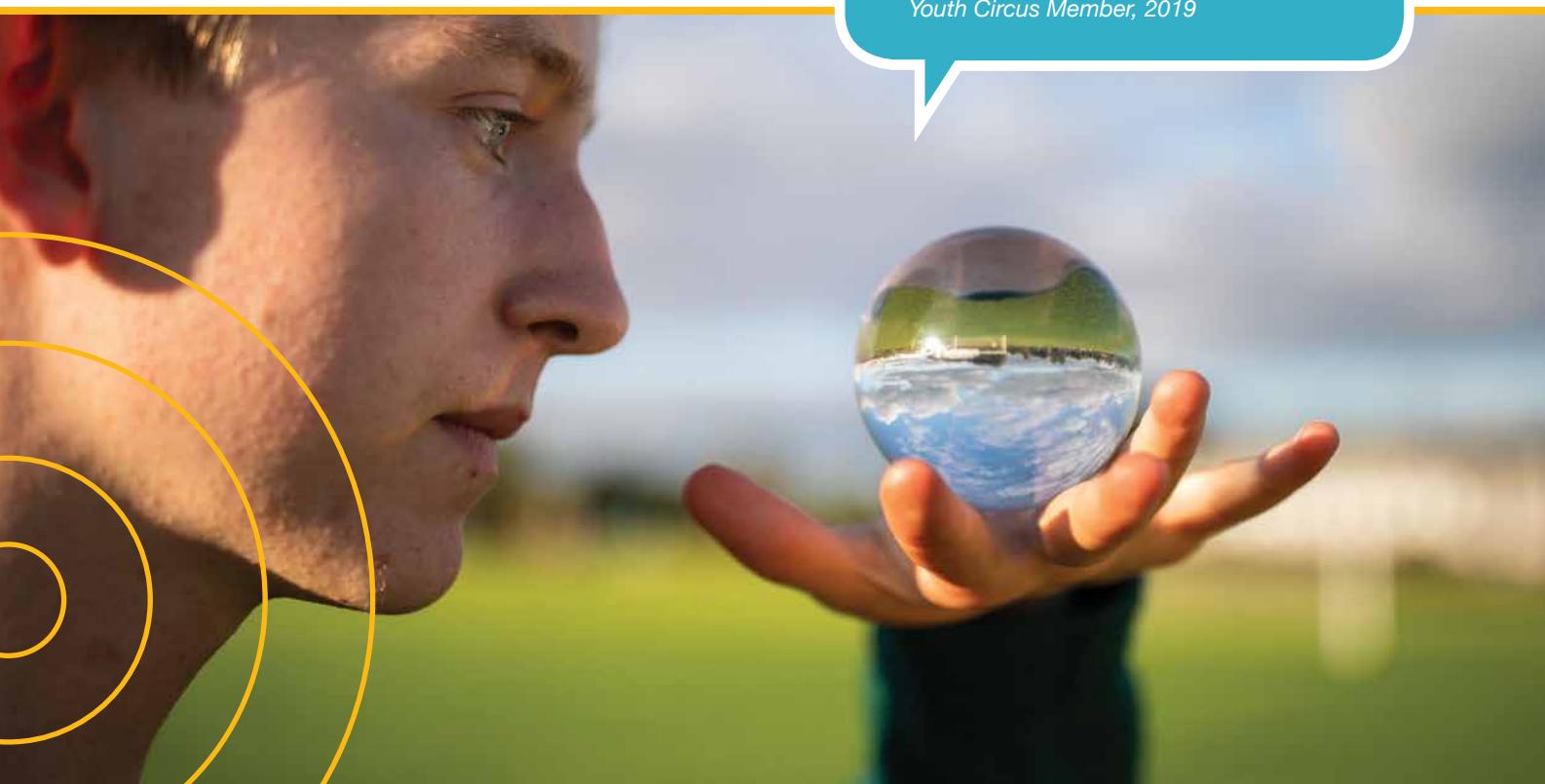
Funambulism is the art of tightwire walking while using a balancing pole

Readiness refers to the development of skills which enable young people along their life journeys. These skills are: resilience, confidence, mutual aid, creative problem-solving, well-being and happiness, self-esteem, patience, leadership skills, improved social skills, personal health, teamwork, empathy, focus.

Krauss, Pittman & Johnson (2016) describe the development of readiness: "*Making progress in areas where we struggle or thrive (and we all do both in our lives) requires the confidence that comes from feeling prepared to handle what comes next. This confidence is built over time, with repeated opportunities to try and sometimes fail, and to grow as a result.*" (Ready by Design: The Science (and Art) of Youth Readiness).

“At Galway Community Circus we are taught that making mistakes is an important part of the process. Learning from mistakes helps young people (and grown-ups!) become more rounded in how they value themselves, improving not only their confidence but also how they see their journey through life. **”**

Youth Circus Member, 2019



Galway Community Circus is Ireland's flagship organisation for youth and social circus, located in the heart of Galway City with a local, national, and international remit. Our aim is to advance the artistic, personal, and social development of young people through circus arts. We are committed to creating an innovative and imaginative learning experience where all young people can realise their full potential.

We are home to a year-round youth circus school, working with over 600 young people from diverse backgrounds every week and deliver social circus programmes in formal and non-formal education settings. We fulfil a vital role in the development of the circus arts sector in Ireland as we work to advance the quality of the sector through professional development programmes for circus practitioners and participation in key international networks.

Our Vision is for a centre of excellence for youth and social circus in Ireland

Our Mission is to unlock personal and creative potential and deliver social inclusion for young people through circus arts

Our Values

Circus is the **Art of Possibility**. Not just an art-form, circus fosters a unique community where everyone is welcome, **where diversity and difference are actively embraced**, and where everyone is encouraged to dream. At Galway Community Circus we don't just teach circus techniques, we impart the unique **values** of circus which guide and motivate the attitudes, behaviour and decision-making of members and artists, staff and volunteers alike.

At Galway Community Circus we...

Provide high **QUALITY** arts experience in circus for all

- Foster a sense of **BELONGING** so that everyone feels welcome, safe and valued for who they are
- Work collaboratively, **SUPPORT** each other and celebrate one another's success
- Create a culture of personal and collective **RESPONSIBILITY**, pursuit of excellence and resilience
- **DREAM** big, take risks and are not afraid to make mistakes
- Focus on positivity and **POSSIBILITY**
- **CHALLENGE** self-limiting thinking patterns and default behaviours
- Value individual and collective **CREATIVITY**
- Play, have **FUN** and remain curious

Artistic Policy

Galway Community Circus aims to create work that is of equal social and **artistic excellence**. We believe it is important to involve our performers in projects which are entirely inclusive and where the process is safe and nurturing but also where the final product is of high **artistic quality**. For us, artistic ambition translates to participatory processes, that allow each person to reach their potential, and innovative, artistically excellent work that engages with diverse audiences and wide range of creative collaborators and showcases circus as exciting, accessible and meaningful artform





As I write this, we are in the middle of Covid-19, one of the most challenging times of our history, both as a country and as an organisation. As ever the management and team have moved as one to a remote model and are currently

working diligently to ensure that when this all ends, we will come roaring back stronger than ever. Unfortunately, this virus has meant that Galway 2020 European capital of Culture year and our planned project has been affected but behind the scenes we are working on a new model using the creativity and positivity that is a part of our culture.

While acknowledging these challenges it is important that we remember and acknowledge the many successes we have had over the past 12 months all of which are covered in other areas of this report. There are too many to list here and all of these achievements are things for which we should all be immensely proud. One achievement worth mentioning here though is Galway Community Circus winning the 'Creative Place' category in 2019 All-Ireland Pride of Place Awards – nominated by Galway City Council!

Finally, I would like to speak on behalf of the board members and commend and thank the management and every member of Galway Community Circus team for their relentless drive and pursuit of excellence. I have no fear that we will exit this time and move on to bigger and better things.

GCC ABÚ

Reg Gordon, Chairperson

Administrative Team 2019

Ulla Hokkanen, Executive Creative Director (full-time)
Fiona Hession, General Manager (full-time)
Becca Clayton, Producer (full-time)
Amélie Bal, Head of Education (part-time)
Gwen Le Guillou, Financial Officer (part-time)
Dani Gill, Communications Co-ordinator (part-time)
Tony Mahon, Technical Manager (part-time)
Anet Moore (Tús, part-time)
Adam Flaherty (Tús, part-time)
Elaine Considine (CE Scheme, part-time)
Brendan Quinn (CE Scheme, part-time)

Core Artists and Educators 2019

Davi Hora, Isabela Mello, Lauren Trainor, Lisa O'Farrell Mendes, Aidan Phelan, Sandra Gonzales Bandera, Eoghan MacMathuna, Naomhan McKeon Joyce, Máiréad Dewar, Ciara MoLoughney

European Voluntary Service Volunteers

Juliette Murez (France), Carolina Girardi (Italy), Benoit Boreux (Belgium), David Praud (France), Leana Valentini (France), Alice Serra (Italy), Hazar Azzeh (Palestine) and Alaa Abualrob (Palestine)

Key Aim

To provide pathways for young people to participate in circus arts at all levels in a way that is inclusive, artistically stimulating and enhances participants' sense of well-being.

Our circus training programme for young people aged 5 to 20 years provides rich opportunities for artistic, personal and social growth in a non-competitive atmosphere. The programme runs year-round in our circus space in Galway City, offering pathways for our members to engage at all levels. It consists of weekly youth circus classes running for 30 weeks per year, masterclasses and intensive training courses, international exchanges, cross-art-form creative labs, camps and outings.

Objectives

- To deliver a high-quality annual youth circus programme that fosters artistic vibrancy, diversity and readiness skills in young people in a sustainable way with the voices of young people represented in all aspects of the programme.
- To promote social inclusion by actively targeting young people who are considered excluded or isolated because of their circumstances and the continual development of social inclusion measures that remove barriers to participation.
- To provide high-quality performance opportunities for members in large-and small-scale productions.



2019 saw Galway Community Circus...

- Deliver 36 weeks of Youth Circus for 650 weekly members.
- Produce 17 shows including '4 Elements' in partnership with Galway Theatre Festival, 'Travelling Light' in partnership with Con Tempo and Galway Music Residency, Christmas Cabaret, bi-monthly Scratch Night shows, performance at The Wheel's National Summit at Croke Park and our Circus Film project with Tumble Circus.
- Start our collaboration with Baboró International Arts Festival for Children, Galway Dance Project and Arch8 for the 'The Streets Are Ours' project as part of Galway 2020.



Key Aim

To develop social circus partnerships which bring circus to marginalised young people and complement a coherent programming ecosystem.

Our Social Circus programmes operate under the 'Circus for All' philosophy which aims to help disadvantaged, at-risk and vulnerable people develop self-confidence and social skills, using circus arts as a vehicle to tap into their strengths and hidden talents. With a diverse array of circus skills on offer delivered by our highly skilled and professional tutors, our programmes are widely accessible and inclusive, allowing participants to realise their potential in accordance with their own abilities.

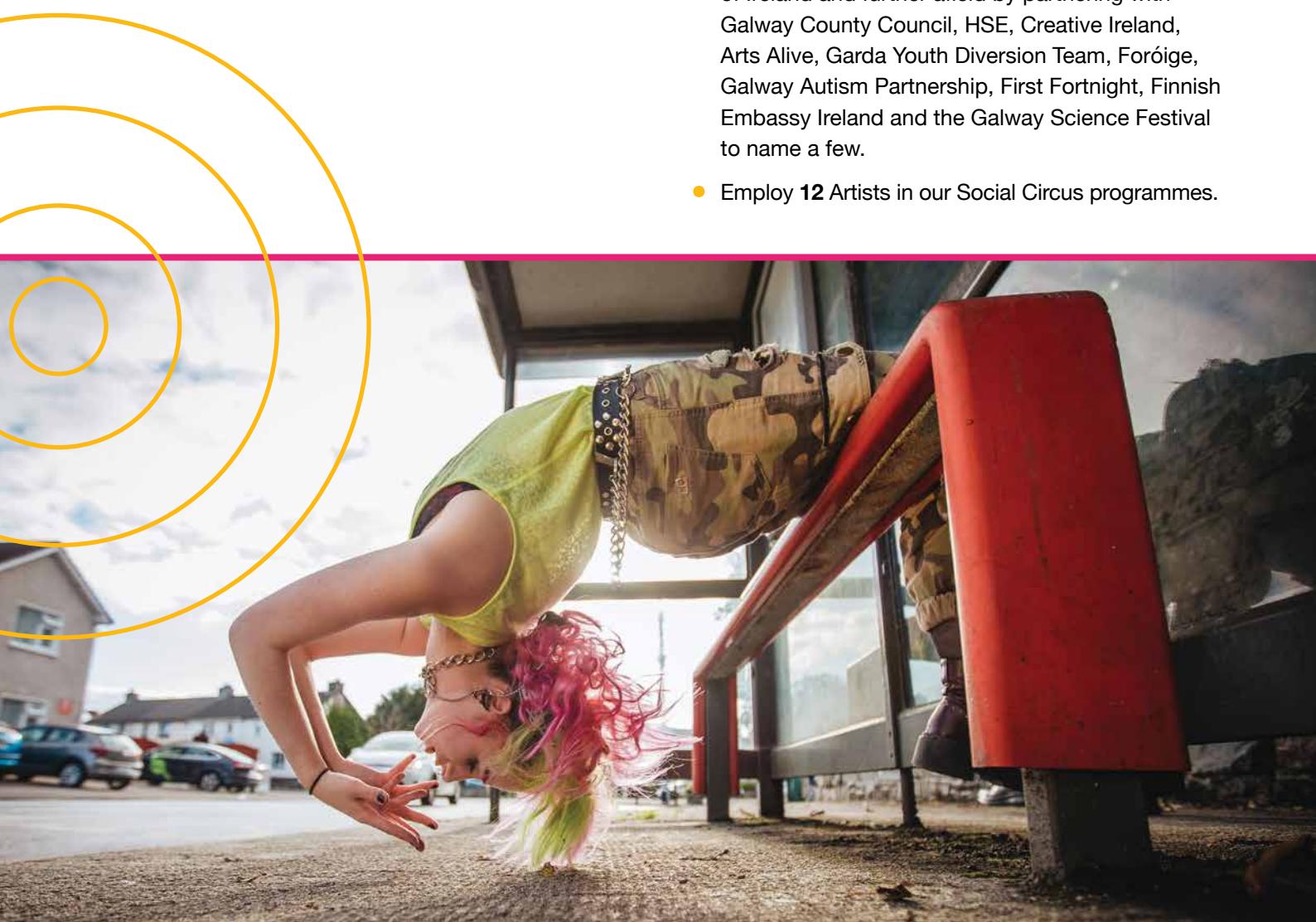
We build and develop strong and long-lasting partnerships with schools and youth and community organisations to bring circus to marginalised young people and complement a coherent programming ecosystem. Develop social circus partnerships with local and regional organisations

Objectives

- To develop and deliver annual social circus programmes that foster creativity, social inclusion, physical and mental well-being and readiness skills in both informal and non-formal education settings.
- To advocate for social circus as a pedagogical and intervention tool to work with youth who are marginalised or at social or personal risk to contribute to their personal and social development and well-being.
- To develop a coherent Social Circus programming ecosystem for GCC based on international models for youth and social circus to maximise our potential and capacity and to tailor programmes to the needs of each target group.

2019 saw Galway Community Circus...

- Deliver **158** Social Circus workshops to **2560** participants in communities across the West of Ireland and further afield by partnering with Galway County Council, HSE, Creative Ireland, Arts Alive, Garda Youth Diversion Team, Foróige, Galway Autism Partnership, First Fortnight, Finnish Embassy Ireland and the Galway Science Festival to name a few.
- Employ **12** Artists in our Social Circus programmes.



Key Aim

To pursue excellence in youth and social circus in an Irish context, learning from international best practice models.

Galway Community Circus supports the growing circus sector in Ireland through strong partnerships and relationships with key international youth circus networks and organisations across the continent. We are a board member of the International Youth and Social Circus Network Caravan and are involved in several European projects to develop youth and social circus locally, nationally and internationally. All our international projects aim to build our capacity and to give opportunities to our members and Irish Circus practitioners to access these networks and learn from them. As much as Galway Community Circus is youth-centred, we are also an artist-centred organisation. In addition to providing employment for Circus practitioners, we also provide a rich environment for Irish and International artist to grow and develop.

Objectives

- To develop, professionalize, and advocate for youth and social circus in Galway and Ireland through involvement in key international and national networks and initiatives.
- To provide a rich environment for youth and social circus practitioners to grow and develop.
- To bring international best practice and skilled circus artists and students to Galway through long-term residency and volunteer schemes.
- To develop and run peer-to-peer learning and Junior Leader programmes.



2019 saw Galway Community Circus...

- Launch our strategic partnership with NUI Galway to build a degree course for circus teachers as part of the European Erasmus+ funded ‘Circus++’ project running from 2019-2022 with 10 international university and circus school partners.
- Represent Ireland internationally as the board member of the International Youth and Social Circus Network Caravan.
- Coordinate 5 European Erasmus+ projects and took part in further 4 including 5 multi-annual strategic partnership projects and 4 mobility projects for young people and professionals.
- Host 8 European Volunteers from Palestine, France, Italy and Belgium on 11-month projects funded by Erasmus+ and 2 Artists in Residence from Brazil.
- Provide professional development programmes to 71 circus artists.
- Present at many key international events and seminars including the International Youth Mental Health Summit in Scotland, the International Children’s Culture Forum in Finland, CircusWorks Annual Seminar in Bristol and two Circostrela’s main annual events; Fresh Street (Ireland) and Fresh Circus (France).





Key Aim

To inspire and advocate for the potential of youth and social circus locally, nationally, and internationally using the high-visibility platform of Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture.

'Wires Crossed – A Balancing Act For Europe' is an international participatory project that promotes physical and mental wellbeing, safe risk-taking and social inclusion through funambulism - wirewalking using a balancing pole. Over the course of 2017 – 2022, people of all ages, abilities, backgrounds, and cultures will be trained in the art of funambulism through a Europe-wide public participation programme. Galway Community Circus, in partnership with 14 European Youth and Social Circus Schools from 12 different countries, will train people to walk the tightwire and experience funambulism's empowering, transformative effects.

Wires Crossed will see one of the largest and most ambitious highwire spectacles to ever be staged in Europe take place over the River Corrib in Galway City as part of the Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture programme.

Objectives

- To build GCC's capacity through long-term partnerships, audience development, professional development and investment in capital and human infrastructures.
- To create a legacy for funambulism and youth and social circus in Galway, Ireland and Europe.

2019 saw Galway Community Circus...

- Deliver **50 public workshops** from beginner to advanced level to some **700 participants** at the Irish Centre of Funambulism – a permanent outdoor training facility in Galway City.
- Deliver 12 days of **outreach workshops** to targeted groups of young people from the West Galway Garda Youth Diversion project, the Clann Resource Centre, the Port of Galway Sea Scouts and the ARD Resource Centre supported by funding from Galway County Council and HSE.
- Deliver a **crossing of the Claddagh Basin** on tightwire as part of the Fresh Street conference in May along with similar crossings in partner countries.
- Secure funding from Creative Europe to **continue Wires Crossed until 2022** with partners Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles (BE), the Serious Road Trip Romania (RO), Universite Libre De Bruxelles (BE) and NUI Galway (IE), focusing on the artform development of funambulism and scientific research into the neurological effects of funambulism on the brain.
- Coordinate 2 Erasmus+ funded Strategic Partnership projects to train international groups of funambulism trainers with partners Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles (BE), CABUWAZI (DE), the Serious Road Trip Romania (RO) and Zaltimbang' Zircus (LUX).
- Coordinate 2 Erasmus+ Youth Mobility projects including a Training for Trainers programme for **new funambulism tutors** from Spain, Czech Republic, Belgium and Ireland, and a large-scale Youth Exchange project with Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles (BE), CABUWAZI (DE), the Serious Road Trip Romania (RO), Cirqueon (CZ), Cirkus Cirkör (SE) and Circus Amersfoort (NL).
- Confirm partnerships with Pieta House (national charity for Suicide Prevention) and Jigsaw (national charity for Youth Mental Health).
- Secure funding from the **Science Foundation of Ireland** for the development of an interactive public Gravity Park to premiere at the Wires Crossed Festival.

Organisational Capacity



Each of our four programme areas form a vital part of an integrated organisational model – an ecosystem where the different elements are deeply interdependent. To maximise our impact, we need to continue to invest in the organisations' capacity and ongoing development as both are essential to the future success and long-term sustainability of Galway Community Circus.

2019 saw Galway Community Circus...

- Hire a part-time Communications Co-ordinator and a part-time Technical Manager
- Complete the Arts Council's RAISE Fundraising Mentorship Programme

- Complete the 'Upsource - Leadership Development and Capacity Building in the Arts' programme funded by the Wheel
- Continue our commitment to our Strategic Plan 2018-2020 'Fuelling Creativity, Confidence and Change', which outlines the steps in which we are taking to develop and grow Galway Community Circus.
- Completed 71 days of professional development for our administrative team.

Governance

Galway Community Circus is a company limited by guarantee (CLG) and a registered charity (20064747) governed by a voluntary Board of Directors.

We confirm that our organisation fully complies with the Governance Code for the Community, Voluntary and Charitable Sector in Ireland and is committed to comply with the charity SORP and the principles of good fundraising.

Senior staff salaries are as follows:

- Band: €40,000-€50,000 Number of employees: 1
- Band: €30,000-€40,000 Number of employees: 1

The organisation keeps detailed books and records of accounts and maintains strict financial controls. We comply with the Arts Council's recommended guidelines for financial reporting. The organisation is transparent in its audited financial statements, with the most recent statements available on our website.

Board of Director's 2019

Reg Gordon, Chairperson - Appointed 2015

John Jordan, Treasurer - Appointed 2018

Niall Doyle, Director - Appointed 2018

Cathy Coote, Director - Appointed 2018

Pauline O'Reilly, Director - Appointed 2017

Maeve Mulrennan, Director - Appointed 2019





Galway Community Circus Company Limited by Guarantee Financial Audit
For the year ended 31 December 2019

This is for information purposes only and does not form part of our statutory accounts.
 For full set of Audited Accounts 2019 please refer to www.galwaycommunitycircus.com/about/governance

	2019 €	2018 €
Fixed Assets		
Tangible assets	25,370	30,540
Current Assets		
Stocks	1,042	932
Debtors	151,209	60,168
Cash and cash equivalents	153,317	26,921
	305,568	88,021
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(284,749)	(89,830)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)	20,819	(1,809)
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	46,189	28,731
Government grants	(1,501)	-
Net Assets	44,688	28,731
Reserves		
Income and expenditure account	44,688	28,731
Members' Funds	44,688	28,731
Total Income	531,351	462,474
Total Expenditure	515,394	488,315
Net surplus/(deficit)	15,957	(25,841)

Financial Results

The surplus/(deficit) for the financial year after providing for depreciation amounted to €15,957 (2018 - €(25,841)). At the end of the financial year, the company has assets of €330,938 (2018 - €118,561) and liabilities of €286,250 (2018 - €89,830). The net assets of the company have increased by €15,957.

Audit by Owen McDonough & Associates Ltd, (Chartered Accountants).

Funders and Supporters



Thank You to all our funders and partners for your continued support!



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



An Roinn Cultúir,
Oidhreachtá agus Gaeltachta
Department of Culture,
Heritage and the Gaeltacht



An Roinn Iompair,
Turasóireachta agus Spóirt
Department of Transport,
Tourism and Sport



Galway Childcare Committee
Coiste Cúram Leanaí na Gaillimhe



Stronger Charities.
Stronger Communities.

Business to Arts
Developing Creative
Partnerships





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