



Galway Community Circus

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EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS AT GALWAY COMMUNITY CIRCUS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Project and the Team.....	1
Your role and timetable in GCC.....	4
Holidays and days off.....	4
Training offered.....	5
Sending Organisation/ Host Organisation.....	2
Coordinator, Supervisor, Mentor.....	3
ESC Coordinator.....	3
Mentor.....	3
Supervisor.....	3
Accommodation.....	6
Pocket Money.....	6
Insurance.....	6
Galway.....	7

THE PROJECT AND THE TEAM

The project lasts **11 MONTHS**.

It runs from 30th August 2021 (the day that the volunteers must be in Galway) until 29th July 2022. Due to the current Covid-19 situation, we will have to confirm these dates in the next five or six weeks. Galway Community Circus holds the safety of our staff, volunteers and membership in the highest regards so we will always put your safety first.

Our GCC team is multi-national - about 90% are from outside Ireland. This year we have people from Ireland, Finland, France, Spain, Turkey, Brazil, America and the UK working here. We are a hard-working team who also finds time to play.



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GCC delivers a full timetable of weekly afterschool classes for 5-20-year olds. We have approximately 500 weekly members and a large waiting list for our classes. We also deliver programmes aimed at the very young (1yr +) and for adults. We run an extensive outreach programme, which delivers one-off workshops or longer courses to targeted schools, groups and communities.

Our staff and tutor team are trained in social inclusion and working with vulnerable children and adults. We have formed strong partnerships with groups such as Arts Alive, an arts programme for adults with intellectual disabilities based in the heart of Galway's West End. We run outreach programs and 10-week school programmes in primary schools within the Galway region.

The ESC project is much more than an internship: it is a life experience requiring you to open your mind by meeting other cultures and by being socially involved and committed to an organisation. Your ESC placement will allow you to improve your skills and learn new ones by contributing to the community!

We encourage you to be curious! Use your own initiative, be willing to help, committed to your tasks, be communicative and flexible, reliable, have a positive attitude and be open to new cultures and new experiences. In return, we will give you the chance to be part of many different projects, explore your independence, award you with enough time off to travel and take part in your own training and provide you with lots of support in a lovely and friendly environment.

SENDING ORGANISATION/ HOST ORGANISATION

GCC IS YOUR HOST ORGANISATION. You will be provided with a coordinator, a supervisor, and a mentor.

Read below the specifics of these roles in regard to you.

The European Solidarity Corps (ESC) requires the cooperation of three different organisations: a **host organisation**, a **sending organisation** and the **EU/National Agency (NA)**. Therefore, **YOU MUST HAVE A SENDING ORGANISATION** that will help train you before your departure and assist in explaining to you and preparing you with the required documents and a visa (if needed). They will keep regular contact with you during your 11 months in the host country.

If you don't have one yet, you can search online for one in your country (and maybe discover that you have one in your city!) You don't necessarily need to know them or meet them personally, but you need to be in touch with them. You don't have to apply or have any selection with them, but in some cases, they might need to redirect you to another sending organisation (this could be for multiple reasons that will have nothing to do with you but with the organisation's capacity). Just contact them and say that you are in the process of selection with the host.

Once we have made a formal offer to the volunteers, and they have accepted, the coordinator will send them a Volunteer Agreement, and CC the sending organisations. Once the volunteer (and GCC) have signed the agreement, the coordinator will scan and send a copy to the sending organisations. **The project is subject to funding.**



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The sending organisations can keep this document; however, it is only necessary for the Volunteers and Galway Community Circus to sign the agreements.

COORDINATOR, SUPERVISOR, MENTOR

The host organisation (GCC) must provide you with three different supporters in line with the National Agency and EU's framework for the project.

ESC COORDINATOR

The ESC Coordinator (Gwen) is the person that will look after the logistics around your project. The coordinator is the person communicating with the NA and centralizes the communication between the NA, mentor and supervisors. The coordinator has an overview of the ESC process for each ESC, keeps track of holidays and days off, and looks after insurance, pocket money, seminars, and trainings. If there are any problems (though everybody tries their best to make sure that there aren't), the coordinator will look after this in consultation with the mentor.

MENTOR

The mentor is a voluntary role. This person knows the host organisation but does not work for them.

Your mentor will support the reflection on your learning experience and social life. During the 11 months, you will learn many new things (language, discovering the new culture of your host country, sharing your culture and being part of many projects) and you will face many new challenges. Your mentor (who you will get to know well) will support you with this, and lead and supervise you in creating your **YOUTHPASS** (see below). You will meet the mentor regularly in group or individual meetings (which are mandatory and protected by privacy). The mentor is also the person that you can go to if something goes wrong in communication with the supervisor or the coordinator, and the person you can go to for discovering your host country, the city, having fun and any other kind of support that you need!

SUPERVISOR

The supervisor is the person responsible for assigning you your tasks. You will agree with the supervisor your timetable and the tasks that you will be asked to carry out. This is the first person you will talk to if you have any problems with your volunteer roll. The supervisor will always inform the coordinator about any changes, agreed holidays and free days.



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YOUR ROLE AND TIMETABLE IN GCC

You will volunteer for a total **32 HOURS** per week as a Tutor Assistant or Arts Administration Assistant, based on your application (the email, which accompanies this sheet, will tell you more about this).

If your profile matches with the role of **ASSISTANT TUTOR**, you will assist the trainers in weekly classes and outreach programmes. You may also be involved with programme evaluations and various administrative tasks. Your supervisor will be the head tutor.

If your profile matches with the role of **ARTS ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT**, you will help with the administration within reception and assisting in assigned projects. Your supervisor will be Fiona Hession, our General Manager.

Your timetable will be agreed with you during your first meetings with your supervisor. It may start on a four or five day per week basis, but changes might also occur during your time with us.

Since it operates in the social context and environment, please note that GCC and its projects might change during the year. You will keep your role and any changes will always be agreed between you and the organisation. Galway Community Circus is in constant movement and change, so new tasks can arise throughout each year. Therefore, we need your tasks and timetable to be adaptable to new needs. We juggle many changes and we are experts in mental contortionism!

The ESC programme also encourages volunteers to develop their own projects in line with the organisation's needs. In the past, some of our ESC volunteers have worked on the technical production of events, others have made a video library of specific skills or equipment and others have worked on administrative skills (fundraising, poster making, evaluations etc.). These projects are a way for our volunteers to work on extra skills they have chosen during the ESC year.

We put on many events throughout the year, from small to large-scale performances to community festivals and fundraising events. Sometimes you will be asked to volunteer more than 32 hours in the week. However, other weeks will be less busy, and you will be asked to volunteer less hours to ensure a balance of your hours volunteering. This is a unique chance to see what working in a busy arts organisation is like!

HOLIDAYS AND DAYS OFF

Some ESC volunteers will work on weekdays; others will work on Saturdays too, since GCC's classes run 6 out of 7 days per week. You will be guaranteed 2 free consecutive days each week. Your timetable will depend on the decisions made between you and the organisation.

The ESC programme allows an additional 2 days off per month on top of your regular **2 FREE DAYS PER WEEK**. This means that you will have 22 days of holiday during the 11-month project, which you will need to take before the end of the project.

GCC is working on social projects, which means that work continues during school holidays. During this time we run holiday camps and social circus programmes.



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If you need specific time off, we try to accommodate. However, this is not always possible at busy times around our shows and performances. We ask you to give us a **MINIMUM OF TWO WEEKS' NOTICE** for holidays.

The coordinator, in communication with the supervisor, will hold the record of holidays and days off.

TRAINING OFFERED

GCC will provide you with training in *Child Protection, Health Safety and Manual Handling*. Anybody working in Ireland that carries out certain tasks (such as lifting materials or working with children) must attend these training courses. This includes our ESC volunteers, too!

The ESC program requires you to take part in two mandatory training courses (also called seminars) because you will be part of a long-term program. Your coordinator will inform you about the dates.

Normally, the **ON-ARRIVAL TRAINING** takes place at the end of October/start of November, while the **MID-TERM TRAINING USUALLY** takes place in March/April (but these dates may change). They will be decided and communicated by the National Agency to your coordinator, who will then pass them on to you.

YOUTHPASS

By the end of the project, every ESC will have to have completed the [Youthpass](#).

This is a certificate fostering recognition of non-formal learning. As a Europe-wide recognition instrument for non-formal learning in the youth field, Youthpass strengthens the social recognition of youth work. It supports active European citizenship of young people and youth workers by describing the added value of their project.

Volunteers will describe what they have done in their project and which competences they have acquired. Youthpass enables young people to record their skills development and learning in a way that can be translated both within and outside the youth sector and across Europe. It can also be used to support future job applications and refining your CV, illustrating the hard and soft skills gained by the participant on their European Solidarity Corps placement.

For the complete Guide click [here](#).



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LIFE IN GALWAY

ACCOMMODATION

Ireland has become very expensive in the last few years and accommodation can be hard to find.

Because of her young and fresh character, about 5 thousand students and thousands of tourists try to visit Galway every year. Therefore, we need to be open to finding different possibilities for accommodation. GCC will try their best to provide a private room in a house or apartment that is shared with other ESC volunteers.

However, you may need to consider the possibility of living in an apartment with other students or working people OR in twin rooms with another GCC ESC volunteer.

Please let us know your preferences and needs. We will do our best to accommodate them where possible (and within reason). GCC will search for accommodation that is as close as possible to the Circus.

Galway is a very small city and it normally takes about 15 minutes to cycle from home to GCC and about 10 minutes to cycle to the city centre (Eyre Square). GCC will provide bicycles for you to use while in Galway or you can also choose to walk as things are quite close to each other.

POCKET MONEY

At the start of each month, we will give you your ESC pocket money. This will be €125 plus a food allowance of €215 per month – a total of €340 per person per month. This will be enough for you to have a basic standard of living but you will need to be careful with spending. Galway Community Circus pays for your accommodation and house bills within the allocated project budget.

We will also provide a bicycle for each participant of the project. We spend all the Erasmus+ funding on living costs.

You do not need to set up an Irish bank account if you do not want to as payment can be made into your existing account via bank transfer each month.

INSURANCE

Cigna will be the insurance provider and will cover you for anything that cannot be covered by your country.

For European citizens, the **TEAM CARD** will cover you for 3 months from the first medical appointment, and in case of emergency. Please ask your sending organisation for information about your country/region including what cover they will provide for you while you are volunteering abroad and how long they will cover you for.



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You will need to pay for any medical appointments and treatment first and then claim the money back afterwards. Your country/region will pay you back for anything that is covered by them.

Your coordinator will help you to claim back anything not covered by your country through Cigna.

GCC will always help you if you are not able to pay the doctor in advance.

GALWAY

Galway is a fun and cultural city. There is a lot to see and do. There is live music of all kinds, and a fun-filled weekend nightlife. There are many clubs and societies; there really is something for everyone. As a city, it is quite small, so you quickly feel a part of the Galway community. There are many street art performances in the main streets; it has a busy, friendly, and relaxed atmosphere.

Outside of Galway, there are many scenic routes and visitor heritage sights. Ireland is a small island, so it is easy to get around quite quickly. We encourage our ESC volunteers to plan their Irish experience and visit places outside of Galway.

We work closely with other emerging circus organisations in Ireland, so if you want to go and visit somewhere, we can usually help to organise staying with one of these people. You will be welcomed into the Irish circus network.

If you need any more information about ESC and Youthpass, please visit:

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents-for-applicants/ESC-infokit_en.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call on +353 85 111 7224 or email at:

esc@galwaycircus.com or gemma@galwaycircus.com

Warmly,

Galway Community Circus team