

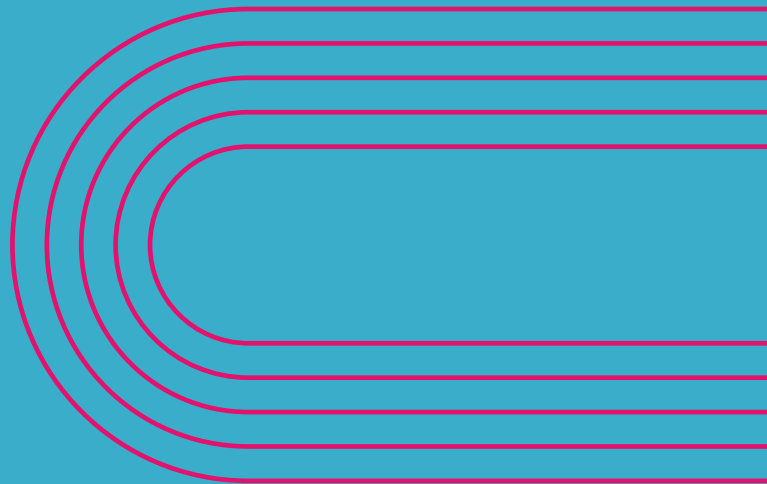
Galway Community Circus

ANNUAL REPORT
1ST JAN - 31ST DEC 2022



*Circus makes kids believe,
'I can do anything; I can
try anything.'*

– Galway Community Circus
parent/guardian



Chairperson's Address

In 2022 we celebrated our 20th anniversary with a packed programme of activities and events. One of the standout events of the year was LifeLine, that took place on July 16th as part of the Galway International Arts Festival. On an unusually hot sunny day in Galway City 20,000 people witnessed 150 people of all ages and backgrounds defiantly cross the River Corrib on a high wire, in an effort to show the courage and resilience of the human spirit in the face of mental health challenges. This momentous event proudly showed the power of community circus in collectively supporting individuals to be brave, determined and to make the impossible happen.

Another key event of the year was the Circus Education: Creativity and Inclusion in Learning Conference, which was organised in partnership with University of Galway and ISACS at the O'Donoghue Centre, University of Galway in November. Not only was this the first conference on circus education to be held in Ireland, it was also where the official celebration of the 20th anniversary of Galway Community Circus (GCC) was marked by the launch of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan 'Creating Magic Together'. This beautifully illustrated plan was created over a series of months from the ideas and hard work of members, staff, the board and partners. It states our purpose, our values and our goals which include growing the impact of our circus, sharing our model of inclusive circus education and creating a sustainable future for the company. This year saw us already begin to work towards some of these future goals as we worked to improve our actions on EDI and environmental sustainability. A further goal in the plan to professionalise circus education with academic partners started this year through GCC being the YPCE Arts Council Artists in Residence at University of Galway which led to the GCC team teaching circus on three degree courses in Theatre Studies, Children's Studies and Early Childhood Education. We are very thankful to the Arts Council for their support with this and for an increase in our annual strategic funding this year.

In addition to these events we also had amazing performances by our students in the Christmas show, Scratch Nights and devised shows by our Youth Ensemble. The details of these and much more are included in this report which documents a very proud year for our organisation and community, none of which would have been possible without the hard work of our members, team, board and the continuing support of our funders and partners, for which we are most grateful.

Dr Ian R Walsh, Chairperson



Youth Ensemble Show, December 2022

Vision, Mission & Purpose

Our Vision (the idea that motivates us)

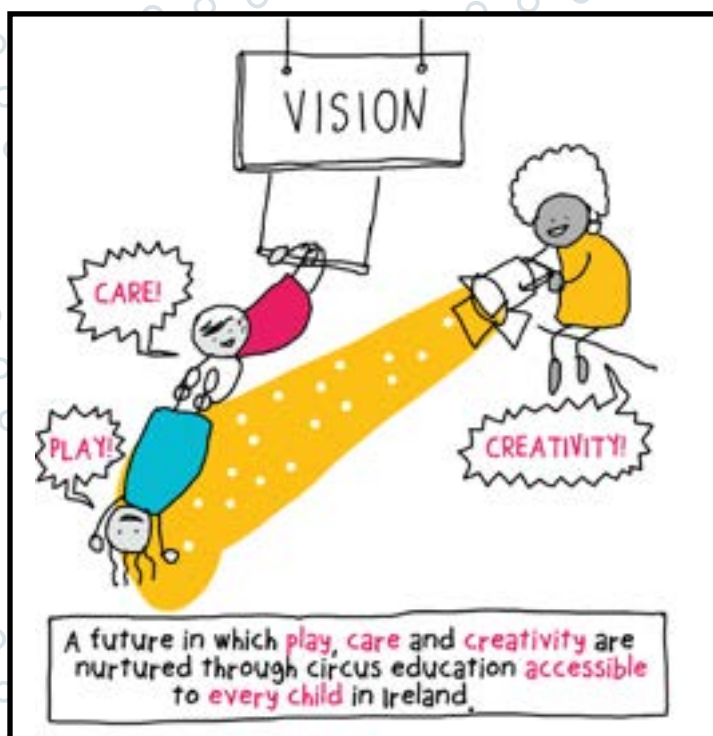
A future in which play, care and creativity are nurtured through circus education accessible to every child in Ireland.

Our Mission (what we do)

We foster the growth of youth circus in Ireland and internationally through our dynamic circus school.

Our Purpose (why we do it)

We are striving to create connection, empower expression and support social change.



A Snapshot of 2022

27,167

AUDIENCE MEMBERS

2858

CLASS PARTICIPANTS

550

WEEKLY MEMBERS

20

COMMUNITY
PROGRAMMES

258

DAYS OF TRAINING
FOR ARTISTS

518

EMPLOYMENT
ENGAGEMENTS

6

EUROPEAN
PROJECTS

- 
- Erasmus+ Youth Accreditation
 - Galway Chamber Culture and Creativity Business Award Winner
 - Launched our new Strategic Plan 2023-2027: Creating Magic Together
 - Celebrated our 20th anniversary
- 

Circus School

Through our circus school, we provide access to high-quality subsidised circus arts education offering youth and adult programmes and professional training. We also create community programmes in partnership with those who have specific social or developmental needs.

32

**WEEKS OF BLENDED
YOUTH CIRCUS
CLASSES**

59

**SOCIAL CIRCUS
WORKSHOPS TO 1187
PARTICIPANTS**

1

**YOUTH CIRCUS
FESTIVAL WITH 786
AUDIENCE MEMBERS**

23

SHOWS

3

YOUTH EXCHANGES

8

**EUROPEAN
VOLUNTEERS**



Youth Circus, photo by Nastja Fekonja



2022 Circus School Highlights

Youth Ensemble Show

With support from the Arts Council of Ireland, we brought back the long-awaited Youth Ensemble show project, a professional circus show created by young Galway Community Circus members aged 15-24.

Mayhem Youth Circus Festival

With support from the Arts Council of Ireland, Galway City Council and Erasmus+, we produced our annual Mayhem Youth Circus Festival that included shows and workshops for members, their families and the public.

Youth Exchanges

We hosted a nine-day Erasmus+ youth exchange called Balance 2022 with 42 young people from seven European circus schools. We also took part in the Irish Youth Circus Gathering hosted by Cloughjordan Circus Club and the Irish Aerial Dance Youth Exchange Day hosted by the Irish Aerial Creation Centre in Limerick.

Community Programmes

In 2022, we worked with several partner organisations to deliver inclusive community programmes aiming to reach marginalised communities across the West of Ireland. Partners included Galway Traveller Movement, Ability West, Brothers of Charity Arts Alive, New Horizon Athlone, Foroige, TUSLA and Mental Health Ireland.

European Solidarity Corps Programme

In 2022, we hosted 8 European volunteers from Slovenia, Spain, Italy, Catalonia, Serbia and Turkey on an 11-month residency funded by Erasmus+ as part of the European Solidarity Corps programme.



Circus is non-competitive, open, inclusive, positive, warm, and a safe place for my child to explore herself.

– GCC parent



Circus is an all rounder. The children play co-operative games; there's an acceptance of everyone's strengths and weaknesses; the children are given choices which means that while they are challenged, they can remain in their comfort zone until they are ready; fantastic core exercise without them even realising; a strong sense of community.

– GCC parent



For me, circus is about community and variety - lots of different people come together to work on lots of different skills. With each prop there are infinite learning outcomes and infinite opportunities to improve, create and support one another. Circus is about having fun, nurturing your inner child and learning how to look out for others as well as yourself.

– GCC member



"Circus says to kids:

"I'm not even questioning whether or not I expect that you can do this, I know that you can do this.

– GCC parent/guardian

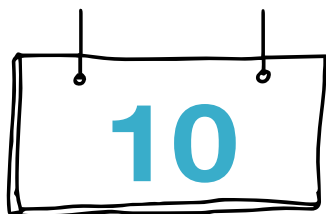




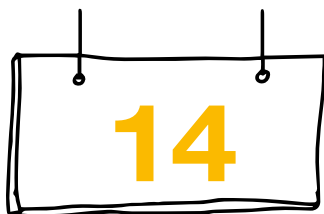
LifeLine highwire spectacle, photo by Paddy Finn

LifeLine

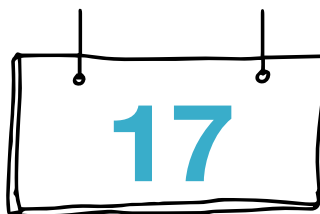
LifeLine was Europe's largest participatory highwire spectacle performed over the River Corrib and Claddagh Basin in the heart of Galway City on Saturday, July 16th, 2022. It was funded by the Arts Council Ireland Open Call Award, the first-ever Open Call Award for the circus sector.



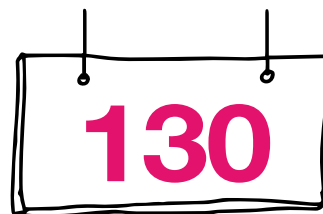
EUROPEAN PARTNERS



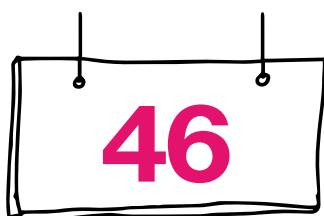
IRISH PARTNERS



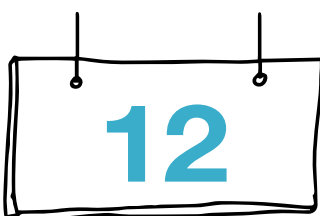
NATIONALITIES



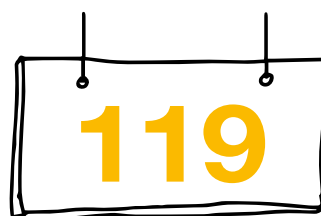
PERFORMERS



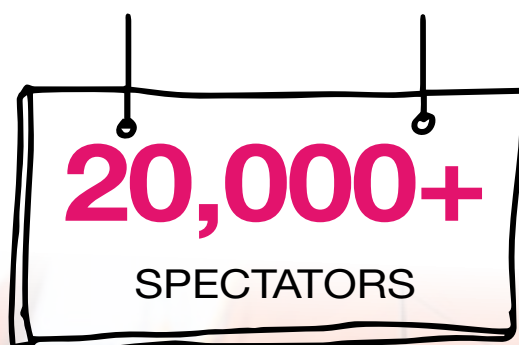
DAYS OF FREE
WIREWALKING
WORKSHOPS



RIGGERS



COMMUNITY
PARTICIPANTS
AGED 11- 63 YEARS



LifeLine Project Highlights

National Participation Programme

Through the Participation Programme we delivered 46 days of funambulism workshops/training to 119 participants. Participants were aged between 11 – 63 years and included 17 different nationalities.

Creative Europe: BassAlto

Staged the first performance of 'BassAlto' – a new professional funambulism ensemble and performance of the same name. BassAlto were formed through our Creative Europe co-operation project 'Wires Crossed – Head, Heart, Balance,' which focused on development of the artform of funambulism working in partnership with École de Cirque de Bruxelles (BE), coala de Circ (RO) and Université Libre de Bruxelles (BE).

'Balance 2022' Erasmus+ Youth Exchange

We hosted a 9-day youth exchange in Galway for 42 young people from 7 EU countries exploring youth mental health, wellbeing and creativity. Participants explored these themes while learning funambulism and created a performance together for the LifeLine spectacle.

"The triumph of LifeLine's community participants was equalled by Galway Community Circus's vaulting ambition. The madness and challenge of the idea, the beauty and skill of the execution, and the sheer bravery, were literally and figuratively uplifting, an expression of hope, strength, belief, trust and overcoming fear that brought tears to the eyes."

– Deirdre Falvey, Irish Times.

Read the full review in the Irish Times [here](#).

I feel more confident. I was struggling with self-appreciation and loving myself and what I do, and I feel it moved forward a little bit on this life period.

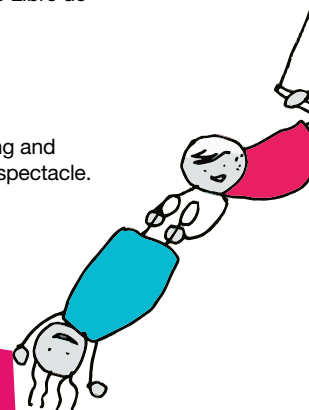
– LifeLine participant

I moved up and down between the wires watching them all. My top was soaked with sweat, I felt the weight of the bar, I wanted to steady the wire when it wobbled, I felt a huge relief at the end, very emotional. It was amazing ... How can something that moves so slowly give you such a rush, and I was only spectating.

–LifeLine audience member

[The project helped me to] remember that I am proud of myself and that I am not a quitter.

–LifeLine participant

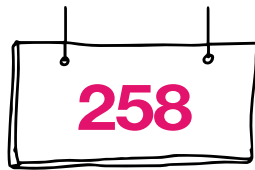




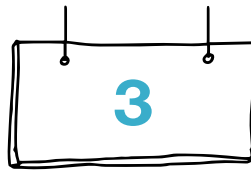
Artform Development



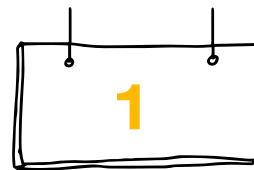
Through our Artform Development programme, we provide artist supports, training and mentoring and lead the development of youth circus in Ireland through our academic, national and international partnerships.



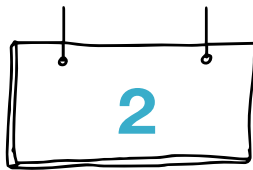
DAYS OF PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FOR ARTISTS



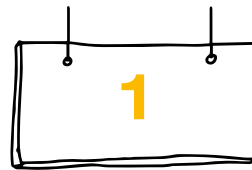
ARTIST RESIDENCIES



NATIONAL
CONFERENCE



EUROPEAN RESEARCH PROJECTS
WITH UNIVERSITY PARTNERS



LONG-TERM RESIDENCY
AT UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY



2022 Artform Development Highlights

Circus++

We co-designed the world's first BA curriculum for youth and social circus teacher education and a five-year National Development Plan for Ireland as a conclusion of the Erasmus+ funded 'Circus++' project in partnership with University of Galway and 10 international university and circus school partners.

YPCE Residency at University of Galway

We became a company in residence at University of Galway through the Arts Council YPCE Residency Scheme. The goal of the residency is to embed Youth and Social Circus in the curriculum of three degree courses across disciplines to educate a new generation of teachers on the benefits of circus in children's education. We also produced Ireland's first Circus Education Conference in partnership with the ISACS Network and University of Galway in November.

Circus Transformation (CTF)

Circus Transformation is a 20-day international training programme for Social Circus trainers developed by the Caravan Network. In 2022, we sent two Irish artists to participate in the programme and hosted one of the 5-day international modules in Galway thanks to Erasmus+ funding. We coordinated an all-Ireland edition of the training in partnership with Dublin Circus Project, Circus Factory and Cloughjordan Circus Club with support from Arts Council Ireland, and participated in 'CTF Advanced', a multi-annual research project to develop and enhance the CTF training for the future.

Artist Supports and Residencies

We offer a daily training and rehearsal space and professional training and development opportunities for circus artists. In 2022 we offered 258 days of professional development workshops for artists and arts practitioners and hosted residencies for three Arts Council Ireland funded individual artists.

International Partnerships

We represented Ireland internationally as a board member of the International Youth and Social Circus Network Caravan and partnered in five Erasmus+ and one Creative Europe project(s), creating life-changing opportunities for artists and young people.

“

Circus gives me the space to focus on my fitness and wellbeing and learn new skills in a supportive environment.

– Adult Circus participant

”

“

Galway Community Circus has made me feel safe and happy. When I come to the Circus, the team always smiles and welcomes me into the big colourful hall filled with lots of amazing equipment. I will forever cherish this place in my heart!

–GCC member

”

“

Circus is a place where I can go and forget about all the stuff going on in my life for a couple hours a week. I can just focus on being in the moment.

– GCC member

”

“

Circus is the most holistic and complete physical and artistic discipline. A way of living, thinking, and relating based on community, joy, creativity, and challenge.”

– Adult Circus participant

”

Governance

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

Governance is concerned with how companies are directed and controlled. Your Board acknowledges the importance of and is committed to maintaining high standards of governance practices. We strongly believe that good corporate governance supports the delivery of our strategy and allows the Board to set the tone for governance practices across the organisation.

The main function of the Board is to provide strong strategic guidance and oversight of the performance of the organisation on behalf of all stakeholders. The Board actively considers long term strategy and monitors and supports the work of the Executive Management team.

We were an early adopter of the code of practise for voluntary organisations for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland. This code has now been replaced by the Charities Regulator Governance Code and we are compliant with the new code. We can confirm that we are 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

The organisation keeps detailed accounting records, kept in accordance with sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014. We have employed appropriately qualified accounting personnel and have maintained appropriate computerised accounting systems. The accounting records are located at the company's office at St. Joseph's Community Centre Ltd, Ashe Road, Shantalla, Galway.

We comply with the Arts Council of Ireland's recommended guidelines for financial reporting. The organisation is transparent in its audited financial statements, with the most recent statements available on our website. The company has adequate financial control systems in place to manage granted funds.

Board of Directors 2022 Financial Year:

Ian R. Walsh, Chairperson - Appointed in 2020
John Jordan, Treasurer - Appointed 2018
Niall Doyle, Director - Appointed 2018
Maeve Mulrennan, Director - Appointed 2019
Darragh O'Donohoe, Director - Appointed in 2020
Ailbhe Slevin, Director - Appointed in 2020
Mairead Folan, Director - Appointed in 2021
Cameron Keighron, Director - Appointed in 2021

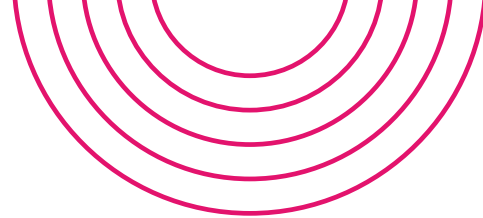
Core Staff 2022:

Alexandra Stewart, Digital Engagement Officer
Anet Moore, Administrator Tús
Becca Clayton, Producer
Brady Hughes, Programme Manager
Caoimhe O'Dochartaigh Barr, Circus Educator
Davi Hora, Circus Educator
David Coyne, Caretaker Tús
Fiona Hession, General Manager
Freddy Burrows Circus Educator
Gwen Le Guillou, Finance and Office Administrator
Ines Garcia, Circus Educator
Isabela Mello, Circus Educator
Juliette O'Donnell, Circus Educator
Keela Egan, Circus Educator
Lisa O'Farrell Circus Educator
Tony Mahon, Technical Manager
Ulla Hokkanen, Executive Creative Director

European Solidarity Corps Volunteers

Ines Garcia (Spain)
Lau Marco (Catalonia)
Laura Santi (Italy)
Nastja Fekonja (Slovenia)
Baran Yakut (Turkey)
Gokce Sahin (Turkey)
Vanja Ljiljana Ilic (Serbia)
Viola Fenoglio (Italy)





Financial Report

Summary of Audited Accounts

Below is the Galway Community Circus Company Limited by Guarantee Financial Audit for the year ended 31 December 2022. This is for information purposes only and does not form part of our statutory accounts. For a full set of audited accounts for 2022 please refer [to the governance page on our website](#).

	2022	2021
Fixed Assets		
Tangible assets	47,461	54,340
Current Assets		
Stocks	1,107	2,353
Debtors	120,284	55,959
Cash and cash equivalents	151,994	320,698
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(219,408)	(297,799)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)	53,977	81,211
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	101,438	135,551
Government grants	(33,684)	(37,659)
Net Assets	67,754	97,892
Reserves		
Operating Reserves	35,000	35,000
Income and expenditure account	32,754	62,892
Members' Funds	67,754	97,892
Total Income	838,198	540,219
Total Expenditure	868,336	516,367
Net surplus/(deficit)	(30,138)	23,856

Financial Results

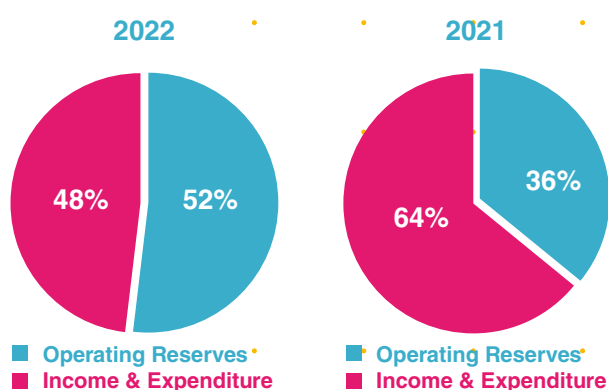
The Net Deficit of €30,138 was budgeted by the Board at the beginning of the financial year to reflect our incredible achievement of 20 years in service and that of the successful application for the Arts Council Open Call project (Lifeline) that was in response to the final phase of the Decade of Centenaries. This deficit was absorbed by previous years surplus (2021 €23,856 and 2020 €29,347).

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has sparked a chain of events that has had a huge impact on inflation. Ireland's inflation rate in 2022 at 8.1% had an impact on our production costs but the introduction of cost controls in the organisation reduced its effect that may otherwise have increased the deficit.

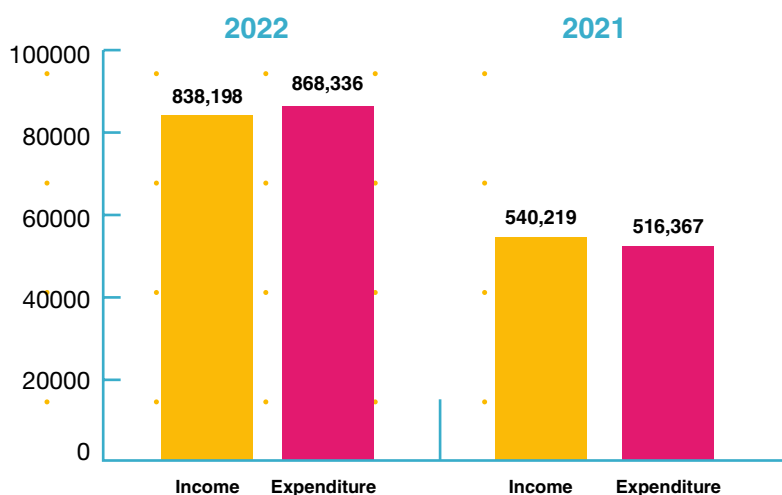
The deficit for the financial year was after providing for depreciation that amounted to €20,867 (2021 - €19,832).

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

Funds 2021-2022



Income and Expenditure 2021-2022



Partners and Funders

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

We continue to be forever grateful to our funders, members, partners and community who support the work of Galway Community Circus.

Thank you to our funders: The Arts Council of Ireland, Galway City Council, Galway County Council, Mental Health Ireland, Erasmus+, Creative Europe, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Creative Ireland, The Science Foundation of Ireland, Finnish Institute UK and Ireland, Galway City and County Childcare Committee and Galway City Local Community Development Committee.

Thank you to our networks: Caravan, Irish Street Arts, Circus and Spectacle Network, CircusWorks UK, FEDEC, Youth Theatre Ireland, The Wheel, Business to Arts and Galway Chamber for their unwavering support and depth of knowledge.

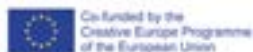
Thank you to all our members, their families, participants, audience members, artists, staff, volunteers, board members and partners for your support, friendship and continued inspiration.

Without this support and commitment towards Galway Community Circus we would not be able to continue to deliver such a real impact to our community and the sector in Ireland and beyond.

Strategic Partners



Programme Funders



Partner Networks



Galway Community Circus

St. Joseph's Community Centre, Ashe Road, Shantalla, Galway, H91 A4VW, Ireland

Registered Charity Number: 20064747 Company Registration Number: 453185

www.galwaycommunitycircus.com