

CIRCUS CITY

ANNUAL REPORT

01/04/2024 - 31/03/2025

CHARITY NO. 1181762

REG. ADDRESS -
22 VICTORIA AVENUE
BRISTOL
BS5 9NG

IMAGE:
CONTACT
COLLECTIVE

FILWOOD
COMMUNITY CENTRE



CHAIR OF THE BOARD'S STATEMENT

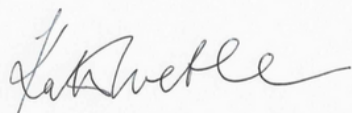
As chair of the board of trustees, I am extremely proud of the work that Circus City has delivered in 2024-25 that places the CIO as a key player in the UK circus sector. Circus City is dedicated to the growth of the sector both at a strategic level with their work with Circus Change Up and Four Nations and at an artistic and relational level, supporting artists, networks and emerging work through initiatives like the New Authors Commission and local place based programming. As an organisation we continue to build trust by supporting artists, producers and programmers contributing to the UK Circus ecology and infrastructure.

Our work to celebrate and maintain Bristol's reputation as the UK's city of circus has encompassed both national and international advocacy work, through networks like Circostrada, and local engagement - supporting local artists and working across the city to increase access to circus activities with partners like The Galleries Shopping Centre and Filwood Community Centre. We continue to create moments of joy, challenge and inspiration for audiences through developing a partnership with Filwood community centre, we presented free and low cost world-class performance and participation activities whilst exploring the role circus can play during regeneration.

Traditionally a non-festival year for Circus City is about planning and fundraising, however the step change in delivery across 2024-25 demonstrates our commitment to grow and expand our reach and impact. Using our 2023 festival as a launch pad we have focussed our resources to benefit the creation and support of new work, developing partnerships, engaging audiences and improving support networks across the UK. Highlights from the year include leading a pilot International Circus Network with Cirkus Syd, Summerhall and Circusful; Continued mentoring of Cocoon - our New Authors 2023/2024 co-commission; our new programme of place based programming and artist residency in South Bristol; Representing UK contemporary circus attending key performing arts gatherings such as IETM, Southern Sweden Circus Festival, BIAC Marseille and the Circostrada AGM.

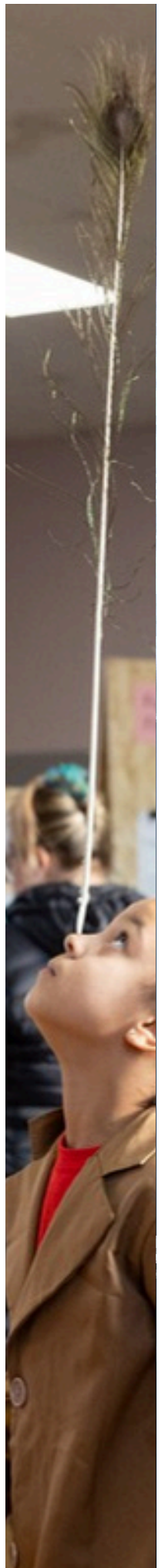
Alongside this work we have continued to develop the next festival programme - including working with new venue Bristol Beacon; Developed a new partnership with Deaf Explorer to look at ways to encourage entry in circus and outdoor arts for Deaf dancers and physical performers; Identified new local supporters Bristol Beer Factory who have pledged their support through Brewed 2 Give to fund an Emerging Producer role.

Our work across the year would not have been possible without the support of Postcode Local Trust, Bristol City Council, Nisbet Trust and Van Neste. We have also secured strong match funding for the 2025 festival having secured £84,600 support from Arts Council England. We look forward to the year ahead including realising our 6th biennial festival and celebrating 10 years of Circus City in 2025 as we continue to programme and engage with new audiences across Bristol and the South West.



KATE WEBB

CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



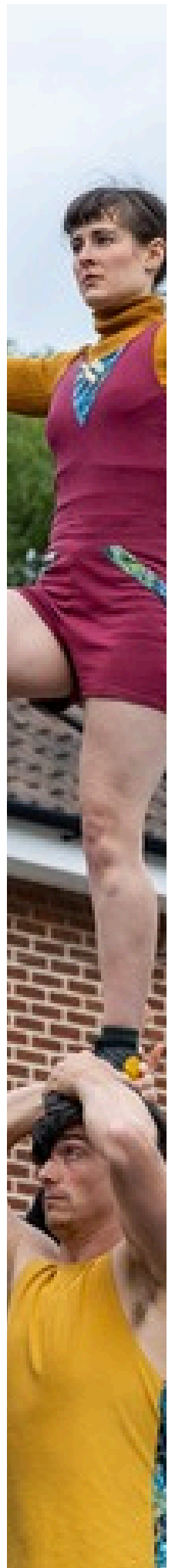
OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The object of the CIO is to advance the arts through the presentation of circus performances and other performance arts for the public benefit, in particular but not exclusively for those people living in Bristol and the surrounding areas.

The trustees are aware of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The key focus for 2024/25 was:

- First year of supporting an ongoing programme outside of the festival.
- Supporting development of new work through continued support of New Authors.
- Delivering place based programme in Filwood including visiting programme with Tit for Tat, Kontakt Collective, Nikki & JD.
- Working with local artist Maddie McGowan to deliver Doorstep Circus Project
- Connecting and collaborating with regional projects such as Circus Round and About
- Building international connections through International Circus Exchange with partners Cirkus Syd, Circusful and Summerhall
- Fundraising for Circus City 2025.
- Implementing a refreshed brand identity
- Board Recruitment to expand knowledge, skills and perspectives and to support our governance going forward.



ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

We made progress towards our charity's work with our objectives in the categories of:

Audience development

Connecting with city wide audiences outside of our festival programme through lace based programming reaching 250 people as audiences and participants with free and low cost activities.

R&D into making Circus City more accessible for Deaf audiences.

Artform and Sector Development

Through Circus City and our wider programme we are committed to prioritising people experiencing exclusion. By this we mean Global Majority, Queer and Disabled people and those experiencing social isolation in areas of deprivation who we engage as artists, participants and audiences.

Across our 2024-25 programme we:

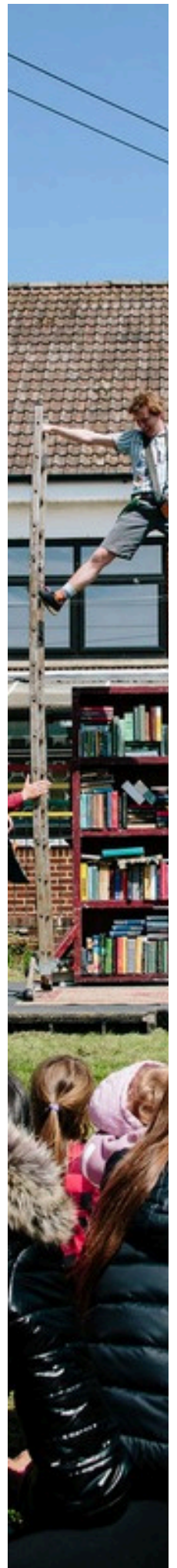
- Supported the creation of a new work – Cocoon and continued to strengthen national collaboration through New Authors co-commissioning network.
- Led new international exchange network with Cirkus Syd, Summerhall and Circusful
- Representing the UK as a partner for FEDEC Take Care Project.

Organisational Impact:

Across the year 2024/25 we have been successful in securing funding to further develop our future ambition and to support the delivery of our aims. By sustaining a year-round team, we have been able to strengthen our organisation's Co-Director model and increase capacity. This has enabled us to develop existing and new relationships to ensure better connection, collaboration and use of resources going forward. We have been able to support the development of the skills and knowledge of our core team whilst identifying partners with whom we can continue to work in 2025/26.

By keeping our organisation strong we ensure the resilience and future of its operation.

Rebranding as Circus City across the organisation and Charity recognising and celebrating the reputation that the festival has built over the years and the clarity of using this across our work for our stakeholders.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Festival Income:

As a non-festival year our turnover has been lower than during festival years. Funding confirmed but not yet received for our 2025/26 programme includes £84,600 from Arts Council England, £5850 from Bristol Beer Factory and £4999 from West of England Combined Authority.

Additionally £7K confirmed in partner match towards next round of New Authors and £5K for VISUAL Feats project.

Wider Income:

Our activity this year has been made possible by the support of Bristol City Council through the Originators Fund, Van Neste, Nisbet Trust, Postcode Local Trust and match funding from Filwood Community Centre.

The majority of our events were free to attend with a small income, £368, generated through pay-what-you-can ticket structure.

Donations:

We received a small amount of £46 in individual giving.

Support in-Kind:

Our Programme continues to benefit from support in-kind from partners including Filwood Community Centre, The Galleries and Circomedia who gave space for activities in Bristol.

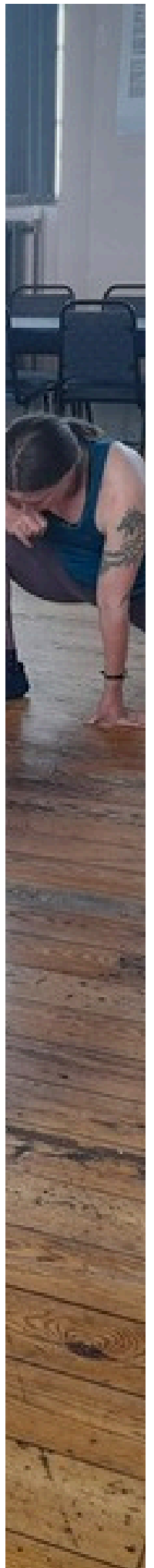
Assessing Risk:

The board assesses risk at each meeting.

During this year the main risks identified were:

- Fundraising in an increasingly competitive environment
- Festival programming
- Retention of staff
- Rising costs

Organisational development has sustained a new staffing structure that increases capacity through delegation of artistic, financial and fundraising responsibilities, preventing reliance on one Director for management of all operations.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Reserves Policy:

At the end of this financial year we held £11,000 in unrestricted reserves. These reserves are held in a savings account at Unity Trust bank. Use of these reserves must be agreed by the Trustees with the purpose of covering unexpected drops in income or costs, beginning new projects or activities, or responding to an unexpected opportunity that will allow the charity to deliver its aims or to meet any obligations and liabilities as part of a managed exit.

Unrestricted reserves are set at 10% of the average income of a festival in order to be able to manage the closure of the charity at the most expensive time which would be mid festival while contracted with companies and artists.



STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Our CIO has a constitution document that outlines its structure.

Trustees are selected by identifying skills gaps in the board and working towards a diverse, representative board. New trustees are appointed by the board who meet 4 times a year with a template agenda with finance, director's report and risk management as standing items.

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity at the close of 24-2025:

Kate Webb – Chair

Sascha Goslin – Trustee

Amy Nichols – Trustee

Manya Benenson – Trustee

Anna Duncan – Trustee

Haleema Mekani – Trustee

During 2024/25 year the charity employed 3 key freelance staff – one Artistic Director, one Executive Director and a General Manager. In addition to the key staff, during the festival delivery our core team expanded to include a Marketing Manager to oversee a re-brand ahead of our 10 year anniversary in 2025.

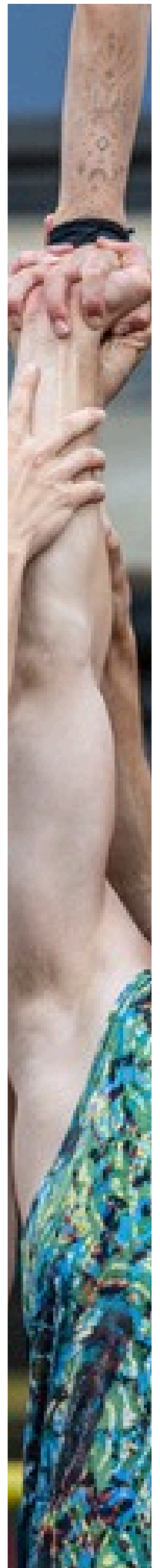
Circus City maintained the following staffing structure:

Nicole A'Court Stuart – Artistic Director since 2023

Nicole has worked with Circus City as producer since 2018. In 2022 Nicole qualified from the RD1st coaching and leadership programme and underwent training in accessibility during her role with Disabled-led performance makers Extraordinary Bodies. She is committed to developing the accessibility of Handstand Arts activities for all and to support UK artists to do the same. As a freelance producer active in the circus and performing arts sector locally and internationally, Nicole is uniquely placed to develop our creative vision and networks.

Rhiannon Jones – Executive Director since 2023

Rhiannon has over 20 years of experience of working in cultural charities, including 13 years of experience of programming, project management and overseeing annual budgets for Trinity Community Arts. Rhiannon holds an MA in Arts Policy and Management and recently completed the Clore Social – Experienced Leaders programme (2023) and Designing for Inclusion – Fearless Futures (2022).

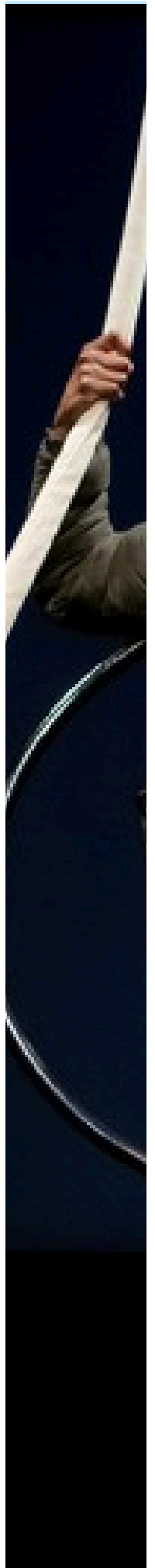


STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Core team continued:

Thea Woodrow – General Manager

Thea brings experience as a Producer, Finance and Project Manager over the last 7 years of working in the arts and voluntary sectors, including 5 years with international show makers Cirque Bijou. Drawing on roots in classical music, she is passionate about working creatively and collaboratively to make socially engaged, inclusive, accessible live performances, events, and experiences. Thea is excited to take on the new General Manager role for Handstand Arts, and work with Nicole and Rhiannon to grow the organisation and Circus City festival.



Circus City CIO (previously Handstand Arts CIO)

Registered Charity No. 1181762

Unaudited Receipts and Payments Account

Year ended 31 March 2025

Accountants: Accounting4Actors Ltd

CHARITY INFORMATION

The Charity was renamed "Circus City" on 16 May 2024

Trustees	Manya Benenson (appointed 14 Jan 2025) Anna Duncan (appointed 14 Jan 2025) Sascha K Goslin Haleema Mekani (appointed 14 Jan 2025) Amy Nicholls Kate Webb
Charitable status	CIO
Charity no.	1181762
Address	22 Victoria Avenue Bristol, BS5 9NG
Accountants	Accounting4Actors Ltd Jon Harris, ACMA, CGMA, MA, FRSA Suite LP61812, 20 Wenlock Road, London N1 7GU
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
CIRCUS CITY CIO**

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the financial records of Circus City CIO for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the records in accordance with the relevant legislation.

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

In carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.


Independent examiner's statement

I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of CIMA, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.



Jon Harris, ACMA, CGMA, MA (Cantab.), FRSA
Suite LP61812, 20 Wenlock Road, London N1 7GU
25 November 2025

CIRCUS CITY CIO

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT TO 31 March 2025

Year to 31 March 2025

Summary of Receipts and Payments

	Note	2025	2024
<u>RECEIPTS</u>		£	£
Ticket sales		368	32,876
Donations		46	382
Commissions		2,150	4,300
Arts Council England		8,859	88,531
Local Authorities		4,625	5,361
Trusts and Foundations		25,250	19,430
Sponsorship		862	2,299
Interest		302	168
		<u>42,462</u>	<u>153,347</u>
 <u>PAYMENTS</u>			
Production etc costs	1	25,827	122,936
Administrative costs	1	24,290	41,437
		<u>50,117</u>	<u>164,373</u>
 Surplus of Receipts over Payments		<u>-7,655</u>	<u>-11,026</u>

Year ended 31 March 2025

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
<u>Current Assets</u>		
Cash at bank	23,943	30,016
Other	2 -903	-903
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>23,040</u>	<u>30,695</u>
 <u>Reserves</u>		
brought forward from 2023 (2022)	30,695	41,721
Surplus in the year	<u>-7,655</u>	<u>-11,026</u>
RESERVES CARRIED FORWARD	<u>23,040</u>	<u>30,695</u>

Notes to the Receipts and Payments Account

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Detailed Income and Expenditure report

2025

2024

Turnover

Ticket Income - Events e.g. talks, conferences	0	412.00
Ticket Income - Shows	358	31,364.25
Ticket Income - Workshops	0	1,100.00
Total Turnover	358.00	32,876.25

Direct costs

Artist Accommodation	0	4,029.10
Artist Fees - Shows	6,375	42,112.18
Artist Fees - Workshops	1,950	2,122.34
Artist International Travel	0	5,259.71
Artist Per Diems	0	1,466.53
Artist UK Travel	13	271.98
Commission/Residency Artist Fees	5,000	4,942.65
Go See & R&D	553	332.93
Green Room Hospitality	0	697.09
Licences	184	75.00
Professional Fees - Project	11,950	38,844.97
Props and Stage Design	0	93.15
Security - Traffic/People Management	0	252.00
Technical Costs	200	8,056.10
Transport	0	264.44
Venue Hire	173	14,115.80
Total Direct costs	26,398.00	122,935.97

Surplus (Deficit) of sales over direct costs	(26,040.00)	(90,059.72)
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Administrative Costs		
Access costs - audience e.g. BSL, AD	550	5,498.99
Access costs - staff	800	1,587.42
Accommodation and subsistence	1948	118.35
Audit & Accountancy fees	1228	492.00
Community engagement e.g. tickets, venue hire	0	172.00
Core Staff	13122	20,823.63
Documentation	0	1,660.00
Evaluation - fees	0	600.00
Evaluation - Materials and Equipment	32	22.75
Insurance	721	2,748.00
Marketing - Distribution	0	489.48
Marketing - Fees	0	1,125.97
Marketing - Merchandise	5	825.00
Marketing - Print & Signage	68	1,462.00
Marketing - Social Media	0	1,646.40
Office Costs	813	487.43
PR	276	575.00
Staff Training	0	495.83
Travel - Bus, Train & Tube	2305	467.39
Travel - flights	847	0.00
Travel - Car Park & CAZ charges	0	54.20
Travel - Taxis	9	85.60
Sundry costs	985	
Total Administrative Costs	23,709.00	41,437.44
Surplus (Deficit) before other income	(49,749.00)	(131,497.16)
Other Income		
Arts Council England	8859	88,531.00
Commissions - Partner Contributions	2150	4,300.00
Donations	46	382.77
Interest Income	302	168.16
Local Authority Grant - Bristol City Council	4500	5,361.50
Local Authority Grant - WECA	125	0.00
Sponsorship	862	2,299.15
Trusts and Foundations	25250	19,430.00
Total Other Income	42,094.00	120,472.58
Surplus (Deficit) on Ordinary Activities	(7,655.00)	(11,024.58)