

Head of Programmes, Pathways and Participation

A bit about us

Over the past three years we have focused on listening to our circus family and key stakeholders about what they think our strengths are and where we can do more. Out of that work we identified the need to rebrand and redefine our purpose.

It's really important to us that the people who love us have been part of that journey and continue to be part of that journey as we:

- build on the past 35 years
- understand the now, and
- propel ourselves into the future.

Over the last 18 months we have been working hard to develop a new strategy and make internal changes so that we have the right people in the right roles to implement our strategy until 2025.

We're proud of the work we have done to get us to here and we believe we can hold our heads high as we continue to develop BCCS with our history, brand, vision, mission and values at the centre of everything we do.

Vision A 21st Century where streets, hearts and minds are filled with the wonder and colour of circus.

Mission We support people to surprise themselves through Circus. We meet them where they are, have fun and create a community together.

The overall purpose of this role is to ensure the vision for the organisation is realised and progress towards our creative objectives evidenced. The main areas of responsibility are to:

- Lead on the design, development and evaluation of our circus programmes – including class content, skill development, accreditation, performance and new projects we have not yet imagined – Always working to ensure a high-quality experience that supports all participants to develop personally, socially and emotionally.
- Take responsibility for leading a team to realise our Christmas Show, Community Corner at Festival of Fools Showcases and other performance work and fundraising events.
- Develop, implement and secure funding to enable clear routes of progression and high-quality participation for people of all ages and abilities.
- Build and advocate for a culture of team support, participation, shared decision making and consistent approaches to project management across the organisation.
- Manage and support the outreach staff team and our team of freelance trainers/trainers/performers/artists.
- Enable and support trainers, circus artists and performers to develop their art form, skills and characters.
- Identify, build and realise brilliant relationships with other individuals and organisations, working towards opportunities for street theatre and circus artists across Ireland and internationally.

Key facts:

- **Reports to:** This role is line managed by the Chief Executive Officer.
- **Hours per week:** 37.5 hours over 5 days.
- **Salary:** Scale PO1/PO2 - £31,346 - £35,745 (Depending on experience.)

- **Holidays:** 25 days per annum, plus 11 bank/public holidays (Subject to review.)
- **Contract Term:** Permanent, subject to funding. As a new role, there will be a six-month probationary period.
- **Line management:** This role manages the outreach team (staff team) and has responsibility for supporting and leading the freelance team.
- **How this role is funded:** Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Garfield Weston Foundation, Belfast City Council and various other sources.
- **Blended working:** This role will be predominantly office based, but also offers opportunities for remote working.

What this role will be doing

Circus programmes and pathways

- Ensure we have a highly skilled trainer team available for our classes for all ages and abilities.
- Check and approve the trainer team rota for each term (in-house classes) and offer support to the outreach team when they're placing trainers on outreach classes.
- Work with trainers and performers to identify moments of success, areas for improvement, skills gaps and training/learning needs and opportunities.
- Lead on the project management of our classes, circus programmes and events, including planning, recruitment, administration, monitoring and evaluation.
- Regularly review the effectiveness and viability of our classes, the relationship and progression routes between our circus classes for people of all ages.
- Identify opportunities for new project development, accreditation, participation and growth, working with the wider team to secure funding and support to realise these ideas and areas of work.
- Work with the finance officer to develop, approve and record all income and expenditure related to circus programmes and pathways.
- Take responsibility for signing off people to train and rig safely, including ensuring the appropriate measures are in place to ensure safe structural rigging for aerial performance and practice – working with specialists where required.

Participation and project management

- Work with others to generate new project ideas, imagine new ways of working and test our thinking.
- Lead on developing the team's understanding of participation, co-creation and shared decision making – with a view to us becoming a circus school whose work and governance is informed by our participants and asset based.
- Lead on the design, delivery and evaluation of a participation strategy for the school, including recruitment, stakeholder engagement, accreditation and evaluation.
- Lead the project teams working to develop/deliver the Christmas Show, Community Corner at Festival of Fools, Showcase, Performances and other fundraising events.
- Manage other projects, coordinate activities and events and support the team to do the same as required.
- Contribute to / lead idea development for and drafting of fundraising applications and work to support their development.
- Support the development of our project management approach and tools, provide leadership to ensure successful implementation across the organisation and contribute to learning and improvements to both the approach and individual tools.

Team leadership

- Line-manage the outreach/social circus posts – offering coaching, mentoring, management, support and development.
- Offer high quality support, supervision and guidance to the freelance trainer and performer team.
- Help all team members to imagine new ways of working, realise their dreams and bring the best of themselves to all that they do.
- Model our values at every opportunity and provide the whole team with what they need to demonstrate our values in all that they do with and for circus.
- Support the performer team to develop new characters, acts, performance pieces and develop how they realise their artistic practise.

Partnerships and relationships

- Act as the lead contact for our new Circus Advisory Group – a group of people from all around the world with significant interest and experience in circus. Work with them to formalize the terms of reference, recruit (when needed) and capture their expertise.
- Build brilliant relationships that open doors for the organisation, staff team, trainers and performer team.
- Work to capture and share the impact of BCCS led circus programmes.
- Build relationships with other organisations who are researching/evaluating circus and street theatre programmes/events and to better communicate the value of our collective work and influence relevant policy making.
- Identify, cultivate and evaluate relationships with private/corporate/other bodies that turn into opportunities for corporate workshops and wider programmes of work.
- Build values-based partnerships and work through these to co-design projects that meet identified needs and clearly evidence benefits for both participants and partners.
- Work with the wider team to develop existing and new relationships with performers, trainers, practitioners and artists working to ensure our offer is up-to-date, high quality and relevant.
- Contribute to tenders, expressions of interest and quotation documents as needed to secure contracts for work.
- Commission specialists to work with the team on a short-term/contractual basis to build our knowledge, experience and approach to circus programmes and pathway development.
- Report to the Board of Trustees on your work and work with Trustees and sub-committees to support organisational development and the delivery of our strategic goals.

Across all work areas/other duties

- Act as Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Take responsibility for ensuring all data collected through circus programmes and events is entered into our database accurately and on time.
- Act as a key holder.
- Act as a signatory for the bank accounts of all related organisations.
- Identify opportunities for improvement relating to our administration, reporting and customer service systems and processes.
- To participate fully in team meetings, gatherings, away days and events.
- To identify and complete relevant training opportunities.
- Cover reception duties and other duties when required.
- Any other duties as requested.



Our values:

Our values are about how we do everything so this role will include thinking about how to deliver objectives and tasks in a way that resonates with our values every day.

- **Community** - Our circus family connects and provides opportunities for everyone.
- **Persistence** - Our circus ethos is that we all try, allow ourselves to fail and understand that this is how we grow, individually and together.
- **Playfulness** - It's how we work and the atmosphere we build to bring a sense of fun and creativity to everything we do.
- **Collaboration** - We connect to create and develop brilliant relationships and success is always shared.
- **Curiosity** - We approach everything with an open mind, courage and resourcefulness.
- **Shared Leadership** - We develop it, nurture it and share it between ourselves and those we work with.

Who you're likely to be working with:

Our relationships with each other and all the people we work with are essential to everything we do. This is particularly true for this role. As such, to successfully deliver our strategy, the successful applicant, will play a pivotal role in delivering all our strategic goals and will depend on strong relationships with all other members of the team and wider circus family.

Person Specification

You might thrive in this role if:

- You appreciate the importance and value of professional street theatre and circus and can identify brilliant stories and tell them in an imaginative and creative way.
- You can build strong relationships quickly over the 'phone, in person and in writing.
- You find joy and reward in both artistic and creative work AND administration, planning, monitoring and reporting.
- You enjoy working systematically, identifying problems before they become issues and mitigating risks.
- You're a completer-finisher.
- You view the world from an asset-based perspective and enjoy sharing power and control with participants.
- You're curious about your work, seek out new ways to gather information and thrive when you have agency and freedom to use your creativity and initiative.

Essential skills and strengths:

If you have these skills and strengths, you are more likely to enjoy the day to day demands of this role:

- Excellent communication skills (written and oral).
- Some experience of working as an artist/performer or event manager (preferably in circus/street theatre) **or** significant experience of developing, progressing and building creative and artistic content and programmes.
- Highly organised and adaptable
- Ability to multitask
- Curiosity and enthusiasm
- Excellent standard of computer literacy and a high level of comfort with Excel, Word, Outlook and other Office 365 packages
- People skills to get the best out of others and give them a positive experience

Essential understanding/experience:

Being able to draw on the following experience will be essential to you in this role:

- Experience of developing artistic/creative programmes that engage children, young people and adults.
- Experience of evaluating informal education programmes.
- Experience of monitoring and managing projects and programmes (preferably in the arts/creative sector).
- Experience of leading co-design, co-production and wider participation programmes that aim to share power and responsibility with participants.
- Experience of leading, supporting and managing freelance teams.
- Experience of undertaking risk assessments and putting mitigating actions into practice and responsibility for implementing good health and safety practice.

- Experience of being responsible for safeguarding/a (Designated) Safeguarding Officer.
- Clear understanding of what makes for an excellent performance piece/character and the process of developing new creative content/shows.
- Experience of making projects, activities and events happen (risk assessments, project planning, performer placement, logistics, evaluation).
- Experience of turning ideas into events and delivering fundraising activities.
- Experience of applying for funding to support new ideas, projects and programmes.
- Experience of flexible working and working under pressure in a busy office environment using own initiative.
- Experience of collating information and presenting it to others in a simple form.
- Experience of using databases/excel/customer relationship software such as Salesforce.

Desirable:

If you also have the following skills and experience you will do well from the very beginning:

- Experience of researching accreditation opportunities suitable to the arts/creative sector.
- Experience of line managing employees.
- Experience of supporting facilitators to deliver accredited programmes and supporting participants to achieve accreditation.
- Understanding of the charity sector and/or arts organisations.
- Experience of working in an arts charity.
- Experience of managing budgets.

Application process:

- **Ready to apply?**
 - Send the following to: Jenna@BelfastCircus.org by **midnight on Sunday 31st October 2021**.
 - A covering statement (no more than two sides of A4) that clearly evidences how your skills, knowledge and experience meet the criteria listed above.
 - An up to date CV.
 - Contact details for two referees. (These must be current/previous employers and/or someone who has taught you at school, college or university.)
 - We may approach your referees before the process has concluded. If you'd rather we didn't please note this on your application.
- **What about the interview format?**
 - We expect interviews to take place on/around **8th/9th/10th November 2021**.
 - We hope to be able to do face to face interviews in Circus School. Should this not be possible for any reason we will use Zoom.
 - Please notify us of any access requirements / reasonable adjustments you need in order to participate fully in the interview.
 - We may:
 - ask applicants to do a presentation/undertake a seen/unseen task.
 - involve the wider team in recruitment.
 - opt to have a second round, if needed.
- **Do you have questions or want to know more?**
 - Email Jenna (CEO) Jenna@BelfastCircus.org to arrange a time for an informal (confidential) chat.
- **Anything else relevant?**
 - Belfast Community Circus School (BCCS) is an equal opportunity employer and committed to ensuring that the talents and resources of all our employees are utilised to the full. We do not and will not discriminate unfairly against any individual in matters of recruitment or selection for any position, promotion, development or training on the grounds of perceived religious or political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, colour, race or ethnic origins.
 - Please note: Any job offer will be subject to:
 - Demonstrable right to work in the UK.
 - Satisfactory references.

This post is generously supported by Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Garfield Weston Foundation and Belfast City Council.

