

**Call Out for
Artists & Shows**

**Circus
Around
And
About +**



Photo credit: Andreas Stueckl

Led by Take Art and Circus City and supported by Arts Council England, Circus Around And About + (CAAA+) will bring circus performances to diverse new audiences in villages, towns and cities across south-west England from June 2027 to May 2028

We are looking for artists and companies to join us on tour!

If you have...

- A finished 60-minute indoor or outdoor circus performance, available for touring June 2027 to May 2028
- A full film of your show
- And are excited to reach new people with your work and adapt it to different places, including parks, housing estates, community centres, village halls, churches, beaches and schools.

Please get in touch.

We can offer...

- guaranteed fees in the region of:
 - £1,350-£1,500 total per performance day for UK-based companies and 2100€ total per performance day for EU-based companies, including the cost of performance, local and regional travel, subsistence (food etc), rest days and VAT if applicable.
- Home-stay Accommodation convenient to touring locations and some meals with local hosts
- Subsidy for additional travel and set transport costs, including international costs.
- Personal access costs to address any barriers touring presents to Disabled performers and touring crew.
- Mentoring and technical and logistical support from the project team.
- A paid, residential artist lab in which we will explore the opportunities and challenges of circus touring in rural and urban community venues
- A bursary of up to £1000-£1500 to adapt your show for community touring, if required.

Circus Around and About + gives you the opportunity to tour your existing work across rural parts of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire and Somerset and in urban community venues in Cinderford, Gloucester, Bristol, Stroud, Bridport and Weston Super Mare.

Four companies will be selected for touring from this call out. If you're among them, we'll aim to offer you at least 4-5 performances out of a total of 26.

An inclusive programme

We want to create a menu of circus work for our presenters that is representative of the diverse communities of the UK, including those who are underrepresented in rural cultural life. In particular, we'd like to include people from the Global Majority and Deaf and Disabled identifying people. If this feels relevant to your company you will have the opportunity to share this on the application form.

Who has toured before?

In 2024, Circus Around and About 2 toured Collective Kontakt, Nikki & JD, Max Calaf Seve, Levantes Dance Theatre, Poppy Plowman and Matt Pang & Owen Reynolds. You can watch a video about the project [here](#).

In addition to the 4 companies selected through this call-out, we will also be touring Cie Zalatai and Head Over Wheels as part of CAAA+.



Photo credit: Paul Blakemore

Interested?

If you're interested in this opportunity, please read through the FAQ's before making an application and get in touch if you need further support understanding if the opportunity is right for you and your show.

How to apply

To apply, please fill in the application form which you can find [here](#) by noon on 19th October 2026. You will need to have a link to a full recording of your show ready to provide with your application; this can be Youtube, Vimeo or Google Drive.

If you need any support with your application, or if applying in another format (for example, BSL, audio or video) would be more accessible for you, please contact ralph@takeart.org or phone 01460 249450 and we'll arrange this.

The selection process

A panel of representatives from Take Art, Circus City and the presenting partners will choose which circus artists and companies to include on the menu. Please see the FAQ's for more on the criteria.

Key dates

- 7th September 2026: Applications open
- 19th October 2026: Deadline for applications
- Start November 2026: You find out if you've been selected
- Late November/Early December 2026: Practical Introduction to Rural and Urban Community Touring for Circus Lab
- Early December 2026 : Deadline for sending us information and images to include on the menu
- January 2027: Menu sent to touring partners
- End February 2027: Tour booking deadline for presenters and dates to be confirmed with menu artists shortly after
- June 2027- May 2028: Touring period



FAQ

What are the criteria for selection?

We're looking for circus artists and companies with a show that:

- Has good availability for bookings in June 2027- May 2028.
- Is ready (or will be ready, with small adaptations) to tour in rural and urban community venues – indoors and outdoors
- Is of a scale that works comfortably within the budget available, ensuring artists and crew are remunerated for their work
- Can be accompanied by one-off workshops or longer creative residencies for local people to participate in. These activities could be held with a specific local group, aimed at children and young people, or open to people of a mix of ages, genders and disabilities.

When selecting artists for the menu, we are also conscious that the selection overall is diverse in terms of who is on stage and representative of a range of circus disciplines and approaches. Our audiences are broad and we are not just looking for work for families, however a show enjoyable by people of all ages is likely to suit more of our contexts.

What sort of circus shows will you consider?

1. Circus shows that are surprising and different. We welcome shows that include high-quality contemporary content, technical aspects and staging.
2. Circus shows that suit the size of the audience. Our indoor audiences range from 60 to 100 people, and our outdoor audiences average around 130.
3. Circus shows that suit a range of ages. Your ideas and content need to connect with people who might not often experience contemporary circus. We're interested in shows that bring the community together and offer them a 'good night out'.
4. Circus shows that engage audiences in different ways. This might be through participation, workshops or residencies.

What travel costs can you cover?

We aim to agree a total day rate to each company that meets their costs, including the majority of travel costs.

Our maximum for this is £1500 or 2100€. Companies with larger additional travel costs - for example those based in the EU, northern parts of the UK, Scotland etc - can negotiate additional travel subsidy, for which we have an additional travel budget. This can also be used towards the costs of an ATA carnet if required.

Please tell us the location of your company members in your application, as well as the mode of transport, and we will use this to estimate what additional travel subsidy you may require. If you have additional information that can help us estimate the costs please supply it.

Can I offer workshops and residencies?

Yes, especially if they're for young people and families. We also want to reach more Deaf and Disabled people through this project, so please tell us if you have experience of delivering workshops to a range of participants.

What happens if my show is selected?

1. Conversation and negotiation with the selected companies

Artists selected for the project will be invited to a meeting with the lead partners and co-ordinator to go over all practical details and agree financial arrangements. The guaranteed performance fee is negotiated individually with companies up to £1500 UK/€2100 EU based on your costs. This fee will cover the performance fee, local and regional travel expenses, subsistence and VAT if applicable. In some places you visit on tour, the hosts will provide accommodation if you need it. Many will also provide a meal on the day of the performance. We will help you to set a fee if needed.

2. Attend a practical lab

If you're selected, we'll ask you to attend the Practical Introduction to Rural and Community Touring for Circus Lab dates to be confirmed. You'll be paid a fee for attending.

At the Lab, you'll meet people from across the rural and urban community touring system in the south-west. Together, we'll think about how we can make better circus shows for rural and urban community audiences and spaces (indoors and outdoors). You'll learn about how the rural and urban touring schemes work, understand the role that the local volunteer promoters play, and think about how to adapt your work to suit community spaces. We will talk about what you will need from venues and communities to do your best work, as well as covering topics such as green touring and engaging Deaf and Disabled audiences.

3. Request funding to adapt your show

You will be supported by the project co-ordinator and partners to identify if your show needs adapting to make it suitable for rural and urban community touring. If required, we will agree a level of bursary with you to make these adaptations. The maximum bursary is £1500. We can talk to you about this at the Lab. In your application to be part of the CAAA+ menu, please tell us roughly how much you think it will cost to adapt your show.

4. Appear on the menu

Your show will feature on a 'menu' of shows, which we'll share with our touring partners in December 2026. The menu will consist of four UK and EU based selected companies. Local volunteer promoters will work with our touring partners to choose which show they want to present.

5. Receive bookings

The Circus Around and About + Project Co-ordinator will take bookings from our venue partners and promoters. We'll tell you about your bookings in February 2027, and our Project Co-ordinator will work with you to arrange a contract.

If you're offering workshops or residencies, we can agree a separate fee for them.

6. Touring period and environmental responsibility

Touring will take place between June 2027 and December 2028. We'll ask you about your commitment to environmental responsibility and how you will keep to the sustainable touring standards set out in the [Theatre Green Book](#)

How does rural and urban community touring work?

The UK's national network of **touring schemes** brings together professional performance companies and artists to put on shows in villages and **community venues**.

- Community venues can include village halls, pubs, schools, church halls, and community centres.
- Rural Touring schemes are funded organisations that support professional shows in rural places in a specific area of the country.
- Each touring scheme works with volunteer local promoters (who live in their local community) to arrange the performances, host the visiting artists and attract a local audience.

Where are the performances?

Across our south-west rural touring network in Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire and Somerset as well as the following urban areas: Weston Super Mare, Bristol, Gloucester, Cinderford, Bridport and Stroud. It's an exciting development for this round of Circus Around and About to be reaching audiences in community venues both rurally and in towns and cities.

Why tour rural and urban community venues?

- Share your work with different audiences – the diversity of audiences in rural areas may differ from those in urban areas!
- Visit unique venues in beautiful locations.
- Feel rewarded and enriched by bringing your work to people who don't have as many opportunities to experience circus performances.

"The joy of this tour has been taking on challenges and working as a company to overcome them. Performing in century-old churches and chapels, and achieving mostly sold-out shows, was a significant accomplishment." CAAA2 touring company 2024

How long should my show be?

Your show should be at least 60 minutes long. Any additional activity, such as meet the artist or a Q&A session after the show is welcomed.

If your show is exactly 60 minutes long (or just under), please tell us what additional activity you will provide.

What does 'suitable for rural and urban community touring' mean?

Audiences and venues in rural and urban areas are diverse so don't make assumptions about what audiences will expect. Here are some things to consider:

- What equipment you will need. Most venues are not fully equipped theatres. Lighting and sound equipment is often limited, so we suggest that you plan for touring with your own technical kit. Most venues won't have sprung floors or dance floors, and not all of them can provide technical support.
- The size of the venue. Community venues can be small, so you will be physically close to the audience. The stages will be different sizes and have different layouts. Most performance spaces are 5m x 5m, with some bigger and others smaller. You can ask for a bigger area, but this will reduce the number of bookings you could get. It's important to be flexible and find creative solutions to staging so your show can be adapted to different spaces.
- How to make sure everyone can see. Most community spaces don't have raked seating, so the audience won't be able to see floor work. Think about what people in the audience will be able to see from where they are sitting.
- The limit for fees is £1500 UK/€2100 EU based companies. We'll agree the fee with you based on your all-inclusive day rate, and the fee will need to cover the performance, travel expenses, subsistence and VAT. To keep costs down, most companies have no more than four people on

the road.

- Transport and accommodation. Rural and urban community touring venues will sometimes offer company members food and local accommodation (rooms in people's houses). If this is not suitable for your needs in terms of restful space you can organise and pay for your own accommodation. Most venues will not be accessible by public transport.

What does 'suitable for rural and urban community touring, with some adaptations' mean?

This means a show that could suit rural and urban community touring if some small changes were made. For example, your show might have five circus performers, but you think you could remake it for three. Or you might have a complex set, but you think you could reduce it.

Bursaries for the cost of making adaptations will be available, so please let us know what changes you would need to make and how much it would cost in your application.

What makes a show 'tour ready'?

A show that is tour ready is:

- a new show that is already made but hasn't yet been presented, or
- a show that has been touring already

What if I'm still creating a show, but it would be ready for touring June 2027-May 2028?

We give priority to shows that are fully made, but please do apply if your show is almost finished. Please include as much information as you can, along with film footage of the whole show as it currently exists and a list of performance dates coming up. We'll need to have a clear sense of how your show will work and what it involves.

We can't consider pieces that are still in research and development or early or mid creation stages. We will view the film you supply as very close to what we would expect to see on stage when it is finished.



Photo credit: JL Chouteau

Our commitment to environmental responsibility?

We have made a commitment in this project to sustainable touring standards and rural touring have worked with the [Theatre Green Book](#) to create guidance including a Simplified Production Calculator. If selected we will offer support to help you engage with the Theatre Greenbook resources and to build your awareness of the importance of environmental sustainability. If you already have made considerations for sustainability within your work you can tell us about this in your application.

Will you consider applications for an installation, or a performance with a non-traditional format (for example, with an outdoor or promenade performance)?

Yes, but please tell us how it also meets the other criteria.

Can I apply if I have no experience of rural or urban community touring?

Yes, you can. As long as you're interested in the challenges and opportunities of touring rurally and in urban community venues, we welcome your application.

Can I apply if I already have lots of experience of rural and urban community touring?

Yes. You are warmly invited to apply.

Do I have to be available to attend the Practical Introduction to Rural and Urban Community Touring for Circus Lab?

Yes, please prioritise your availability at the Lab the dates will be set in consultation with the selected artists. It's advisable to attend this Lab unless you can show us that you have a lot of experience of touring rurally or in urban community venues.

Do all artists in my show need to attend the Lab?

If you're applying as a company, you should send one lead artist or producer

Will I be paid to attend the Lab?

Yes, if you're selected we'll pay you an additional fee to attend the Lab. Your travel, accommodation and meals will also be covered.

How many artists will be chosen?

Ideally four artists or companies will be chosen for touring. As we are working with a limited project budget, the final number will depend on the total projected cost of the tour, based on the details and costs submitted to us through this call-out process.

What counts as a workshop or a residency, and what fees will you pay?

Workshops, residencies and wrap around activities are for audience development, and they are held in the weeks leading up to a performance, not on the day of the performance. In your application, please tell us how many participants you can work with at a workshop or residency.

We'll pay a fee of around £300 for a workshop and around £1000 for a residency. A residency with children and young people and family groups can last 2 days.

Who is responsible for making my budget balance?

You, your company and your producer are responsible for your budget. We can help you by providing guidance, looking at your budget and sharing budget templates with you.

Can I apply for Arts Council funding to make my budget balance?

Circus Around and About + is funded by Arts Council England, so you can't apply to Arts Council for funding towards the touring costs of any shows we are promoting. However, to make a tour viable you could add some extra dates and apply for Arts Council funding for those, which won't be part of Circus Around and About.

Who are the organisations partnering to deliver Circus Around and About +?

[Take Art](#) is a pioneering arts charity based on a farm in rural Somerset. Uniquely, it houses both a County Dance Agency and a Rural Touring Service (alongside other services). It is committed to supporting the development and promotion of high-quality arts practice and works with artists and companies locally, nationally and internationally. It also aims to enable Somerset residents to experience and participate in high-quality arts activities.

[Circus City](#) is a contemporary circus platform and development organisation based in Bristol. Biennially, they produce the UK's largest international circus festival, Circus City, with city-wide programming that showcases diverse, innovative performance that speaks to contemporary themes and experiences. They work proactively to combat the barriers live events can present to Disabled audiences and work with local people to present shows beyond Bristol's city centre, including areas currently underserved by cultural programming. Their responsive development projects, like the New Authors network commission and Deaf artist development initiative, Visual Feats, act to build the conditions required for a stronger, more just and vibrant circus sector.

If you have any questions, please email ralph@takeart.org or phone 01460 249450.



Photo credit: David White

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