

national centre for circus arts

Annual Report 21–22



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Officers, Advisers and Trustees

COMPANY NUMBER:

2553293 (registered in
England & Wales)

CHARITY NUMBER:

1001839

**REGISTERED OFFICE
& OPERATIONAL ADDRESS:**

Coronet Street, London, N1 6HD

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Kate White
Chief Executive

Dan Cowdrill
Commercial Director

Froniga Lambert
Chief Operating Officer

Glen Stewart
Director of Professional Development

COMPANY SECRETARY

Froniga Lambert

BOARD MEMBERS

Alison King, Chair
Tuikku Alaviitala (*until 05/08/21*)
Cameron Brookhouse
Brett Carron (*from 11/05/22*)
Kate Cavelle
David Chinn (*until 16/10/21*)
Mark Friend (*from 11/05/22*)
Sue James
Elizabeth (Betsy) Lynch
Sean Lynskey (*from 11/05/22*)
Bill Morris (*until 31/12/21*)
Tarun Nagpal
Thomas Nowacki
Diana Salazar (*from 11/05/22*)
Darshak Shah
Stuart Smith (*from 11/05/22*)
Paul Steggall
Lesley Strachan (*until 30/09/21*)
William Underhill
Robert West (*until 14/04/22*)
Esther Wallington (*from 11/05/22*)
Rachael Williams

**KEY BUSINESS ADVISORS
AND CONTACTS**

The Conservatoire for Dance
and Drama, WeWork, 14-16 Great
Chapel Street, London, W1F 8FL
(*until 31 July 2022*)

Slaughter and May, One Bunhill
Row, London, EC1Y 8YY

Buzzacott, 130 Wood Street,
London, EC2V 6DL

Co-operative Bank, 80 Cornhill,
London, EC1V 3NJ

Shoosmiths, No. 1 Bow Churchyard,
London, EC4M 9DQ



Welcome



Alison King
Chair of the Board



Kate White
CEO

We were delighted to start the 2021/22 academic year fully reopened with our home in Hoxton buzzing with student activity. It was amazing to see classes and courses for adults and young people once again in full swing with hundreds of people participating in circus arts activity each week.

We were also thrilled to be back in the building to see the results of a year's creative endeavours in the higher education student productions. While the COVID-driven creativity had shown such remarkable resilience and adaptability as the students worked remotely and made films, nothing beats the feeling of being at a live event and watching the students we know so well, perform in their chosen disciplines, demonstrating on-stage the culmination of their studies.

Towards the end of the year we reached a significant milestone in the development of the National Centre with higher education students being admitted directly on to our

higher education courses for 2022/23 following the successful outcome of our application for independent registration with the Office for Students. This really is the dawn of an exciting future for the National Centre for Circus Arts as we lead the way in developing circus arts training.

Our biennial Gala event in February was a terrific night made even more special by being the first time we had opened the doors to welcome back guests since our closure in March 2020. The evening was supported by our wonderful special guests and Gala ambassadors Helena Bonham Carter and Stephen Daldry. A proportion of the proceeds from the event went to support the creation of an embryonic graduate company in partnership with Ockham's Razor, and the resulting outdoor production, PUBLIC, toured to great acclaim throughout the summer of 2022. This production will be rebooted for the 2023 summer season, giving employment to another group of recent graduates.



The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee has gone from strength to strength this year and the valuable work the group has undertaken is making the building welcoming and accessible for all and continues to challenge our thinking and helps us to remove barriers to entry. The inclusion of staff, students, professional circus artists and trustees on the committee means that debate and discussion is robust and wide-ranging. These efforts culminated in an open day in June where our most local communities and stakeholders could come and see the building in action and try their hand at one of the many classes and activities we offer.

It seems an understatement to say we continue to live in challenging times. The cost of living crisis, the war in Ukraine and the climate crisis are causing deep and dark uncertainty around the world. Understanding the world around us or providing activity that allows people an escape from what can be a harsh reality,

is more important than ever. Circus can do exactly that. Not bound by the conventions of language, circus can tell stories with its amazing physicality. It inspires and entertains and can provide a welcome escape for audiences and participants alike. We hope 2023 is a year where even more people experience the physical challenges and creative delights of this very special art form.

Alison King

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Kate White

CEO



The National Centre's fundraising gala with host, Chastity Belt and Gala Ambassador, Helena Bonham Carter. Image: Marc Gasgoine

About the National Centre for Circus Arts

GREAT CIRCUS EVERYWHERE

The National Centre supports circus as it matures and is ever more widely recognised as a dynamic, relevant and important part of the arts and cultural life of the UK. We deliver excellent circus arts training to support the development of the next generation of world-class circus artists.

We also support and collaborate with circus artists and companies throughout their careers to embed professional standards in teaching, facilities and the creation and presentation of circus to reach new audiences and participants with relevant, challenging and engaging work.

The National Centre's reach and relevance continues to grow through the development of revenue-generating activities that can support core education and artists' support activity. This enables us to build on our role as sector leader and continue to push the boundaries of the circus arts, while maintaining core 'business as usual' activities at our home in Hoxton.



Values



AMBITIOUS AND WILLING TO TAKE RISKS

We are ambitious for ourselves and our art form even in challenging times. With high professional standards and an expert community, we provide a safe space for artists, students and participants of all ages and stages in their own circus journeys, to take bigger physical and creative risks.



INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE

The anarchic nature of circus means it appeals to a broad range of people and we are committed to ensuring we meet the needs of our sector by being inclusive, open and accessible to everyone. We work hard to make sure all our staff, students, partners and stakeholders feel comfortable and able to work and create in the very best way possible.



ENVIRONMENTALLY AWARE AND SUSTAINABLE

We are committed for the long term and strive to ensure our organisation is resilient and sustainable, operating a mixed economy model and demonstrating a truly entrepreneurial spirit to ensure our business can survive and thrive in our ever-changing world. In our home building in Hoxton we ensure we use our building efficiently, monitoring our energy usage to support our ambitions around the reduction of our carbon footprint year on year.



Higher Education

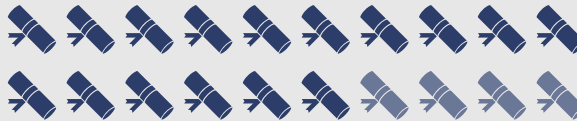
The National Centre's higher education programme is at the heart of our activity, and comprises a two-year Foundation degree and a one-year BA 'top up' in Circus Arts, validated by the University of Kent.

 x **58**
Students



12 students

graduated from the BA programme,
three with first class honours



18 Students

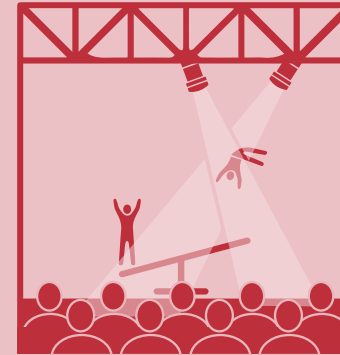
were awarded a Foundation degree after two years of study and **14 have progressed onto the BA course** commencing in September 2022

HIGHLIGHT

Our Foundation Degree 2nd years performed, *me me me me me me me me me me* directed by National Centre graduate Jason Dupree. This production was staged as a promenade, experimental piece of circus in an exhibition style, mixing comedy, farce and the definition of creating a 'circus spectacle'.

STUDENT PERFORMANCES

3 live student performances across 15 nights for the BA Ensemble, FD2 Ensemble and BA Devised shows



1,300 AUDIENCE MEMBERS



7,000 ONLINE VIEWS





Supporting the Creation of Great Circus

As part of supporting the creation of great circus and supporting professional members, we run workshops, seminars and courses in order to develop artists' employability and support them to manage sustainable careers.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

As part of their membership with us, professional members have the opportunity to attend free seminars and workshops. These have included a seminar focusing on how to research and write effective funding applications and a seminar on how to create specialist risk assessments for circus performance.



256 open training members



40 circus artists or companies

supported with free or reduced studio hire space

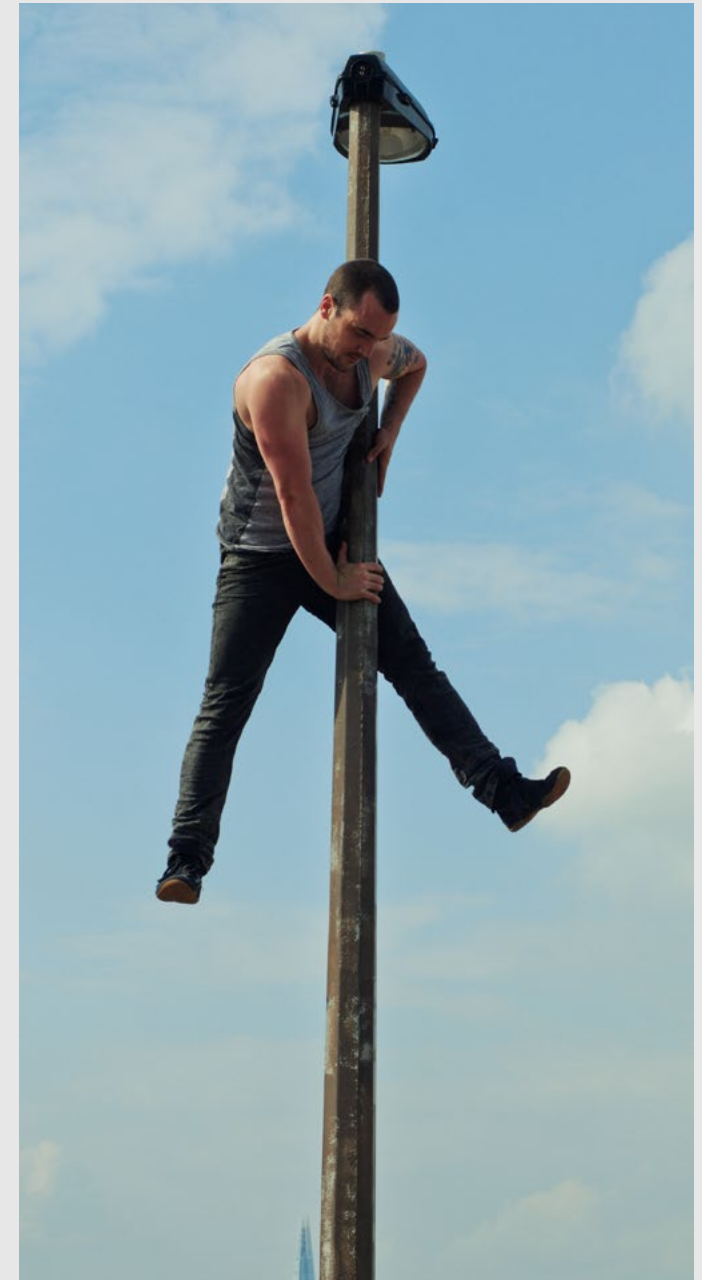


920 hours of studio time

used by circus professionals and companies to create and rehearse works



3,533 training sessions for members





Youth Programmes

The National Centre is home to the London Youth Circus (LYC), and also the only circus strand of the Centre for Advanced Training (CAT). These programmes run throughout the year alongside our outreach and access and participation activities. The last year has shown that whilst we are still on our journey back to pre-pandemic levels of participation, we've been given a great opportunity to plan and launch new projects under our access and participation plan.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Despite a reduced offer, delivering the National Youth Circus Event in person again provided a fantastic experience for young people and circus practitioners from across the country to re-establish connections and make new ones. Our CAT students also worked with some thriving NCCA graduate companies. The intensive workshops were led by LYC graduate Luke Hallgarten (Revel Puck Circus), and Lydia Harper (LEAP). We also saw the success of the CAT programme with three students being accepted onto our higher education programme.



London Youth Circus Students



25 Centre for Advanced Training students,
including **15 from schools outside London**



70 young people and **32 practitioners** took
part in the National Youth Circus Event



Our National Role

The support that the National Centre offers the wider sector is crucial. How we engage with other circus artists and organisations to ensure the challenges we are all facing are heard at the highest levels is a key priority. We are active within various groups and forums, and we want to develop more open information sharing and a willingness to collaborate in ways that have previously not been explored.

The launch of our refreshed website in July 2021 presented an opportunity for us to create a resource hub for the wider sector, where we can share and disseminate advice and best practice across a range of issues that affect both individual performers, circus companies and other circus schools across the country.

We are active in the Circus Change UP network, with staff members being present in a variety of working groups as well as supporting costs for some freelance circus artists to enable them to devote time and their own expertise to contributing to the debates and actions being developed.

National Centre for Circus Arts is a key UK representative at the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (FEDEC), where our Head of Degree Delivery is currently a board member.





Commercial Development

With the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, we were able to restart our corporate and revenue-generating activity, bringing in vital income and helping us on the road to post-pandemic recovery.

HIGHLIGHTS

We have been developing an enhanced executive corporate training programme to sit alongside our team-building events, which focuses on how attendees can apply the skills developed during the training to their life in the workplace and the relationships that they build. In the second half of the year, we ran three large-scale test events with excellent responses from the clients involved.



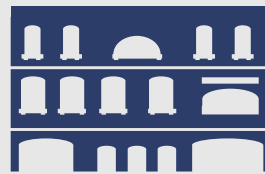
800

**Adult recreational
course participants**



600

**Youth recreational
course participants**



£325,000

**Generated from
venue hires**





Fundraising

Raising voluntary funds from trusts, foundations and individuals is a vital source of income for the National Centre, enabling us to fulfil our charitable objectives as effectively as possible. We are grateful for the support given by all our donors. We believe that fundraising should be an open, honest and respectful process and we aim to build and maintain solid partnerships with our supporters and donors, based on mutual understanding and shared values and goals.

THANKS

The National Centre would like to thank the following funds, organisations and individuals for their support in 2021/22:

Patrons **Aileen Getty**
Stephen Daldry

Support



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



on behalf of the
Conservatoire for Dance and Drama

The Leverhulme Trust

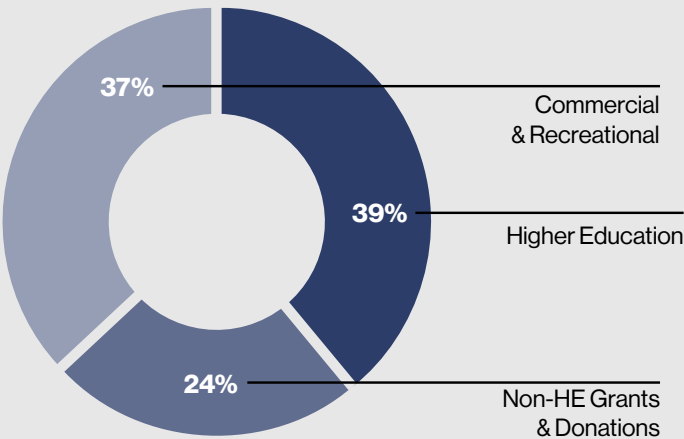


**JERWOOD
ARTS**

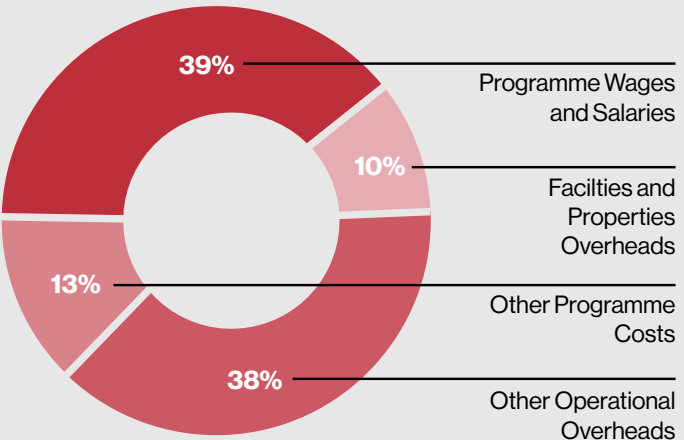




Financial Summary



Income: £2.67 million



Expenditure: £2.8 million

As the country pulled out of the restrictive impact of COVID, our income mix moved back towards historical ‘norms’, with income more evenly split between higher education, commercial activity and other grants & donations. Venue hire performed particularly well and while not back to pre-COVID levels yet, this bodes well for subsequent years. Similarly, the easing of restrictions allowed us to resume the recreational programme for adult and youth, another significant source of commercial income.

	2021–22	2020–21
Higher Education	39%	37%
Non-HE Grants & Donations	24%	57%
Commercial & Recreational	37%	6%
	100%	100%
Total Income	2.67m	2.78m





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