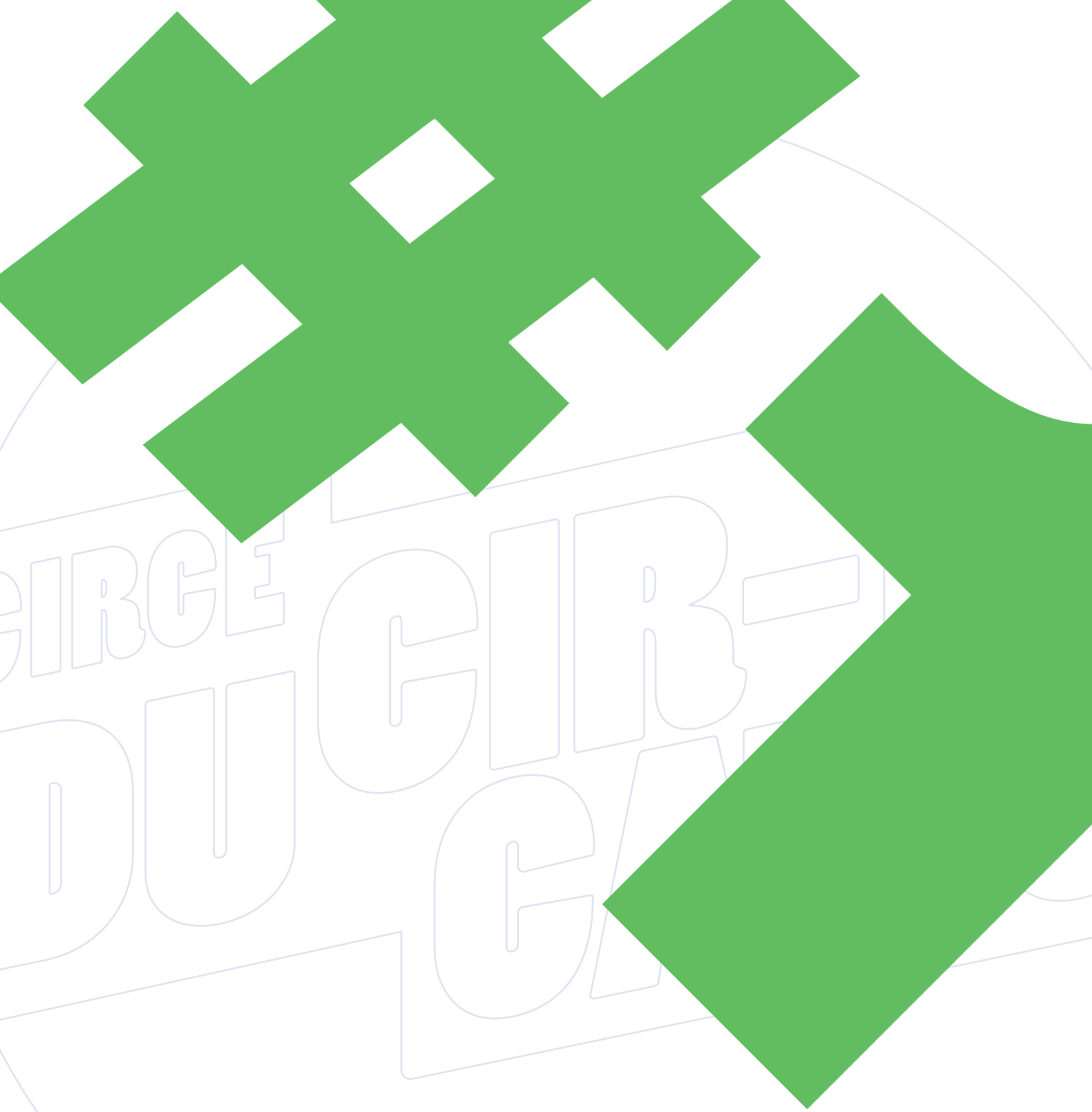




**CIRCE  
EDU CIR-  
CATION**



**Organizational  
Meeting**



Organizational Meeting #1

## **“Bring Yourself at Work”**

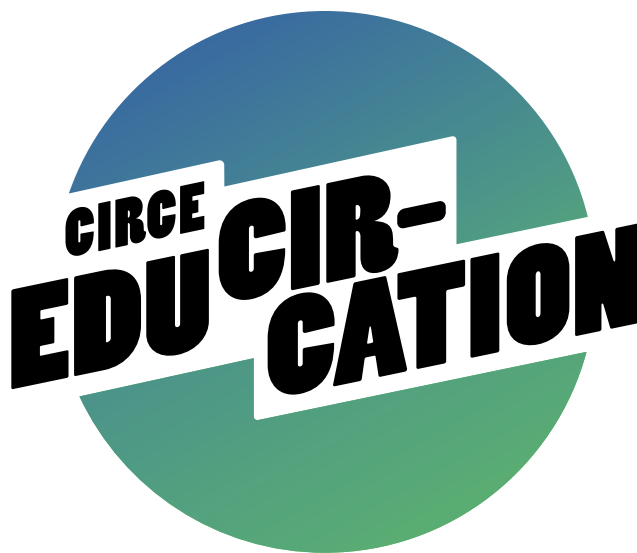
Shared concerns of Circus Teachers, Social Circus Trainers and Circus Officers

**26-27 May 2018**

Hosted by: Kids In Action, Thessaloniki, Greece



# REPORT



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Effective Tips and Ideas*

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*Why? When? What? Where?*

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#### 4. Organizing our Circus School, Space, Studio, or Organization.

*Questions and Answers on marketing strategies, handling participants, employing opportunities and more*

# **General Idea of the Meeting.**

**How it was organized.**



The first organizational meeting of CIRCE project for the Educircation Network took place in Greece. It was organized and hosted by Kids In Action in Thessaloniki, Greece.

Participating organizations were the following:

- ▶ Hungarian Juggling Association (Hungary)
- ▶ Cirqueon (Czech Republic)
- ▶ Valencian Circus Association (Spain)
- ▶ Invisible Circus (UK)
- ▶ Cabuwazi (Germany)
- ▶ Circus In Beweging (Belgium)
- ▶ Kids In Action (Greece)
- ▶ Monokyklo (Greece)



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**CIRQUEON**



Participants' profile has varied from certified circus teachers, to circus artists, social circus trainers, project coordinators, and circus school moderators creating a diverse group dynamic.

The point for this meeting arrived from a need of exchanging views, experiences and best practises around the world of Pedagogic, Artistic and Social Circus, in a professional yet personal way.

Being experienced and effective in some topics of work, reveals not just academic knowledge or studies, but personalities and self assessing situations as well.

## So the invitation for participants was:

“Come and Share Yourself at Work! Choose from the following topics the ones you feel strong in contributing and get triggered to know more about other topics from the rest of the professionals”

Originally the main topics of the exchange were the following:



Building annual teaching programs for different age groups in Youth Circuses (Aims, teaching styles, Focus of work)

Organizing Circus Camps while National, summer or winter holidays (General Context, who can participate, how to promote)

Fundraising and writing applications (Platforms for applying projects, the procedure of writing an application, local and international funding opportunities)

The schedule of work was set as following and participants were engaged in a productive and fruitful meeting:

As a main tool of work has been an original brainstorming of addressing questions and concerns on the suggested topics that were all put on post its, then divided in groups and subgroups according to their relevance to each topic. A lot of questions came up, confirming the need of field workers for sharing their concerns with fellow workers.

## So how did we proceeded?

### Basic guidelines:

- ▶ We merged the questions to go for the main ones.
- ▶ 1 person facilitated each question –( always go back to the question, time keeper, everyone gets to speak)
- ▶ 1 person per question for documenting
- ▶ **Aim: To produce this report of documentation of this meeting.**

# And that's what came up!



# Inside the mind of a Circus Trainer





## 2.1

# What keeps trainers motivated?

*Ideas and Good practises for Satisfied and productive trainers*

### How to increase motivation:

#### **Cabuwazi:**

- ▶ They try to give the teachers work in different locations, by preference with contract, so they don't need to take other jobs, just circus. Result = more experience, better energy.
- ▶ Give more responsibility, leadership.
- ▶ Meetings (But mind the too many meetings!)
- ▶ Evaluations (one on one talk)
- ▶ Feedback, reflection – with kind of checklist to make it more objective

#### **Invisible Youth:**

- ▶ Projects like summer camps, gala where the same group spends time together (bonding teachers-child)
- ▶ Pay for planning of the session (So 1 hr course is paid for 1,4 hrs to include this planning)

#### **Monokyklo | Kids In Action:**

- ▶ Organize free trainings

#### **Cirqueon:**

- ▶ Meetings, but they are not paid. But the teachers should be motivated enough to come to meetings anyway
- ▶ Get together to share dreams, while having a drink.
- ▶ Teacher of the month (who has done the most substitutes etc)

#### **Circus In Beweging (CIB):**

- ▶ Give feedback after observation – but it can be intimidating
- ▶ Send reports of the meetings to all the teachers (even those absent), so that they know what is happening in the organization
- ▶ Survey: what would you like? What do you need?
- ▶ Training for trainers, trick sharing
- ▶ Weekend with combination of games, eating together, workshops.

### Valencian Juggling Association (AVC):

► Impossible to organize meetings, they don't come, they don't answer mails. So meeting became obliged, 2 meetings a year, as a rule. Still being open to dialogue is a plus: 'We see that there is a problem with motivation. Can you come to talk about it.'

### What is inspiring teachers?

- Master classes and create a buzz about it
- Share your dreams
- Cross disciplines (training for trainers week with own and guest teachers)
- Work with a year theme
- European exchanges, festivals, ...
- Free tickets for shows

### Good practices

#### Circus In Beweging (CIB):

► Payment: transparent system which takes into account the hours/day of teaching, preparation time needed, age, experience and qualification. General information: Book for all teachers & helpers, distributed in September, with course schedule, year planner, phone numbers & e-mail addresses, rules, guidelines, ... + a lot of empty pages for the planning of the courses!!



## 2.2

### **Pedagogical Strategy: Am i on the right track?**

*Inputs of practises from 7 countries*

## What do we want to achieve for the pedagogical target for the year.

### Circus In Beweging (CIB)

In a pedagogical plan for 8 – 10 year's old– there is a breakdown of general skills covered, with ex 31 lessons, 34 kids, 3 teachers and 1 assistant.

There is a full chart of all the skills and techniques and what the minimum that the children should be able to achieve vs. what is the ideal level that the children should achieve over how long. Each age group has - cognitive goals, social/emotional goals, creative/ artistic goals.

This chart is followed by the teachers and they all do a training for trainers for 20 days before they begin teaching. Within the planning there is one big show a year and twice a year there's a less formal showing for parents. Additionally twice a year is a free podium to present something.

### Cirqueon

A guide is offered to the teachers built upon the Physical Education structure. The classes are based on lessons leading up to 2 shows. Trying to make teachers follow a preparation booklet for the semester that breaks up the year with different lessons with different goals – technical goal and pedagogical goal. Then you can see what you have done each week over time and what you are building up to. It is not mandatory but it is helpful for the teachers to fill out. The preparation forms become a centralized record kept by the organization. Teaching is based on age groups.

## Monokyklo

Preparation forms were used a lot. To the point that the teachers don't want to fill them in anymore. As a base for the year the following structure based on relevant exercises and games is used:

Getting to know each other

Trusting the group,

Learning the skills –

Using creativity

and following group dynamic.

Slowly adding performance elements towards the end of the year for a show.

On a deeper level, a perspective of respecting your body is followed. Listening to your body, trust you body and it will take you places is the pedagogical approach.

## Hungarian Juggling Association (HJA)

The children are encouraged to move with their body not just to juggle. Not many are excited about the circus skills but much more excited about parkour. The teachers try to encourage them more for circus but struggle to keep the children. Every year there is one performance a year to show off their skills. Focus is on the environment and problems of the children and a strategy is made based on that. For example segregation and trying to integrate people through the circus skills.

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## Valencian Juggling Association (AVC)

Having 6 classes a week for children and 1 for teenagers, the classes operate with a warm up, 2 techniques and then free play. One show a year and no official teaching program yet

## Cabuwazi

In the school exists 37 courses a year, 2 x adult classes, 10 x youngsters, 10x 4-8 years, 6 refugee classes, 6-10 x school projects. Using the cirque de monde training methods as a guide, the teachers teach as they want, so there is not much structure and it is all different. It is very freestyle teaching. 2 x shows a year.

## Invisible Youth

The pedagogical approach is based on the social circus mentality. The social circus trainers get informed about what age group is falling behind in what school subjects or what social goals they need support with. Then they use activities the young people are interested in and slip in the lessons and support the school and community with goals. The teachers can plan each session based on what kids are there and what circus/arts play they want to do that day. Week-long projects are made, with a big public show at the end when funding allows.



## General Tips

One needs to have a pedagogical background to plan and create the strategy.

Communication is key when keeping the teachers on track to follow pedagogy.

Personal feedback and checking in can help.

Make sure you give 7 nice comments to 1 critique of teaching.



## 2.3

### **“It’s all about the students”**

*How to handle difficulties and keep up the spirits in a circus class.*

*Effective Tips and Ideas*

## Effective Tips and Ideas

### How to handle different levels in the same class?

Ask the children to invent their own trick + do a little presentation

Put 2 skills together: balance a feather while spinning a plate

Peer teaching (Mind that the children don't always like this, because always the same children are 'the teachers')

Splitting the class in two

Working in different steps/levels in the same exercise, offering alternatives.

(Difficult when there is only 1 teacher)

System of receiving points from themselves and from the teacher when achieving a goal. Its a way of giving compliments. At the end of the year they can use the points to go to the cinema or to buy juggling balls.

Some children come to learn and train and some come to see their friends. What to do? You can give them tasks. Respecting the steps, putting clear boundaries, ways to operate. Balance between practice in group and doing more individual or little group things.

Sharivari, punk = small act all together at the end of the show, chaotic.

This brings all levels and age groups closer

## How to motivate the children?

- ▶ Production groups: Huge motivation and group bonding.
- ▶ The drive comes from the teachers to motivate children for making a nice show.
- ▶ Everyone has tasks: Moving mats, props, stage manager, 'piste boy', doing music, lights, together with an adult
- ▶ Have a task ready for the children that don't want to perform.
- ▶ Brainstorm with the children.
- ▶ Then the coach makes a list of realistic things loosely based on the brainstorm.



- ▶ Supporting ideas coming from them.
- ▶ Let the children try exercises 2 by 2 and let them elaborate with this
- ▶ Make a drawing: what would your magic act be like
- ▶ Talk a lot with the children about themes, ideas, ...
- ▶ Improvise with movement and material

**What about the child constantly disturbing the class?**

- ▶ Time out
- ▶ Take this behavior as a base for a movement for instance (put the focus on them) Turning the negative into a positive energy.
- ▶ Boundaries!

**Little children:**

- ▶ Provide a drawing space
- ▶ allow them to just run

**Important is to stay calm as a teacher, don’t yell at the children!**  
**Listen to the needs.**

Try to build a community.

Create a space/environment where they want to be part of.

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**But how?**

**It takes time to build trust.**

**Safe space, free from authority.**

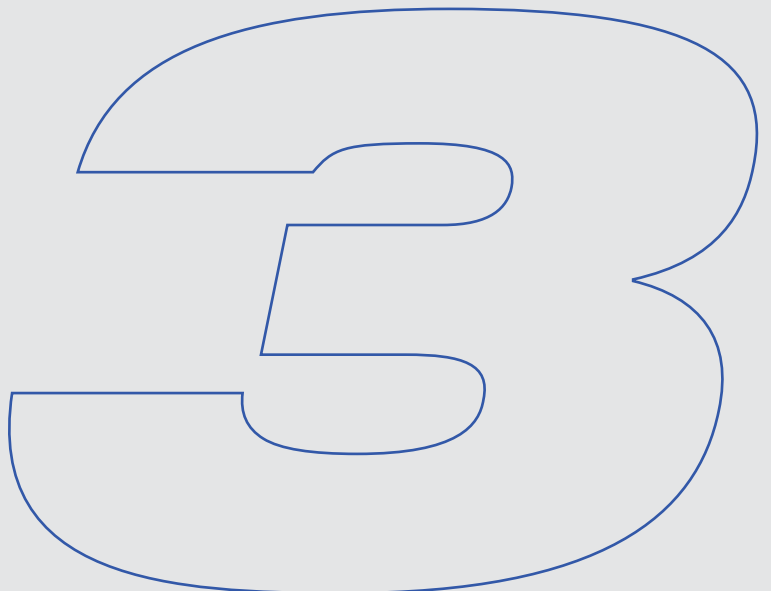
**Let the children make up the set of rules & consequences themselves.**

*Resources, platforms for methods and idea:*  
**Cirque du monde | Circus games | Fedec**



# Let's make a Circus Camp

*Why? When? What? Where? Creative answers from different cultural and professional backgrounds*



## Circus holiday camps

# Why?

Because parents have to work

It's a good opportunity for the teachers to gain experience out of working concentrated time, with a same group of kids

Opportunity for children on the waiting list of weekly courses to join the circus

Team building for a group, to obtain a better connection with the teacher

Social circus: For socially sensitive groups this may be an only chance of a holiday, in another environment

Try out for new methods to use in shows, classes etc.

Opportunity to cooperate with other organizations

# What? How? Ideas

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Max 20 kids, they have to come every day, project to prepare and perform a show

Registration start in January, advertising through newsletter

Work with students from the pedagogical department  
Fusing Circus with: Theater | video mapping, video designer | Music, Percussion | Puppetry | Teaching a foreign language

# When?

One week in Summer, Easter or Christmas Holidays.

Either 2 to 2.5 hours with or without snack, or half day activities with snack and lunch provided

# Where?

Inside the school, in local school gyms, circus tent, summer camp facilities. Existing possibilities for the show is essential!



# Organizing our Circus School, Space, Studio, or Organization

*Questions and Answers on marketing strategies, handling participants, employing opportunities and more*



## What certificate in Training Circus are you aware?

### **Belgium - CIB**

*Teacher's Training– 20 days total of training*

### **Belgium – Ecole de Cirque Brussell**

*1 year training: Formation Pedagogic*

### **Circus Academy Cabuwazi**

*Circus Pedagog 1 year intensive specialized training.*

### **Cirque Du Monde**

*Social Circus Training*

### **Caravan**

*Social Circus Training*

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## How can big and small circus schools be more connected and support each other?

By sharing information – online platform

### **EYCO**

<http://www.eyco.org/>

### **CARAVAN**

<http://www.caravancircusnetwork.eu/>

### **EDUCIRCATION**

<http://www.educircation.eu/>

## How to refund ? Refunding and Policies

### **Cabuwazi:**

Classes are paid per month. Cancellations are upon prior notice

### **CIB:**

Classes are paid for the year, while other monthly options are also available. Refund is possible in case of illness only. Possibilities to switch classes are offered but no refund just for dropping out. Either way it is a case by case basis.

### **Monokyklo:**

Difficulties in month per month payments, many drop out and excuses to switch classes especially by adults.

### **Invisible Youth:**

1 free place is offered for 4 paid places. No refunds

## How to gain trust between students and teachers



Keep the dialogue open and keep the rules clear along with the consequences.

Older students educate the younger ones

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Gain respect from the students by performing for them

Peer learning, mix the groups so they learn from each other. Setting examples.

Setting small goals as a trainer will help with the stress. The goal is to raise their self-esteem.

Show the students trust, still give them the benefit of the doubt.

Building trust within little tasks such as tidying up or cleaning the school altogether.

## How about low cost marketing strategies?

- ▶ Cooperation with theatres
- ▶ Social Media
- ▶ Through selling circus material
- ▶ Share an audience with local scenic organizations
- ▶ Discount for (Erasmus) students
- ▶ Exchange workshops between circus school and theatre (contemporary arts) cross over audience – exchange of skills
- ▶ Mailings, use your own network
- ▶ Distribute flyers by the unicyclists, stilt walkers etc

## Fundraising.

### How do you fund your organization? Which channels do you use

Channels:

- ▶ Classes | Shows | Children's Parties
- ▶ Philanthropists (rich people)
- ▶ Lottery (up to € 10.000)
- ▶ EU projects
- ▶ Loans from the bank
- ▶ Social circus
- ▶ Crowdfunding
- ▶ Fundraisers, benefits
- ▶ External corporations (parkour, sheer leaders,...)
- ▶ School programs

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**Applications for grants: Give facts and figures. Track records**, justify your organization's qualifications.

**Read grants of other organizations** which received a lot of money, but are not competition.

**Call the fund givers, ask for a meeting**, invite them to shows, try to build up a relationship.

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In Belgium and UK you have a dialogue with the funder and your project can change over time. Make the time window big enough, so that you can apply two times. Than you can ask for tips to make your grant better.

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# THANK YOU!



**Hungraian J.A**  
**Budapest**  
*Hungary*

## CIRQUEON

**Cirqueon**  
**Prague**  
*Czech Republic*



**AVC**  
**Valencia**  
*Spain*



**Invisble Circus**  
**Bristol**  
*UK*



**Cabuwazi**  
**Berlin**  
*Germany*



**Circus in Bewegung**  
**Leuven**  
*Belgium*



**KIA**  
**Thessaloniki**  
*Greece*

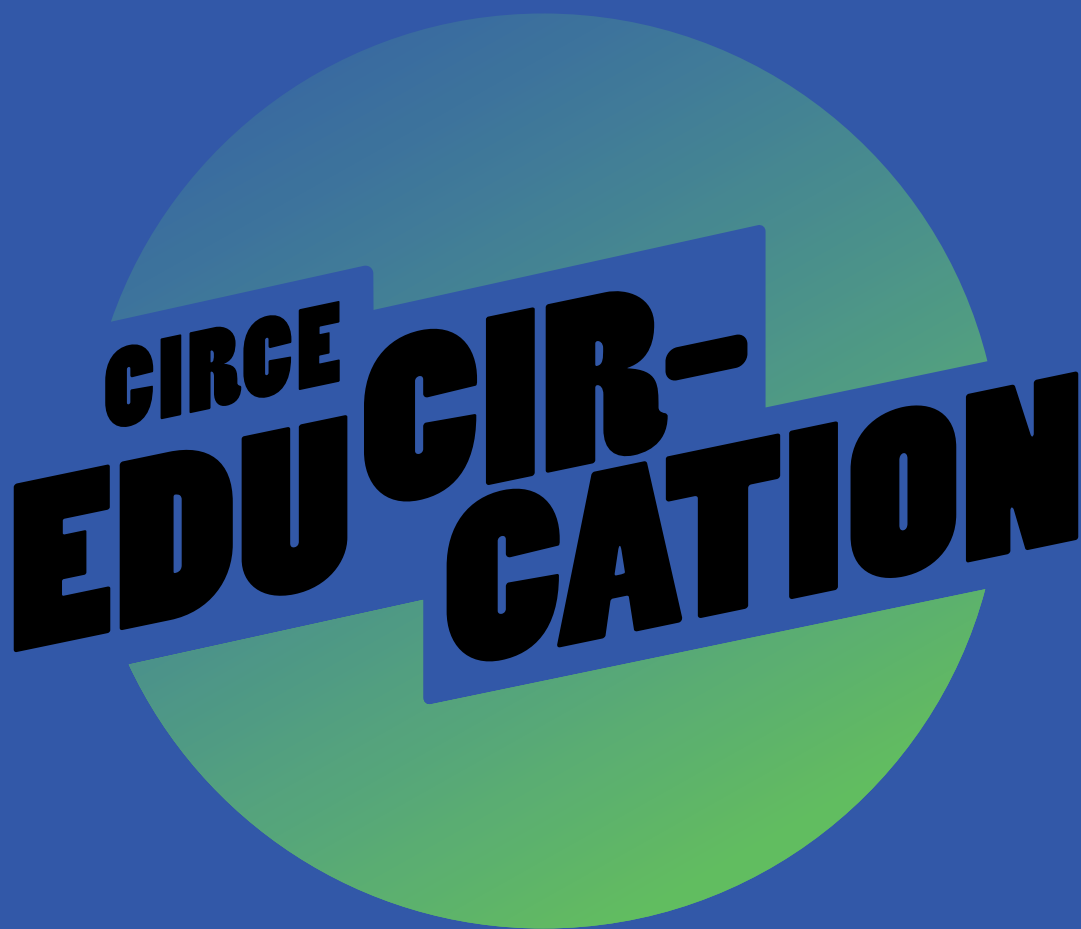


**MONOCYCLO**  
**Thessaloniki**  
*Greece*



Special Thanks to  
**Dajana Elste**  
for the beautiful photos.

**See you soon in  
Thessaloniki**



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