

2015

# Circus Aurora Development Project Report



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Photos: fc, Destined, Feeny. 3, SWAP, Omagh. 4, Map of Aurora. 6a, Faughanvale, Dungiven. 6b, Dramability, Downpatrick. 9 SWRC, Omagh. 11, Dramability, Downpatrick. 14a+b, Be safe be well, Limavady. 19, Faughanvale, Dungiven. 21, Dramability, Downpatrick.

## **Executive Summary:**

The following report sets out how Streetwise Community Circus CIC planned and delivered a development project as part of a Spirit of 2012, Spirit of Achievement Arts and Culture Challenge Award.

This development project was designed to illustrate how Streetwise Community Circus CIC would address issues raised by the board of Spirit of 2012, as detailed on the following page.

This document shows that by developing and strengthening collaborative partnerships within 3 council areas and with 16 different groups and communities across Northern Ireland, Streetwise Community Circus CIC were effectively able to address the challenges of 'Demand, Numbers, Partners and Profile'.

### **Demand:**

All 3 council areas have engaged with several groups who understand the ethos of the project and are ready to support the project over the long term.

### **Numbers:**

In a very short space of time we worked with 202 new participants plus staff and carers, and several organisations that are committed to attracting new participants should the application be successful.

### **Partners:**

Streetwise have created new partnerships with 16 new organisations – including community groups, health and social care trusts, and academic institutions – all of whom are prepared to work with Streetwise to continue to develop ways to support and engage individuals from diverse backgrounds throughout the life of the project.

### **Profile:**

Through partnership with our liaisons in the 3 council areas Streetwise were able to develop links with a broad and diverse range of participants: including individuals with physical impairments, those living with learning difficulties, people with ASDs, members of the BME communities, people accessing mental health services, and older people.

It is our belief that this development grant has shown without doubt that Streetwise Community Circus CIC is a capable and professional organisation who are very able to steer this project successfully over the next 3 years, and beyond.

## Introduction:

In June 2015 Streetwise Community Circus CIC (hereafter Streetwise) was awarded a grant from the Spirit of 2012 Trust of £10, 000 to develop a grant application for the Circus Aurora project. This grant was awarded to fund activity to assess how Streetwise could develop a long term programme of circus based activities that would work towards the following aims:

1. Improve the health and wellbeing of communities and society as a whole
2. Improve perceptions towards disability and impairment
3. Lead to greater social cohesion and understanding

This project would be rolled out across 3 council areas in Northern Ireland.

Spirit of 2012 asked Streetwise to address the following 4 points when developing this project:

1. **Demand:** to what extent is there a demand for circus activities in the communities identified; both the one-off workshops and subsequent clubs?
2. **Numbers:** Linked to demand, what kind of numbers of participants could be engaged in circus activities? Are these likely to be one-off visits or subsequent memberships of clubs?
3. **Partners:** In what ways could partner organisations be further engaged to reach and/or support participants?
4. **Profile:** Could participants with other impairments or characteristics (e.g. physical impairments, older people) be engaged to participate on equal terms alongside participants with learning disabilities?

The following report outlines the ways in which Streetwise has responded to this request and how these activities have enabled Streetwise to formulate a plan for developing this project in the future.



## Background:

Between Friday October 2<sup>nd</sup> and Monday November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015, Streetwise ran 36 ½<sup>1</sup> circus workshops; worked with over 200 participants plus staff and carers; developed new links with 16 different organisations; and strengthened existing links within 3 council areas in Northern Ireland.

Streetwise ran development projects across 3 areas and with several existing organisations, as well as some independent participants:



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- **Fermanagh and Omagh District Council**
  - Key contact: Matthew Nevin, access and inclusion officer, Omagh.
  - Worked with 6 groups
  - Total of 84 participants, plus staff
- **Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.**
  - Key contact: Denise Griffith, arts officer, Downpatrick.
  - Worked with 3 groups
  - Total of 32 participants, plus staff
- **Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council**
  - Key contacts: Elaine Gaston, Ballycastle & Geraldine Smyth, arts outreach and events officer, Limavady.
  - Worked with 7 groups
  - Total of 86 participants, plus staff

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<sup>1</sup> One workshop was abandoned halfway through due to a security alert in Omagh on the 9<sup>th</sup> October, and had to be rearranged for 10<sup>th</sup> November.

The development project for the Circus Aurora project was established and planned by Streetwise along the following timeline:

#### June 2015

Streetwise notified that we had been awarded the development grant of £10,000

Streetwise submits the “Proposed development programme” to Spirit of 2012 laying out what we intended to do and also how a potential award of £100,000 would change the activities proposed in our original application for £250,000.

Streetwise writes to all the eight councils outside the greater Belfast Area with a description of the programme asking them to submit an application to be a host for the programme by the end of July.

#### July 2015

Streetwise receives 5 written responses and one telephone response. The Streetwise Community Circus Management Board assesses the applications and selects the following 3 areas:

- Fermanagh and Omagh - to be centred in Omagh
- Causeway Coast and Glens – to be centred in Ballycastle
- Newry Mourne and Down – to be centred in Downpatrick

These 3 areas were selected because of the strength of community links; the diverse range of groups they were able to introduce to the project; the support they offered in terms of staff to liaise with the project; and the venues offered to the project.

Streetwise were able to offer Mid Ulster, (which was offering great support but only offered groups with learning disabilities), a place on a separately funded 20 week programme. This enabled the project to have a ‘reserve group’ should any problems arise in any of the other 3 areas

#### August 2015

Streetwise administrator commences the process of meeting with partners and creates the timetable for the project<sup>2</sup>. This involved sourcing all the partner organisations who would participate in the introductory workshops.

The initial programme of workshops is finalised

#### September 2015

Streetwise holds a selection process including interviews to select the leader to run the development project. It was decided to have one leader to oversee all the workshops to allow effective evaluation across the programme.

Nick McCaffery selected as the project leader

Staff rota is created

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<sup>2</sup> See appendix

October and November

36 Workshops take place throughout Northern Ireland in each of the 3 council areas.

Streetwise engage with over 200 new participants plus organisational staff/carers.

Streetwise develop links within the 3 council areas with 16 new groups and organisations.

Information for the evaluation of the programme is collected throughout the workshops and a final report submitted to Spirit of 2012 by the 27th November.



## General Observations:

As the development project ran it became clear that in each of the 3 council areas the project was taking shape according to the unique nature of the groups. Streetwise staff began to identify certain groups that would be more or less suited to this particular project, and began to develop ways in which we could maximise on the strengths of each area.

- **Fermanagh and Omagh District Council**

The council liaison here, Matthew Nevin, was extremely supportive of the project. His links with a variety of local organisations was unparalleled and his support both within and around the workshop sessions was much appreciated.

Streetwise have not worked as much in this council area as we have in the 2 other areas, and this was evident in the difficulties that the liaison had in ensuring participation from various groups. As one of the group organisers stated:

*To be honest initially it wasn't the easiest thing to bring older people along to, people's perceptions of 'circus skills', tended to put them off but once we got people there they loved it.*

The enthusiasm from those groups that did engage was clearly evident in the ways in which participation numbers generally increased once a taster session had been experienced.

***Demand: to what extent is there a demand for circus activities in the communities identified; both the one-off workshops and subsequent clubs?***

Once we were able to demonstrate the activities involved in a circus workshop and the potential benefits of participation to the groups involved, all of the groups in Fermanagh and Omagh expressed a willingness to become involved in future sessions. This strongly reinforces Streetwise's opinion that circus is a valuable and useful means of engagement across a variety of populations in this area, and one that does address the 3 key aims of this project. These aims were clearly noted by the organisations involved and suggest a clear correlation between what Streetwise do and what these communities need.

Whilst some of the participants may have benefitted from simply experiencing the one-off circus activities on offer, it became clear that several would be suited to engage on longer term activities that we propose.

In short, yes, there is a need for circus activities here and, following the development project, a much clearer understanding of the potential benefits of these activities.

**Numbers: Linked to demand, what kind of numbers of participants could be engaged in circus activities? Are these likely to be one-off visits or subsequent memberships of clubs?**

As can be seen from the above table, there were several organisations who contributed to the overall numbers of this council area. With relatively short notice we were able to work with 84 participants from 6 different groups. In order to run an effective project we need to maximise the

potential of the most suitable participants; whilst some organisations arranged for only one or two attendees, others brought along almost 30. However, the long term nature of this project may not be suited to all of those who experienced the development project. For example, whilst only one person from Mencap returned for a second session, this individual was extremely motivated and connected immediately with the activities and the staff.

Streetwise envisage building the future of this project from 2 key sources: The students from SWRC and the participants from SWAP. We would also encourage those individuals from the other participating groups who showed high levels of potential and enthusiasm.

**Partners: In what ways could partner organisations be further engaged to reach and/or support participants?**

We have identified two key partner organisations that would be very useful in this project. SWAP and SWRC. Communications with both organisations reflect a very strong understanding of the aims of the project, as well as the support from the communities that each organisation represents. Streetwise would also be in a position to further our own understanding of these communities through active collaboration with these organisations. For example, the following feedback from SWAP reflects issues that we were not immediately aware of, but could incorporate into our future planning:

*As you know we had 3 sessions in Omagh, the attendance at those grew due to local older people telling others about the great time they had at a workshop ... Activities like this go a long way to reducing isolation amongst older people.*

*I have also had groups contact me to tell me that they want to know where to buy some of the equipment so they can try it as a group activity at one of their sessions, the beauty of your workshop is they can take the skills back to their local area and give it a go. I'm pretty sure I have groups making juggling balls as an activity at the minute.*

*One comment which struck me from someone who attended was that 'it's great to have some fun, usually we have a speaker coming in to talk about some condition, like diabetes, this was just fun, which we often forget to have at my age'.*

By partnering with SWRC we have the potential to connect elements of our own work with the curriculum of the college.

In practical terms, we envisage increased levels of collaboration with these partners in order to develop a programme that would suit the needs of these 2 very different communities, whilst addressing the overall aims of the project.

Alongside this core activity we envisage a continued outreach programme to strengthen ties with existing and potential partners.

**Profile: Could participants with other impairments or characteristics (e.g. physical impairments, older people) be engaged to participate on equal terms alongside participants with learning disabilities?**

As can be seen from the tables in the appendix and the list of groups contacted by Matthew Nevin, there is a clear increase in diversity of communities and organisations contacted within this council area. Whilst we developed our own strengths of working with older people and adults with learning difficulties, we also worked with young people with behavioural issues, several participants with physical impairments and disabilities, people from BME organisations and those with ASDs.

With this in mind it should be noted that the success of this project means treating all of our participants with respect and dignity, and not simply seeking to tick as many 'minority' boxes as possible in one workshop. We would be under enormous pressure to run single circus workshops that incorporated a group of older people with a group of teenagers with behavioural difficulties, just for the sake of it. However, by developing a program that worked with both groups independently, and that led towards a performance that incorporated both groups, once a series of circus skills had been learned, would be a more satisfactory and more effective use of resources.

Conclusions:

Streetwise has demonstrated that there is certainly a demand for and high levels of support for, circus activities in the Fermanagh and Omagh area; and that with the right management and by collaborating with new and existing partners we would be able to develop a project that will meet the needs of a diverse local population.



- **Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.**

The project in Downpatrick was slightly different, in that we delivered a higher number of sessions towards one group, whilst 2 other groups split the rest of the sessions. Originally we were to be working with 4 groups in total, but one group pulled out at the last minute, so we reallocated their 2 sessions to AMH, as we had had some success in their earlier workshops.

Whilst Streetwise had more familiarity with this council area, and the Arts Officer here (Denise Griffith) was very supportive of the project, none of the participants on this development project had done any circus before.

**Demand: to what extent is there a demand for circus activities in the communities identified; both the one-off workshops and subsequent clubs?**

Streetwise noted a very enthusiastic and supportive level of engagement with this project, in particular with the Dramability group. This group maintained a high level of participation throughout the 6 weeks, and often attracted new members. Volunteers within this group ensured that engagement was consistent, and even arrived early for extra tuition in circus skills. This would certainly be the core group to which we would seek to invite prospective participants from other groups and outreach projects.

This group has already purchased some of their own equipment and have incorporated their new found circus skills into their own repertoire of activities. The benefits of circus were also well noted, with several accounts of participants demonstrating increased confidence, well being, and other improvements as outlined in our original application (e.g. physical, social, emotional and cognitive well being)

Of the other 2 groups involved here, we feel that individuals from both AMH and Autism Initiatives would be able to participate alongside the Dramability group without any bother at all. As such, we are confident that a regular session built around the Dramability group would have the potential to become a long term project that would attract and welcome new members identified through further outreach work in the area.

**Numbers: Linked to demand, what kind of numbers of participants could be engaged in circus activities? Are these likely to be one-off visits or subsequent memberships of clubs?**

Whilst numbers in this area were lower overall than the other 2 council areas, we would be able to form a regular, sustainable group almost immediately by combining several individuals from AMH and Autism Initiatives with the Dramability group. Further outreach with other communities in this area would be useful though.

**Partners: In what ways could partner organisations be further engaged to reach and/or support participants?**

The volunteers who work with Dramability are extremely well informed and supportive; as such we would be in a favourable position to ensure the support of existing participants. Future outreach work in this area could focus on a more diverse range of suitable potential participants, bearing in mind the dangers of 'box-ticking' exercises as discussed above.

**Profile: Could participants with other impairments or characteristics (e.g. physical impairments, older people) be engaged to participate on equal terms alongside participants with learning disabilities?**

As a mixed ability group, Dramability is already encouraging a range of participants. Our work within autism and mental health organisations in Downpatrick would seem to fit in with the existing ethos here, and I do not foresee any insurmountable obstacles to integration of organisations in the future – so long as this process is well managed.

Of course, we will continue to work with the Arts Officer in Downpatrick to identify any potential groups which would benefit from participation in this project.

Conclusion:

The Dramability group is a solid foundation for this project, and we have discussed with the organisation the best ways for integrating new participants over time. I would envisage a series of events (performances etc.) that would communicate the ethos of this project to a range of new participants, as well as the proposed series of continuing outreach work with new groups in the area.



- **Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council**

This council area includes Ballycastle, which is an area that Streetwise have worked in the past. As such we were able to strengthen existing links with both the Ballycastle Base and Greenlight Gateway, as well as exploring a range of new groups from within the Limavady area thanks to the dedication of both the Arts Officers in these areas.

What we saw with this council area was the almost immediate potential for hosting inclusive workshops. Our first 'older peoples' session was due to be poorly attended (we were told that only 2 were coming) and so we invited a group from the Ballycastle Base who had participated in a Streetwise project in previous years. In the end around 12 of the older people arrived, and the workshop became our first integrated, cross-generational, all-ability workshop. The success of this workshop was, in part, due to the level of circus skills already held by those participants from the Base, who were in many cases keen to share with the older people who had no experience of circus. This element of integration using circus skills as a means of communication was well noted.

**Demand: to what extent is there a demand for circus activities in the communities identified; both the one-off workshops and subsequent clubs?**

In Ballycastle alone, we have recorded a keen interest for Streetwise to return to continue to teach circus skills. We were also very happy to work with Rathmoyle Resource Centre in Ballycastle, and the 3 groups from Limavady/Dungiven who had not had any circus in the past. Once again, the high numbers of those returning to a circus workshop as outlined in the table above suggests a keen demand for circus activities across the council area. This is perhaps best expressed through feedback from the group in Feeny:

*We have carried out many different activities and programmes over the years and the circus skills workshops were most definitely one of the most fun and enjoyable. It was very different from anything we've done to date and the group were really enthusiastic about it with one of them describing it as 'the best thing we've done'. I was very impressed at how Streetwise Circus were able to design the workshop so as people with varying levels of ability could all participate-very important for people with learning disabilities.*

*I was also very impressed with the Streetwise staff who created a great atmosphere throughout the workshops and immediately made everyone feel at ease. The difference in participants' confidence from the beginning to the end of the workshops was clear to see as they went from being slightly apprehensive about using the equipment to wanting to try out everything! We were delighted to be part of the project and would be very keen to participate in the proposed longer term project if given the opportunity.*

**Numbers: Linked to demand, what kind of numbers of participants could be engaged in circus activities? Are these likely to be one-off visits or subsequent memberships of clubs?**

It is my opinion that this area has been the closest to our original plan of taking a small selection of keen individuals from each group we worked with over the development project and combining them at a time and place that is most convenient to all.

We would envisage hosting a session during the day in Ballycastle with small groups of around 4 individuals coming from Feeny, Limavady, Faughanvale and the 4 groups in Ballycastle. This would lead to a regular integrated session of up to 30 individuals already.

**Partners: In what ways could partner organisations be further engaged to reach and/or support participants?**

Once again, we were fortunate in this project to be able to collaborate with a number of dedicated professionals and volunteers who are keen to engage and support the participants from each of the groups already identified. By maintaining high levels of inclusion of staff in activities and by ensuring a continued spirit of collaboration Streetwise intends to develop projects that develop the potential of as many of our participants as possible.

Of course, if there were opportunities to reach out to new groups via the proposed outreach programme, we would endeavour to adapt the core programme to include as many people as possible, whilst maintaining a level of quality for all participants within each workshop.

**Profile: Could participants with other impairments or characteristics (e.g. physical impairments, older people) be engaged to participate on equal terms alongside participants with learning disabilities?**

As stated above, this area of the project has already demonstrated the potential for effective inclusive workshops, with adults with learning disabilities teaming up with and teaching a group of older people how to do circus skills. We were also extremely fortunate to work with a really dedicated and extremely supportive group from the 'be safe be well' organisation in Limavady, who picked up skills at an alarming rate and whose organisation is dedicated to inclusion. We see this group as having the potential to become peer tutors very early on in the process. Thus reducing the need for long term investment in higher numbers of professional circus tutors (which therefore makes the project more sustainable in the long term)

Conclusion:

The Causeway Coast and Glens element of the Circus Aurora project has benefitted from two key things: Firstly a small group of participants who are already known to us and who are very keen to help to support a long term project in their area. Secondly, we have been very fortunate to meet new partner organisations who have understood the aims of the project very quickly, have witnessed the impact of circus activities on their participants, and who are keen to support the development of a long term project in their area.

## Overall Conclusions

Whilst it is clear that the 3 council areas involved in the Circus Aurora development project have all developed in quite distinct ways, it is also clear that each of these areas has the proven potential to develop favourably in the long term.

Almost all of the 16 organisations who were involved in any one of the 36 ½ workshops through October and November 2015 have expressed a desire to continue with the project over the next 3 years at least.

This level of engagement suggests very strongly that there is a good demand for this project throughout the 3 council areas.

Streetwise are also very confident that this expression of interest is backed by a very real capability for all of these organisations to act upon this demand, and to forge strong relationships with Streetwise staff in order to develop a sustainable and effective circus project in each area.

We also look forward to using our proposed outreach workshops to continue to feed into these central projects, and to continue to develop links with new and existing organisations in the future.

It is clear that Streetwise Community Circus CIC has not only identified the benefits of social circus projects; but we have identified a demand for them, developed relationships with the appropriate partners, identified new participants, and that we have the knowledge, experience and capability to continue to develop this project in the future.



## Feedback from Clients:

Due to the fact that we were only working with some groups for one or two workshop sessions at a time, Streetwise felt that time devoted to inspiring a sense of enthusiasm for the project was of more use than time devoted to completing evaluation forms. However, so many groups and individuals asked to have their opinions on the project included in this report that we were able to collect the following feedback:

### Council Liaisons:

Matthew Nevin, access and inclusion officer, Fermanagh and Omagh:

*'It's a fantastic opportunity for people in the area, especially individuals who may not have had the opportunity to go to workshops before, especially unique ones teaching circus skills. Streetwise provided fun, entertainment and the opportunity to learn new skills. Every group that attended thoroughly enjoyed the workshops and the way they were planned and delivered by Streetwise. The workshops proved that there is a definite need for the workshops in this area.'*

Denise Griffith, Arts officer, down:

*You would be better placed having worked with the groups. From an organiser's point of view I felt the crew were very organised and the participants, Dramability, especially really enjoyed the sessions. This was evident with their growing numbers each week and the leaders arriving early for extra tuition.*

Geraldine Smyth:

*I feel that the project was very beneficial to all of my participants in Faughanvale Community Project, Destined and The Men's Shed. The older group with physical and mental disabilities from Faughanvale gained a lot from the interaction with the guys and trying things that they had never dreamt of doing before. The Destined group of younger mainly mentally disabled group really blossomed under the tutelage of your tutors, especially Owen a man of over six foot with the mental age of a child, took to the unicycle as if he were born to it. After you left he said circus skills were the best thing he had ever done – this from someone who usually shows little interest in his surroundings. The others in the group all commented that it was wonderful and completely different to previous workshops they had tried. The men's shed helps older and younger men without disabilities interact with each other and the workshops helped to promote camaraderie within the group – they were very good in picking up the various skills.*

### Organisations:

SWAP:

*Without question South West Age Partnership would support the progress/development of the Aurora project. As you know we had 3 sessions in Omagh, the attendance at those grew due to local older people telling others about the great time they had at a workshop. We brought*

*older people in from rural areas as well as the town, not just group members but also individual members. Activities like this go a long way to reducing isolation amongst older people.*

*To be honest initially it wasn't the easiest thing to bring older people along to, people's perceptions of 'circus skills', tended to put them off but once we got people there they loved it. From my perspective I measure success on the happy faces in the photographs to the amount of queries I have, when are we doing that again? I have been contacted by groups asking are you running that again soon and also interestingly from individuals.*

*I have also had groups contact me to tell me that they want to know where to buy some of the equipment so they can try it as a group activity at one of their sessions, the beauty of your workshop is they can take the skills back to their local area and give it a go. I'm pretty sure I have groups making juggling balls as an activity at the minute.*

*One comment which struck me from someone who attended was that 'it's great to have some fun, usually we have a speaker coming in to talk about some condition, like diabetes, this was just fun, which we often forget to have at my age'.*

*They can take the skills back to their families and show the grandkids what they learnt today, I have seen that in my own house.*

*The team were on the right level with our members, not patronising. No-one felt they had to take part either, if they wanted to they could just sit back and watch, absolutely no pressure, which is so important when working with older people.*

*We would love to have more workshops, the success stories from the Omagh workshops have reached my groups in Fermanagh and they are asking when can we try this? That speaks for itself.*

#### Greenlight Gateway:

*Showed me tricks and how to do magic. I liked the hats -really good. I'd love to do it again (P, 26 years old)*

*I have used the juggling skills that I have learned to share with a member of our Gap Junior club. (Trainer and Support Worker, young at heart)*

*I miss the classes. (V, 24 years old)*

*Thank u drax for being one of my best friend in the world I will miss u bffl (A)*

*Showed me how to walk on stilts. It was excellent. I'd love to do it again. (W, 26 years old)*

*I only got to two classes. I learned how to play the Diablo and I am getting one for Christmas. Brilliant. (C 17, years old)*

*I loved the hats. (J, 52 years old)*

*I love them. I enjoyed the Diablo (S, 54 years old)*

*I enjoyed the balls on the board thing. It made me feel happy. I liked doing the hats. (K, 34 years old)*

*It was a positive way to interact with each other and engage with the people I work with. It was also interesting and a bit of an insight to the cognitive challenges that people face and a way of seeing how things work below the surface. (Support Worker, 31)*

Destined:

*We have carried out many different activities and programmes over the years and the circus skills workshops were most definitely one of the most fun and enjoyable. It was very different from anything we've done to date and the group were really enthusiastic about it with one of them describing it as 'the best thing we've done'. I was very impressed at how Streetwise Circus were able to design the workshop so as people with varying levels of ability could all participate-very important for people with learning disabilities. I was also very impressed with the Streetwise staff who created a great atmosphere throughout the workshops and immediately made everyone feel at ease. The difference in participants' confidence from the beginning to the end of the workshops was clear to see as they went from being slightly apprehensive about using the equipment to wanting to try out everything! We were delighted to be part of the part of the project and would be very keen to participate in the proposed longer term project if given the opportunity.*

## **Proposed project plan 2016-18**

### **Full Project Description:**

Following the success of our development project in terms of confirming the demand and interest from participants we are now in a position in all three centres based in Downpatrick, Omagh and Ballycastle to set up the central regular Aurora workshop. We have confirmed individuals and groups from a diverse range of marginalised communities in Northern Ireland, who have participated in the development programme, understand the aims and objectives of the Aurora project and who want to participate in the programme.

The potential award of £100,000 would allow us to deliver the following programme over a three year period.

### **Central Aurora Programmes**

In each area, we will run a central programme of 3 x 8 week terms annually. These will take place in February/ March, May/June and October/November with a total of 24 workshops per year per area. The timing of these workshops will be based on the information gathered in the development programme to maximise access for participants.

- Fermanagh and Omagh District Council:

Following on from the development programme we are planning to build our central programme in Omagh around 2 key groups; the students from SWRC and the older people's group from SWAP. At this stage we envisage running a parallel programme of workshops developing skills in each group prior to developing a collaborative performance. Participants from other partner organisations will be able to filter into either one of these strands according to the most appropriate environment. We have already identified some members from a group in Enniskillen who would be able to travel to Omagh to participate.

- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council:

At this stage we anticipate that the Downpatrick area central programme will be built around the Dramability group, with additional input from AMH and Autism Initiatives. These workshops will continue to take place in the Down Arts Centre, Downpatrick. Even at this stage we aim to have a regular attendance of around 20 participants.

- Causeway coast and Glens Borough Council:

This area's central programme will be based in Ballycastle and attract an enthusiastic number of participants from all of the groups we met with in the development stage of the project. We have already established that groups from the Dungiven area and Limavady are prepared to travel to Ballycastle and (as with the Ballycastle over 55's group) are keen to develop an integrated project.

With such an enthusiastic core group we are already developing ways to effectively manage larger numbers. However, the space at the Sheskburn centre is certainly comfortable enough to

accommodate a larger workshop group, and we have good support here from both the Ballycastle and Limavady arts development officers.

### **Outreach Programme**

Each area will also receive 15 additional outreach workshops for local groups to introduce new individuals and organisations to the Aurora project, thus giving them the chance to feed into the central project in each area. The funding available will allow us to offer 5 workshops to 3 new groups annually. Over the 3 year programme, each of the council areas will offer 9 new groups the chance to be part of Aurora.

We anticipate delivering one outreach project each term in each area. Selection of these groups will be based on information gathered in our development programme and working in partnership with the local council staff.



## **Timetable:**

- **Year One, 2016 ‘establishing roots’:**

Following the development programme we are currently ahead of the position that we envisaged in our original application. Each area is already in a position to set up a regular programme with different groups and individuals feeding into it. These programmes would commence in February 2016 in all 3 areas. This will enable us to immediately publicise and market the project. We will then focus on one outreach programme per term, in each area with a specific aim of introducing new people to the programme and overcoming any barriers to inclusion in the central programme. Through the development programme we have already had groups who are sourcing transport themselves and in some cases our local council partners are offering to help provide transport. We have also established that groups are willing to travel large distances to participate. A group in Limavady are putting on a mini bus to attend in Ballycastle and a group in Enniskillen are planning to travel to Omagh.

- **Year Two, 2017 ‘branching out’:**

The main feature of year two will be establishing the central groups as a permanent feature of the local artistic infrastructure. We will continue to develop ways of publicising and marketing the project in partnership with local councils, and will provide further introductory workshops for new groups. This will ensure that the project is less likely to stagnate by opening the opportunity to new groups. The big feature of this year for participants will be the start of public performances and participation in local events.

Examples of performance opportunities in each area are:

- Fermanagh and Omagh:
  - Omagh Summer carnival
  - St Patricks Parades in Enniskillen and Omagh
  - Omagh Summer Carnival
  - Summer Programme of entertainment in Enniskillen
  - Turning on Xmas lights in Enniskillen and Omagh
  - There are two council run theatre spaces in this area
- Newry Mourne and Down
  - St Patricks Day parade Downpatrick and Newcastle
  - Summer Entertainment Programme in Newcastle
  - Halloween in Down County Museum
  - Turning on Xmas lights in Newcastle Newry and Downpatrick
  - There are also 3 council run theatre spaces.

- Causeway Coast and Glens
  - Brighter Nights summer programme Ballycastle
  - Maritime Festival Ballycastle
  - Lughnasa Fair Ballycastle
  - Danny Boy Festival Limavady
  - Summer programme of entertainment Portrush Portstewart
  - Turning on Xmas lights in Coleraine, Limavady, Ballycastle and Ballymoney
  - There are three council run theatre venues in this area
- **Year Three, 2018 ‘flowering’:**

The main progression for each of the central groups will be the artistic development of the groups. Links with professional carnival companies to create their own costumes, working with professional street entertainers to create performance pieces, and the opportunity to work with international artists will all develop the creativity for each group and impact on local public events. Throughout the project the opportunity will continue to be offered to new groups through the introductory workshops.

- **Post project, ‘seedlings’:**

Streetwise aim to establish the “Central Workshops” in partnership with the local councils as a valued part of their artistic infrastructure. We aim to have demonstrated to each of the councils the benefit and value of having the circus groups in their areas. Having worked closely in partnership with the councils from the start of the development programme we believe that the relatively low cost of each council funding their own project is an achievable goal. The benefit and publicity gained by the project will ensure that the opportunity for new people to join will always be possible because local communities will be aware that they have the groups in their areas.



## Financial Summary:

This programme is based on all our staff being paid as self-employed tutors in the following way:

○ Staffing per 2 hour workshop		
1 X Leader 3 hours <sup>3</sup> @ £25ph	£75.00	
2 X Tutors 2.5 hours <sup>4</sup> @ £25ph	<u>£125.00</u>	
<b>Total per workshop</b>	<b>£200.00</b>	
117 <sup>5</sup> workshops @ £200		£23,400.00
○ Administration per year <sup>6</sup>		
520 hours @ £12.50 ph		£6,500.00
○ Transport per workshop per year <sup>7</sup>		
117 workshops @ £30	<u>£3,510.00</u>	
<b>Total Annual cost</b>	<b>£33,410.00</b>	
<b>Total project cost 3 X years @ £33,410.00</b>		<b>£100, 210.00<sup>8</sup></b>

## Additional Support

Our community partners provide venues for the project at a value of £20 per hour for two hours per workshop total value £4,680 per year

Streetwise Community Circus will produce our own evaluation of the project at the end of 3 years which will be the result of on-going collection of information throughout the project carried out by Dr Nick McCaffery valued £2,500

Streetwise Community Circus will provide all equipment required for the project

Streetwise Community Circus will provide a DVD at the end of the project produced by film maker Michael McNulty valued at £5,000

Any costs of staffing or transport for performances will be met by the event organisers.

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<sup>3</sup> 2 hours teaching + 1 hour planning & evaluation

<sup>4</sup> 2 hours teaching + 0.5 hours planning & evaluation

<sup>5</sup> 24 central workshops + 15 outreach workshops per centre X 3 = 117

<sup>6</sup> For a full explanation of the roles and expected time allowances of the administrator see appendix.

<sup>7</sup> Based on transport from development project at £0.35 per mile averaged over the 37 workshops.

<sup>8</sup> Any spend over £100,000 will be met by Streetwise Community Circus

## **Appendices:**

- D. Participation tables from development project
- E. Administrators role for Circus Aurora Project
- F. Circus Aurora finances

<b>Fermanagh and Omagh District Council</b>			
<b>Name of group</b>	<b>Aims of group</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Demographics</b>
South West Age Partnership	“SWAP’s main objective is to work in partnership with statutory agencies to deliver joint services for older people in the Fermanagh and Omagh area” <sup>9</sup>	2/10/2015: 2 + 1 staff <sup>10</sup>  9/10/2015: 8 +1 staff [6 new]  10/11/2015: 21 + 1 staff [19 new]	Over 55s  26 female 1 male
Omagh Centre, Western Trust	“The Omagh Centre is a 50 place day care facility which caters to the needs of adults with learning disabilities within the Omagh catchment area. The facility was established in 1978.” <sup>11</sup>	6/10/2015: 6 + 3 staff  13/10/2015: 7 + 4 staff [3new]	Early 20s to 50s  3 female 6 male
Independent Autism & Learning Disability participants	We ran an integrated workshop of people with autism, and with learning difficulties alongside neurotypical siblings and friends	7/10/2015: 3 14/10/2015: 12 [9 new]	Under 10 to mid 40s  5 female 7 male
SWRC Omagh campus. OCR life & living students	This group consisted of students from the college with special educational needs; both learning difficulties and behavioural issues.	3/11/2015: 8 + 3 staff  10/11/2015: 13 + 6 staff [6 new]	Late teens/early 20s  9 female 5 male
Mencap	Support Group for people with learning disabilities and mental health <sup>12</sup>	3/11/2015: 3 + 2 staff  10/11/2015: 1 + 1 staff	>40  2 female 1male
Fresh Focus, Enniskillen	Employment integration for day care for adults with a learning disability.	6/11/2015: 17 + 2 staff  13/11/2015: 18 + 2 staff [2 new]	20s – 50s  5 female 14 male

<sup>9</sup> [www.ageuk.org.uk/northernireland/get-involved/regional-networks/sub-regional-networks/south-west-age-partnership/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/northernireland/get-involved/regional-networks/sub-regional-networks/south-west-age-partnership/) accessed 26/10/2015

<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately this first session coincided with a local funeral that was heavily attended by some of the SWAP participants

<sup>11</sup> [www.westeritrust.hscni.net/about/1969.htm](http://www.westeritrust.hscni.net/about/1969.htm) accessed 26/10/15

<sup>12</sup> This group came from one of Mencap’s supported living units in Omagh.

<b>Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.</b>			
<b>Name of group</b>	<b>Aims of group</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Demographics</b>
AMH New Horizons	“Action Mental Health changes the lives of those living with mental ill health and promotes resilience and well-being to future generations” <sup>13</sup>	5/10/2015: 7 + 2 staff 12/10/2015: 6 + 2 staff 16/11/2015: 5 + 1 staff 23/11/2015: 4 + 1 staff	20s to 50s  5 female 2 male
Autism Initiatives	This group came from the supported living section of Autism Initiatives in Downpatrick. “We encourage social interaction by providing opportunities such as attending college, work placements, employment opportunities and socialising with friends.” <sup>14</sup>	19/10/2015: 6 + 3 staff 26/10/2015: 5 + 3 staff	40s to 70s  5 female 1 male
Dramability	“We are a mixed ability drama group founded in 1991 and based in Downpatrick Northern Ireland. We currently have 30 members ranging in age from 8 to 60+ who meet weekly to rehearse, have fun and join in the craic” <sup>15</sup>	5/10/2015: 14 12/10/2015: 17 [3 new] 19/10/2015: 16 [1 new] 26/10/2015: 18 [1 new] 2/11/2015: 16 9/11/2015: 15	Under 10 to mid 40s  15 female 4 male

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.amh.org.uk/> accessed 20/11/15

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.autisminitiatives.org/where-we-are/northern-ireland/supported-living.aspx> accessed 08/11/15

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.dramability.org/#!/about-us/c1yws> accessed 08/11/15

<b>Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council</b>			
Name of group	Aims of group	Attendance	Demographics
Faughanvale Community Project, Greysteel.	“Faughanvale Community Project endeavours to bridge the gaps between old and young, able bodied and disabled, employed and jobless.” <sup>16</sup>	14/10/2015: 15 + 4 staff 21/10/2015: 18 [6 new] + 4 staff	30s – 80s  14 male 7 female
Greenlight Gateway, Ballycastle	“Greenlight’s social enterprise core aim is: to provide real and meaningful work and employment experiences to enable people with a learning disability to enhance and develop their self-confidence, skills and talents through new opportunities, responsibilities, and training for work and life in a creative team and community environment” <sup>17</sup>	14/10/2015: 6 + 2 staff 21/10/2015: 6 + 2 staff 4/11/2015: 6 + 2 staff 11/11/2015: 6 + 2 staff	20s to 50s  3 male 3 female
Rathmoyle Resource Centre, Northern Health and Social Care Trust	Day care facilities for adults with learning and physical disabilities	14/10/2015: 10 + 2 staff 21/10/2015: 8 [1 new] + 2 staff 4/11/2015: 6 + 2 staff 11/11/2015: 8 [3 new] + 3 staff	20s to 60s  7 male 7 female
Destined, Feeny	“Destined is a voluntary charitable organisation ... that seeks to address the needs of people with learning disabilities in a whole life context.” <sup>18</sup>	15/10/2015: 7 22/10/2015: 9 [3 new]	20s to 40s  5 male 5 female
Ballycastle over 55s	A social group of local residents over 55 years of age.	15/10/2015: 12 22/10/2015: 7 4/11/2015: 1 <sup>19</sup>	Over 55  11 female 1 male
Ballycastle Base,	Ballycastle Base is one of	15/10/2015:	20s to 50s

<sup>16</sup> ‘Faughanvale community project’ pamphlet

<sup>17</sup> [www.greenlightgateway.com](http://www.greenlightgateway.com) accessed 26/10/15

<sup>18</sup> [www.destined.ie](http://www.destined.ie) accessed 26/10/15

<sup>19</sup> This was the first ‘open invite’ workshop at Sheskburn, which unfortunately coincided with a funeral that was heavily attended by the over 55s group.

Northern Health and social care trust.	a number of similar 'drop-in' services throughout the Northern Trust's Day Opportunities Programme for adults with a learning disability	6 <sup>20</sup> + 1 staff 21/10/2015: 3 [2 new] + 1 staff 4/11/2015: 8 [4 new] + 1 staff	6 female 6 male
Be safe be well, limavady	"The Be Safe, Be Well Partnership seeks to address issues of community safety, security, well being and health for older people, young people, vulnerable adults, people with mild mental health issues, physical disabilities and learning difficulties" <sup>21</sup>	4/11/2015: 11 11/11/2015 8	20s to 60s  3 female 8 male

<sup>20</sup> There is some crossover between participants at Ballycastle Base and Greenlight Gateway. I have ensured that individuals are not counted twice in sessions where both groups are present.

<sup>21</sup> <http://besafebewell.co.uk/> accessed 08/11/15