

## CALL FOR PROJECTS

### circusnext Platform · 2026 edition

open from February 10<sup>th</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025 (noon, CET)

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# 1. What is circusnext

For over 20 years, circusnext has been paving the way for the **professional development of emerging circus authors** with original, unusual, and peculiar writings. More than [100 companies](#) have benefitted from circusnext's action since its creation.

Through its action, circusnext has become a renowned **label for artistic excellence** in the contemporary circus scene.

circusnext coordinates "circusnext Platform", a **European programme** which aims at identifying and supporting emerging circus artists within a network of 25 partner venues across Europe (festivals, creation and touring venues) based in 15 countries. Every year, an open call for projects is launched, followed by a 3-step selection process.

More about circusnext [here](#).

## What circusnext searches for

circusnext wishes to offer space for **artistic risk-taking**, research and experimentation.

The aim of circusnext juries is to identify and support the most innovative and **bold emerging circus authors** who are looking to develop, at a European level, any type of circus creation – except for acts.

How do we define emerging authors at circusnext?

- **Author** refers to artists who have authority over their work and are in the process of finding their "artistic signature", the ability to define their artistic position.
- **Emergence** is envisaged as a level of professional recognition. It is not related to youth, there is no age limit for applicants.

*"There is no preferred aesthetic, there is no preferred subject, form, spatial arrangement, discipline, duration or target audience. All creative contexts, all forms, aesthetic formats, all disciplines and all interdisciplinary endeavours between circus and other art forms are admissible."*

*Extract of the jury of Laureates' statement - 2023*

Thus, the juries will consider the following **selection criteria**:

- **Originality of the project:** it could be a new approach to circus techniques, an original research process, the construction of an unseen artistic universe, etc.
- **Authorship:** the ability to defend one's work and artistic choices, the ability to position oneself and one's work in the field of circus art, the need to create, etc.
- **Coherence and relevance:** between one's artistic intentions and the way the project is structured, thought, how the elements that compose it are arranged, etc.
- **Quality of the performance:** quality of movement, rhythm, stage presence, i.e. the ability to make the intentions of the proposal tangible on stage, etc.

## Why apply?

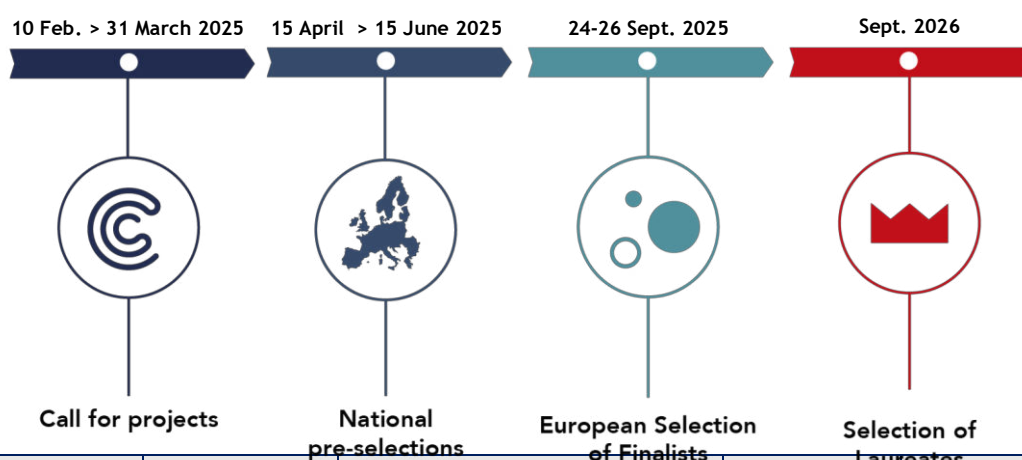
At each step of the selection, circusnext provides different types of support to the artists.

<b>Financial support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- € 3,000 for each of the Finalist projects</li><li>- € 5,000 for each of the Laureate projects (in addition to the € 3,000 above mentioned)</li></ul>
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<b>Creation and touring</b>	<p>circusnext subsidises the following activities amongst its network of European partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation residencies</li> <li>- Small-scale laboratories mentored by experienced artists from the performing arts</li> <li>- Touring opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Professional development</b>	Thematic online trainings and workshops
<b>Communication</b>	Finalist and Laureate projects benefit from circusnext's communication online and print channels: website, social media, artists' catalogue... and those of its partner venues
<b>Networking</b>	Joining circusnext means joining a wide European network of cultural professionals and operators from the performing arts sector.

## 2. Selection process

It is a 3-step selection process which starts with the open call on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025 and ends with the on-stage Selection of Laureates in September 2026.



Steps	Material analysed	Jury composition	Dates	Number of projects
<b>Step 1</b> National pre-selections	<i>Application and video</i>	Applications are examined by national committees composed of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• circusnext Platform representatives</li> <li>• local professionals</li> <li>• artistic jury members</li> </ul>	April 15 > June 15, 2025	In average, approx. 35 pre-selected projects every edition
<b>Step 2</b> European selection of Finalists		Pre-selected projects are discussed by the European jury composed of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all circusnext Platform representatives</li> <li>• artistic jury members</li> </ul>	24-26 September 2025	10 Finalist projects
<b>Step 3</b> Selection of Laureates	<i>On-stage work-in-progress presentation + interview</i>	Finalist projects present on stage a 20 min. work-in-progress of their artistic material in front of professionals and are interviewed by the jury. The jury is composed of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 circusnext Platform representatives</li> <li>• artistic jury members</li> </ul>	September 2026	4 Laureate projects

## 3. Support provided to the artists

### For artists who are not pre-selected

#### > Seeding Labs

For its 2026 edition, circusnext introduces a new form of support, called Seeding Labs.

The participants for these labs are selected during the National/regional selection committees.

These labs are intended for emerging circus creators who have applied to the circusnext open call with a project which presents compelling elements according to the selection criteria (see above) but which the national selection committees consider not ready yet to go through the selection process.

Seeding Labs will take place from July 2025 to March 2026 at the Platform members' venues:

- In Genoa (Italy), organized by Sarabanda
- In Toulouse (France), organized by La Grainerie
- In Brussels (Belgium), organized by Up
- In Paris (France), organized by circusnext



Discover the Lab experiences of previous pre-selected artists [here](#).

**In your application on JotForm, you can decide whether you would like your project to be considered for a Seeding Lab or not, if it is not pre-selected.**

### For the 10 Finalist projects

> **Financial:** €3,000 co-production for each Finalist project

#### > Participation in the Selection of Laureates:

Finalist teams will have one year to prepare for the Selection of Laureates.

They will be invited to present a 15-to-20-minute presentation of their work-in-progress in front of professionals at Théâtre de la Cité internationale in Paris between 14 and 19 September 2026.

In addition, they will be interviewed by the jury and pitch their project to circusnext Platform members and other European professionals.

The event is only open to professionals invited by circusnext.

#### > Creation:

- **1 residency:** at a Platform member's venue, located in a different country than their country of application
- **Artistic laboratory:** for 10 days, around 8 artist-authors from different countries will gather at one of the Platform member's venues to work on their projects under the mentorship of an experienced artist. Artistic Labs are a collective experience of working together and exploring each pre-selected project, testing artistic material on stage and receiving feedback from the group, with a focus on circus writing and dramaturgy. It is also an opportunity to meet artists from other backgrounds and countries, be in contact with the local artistic community of the hosting venue and discover different practices.

For the 2026 edition, the two Finalist Artistic Labs will take place:

- at DYNAMO (Odense, Denmark) from January 24 to February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026
- at Rigas Cirks (Riga, Latvia) from March 1st to 10, 2026

> **Professional development:** online thematic trainings and workshops with professionals from the performing arts sector, on topics such as care, mobility in Europe, intellectual property, relation to audiences, sustainability...

> **Communication:** professional video and photos are offered to the Finalists, and communication on

their works is carried out through our website and social media

> **Networking:** meetings with a strong network of European professionals online and in real life

## For the 4 Laureate projects

> **Financial support:** € 5,000 co-production in addition to the € 3,000 previously received.

### > Touring

- **circusnext Revelations:** the Laureate teams are invited to participate in the “circusnext Revelations” event during which they present a 15-to-20-minute work-in-progress or extract of the project, to the public:
  - in Paris at Théâtre de la Cité internationale between September and December 2026
  - in Tilburg (The Netherlands) at Festival Circolo in October 2026
- **Other touring opportunities** within circusnext Platform’s network

> **Creation:** 1 residency at a Platform member’s venues, located in a different country than the Laureate’s country of application. If the Laureate company wishes that this residency be mentored by an experienced artist, circusnext offers to cover the travel, accommodation and meals of the mentor.

> **Communication:** a video portrait and a long interview by a journalist, a training session on how to talk about one’s artistic project to journalists, strong communication on the Laureates works through our website and social media

> **Networking:** meetings with European professionals during the “circusnext Revelations” event

### Memo on the financial coverage of all circusnext Platform activities

**Transport, accommodation and meals** for the following activities will be funded by *circusnext Platform*:

- Seeding Labs
- Residencies
- Touring opportunities
- Artistic Labs
- Laureates’ selection week
- Revelations in Paris and on tour

The subsidies are directly transferred to the Platform member hosting the corresponding activity.

An **artistic fee** will be paid for any performance open to the public (work-in-progress presentation and show), including the work-in-progress presentations during the Laureates selection week and the Revelations.

## 4. Criteria

Please note that in this European programme, **all circusnext's activities are in English.**

### Eligible projects

There is no restriction regarding the type of project submitted: all forms, formats, durations, aesthetics, universes, themes, audiences, circus disciplines and interdisciplinary endeavours (which must include circus) are accepted **except acts.**

The submitted project:

- must be a **creation in the making**
- can be from any circus discipline-s
- one author = one project = one application per edition
- can be submitted again for the next call for projects if it is not selected as a Finalist or Laureate in the upcoming edition

### Eligible artists

circusnext is meant for artists who:

- are resident in a **Creative Europe country \*** (see list below)
- are **emerging circus authors\*\*** (see definition below) as individuals or company
- are minimum 18 years old
- don't necessarily have a circus degree
- won't be studying in a circus school when the support for the 2026 edition starts (ie. September 2025)
- have not been selected in a previous edition as shortlisted/Finalists or Laureates

Legally, applicants must be:

- Either **linked to a legal structure** which must be based in a Europe Creative country
- Or self-employed** if the legislation of the country of application allows artists from the performing arts sector to use this status to hire other collaborators (in this case an official registration number is requested)

#### > List of eligible countries \*

circusnext Platform is co-funded by Creative Europe, a program of the European Union. Therefore, the call is restricted to applicants who are resident and whose legal structure are based in the following countries:

- **European Union:** Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland (Republic of), Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden,
- **Non-EU countries participating in the Creative Europe programme:** Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Kosovo, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Tunisia, Ukraine

#### > Definition of 'emergent author' at circusnext \*\*

The notion of emergence is evaluated according to the national context in which the artist evolves. It is not directly linked to the age of the applicants but to their professional recognition in contemporary circus field at a European level.

The following elements are considered when evaluating the level of emergence of an artist-author:

- **The total number of previous creations as an author:** artists applying from France, Belgium or the Netherlands are eligible with their 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> creation maximum. Artists applying from all other countries are eligible with their 3<sup>rd</sup> creation maximum.  
*NB: self-produced creations do not count.*
- **The visibility of previous creations as author·s:** if they have toured a previous creation significantly at European and/or international level.
- **The financial support of previous creations:** if the previous creations as author·s have received important creation subsidy from a public organism.

These criteria only apply to the artists who are the authors of the submitted project; it does not apply to the performers.

Collectives including an author who is not considered emerging are ineligible.

A non-emerging outside eye who, in fact, holds the position of co-creator makes the project ineligible.

## Availability to participate in the Selection's key events

- The **premiere** of your project **should not take place before the Laureates' selection week**.
- If your project is selected, your **participation in these key events is obligatory**.  
*The exact dates will be confirmed and sent to the pre-selected artists by July 2025.*
  - **Laureates selection week:** at Théâtre de la Cité Internationale (Paris, France) – September 2026
  - **circusnext Revelations:** in Paris – between October and December 2026
  - **circusnext Revelations on tour:** at Festival Circolo (Tilburg, The Netherlands) – September 2026

## Selection criteria

### > Originality of the project

A new approach to circus techniques, a peculiar research process, the construction of a unique artistic universe. Bold? Groundbreaking? Is there artistic risk-taking?

### > Authorship

Being able to advocate for one's work and artistic choices, the ability to position oneself and one's work in the field of circus art, the need to create, etc.

### > Coherence and relevance

Between one's artistic intentions and the way the project is structured, thought, how the elements that compose it are arranged, etc.

### > Quality of the performance

Quality of movement, rhythm, stage presence, i.e. the ability to make the intentions of the proposal tangible on stage, etc.



## 5. How to apply

The call for projects for circusnext's 2026 edition is open:

from February 10th to March 31st, 2025 at noon (CET)

*Late applications will not be accepted.*

It is an online application process on JotForm which is composed of:

1. The general information on the project and its author(s)
2. Additional documents **to upload directly on JotForm**, in PDF format:
  - a. Project presentation (using the provided template, link below)
  - b. Link to a 10-minute video
  - c. Artistic dossier or creation material
  - d. Provisional creation calendar
  - e. Provisional tech rider (optional)
  - f. CV of the author(s) (optional)

→ [LINK TO THE JOTFORM](#)

### a- Project presentation

The Project presentation is a document in which you describe your project and intentions.

We provide [a compulsory template](#).

→ fill in the provided template

→ Title the document "**Project-name\_ Presentation**"

→ **save it in PDF format and upload on JotForm**

Language

- For applicants: send it in English **and** if you wish you may send a copy in the language of your country of application, if it appears in the list below.
- For applicants in France and in Italy: send a copy in English **and** a copy in French (for France) and Italian (for Italy)

List of accepted languages: Bosnian, Croatian, Czech, Dutch, Estonian, French, Finnish, Flemish, German, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Serbian, Spanish, Swedish. If your language is not in this list, please fill in the application in English only.

*Example: you are an artist applying from Sweden. You must imperatively send your application in English. If you wish, you can additionally send the application in Swedish.*

### b- 10-minute video

This video is complementary to your written application. Ideally, it should show your movement, technique, scenography elements used in the project you are applying with. If you don't have any footage of your project yet, you may use extracts of your previous projects. If you wish, it may include an oral presentation of the project you are applying with.

→ title the video "**Project-name\_ Video**"

- maximum 10 minutes long
- limited editing: teasers and promotional videos will not be accepted
- **insert the link to the video directly in your JotForm application**

### c- Artistic dossier or creation material

All types and forms of creation or visual material you find relevant to help the jury understand your project, artistic path, artistic universe and/or technical requirements is accepted.

*Example: mood board, video links, photos, drawings...*

- title the document **"Project-name\_Creation-material"**
- compile your creation material into one document
- **save it in PDF format and upload on JotForm**

### d- Provisional creation calendar

The provisional creation calendar provides an overview of the past residencies, future secured residencies and missing residencies for the project you are applying with.

It runs from your first working session to the premiere date (confirmed or expected).

- title the document **"Project-name\_Creation-calendar"**
- **save it in PDF format and upload on JotForm**

### e- Provisional technical rider (optional)

The provisional technical rider gives a general understanding of your project's technical needs.

- title the document **"Project-name\_Tech rider"**
- **save it in PDF format and upload on JotForm**

*NB: this document is informative and will not impact the global analysis of your application.*

### f- CV of the author(s) (optional)

If there is more than one author, this document should compile the CVs of all the authors of the project.

- title the document **"Project-name\_CV(s) "**
- **save it in PDF format and upload on JotForm**

*NB: this document is informative and will not impact the global analysis of your application.*

# Recommendations

We strongly recommend that you submit your application in advance of the deadline to make sure that there are no technical problems.

## Before applying

**Read all the useful documents.** The call for projects, [the project presentation template](#) and the general information asked on the online portal, all is available on our website.

**Check your eligibility.** Carefully read the criteria of eligibility and emergence. If you have any doubts do not hesitate to contact [info@circusnext.eu](mailto:info@circusnext.eu) or register to an [info session online](#).

**Check your availability.** Applicants must be available for the Selection of Laureates in September 2026, for the Revelations in Paris that will take place between October and Decembre 2026 and the Revelations on tour that will take place in Tilburg in September 2026.

Your premiere should not be before the Selection of Laureates in Paris in September 2026.

**Prepare all the required information and documents.** Gather the information requested in the online portal (general information, authors information).

## To submit your application

- go to [www.circusnext.eu](http://www.circusnext.eu), open call section
- click on "Apply"
- fill in the [JotForm application](#)
- click on "skip create an account"
- upload the required documents making sure that they are correctly titled

*NB: you can start compiling your application and go back to it later; you don't have to complete your application in one go. To do so, click on "save and submit later", then "skip create an account".*

Once you have clicked on the "Submit" button, you will receive a confirmation email a few minutes later. It will also contain a link to [an anonymous survey](#) (5 min max) that will help circusnext to better understand the profiles of the applicants and to improve the selection process in the future, thus helping future emerging authors applying to circusnext.

**Good luck on your application!**

For any inquiry: [info@circusnext.eu](mailto:info@circusnext.eu)

## ANNEX 1. circusnext Platform members

	Organization name	Country
1	Berlin circus festival	Germany
2	Central del Circ	Spain
3	CIAM	France
4	Cirko	Finland
5	Cirkorama	Croatia
6	Cirkusfera	Serbia
7	Cirqueon	Czech Republic
8	Dynamo	Denmark
9	Festival Circolo	The Netherlands
10	La Brèche	France
11	La Grainerie	France
12	Latitude 50	Belgium
13	Mercat de los Flors	Spain
14	On the edge	Austria
15	Perplx	Belgium
16	Positive Force - Room 100	Croatia
17	Rīgas cirks	Latvia
18	Sarabanda	Italy
19	Subtopia	Sweden
20	Teatro da Didascália	Portugal
21	Teatronas	Lithuania
22	TiDa	Italy
23	Tollhaus	Germany
24	Up	Belgium