

**NoFit State Circus  
Business Plan/Feasibility Study**

**March 1999**

## Contents

	SECTION	PAGE NUMBERS
<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
	1.1 Background	
	1.2 Responsibilities	
<b>2</b>	<b>Background to the Company</b>	<b>5-7</b>
	2.1 Artistic Policy & Company Mission Statement	
	2.2 History & Development	
	2.3 Current Services & Schemes	
	2.4 Annual Income Sources & Expenditure	
	2.5 Current Management & Staffing Structures	
<b>3</b>	<b>A Summary Review - SWOT Summary</b>	<b>8-9</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Future Trends</b>	<b>10</b>
	4.1 Potential Competition	
	4.2 Potential Collaborations	
	4.3 The Needs of Stakeholders	
<b>5</b>	<b>Strategic Direction</b>	<b>11-14</b>
	5.1 Future Development	
	5.2 Building a New Vision	
	5.3 Strategic Aims	
	5.4 Strategic Objectives	
<b>6</b>	<b>The Capital Project</b>	<b>15</b>
	6.1 Overview	
	6.2 Rationale	
	6.3 Costings	
<b>7</b>	<b>Programme for 1999 onwards</b>	<b>16</b>
	7.1 Rationale	
	7.2 Aims	
	7.3 Objectives	
	7.4 Proposed Activities	<b>17-19</b>
	7.4.1 Professional Show	
	7.4.2 Community Residencies	
	7.4.3 Co-Promotions and Collaborations	
	7.4.4 Commercial Activities	
	7.5 Programme Scenarios	<b>20</b>
	7.5.1 Scenario 1: The Ideal	
	7.5.2 Scenario 2: Touring Plus Model 1 Residencies	
	7.5.3 Scenario 3: Community Development Work Only	
	7.6 Feasibility/Interest Generated	<b>21</b>
	7.6.1 Touring Programme	
	7.6.2 Commercial Hires	

	<b>SECTION</b>	<b>PAGE NUMBERS</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Marketing and Sponsorship</b>	<b>22-23</b>
	8.1 Marketing	
	8.2 Sponsorship	
	8.3 Target Marketing Segments	
	8.4 Outline Marketing Strategies	
<b>9</b>	<b>Staffing Implications</b>	<b>24</b>
	9.1 Changes in Staffing Levels	
	9.2 Revised Staffing Structure	
<b>10</b>	<b>Financial Implications</b>	<b>25-30</b>
	10.1 Assumptions Relating to the Financial Scenarios	
	10.2 Rationale for Chosen Scenario	
	10.3 Scenario 1 - 1999/2000 Capital Phase Development Spreadsheet	
	10.4 Notes to 1999/2000 Capital Phase Development Spreadsheet	
	10.4.1 Income Streams	
	10.4.2 Expenditure Streams	
	10.5 Scenario 1 - 2000/2001 Operational Phase Spreadsheet	
	10.6 Notes to 2000/2001 Operational Phase Spreadsheet	
	10.6.1 Income Streams	
	10.6.2 Expenditure Streams	
<b>11</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>31-38</b>
	Technical Equipment Costings	
	Bookable Options	
	Letters of Support	
	Job Tasks	

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

In October 1998, NoFit State Circus was granted a lottery award towards the costs of a feasibility study to examine the concept of,

“developing, designing and commissioning a new and innovative touring structure as part of the company’s proposed 3 year plan of expanded artistic, community and touring activities”

The overall purpose of the study was to,

“determine the viability of the project pre a full launch of our development programme throughout Wales; to investigate the future capital costs, and revenue implications the project will have on the company; to produce a robust and realistic business plan which will support the artistic aims of the organisation.”

## 1.2 Responsibilities

The following responsibilities were allocated to the project consultants:

Technical Feasibility & Costings  
Business Planning Development

Henry Bassadone, ISS  
Angela Tillcock, Arts Consultant

This plan contains a summary of the technical study, which was produced in two additional reports from ISS and the Rudi Enos design team.

The development of this plan has been a team effort, with the lead consultant working closely with Orit Azaz, Tom Rack, Alison Woods and Ali Williams.

## 2 Introduction & Mission

### 2.1 Artistic Policy & Company Mission Statement

NoFit State Circus positions itself as progressive circus theatre prepared to take risks to produce innovative work. Over the years the focus of the work has developed and changed. External funding forces have influenced the company into focusing on community work, and away from the annual tour of a professional show.

The company's mission statement is as follows:

***"To produce, through collaboration with experts from other fields, progressive and excellent mixed-media circus, both with professional artists and through community projects, accessible to the wider community throughout Wales, the United Kingdom and beyond."***

The company feels it has built up a specialism of working with diverse community groups to produce stunningly original shows. It is constantly striving to reinvent its work and is now embracing the use of interactive media and new technologies in its productions.

The success of this community work has been demonstrated by the critical acclaim and public support for both "Prophecy" and "Now.here", the first two phases of the 3 year Stepping Stones project; both of these productions involved a total of 700 people, and played to audiences in excess of 2,000. More importantly for the company, these projects involved working with a range of other arts organisations such as South Wales Intercultural Arts (SWICA), Community Music Wales; educational establishments ranging from schools to universities, and local community groups throughout South Wales.

### 2.2 History & Development

NoFit State Circus was established in 1986 by 5 original partners, of whom 2 now remain as core workers. The original vision of these partners was to develop their own circus performance skills to create performances which expressed how they felt about society at the time, and to have fun.

In its earlier years, the company performed its own devised narrative circus theatre act at a range of local festivals, play schemes and schools, primarily in South Wales. At this point in time, the organisation had no business plan or future development targets; it was focused on the work and ensuring that fees were paid to keep its performers fed and watered. However, the company was Welsh Community Business of the Year in 1987.

The company toured throughout the United Kingdom, devising and performing its own work, and starting to "grow up" when it secured a major commercial sponsor in Cardiff based ASW Holdings. This sponsorship funded development of productions, but also enabled NFSC to take control of its rehearsing and performing environment by funding the purchase of a tent. Key points during this relationship were:

- 1989 - ASW fund new show with £5,000
- 1990 - ASW fund new show with £5,000
- 1991 - purchase of the company's first tent with £10,000 from ASW
- 1992 - secure 3 year sponsorship deal with ASW (£10,000 per year)
- 1994 - wins ABSA SWALEC Arts Award for the best use of continued sponsorship
  - grant of £7,000 from FSA for workshop equipment

The funding from ASW raised the profile of NFSC, and gave it a secure footing on which to develop artistically. In 1992, the company received its first ACW grant from the then Drama Department towards the production of *The Defective Detective*, which went on to tour for 25 weeks, including 3 weeks around venues as part of the Valleys Live Festival.

1994 onwards saw a change in the level of work for the company. Changes in ASW company policy meant that the company ended all of its arts sponsorship deals, and it became increasingly difficult for NoFit State to raise fees from strapped local authorities to secure the touring of the annual professional show.

In 1995, the loss of ACW funding meant that the company, for the very first time, did not tour its summer show. The company decided to consolidate its community work by setting up and producing its first large-scale community project, *Autogeddon*, which involved 100 community members, several local community arts groups and individual artists. The production managed to attract public funding from both the Arts Council of Wales and the City of Cardiff.

In the advent of ACW lottery funding, NoFit State applied for a capital grant in order to purchase a new van, generators and trailer and new light and sound equipment. A grant of £52,195 was awarded in 1996. Simultaneously, the organisation achieved ltd company status and a new Board of Management was formed to oversee the running of the company.

Since 1996, NoFit State Circus has been awarded two major lottery Arts for All Grants to fund the 3 year *Stepping Stones* project.

- 1997 - ACW A4 All Grant of £86,666 towards production of "Prophecy" (1st stage)
- 1998 - ACW A4 All Grant of £89,920 towards production of "Now.here" (2nd stage)

Although this funding has enabled projects to happen, the company still does not generate enough income to pay its development staff who work in-between projects. The company had to move from its office base in Splott in autumn 1998 and has since been working from temporary premises.

### 2.3 Current Services & Schemes

The company currently divide their work into three areas:

- An Annual Professional Tour, which is entirely dependent on availability of funding
- Community Development and Production Work, which includes large scale community productions and on-going support and co-ordination of Splott State Circus
- Other services which include:

- Running Venues
- Equipment Hire
- Teaching circus and other skills
- Cabaret & street entertaining
- Providing an agency service for entertainers
- Workshops/Schools Work/Play Schemes etc

The company can currently only produce work as and when funding is available. In the past two years, A4All lottery grants have supported two large scale community projects, but virtually no funding has been available to enable the reinstatement of the annual tent tour.

## 2.4 Annual Income Sources & Expenditure

It is difficult to find a regular pattern in the past annual turnover of the company, as each year is different. The partnership organisation had its financial year from Oct to Oct, with the new ltd company coming into existence in 1996.

For both 1997/98 and 1998/99, there has been an annual community project in addition to any other work, and it is useful for the company to illustrate this turnover separately.

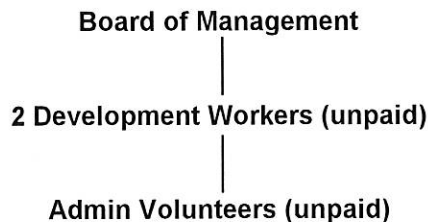
Financial Year	NFS Core Turnover	A4 All Funded Project
<b>The Partnership</b>		
Oct 94/Oct 95	£65,526	
Oct95/Oct 96	£58,828	
Oct 96/Oct 97	£6,290	
<b>The Ltd Company</b>		
1996/97	£4,996	
1997/98	£52,783	£100,000

Core turnover represents the company at its baseline level of activity, eg when it is purely hiring out its tent and equipment to other festival organisers. This income varies from year to year; any creative work has to be funded either by fees from venues, or from public funding.

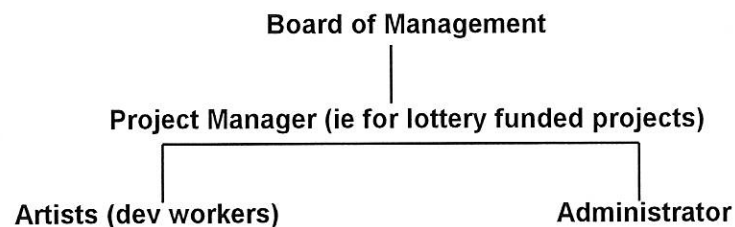
## 2.5 Current Management & Staffing Structures

Two different management structures exist for the organisation, depending on whether or not the company is running a project.

Outside of running projects, the following structure is in place:



When projects are running, a budget is available to employ a Project Manager, and the two development workers are usually employed and paid as artists on the project; effectively, they are being managed by a project worker during this period.



As previously mentioned, between projects there is little or no long term development. If other paid work is available then the two core team members will take it up, and the company effectively does not exist for that period of time.

### 3 The Internal Environment - SWOT Analysis

The following is a summary of NoFit State Circus' internal strengths and weaknesses, and the external opportunities and threats which face the organisation.

#### Strengths

- 12 years experience of circus touring and good reputation throughout the industry and with the public
- Commitment of core team
- Commitment of additional network of interested professionals, who work at low fees
- Innovative, progressive style of work
- Core team skills in running a business, marketing, fund-raising, creating accessible productions
- Support from community
- Good financial track record - budget management and happy bank
- Wide product base
- The company has a social and political conscience and strives to make everything its does accessible
- The company is on the cutting edge of progressive Circus and community participation projects in the UK
- Possession of some hardware (ie tent, technical equipment, transport and computers)

#### Weaknesses

- The company's name often confuses the public, who may be expecting animal circus, and it also means the company does not fit neatly into any art-form lead funding schemes from funders such as ACW
- Over reliance on project funding leads to lack of long term planning
- No paid staff in-between projects
- Lack of administrative support means core team spend little time on long term planning
- Morale of core team is low due to pressure of work and effort of trying to keep the company running on a day to day basis
- Confusion in the role of core team - when are they development workers and when are they artists?
- No job descriptions or key tasks when team workers are acting as development workers
- No training policy or funds to develop skills of core workers
- Lack of permanent office space and premises
- Over dependence on help in kind
- Equipment needs up-dating and replacing
- Insufficient financial resources to fund the marketing of the company to the desired standard
- No funds available to be able to offer training to Board members or employees
- No Welsh speakers on Management Committee or core team



### Opportunities

- The year 2000 bandwagon; many local authorities will have enhanced budgets for entertainment programming throughout the year
- Company's artistic policy and work plans fit into Arts for All Lottery funding criteria
- There is a renewed interest in progressive circus
- Interest in new media
- Portability of venue means we can deliver our product to new audiences and participants
- Wales' only progressive circus company
- Opportunity to attend bigger and more prestigious events in Wales and throughout Europe
- Given initial investment, core company work could become self sustaining
- European funding, especially Objective 1 funding for Wales and partnerships with similar companies in Europe
- Potential to attract major corporate sponsorship

### Threats

- Further reductions in local government funding could result in a further reduction in partnerships with local authorities in Wales
- Changes in ACW funding criteria could sideline the company
- Complexity of the funding application processes and changing goal posts
- Perceived image of company by arts funding bodies, and the short sightedness of arts development workers in Wales
- Over-reliance on public funding
- Saturation of markets due to millennium overkill of large events may have an impact on the company's longer term strategy
- Competition from millennium scale new projects
- Exhaustion of local support, ie volunteers and help in kind
- Year 2000 - potential unavailability of hire stock and help in kind from technical and theatrical services
- Preconception of audiences
- The company's values mean that it is anti-establishment rather than pro-establishment; this may affect its chances of developing meaningful levels of funding from the private sector, especially in Wales

## 4 The External Environment - Future Trends

### 4.1 Potential Competition

NoFit State Circus is the only producing contemporary Circus based and working in Wales.

No other contemporary circus has ever toured in Wales to date. There have been large traditional circus tours, eg Gandhi's Chinese State Circus and Cottle's Moscow State Circus, and these have played in cities in Wales whilst smaller traditional circuses have toured smaller towns. There is no direct competition from any product of a similar nature to NoFit State Circus here in Wales.

In the UK, NoFit State Circus is still the best known British contemporary touring circus with competition coming from European Circuses such as Plume, Baroque, Archaos and Canada's largest cultural export, Cirque du Soleil.

The New Millennium Experience Company has set up circus training in London to create a show for the year 2000 in the Millennium Dome. This will be the biggest circus spectacle ever to be seen in the UK. However, this is venue based for at least the year 2000. Arts For Everyone and NMEC have not, to date, funded any other large-scale circus projects for 2000.

### 4.2 Potential Collaborations

At the end of the year 2000, the New Millennium Experience Company at the Dome will release 90 highly trained circus performers from contract. NoFit State Circus has been approached by Circus Space, where the students are currently being trained, to collaborate on a project for the year 2001. Circus Space's Director has seen the concept designs for NFSC's new tent and much of the company's past work, including the large-scale projects, and is keen to collaborate on a touring show which would include some of the students. As yet, this is in the early stages of discussion.

NoFit State Circus will also be looking for collaborative partners in order to continue its large scale community work. Discussions are currently taking place with Broli in North Wales who wish to run a large-scale community project in collaboration with NFSC to be performed in the new tent.

### 4.3 The Needs of Stakeholders

Over the years, the number of people and other organisations who have a stake in NFSC has grown, especially through the company's collaborative methods of working.

The company recognises the need to work closely with those organisations, especially funders, who have a stake in what it is trying to achieve. In order to achieve its strategic aims, the company will need to work closely with its stakeholders and develop open channels of communication with the following groups, who all impact on the company's future possibility of success:

- Board Members
- Core workers and volunteer workers
- Past participants in community projects
- Other community arts organisations throughout Wales
- Umbrella Groups, especially those representing participatory arts organisations through the UK and Europe
- Local Authorities, Arts Dev Officers; Tourism & Leisure Staff
- Funders - especially ACW Lottery, Access & Artform Divisions
- Potential Sponsors and commercial partners

## 5 Strategic Direction

### 5.1 Future Development

The company is currently coming to the end of one three year programme of community work with the Stepping Stones project. Now is the time to look forward in order to plan the work for the next 3-5 years.

Several options for development have been discussed at board level as part of the process of formulating this business plan, and these have included:

- closing the company
- running the company at its current level of operation, ie project lead work as and when it can be funded
- running the company purely as a commercial concern, hiring out resources (people and equipment) and not creating any company driven work
- running the company to achieve success in a mixture of professional productions, community residencies and education work as and when they can be funded

The company feels that it needs to be more proactive, strengthen its core team of workers, and work towards implementing its long term vision based on the latter of the options outlined above.

### 5.2 Building a New Vision

NFSC would now like to build on the foundations established through its past projects - the artistic innovations, the scale of production, the model of good practice in community participation, and the strengthened company infrastructure - towards a new phase of national touring.

The company will need to commission and purchase a new tented structure in order to support its programming aims. This new venue will provide the basis for a unique programme of high quality professional productions, community residencies and education work, co-promotions and collaborations, which will tour throughout Wales and the UK.

This programme of work is designed not only to deliver the company's unique artistic vision, but also to maximise opportunities for funding through national and international public subsidy schemes, and through corporate sponsorship. The new tent and facilities will also provide the means for new strands of commercial activity which ensure the company's sustainability independent of public subsidy and create attractive opportunities for potential sponsors.

**5.3 Strategic Aims**

The strategic aims of the company for the next 3 years are:

**5.3.1 The Company**

- To raise the public profile of NFSC within Wales, UK and internationally
- To establish NFSC as the UK's leading producer of large scale mixed media new circus-theatre

**5.3.2 Artistic Development**

- To create extraordinary and innovative artistic products which are accessible and attractive to the broadest possible audience, and which are developed through an inclusive creative process
- To continue to develop community participation and training as a fundamental part of the company's artistic and commercial development

**5.3.3 Audience Development**

- To develop new audiences for the company's work throughout Wales, UK and internationally through the unique combination of professional and participatory work
- To create and develop long term collaborative relationships with communities outside of Cardiff

**5.3.4 Infrastructure/Sustainability**

- To build on and develop our network of collaborations and partnerships with all stakeholder groups in order to maximise resources and funding opportunities
- To build a sustainable financial and administrative infrastructure which will support the company's artistic vision

## 5.4 Strategic Objectives

### 5.4.1 Artistic Development

- To create a unique programme of work from 2000 onwards which:
  - combines high quality professional touring productions with equally high quality participatory and community projects
  - continues to evolve new forms of mixed media circus-theatre in response to themes which are relevant and challenging to contemporary audiences
  - facilitates the involvement, participation and training of diverse communities throughout Wales
  - over 3 years, builds on and extends the company's network of community partnerships throughout Wales in order to maximise resources and opportunities

### 5.4.2 Audience Development

- To develop new audiences through the combination of a widely accessible and highly popular art-form (circus) with new media/technology
- To take exciting, innovative and accessible work of the highest artistic quality to communities currently denied effective access to the arts and participatory projects through lack of local facilities, in particular communities outside of the M4 corridor

### 5.4.3 Infrastructure/Sustainability

#### Infrastructure

- To commission, design and purchase a new tented structure, and associated technical equipment, by autumn/winter 1999 which:
  - has an immediate and original visual impact on its environment
  - provides a mobile venue for the production of spectacular promenade professional and community shows throughout Wales, UK and internationally
  - is attractive to potential sponsors, co-promoters and bookers
  - creates a new source of revenue through commercial hires and co-promotions
- To secure a new administrative base for the company by autumn/winter 1999

#### Staffing

- By autumn/winter 1999, to establish a new post of **Executive Director**, appointed by the Management Committee, whose role, in addition to co-ordinating the company's programme of activities and managing the day to day administration, will be to develop sponsorship relationships, and earned income opportunities for the company
- By autumn/winter 1999, to secure a salary for one **Development Officer** post, which will put the current volunteer workers on a professional status, and secure their commitment to the company. This post will focus on the development of core production and community work, and the establishment of collaborations and partnerships with other artists, community groups and other organisations
- As soon as possible, to establish the posts of **Marketing Officer** and **Resources/Technical Manager** on a full-time basis, to support the company's programme of work and maximise sponsorship and other commercial opportunities

#### 5.4.4 Income/Funding

##### Capital Funding

- To secure capital funding for the commissioning, design and purchase of the new tented structure, and associated technical equipment, ready for autumn, winter 1999

##### Earned Income

- To secure earned income from commercial hire in order to fund the core administrative costs of the organisation
- To define and market a manageable range of commercial services, partnerships and activities specifically designed to generate income, and enhance sponsorship opportunities

##### Sponsorship

- To build new long term and short term sponsorship relationships which can support the company's artistic vision and deliver clear benefits to our sponsorship partners
- To set and achieve realistic targets for sponsorship

##### Other Funding

- To develop a closer collaborative relationship with ACW; in particular to assist ACW to deliver its strategic aims as indicated in its Corporate Plan, Draft Drama Strategy and Strategy for Young People
- To continue to build collaborative relationships with local authorities, other funding bodies, and other arts organisations in order to develop shared goals and provide maximum value for money to all our stakeholders
- To secure funding from Trusts, Charities, Foundations and other organisations in order to support the artistic aims of the company
- To develop partnerships in such a way as to maximise funding through regional, national and European economic and cultural regeneration and training programmes

## 6 The Capital Project

### 6.1 Overview

In order to achieve its artistic programming objectives, NFSC will need to commission the design and installation of a new tented structure and purchase associated technical equipment. To this end, the company will be making an application for funding to ACW Lottery Division, under the Capital funding programme, and to have the structure and equipment in place by October 1999.

The proposed capital purchase will enable the company to produce and tour shows to the quality technical standards which have become the norm during the "Prophecy" and "Now.here" projects. Running these projects has enabled NFSC to develop a way of integrating new technologies into the performance experience, and this has informed the type of equipment the company needs to purchase in order to deliver this type of work within the new tented structure.

### 6.2 Rationale

The new tented structure is needed because:

- the current tent is too small for the new types of productions the company wishes to develop and tour
- the company needs to upgrade its facilities in order to be a viable selling proposition to a range of local authorities, festivals and arts organisations in Wales, the UK and beyond
- it is becoming increasingly difficult to find suitable warehouse space in which to develop larger scale community projects; the new tented structure would give NFSC the flexibility to offer this type of project to new communities throughout Wales and beyond
- it will enable the company to develop new strands of income from the commercial sector which will help generate income to support a strengthened company infrastructure

### 6.3 The Process

NFSC commissioned In Site Services to work with Rudi Enos Design to come up with a technical specification, creative design and full costings for a new tented structure. The key points of the brief on which the final design were based were:

- that the venue provide an unrivalled setting for the unique work of NFSC
- that the venue design is visually distinct from other touring structures, and that its design makes an architectural statement, and raises the standard by which other mobile venues are judged
- that health and safety provisions for this type of structure are brought completely up to date

The full designs and costings for the structure can be found in the separate ISS and Rudi Enos reports.

### 6.4 Costings

The full capital project costings can be found in Appendix 1 of this report, and can be summarised as follows:

Tented structure, design, build and initial project management	104,000
Technical equipment (flooring, lighting, sound, AV etc)	113,475
Capitalised costs (training costs, admin, Exec Director etc)	27,550
Contingency (5%)	12,251
	-----
Total	257,276
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## 7 Programme for 1999/2000 and Beyond

### 7.1 Rationale

The success of "Prophecy" and "Now.here", facilitated by ACW Lottery Arts for All funding, has created a new artistic vision for the company. The synthesis of diverse art forms into a coherent theatrical language; the integration of new technologies; the inclusion and involvement of diverse artists and diverse communities as key creative collaborators; the immersive theatrical environment - all contribute to a spectacular and memorable experience for the audience. NFSC would like to explore ways of sharing this work with a broader audience, nationally and internationally in their new tent structure.

### 7.2 Aims

- To build on the artistic innovations, the scale and style of production, the model of good practice in community participation developed through the "Stepping Stones" project
- To create a new and flexible model of touring circus theatre which, in addition to a high quality professional show, offers a range of opportunities for participation, involvement and training of diverse communities, particularly young people
- To develop a creative methodology which is inclusive and to find ways of integrating specific community contributions within a touring show framework
- To offer maximum flexibility, inspiration, opportunities and value for money to all our stakeholder groups
- Over three years, to build collaborative relationships with communities throughout Wales which facilitate long term participant development and training
- To maximise opportunities for funding, income generation and sponsorship

### 7.3 Objectives

- Each year, to create a high quality professional show which combines circus, theatre, dance, music, video and interactive/installation art within a coherent narrative journey. Ideally, this show will be developed out of a six month "Stepping Stones" style community residency
- To develop a complimentary programme of participatory projects in the form of Community Residencies which are promoted as an integral part of the tour
- Through the combination of the above, to build and develop long term relationships with specific communities in Wales and the UK which eventually facilitates the creation and production of a large scale "Stepping Stones" style residency outside of Cardiff
- To assist ACW in the delivery of its strategic aims
- To actively seek out co-promotions and collaborations which maximise resources and add value for all stakeholders
- To develop a strand of commercial activities which ensure that the core running costs of the company are independent of public subsidy



## 7.4 Proposed Activities

### 7.4.1 Creation and Tour of Professional Show

The creation and production of at least one high quality, professional circus-theatre show each year to tour Wales and the UK. As with "Prophecy" and "Now.here", each promenade production will involve the synthesis of circus, theatre, dance, music, video and interactive/installation art into a coherent narrative journey and will explore themes which are relevant, challenging and accessible to contemporary audiences.

#### Aim

- to tour a unique professional circus-theatre show to communities in Wales and the UK
- to create this show through an inclusive process

#### Development Process

Ideally, this show will be created through a unique process of community involvement. Building on the "Stepping Stones" model, the company proposes to create each new show through a 6 month Community Residency leading to a large scale performance in the new tent. This residency production will provide the basis for development of the new touring show - the story will be adapted for a smaller professional cast, but many of the original production elements will be retained. Ideally, many of the original community contributions will also be retained, eg through video.

The company are keen to build on the long term community training programme which they have implemented in Cardiff by creating work placement opportunities for community participants and semi-professional artists who have achieved a high level of skill. Depending on levels of funding and interest, NFSC would like to develop a second touring show as part of the same process, which is specifically aimed at younger children and family audiences and which is performed by this group, who also take part in the main touring show.

#### Potential Funding Sources

##### Production

- A4A or ACW artform development project funding
- Sponsorship

##### Touring

- Fees/guarantees from local authorities
- Sponsorship
- Co-promotions/partnerships
- Box office, catering and merchandising

### 7.4.2 Community Residencies

In addition to one 6 month residency per year, the company wishes to undertake 2-4 smaller residencies in communities around Wales.

#### Aims

The aim of these projects is

- to develop longer term community participation in NFSC's work in communities new to the company outside of South Wales
- to build close collaborative relationships with a network of local partner groups in each location over a 3 year period

**Objective**

- to work with local community groups and individuals, developing appropriate levels of work over a 3 year period, on an incremental basis, building new participatory arts skills especially among young people

These residencies will also:

- develop a new audience context for the company's professional touring work
- provide an inspiring focus for existing community arts activities
- nurture creativity through participation in extraordinary arts projects
- eventually facilitate a large scale community performance project on the Stepping Stones model

These smaller residencies will happen concurrently with the professional touring programme, and will be broadly based on the same themes. Two models have been proposed to potential partners:

**Model 1: 2 Weeks**

A team of professional workshop facilitators work with new and existing community groups for one week before the tent arrives to develop basic skills and devise ideas for presentation alongside the touring show. The tent arrives for the second week of the residency, and, in addition to performances, the professional team assist in the development of the community presentation. On the final weekend, the community participants present their work as part of the final performance.

**Model 2: 3 Months**

The touring show will have a flexible structure which allows the productions to be re-expanded to include up to 150 community participants. A team of professional facilitators and animateurs will work with new existing community groups to develop skills in circus, dance, drama and music and to devise and rehearse scenes over a 3 month period. The residency will culminate in a week of rehearsals in the tent with a professional director and technical team, in which the community contributions are integrated within the professional show structure, and a week of performances.

**Development Process**

The various residency options will be discussed with local partners and bookers as part of the marketing of the tour. Where there is interest, NFSC will design a tailor-made workshop programme in collaboration with the local partners, through a Community Liaison Officer. For Model 2, the expandable show structure will be developed alongside the professional touring show, by the same artistic team. The 3 month workshop programme will be co-ordinated by the Community Liaison Officer in conjunction with a local partner, and supported by the core artistic and administrative team.

**Potential Funding Sources**

- Fees from local authorities
- Co-productions with local partners
- A4A/ACW funding for access, participation and training
- Local, national and European regeneration schemes, eg Objective 1 Funding

**7.4.3 Co-Promotions and Collaborations**

NFSC is committed to making high quality arts events accessible to the broadest possible audience and to providing maximum value for both its audiences and its bookers. This means finding new ways of utilising the tent and its facilities for as many hours a day as possible. Therefore, in addition to the residency projects already described, NFSC would like to add further value to its touring programme by

providing a flexible framework for both local initiatives, festivals and promoters/producers of new Welsh talent, eg music and stand up comedy.

**Aims**

- To maximise the use of the tent during the touring programme, and at other times
- To support the touring programme financially and artistically through appropriate partnerships with other promoter

**Objectives**

- Over three years, to develop sustainable partnerships with appropriate co-promoters and producers
- Where possible, to make the tent available to such partners outside of the touring programme
- To facilitate use of the tent by local partners during the period of residency for local functions and festivals

**Development Process**

These opportunities will be pursued as part of the marketing strategy for both the artistic programme and the commercial activities, as soon as a core professional staff are in place.

**7.4.4 Commercial Activities**

Given the current climate of arts funding in Wales, in which it is highly unlikely that ACW will make commitments of revenue funding to new clients, NFSC proposes to develop a strand of commercial activity, which will generate sufficient income to ensure that the core running costs of the company are independent of public subsidy.

The proposed programme of work will utilise the new tent for 25 weeks of each year. For the remaining 27 weeks, the tent and its facilities will be available for commercial hire. The company has identified several potential markets for such hires including:

- Corporate Production and Communications Companies for business functions, product launches, conferences etc
- Large Scale Party and Event Organisers
- Venue Suppliers to these industries
- Businesses who produce their own events in house

Ideally, both the new and old tent will also be available for hire at reduced rates to local authorities, festivals and community groups.

**Aim**

- to achieve an income from trading to secure the core staffing, and other running costs for the company from 2000 onwards

**Objective**

- to hire the tent and other facilities to the commercial sector for corporate events, product launches etc in 2000/01 and to earn £80,000 from this activity

**Development Process**

The company has identified several markets in which this commercial strand is likely to be successful, and will create the post of Executive Director to generate, co-ordinate and manage this new business activity.

## 7.5 Programme Scenarios

### 7.5.1 Scenario 1: Ideal

This is the company's ideal scenario, starting with a six month residency in Cardiff to develop and produce Stepping Stones 3:

Oct-Dec 1999	Development of Stepping Stones 3 Marketing of 2000 touring programme New tent and facilities available for commercial hire for December 1999
Jan-Mar 2000	Production of Stepping Stones 3 - large scale participatory project culminating in mixed media promenade performance in new tent New tent available for commercial hire Jan/Feb 2000
Mar-April 2000	Development and production of touring show(s) and participatory projects/residencies based on Stepping Stones 3
May-Sept 2000	Touring professional show in Wales and UK plus 2-4 Community Residencies
Oct-Dec 2000	New tent and facilities available for commercial hire

### 7.5.2 Scenario 2: Touring Plus Model 1 Residencies

In this scenario, a new show is developed and produced specifically for the touring programme. Only Model 1 residencies possible, working towards a Model 2 residency in 2001.

Oct-Dec 1999	Marketing of 2000 touring programme New tent and facilities from December 1999
Jan-April 2000	Development and pre-production of new touring show plus participatory projects/residencies New tent and facilities available for commercial hire
May-Sept 2000	Touring professional show in Wales and UK plus 2-4 Community Residencies
Oct-Dec 2000	New tent and facilities available for commercial hire

### 7.5.3 Scenario 3: Community Development Work Only

This scenario assumes no funding for either a six month residency or the production of a professional touring show. The year 2000 programme of activities becomes a process of maximising the new tent and facilities, and development of partnerships and collaborations with new communities.

Oct-Dec 1999	Marketing of a programme of participatory projects, co-promotions and commercial hires only for 2000
Jan-April 2000	Development and co-ordination
May-Sept 2000	An ad hoc programme of commercial hires, co-promotions and participatory projects
Oct-Dec 2000	New tent and facilities available for commercial hire

## **7.6 Feasibility/Interest Generated**

### **7.6.1 Touring Programme**

As part of this feasibility study, the proposed programme of activities, in the form of a menu of bookable options, has been discussed with a range of local authority partners for their feedback on both services offered and likely costs. (see Appendix 2 for Bookable Options Document).

In general, feedback has been very positive. For 2000, many authorities have enhanced budgets for events to celebrate the new Millennium, and they have been enthusiastic about the proposed touring programme in the new tent; several have indicated that they would be interested in a Model 1 Residency option, with a view to developing further projects in 2001/20002; and there is interest in a Model 2 Residency option with Broli in North Wales. All potential partners have indicated understanding of, and commitment to NFSC's long term approach to community development.

### **7.6.2 Commercial Hires**

The new tent and facilities create the potential for development in several new markets, as well as facilitating new forms of sponsorship relationships. While NFSC have considerable experience of generating income from hiring the old tent to local authorities and festival organisers, the company recognise that the development of these new markets will require special expertise.

Informal preliminary discussions with selected companies and consultants indicates considerable interest in hiring the new tent, particularly during the year 2000 for millennium celebrations. However, our preliminary research has also indicated that serious discussion cannot take place until funding for the new tent is guaranteed.

## 8 Marketing and Sponsorship

### 8.1 Marketing

The resources for marketing will be greatly improved in the forward plan for the company. The staffing structure will create a year round presence of team members who will have different levels of responsibility for marketing and sponsorship, ensuring a consistent approach to marketing. For the first time, a marketing budget for promotion of the company as a whole will be established.

New marketing tools, appropriate to communicate the quality and impact of the company's work, have been created. These are a company marketing pack, an interactive CD ROM, the company's website and a promotional video.

### 8.2 Sponsorship

The initial need for commercial sponsorship will be in order to meet partnership funding targets for the capital funding bid. As well as cash contributions, donations in kind in terms of equipment and staff time will be solicited from suppliers.

A significant proportion of all companies regularly hire large venues for corporate events, product launches and public meetings. The creation of a new, branded touring venue for Wales, co-inciding with the arrival of the Welsh Assembly and the Millennium, and offering sponsors access to a unique and highly flexible space is an attractive sponsorship opportunity.

By offering sponsors, in addition to normal sponsor's benefits, exclusive use of the new venue for their own purposes at agreed times periods each year, the opportunities for developing long term relationships with the commercial sector are great.

### 8.3 Target Marketing Segments

The target markets breakdown into the following segments:

- Potential Venues/Partners
- Funders/Sponsors
- Commercial Market
- The Public (as attenders and participants)

### 8.4 Outline Marketing Strategies

#### Potential Venues/Partners

The Development Officer will be responsible for the continual selling of the company's work to potential partners throughout the UK and beyond. This will involve mail outs and face to face meetings and negotiations. The company marketing pack will be utilised to target specific venues/partners.

#### Funders/Sponsors

Building on past successes, the commercial sector will be targeted for partnership funding and sponsorship of key events and activities. Again, the company marketing pack will be used in order to generate interest, and specific sponsorship packages will be negotiated for each sponsor.

#### Commercial Market

The Executive Director will have sole responsibility for marketing the company's new tented structure to commercial companies for product launches, corporate and sponsorship events, outside of the core touring season. A range of new contacts will be made with companies within this market segment, and visual marketing tools such

as the website and the CD ROM will be used in order to convey the actuality of the tented structure.

**The Public (as attenders and participants)**

Although working on fixed fees for touring weeks and for community residencies, maximising the number and range of attenders and participants in its work is of primary importance for NFSC.

The company has a wealth of experience of tour marketing, grounded in practical hands-on marketing techniques, generating pre-visit interest and bookings. The costs of a Marketing Officer and specialist PR consultant have been built into both the production costs and the weekly touring costs of the professional production.

The tour's Community Liaison Officer will work ahead of the company's visit to generate interest from potential participants through a series of taster workshops, meetings and talks about the company's work.

## 9 Staffing Implications

### 9.1 Changes in Staffing Levels

As discussed earlier in this plan, the company recognises that it will need to improve its current staffing levels in order to achieve its strategic aims. The limitations of the current structure are discussed in section 2.5.

The company proposes to:

- build in a salary for one Development Officer post by autumn/winter 1999, which will put the current volunteer workers on a professional job-share status, and secure their commitment to the company; this post will focus on the development of core work and the resources to run it.
- build in the first six months' salary for an Executive Director into a bid for capital funding for the new tented structure; the role of this person will focus on generating income from commercial hiring of the company's facilities; this person will need to be in post once the capital funding is confirmed.

Key tasks for the Development Officer, Executive Director and Administrator can be found in Appendix 4 of this report.

### 9.2 Revised Staffing Structure

The aim is to achieve the following staffing structure for the company within the next 3 years:



The company will employ a part-time Administrator for 2000/2001, building up the hours as and when earned income levels for the company reach an appropriate level.



## 10 Financial Implications

### 10.1 Assumptions Relating to the Financial Scenarios

Three programme scenarios were outlined earlier in the report in section 7.5. These formed the basis for our discussions relating to the financial planning for the company.

Each of the three financial scenarios makes the positive assumption that the company is successful in its ACW Lottery Capital Fund Application; that this is awarded in October 1999 and that the appropriate levels of partnership funding are secured

In addition, the following assumptions can be applied to the scenarios:

#### Scenario One: The Ideal

- A4All application is successful and appropriate levels of funding are raised
- Stepping Stones Project Phase 3 runs in Jan/Feb/Mar 2000 in Cardiff
- Ad hoc touring continues with the old tent
- The professional tour runs for 13 weeks
- There are two community residencies (2 weeks each)

#### Scenario Two: Touring Plus Model 1 Residencies

- A4All application is postponed for one year; application is successful in December 2000; project runs in Spring 2001
- Ad hoc touring continues with the old tent
- The professional tour runs for 13 weeks
- There are two community residencies (2 weeks each)

#### Scenario Three: Community Development Work Only

- No A4All application is made, and the Stepping Stones Project is not completed
- Ad hoc touring continues with the old tent
- No professional tour
- There are two community residencies (2 weeks each) - could be more

### 10.2 Rationale for Chosen Scenario

#### Scenario Two: Touring Plus Model 1 Residencies

Running Scenario Two would present serious financial problems for the company because of the timing of the third phase of the Stepping Stones project.

If a large scale community project is run ahead of the professional tour, there are considerable production cost savings of some £65,000, because artistic themes and material for development emerging from the community project can be further developed in a professional show.

Finding an additional £65,000 for production costs in this scenario would be difficult, especially as staff would already be working on developing streams of income from commercial hire, sponsorship and other public sources in order to contribute to the capital project, and the company's core operating costs.

**Scenario Three: Community Development Work Only**

This is the company's fall back position, and is financially viable, although it presents some artistic limitations, and weakens the argument for capital funding.

Without a professional tour the running costs for 2000/2001 drastically reduce, but this does allow more time and energy to be put into developing a wider range of community residencies and co-promotions during the summer period in the new tented structure.

Local authorities in Wales have indicated that there are extra financial resources allocated for year 2000 celebrations and events, and there is therefore a good opportunity for NFSC to develop a substantial number of bookings for a professional tour in 2000/2001. This opportunity needs to be harnessed.

In addition, without the demonstration that the company will be reaching substantial numbers of new people in Wales through a touring strategy, the application for ACW Lottery Capital funding is severely weakened.

**Scenario One: The Ideal**

This scenario enables the company to complete its commitment to the Stepping Stones project before the millennium and as originally planned. This, in turn, reduces some of the production costs for the professional tour, and creates an improved financial picture for year 2000/2001. It also allows for community residencies to run concurrently with the professional tour, and makes the fullest use of the new tented structure during the summer period.

**10.3 Scenario 1 - 1999/2000 Capital Phase Development**

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## 10.4 Notes to 1999/2000 Capital Phase Spreadsheet

### 10.4.1 Income Streams

Income Stream	Amount	Rationale Behind Figures
Baseline Income	1,3000	Conservative estimate of income from hiring out of old tent to a range of festivals, events and activities for fees
Grant Aid for A4A Project	90,000	Based on the costs of the past 2 projects
Partnership Funding (A4A)	10,000	Similar amounts were raised for the past 2 projects
Grant Aid for Capital Project	192,957	Assumes grant for 75% of total project costs is awarded
Partnership Funding (cap)	64,319	Assumes 25% of total project costs is raised in partnership funding
Commercial Hire	60,000	Assumes minimum of 12 days hire over 3 month period at £5,000 per day
Other Income	25,000	Target for income from trusts, charities & foundations
Sponsorship	6,000	Target for sponsorship of A4A project - achieved in past 2 projects

### 10.4.2 Expenditure Streams

Expenditure Stream	Amount	Rationale Behind Figures
Baseline Expenditure	3,420	Conservative estimate of expenditure relating to hiring out of old tent to a range of festivals, events and activities for fees
Professional Tour Production Costs	23,100	50% of total production costs for professional tour
Commercial Activities	9,000	Costs of technical team needed to install tented structure for commercial hires
A4A Project	105,000	Based on the costs of the past 2 projects
Capital Project - tent & equip	229,727	Expenditure runs over 3 months, with costs of tent design and build kicking in first
Capitalised Costs	27,549	Salary of Executive Director; staff training wages and costs; initial tent erection costs; associated marketing and administrative costs
Staffing Costs	13,998	Salaries of Development Officer; part time Administrator and associated on costs
Additional Administrative Expenses	2,874	Costs of additional insurance, tel/fax and postage; accountancy fee; travel costs and publicity budget
Additional Office/Storage Costs	5,400	Costs of additional rental costs for new tented structure and the new office facility

## 10.4 Notes to 1999/2000 Capital Phase Spreadsheet

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Additional Administrative Expenses	2,874	Costs of additional insurance, tel/fax and postage; accountancy fee; travel costs and publicity budget
Additional Office/Storage Costs	5,400	Costs of additional rental costs for new tented structure and the new office facility

10.5 Scenario 1 - 2000/2001 Operational Phase

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## 10.6 Notes to 2000/2001 Operational Phase Spreadsheet

## 10.6.1 Income Streams

Income Stream	Amount	Rationale Behind Figures
Baseline Income	40,600	Conservative estimate of income from hiring out of old tent to a range of festivals, events and activities for fees
Professional Touring	169,000	Assumes 13 weeks of touring at income of £13,000 per week
Community Residencies	48,000	Assumes 2 2-week community residencies at income of £24,000 each
Commercial Hire	80,000	Assumes minimum of 16 days hire over 4 month period at £5,000 per day
Other Income	2,000	Target for income from trusts, charities & foundations
Sponsorship	8,000	Target for sponsorship of professional tour

## 10.6.2 Expenditure Streams

Expenditure Stream	Amount	Rationale Behind Figures
Baseline Expenditure	31,270	Conservative estimate of expenditure relating to hiring out of old tent to a range of festivals, events and activities for fees
Professional Touring Production Costs	23,100	50% of total production costs for professional tour
Professional Touring - Touring Costs	160,290	13 weeks at £12,330 per week
Community Residencies	46,800	2 residencies at £23,400 each
Commercial Activities	12,000	Costs of technical team needed to install tented structure for commercial hires
Staffing Costs	45,996	Salaries of Development Officer; Executive Director; part time Administrator and associated on costs
Additional Administrative Expenses	5,748	Costs of additional insurance, tel/fax and postage; accountancy fee; travel costs and publicity budget
Additional Office/Storage Costs	10,800	Costs of additional rental costs for new tented structure and the new office facility

## 11 Appendices

### 1 Technical Equipment Costings



**2 Bookable Options**

**NoFit State Circus****Bookable Options Document - Presented to Potential Partners**

As part of the process of applying for capital lottery funding for our new tent, we are researching interest and likely demand for our proposed programme of work for Summer 2000 and beyond.

The following are a series of bookable options for this period, with indicative costs. We hope to be able to discuss these options with you as soon as possible and refine the programme on the basis of this consultation process.

As you will see, the programme includes 2 community residency projects, which offer unique opportunities for local community members not only to learn new skills but also to perform and present their work within a large-scale professional environment. We are aware that these projects create new funding opportunities for our local partners and would be glad to discuss these options.

**1 One Show in the New Tent**

An extraordinary and spectacular new promenade circus theatre show which will include circus, theatre, dance, music, video and interactive/installation art. This show will be adapted and developed out of a 6 month community residency in Cardiff and will retain many of the large scale technical and production elements.

- tent fit-up Monday/Tuesday
- up to 7 performances Tuesday to Saturday
- 8 professional performers, 2 semi-professional performers, plus staff, stage management and technical crew
- audience capacity - 500
- show will be suitable for people over 8 years old
- tent available for other activities Wednesday to Saturday excluding performances

Weekly Cost	£11-13,000
Potential Box Office (100% @ £5 per ticket)	£17,500

**2 Two New Shows in Repertoire**

In addition to our main evening show, we would like to create a second smaller show specifically targeted at younger children and family audiences. This second show would be developed and rehearsed alongside the main show and would be performed by a larger team of recently graduated young circus performers. Apart from providing training and invaluable on-the-road experience for new talent, and offering further value for money to our bookers and audiences, the advantage of touring two shows in parallel is that our main show will be performed by a company of up to 16 performers.

- tent fit-up Monday/Tuesday
- up to 11 performances Tuesday to Saturday
- 8 professional performers, 8 recently graduated performers, plus staff, stage management and technical crew
- audience capacity - 500
- show 1 will be suitable for people over 8 years old
- show 2 will be suitable for children over 4 years old and their parents
- tent available mornings Thursday and Friday

Weekly Cost	£13,500-15,000
Potential Box Office (100% @ £5 per ticket)	£27,500

### 3 Two Week Residency

A tailor-made package which allows the involvement and active participation of up to 75 local community members in a full-time programme of workshops leading up to a performance/presentation in the new tent. A team of professional workshop leaders work with new and existing community groups for one week before the tent arrives to develop basic skills and devise ideas for performance and presentation alongside the touring show. The new tent arrives for the second week of the residency, and, in addition to performances, the professional team will assist in the development of the community performance/presentation. On the final Saturday of the residency, the community participants will present their work as part of the final performance.

The workshop team will be selected from our extensive pool of experienced professional facilitators. We would like to offer a flexible package to bookers and local partners which can include up to four skills.

- 1 week of workshops before the tent arrives
- 5 specialist workshop leaders - can choose from circus, drama, dance, voice and singing, music, video, multi-media, kinetic sculpture, /interactive design and installation art
- up to 75 participants in groups of 15 - open to all ages and experience
- tent fit-up Monday/Tuesday
- up to 7 performances Tuesday to Saturday
- workshop participants work alongside professional performers and technicians in the tent Wednesday to Saturday
- workshop presentation Saturday early evening

Cost of Residency plus Performances	£22-24,000
Potential Box Office (100% @ £5 per ticket)	£17,500

### 4 Large Scale Community Project - Three Month Residency

Building on the success of **Prophecy** and **Now.Here** in Cardiff and the widely acknowledged model of good practice we have established, NFSC would like to offer new communities in Wales the opportunity to participate in a large scale high quality circus-theatre performance. In order to facilitate this involvement, the main touring show will be designed with a flexible story structure which allows the production to be re-expanded to include up to 150 new community participants in a spectacular large scale performance.

Our Community Liaison Officer will work alongside our local partner to set up a network of new and existing participant groups. A team of professional facilitators and amateurs will work with these groups over a 10 week period to develop skills in Circus, dance, drama and music, and to devise and rehearse scenes for performance. The residency will culminate in a week of rehearsals in the new tent, in which the community contributions are integrated within the professional show structure, and a week of public performances. Community participants will have the opportunity to work with a professional artistic and technical team, as well as professional performers.

- 10 week workshop programme before the tent arrives
- 5 specialist workshop leaders - can choose from circus, drama, dance, voice and singing, music, video, multi-media, kinetic sculpture, /interactive design and installation art
- up to 150 participants in groups of 15 - open to all ages and experience
- each group will have an opportunity to create and devise their own work around the themes of the show
- professional artistic team including Director, Choreographer, Music Director and Circus Director will visit each group at least once during the workshop period
- tent fit-up Monday/Tuesday week 11

- on site rehearsals Tuesday-Sunday - community participants work alongside professional artistic and technical team
- up to 7 performances Tuesday to Saturday
- dress rehearsal Monday
- public performances Tuesday to Saturday

Cost of Residency plus Performances	£65-75,000
Potential Box Office (100% @ £5 per ticket)	£10,000

**3 Letters of Support**

4 Job Tasks

**Job Tasks for Three Key Members of the NFSC Team:****Development Officer**

- to oversee and manage the co-ordination and promotion of all of the company's projects and activities in partnership with other staff
- to develop partnership projects with local authorities, public funders, venues, arts organisations and artists
- to research, formulate and implement the organisation's business plans in agreement with the Management Committee
- to research and write proposals for public funding of all the organisation's work
- to work to meet all annual income and fund-raising targets and maintain efficient budgetary control
- to formulate and implement the company's public relations strategy and communicate clearly and effectively with all stakeholders
- to produce all marketing materials with the assistance of the Administrator
- to produce regular reports and present them to the Management Committee
- to manage and supervise the work of other staff within the organisation

**Executive Director**

- to work to meet all annual income and fund-raising targets and maintain efficient budgetary controls
- to research and formulate a strategy for marketing the company's resources to the commercial sector for hire, specifically the new tented structure
- to practically manage all the arrangements, implementation and monitoring of commercial hires
- to research potential business sponsors for the whole range of the company's activities
- to oversee and manage the co-ordination and promotion of all of the company's projects and activities
- during the capital phase of the project, liaise with ISS regarding project management issues, and act as primary day to day contact for the project

**Administrator**

- ensure the smooth day to day running of the office environment
- managing the organisation's payroll, and other administrative systems relating to staffing
- setting up and processing the day to day finances, including raising of invoices and payments
- providing administrative support to other members of staff when required
- updating and managing a range of contacts databases on the computer system
- liaising with venues and other organisations and providing administrative support for project activity
- assisting with marketing activity