

### What is the BNG circus award?

The BNG (Bank Nederlandse Gemeenten) circus award is an **annual prize for a Dutch based circus production**. It is coordinated by *Circuspunt* (the platform for the united Dutch circus field) and supported by *Festival Circolo* and different other venues and festivals throughout the Netherlands.

Its goal is to foster a stronger climate and more visibility for circus in the Netherlands, identify and support a new production, and contribute to a durable career evolution for circus authors.

These goals resonate with the strategic vision of the BNG in which societal impact, visibility and cooperation are at the core.

The 2026 edition call is open from **April 15th till 30th May**

*More about Circuspunt — [www.circuspunt.nl](http://www.circuspunt.nl)*

*More about BNG — [www.bngbank.nl/en/bng-culture-fund](http://www.bngbank.nl/en/bng-culture-fund)*

*More about Festival Circolo — [www.festivalcircolo.nl](http://www.festivalcircolo.nl)*



Winnaar Circusprijs 2025: Tim van den Bos de Lucas [foto door Jostijn Ligthoet]

### Who can apply?

*There is no preferred aesthetic, no preferred subject, form, spatial arrangement, discipline, duration or target audience. All creative contexts (outdoor, site-specific, tent, black box...), all disciplines and all interdisciplinary endeavors between circus and other art forms are admissible, without any exclusion.*

But you have to check all the following boxes:

- You are making a circus performance that will premiere after May 31st 2026.
- You and/or the production are based in the Netherlands and/or you have an active Dutch work practice.
- You are active in the field as a professional at least since 2024.
- The performance you are making is not an act.
- You have an existing legal structure that does not receive structural funding

If you have any doubts or questions regarding your eligibility you can check with the coordinator from Circuspunt: [stephan.bikker@circuspunt.nl](mailto:stephan.bikker@circuspunt.nl)

## What can I win?

The prize consists of two parts.

### A) A cash prize of € 10.000, -

This budget allows the winner to prepare and make the performance possible. Also, the flexibility of the budget allows for the support of various circus formats (tent, theatre, festival) to adapt if necessary. For example the prize can be used for :

- Residencies, rehearsals, adaptation, reprise
- Travel expenses, accommodation, any overnight stays, transportation per diems etc.
- Making the performance affordable for touring the Dutch market
- Additional artistic coaching (outside eye)
- Additional marketing materials, photography, recordings
- Tech support,
- ...

### B) An additional professionalization trajectory worth € 10.000, -

The winner will, in collaboration with professional support, organize a series of performances in the following year. The support provided is demand-driven, but specifically focused on creating a strategic tour plan, increasing visibility, publicity, developing marketing materials, and coordinating with programmers. This amount will therefore be spent entirely on external expertise and support by:

- A creative producer
- And/or distribution manager
- And/or marketeer
- And/or fundraiser
- ...

## How does the selection process work?

There are three steps in the selection process.

- 1) Open call (open from April 15th till 31st May)
- 2) Up to four projects are shortlisted (before June 30th)
- 3) Committee interview and selection (online)

## Applicants submit the following for evaluation by a committee:

- An artistic dossier
- Link to a video recording of the work in progress
- Annexes: CV's, provisional tech sheet, budget and creation calendar.

The committee will select up to four performances from all applications and will consider the following key aspects and selection criteria:

- Originality and dramaturgical interest  
*express what's special/interesting about your project*
- Societal impact and relevance  
*why is this project important to support?*
- Quality of the performance  
*stage presence, craftsmanship, skill*
- The capacity to bring the project to fruition  
*if it is supported will it keep it's promise...?*

All applicants will receive notice before June 30th whether they have been shortlisted or not. Following this, a committee interview will take place, after which the winning project will be chosen from the four shortlisted. In addition to the aforementioned criteria, during the interview a reflection on the

author's position in the current era/society and a view on the broader aspects of authorship are also considered.

The committee for 2026 is composed of the following members:

- Anette Embrechts
- Do Verschagen
- Frens te Kiefte
- Melody Nolan

Stephan Bikker is the coordinator for Circuspunt and will attend the Committee interviews and meetings in order to facilitate the process.

All shortlisted performances will receive personalized feedback from the committee (if they wish).

### **Side notes on the call and the process**

All shortlisted projects will benefit from Circuspunt's communication channels, and by extension, that of Festival Circolo and the other partners.

When applying, you commit to stay available for the following periods: September 16th – September 20th 2026, and the last two weeks of September 2027 to perform the finished piece during the *BNG showcase* at *Festival Circolo*.

**Artistic dossier and creation material:** This document can include any visual material that will help the committee understand your project. Texts, mood board, photos, drawings, references... All material should be compiled into one document and uploaded in PDF format and have the following name: "NAME ARTIST\_ Name Project.pdf"

**Link to a video registration of the work in progress:** Do not send a video file, send us a link to where the video can be seen. The video should show your work -> it is not a pitch. It should not include extracts of previous projects and/or an oral presentation. Preferably it has limited editing (no extensive image and sound editing), the committee will not evaluate the quality of the video itself.

The maximum length of the video is 10 minutes.

**Annexes:** the following documents will create a better understanding of your capacity to bring the project to fruition.

- Technical rider or general understanding of the project's technical needs.
- CV of the author(s). If the project includes multiple authors.
- Creation calendar: when/where are the other planned residencies and premiere?
- Budget

A draft plan on how you intend to use the professional support offered (creative producer, sales/distribution, marketing, etc.) is an optional annex : This document is informative and will not impact your application.

Compile all the annex documents into one single file and name it: "NAME ARTIST\_ Name Project\_ANNEX.pdf"

→ **Mail to: [bngcircusprijs@circuspunt.nl](mailto:bngcircusprijs@circuspunt.nl)**

**Confirmation:** After submission, you will receive a confirmation email. If you don't receive one within one working day, kindly get in touch with the coordination team: Also, if you have any questions regarding this call, the procedure or the criteria, please contact [stephan.bikker@circuspunt.nl](mailto:stephan.bikker@circuspunt.nl)

## **Reminder of the chronology**

April — May: the call is open

End of June: announcement of up to four preselected projects

August: interviews with preselected projects

September: Showcase during Festival Circolo with announcement of the winner (last year's winner will also perform as part of the tour)

October — December: professionalization trajectory and tour preparations for the winner

January — December (N+1): touring period