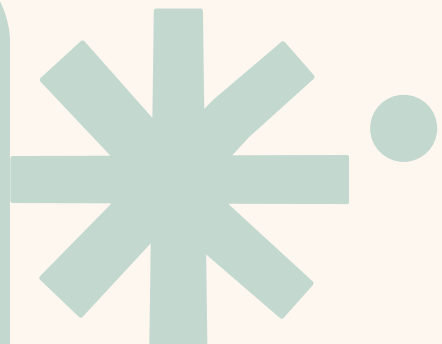
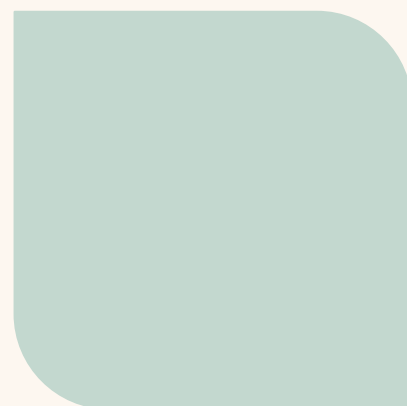
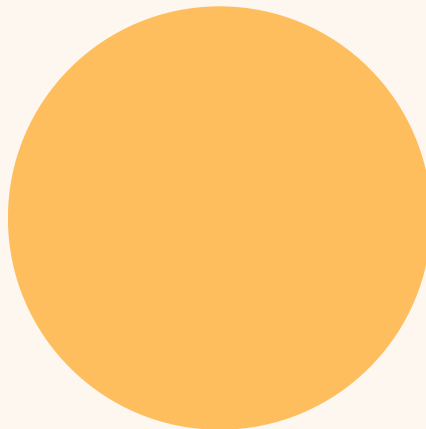


APRIL 2026

# EXPLANATORY NOTE

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# THE BRIDGE THEATRE



## Presentation

**Project** The Bridge Theatre

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**Project lead** Edward McMillan & Éva Kamarás

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**Project location** Brussels

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**Budget** The project will be funded up to €15,000, subject to receiving 65% of the votes from cooperative members. This funding will be provided entirely in the form of a loan.

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**Vote** The vote will be held electronically starting from 30/04/2026.

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## In a few words..

The Bridge Theatre is a non-profit cultural association bringing together artists, directors and theatre enthusiasts around a common language: English.

Founded in 2021, it was born from a simple conviction: English-language theatre can bring Brussels together, in a city enriched by its 180 nationalities where culture is one of the most powerful forces for connection.

A Brussels-based association, it seeks to fill the gap left by the lack of a permanent venue for professional English-language theatre, by providing a dedicated space for performances while also offering Brussels residents opportunities to participate in the performing arts.

To this end, The Bridge Theatre operates across several areas of activity: stage productions, weekly workshops, monthly events at the Studio, immersive training programmes for businesses, as well as a creative space located at Chaussée de Forest 83, in Saint-Gilles, since September 2024.



## Missions & Objectives

The Bridge Theatre has set itself the mission of transforming the way theatre is experienced in Brussels, making the English language a bridge between the many communities that make up the city.

The project addresses several major challenges:

- the absence of a permanent, dedicated venue for professional English-language theatre in the European capital,
- the fragmentation of a city of 180 nationalities, where linguistic communities coexist without always meeting,
- the lack of access to the performing arts for school audiences, families and those who are distant from culture,
- the need to build a more inclusive, sustainable cultural ecosystem rooted in its local community.

To address these challenges, The Bridge is developing a nomadic, inclusive and locally integrated theatre model, producing shows in English while engaging with the community through school workshops and participatory activities for children and adults.

In parallel, the association works with businesses through immersive training sessions and tailor-made events, thereby generating its own resources in service of its cultural and social mission.

The ultimate objective is twofold:

- to offer Brussels a lasting professional English-language stage, accessible to all regardless of origin or language,
- and to contribute to progressive social change, by fostering equality, sustainability and well-being within the Brussels community.

## Impact

The impact of The Bridge Theatre is a response to a Brussels paradox: a cosmopolitan city of 180 nationalities, home to the European institutions, where 550,000 inhabitants speak English fluently, yet which has no permanent professional stage dedicated to English-language theatre.

This absence weakens the bonds between communities and deprives a large part of the population of access to live performance in their everyday language. Faced with this reality, The Bridge offers an alternative rooted in theatre as a tool for cohesion, creating spaces for encounter between Brussels residents from different backgrounds and fostering a more inclusive cultural life that is representative of the city's diversity.

On a social level, the results are already tangible: 12,000 tickets sold across 7 productions, 2,000 participants in community workshops, 1,500 students reached through school workshops, and 2,000 participants in corporate training sessions. These figures reflect a genuine capacity to reach diverse audiences : spectators, young people, working professionals and to make theatre a shared practice rather than a privilege. The weekly workshops, open to all levels and backgrounds, reinforce this dimension by using play, voice and improvisation as vehicles for self-confidence, public expression and social connection. They respond to a growing demand for accessible artistic practice spaces, helping to integrate into Brussels cultural life those who had not yet had access to it.

The Bridge is contributing to progressive social change, including greater equality (SDGs 5 & 10), greater sustainability (SDGs 11 & 12) and greater happiness (SDG 3).



## Team

The Bridge Theatre is a non-profit association founded in 2021, led by two administrators with complementary profiles.

Edward McMillan, CEO, is an experienced cultural entrepreneur holding an MBA. He is the originator of the project and is responsible for its strategic vision and development, with an in-depth knowledge of the live arts sector and cultural organisation management.

Éva Kamarás, Chair of the Board of Directors, brings a dual legal and strategic expertise, developed within leading consulting firms (Big4). Her profile ensures the solidity of the association's governance and supports its structuring with a view to growth.

On a day-to-day basis, the organisation relies on an agile team of freelancers and volunteers, who contribute to productions, workshops and communications. This lean and flexible structure, supported by an advisory board, allows The Bridge to remain responsive while mobilising a diverse network of skills in service of its cultural and social ambitions.



## Financial plan

The Bridge Theatre has existed for 4 years and has grown without significant external support.

Since its founding in 2021, the organisation has:

- sold 12,000 tickets across 7 large-scale productions,
- reached 2,000 participants through community workshops,
- delivered workshops to 1,500 students in Brussels schools,
- and completed over 60 corporate engagements.

In 2025 alone, the organisation generates €400,000 in revenue, built on four complementary streams:

- workshops, which provide stable and growing income ( $\approx$  €66K profit),
- corporate collaborations, with high margins and still to be developed ( $\approx$  €25K),
- school workshops, providing additional liquidity ( $\approx$  €12K),
- and productions, currently close to break-even but considered a strategic investment to develop audiences and brand awareness ( $\approx$  €70K invested).

This diversified structure provides a solid foundation, but one that is still insufficient to move to the next level. The main obstacle to growth is today a structural one: the studio is running at full capacity, occasional venue rentals are becoming less and less cost-effective, and the lack of a permanent base limits the organisation's visibility and ambition. Acquiring a venue of its own is the decisive lever for scaling up.

With a permanent base, two additional revenue streams become available: bar operations and external building rental (projected at €100,000/year from year one). Total projected revenue reaches €1.3M by year 4 and stabilises at approximately €1.7M at maturity, with a stabilised operating result of approximately €168,000 per year thereafter.

## Request

A concrete opportunity exists: a property belonging to bpost, available since June 2025 and immediately usable, with a sale price of €4.3 million of which more than 65% is eligible for classification as public equipment, opening the way to significant public funding.

In this context, The Bridge is seeking a loan of €15,000 from the Citizenfund community. This contribution forms a complementary lever within a broader financial structure, aimed at enabling the acquisition of the venue and securing a lasting foothold in Brussels.

Beyond the financial support, the partnership between The Bridge Theatre and Citizenfund responds to a logic of mutual reinforcement.

Beyond the real estate challenge, this partnership addresses a broader ambition:

- to widen the project's base of support by reaching new Brussels audiences, beyond the current community,
- to strengthen the local roots of an initiative with an international vocation,
- and to create a bridge between different audiences — notably between the international communities present in Brussels and local cultural dynamics.

For Citizenfund, this partnership represents the opportunity to align with a growing project, driven by an engaged, multicultural community aligned with the challenges of social cohesion and sustainability.

## Selection committee

The selection committee, convened on 30/04/2026, was composed of:

Damien Locqueneux (expert)  
Eleonore Meeus (expert)  
Thierry Van Boeckel (cooperative member)  
Matthieu Henkens (cooperative member)  
Alain Boribon (co-founder)

The project has been accepted by the selection committee. The results, comments and evaluation grid will be shared in the coming days, as the committee met on the very day of the validation session.

## General informations

**For a more detailed overview of the comments and questions raised, please refer to the evaluation grid.**

**Name** : The Bridge Theatre

**Legal form** : Non-profit association

**Founded** : 2021

**Website** : <https://thebridge.brussels/home>

**E-mail** : [edward@thebridge.brussels](mailto:edward@thebridge.brussels)