

The Edith M Ellis 1985 Charitable Trust

Palmers Players Community Interest Company

#QXPPKB5F6B submitted on 9 June 2021

1.1 Please summarise what you are seeking from us

To develop and promote an online course that brings our experience of Ignatian discernment in a Quaker context to the world of “business” being both companies and not for profit organisations (“Institutions”).

Our course aims to engage hearts and heads in bringing discernment to business decision-making in Institutions - more community centred than ego-centered. This would also enhance the existing community in the process of the Holy Spirit being built by our project more widely.

1.2 Tell us more about your project, the impact it will have on those it aims to help, and why you consider the proposed approach to be innovative

The With Full Conviction project seeks to provide spiritual resources for a peaceable and loving spirit led community.

Since June 2020, considerable progress has been made in developing our online presence. With the assistance of a Digital Marketing Assistant, we have reached out to people from the UK, USA, Poland, Romania, and Finland through our discernment seminars, free courses and presentations of our play With Full Conviction.

The project has been discerned primarily through the 22 “Rules for Discerning Spiritual Influences” that were included by Ignatius of Loyola, a Jesuit, in his “Spiritual Exercises”. In the light of his own experience Ignatius sets out a method for decision-making by which the operation of both consolation and desolation (light and darkness) in the experience of the individual may be assessed and evaluated. Our founder, Neil Macdonald, facilitated a seminar at the Sussex West Area Quaker meeting in May 2019, and subsequently for a Special Interest Group at the October 2019 residential Meeting for Sufferings. The seminar included a short contemplation, after which those present were invited to share their responses. The principles underpinning spiritual decision-making were introduced, and consideration was given as to how the use of imagination and awareness of affective states, such as consolation and desolation, can inform our choices. The development of the With Full Conviction project was also discussed and a “Christian” understanding was not expected. Since then, Neil has further developed this seminar and in March, he gave a talk based on this seminar to a Modern Church group based in Surrey, which included both priests and lay people, which audience members found ‘inspiring’. Later in the year, the seminar will be given as part of the national gathering of Quakers in Britain, Britain Yearly Meeting, which will be open to all members of the Religious Society of Friends.

We now seek to use the fruits of our learning and experience (including key aspects of those seminars) to develop an online discernment training course for Institutions. The course will draw from the rich well of the (1) Quaker business method and (2) Ignatian discernment (and our experience of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises).

The aim of the course is to give “business” leaders a programme, and set of tools, to assist them to bring the spiritual into corporate decision making. We call this our “Business Spirits Project”.

The Business Spirits Project seeks to offer a form of antidote to emerging dynamics that have led to an increasingly wounded world. These include the:

1. disconnection between (1) artful living centered on deeper values aligned to heart and spirit and (2) the modern malaise of artificial living underpinned by consumerist values.
2. shift from local to global with community and family increasingly being usurped by governmental and market forces.

We believe that at the heart of the wound lies unabated consumerism driven by modern day market

forces that create an ever spiraling desire for ego-centred wants and needs. Forces driven by the interplay between Individual and Institution; between the “business” world (and its need to make more) and the “individual” ego’s desire to want more. One feeds the other and vice versa. And, in this interplay lies the “corporate veil” - the incorporation of Institution as a separate legal person absent a living heart or soul other than through the agency of its people and leaders.

We hope that our programmes will (1) offer a space for the spiritual to begin to pierce through that veil and (2) provide a catalyst for change in the form of a growing community of Individuals and Institutions that are far more spiritually guided.

1.3 Which grant-giving categories does your project fulfil?

- A - Quaker work and witness
- B - Peace-building and conflict resolution
- C - Interfaith and ecumenical understanding

1.3a Quaker work and witness

Despite major differences between Ignatius and George Fox, both employed methods of communal discernment that relied on the belief that God guides individuals and groups through their religious experiences. Our project will help to develop and enhance existing Quaker business methods. The With Full Conviction project is a Concern of the Sussex West Area Quaker Meeting.

1.3b Peace-building and conflict resolution

It is said that the “love of money is that the root of all kinds of evil”. At the heart of business lies money and much of today’s conflicts are essentially rooted in money.

Our course would provide the tools for greater discernment in business, aiming to build a greater and more harmonious world aligned to the spirit.

1.3c Interfaith and ecumenical understanding

The engagement with our project’s current offerings draws those from a wealth of Christian traditions. This course, although centred on Ignatian and Quaker insights, will draw on the discernment processes of many faiths including Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism and Islam. We will strip many of the “religious” particularities, ensuring that the final product is of value to all belief systems.

1.4 Which country is the project based in?

United Kingdom (GB)

1.5 Will the project continue after initial funding has ended?

Yes

1.5b Please give details of how you plan to continue after initial funding has ended

The initial funding will be used to develop the experiential discernment course. Future funding will be via two sources:

1. offering the course to cohorts of 6 company leaders who will pay fees for each course that:
 - a. covers the full cost of the course; and
 - b. subsidises 6 leaders of non-profit organisations to attend for a nominal fee.
2. licensing the course to corporates and non-profits in return for licence fees.

1.6 How will the project be monitored and evaluated?

The course will be delivered over ten weeks comprising five 2 hour sessions at fortnightly intervals. Each attendee will:

1. complete a detailed evaluation form at the end of the course.
2. commit to report back on a quarterly basis to evaluate and monitor the impact of the course on the spiritual life of each leader and business.

These outputs will be consolidated into our annual impact report.
And by these fruits you will know.

2.1 Expenditure

EXPENDITURE ITEM	AMOUNT	NOTES
Consultant	£1	Development of pilot
Writer	£1	Development of pilot
Graphics artist	£1	Development of pilot
Research assistant	£500	Development of pilot
Video	£250	Development of pilot
Digital marketing	£500	Initial promotion
Website update	£250	Initial promotion
Facilitator's fee	£3	Project active - 6 sessions @ £500
Website	£1	Project active - further promotion and development
Digital marketing	£500	Project active - further promotion
TOTALS	£9,000	

2.2 Income

INCOME SOURCE	TARGET AMOUNT	AMOUNT RAISED	NOTES
Courses fees	£6	£0	Project active 6 x £1,110
	£0	£0	
TOTALS	£6,660	£0	

2.3 What is the total amount (in £ sterling) your organisation is requesting from The Edith M Ellis Trust?

£4

2.4 Has your organisation made an application to The Edith M Ellis Trust before?

Yes

2.4b Please provide the date of the previous application

27th December 2018

2.4c Was this previous application successful?

No

2.5 Please state your organisation's annual turnover (in £ sterling)

£3

2.6 Do you wish to upload your audited accounts or financial statement?

Yes

2.6b Upload File

<https://theedithmellischaritabletrust.org/assets/uploads/2021/06/PALMERS-PLAYERS-COMMUNITY->

2.7 Please tell us where payment should be made if your application is successful

Palmers Players Community Interest Company
21738637
60-05-24

3.1 Your name

Neil Macdonald

3.2 Your contact telephone number

01243823374

3.3 Your position within the organisation

Director

3.4 Your email address

neil.t.macdonald@gmail.com

3.5 Organisation name

Palmers Players Community Interest Company

3.6 Please state the status of your organisation

Community Interest Company

3.7 Please summarise what your organisation does

We are a drama and prayer course company based in Bognor Regis with the aim of reaching those who have become alienated from Christianity or have never seen it as having any relevance to their lives. We give presentations of our play engaging with Christian themes, followed by discussion and contemplation. We facilitate contemplative prayer courses and seminars on discernment. Through our activities we are building a community in the process of the Holy Spirit.

3.8 UK correspondence address for organisation

28 Courtfield House
Hambledon Place
Bognor Regis
West Sussex PO21 2TN

3.9 UK telephone number

01243823374

3.10 UK charity number (if applicable)

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3.11 Year established

2014

3.12 Website (if applicable)

<http://www.withfullconviction.com>

3.13 Social media accounts (if applicable)

<https://www.facebook.com/withfullconviction>

4.1 How did you hear about The Edith M Ellis Trust?

Quakers

Other

4.1b Other

NOTE RE ACCOUNTS: Please be advised that we are too small an organisation to justify the expenditure required for an audit (or an independent examination). We have filed compliant accounts and CIC34 with Companies House since incorporation in 2014.