

The Edith M Ellis 1985 Charitable Trust

ab solidarity CIC

#68MQVBPD1C submitted on 31 December 2023

1.1 Please summarise what you are seeking from us

We are seeking support to run a pilot project to develop practical interventions for refugees on the Bibby Stockholm in Portland to mitigate current isolation and segregation from the local community by:

Providing a safe space for them to connect, cook and share food with each other and the local community.

Skills training to support them to set up their own online radio program to enable ongoing communication, creativity and self-expression long term.

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 Bibby Stockholm barge in Portland currently houses over 300 refugees and aims to accommodate 500. The men, housed in small double bunk cabins are under 24/7 surveillance by military trained security guards with access to and from the boat monitored through airport security style measures. The men are only allowed to leave the port via a set of time limited buses (40 man capacity) stopping at 2 locations in Portland and Weymouth.

There is little for the men to do, with only 2 small TV rooms (capacity of 80) a very small gym with few machines, no organised activities on the boat and limited opportunities for outdoor exercise. The men receive £8.86 per week to cover expenses.

Men living on the boat speak of feelings of isolation and fear caused by these living arrangements, complaining of poor food and little support for their well-being. Since being used as a space to accommodate those seeking asylum in August 2022, there has been one confirmed death through suicide and another recent attempt.

Aims

This pilot project aims through practical research, facility provision and skills sharing to work alongside the local volunteer network on the island to :

Slowly develop infrastructure to identify and test out local locations with the intention of providing a safe and comfortable social space within Portland where refugees can connect with each other and the local community. Our aim is to create a welcoming social hub open to all (inspired by Camerados principles <https://camerados.org/what-is-camerados/>), not a space to isolate refugees from the local community.

Coordinate with local initiatives to run a series of openings of warm, safe and comfortable spaces where free food and drink are provided.

Run a series of investigative, creative skills-sharing workshops in these spaces to enable refugees to communicate with each other now and in the long term through the medium of their own online radio program.

Provide facilities within these spaces to enable refugees and anyone from the local community to relax, come together over food, share recipes, cook together and share meals.

Innovation

This will be the first integrative project on Portland that coordinates local community support to provide asylum seekers on the Bibby and in South Dorset with a dedicated safe space to :

Grow community amongst the refugees living on the barge

Develop connections between local people and these refugees

Provide these men with an opportunity to develop communication skills within the medium of radio to enable long term connection to be sustained.

Who We Are

We are experienced arts practitioners who have led a wide range of educational and social empowerment projects across different parts of the UK and beyond. We believe “arts activities can improve self-confidence, promote healthy behaviours as well as social inclusion and, importantly, offer hope.” (World Health Organisation, 2018). Our work has as its foundation what the Counterpoints Arts report; ‘Creatively minded and refugees’ (June 2023) * describes as ‘... providing a means to positively impact the body’s physiological response to stress, through artistic activities that offer a powerful tool for healing and recovery’ from trauma and isolation.’

Impact

Provide a 'blueprint' to enable ongoing safe community space in Portland and South Dorset for refugees to connect

Mitigate refugees feelings of isolation and segregation

Enable ongoing connection between refugees to support development of community through the medium of online radio.

Provide refugees with transferrable technical and communication skills supporting their ongoing development

* Counterpoint Arts: ‘...surveyed and analysed the impact of a range of organisations working to produce artistic work with those within the migration system

1.3 Which grant-giving categories does your project fulfil?

E - Work with forced migrants, including internally displaced people

1.3e Work with forced migrants, including internally displaced people

The project will support people with migrant and refugee backgrounds in South Dorset, those who have secured asylum, and those still within the process, particularly refugees living aboard the Bibby Stockholm barge. We will work with skills-sharing to address isolation and develop creative expression as a method of support and empowerment.

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

We plan to continue this project by enabling long term safe spaces in Portland and across South Dorset to support the development of integrative community and creative expression for refugees. We will apply the learning from this project to inform applications for funding to support this long term objective. Building on the outcomes we aim to support community groups and arts organisations to come together in partnership to achieve this aim.

1.6 How will the project be monitored and evaluated?

We will implement ongoing feedback systems during the project to respond to the refugees' individual needs and aspirations. We will produce a report evaluating the process and proposing a way forward for the ongoing development of the community social space, self-organised mutual support within the refugee group and creative expression for the longer term. This document will compile reflections on the methodology as well as feedback on each session, from facilitators, participants and partners.

2.1 Expenditure

EXPENDITURE ITEM	AMOUNT	NOTES
Preparation days: identifying & securing spaces, developing process, procuring equipment, organising administration, developing project in conversation with partners, sourcing food	£1,200	3 days each for 2 project leads at £200 per day
Comms: preparing communication, developing printed material (eg. workshop resources) graphic design, printing and distribution/circulation	£600	1.5 day each for 2 project leads at £200 per day
Printing costs	£130	For flyers and information worksheets for the workshops
Travel	£300	travel expenses, (petrol) for 4 trips - one preparation and three workshops
Accommodation:	£160	accommodation for 4 nights for each project lead, one night each trip
Space hire:	£450	space hire for 3 different community venues each for 1 day
Workshop facilitation	£1,200	2 days fee per workshop (including travel, prep, documentation and pack down)
Evaluation & report production	£400	1 day each for project leads to administer, gather and reflect on evaluation processes
Contingency	£560	Expenses for workshops, and extra time required for picking up unanticipated labour
TOTALS	£5,000	

2.2 Income

INCOME SOURCE	TARGET AMOUNT	AMOUNT RAISED	NOTES
Patreon subscriptions from	£4,664	£598	This is income to cover

ab__ members			administrative and infrastructural costs for ab__ members. The target amount detailed is the income we will receive over the next 9 months from the current members.
	£0	£0	
TOTALS	£4,664	£598	

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

£5,000

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

No

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

£834

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

No

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

miss frances w edgerley

21224530

404020

3.1 Your name

Fran Edgerley

3.2 Your contact telephone number

+44 795132259

3.3 Your position within the organisation

Director & Stewardship member

3.4 Your email address

fran@absolidarity.net

3.5 Organisation name

ab solidarity CIC

3.6 Please state the status of your organisation

community interest company limited by guarantee

3.7 Please summarise what your organisation does

ab__ supports the development of independent action research projects working towards a more equitable and just society. These initiatives focus on migration, learning, community infrastructure and resilience in the face of climate change.

It was launched by a group of award-winning arts practitioners and opened for membership in September 2023. We currently have 37 members, paying monthly subscriptions via patreon and are in the process of establishing a bank account for ongoing projects.

3.8 UK correspondence address for organisation

25 Princelet Street, London, United Kingdom E1 6QH

3.9 UK telephone number

+44 795132259

3.10 UK charity number (if applicable)

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3.11 Year established

2022

3.12 Website (if applicable)

<https://absolidarity.net/>

3.13 Social media accounts (if applicable)

https://www.instagram.com/ab_solidarity/

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

theedithmellischaritabletrust.org

Word of mouth