



Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences

Proposed Title: Charities, Trading Subsidiaries and Cultural Dissonance: A Case Study of Trident Group

School: Business

Reference Number: 14

Proposed Supervisory Team: Professor Deborah Lock, Dr Cindy Millman, Dr Bruce Philp

Abstract: This project investigates Trident Group, which is charity which operates with a formal trading subsidiary, Trident Star. The purpose of such trading subsidiaries is to make money for the charity, whilst minimising exposure to taxation and not exposing the charity itself to undue risk. This project will assess the enablers and impediments to successful trading subsidiaries' operations, using Trident Star as a case study. More specifically, the PhD student will examine the market structure and competitor groups in Trident Star's main segmented markets, the trading history and firm performance of Trident Star, and alignment and potential incongruence between the objectives and strategy of Trident Group in general, and Trident Star in particular. The project will explore how Trident Star can leverage greater returns for Trident Group and will provide inform practice for charities which operate formal trading subsidiaries.

Research Environment: UoA17. Within the Business School Centre for Enterprise, Innovation and Growth (CEIG) there are two clusters where are directly relevant to this project proposal. The entrepreneurship cluster focusses on entrepreneurial context including the provision for female housing association tenants and other aspects of social entrepreneurship. The SME Growth cluster is made up of a team of research active staff, PhD students and a research fellow, and it has gained a significant reputation for undertaking applied research on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to enhance understanding of practices linked to growth.

Among the research team, Cindy Millman and Bruce Philp had outputs returned in REF2021, and they expect to have more again in REF2027. Deborah Lock, whilst Director of the Business School, is also an active researcher, and we anticipate will be returned in the next REF. It is expected this PGR project will contribute to at least one REF2027 Impact Case Study, attached to the entrepreneurship or firm growth research clusters of CEIG. We expect a successful completion and 1-3 collaborative research outputs (with the team) to be considered for the output pool in REF.

Applicant Requirements: The applicant should have a good bachelor's degree (2.1 or above). A master's degree in Business, Management or Economics would be desirable and familiarity with the West Midlands region, demography and local economy. Understanding, or experience of, issues related to social housing or domiciliary care would be an advantage.

Contact: Name, e-mail and telephone number:

Professor Deborah Lock, Deborah.Lock2@bcu.ac.uk, 0121 331 4353