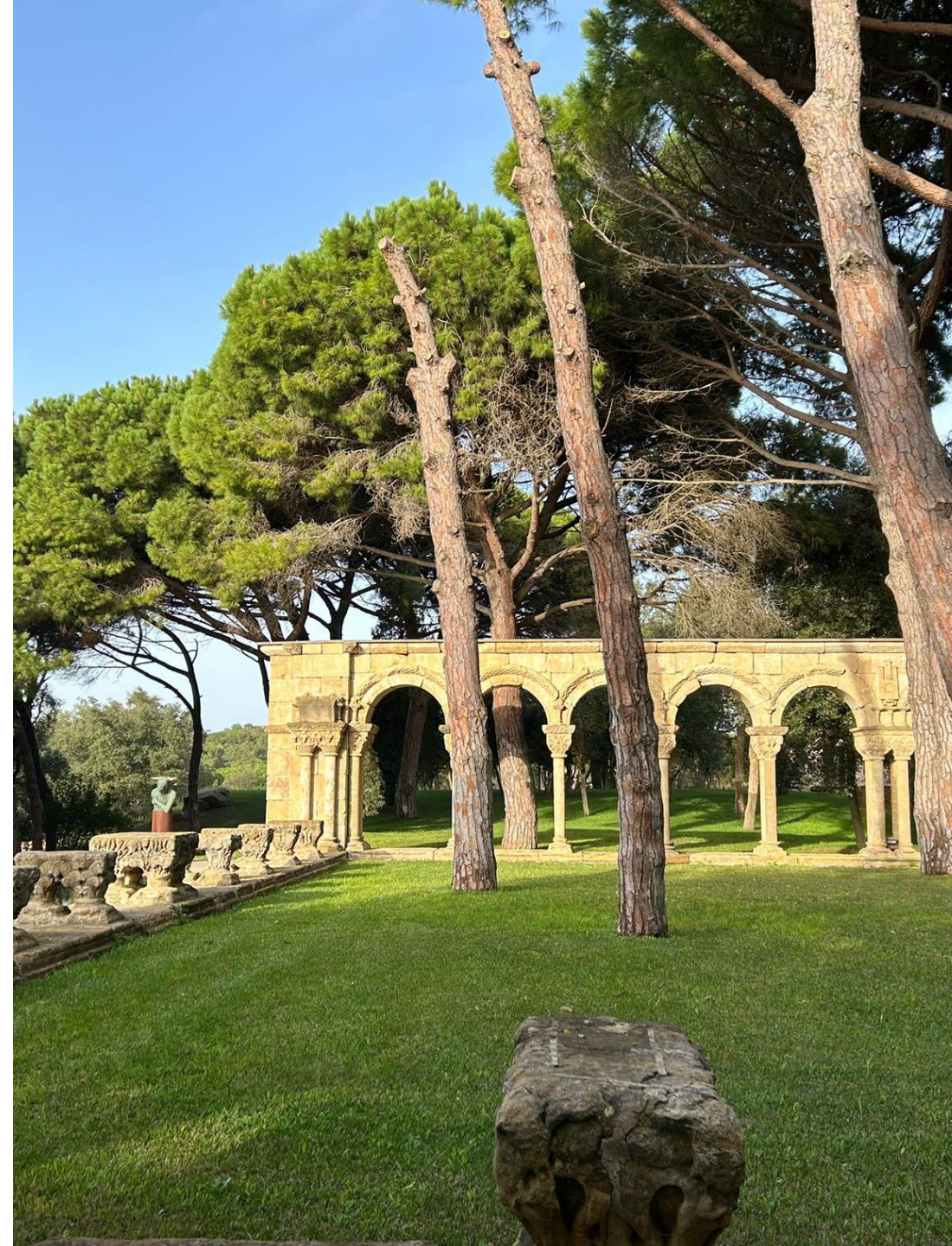


Spiritual Civilization European Gathering

Girona, Spain • 24 October 2022



Background

The Spiritual Civilization Collaborative Community is an initiative of Synergos' Global Philanthropists Circle (GPC), in partnership with The Fetzter Institute and The Lunt Foundation. The intent is to create an inclusive, global community of funders working to shape a movement to shift consciousness and bring their inner work to outer action in order to accelerate and expand impact.

Members of this diverse community, over 97 to date, are funders and investors supporting mindfulness, consciousness, mind science, wellness, spirituality, and/or faith from around the world. The European gathering was designed to continue to promote the sharing of projects, learnings, and challenges, explore and support collaborations and future endeavors, and provide a space for members to engage in contemplative and reflective practices.

This year, the gathering took place in beautiful Spain at the Finca Bell-lloc, owned and operated by Synergos' GPC member Victoria Engelhorn and her family. The stunning rural backdrop of the hacienda was the ideal setting for reflective dialogues, meta music meditation and immersion, and other experiential practices, connecting to others and to nature and taking part in thought-provoking presentations by guest speakers at the event.

The program included holistic, reflective, and experiential activities as well as space for inner work, connection, and co-creation.



Insight Talks

The journey began with welcome and opening remarks by the Synergos' leadership present at the event. These were followed by engaging and provocative presentations by guest speakers on the following topics:

Transformation to Philanthropic Action

Anne Kiehl Friedman, Writer, Reverend, and Social Justice Investor

In this talk, Anne Friedman related her relationship with psychedelics using her personal experience with heartache and physical illness as a tool to demonstrate the effectiveness of plant medicine and why its usage needs to be decriminalized and made accessible to those who need it the most but in a way that indigenous people, voices and stewardship are centered not profits.

She offered to the group that “if we don’t center indigenous wisdom, dignity, and power in this movement, we are replicating the harms of colonization, white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism.

We cannot build a foundation of healing on continued systemic injustice.”

Love in Action

Bob Boisture, President, Fetzer Institute

Bob Boisture delivered a presentation on the role and urgency of love in today’s philanthropy landscape. He described Fetzer’s commitment to research and dissemination of the message of love as the guiding principle and animating force for living in sacred relationship with spirit, self, others in the natural world.

He described Fetzer’s support of promising research around the role of love in human flourishing, which has found the former positively central to the latter.

He went on to outline the Institute’s next steps in its quest to spread this belief at a scale. Its work with prominent and respected faith leaders across different traditions “to articulate the spiritual stream of that new worldview.” They are also working with world-class scientists and philosophers to frame the same in a philosophical, scientific, and theological manner while mobilizing resources and networks for the love “movement.”

Science Behind Wellbeing

Dr. Tara Thiagarajan, Scientist, Entrepreneur, & Philanthropist

Dr. Thiagarajan walked the group through and explained in detail, a series of statistics outlining the global decline in our well-being, particularly among young people and especially post-pandemic.

She detailed how 40% of young people report not having a single friend outside the virtual realm. She explained how a culture of either individualism or collectivism can impact our well-being, negatively in the case of the former and more positively so in the case of the latter. She also referenced the negative correlation between every economic indicator and our mental well-being, making richer countries lag behind less developed countries in overall mental well-being.

She stressed the urgency to act and reverse the persistent sadness, lack of emotional resilience, and suicidal thoughts that plague a lot of our youth today.

Collaborative Action

The meeting continued with a session on collaborative communities and collaborative action. The GPC's collaborative communities offer their members the opportunity and space to inspire each other, learn and take concrete action on common projects. The following are current collaborative communities:

- Spiritual Civilization - explores ways philanthropists can increase consciousness of the ideals and practices in society that work for the greater good.
- Global Dialogue Initiative - comprises of philanthropists and practitioners that seek to learn, share, and collectively implement programs that promote the use of dialogue.
- Climate & Environment - a global community of philanthropists, grassroots organizations and local leaders who are committed to cross-learning and collaborative climate action.
- Shifting the Food System- convenes GPC members interested in using food as a tool for social and environmental change.
- Collective Action for the Amazon - comprised of "new" and "now" generation members, with partner Conexsus, this community strives to protect the Amazon rainforest through a "standing forest economy" approach.

The attendees discussed some of the challenges and opportunities that exist within the different collaborative groups, posed questions to others, and made suggestions to maximize their impact and time together. They voiced the need for an understanding of who is in these global communities and how this relates to today's world, what we can do to support each other and connecting our individual and collective efforts to be in harmony with our inner selves.



Spiritual Civilization Breakout

The collaborative group came together in a reflective exercise to answer the following questions.

- What is this community and how can you contribute?
- What does collaboration mean to us?
- What actions can we take (individually and collectively)?

The result was a rich and diverse wealth of ideas and contributions to increase that community's reach and effect.

The members defined the community as a creative safe space to learn and develop trust and clarity. A place to hold inspiring conversations, share one's vision and provide and receive different perspectives. A body that supports one another at a personal level and pulls together to enhance its influence.

Collaboration was interpreted as the constructive efforts of the group to reach a collective goal while leveraging diversity and nurturing synergies. Taming the ego and prioritizing the greater common good were mentioned as important puzzle pieces for successful collaboration.

The group contributed many suggestions and proposals to optimize and support its concerted efforts. These ranged from a directory with Bios and projects in need of help, to tech tools providing opportunities for collaboration and partnership. From community gatherings in between meetings to a spiritual pool of resources, books and/or practices as well as spiritual gatherings. They also expressed the need for reviewing, monitoring, and evaluating the group's efforts and the concerted selection of objectives, goals and strategy for the future as well as intentional facilitation for co-creating and co-funding projects among the members.

Next Steps

In terms of action in the near term, the Synergos team is creating a new online directory and mapping of member needs that will be dynamic to facilitate connections and collaborative action.

The tool will be rolled out in the first quarter of 2023. In the meantime, the current online community contains the profiles of 97 members, including a project listing and resources, and is accessible for peer connection and learning.







If you would like to learn more, share with the group, or get further involved, please do not hesitate to reach out to Melissa Durda at mdurda@synergos.org