2023

Accommodations Tax Funds Request Application

Organization Name: Lowcountry Gullah

Project/Event Name: Lowcountry Gullah

Executive Summary

An ATAX Effectiveness Measurement form has been attached to this application.

Lowcountry Gullah was developed to promote and more importantly document the richly significant Gullah culture and its contributions to the United States. As a historical resource and cultural tourism influencer, Lowcountry Gullah provides a necessary and central link to the cultural elements that have been woven into the fabric of our society. With a primary focus on the traditional cultural strengths on Hilton Head Island, Lowcountry Gullah is the bridge between all of the Gullah/Geechee communities throughout the designated Gullah/Geechee Corridor, which includes the Sea Islands that span along the eastern seaboard to 35 miles inland from Wilmington, NC to St. Augustine, FL.

Lowcountry Gullah is the first "one-stop-shop" for the Gullah culture throughout the congressionally designated Gullah / Geechee Corridor, with a focus on providing educational information while stimulating interest in cultural and heritage tourism. The site www.lowcountrygullah.com serves as an interconnected resource between all Gullah Geechee cultural assets.

The heritage and traditions of the Gullah Geechee culture cannot be sustained without having protective measures that cover all of its elements. Formed through the stories and history of the Gullah culture, the information comes from the community. Therefore, the sole purpose of Lowcountry Gullah, is to give back to the community. Lowcountry Gullah and the Lowcountry Gullah Foundation utilize a non-profit approach, so that any financial resources earned go directly back to the community in the form of historic land preservation, heirs property protection, cultural

information and education.

The Gullah community and culture has been, in a lot of cases, dismissed and ignored, even though it's a significant part of America's historical story. Many Gullah are living disadvantaged lives, without some of the basic residential needs that many people take for granted, like sewer connections, fire hydrants and drainage. In addition, heirs property and resort development has caused the unique issue of a consistent loss of generational property. These issues are critically significant, causing gentrification and destroying the culture. As a result, our mission(s) are to preserve and document the culture; protect the culture's greatest asset, historic Gullah land for future generations, and provide a consistent voice for the community in conjunction with other Gullah cultural partners throughout the Gullah/Geechee Corridor.

The promotion and preservation of the culture is the primary focus of Lowcountry Gullah. In order to promote the culture, providing information, as well as educating people through creating genealogical connections to the Gullah is an important component to our success. Lowcountry Gullah provides genealogy resources, research assistance and guidance for individuals who are searching their ancestral roots, as well as looking for a cultural foundation.

Lowcountry Gullah fills a significant and necessary void as a central source and online location for Gullah information. People are starving for historic and cultural information, as well as a genealogic connection to their heritage on a local and global level. For the Black community, especially, having a tangible connection to the Gullah culture provides a priceless sense of identity. In a time where ancestry research and identifying one's "self" is a significant part of our society, it's the perfect time to promote the Gullah culture and its relevance to our society to a broader audience.

In addition to being a source of information and promotion for all things Gullah, Lowcountry Gullah provides a direct connection to the culture by offering groups planning assistance for day and overnight tours throughout the community's cultural assets in Savannah, Hilton Head, St. Helena and Charleston.

This year, Lowcountry Gullah has tripled its local, national and international audience. As of this writing, in 2022, the website has grown substantially in every state with over 76,000+ visitors, 424,000+ pageviews and has been accessed by 97% of the world. The worldwide audience clearly demonstrates a significant interest in Hilton Head and the island's Gullah culture.

Content creation is offered and delivered in several different ways (written articles - online, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter; audio podcasts - available through all platforms (eg. Apple, Spotify, Amazon, Google); video shorts and documentaries - YouTube, Instagram and TikTok), so that it can reach a large and varied audience in whatever way they prefer to receive content. The audience is active and engaged in the content, looking at an average of 5 pages per visit and spending an average of 5 minutes per visit. The data and the site's growth clearly demonstrates that the audience has a significant interest in Hilton Head and the island's Gullah culture.

The website enhances and specifically drives tourism by highlighting and promoting the significant contributions that the culture and its people have made to our community and American society. By providing a window, as well as an informational resource into the culture, Lowcountry Gullah enables Hilton Head to be seen as a cultural, heritage and genealogical tourism destination with the backdrop of a great location to vacation that has great historic and cultural assets. By offering stories and information that describe various cultural locations, such as Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park, is intriguing, which in turn sparks a desire for travel. On a regular basis, viewers and followers ask for recommendations of specific places to see and stay, or they are excited about sharing their personal experiences from their own visit(s).

The specific type of tourism that Lowcountry Gullah focuses on can be described in several different terms or subcategories: Cultural Tourism, Heritage Tourism, Genealogical Tourism and DNA Tourism. Regardless of the category, they're described as people who are traveling to discover exactly who they are; they're searching for self-identification, authenticity, experiences (sometimes deeply personal) and to uncover a specific place that connects them directly to their lineage.

Heritage or cultural tourism is a \$171 Billion dollar industry and 81% of US tourists consider themselves as such. When cultural tourists travel, 56% of them include a cultural, historic, or heritage activity or event in their vacation. Millennials drive this type of tourism, with 76% desiring vacations that offer more engagement to authentic travel destinations. A cultural tourist is well educated and affluent 41%, travels and spends more 60%, stays longer overnight 77%, is curious and is interested in growing in their knowledge of diverse histories and cultures.

As interest and curiosity about genealogy and "where I come from" expands, more and more, people are realizing how entrenched the Gullah culture is into the fabric of

our society. The attention and awareness that the culture has garnered has made heritage and cultural tourism become a popular influencer for vacation selection for affluent, active, informed and frequent travelers who are looking for authentic educational experiences. By tapping into an audience that's craving broader travel experiences and richer cultural adventures, Lowcountry Gullah reaches a different type of tourist who has cultural needs and curiosity.

As a cultural influencer and through the promotion of the culture, Lowcountry Gullah is the bridge that connects all of the island's historical preservation and cultural assets. Site visitors receive a virtual tour of the area, including pictures that encourage further investigation and a sample of what one could expect upon visiting. Through articles, images and stories, Lowcountry Gullah highlights, cross-promotes and collaborates with the Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park, the Gullah Museum, the Heritage Library, the Coastal Discovery Museum, Ft. Howell and the Gullah Heritage Tours. The success of Lowcountry Gullah is directly tied to the success and sustainability of the island's Gullah culture.

Since its inception, Lowcountry Gullah and the Lowcountry Gullah Foundation have continuously evolved based on expressed needs of site visitors and more importantly, the culture. As a valuable asset that's not only expanding its cultural identity and exposing its relevance, Lowcountry Gullah is redefining the culture for new generations and information seekers, while strengthening Gullah Geechee families and communities, so that they can discover sustainable generational support and generational wealth, financially, as well as collectively.

2023

Accommodations Tax Funds Request Application

Applications will not be accepted if submitted after 4 pm on September 2, 2022

A. SUMMARY OF GRANT REQUEST:

ORGANIZATION NAME: Lowcountry Gullah

Project/Event Name: Lowcountry Gullah

Contact Name: Luana Graves Sellars Title: Founder

Address: 2 Catesby Lane, Hilton Head Island, SC 29928

Email Address:

lowcountrygullah@gmail.com

Contact Phone: 843-715-3506

Event Date: Event Location:

www.lowcountrygullah.com

Total Budget: \$ 0.00 Grant Requested: \$100,000.00

Provide a brief summary on the intended use of the grant and how the money would be used. (100 words or less)

Lowcountry Gullah promotes Hilton Head and the Gullah culture using an online platform. With funding, Lowcountry Gullah can significantly increase its marketing and advertising reach in its social media presence, through events and other mediums. Expanded promotion of the island's rich history and valuable cultural assets through a variety of creative advertorial models that reach a wide ranging audience in several different ways. Lowcountry Gullah produces culturally focused articles, podcasts,

short videos, informational snippets and documentaries that reach people through their preferred method(s) of obtaining information on several web-based outlets, which peaks interest and directly increases our tourism numbers.

How does the organization/event either drive tourism to Hilton Head Island or enhance the visitor experience on Hilton Head Island? How is this impact being measured? (100 words or less)

Lowcountry Gullah highlights and promotes the contributions that the Gullah culture and its people have made to our community and society. The website serves as an educational driver for all of the island's Gullah cultural assets, and an informational enhancer that informs tourists, including while on the island, about Hilton Head and its location in the heart of the Gullah/Geechee Corridor. As a resource, Lowcountry Gullah markets Hilton Head as a cultural tourism destination while prompting visitors to include the Gullah culture as part of their vacation agenda.

Lowcountry Gullah's website reaches over 20,000+ visitors monthly and 25,000+ on social media.

- A. Total Number of Physical Tourists Served: 34,888
 - A Tourist is considered a non-resident, traveling more than 50 miles to the Town of Hilton Head Island.
- B. Total Number of Physical Visitors Served: 7,016

 A Visitor is considered a non-resident, who travels 50 miles or less to visit the Town of Hilton Head Island.
- C. Total Number of Physical Residents Served: 3,877

 A Resident is considered any person who claims their property address within the limits of the Town of Hilton Head Island as their primary residence.
- D. Total Number of Physical Patrons Served (A+B+C=D): 45,781

In 2022, Lowcountry Gullah expanded its reach to potential tourists, online and through documentary screenings, speaking engagements (live and virtual) and participation in festivals on Hilton Head (Gullah Celebration, Taste of Gullah, Juneteenth, Crescendo, Historic Holidays and Gullah Market) and Juneteenth(s) (Savannah, Charleston, Tybee), Black Expos (Atlanta, Charleston and Columbia), Gullah Festivals (Wilmington, Bluffton and Beaufort), African American Travel Professional Conferences and Miami. Event participation was calculated by clicker with 1,632 zipcodes captured.

In addition to accessing physical tourists outside of Hilton Head, several varieties of data, including demographic information, site visitors and users based on their location, pageviews, interests, trends, searchable keywords and length of time spent on content, and email addresses are obtained.

Utilizing MailChimp, Google Analytics, Jetpack, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn and Twitter data statistics on content interest and viewership are monitored. The numbers demonstrate a highly interested and actively engaged audience, who shares their informational finds with others, while they explore new learning opportunities and an exciting cultural vacation destination.

In addition to numerical and demographic data, as an interactive platform, a significant amount of comments are received. All visitor comments regarding tourism interests and requests for suggestions on areas or attractions to visit are also compiled. As a result, and based on the interest expressed by the audience, information shared is then utilized to create new content that is directly targeted towards popular interests.

In 2022, the growth has been substantial, surpassing it's previous total year end numbers in every category by triple digits by June. As of August, the website significantly increased to roughly 22,000+ visitors a month, 75,738+ users and 420,584 pageviews.

In the last year, a YouTube Channel was added to house the production of cultural video shorts and documentaries to compliment the social media

pages on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and LinkedIn. In May 2022, the Lowcountry Gullah Podcast was launched with 500+ downloads in its first month and averages over 1,000+ per month. Added social media exposure and increased cross promotional vehicles, not only greatly expanded the site's audience and reach, but also established a more diversified, savvy and engaged audience. The Lowcountry Gullah social media footprint continues to grow at an average of 1,000 followers a month. To date, the numbers on each site are as follows: Facebook 20,000+, Instagram 5,000+, YouTube 172,556+ video views/346 subscribers, LinkedIn 263 and Twitter and TikTok 100 combined.

Content interest and active engagement has grown the newsletter to over 3,200 subscribers in 2022 with 95% organically captured and only 2% unsubscribing. The average open rate is 33% and a click rate of 30% compared to national averages of 21%/10% respectively.

The amount and type of data that is complied, on Lowcountry Gullah's active and engaged audience, of which 79% is under 54 years old is very detailed and includes age and gender, location (95% from the US), hobby/interest categories, new vs. returning visitors, mobile (81%) vs desktop/tablet (19%) use, as well as how the site's delivered, whether through social media, newsletter, organically accessed or searched.

B. DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS:

1. For state reporting purposes, give a brief description of the organization. (250 words or less)

Lowcountry Gullah was developed to promote and more importantly document the richly significant Gullah culture and its contributions to the US. As a historical resource and cultural tourism influencer,

Lowcountry Gullah provides a necessary and central link to the cultural elements that have been woven into the fabric of our society. With a primary focus on the traditional cultural strengths on Hilton Head, Lowcountry Gullah is the bridge between all Gullah communities throughout the designated Gullah / Geechee Corridor, which includes all of the Sea Islands along the eastern seaboard.

With a focus on providing information and stimulating cultural tourism, the site www.lowcountrygullah.com serves as an interconnected resource between all Gullah cultural assets by highlighting the Gullah culture and its people through articles, podcasts, documentaries that focus on the history and culture. As a result, the incredible amount of interest generated, has translated into a large national and international following, which has an ongoing demand for information, including requests for speaking engagements. Lowcountry Gullah fills the void as a vital online source for Gullah information, which significantly fueled the expansion of its audience, in addition to creating a space for an online community and cultural dialogue.

At Lowcountry Gullah's core and through support and education of community-based issues, such as the preservation of culture and historic Gullah land, which is the culture's greatest asset. Through raising funds to protect, preserve and prevent the growing critical state that the land faces from being lost through delinquent taxes and heirs property issues.

2. Describe in detail how the requested grant funding would be used? (250 words or less)

Lowcountry Gullah is more than just a website. It's become a strong cultural influencer whose sole purpose is to bring the Gullah culture into a greater awareness worldwide. To date, the site has received significant national and international exposure, which, with the addition of ATAX dollars, the site has been able to demonstrably improve its reach, international audience and ability to be a cultural

influencer and promoter for Hilton Head Island.

Lowcountry Gullah plans to use the ATAX dollars to strengthen and maintain its overall presence; including maintaining the site and design adding fresh imagery; the ability to develop new and relevant content; increase its Search Engine Optimization through GOOGLE/BING, advertising (traditional forms and social media) as well as the promotion of the site.

In addition to printed information and launching a podcast and mobile app, offering visual media through documentaries and videos has proven to be a strong social media drivers for the site.

ATAX dollars enable the site to not only stay updated and relevant, but improve its overall search engine placement. Being able to add dollars towards GOOGLE/BING enables Lowcountry Gullah to achieve higher advertising frequency with broader social media advertising on Facebook and Instagram, which in turn would continue to extend its worldwide audience and reach.

The dollars would allow for the design and printing of collateral materials, which would be used to promote the site and culture at a variety of events and travel conferences, such as the African American Tourism Conference and other relevant organizations.

3. What impact would partial funding have on the activities, if full funding were not received? What would the organization change to account for partial funding? (100 words or less)

Partial ATAX funding would lessen the amount of national and international exposure and promotional advertising that Lowcountry Gullah could place, as well as its ability to maintain itself as a Gullah resource that educates and empowers people across the country and around the world. Full ATAX funding would enable the site to expand its search engine optimization by providing priority placement, as well as to broaden its overall social media presence. The greater

placement priority that the site is afforded translates directly into a higher amount of searchable access that the site achieves, thus delivering greater exposure to Hilton Head.

4. What is expected economic impact and benefit to the Island's tourism? (100 words or less)

Lowcountry Gullah's strong presence and following is recognized and shared internationally. As interest and curiosity about genealogy and "where I come from" expands, learning how entrenched the Gullah culture is into the fabric of our society, sometimes affects people personally. The attention and awareness that the culture has garnered makes heritage and cultural tourism a popular influencer for vacation selection by affluent, active, informed and frequent travelers who are looking for deeper and authentic educational and historical knowledge. Tapping into an audience that's craving broader travel experiences and richer cultural adventures, Lowcountry Gullah reaches that different and sought after tourist.

- 5. In order to comply with the State's Tourism Expenditure Reveiw Committee annual reporting requirements, please classify your current grant request into the following authorized categories:
 - 1 Destination Advertising/Promotion

 Advertising and promotion of tourism so as to develop and increase tourist attendence through the generation of publicity.

 2 Tourism-Related Events

 Promotion of the arts and cultural events.

 3 Tourism-Related Facilities

 Construction, maintenance and operation of facilities for civic and cultural activities including construction and maintenance of

access and other nearby roads and utilities for the facilities.

4 - Tourism-Related Public Services

7 - Operation of Visitor Information Centers

Operating visitor information centers.

The criminal justice system, law enforcement, fire protection, solid waste collection and health facilities when required to serve tourists and tourist facilities. This is based on the estimated percentage of costs directly attributed to tourist. Also includes public facilities such as restrooms, dressing rooms, parks and parking lots.

5 - Tourist Public Transportation
Tourist shuttle transportation.

6 - Waterfront Erosion/Control/Repair
Control and repair of waterfront erosion.

Total: 100 %

0 %

6. If not covered elsewhere in the application, please describe (a) how the organization will collaborate with other organizations to enhance tourism efforts, and (b) provide a venue or service not otherwise available to visitors to the Town of Hilton Head Island. (250 words or less)

As a cultural influencer and through the promotion of Hilton Head's Gullah culture, Lowcountry Gullah is the bridge that connects all of the island's cultural and historic preservation assets.

Through an online platform, site visitors and social media followers receive a varied virtual tour of the area, including pictures that encourage further investigation and a sample of what one could expect upon visiting. The curiosity that the information develops frequently prompts tourists to seek recommendations for lodging and/or places to go and experience. Utilizing the instantaneous dialogue that Social Media provides plays a significant part in enabling tourists to quickly see and experience cultural assets that interest them.

By continuously sharing information through the podcast, mobile app, articles, imagery, informational videos, documentaries, and events, Lowcountry Gullah highlights, cross-promotes and collaborates with

the: Mitchelville Freedom Park, the Gullah Museum, NIBCAA, the Gullah Heritage Tours, Coastal Discovery, and the Heritage Library by providing visitors a unique and trendy view into the culture that had not existed previously. Collaborating on cultural projects, videos and documentaries, providing speaking engagements and classes, as well as promotion and participation in local cultural events, are just a few of the ways that we have been able to further our common goals.

With our broad exposure, Lowcountry Gullah created an active online community that offers the culture a specifically targeted space and voice. As such, the growth and ultimately the success of Lowcountry Gullah, is directly tied to the success and sustainability of the island's Gullah culture.

7. Additional comments. (250 words or less)

Lowcountry Gullah's primary mission is preserving and protecting Gullah culture. In order to be a catalyst of a sustained Gullah culture, educating and informing is at our core. Through documentation, education and information the richness of the culture is being preserved and promoted, however, in addition to preservation, there needs to be protection. A significant element in ensuring the survival of the culture includes protecting its greatest asset, historic generational land might have been originally purchased by slaves or the first generation after the civil war.

At one point, minimally, 3,500 acres on Hilton Head was Gullah owned. Today, that number is less than 700 acres. The status of Gullah land is at a critical state, because it has been quietly eroding as a result of increasing development and annual tax sales. By providing informational and educational exposure to heirs' property issues and its legal and financial complications, through fundraising, Lowcountry Gullah's goal is to be beneficial to the community as a whole.

Structurally, Lowcountry Gullah provides a funding source for the

community to draw upon to support its critical issues such as; maintaining Gullah land ownership by preventing loss through property taxes; help property owners with residential improvements; as well as being a relevant source of cultural communication and connection throughout the community. The Gullah community has a significant number of needs and Lowcountry Gullah addresses them as they develop and evolve. Through this work, Lowcountry Gullah will not only highlight and promote the culture, but protect, strengthen and preserve it.

C. FUNDING:

1. Please describe how the organization is currently funded. (100 words or less)

Lowcountry Gullah's popularity has led to interests/requests for Gullah art and cultural products, which provides a revenue stream, through our online store, the Lowcountry Gullah Market. In addition to online, we offer cultural products at our event and festival booths. With the addition of ATAX dollars, Lowcountry Gullah has significantly increased its marketing and advertising reach and exposure online and on social media.

Continuous efforts seeking local, state, and national grants, and other sponsorship opportunities are an ongoing priority. The financial support that they afford assists in keeping Lowcountry Gullah viable operationally and able to expand its reach and exposure.

2. Please also estimate, as a percentage, the source of the organization's total annual funding.

	Government Sources Corporate Support, Sponsors Ticket Sales, or Sales and Services	5	Private Contributions, Donations and Grants Membership, Dues, Subscriptions Other		
other _l Yes ₋	ne organization requested other public sources or organization X	ıs?			
•	olease list top 3 sources and a onald Burkle Foundation	amou	nts. \$10,000.00		
	enry Chapin en Snow Foundation		\$50,000.00 \$10,000.00		
	L INFORMATION: Disclosure: Start Month: <u>Ja</u>	nuar	y End Month: <u>December</u>		
Financial S	Statement Requirements:				
1. The u	pcoming year's operating bu	dget	for the organization.		
Е	Budget Years Provided:				
	2022				
•	revious two years and current ization.	year	profit and loss reports for the		
F	Profit and Loss Years Provided:				
	2021 2022 YTD				

Balance Sheet Years Provided: 2022 2021 4. The previous two years and current year IRS Form 990 or 990T. IRS Form 990 or 990T Years Provided: 2019 2020 2021 E. FINANCIAL GUARANTEES AND PROCEDURES: 1. Provide a copy of the **official minutes** wherein the organization approves the submission of this application. An official set of minutes have been attached to this application. 2. Indicate whether your organization follows Town procurement guidelines or has its own procurement guidelines which are utilized and followed in the expenditue of ATAX grant funds. Follow Town procurement guidelines Utilize and follow organization's own procurement guidelines Our organization does not have or follow procurement guidelines F. MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS: If you received 2021 or 2022 HHI ATAX funds

3. The previous two years and current year **balance sheets**.

Page 16 of 20

1. List any ATAX award amounts received in 2021 and/or 2022.

2021	\$75,000.00
2022	\$75,000.00

2. How were the ATAX fundsused? To what extent were the objectives achieved? The ATAX Effectiveness Measurement spreadsheet available in the application portal will show the numerics. Use the space below for verbal comments. (200 words or less)

2022 ATAX funds were used to advertise and promote Hilton Head and the Gullah culture through a variety of very successful online options and in person opportunities that not only grew the audience, but establish a clear focus on island culture and specific and targeted information, like stories about Historic Neighborhoods. Consistent fresh content creation includes written articles, a podcast, stories, snippets of information (short informative pieces that inform and tease the reader to discover more, leading them to the site), and the production of video shorts and documentaries (i.e. writing, research, voiceovers, editing and storyline development).

With the website as it's foundation, each element contains Hilton Head cultural information and images that are produced and shared with followers. The contents are shared during face to face interactions, posted online, distributed through the newsletter, and advertised to an audience larger than our core through their contacts and other social media platforms.

To date, in addition to high monthly website traffic, the social media exposure with the various platforms received 3,835,979 impressions, 1,408,367+ people reached, 300,000+ post engagements, 242,617 video plays and 101,772+ link click throughs, 34,891 post reactions, 30,224 facebook direct to website landing page views and 6,970 post shares.

3. What impact did this have on the success of the organization/event and how did it benefit the community? (200 words or less)

ATAX dollars has a tremendous impact on the accelerated and continuous growth of Lowcountry Gullah. The funding enables us to maintain a consistent online presence and produce and deliver fresh content for a very active and engaged audience who responds, shares and discusses the content. The funding is clearly attributed to an overall increase in new users and in online sessions.

YTY, the site's numbers rose to coverage in every state and from 44 to 140 countries. A monthly increase of 1,000+ to 20,000+ visitors and an annual increase(s) from 74,293 to 78,576 users; 73,573 to 91,327 sessions; 393,530 to 435,138 pageviews respectively. The average viewer reads 5 pages/session.

Social Media also experienced tremendous success. Facebook followers increased from 7,000 to 20,000 to date; Instagram from 4,000+ to 5,000+. Additional social media platforms (LinkedIn, Twitter, TikTok and YouTube) grew, broadened and diversified our audience's reach with additional subscribers, viewers and followers.

Currently, in production is a documentary on the US Colored Troops in collaboration with the Heritage Library. Offering content like this tells untold perspectives of the Hilton Head story, delivering it in a uniquely different way that significantly enhances the historic value of the island for residents and tourists.

4. How does the organization measure the effectiveness of both the overall activity and of individual programs? (200 words or less)

Lowcountry Gullah measures its effectiveness through the

awareness, levels of interest and incredible growth that it generates. Utilizing the data services: Google Analytics, Jetpack, Instagram and Facebook Audience Data, we track content interest, growth and audience usage weekly. As a result, we're able to understand which post or video receives greater attention, feedback and focus; and based on that, we can tailor and target the specific audience segments and topics that have the highest interest or amount of engagement.

Based on the data, the site delivers an audience of Adults 18-65+ and specifically 7%-18-24; 10%-25-34, 16%-35-44; 19%-45-54; 24%-54-64, 22%-65+, with a gender split of 37% Men/63% Women.

89% of the viewers are in the US with the top 10 states being: NC, SC, FL, GA, TX, CA, NY, VA, WA, and PA. The top 10 US cities: New York, Charlotte, Washington DC, Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, Raleigh, Dallas and Houston.

11% of users are from 140 countries, counting the top 10 as: Canada, United Kingdom, France, Ireland, India, Sweden, Germany, Phillipians, and Indonesia.

In comparing the previous year(s) data, the states increased and international growth went from 4% to 7%, which demonstrates significant international tourist interest in Gullah cultural programming and information.

Signature: Luana Graves Sellars

Title/Position: Founder

Mailing Address: 2 Catesby Lane, Hilton Head, SC 29928

Email Address: lowcountrygullah@gmail.com

Office Phone Number: 843-715-3506

Home Phone Number: 954-770-5826

"Individually we are one drop; but together we are an ocean."

– Ryunosoke Saturo

COLLABORATE, COMMUNICATE, COOPERATE, COORDINATE - All that and in no particular order is how we work together in support of our organizational missions and commitment to our community. The arts, culture and history community comes together regularly because we believe that we are partners in promoting all that our Island has to offer to visitors, students and residents. We are there for each other and we actively seek out ways to partner when our missions intersect.

WHO: Coastal Discovery Museum, Culture HHI, Gullah Museum, Heritage Library Foundation, Hilton Head Island Land Trust, Lowcountry Gullah, Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park.

WHO ELSE: USCB HH, Arts Center of Coastal Carolina, Art League, Arts Council of Hilton Head, Beaufort County Schools, Chamber of Commerce, Heritage Classic Foundation, NIBCAA, MLK Committee for Social Justice, Island Recreation Center, Island Writers' Network, Morris Center, Beaufort County Public Library, Turtle Trackers, local artists, local authors, OLLI, local community groups and service organizations.

WHAT: Crescendo, Gullah Celebration, Juneteenth, Historic Holidays, Lantern Parade, Family Fun Day, Farmers Market, Our Storied Island, Gullah Food Festival, public art, historic site tours, Fish & Grits, Diversity Weekend, MLK Day, Griot's Corner, Mitchelville Annual Forum, Freedom Walk, Holiday Nights & Lights, Freedom Day, HHI Land Trust Eagle Nest, RBC Heritage, Art Moves, Return to Nature: Gullah Artists Documentary, Student Mural Exhibit, Hilton Head Island: The Pursuit of Freedom & Opportunity and the list goes on and on.

HOW: Shared radio, print and TV advertising, shared social media, event participation, event partnerships, combined research, shared resources, websites, board updates, training, brochures, rack cards, newsletters, volunteer sharing, mutual respect and strong communication.





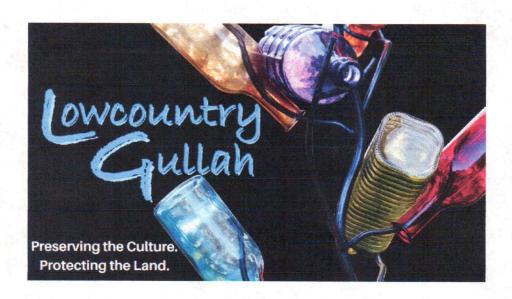












Board of Directors Meeting July 29, 2022

In Attendance: Fred Hamilton, Herbert Ford, Melvin Campbell, Luana Graves Sellars

Resolved: The application request of \$100,000 for the promotion and marketing

of Lowcountry Gullah through the website and social media presence. Lowcountry Gullah's proposed ATAX application is approved as

submitted.

Voting In Favor: Unanimous

Luana M. Graves Sellars

Founding Member

) ..., .., ...

Herbert Ford

Member

July 29 2022

Lowcountry Gullah Operational Budget - 2022

		Annual Itemized Cost	<u>Annual</u> Expense
Operational Costs			\$6,852.36
operational costs	Office Supplies	\$200.00	70,032.30
	South State Banking Fees	\$500.00	
	Merchant Account Fees	\$500.00	
Utilities		γ300.00	
Othices	Electric	\$1,860.00	
	Water	\$1,116.00	
	Landline / Internet	\$2,248.20	
	Cellphone	\$428.16	
Advertising	Cemphone	γ -1 20.10	\$45,000.00
Advertising	Google	\$15,000.00	γ-13/000.00
	Facebook/Instagram/YouTube/Twitter	\$30,000.00	
Content Design	racesooky mistagramy rourase, rwitter	430,000.00	\$73,000.00
content besign	Snippets/Social Media/Newsletter	\$25,000.00	ψ <i>1</i> 3,000.00
	Long/Short - Video Production	\$20,000.00	
	Artwork	\$3,000.00	
	Site Content/Writing/Images	\$25,000.00	
Marketing	Site Content, Writing, images	725,000.00	\$44,500.00
Marketing	Social Media	\$30,000.00	Ÿ ŢŢ ,500.00
	Website	\$12,000.00	
	Collateral Material Design	\$2,500.00	
Website	Conditional Material Design	72,300.00	\$6,389.72
VVCDSICC	Domain Hosting - Go Daddy	\$389.72	40,303.72
	Monthly Upload / Site Maintenance	\$6,000.00	
Equipment	Worthly opload / Site Maintenance	70,000.00	\$2,700.00
Equipment	Computer	\$1,000.00	72,700.00
	Recording/Microphone/Video	\$1,500.00	
Outreach	need ang microphone, video	ٱ,500.00	\$1,000.00
	Miscellaneous	\$1,000.00	γ - ,300.00
	Wilderfulledus	71,000.00	
Total 2022 Budget			\$172,589.72

1:25 PM 08/29/22 **Accrual Basis**

Lowcountry Gullah Summary Balance Sheet As of August 29, 2022

	Aug 29, 22
ASSETS Current Assets	206,680.00
TOTAL ASSETS	206,680.00
LIABILITIES & EQUITY Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	1,701.76
Total Liabilities	1,701.76
Equity	204,978.24
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	206,680.00

1:31 PM 08/29/22 Accrual Basis

Lowcountry Gullah Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2021

	Dec 31, 21
ASSETS	
Current Assets	186,681.62
TOTAL ASSETS	186,681.62
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	1,701.76
Equity	184,979.86
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	186,681.62

12:53 PM 08/29/22 **Accrual Basis**

Lowcountry Gullah Profit & Loss January 1 through August 29, 2022

	Jan 1 - Aug 29, 22
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Direct Public Grants	76,310.56
Direct Public Support	1,000.00
Donations	200.00
Lowcountry Gullah Market	13,090.45
Other Types of Income	1,837.58
Program Income	75.17
Total Income	92,513.76
Expense	
Advertising & Promotion	12,176.92
Business Expenses	6,896.14
Contract Services	7,442.40
Event Booths	3,042.97
LCG Market Inventory	8,065.02
Lowcountry Gullah Market Oper	3,711.47
Marketing	4,715.00
Newsletter	108.12
Operations	2,852.74
Production Expense	7,083.58
Research	230.30
Social Media Advertising	6,724.77
Travel and Meetings Uncategorized Expenses	4,506.07 3,044.24
Venue Rental	1.250.00
Website Maintenece	665.64
Total Expense	72,515.38
Net Ordinary Income	19,998.38
Net Income	19,998.38

1:35 PM 08/29/22 Accrual Basis

Lowcountry Gullah Profit & Loss

January through December 2021

	Jan - Dec 21
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Charitable Contributions	147,400.00
Direct Public Grants	77,218.50
Direct Public Support	22,651.18
Donations	-125.00
Lowcountry Gullah Market	4,429.20
Other Types of Income	8,105.21
Total Income	259,679.09
Expense	
Advertising & Promotion	1,026.43
Business Expenses	2,750.09
Contract Services	27,166.12
Facilities and Equipment	292.12
Gullah Property Tax Payments	4,081.70
LCG Market Inventory	456.02
Marketing	6,340.16
Operations	290.14
Other Types of Expenses	81.80
Production Expense	13,850.00
Reconciliation Discrepancies	262.46
Social Media Advertising	27,241.01
Website Maintenece	928.22
Total Expense	84,766.27
Net Ordinary Income	174,912.82
Net Income	174,912.82

Form **990-EZ**

Short Form Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax

OMB No. 1545-0047

Open to Public Inspection

Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service

Under section 501(c), 527, or 4947(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code (except private foundations)

▶ Do not enter social security numbers on this form, as it may be made public.

► Go to www.irs.gov/Form990EZ for instructions and the latest information.

A I	For the 2021 calendar year, or tax year beginning 01/01/2021 and ending		12/31/2021				
В	B Check if applicable:		C Name of organization			D Employer identification number	
	Address change LOWC		LOWCOUNTRY GULLAH			8	4-2343316
	Name cha	inge	Number and street (or P.O. box if mail is not delivered to street address)	Room/suite	E Telephone number		
=	Initial retur		90 Gloucester Road 1204		843-715-3506		
=	Finai returi Amended	n/terminated	City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code		F Grou	ір Ехе	mption
=	Application		Hilton Head, SC 29928		Num	nber 🕨	•
G /	Account	ing Method:	✓ Cash	н	Check I	▶ 🔲 i	f the organization is not
1 1	Vebsite	:► www	lowcountrygullah.com				ach Schedule B
J T	ax-exen		ck only one) — ☐ 501(c)(3) 🗸 501(c) (4) ◄ (insert no.) ☐ 4947(a)(1) or	f 527	(Form 99	90).	
			✓ Corporation ☐ Trust ☐ Association ☐ Other				
L A	dd lines	s 5b, 6c, and	7b to line 9 to determine gross receipts. If gross receipts are \$200,000 or r				
(Pa	rt II, colı	umn (B)) are \$	500,000 or more, file Form 990 instead of Form 990-EZ			▶ \$	184,679
Р	art I	Revenu	e, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets or Fund Balanc	es (see the	instruc	ctions	for Part I)
		Check if	the organization used Schedule O to respond to any question i	in this Part I			🔽
	1	Contribution	ns, gifts, grants, and similar amounts received			1	179,935
	2	Program se	ervice revenue including government fees and contracts		[2	0
	3	Membersh	ip dues and assessments		[3	0
	4	Investment	income		[4	0
	5a	Gross amo	unt from sale of assets other than inventory 5a		0		
	b	Less: cost	or other basis and sales expenses		0		
	С		ss) from sale of assets other than inventory (subtract line 5b from li	ne 5a)	[5c	0
	6	Gaming and fundraising events:					
ine	а	a Gross income from gaming (attach Schedule G if greater than \$15,000)					
Revenue	b	Gross income from fundraising events (not including \$ 0 of contribution)					
Be		from fundraising events reported on line 1) (attach Schedule G if the					
		sum of suc	h gross income and contributions exceeds \$15,000) 6b		4,744		
	С		t expenses from gaming and fundraising events 6c		0		
	d	() 5 5 (
		line 6c) .				6d	4,744
	7a		s of inventory, less returns and allowances		0		
	b		of goods sold		0		
	C	-	it or (loss) from sales of inventory (subtract line 7b from line 7a) .			7c	0
	8	Other reve	nue (describe in Schedule O)			8	0
	9		nue. Add lines 1, 2, 3, 4, 5c, 6d, 7c, and 8			9	184,679
	10		similar amounts paid (list in Schedule O)			10 11	3,979
"	11		Benefits paid to or for members				0
Se	12 13		Salaries, other compensation, and employee benefits			12 13	17.700
Expenses	14					14	17,700
X	15	Printing, publications, postage, and shipping				15	0
_	16				ī	16	150
	17		nses (describe in Schedule O) <u></u>			17	62,070
_	18		deficit) for the year (subtract line 17 from line 9)			18	83,899 100,780
Net Assets	19		or fund balances at beginning of year (from line 27, column (A))			.5	100,780
\ss	"		r figure reported on prior year's return)			19	3,437
ਰ 20		-	ges in net assets or fund balances (explain in Schedule O)			20	0
ž	21	Net assets	or fund balances at end of year. Combine lines 18 through 20		<u>.</u> ▶	21	104,217
			· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·				

Form 990-EZ (2021) Page 2 Part II Balance Sheets (see the instructions for Part II) Check if the organization used Schedule O to respond to any question in this Part II (A) Beginning of year (B) End of year 3,999 22 22 Cash, savings, and investments 7,801 0 23 23 0 Other assets (describe in Schedule O) . . _ 24 75,000 24 105,315 25 78,999 25 113,116 26 Total liabilities (describe in Schedule O) . . 75,562 26 8,899 Net assets or fund balances (line 27 of column (B) must agree with line 21) . . . 27 3.437 27 104,217 Part III Statement of Program Service Accomplishments (see the instructions for Part III) **Expenses** Check if the organization used Schedule O to respond to any question in this Part III (Required for section What is the organization's primary exempt purpose? See Schedule O, Statement 1 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations; optional for Describe the organization's program service accomplishments for each of its three largest program services, others.) as measured by expenses. In a clear and concise manner, describe the services provided, the number of persons benefited, and other relevant information for each program title. Lowcountry Gullah raises funds through donations to protect historic Gullah land in Hilton Head and Bluffton SC from being sold at the annual Beaufort County Tax Sale of Delinquent Properties. Three local properties/families were protected from going to the sale. (Grants \$ 3,979) If this amount includes foreign grants, check here 28a 0 29) If this amount includes foreign grants, check here . 29a 30) If this amount includes foreign grants, check here 30a **31** Other program services (describe in Schedule O) (Grants \$ **0**) If this amount includes foreign grants, check here . . 31a 32 0 List of Officers, Directors, Trustees, and Key Employees (list each one even if not compensated – see the instructions for Part IV) Check if the organization used Schedule O to respond to any question in this Part IV (c) Reportable (d) Health benefits, (b) Average compensation contributions to employee (e) Estimated amount of (Forms W-2/1099-MISC/ (a) Name and title hours per week benefit plans, and other compensation devoted to position 1099-NEC) deferred compensation (if not paid, enter -0-) 2.00 0 0 0 **Herbert Ford** Member 0 Fred Hamilton 2.00 0 n Member Melvin Campbell 2.00 0 0 0 Member Jazmin Sellars 2.00 0 0 0 Member Luana Graves Sellars 40.00 0 0 0 Founder Member

Other Information (Note the Schedule A and personal benefit contract statement requirements in the Part V instructions for Part V.) Check if the organization used Schedule O to respond to any question in this Part V Yes No 33 Did the organization engage in any significant activity not previously reported to the IRS? If "Yes," provide a 33 34 Were any significant changes made to the organizing or governing documents? If "Yes," attach a conformed copy of the amended documents if they reflect a change to the organization's name. Otherwise, explain the 34 Did the organization have unrelated business gross income of \$1,000 or more during the year from business 35a 35a If "Yes" to line 35a, has the organization filed a Form 990-T for the year? If "No," provide an explanation in Schedule O 35b Was the organization a section 501(c)(4), 501(c)(5), or 501(c)(6) organization subject to section 6033(e) notice, reporting, and proxy tax requirements during the year? If "Yes," complete Schedule C, Part III 35c 36 Did the organization undergo a liquidation, dissolution, termination, or significant disposition of net assets during the year? If "Yes," complete applicable parts of Schedule N 36 Enter amount of political expenditures, direct or indirect, as described in the instructions ▶ 37a 37a 37b 38a Did the organization borrow from, or make any loans to, any officer, director, trustee, or key employee; or were any such loans made in a prior year and still outstanding at the end of the tax year covered by this return? 38a If "Yes," complete Schedule L. Part II, and enter the total amount involved 39 Section 501(c)(7) organizations. Enter: 39a Gross receipts, included on line 9, for public use of club facilities Section 501(c)(3) organizations. Enter amount of tax imposed on the organization during the year under: section 4911 ▶ ; section 4912 ► ; section 4955 ► Section 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and 501(c)(29) organizations. Did the organization engage in any section 4958 excess benefit transaction during the year, or did it engage in an excess benefit transaction in a prior year that has not been reported on any of its prior Forms 990 or 990-EZ? If "Yes," complete Schedule L, Part I 40b ✓ Section 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and 501(c)(29) organizations. Enter amount of tax imposed on organization managers or disqualified persons during the year under sections 4912, 0 Section 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and 501(c)(29) organizations. Enter amount of tax on line All organizations. At any time during the tax year, was the organization a party to a prohibited tax shelter List the states with which a copy of this return is filed ► sc 41 The organization's books are in care of ► Luana Graves Sellars Telephone no. ▶ 843-715-3506 Located at ▶ 90 Gloucester Road 1204, Hilton Head, SC 29928 ZIP + 4 ▶ At any time during the calendar year, did the organization have an interest in or a signature or other authority over Yes No a financial account in a foreign country (such as a bank account, securities account, or other financial account)? 42b If "Yes," enter the name of the foreign country ▶ See the instructions for exceptions and filing requirements for FinCEN Form 114, Report of Foreign Bank and Financial Accounts (FBAR). At any time during the calendar year, did the organization maintain an office outside the United States? 42c If "Yes," enter the name of the foreign country ▶ Section 4947(a)(1) nonexempt charitable trusts filing Form 990-EZ in lieu of Form 1041 - Check here 43 and enter the amount of tax-exempt interest received or accrued during the tax year 43 Yes No 44a Did the organization maintain any donor advised funds during the year? If "Yes," Form 990 must be 44a Did the organization operate one or more hospital facilities during the year? If "Yes," Form 990 must be 44b If "Yes" to line 44c, has the organization filed a Form 720 to report these payments? If "No," provide an 44d **45a** Did the organization have a controlled entity within the meaning of section 512(b)(13)? 45a Did the organization receive any payment from or engage in any transaction with a controlled entity within the meaning of section 512(b)(13)? If "Yes," Form 990 and Schedule R may need to be completed instead of 45b

Page 3

Form 99	90-EZ (2	J21)						F	age -
								Yes	No
46		ne organization engage, directly or in							
_		ndidates for public office? If "Yes," o		Part I			. 46		✓
Part		Section 501(c)(3) Organizations		-ti 17 10h	-d COd		l - l 4	مالا بام	
		All section 501(c)(3) organization	s must answer que	stions 47–49b ar	na 52, and	complete th	e tables t	or iin	es
		50 and 51.	andula O ta raanand	to any avection i	n thin Dort \	п			
		Check if the organization used Scl	nedule O to respond	to any question i	n this Part v	/1		· ·	·
47	Did +	he organization engage in lobbying	activities or have a	section 501(b) aloc	ation in offo	at during the	tay	Yes	No
7/		If "Yes," complete Schedule C, Par					. 47		
year? If "Yes," complete Schedule C, Part II				48					
49a		ne organization make any transfers to		•					
b		es," was the related organization a se	•	•					
50		olete this table for the organization's						es. an	ıd kev
		oyees) who each received more than							
			(b) Average	(c) Reportable		alth benefits,			
	(a)	Name and title of each employee	hours per week	compensation (Forms W-2/1099-MIS		ons to employee ns, and deferred	(e) Estimate other con		
			devoted to position	1099-NEC)		pensation	Other con	грепза	LIOIT
None									
	-		Φ100 000						
		number of other employees paid ovo				- 			
51	\$100	,000 of compensation from the organ	s live highest compe nization. If there is no	ne. enter "None."	eni contracti	ors who each	received	more	tııaı
		· · · · · ·							
	(a)	Name and business address of each independ	ent contractor	(b) Type of s	service	(c) Compensati	on	
None									
	T								
		number of other independent contra			. –		<u> </u>		
52		the organization complete Schedu Deted Schedule A	iie A? Note: All se		_	must attaci	n a ▶ □ Yes	. 🗆	No
l Indor n		of perjury, I declare that I have examined this r				the best of my k			
		d complete. Declaration of preparer (other than					nowledge and	i bellet,	11.15
		1							
Sign		Signature of officer			[Date			
Here		Luana Graves Sellars, Founder							
		Type or print name and title							
Paid		Print/Type preparer's name	Preparer's signature		Date	Check] if PTIN		
Prep	arer					self-emplo	yed		
Use (Firm's name ▶			F	Firm's EIN ▶			
	-···y	Firm's address ▶			F	Phone no.			
N / - \ + l	ne IRS	discuss this return with the preparer	shown above? See i	nstructions			► ☐ Yes		No

SCHEDULE O (Form 990 or 990-EZ)

Supplemental Information to Form 990 or 990-EZ

Complete to provide information for responses to specific questions on Form 990 or 990-EZ or to provide any additional information.

2021

OMB No. 1545-0047

► Attach to Form 990 or Form 990-EZ.

Open to Public Inspection

Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service

► Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for the latest information.

Name of the organization **Employer identification number LOWCOUNTRY GULLAH** 84-2343316 Form 990-EZ, Part I, Line 10 - Paid Beaufort County Property Taxes on the behalf of Gullah families in jeopardy of losing their historic land Form 990-EZ, Part I, Line 16 - Advertising and Promotional support from the Town of Hilton Head Island ATAX dollars Form 990-EZ, Part II, Line 24 - Online store inventory \$5,315 Intellectual Property Asset \$100,000 Form 990-EZ, Part II, Line 26 - Online merchandise \$8455

Schedule O, Statement 1 LOWCOUNTRY GULLAH

Form: **Form 990-EZ (2021)** EIN: **84-2343316**

Page: 2 Part III

Primary Exempt Purpose

Cultural resource and information to document the Gullah culture and save historic Gullah land.

Primary Exempt Purpose

Form 990-N		Electronic Notice (e-Postcard)	OMB No. 1545-2085
Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service	for Tax-Exemp	ot Organization not Required to File Form 990 or 990-EZ	2020
A For the 2020 Calendar year, or	tax year beginni	ing 2020-01-01 and ending 2020-12-31	Open to Public Inspection
B Check if available ☐ Terminated for Business ✓ Gross receipts are normally \$50,0	000 or less	C Name of Organization: <u>LOWCOUNTRY GULLAH</u> 90 Gloucester Road 1204, Hilton Head, SC, US, 29928	D Employee Identification Number <u>84-2343316</u>
E Website: www.lowcountrygullah.com		F Name of Principal Officer: <u>Luana Graves Sellars</u> 90 Gloucester Road 1204,	-

Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice: We ask for the information on this form to carry out the Internal Revenue laws of the United States. You are required to give us the information. We need it to ensure that you are complying with these laws.

Hilton Head, SC, US, 29928

The organization is not required to provide information requested on a form that is subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act unless the form displays a valid OMB control number. Books or records relating to a form or its instructions must be retained as long as their contents may become material in the administration of any Internal Revenue law. The rules governing the confidentiality of the Form 990-N is covered in code section 6104.

The time needed to complete and file this form and related schedules will vary depending on the individual circumstances. The estimated average times is 15 minutes.

Note: This image is provided for your records only. Do Not mail this page to the IRS. The IRS will not accept this filing via paper. You must file your Form 990-N (e-Postcard) electronically.



Confirmation

Home | Security Profile | Logout

e-Postcard Profile Select EIN Organization Details Contact Information Confirmation

Your Form 990-N(e-Postcard) has been submitted to the IRS

• Organization Name: LOWCOUNTRY GULLAH

• EIN: 842343316

• Tax Year: 2019

• Tax Year Start Date: 01-01-2019

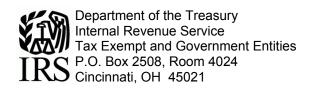
• Tax Year End Date: 12-31-2019

• Submission ID: 10065520202473992445

• Filing Status Date: 09-03-2020

• Filing Status: Pending

MANAGE FORM 990-N SUBMISSIONS



Date: August 19, 2019
Person to Contact: Customer Services
Contact telephone number: 877-829-5500

Lowcountry Gullah 90 Gloucester Road 1204 Harbourmaster Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29928

We received your Form 8976, *Notice of Intent to Operate Under 501(c)(4)*, you filed on August 13, 2019. This acknowledgement is not a determination by the IRS that you qualify as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code (Code) Section 501(a) as an organization described in Code Section 501(c)(4).

For important information about your responsibilities, including recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements, go to www.irs.gov/charities.

If you have questions, you can call Customer Services at 1-877-829-5500.