

# 2025 Accommodations Tax Funds Request Application

**Organization Name:** TEDxHiltonHead

**Project/Event Name:** TEDx Hilton Head 2025 Event

## Executive Summary

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

Below, I have explained our alternative Effective Measurement approach, but I want to start by providing a background and status.

In 2023, a new organizing committee took over TEDxHiltonHead, and admittedly, we were not sure what we had on our hands or how successful we would be. The 2024 ATAX grant was very generous and allowed us to level-up our 2024 event and invest in our future with the mid-term objective of becoming self-sufficient.

Yes, I said our goal is to become self-sufficient.

Our 2023 event, which used the previous grant, was a grand slam. It sold out *and* created a waiting list for the 2024 event. Please note that our attached survey is administered directly by TED, so it is unvarnished. The verbatims should make Hilton Head proud!

In early 2024, we realized that we could become self-sufficient so we shifted our strategic approach. ATAX is a fantastic program and TEDxHiltonHead would not exist without it. The original TEDxHiltonHead organizer built a strong foundation for our event. In 2020, COVID hit, and the event had to regain traction in 2021 and 2022.

In 2023, a new organizing committee took over the planning and used \$25K grant for that year to rebuild the TEDxHiltonHead brand and audience. The event was a resounding success, and big plans started for 2024. The 2024 event is on November 9, 2024, and we expect it to sell out quickly. The original vision was to grow TEDxHiltonHead into a weekend event, and ATAX again came to the table with a generous 2024 grant. During our planning this year, we realized we have the ability to become self-sufficient and should not need your generosity after 2025.

We are in the middle of using our 2024 grant as follows:

- \* rebuilding our website SEO. TED is a highly searched for topic and people travel for TED events as indicated in Google Analytics.

- \* investing in reusable marketing assets like signs and digital tools.

- \* Creating a fundraiser so we can raise our own funds to execute TEDxHiltonHead. Since this is the first fundraiser, we are investing in marketing this event to ensure we secure high-end, repeat donors and sponsors.

## ALTERNATIVE TO 2023 MEASUREMENT FORM

I took over 2023 TED event and did a terrible job tracking things. I am trying to be better in 2024 so I hope this alternative reporting approach is adequate.

The budget for 2023 delivered a small profit, which remains in the CFL. We do everything through the CFL and therefore, have not kept our own records which is why we don't have a traditional budget template and did not submit a balance sheet (CFL doesn't provide that). To provide you with concise insight into our spending and effectiveness, this Effectiveness Measurement approach focuses on top expenses, lessons learned and application of learnings so we can continuously improve.

## MARKETING

**1. 2023 PR Firm was \$20,000** - TEDxHiltonHead always worked with a PR firm that handled a lot of the marketing, digital, website and administration. *Learning:* This made it very easy for me as the organizer so it was worth it personally but not in terms of return on investment. For 2024, we decided to do marketing in-house and reduce this expense. It did put a burden on our team (and Sheena). **EFFECTIVENESS RESULT: Saved \$20,000 in 2024.**

**2. 2023 Marketing was over \$5K** - Most marketing funds were allocated to local print media 1-2 months prior to the event. After the ads were booked and in the market, we were already close to sold out. In hindsight, that money didn't need to be spent. *Learning:* We reviewed travel industry research and conventional marketing best practices and learned that people plan trips 6 months or more in advance. Therefore, we began our 2024 marketing much earlier. Advertising effectiveness research proves that frequency drastically improves results. Therefore, we will invest most of our ATAX funds in comprehensive social, digital, and consistent communication with our audience. This will help to reach tourists while they are planning their vacation and stay top of mind when they are planning activities. **EFFECTIVENESS RESULT:** Before our tickets are even on sale, we have a waitlist of over 200 people who want tickets. This is good learning for the future - we will only spend right before the event if tickets haven't sold.

**3. Efficiency Improvements** - 2023 was "One and done" which is an inefficient approach to marketing. Typical of many events, marketing for the 2023 event was short-term, last minute and one-time. This worked to sell out the event but is not a sustainable or efficient strategy. *Learning:* 2024 is taking a longer-term approach by investing in marketing that builds repeat customers (through relationship management), sells tickets earlier (building a waitlist and executing earlier marketing) and efficient marketing (reusable signs and collateral). *Learning:* We have a very loyal following and an upscale demographic we need to nurture and leverage. With this insight, we are investing to create a self-funding fundraiser to help fund our main event. **EFFECTIVENESS RESULT:** 2024 will be a pivotal year and if successful, we will be able to reduce our dependency on ATAX funding. Because the main event can sell out with good marketing, we will focus on the fundraiser and \$15,000 to build a long-term donor base.

## PROGRAMMING

**1. 2023 Venue was \$5000**—The Arts Center is very expensive, at \$5,000 plus \$12 per ticket. *Learning:* After careful evaluation and analysis of alternative venues and based on our survey feedback, we determined that this investment is worth it. They are the best venue for staging our videos and because the video is key for a TED Talk, we can't reduce the quality. **EFFECTIVENESS RESULT: Sold out event, waitlist and stellar reviews.**

This application happens at an interesting point in time:

\* Our 2023 event is over. Our grant funds were used to execute a sold-out event.

\* Our 2024 event hasn't happened. Tickets go on sale on Sept 9, and I hope to report in the presentation in a month that we sold out. I can also add more context to the 2024 grant effectiveness. To add to this 'limbo' we used 2024 grant to launch longer-term marketing strategies and tools including a CRM database, incredible SEO that is driving major results, and launch a fundraising event

\* In part, our 2024 grant will be used to market to the high-value donor fundraiser that will be the cornerstone of our future funding. Tickets for that event go on sale three days after this submission.

#### In terms of ATAX EFFECTIVENESS - 2023 OBJECTIVES

1. Sold out - accomplished
2. Positive Feedback - exceeded expectations
3. Awareness - massive with over 100,000 global video views with Hilton Head branding.

My October presentation will provide a better overview of 2024 effectiveness in terms of:

- \* Event Ticket Sales
- \* Fundraising Sales and donations to date
- \* A significantly reduced 2025 request

# 2025 Accommodations Tax Funds Request Application

Date Received: 09/06/2024

Time Received: 03:48 PM

By: Online Submittal

*Applications will not be accepted if submitted after 4 pm on September 6, 2024*

## A. SUMMARY OF GRANT REQUEST:

**ORGANIZATION NAME:** TEDxHiltonHead

**Project/Event Name:** TEDx Hilton Head 2025 Event

Contact Name: Laurie Laykish

Title: Organizer

Address: 800 Main St, Hilton Head, SC 29926

Email Address:

laurie.laykish@wearelocallife.com

Contact Phone: 843-227-4436

Event Date: November 2025

Event Location: Arts Center of Coastal  
Carolina

**Total Budget:** \$50,050.00

**Grant Requested:** \$10,000.00

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

1. **Venue/Staging** - The Arts Center is the only venue that provides a world-class stage, but it does come with a hefty price for both the venue and ticket fees. This is a critical budget need.
2. **Speakers** - Excellent speakers are the cornerstone of any TED event. TEDxHiltonHead cannot pay speakers a fee; however, a modest budget is required to assist with their travel/accommodations. We will secure donated accommodations to reduce the strain on the budget.
3. **Marketing** - Fortunately, TEDxHiltonHead has built a solid database, can access the TED marketing network and we invested in marketing solutions, so minimal funds will be required in 2025.

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)

**TOURISTS**—TED is a world-class brand that attracts an educated, well-traveled audience. In addition to the marketing we do, TEDxHiltonHead benefits from TED's global marketing engine's reach. Thousands of people visit TED's website and social media to find TEDx events to attend, and Hilton Head is literally on their global map.

**ENHANCEMENT**—Locals are proud of TEDxHiltonHead, which is an option for tourists besides golfing and pickleball, creating a diverse experience!

**MEASUREMENT** - 1. Event attendance - repeated sell-outs confirm the event's popularity. 2. Web traffic and email capture are awareness measurements. 3. Survey - positive feedback is resounding

A. Total Number of Physical Tourists Served: 100+

*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: 100+

*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: 100+

*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): 350 - 500 (this is attendance only, not including the visibility of the TEDxHiltonHead branding on the thousands of videos watched.

How was the Number of Visitors/Tourists Documented? (250 words or less)

**TICKET SALES** - The Arts Center provides a list of all sales through their box office including zip and area code. Note: Their Zips may be understated as many people have a second home here but indicate a local zip. The 2024 event attendees who purchased through the box office were approximately 30% were tourists, 30% visitors and 40% local. This data is not exact as it does not identify 1. locals who bring their guests; 2. Second Home owners; 3. Missing zips as the third-party ticket site did not capture Zip.

**WEB TRAFFIC** - Source: Google Analytics

The TEDxHiltonHead site has a very powerful regional draw and beyond Hilton Head. Around 51% of our traffic comes from the tech triangle of Atlanta, Jacksonville, and Raleigh. In the last 12 months, we had 4,600 people visit the website (this excludes bot traffic)

Source: SEMrush and SEO Copilot for the following facts, these are industry-accepted metrics:

The phrase: "special room rates TEDX hilton head" was searched 412 times in 2023 and almost 520 in 2024. This increase in search traffic demonstrates growing the visitor interest in travelling to our event.

The phrase: "Hilton head TEDx speakers 2023" was searched 273 times / already this year, it's been searched 643, again demonstrating the growing popularity of the event.

**Why this is important:** If half our traffic is from drivable cities, it's easy to see half of those searches for rooms and speakers have a very high probability of executing on coming.

**VIDEO VIEWS** - This is huge - Our 2023 event had almost 40,000 views on our YouTube channel alone. That number does not include the views from the videos that the speakers sent out, or the TED channel or social media. Over 100,000 video views is a conservative estimate. That is powerful awareness for Hilton Head, especially when combined with travel intention; Hilton Head branding is in every video, and Hilton Head is also on the TED website global map for people who plan TED trips. Again, it is a conservative estimate that our HILTON HEAD videos reached over 100,000 GLOBAL viewers, promoting Hilton Head and reinforcing that our community is one of thought leaders.

The 2024 event is on November 9, 2024; therefore, the estimates stated here and the survey are from the 2023 event, which we will use to estimate future events.

## B. DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS:

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

TEDxHiltonHead is a volunteer-run organization that is licensed by TED that operations rely on volunteers, sponsors, donors and ATAX support. The TED mission is to bring ideas worth spreading to inspire intellectual curiosity and continuous learning and establish Hilton Head as a center for thought-leading cultural events. TEDx Hilton Head believes in the power of ideas to impact our lives positively.

Invited speakers each have 18 minutes or less to share their ideas from the stage on the world-famous Red Circle. The backdrop is the TEDx Hilton Head logo. TED and TEDx speakers have included Bill Gates, Simon Sinek, Tony Robbins and Brenne Brown. Many speakers 'get their big break' on the TEDx stage and we hope to let Hilton Head be the global stage for our speakers.

Hilton Head has several established arts and cultural events but TEDx is unique in focusing on thought leadership and educating people on topics including community, environment, and history. TEDxHiltonHead has met TED's global standards and they have renewed our license each year.

The global organization TED will promote the Hilton Head event on their network reaching hundreds of thousands of people looking for TEDx events to watch and attend.

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

We are confident the 2025 event will sell out again. 2023 sold out (except for 4 seats) and

the Arts Center said it is rare for a one-time event to sell out as we did. At the time of writing this, 2024 tickets have not gone on sale yet, however, we have pre-sold 60 of the 320 tickets and have an advance-notice waitlist of over 200 people who want to secure tickets the minute they go live on Sept 9. The following is the **GOAL**, (source) and *Amount*.

1. **AWARENESS**— (ATax) Digital marketing (SEO, Social, leverage database) creates and maintains awareness of the event. *\$2000ish*
2. **ATTENDANCE** - (ATax) Local print and social will drive remaining ticket sales. *\$2000 ish*
3. **EXPERIENCE** - (ATax) Signage and a program that recognizes the speakers and sponsors will be classy and represent the quality of the event and our destination. *\$3000*
4. **SPEAKER ATTRACTION** - (Sponsor, Donors) Secure donated accommodations and sponsorships to offset travel.
5. **GLOBAL BRANDING FOR HILTON HEAD** - (ATax) This is an event outcome that costs zero dollars - probably the best promotion for Hilton Head ever. We do need the funds for a top videographer - *\$3000ish*

Rationale for fund use: We will replicate tactics from a successful 2023 and 2024: This success is due to i) the quality of the event last year, as noted by the included survey, ii) advance marketing. People plan vacations 3-10 months in advance, so we invested in digital marketing well before the event, iii) relationship management via an email and social strategy.

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)*

1. **Venue** - we could not afford The Arts Center. This would seriously impact the quality of the event and the image for Hilton Head in the videos that are viewed globally.
2. **Video Production** - we hire the best videographer as TED has very high standards for their globally-shared videos. We may not be able to afford that videographer.
3. **Marketing reach** - we would not be able to promote as far in advance which is a critical part of our success.

If we got partial funding (of our reduced request), we would have to consider other venues.

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

1. **Enhanced Experience** - According to the 2023 Visitor Profile Survey, 57% of visitors are interested in cultural experiences (not including historical). TED events are the epitome of culture and learning and provide visitors an opportunity to 'round out' their

activities. Study

here: [https://issuu.com/hilton\\_head\\_island-bluffton\\_vcb/docs/hhi\\_vps\\_2023 - 031924](https://issuu.com/hilton_head_island-bluffton_vcb/docs/hhi_vps_2023_-_031924)

**2. Direct** - Approximately 80 - 100 visitors will be directly served BUT...

**3. Indirect, larger impact**

5. In order to comply with the State's Tourism Expenditure Review Committee annual reporting requirements, **please classify your current grant request into the following authorized categories:**

<b>1 - Destination Advertising/Promotion</b> <i>Advertising and promotion of tourism so as to develop and increase tourist attendance through the generation of publicity.</i>	50 %
<b>2 - Tourism-Related Events</b> <i>Promotion of the arts and cultural events.</i>	45 %
<b>3 - Tourism-Related Facilities</b> <i>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.</i>	5 %
<b>4 - Tourism-Related Public Services</b> <i>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.</i>	0 %
<b>5 - Tourist Public Transportation</b> <i>Tourist shuttle transportation.</i>	0 %
<b>6 - Waterfront Erosion/Control/Repair</b> <i>Control and repair of waterfront erosion.</i>	0 %
<b>7 - Operation of Visitor Information Centers</b> <i>Operating visitor information centers.</i>	0 %
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100 %</b>

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)

**1. ATAX RECIPIENT WEBINAR** - we co-hosted a webinar with the Concours and Seafood festival organizer, so other grant recipients to share ideas and how to collaborate. Over 15 recipients attended and we shared best advertising practices and ways to collaborate]. We thought we could benefit from those premier events and share their learning and best practices.

**2. HHSO**—Because the Symphony has a similar audience (upscale, over 55yrs, interested in culture), we share each other's social posts and will share our respective



events with our email lists. We also hired a pianist from the Symphony for our first ancillary fundraising event and we will pay that local musician.

**3. Seafood Festival and Concours** - In addition to co-hosting a collaboration webinar, we joined forces to share and like each other's social media posts to extend reach. They have a much larger audience than we do so we can benefit from their reach. We provide a niche audience so they can benefit from our unique demographic.

**4. Crescendo** - They kindly include TEDxHiltonHead in their programming calendar.

**5. WAHHI** - TEDxHiltonHead donates \$5 from each ticket sold to WAHHI back to their organization.

Because TEDxHiltonHead's online and email audience is comprised of so many people who are out-of-market, we recognize we have the opportunity to share other Hilton Head events with that audience. This helps other events extend their reach and does not cannibalize anyone's attendance or marketing efforts.

7. Additional comments. (250 words or less)

The opportunity for Hilton Head to be shared through the global TED digital platforms cannot be over-stated. TED is a very recognized and revered brand. There is no cost for us, the organizers, to leverage the TED resources, but it is critical that our events are world-class in order to be approved by TED as they renew our license each year. That is why we invest in quality, awareness and branding.

Hilton Head is a world-class destination and TED is a world-class brand. Our dream is to continue to unite these two brands to grow pride in our community, attract thought leaders and create a special experience for tourists and visitors that extends beyond the expected.

For 2024, we added a fundraiser with the goal of raising a net of \$15,000 in the first year. Originally we were going to add a Sunday event to reach a bigger audience but we decided to walk before we run and focus on flawless execution of the Main Stage TEDxHiltonHead talks and our first fundraiser called Broadway on the Beach.

We are on the way to becoming much less dependent on ATAX. Thanks to our 2023 event success, learning and investment in the 2024 main event and fundraiser, we have established the foundation for an operation that will become self-sufficient as early as 2026. Our 2025 request is much lower than in previous years because we invested our 2024 grant into reusable marketing collateral, sustainable marketing tools, and the development of a major fundraiser.

**C. FUNDING:**

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

**SPONSORSHIPS**—We sold approximately \$12,000 for the 2024 event and have budgeted an increase to \$15K in 2025.

**TICKET SALES** - The venue is limited in possible seat sales so the only potential revenue increase from this source is a price increase. We are hesitant to do that as TED should be accessible to any and many. Ticket sales should net \$5,000.

**DONATIONS** - We admit we could do a better job securing additional sources like local funds. We want to create a volunteer role to source those funds.

**VOLUNTEERS** - 4 volunteers work all year and 10 volunteers help during the event.

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

<u>      </u>	Government Sources	<u>      </u>	Private Contributions, Donations and Grants
<u>25</u>	Corporate Support, Sponsors	<u>50</u>	Membership, Dues, Subscriptions
<u>25</u>	Ticket Sales, or Sales and Services	<u>      </u>	Other

3. Has the organization requested other ATAX or any other funding from other public sources or organizations?

Yes     No   X  

If so, please list top 3 sources and amounts.

#### D. FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

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Fiscal Year Disclosure: Start Month: **Jan 2023** End Month: **Dec 2023**

#### Financial Statement Requirements:

1. The upcoming fiscal year's **operating budget** for the organization.

Budget Provided: **Yes**

2. The previous two fiscal years and current year-to-date **profit and loss reports** for the organization.

Current fiscal year Profit Loss Report Provided: **Yes**

Previous fiscal year Profit Loss Reports Provided:

**2022- Previous FY 1**

3. The previous two fiscal years and current year-to-date **balance sheets**.

Current fiscal year Balance Sheet Provided: **Yes**

Previous fiscal year Balance Sheets Provided:

2022 - Previous FY 1

4. The previous two years and current year **IRS Form 990 or 990T**.

Current year IRS Form 990 or 990T Provided: **Yes**

Previous IRS Form 990 or 990T Years Provided:

2012 - Previous FY 1

**E. FINANCIAL GUARANTEES AND PROCEDURES:**

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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 expenditure 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:**

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If you received 2023 or 2024 HHI ATAX funds

1. List any ATAX award amounts received in 2023 and/or 2024.

2022	\$16,000.00	TEDxHiltonHead 2022
2022	\$16,000.00	TEDx Hilton Head 2022 "Making Waves"
2023	\$25,000.00	TEDx Hilton Head 2023 "The Power of"
2024	\$45,000.00	TEDx Hilton Head 2024 "SHIFT Happens"

2. How were the ATAX funds used? 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)

Our event is on November 10, 2024, and the first fundraiser is on the 9th so we do not have 2024 results. Here are our objectives:

**MAIN EVENT (TEDx TALK) OBJECTIVE = sell out!!!!** We expect to sell out and continue to build a loyal following to become a must-see event on Hilton Head.

**FUNDRAISER OBJECTIVE - Net \$15,000** - this is a new event where we invested ATAX marketing funds to attract high-end donors and sponsors who will continue to support TEDxHiltonHead and reduce our future reliance on ATAX funds. Since this is year one, we are investing in promotion and execution for this event so that the attendees: i) donate more at the event, beyond the \$250 ticket price and ii) become regular donors. The venue is a donated home on Beach Lagoon; entertainment by Hilton Head; food at cost by Sprout Momma; donated alcohol.

#### **OVERALL STRATEGIES**

1. Build a marketing foundation - repeat customers, reusable assets, efficient digital marketing platforms.
2. Build repeat customers - become the event people plan to visit each year, similar to wine festivals. This is possible as the data shows TED has a loyal following that searches for travel to events.

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

**PRIDE** - Hilton Head residents are well-educated and avid life-long learners as demonstrated by the proliferation of organizations like Olli, World Council and the many service organizations. Many residents hail from urban markets where TED talks are popular so having a world-class TEDx in our 'small-ish' community is a source of pride.

**SENSE OF COMMUNITY** - The TEDxHilton Head talk, our new fundraiser, and active social media create a connection between like-minded people.

**SOMETHING UNIQUE** - There are many great local events and activities, but we can't think of one single-day event that educates, informs, and inspires as TEDxHiltonHead does. As referenced previously, the Visitor Survey indicates people want diverse activities.

**SUPPORT LOCAL TALENT**—We ensure many of the speakers are local. We source only local talent. This year, we will hire an up-and-coming pianist from the Symphony to

perform. We have a Gullah speaker and a local Broadway performer. For any catering, we insist on covering food and server costs so as not to drain small local businesses, and in turn, we support those businesses to our audience.

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

**ATTENDANCE** - Our goal is to sell out. We wish The Arts Center had a bigger capacity so we could increase the number of people served.

**ONLINE ATTENDANCE**—TEDxHiltonHead's online presence impacts tourism and the Hilton Head brand, as reported in our Google Analytics. This is a non-traditional event where 100,000 people watch our speakers online with the Hilton Head brand in front of them on screen.

**FEEDBACK**—Our survey feedback far exceeds TED's high standards globally. TED issues a standard survey to all attendees, so it is independent and is consistent with every TED event in the world. TED measures Net Promotor Score (a research method to measure satisfaction), and TED expects a score of 50%. Our score was a mind-blowing 86%.

**SELF-SUFFICIENT** - We believe we can "ween off" AtAX funding. With the generous contribution for 2024, we have invested in marketing collateral and digital assets that do not need to be redone each year. Our in-house marketing can sell this event out and we will focus on growing our sponsor and donor base. Finally, we will leverage our audience's passion to host our own fundraising event.

## G. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Provide an executive summary using the "ATAX Effectiveness Measurement" form provided via the link on the left, or by utilizing the text area provided below to report uses of the organization's prior ATAX grant, if applicable. If creating your own format, please refer to the "ATAX Effectiveness Measurement" form and use the criteria as a guideline in developing your executive summary below. (1300 words or less)

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generous and allowed us to level-up our 2024 event and invest in our future with the mid-term objective of becoming self-sufficient.

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**2. 2023 Marketing was over \$5K** - Most marketing funds were allocated to local print media 1-2 months prior to the event. After the ads were booked and in the market, we were already

close to sold out. In hindsight, that money didn't need to be spent. *Learning:* We reviewed travel industry research and conventional marketing best practices and learned that people plan trips 6 months or more in advance. Therefore, we began our 2024 marketing much earlier. Advertising effectiveness research proves that frequency drastically improves results. Therefore, we will invest most of our ATAX funds in comprehensive social, digital, and consistent communication with our audience. This will help to reach tourists while they are planning their vacation and stay top of mind when they are planning activities. **EFFECTIVENESS RESULT:** Before our tickets are even on sale, we have a waitlist of over 200 people who want tickets. This is good learning for the future - we will only spend right before the event if tickets haven't sold.

**3. Efficiency Improvements** - 2023 was "One and done" which is an inefficient approach to marketing. Typical of many events, marketing for the 2023 event was short-term, last minute and one-time. This worked to sell out the event but is not a sustainable or efficient strategy. *Learning:* 2024 is taking a longer-term approach by investing in marketing that builds repeat customers (through relationship management), sells tickets earlier (building a waitlist and executing earlier marketing) and efficient marketing (reusable signs and collateral). *Learning:* We have a very loyal following and an upscale demographic we need to nurture and leverage. With this insight, we are investing to create a self-funding fundraiser to help fund our main event. **EFFECTIVENESS RESULT:** 2024 will be a pivotal year and if successful, we will be able to reduce our dependency on ATAX funding. Because the main event can sell out with good marketing, we will focus on the fundraiser and \$15,000 to build a long-term donor base.

## **PROGRAMMING**

**1. 2023 Venue was \$5000**—The Arts Center is very expensive, at \$5,000 plus \$12 per ticket. *Learning:* After careful evaluation and analysis of alternative venues and based on our survey feedback, we determined that this investment is worth it. They are the best venue for staging our videos and because the video is key for a TED Talk, we can't reduce the quality. **EFFECTIVENESS RESULT: Sold out event, waitlist and stellar reviews.**

This application happens at an interesting point in time:

\* Our 2023 event is over. Our grant funds were used to execute a sold-out event.

\* Our 2024 event hasn't happened. Tickets go on sale on Sept 9, and I hope to report in the presentation in a month that we sold out. I can also add more context to the 2024 grant effectiveness. To add to this 'limbo' we used 2024 grant to launch longer-term marketing strategies and tools including a CRM database, incredible SEO that is driving major results, and launch a fundraising event

\* In part, our 2024 grant will be used to market to the high-value donor fundraiser that will be the cornerstone of our future funding. Tickets for that event go on sale three days after this submission.

In terms of ATAX EFFECTIVENESS - 2023 OBJECTIVES

1. Sold out - accomplished
2. Positive Feedback - exceeded expectations
3. Awareness - massive with over 100,000 global video views with Hilton Head branding.

My October presentation will provide a better overview of 2024 effectiveness in terms of:

- \* Event Ticket Sales
- \* Fundraising Sales and donations to date
- \* A significantly reduced 2025 request

Signature: Laurie Laykish

Title/Position: Organizer

Mailing Address: 800 Main St, Hilton Head, SC 29926

Email Address: [laurie.laykish@wearelocallife.com](mailto:laurie.laykish@wearelocallife.com)

Office Phone Number:

Home Phone Number:



We chose the option to an alternative approach to reporting because we have changed our objective and operation strategy.

Please review the Executive summary.

# TEDxHiltonHead, 4-NOV-2023



44 responses (40 promoters, 2 passives, 2 detractors)

365-DAY NPS

86



10

.....

Nov 15, 2023 – 8:09 am

10

....@....

Nov 13, 2023 – 9:39 pm

Perfect venue and speakers.

10

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Nov 13, 2023 – 5:16 pm

It is a great venue and forum by which to spread ideas that needs sharing. My wife and I thoroughly enjoyed our experience. The master of ceremonies was awesome! The speakers chosen were a neat outfit and delivered impact.

10

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Nov 10, 2023 – 7:46 am

8 EXCELLENT speakers

10

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Nov 9, 2023 – 6:26 pm

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.....@.....

Nov 9, 2023 – 10:30 am

Great work, always enjoy and learn!

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Nov 8, 2023 – 10:26 pm

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Nov 7, 2023 – 9:38 pm

Fantastic line up of speakers! They were simply inspirational, motivational, and positive. I left feeling inspired and I googled all of the speakers as I wanted to learn more! Can't wait until next year!!

10

.....@.....

Nov 7, 2023 – 9:19 pm

Excellent event in every way

10

.....@.....

Nov 7, 2023 – 8:23 pm

The speakers and topics were very timely.

10

.....@.....

Nov 7, 2023 – 7:55 pm

It was a great experience being live at the event as opposed to watching a video later

9+

.....@.....

Nov 7, 2023 – 7:37 pm

10

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Nov 7, 2023 – 7:12 pm

8+

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Nov 7, 2023 – 6:52 pm

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.....@.....

Nov 7, 2023 – 6:39 pm

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Nov 7, 2023 – 6:04 pm

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.....@.....

Nov 7, 2023 – 5:53 pm

10

.....@.....

Nov 7, 2023 – 5:22 pm

10

.....@.....

Nov 7, 2023 – 1:27 pm

I wasn't really sure what it would be like - I was so pleasantly surprised. It was extremely well done as well as being thought provoking! Loved it

10+

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Nov 7, 2023 – 9:52 am

All the speakers were inspiring! Great event.

10+

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Nov 7, 2023 – 9:02 am

Several great speakers and wonderful venue.

9+

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Nov 7, 2023 – 8:41 am

I really enjoyed most of the speakers but recognize the fact that this type of event is not for everyone.

10+

.....@.....

Nov 7, 2023 – 8:40 am

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Nov 7, 2023 – 7:21 am

Each speaker was passionate about their idea. three hours slipped by quickly. It was quite inspiring!

10+

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Nov 7, 2023 – 7:10 am

I learn something new from each speaker. Thought provoking ideas.

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I loved attending the TEDx sessions to learn more about my community the world. First hand knowledge from dynamic individuals at a small ticketed cost is very valuable as well as affordable.

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Great format and host. More time is needed between sessions to allow audience members to talk amongst themselves. Snacks at intermission would be great.

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Nov 6, 2023 – 11:03 pm

The speakers topics gave a new perspective on how I view matters that never crossed my mind before.

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Nov 6, 2023 – 10:56 pm

Well attended. Captivating speakers with interesting conversations. Sound system was excellent.

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Nov 6, 2023 – 10:28 pm

Great speakers

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Nov 6, 2023 – 10:15 pm

It was a lovely afternoon. I appreciate TEDx as you can actually pay attention...I love the time parameters. The the theater was nice and cozy and it went of w/out a hitch.

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Nov 6, 2023 – 8:56 pm

I only thought one of the speakers was inspiring.

10+

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Nov 6, 2023 – 8:43 pm

The speakers were spectacular. There was something for everyone. It was super well organized and professional.

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Nov 6, 2023 – 8:32 pm

I thought I would hear about new ideas. I thought several speakers were excellent and I enjoyed the day. However I have heard the same concepts before.

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Nov 6, 2023 – 8:07 pm

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TEDxHiltonHead  
Board Meeting  
August 9, 2024

Attendees: Laurie Laykish, Debi Lynes  
Absent: Kim Turner, Carol Schembra

Whereas TEDxHiltonHead is a locally-organized not-for-profit and officially licensed TED event operating under the auspices of the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry and,

Whereas the need for additional funding is required to execute a world-class event that meets or exceeds the expectations of local and visitor attendees and the TED global audience and,

We hereby approve the application to the Town of Hilton Head for ATAX funds to assist in creating a world-class experience.

Approved on August 9, 2024,



---

Laurie Laykish, Organizer



---

Debi Lynes, Co-Organizer

**TEDx Hilton Head 2025 - Preliminary Budget**

<b>AREA</b>	<b>DETAILS</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Ticket Sales	270 available	\$10,000	Net \$39/ticket
Fundraiser	Friday event	\$15,000	Net revenue based on \$250/ticket X 100 tickets less expenses
Sponsorships		\$15,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$40,000</b>	
<b>MARKETING &amp; PR</b>			
Website	Refresh all content	\$4,000.00	Update site including: Added new sponsors, new speaker bios, new event info, add videos from previous events. Adding Google Analytics to track traffic sources and views. Enhance SEO on site to improve reach.
Print & Broadcast	Local and Regional Media	\$500.00	Event should sell out with grass roots
Social Media	Paid Facebook and Instagram campaigns	\$7,800.00	Facebook, Instagram. Add Linked IN and enhance You Tube page.
Newsletters	3-4 email blasts through Mail Chimp	\$400.00	Negotiated NFP rate. Design in-house
PR Firm	Publicity to secure articles and regional coverage	\$0.00	In-House
Printing	Program, signage	\$3,000.00	Local Printer
<b>OPERATIONS</b>			
Venue	Arts Center	\$10,000.00	Investment to a premiere venue. The costs are significantly higher with incredibly high ticket fees and additional costs.
Videos	Improve production quality	\$3,500	Videos are shown around the world and must be of world-class quality.
Staging	Hilton Head branding on stage	\$2,000	Props and Slides, signs, transport items
VIP Events	Venues, Food and Beverage	\$1,500	Venue donated. Food only. Alcohol donated
<b>SPEAKERS</b>			

Speaker Expenses <b>FRIDAY FUNDRAISER</b>	Air, accommodation, per diem	\$5,000.00	Trying to negotiate in-kind for many expenses
Venue	Private home		Donated
Promotion	Advertising	\$2,500.00	
Décor, disposibles	Florals, plastics	\$2,500.00	Many donated
Food	Sprout Momma	\$4,000.00	Food cost and tip staff
Booze	Sponsor	\$500	Donated
Misc			
<b>ONGOING</b>	For staging items and supplies	\$1,850	Public Storage.
Storage	Biz cards, stationary, event items	\$500	Most investments have been made
Supplies		\$500	
Misc			

**TOTAL EXPENSES \$50,050.00**

**NET (\$10,050.00)**



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

**TEDx of the Lowcountry Fund**

January 01, 2023 through December 31, 2023

Short Term Investment Pool

*Statement of Activity*

	January 01, 2023 through December 31, 2023	July 01, 2023 through December 31, 2023
<b>Beginning Balance</b>	\$12,328.19	\$13,442.51
<b>Contributions &amp; Investment Activity</b>		
Contributions to Fund	\$42,421.46	28,921.46
Interest and Dividend Income	\$ 240.75	89.25
<b>Total Contributions &amp; Investment Activity</b>	\$42,662.21	\$29,010.71
<b>Expenses</b>		
Distributions - Program Expenses	\$37,635.67	\$25,198.57
Fees - Administrative and Investment	\$200.08	\$ 100.00
Fees - Credit Card Processing	\$42.60	\$ 42.60
Fundraising Expense	\$4,387.50	\$4,387.50
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$42,265.85	\$29,728.67
<b>Net Change to Fund Balance</b>	\$ 396.36	(\$ 717.96)
<b>Ending Balance December 31, 2023</b>		\$12,724.55
<b>Available to Spend</b>		\$12,724.55



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

**TEDx of the Lowcountry Fund**  
**December 01, 2022 through December 31, 2022**  
**Statement of Activity**

	December 01, 2022 through December 31, 2022	July 01, 2022 through December 31, 2022
<b>Beginning Balance</b>	\$3,844.19	\$814.75
<b>Contributions &amp; Investment Activity</b>		
Contributions - Available to Spend	\$8,525.00	30,025.00
Event and Registration Income	\$ 0.00	675.00
Interest and Dividend Income	\$ 9.01	21.17
<b>Total Contributions &amp; Investment Activity</b>	\$8,534.01	\$30,721.17
<b>Expenses</b>		
Distributions - Program Expenses	\$0	\$18,946.10
Fees - Administrative and Investment	\$50.01	\$ 100.03
Fees - Credit Card Processing	\$0	\$ 161.60
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$ 50.01	\$19,207.73
<b>Net Change to Fund Balance</b>	\$8,484.00	\$11,513.44
<b>Ending Balance December 31, 2022</b>		\$12,328.19
<b>Available to Spend</b>		\$12,328.19



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
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**TEDx of the Lowcountry Fund**  
**December 01, 2022 through December 31, 2022**

---

**Fund Activity Detail**

---

**Contributions**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Eventbright, Inc.	2022-12-28	\$8,525.00
<b>Total Contributions</b>		<b>\$8,525.00</b>

**Grants**

No grants were made during this period.

**Program Expenses**

No program expenses were paid during this period.



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<b>Net Change to Fund Balance</b>	\$ 396.36	(\$ 717.96)
<b>Ending Balance December 31, 2023</b>		\$12,724.55
<b>Available to Spend</b>		\$12,724.55





COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

**TEDx of the Lowcountry Fund**  
**December 01, 2022 through December 31, 2022**  
**Statement of Activity**

	December 01, 2022 through December 31, 2022	July 01, 2022 through December 31, 2022
<b>Beginning Balance</b>	\$3,844.19	\$814.75
<b>Contributions &amp; Investment Activity</b>		
Contributions - Available to Spend	\$8,525.00	30,025.00
Event and Registration Income	\$ 0.00	675.00
Interest and Dividend Income	\$ 9.01	21.17
<b>Total Contributions &amp; Investment Activity</b>	\$8,534.01	\$30,721.17
<b>Expenses</b>		
Distributions - Program Expenses	\$0	\$18,946.10
Fees - Administrative and Investment	\$50.01	\$ 100.03
Fees - Credit Card Processing	\$0	\$ 161.60
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$ 50.01	\$19,207.73
<b>Net Change to Fund Balance</b>	\$8,484.00	\$11,513.44
<b>Ending Balance December 31, 2022</b>		\$12,328.19
<b>Available to Spend</b>		\$12,328.19



# COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

## TEDx of the Lowcountry Fund December 01, 2022 through December 31, 2022

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### Fund Activity Detail

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#### Contributions

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Eventbright, Inc.	2022-12-28	\$8,525.00
<b>Total Contributions</b>		<b>\$8,525.00</b>

#### Grants

No grants were made during this period.

#### Program Expenses

No program expenses were paid during this period.

Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service

for Tax-Exempt Organization not Required to File Form 990 or 990-EZ

2023

Open to Public Inspection

**A** For the 2023 Calendar year, or tax year beginning 2023-07-01 and ending 2024-06-30**B** Check if available

- 
- Terminated for Business
- 
- 
- Gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less

**C** Name of Organization: TEDXHILTONHEAD INC63 SKULL CREEK DR APT  
101, HILTON HEAD, SC, US,  
29926**D** Employee IdentificationNumber 84-2999629**E** Website:**F** Name of Principal Officer: LAURIE LAYKISH63 SKULL CREEK DR APT  
101, HILTON HEAD, SC, US,  
29926

**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.

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.

Date of this notice: 09-10-2019

Employer Identification Number:  
84-2999629

Form: SS-4

Number of this notice: CP 575 E

TEDXHILTONHEAD INC  
2 OTTER RD  
HILTON HEAD, SC 29928

For assistance you may call us at:  
1-800-829-4933

IF YOU WRITE, ATTACH THE  
STUB AT THE END OF THIS NOTICE.

WE ASSIGNED YOU AN EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

Thank you for applying for an Employer Identification Number (EIN). We assigned you EIN 84-2999629. This EIN will identify you, your business accounts, tax returns, and documents, even if you have no employees. Please keep this notice in your permanent records.

When filing tax documents, payments, and related correspondence, it is very important that you use your EIN and complete name and address exactly as shown above. Any variation may cause a delay in processing, result in incorrect information in your account, or even cause you to be assigned more than one EIN. If the information is not correct as shown above, please make the correction using the attached tear-off stub and return it to us.

When you submitted your application for an EIN, you checked the box indicating you are a non-profit organization. Assigning an EIN does not grant tax-exempt status to non-profit organizations. Publication 557, Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization, has details on the application process, as well as information on returns you may need to file. To apply for recognition of tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3), organizations must complete a Form 1023-series application for recognition. All other entities should file Form 1024 if they want to request recognition under Section 501(a).

Nearly all organizations claiming tax-exempt status must file a Form 990-series annual information return (Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-PF) or notice (Form 990-N) beginning with the year they legally form, even if they have not yet applied for or received recognition of tax-exempt status.

Unless a filing exception applies to you (search [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for Annual Exempt Organization Return: Who Must File), you will lose your tax-exempt status if you fail to file a required return or notice for three consecutive years. We start calculating this three-year period from the tax year we assigned the EIN to you. If that first tax year isn't a full twelve months, you're still responsible for submitting a return for that year. If you didn't legally form in the same tax year in which you obtained your EIN, contact us at the phone number or address listed at the top of this letter.

For the most current information on your filing requirements and other important information, visit [www.irs.gov/charities](http://www.irs.gov/charities).

**IMPORTANT REMINDERS:**

- \* Keep a copy of this notice in your permanent records. **This notice is issued only one time and the IRS will not be able to generate a duplicate copy for you.** You may give a copy of this document to anyone asking for proof of your EIN.
- \* Use this EIN and your name exactly as they appear at the top of this notice on all your federal tax forms.
- \* Refer to this EIN on your tax-related correspondence and documents.
- \* Provide future officers of your organization with a copy of this notice.

Your name control associated with this EIN is TEDX. You will need to provide this information, along with your EIN, if you file your returns electronically.

If you have questions about your EIN, you can contact us at the phone number or address listed at the top of this notice. If you write, please tear off the stub at the bottom of this notice and include it with your letter. Thank you for your cooperation.

Keep this part for your records. CP 575 E (Rev. 7-2007)

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Return this part with any correspondence  
so we may identify your account. Please  
correct any errors in your name or address.

CP 575 E  
9999999999

Your Telephone Number Best Time to Call DATE OF THIS NOTICE: 09-10-2019  
( ) - EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 84-2999629  
FORM: SS-4 NOBOD

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
CINCINNATI OH 45999-0023  
██

TEDXHILTONHEAD INC  
2 OTTER RD  
HILTON HEAD, SC 29928

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
P. O. BOX 2508  
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **NOV 20 2019**

TEDXHILTONHEAD INC  
2 OTTER ROAD  
HILTON HEAD, SC 29928

Employer Identification Number:  
84-2999629  
DLN:  
29053305330029  
Contact Person: GEORGE J BOWLING ID# 17236  
Contact Telephone Number:  
(877) 829-5500  
Accounting Period Ending:  
June 30  
Public Charity Status:  
509(a)(2)  
Form 990/990-EZ/990-N Required:  
Yes  
Effective Date of Exemption:  
September 11, 2019  
Contribution Deductibility:  
Yes  
Addendum Applies:  
No

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to [www.irs.gov/charities](http://www.irs.gov/charities). Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.

Letter 947

TEDXHILTONHEAD INC

Sincerely,

*Stephen A. Mattson*

Director, Exempt Organizations  
Rulings and Agreements