

**Milroy, Shannon**

**From:** noreply@civicplus.com  
**Sent:** Monday, March 31, 2025 10:40 PM  
**To:** ATax Communications  
**Subject:** Online Form Submittal: Accommodations Tax Grant Application

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## Accommodations Tax Grant Application

### TOWN OF BLUFFTON ACCOMMODATIONS TAX GRANT APPLICATION

## TOWN OF BLUFFTON ACCOMMODATIONS TAX GRANT APPLICATION

Accommodations Tax Grant Application Instructions [Accommodations Tax Grant Application Instructions](#)

Accommodations Tax Grant Application Instructions I have read and acknowledged the Town of Bluffton, SC Accommodations Tax Grant Application Instructions.

(Section Break)

Application Date 3/27/2025

Project Name Roots & Rivers Festival 2025

Project/Event Location Oyster Factory Park - Bluffton SC

Is this a new project or event? No

Project/Event Start Date: 9/6/2025

Project/Event End Date 9/6/2025

Multi-Year Project/Event? No

|                                                                                                                      |                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Total Project Costs                                                                                                  | 62000                       |
| Total ATAX Funds Requested                                                                                           | 27000                       |
| Percent of Total Budget                                                                                              | 44%                         |
| Date the funds are needed:                                                                                           | 8/31/2025                   |
| Full Legal Organization Name                                                                                         | BlacQuity SC                |
| Address                                                                                                              | PO BOX 3132                 |
| Street Address Line 2                                                                                                | <i>Field not completed.</i> |
| City                                                                                                                 | Bluffton                    |
| State                                                                                                                | South Carolina              |
| Zip Code                                                                                                             | 29910                       |
| Applicant must be designated as a non-profit entity to receive ATAX funds. Is your entity a non-profit organization? | Yes                         |

### **TOWN OF BLUFFTON ACCOMMODATIONS TAX GRANT APPLICATION**

#### Organization Primary Point of Contact

|                |                                                                |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| First Name     | Gwen                                                           |
| Last Name      | Chambers                                                       |
| Title          | Executive Director                                             |
| Phone Number   | 8437075271                                                     |
| E-mail Address | <a href="mailto:gwen@blacquitysc.org">gwen@blacquitysc.org</a> |

(Section Break)

#### Organization Secondary Point of Contact

|            |                             |
|------------|-----------------------------|
| First Name | <i>Field not completed.</i> |
|------------|-----------------------------|

|                |                             |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Last Name      | <i>Field not completed.</i> |
| Title          | <i>Field not completed.</i> |
| Phone Number   | <i>Field not completed.</i> |
| E-mail Address | <i>Field not completed.</i> |

### **TOWN OF BLUFFTON ACCOMMODATIONS TAX GRANT APPLICATION**

**Project Description:** The Roots & Rivers Festival 2025 is a one-day outdoor cultural celebration hosted by BlacQuity on Saturday, September 6, 2025, from 2 PM to 8 PM at Oyster Factory Park in Bluffton, SC. This annual event uplifts the cultural, economic, and entrepreneurial contributions of black entrepreneurs in the Lowcountry. It features live music (headlined by Deas Guyz), artisan markets, food trucks, historical programming, and family-friendly activities that reflect culture and the legacy of the land. The festival is ticket price is \$15 and is open public and designed to attract both local and regional attendees.

**List any required permits, if applicable. If none, type "N/A":** N/A (Permit requirements will be addressed in coordination with the Town of Bluffton as needed for stage setup, food vendors, and traffic control.)

**Describe all planned advertising and marketing for this project/event:** Our marketing strategy is designed to reach regional audiences in South Carolina, Georgia, and North Florida. Marketing efforts will include:

A regional digital campaign via social media (Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube)

Geo-targeted digital ads for Hilton Head, Savannah, Beaufort, and Charleston audiences

Printed posters and postcards distributed to hotels, businesses, and visitor centers

Event listings and articles in Lowcountry and Coastal regional calendars and platforms

Press outreach and interviews with festival organizers and artists

All materials will include Town of Bluffton branding and be submitted for design approval in accordance with the Town's Brand Standards.

Please list all media outlets you intend to utilize for your project/event (i.e. names of magazines, TV and radio stations, etc.):

WHHI-TV (Lowcountry's local TV channel)

Gullah Geechee Radio / 98.5 FM

Lowcountry Weekly

Bluffton Sun and Island Packet

The Southern Edge Magazine

WSAV-TV (Savannah)

WJCL

WTOG

104.9 Bob FM / G100 Savannah

98.7 FM/101.1 FM

[VisitBluffton.org](http://VisitBluffton.org) & [SouthCarolinaLowcountry.com](http://SouthCarolinaLowcountry.com)

Hilton Head/Bluffton Chamber of Commerce Newsletters

iHeart Radio

Spotify Radio

Local Life

Post & Courier

iHeart Radio

Savannah Magazine

CB2 Magazine

The Bluffton Sun

Facebook

Urban Mag - Atlanta

WHCJ - Savannah State Radio

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**All** advertising/marketing paid for with Town of Bluffton Accommodations Tax dollars **must** incorporate the branding shown here: **Town of Bluffton Brand Standards**. The use of the Town's logo must meet the design standards outlined at the aforementioned link and be approved by the Town. Designs may be submitted electronically using this **link**. Please allow five (5) business days for approval.

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Impact on or Benefit to Tourism:

The Roots & Rivers Festival 2025 is specifically designed to attract tourists into Bluffton. In 2024, the festival drew hundreds

more than 500 for the day, of visitors from Savannah, Charleston, Hilton Head, Atlanta, Jacksonville and as far as Ohio and New York. We anticipate over 1,000 attendees in 2025, with many traveling specifically to experience Gullah culture, live music, artisan shopping, and unique culinary offerings.

We will provide a list of recommended hotels and accommodations on event marketing materials and utilize out-of-town social targeting in advertising. Visitors will also be encouraged to explore Bluffton's Historic District and shops, dine locally, and extend their stay.

***“Tourist”*** means a person who does not reside within the corporate limits of the Town or within a Town zip code that takes a trip into the corporate limits of the Town for any purpose, except daily commuting to and from work.

***“Travel”*** and ***“Tourism”*** mean the action and activities of people taking trips outside their home communities for any purpose, except daily commuting to and from work.

**Additional Comments:** BlacQuity is proud to present a culturally significant festival that enhances Bluffton's visibility as a regional destination. By blending cultural preservation, economic empowerment, and creative celebration, Roots & Rivers aligns beautifully with the Town's values and tourism goals.

## **TOWN OF BLUFFTON ACCOMMODATIONS TAX GRANT APPLICATION**

### **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

To download the Town's required Line-Item Budget Form, click here:  
<https://www.townofbluffton.sc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4295/ATAX-Grant-Application-Line-Item-Budget-Form>

Download and save the form and hit "Back" in your web browser to return to the application. Once the form is completed, attach it on the following line.

Town's required Line-Item Budget Form: [ATAX Grant Application Line Item Budget Form Roots N Rivers Festival 2025 small.pdf](#)

Most Recent Fiscal Year Balance Sheet and Profit [Statement of Financial Position TOB ATAX.pdf](#)

and Loss Accounting  
Statement

|                     |                                                                                      |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Financial Guarantee | <a href="#">Affirmation of Financial Responsibility 2025 Roots N Rivers Fest.pdf</a> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

*Applicant must provide a copy of official minutes wherein the sponsoring organization approves the project and commits the organization to financial responsibility for carrying it out to the stage of completion.*

|                                                                        |                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Please attach Budget vs. Actual statements for prior two years events. | <a href="#">2023 Roots and Rivers Festival - Expense.pdf</a> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                                                        |                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Please attach Budget vs. Actual statements for prior two years events. | <a href="#">2024 Roots and Rivers Festival - Expense.pdf</a> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|

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|                                                                                                                       |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Have you requested, received, or been awarded ATAX funding from other state or local entities for this project/event? | Yes |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

|                                                                 |                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| If yes, please list all sources and amounts:<br>Awarding Agency | Town of Bluffton 2023 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|

|        |       |
|--------|-------|
| Amount | 21000 |
|--------|-------|

|                 |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Awarding Agency | Town of Bluffton 2024 |
|-----------------|-----------------------|

|        |       |
|--------|-------|
| Amount | 25000 |
|--------|-------|

|                                                                                                                |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Have you received or been awarded ATAX funding from other state or local entities for any other project/event? | No |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

**TOWN OF BLUFFTON ACCOMMODATIONS TAX GRANT APPLICATION**

## PRIOR RECIPIENT'S REPORT

If your organization has received ATAX funding from the Town of Bluffton in previous years, you must complete the below information.

If you have not received ATAX funding from the Town of Bluffton, please answer "No" and skip this section, and sign and submit your application.

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Has your organization previously received ATAX funds from the Town of Bluffton?

Yes

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Project/Event Name

Roots & Rivers Festival 2024

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Year Awarded

2024

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Amount Awarded

25000

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Was a final report submitted?

Yes

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What was the total number of tourists?

230

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What was the percentage of tourists?

508

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Please attach a copy of your organization's IRS Designation Letter showing your non-profit status .

[IRS Determination FinalLetter 88-0662577 BLACQUITYSC 02142022 00.pdf](#)

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Please upload a copy of your current Town of Bluffton Business License, which is required of all applicants.

[BlacQuity License.pdf](#)

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Additional Application Documents

[Roots N Rivers Festival ATAX Request.pdf](#)

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Additional Application Documents

*Field not completed.*

Additional Application Documents *Field not completed.*

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Additional Application Documents *Field not completed.*

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Additional Comments *Field not completed.*

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## **TOWN OF BLUFFTON ACCOMMODATIONS TAX GRANT APPLICATION**

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**All applicants will be required to come before the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee (ATAC) and answer any and all questions when scheduled to do so.**

**Any organization awarded funds for advertising/marketing must incorporate the Bluffton Heart of the Lowcountry brand logo in all promotional materials and advertising.**

**The South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) defines a “public body” as any organization or corporation supported in whole or in part by public funds or expending public funds. If awarded, your organization's acceptance of public funds from the Town of Bluffton may cause your organization to come within the meaning of “public body” as defined by the Freedom of Information Act. S.C. Code Ann. §30-4-10, et seq. (Supp. 2002). Accordingly, this is to advise that by accepting public funds, your organization may be subject to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.**

**By submitting this application, the organization certifies that it has read and understands the paragraphs above. The organization additionally certifies that it does not discriminate in any manner on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, religion, or language and that all funds that may be received by the applicant organization from the Town of Bluffton, South Carolina will be solely used for the purposes set forth in this application and will comply with all laws and statutes, including the South Carolina Code of Laws regarding Allocations of Accommodations Tax Revenues.**

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**By typing your name below, you are signing this application electronically. You agree that your electronic signature is the legal equivalent of your manual signature on this application.**

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Signature Gwen Chambers

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Signatory's Title or Position Executive Director

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Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service  
Tax Exempt and Government Entities  
P.O. Box 2508  
Cincinnati, OH 45201

BLACQUITY SC  
PO BOX 3132  
BLUFFTON, SC 29910

Attachment 10

Date:  
03/09/2022  
Employer ID number:  
88-0662577  
Person to contact:  
Name: Customer Service  
ID number: 31954  
Telephone: 877-829-5500  
Accounting period ending:  
December 31  
Public charity status:  
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)  
Form 990 / 990-EZ / 990-N required:  
Yes  
Effective date of exemption:  
February 2, 2022  
Contribution deductibility:  
Yes  
Addendum applies:  
No  
DLN:  
26053447002412

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.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Martin  
Director, Exempt Organizations  
Rulings and Agreements

# TOWN OF BLUFFTON

## TOWN OF BLUFFTON -

**Expires:04/30/2026**

**License No.** 25-03-7138

**Business Name:** BlacQuity SC

**Date Issued:** 03/20/2025

**NAICS Title:** Other Similar Organizations  
(except Business,  
Professional, Labor, and  
Political Organizations)

**Business DBA  
Name:** BlacQuity SC

**Business Type:**

Economic Development Center

**Physical Address:**

10 BUCK ISLAND RD  
BLUFFTON SC  
29910

**NON-TRANSFERABLE | TO BE PLACED IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE**

### Section 6-21 Purpose and Duration of Business License

ALL BUSINESSES LOCATED IN THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON MUST POST THE BUSINESS LICENSE IN A VISIBLE LOCATION WITHIN THE BUSINESS LOCATION AS REFERENCED ABOVE AND IS VALID FOR THIS LOCATION ONLY. ALL BUSINESSES LOCATED OUTSIDE THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON MUST KEEP A CURRENT COPY WHILE CONDUCTING BUSINESS INSIDE THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON. CHANGE IN LOCATION OR OWNERSHIP REQUIRES A NEW LICENSE. IF THE BUSINESS IS CLOSED, CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT 843-706-4501 TO UPDATE ACCOUNT.

**TOWN OF BLUFFTON**  
**ACCOMODATIONS TAX GRANT APPLICATION BUDGET**  
**REVENUES**

**Revenues - Cash**

|                                                                                      |           |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Sponsorships                                                                         | \$        | 10000        |
| Donations                                                                            | \$        | 1500         |
| ATAX Grants/Funding from Other Entities*                                             | \$        |              |
| <i>* Do <b>NOT</b> include anticipated award funds requested in this application</i> |           |              |
| Other Grants (please name): TBA                                                      | \$        | 2500         |
| Vendor Fees                                                                          | \$        | 2100         |
| Registration Fees                                                                    | \$        | 8000         |
| Other Fees (please name):                                                            | \$        |              |
| Other Fees (please name):                                                            | \$        |              |
| Mercandise Sales                                                                     | \$        | 1200         |
| Other Sales (please name):Raffle                                                     | \$        | 500          |
| Other Sales (please name): Photo Booth Donations                                     | \$        | 400          |
| Other Revenue (please name):ticket sales                                             | \$        | 6050         |
| Other Revenue (please name):                                                         | \$        |              |
| <b>Revenues - In-Kind Contributions</b>                                              |           |              |
| Volunteer Hours                                                                      | \$        | 2400         |
| Donated Items                                                                        | \$        | 1100         |
| Donated Services                                                                     | \$        | 2000         |
| Other (please name):Marketing & Ad Space Discounts                                   | \$        | 1000         |
| Other (please name):Social Media Promotion by Partners                               | \$        | 750          |
| Other (please name):Event Photography by Volunteer                                   | \$        | 500          |
| <b>Total All Revenue Sources:</b>                                                    | <b>\$</b> | <b>40000</b> |

**TOWN OF BLUFFTON**  
**ACCOMODATIONS TAX GRANT APPLICATION BUDGET**

**EXPENSES**

*Eligible Tourism-Related Expense Categories (per SC Code of Laws)*

**Amount**

**Advertising & Promotion of Tourism or Arts and Cultural Events**

|                                                       |    |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----|------|
| Local Newspaper/Digital Advertising                   | \$ | 1000 |
| Regional Newspaper/Digital Advertising                | \$ | 1000 |
| National Newspaper/Digital Advertising                | \$ |      |
| Local Magazine/Digital Advertising                    | \$ | 1000 |
| Regional Magazine/Digital Advertising                 | \$ | 1000 |
| National Magazine/Digital Advertising                 | \$ |      |
| Local Radio Advertising                               | \$ | 1500 |
| Regional Radio Advertising                            | \$ | 5000 |
| National Radio Advertising                            | \$ |      |
| Local Television Advertising                          | \$ | 500  |
| Regional Television Advertising                       | \$ | 500  |
| National Television Advertising                       | \$ |      |
| Billboards                                            | \$ | 1500 |
| Social Media Advertising                              | \$ | 1000 |
| E-mail and/or Text Blasts                             | \$ | 500  |
| Postcards/Mailers                                     | \$ | 1500 |
| Posters/Banners/Signage                               | \$ | 2000 |
| Graphic Design of Marketing/Writing or Press Releases | \$ | 1500 |
| Web Hosting for <b>Event</b> (not organization)       | \$ | 150  |
| Other (please name):                                  | \$ |      |
| Other (please name):                                  | \$ |      |
| Other (please name):                                  | \$ |      |
| Other (please name):                                  | \$ |      |
| Other (please name):                                  | \$ |      |

**Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events**

|                                        |    |      |
|----------------------------------------|----|------|
| Rentals: Tables, Chairs, Stages, Tents | \$ | 500  |
| Rental: Sound, Audio Equipment         | \$ | 2300 |
| Construction                           | \$ |      |
| Repairs to Facilities                  | \$ |      |
| Maintenance of Facilities              | \$ |      |
| Other (please name):                   | \$ |      |
| Other (please name):                   | \$ |      |
| Other (please name):                   | \$ |      |

**TOWN OF BLUFFTON**  
**ACCOMODATIONS TAX GRANT APPLICATION BUDGET**  
**EXPENSES**

*Eligible Tourism-Related Expense Categories (per SC Code of Laws)*

**Amount**

**Tourist Transportation**

|                                                |    |      |
|------------------------------------------------|----|------|
| Company Name: Bluffton Shuttle/Trolley Service | \$ | 1800 |
| Company Name:                                  | \$ |      |

**Public Facilities**

|                                          |    |      |
|------------------------------------------|----|------|
| Temporary/Portable Restrooms             | \$ | 1200 |
| Permanent Restrooms                      | \$ |      |
| Parks                                    | \$ | 600  |
| Parking Lots                             | \$ | 200  |
| Other (please name): Handwashing Station | \$ | 500  |
| Other (please name):                     | \$ |      |

**Municipality and County Services**

|                                                            |    |       |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----|-------|
| Dumpster Rental/Trash Hauling                              | \$ | 1200  |
| Security Provided by Bluffton Police Department            | \$ | 800   |
| Security <b>NOT</b> Provided by Bluffton Police Department | \$ | 1000  |
| <b>Total of ATAX Eligible Expenses:</b>                    | \$ | 29750 |

**Other/Ineligible Expenses**

*Applicants should list all other project/event expenses that are not eligible for ATAX funds and not listed above.*

| Item                                         | Amount   |
|----------------------------------------------|----------|
| Volunteer Meals                              | \$ 1000  |
| Gifts/Giveaways (VIP swag bags) \$500        | \$ 500   |
| Staff Coordination/Planning Stipends \$1,200 | \$ 1200  |
| Insurance                                    | \$ 900   |
| Videographer                                 | \$ 1200  |
| Office Supplies & Admin                      | \$ 300   |
|                                              | \$       |
|                                              | \$       |
|                                              | \$       |
|                                              | \$       |
|                                              | \$       |
|                                              | \$       |
|                                              | \$       |
|                                              | \$       |
| <b>Total of Other/Ineligible Expenses:</b>   | \$ 5100  |
| <b>Total Project/Event Budget:</b>           | \$ 34850 |
| <b>Total Project/Event Profit or Loss</b>    | \$ 5150  |

## Statement of Financial Position

BlacQuity

As of December 31, 2024

| DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT                       | TOTAL              |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Assets</b>                              |                    |
| Current Assets                             |                    |
| Bank Accounts                              |                    |
| SMALL BUSINESS CHECKING (3861) - 4         | 32,090.71          |
| zAdjustment                                |                    |
| <b>Total for Bank Accounts</b>             | <b>\$32,090.71</b> |
| Accounts Receivable                        |                    |
| Other Current Assets                       |                    |
| Inventory Asset                            | 464.36             |
| Payments to deposit                        |                    |
| <b>Total for Other Current Assets</b>      | <b>\$464.36</b>    |
| <b>Total for Current Assets</b>            | <b>\$32,555.07</b> |
| Fixed Assets                               |                    |
| Other Assets                               |                    |
| <b>Total for Assets</b>                    | <b>\$32,555.07</b> |
| <b>Liabilities and Equity</b>              |                    |
| Liabilities                                |                    |
| Current Liabilities                        |                    |
| Accounts Payable                           |                    |
| Credit Cards                               |                    |
| South State Bank Card                      | 625.00             |
| <b>Total for Credit Cards</b>              | <b>\$625.00</b>    |
| Other Current Liabilities                  |                    |
| Direct Deposit Payable                     |                    |
| Payroll Liabilities                        | 0                  |
| Federal Taxes (941/944)                    | 694.70             |
| SC Income Tax                              | 106.64             |
| SC Unemployment Tax                        | 341.25             |
| <b>Total for Payroll Liabilities</b>       | <b>\$1,142.59</b>  |
| <b>Total for Other Current Liabilities</b> | <b>\$1,142.59</b>  |
| <b>Total for Current Liabilities</b>       | <b>\$1,767.59</b>  |
| Long-term Liabilities                      |                    |
| <b>Total for Liabilities</b>               | <b>\$1,767.59</b>  |
| Equity                                     |                    |
| Retained Earnings                          | 86,096.34          |
| Net Income                                 | -55,308.86         |
| <b>Total for Equity</b>                    | <b>\$30,787.48</b> |
| <b>Total for Liabilities and Equity</b>    | <b>\$32,555.07</b> |

## Statement of Activity - copy

BlacQuity

January-December, 2024

| DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT                              | TOTAL               |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Income                                            |                     |
| Contributed income                                | \$1,516.00          |
| Corporate & foundation grants                     | 15,350.00           |
| Donations                                         | 77,139.30           |
| Roots and Rivers Festival                         | 0                   |
| Bronze Sponsor                                    | 1,500.00            |
| Gold Sponsor                                      | 10,000.00           |
| Silver Sponsor                                    | 5,000.00            |
| <b>Total for Roots and Rivers Festival</b>        | <b>\$16,500.00</b>  |
| Roots & Rivers Festival - Sponsorship 250.00      | 1,500.00            |
| <b>Total for Contributed income</b>               | <b>\$112,005.30</b> |
| <b>Total for Income</b>                           | <b>\$112,005.30</b> |
| Cost of Goods Sold                                |                     |
| <b>Gross Profit</b>                               | <b>\$112,005.30</b> |
| Expenses                                          |                     |
| Advertising & marketing                           | \$10,621.78         |
| Roots & Rivers                                    | 12,819.26           |
| <b>Total for Advertising &amp; marketing</b>      | <b>\$23,441.04</b>  |
| Awards & grants to others                         | 300.00              |
| Board Meetings/Hosting                            | 21.40               |
| Contract & professional fees                      | \$197.32            |
| Accounting fees                                   | 1,065.00            |
| Bookkeeping                                       | 60.00               |
| Investment management fees                        | 25,000.00           |
| Legal fees                                        | 85.00               |
| <b>Total for Contract &amp; professional fees</b> | <b>\$26,407.32</b>  |
| Insurance                                         | 0                   |
| Roots & Rivers                                    | 430.00              |
| <b>Total for Insurance</b>                        | <b>\$430.00</b>     |
| Occupancy                                         | 0                   |
| Utilities                                         | 0                   |
| Telephone                                         | 1,646.79            |
| <b>Total for Utilities</b>                        | <b>\$1,646.79</b>   |
| <b>Total for Occupancy</b>                        | <b>\$1,646.79</b>   |
| Office expenses                                   | \$4,547.88          |
| Bank fees & service charges                       | 24.28               |
| Memberships & subscriptions                       | 1,315.76            |
| Office supplies                                   | 265.24              |



## Statement of Activity - copy

BlacQuity

January-December, 2024

| DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT                         | TOTAL               |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Shipping & postage                           | 217.51              |
| Software & apps                              | 2,536.26            |
| <b>Total for Office expenses</b>             | <b>\$8,906.93</b>   |
| Payroll expenses                             | 0                   |
| Taxes                                        | 7,184.15            |
| Wages                                        | 88,410.52           |
| <b>Total for Payroll expenses</b>            | <b>\$95,594.67</b>  |
| Professional Development                     | 0                   |
| Conference                                   | 115.99              |
| Travel                                       | -\$386.46           |
| Airfare                                      | 192.90              |
| Hotels                                       | 96.05               |
| Taxis or shared rides                        | 133.60              |
| Vehicle rental                               | 1,280.89            |
| <b>Total for Travel</b>                      | <b>\$1,316.98</b>   |
| <b>Total for Professional Development</b>    | <b>\$1,432.97</b>   |
| Professional Organizations & Memberships     | 1,055.00            |
| QuickBooks Payments Fees                     | 241.42              |
| Roots & Rivers Festival                      | \$3,100.00          |
| Program Expenses                             | 10,417.09           |
| Trolleys                                     | 600.00              |
| <b>Total for Roots &amp; Rivers Festival</b> | <b>\$14,117.09</b>  |
| Supplies                                     | 399.04              |
| <b>Total for Expenses</b>                    | <b>\$173,993.67</b> |
| <b>Net Operating Income</b>                  | <b>-\$61,988.37</b> |
| Other Income                                 |                     |
| Roots and Rivers Festival                    | \$1,241.00          |
| Grants and Contracts                         | 4,000.00            |
| Other Income - Ticket sales                  | 12,268.02           |
| <b>Total for Roots and Rivers Festival</b>   | <b>\$17,509.02</b>  |
| <b>Total for Other Income</b>                | <b>\$17,509.02</b>  |
| Other Expenses                               |                     |
| Business Meeting                             | \$417.40            |
| Coffee                                       | 8.46                |
| <b>Total for Business Meeting</b>            | <b>\$425.86</b>     |
| Business membership                          | 20.00               |
| Print Marketing                              | 1,900.00            |

## Statement of Activity - copy

BlacQuity

January-December, 2024

| DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT                 | TOTAL               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Program - BEU Class                  | \$4,603.42          |
| Program - Food                       | 185.20              |
| Program - Printing                   | 220.06              |
| Program - Supplies                   | 1,856.67            |
| Program - Vendors                    | 1,608.30            |
| <b>Total for Program - BEU Class</b> | <b>\$8,473.65</b>   |
| Vehicle expenses                     | 0                   |
| Parking & tolls                      | 10.00               |
| <b>Total for Vehicle expenses</b>    | <b>\$10.00</b>      |
| <b>Total for Other Expenses</b>      | <b>\$10,829.51</b>  |
| <b>Net Other Income</b>              | <b>\$6,679.51</b>   |
| <b>Net Income</b>                    | <b>-\$55,308.86</b> |



843-707-5271  
www.blacquitysc.org  
PO BOX 3132 Bluffton, SC 29910y

To :

**Town of Bluffton  
ATAX Committee**

March 27, 2025

BlacQuity Financial Commitment for Roots & Rivers Festival 2025

On behalf of BlacQuity, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, this letter serves as a formal commitment to carrying out the 2025 Roots & Rivers Festival scheduled for September 6, 2025, at Oyster Factory Park in Bluffton, SC.

The organization affirms that it will assume financial responsibility for the planning, execution, and completion of the event, even if the Town of Bluffton ATAX funding is not awarded in full.

This project has been officially approved by the board of directors as recorded in the meeting minutes dated March 27, 2025.

Regards,

Derek Jenkins  
BOARD CHAIR  
MARCH 27, 2025

Gwen Chambers  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
MARCH 27, 2025

| <b>Expenses</b>       |                                                    |                 |                 |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Logistics             |                                                    |                 |                 |
|                       | Dumprter (Dump & Haul)                             | \$250           | \$0             |
|                       | Orange fencing barricade                           | \$500           | \$0             |
|                       | Shuttle Services                                   | \$1,200         | \$1,097         |
|                       | Rentals (Stage, Tents, etc.)                       | \$1,866         | \$1,866         |
|                       | Royal Restrooms                                    | \$1,500         | \$1,337         |
|                       | Police/Security (town will use)                    | \$850           | \$840           |
|                       | Entertainment                                      | \$5,000         | \$4,600         |
|                       | Admin fees (ticket sales, wristbands)              | \$2,500         | \$111           |
|                       | Insurance, permits                                 | \$2,500         | \$288           |
|                       | Venue Town of Bluffton Waived                      | \$600           | \$0             |
| Marketing             |                                                    |                 |                 |
|                       |                                                    |                 |                 |
|                       | Merchandise (tshirts, cinch bags, koozies)         | \$3,500         | \$4,000         |
|                       | Print Paid Media                                   | \$4,765         | \$4,765         |
|                       | Radio Paid Media                                   | \$1,000         | \$952           |
|                       | Digital Paid Media                                 | \$4,200         | \$4,200         |
|                       | Social Paid Marketing                              | \$525           | \$525           |
|                       | Influencer partnerships                            | \$5,193         | \$1,193         |
|                       | Print materials (banners, signs, posters, flyers)  | \$2,410         | \$1,045         |
|                       | Design materials (banners, signs, posters, flyers) | \$500           | \$1,500         |
|                       | Public Relations                                   | \$4,000         | \$4,000         |
|                       | Videography & Photography                          | \$1,250         | \$1,250         |
|                       | Photo Booth                                        | \$1,200         | \$1,200         |
|                       | Photo Booth Backdrop Installations                 | \$1,200         | 1200            |
|                       |                                                    |                 |                 |
|                       |                                                    |                 |                 |
| <b>Total Expenses</b> |                                                    | <b>\$46,509</b> | <b>\$35,968</b> |

## BlacQuity SC - 2024 Roots and Rivers Festival

| Vendor                            | Description                          | Amount           | Amount Eligible  |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Event Marketing</b>            |                                      |                  |                  |
| <b>Local Life</b>                 | Magazine Advertising                 | 4,345.40         | 4,345.40         |
| <b>Post &amp; Courier</b>         | Magazine Advertising                 | 1,500.00         | 1,500.00         |
| <b>iHeart Radio</b>               | Radio Ads                            | 5,845.00         | 2,510.00         |
| <b>Savannah Magazine</b>          | Magazine Advertising                 | 2,000.00         | 2,000.00         |
| <b>CB2 Magazine</b>               | Magazine Advertising                 | 1,857.00         | 1,857.00         |
| <b>The Bluffton Sun</b>           | Newspaper Advertising                | 1,380.00         | 1,380.00         |
| <b>Facebook</b>                   | Digital Promotions                   | 229.88           | 229.88           |
| <b>Promotional Items</b>          |                                      |                  |                  |
| <i>Just The Right Inc</i>         | Event Chairs                         | 1,117.00         | 1,117.00         |
| <i>JR Designs</i>                 | Event Shirts & Koozies               | 3,807.50         | 3,807.50         |
| <i>Totally Promotional</i>        | Event Cups                           | 921.89           | 921.89           |
| <i>Sign D' Sign</i>               | Banners                              | 893.70           | 893.70           |
| <i>Staples</i>                    | Banners/Posters/Print                | 572.83           | 572.83           |
| <i>Stomp</i>                      | Fans                                 | 597.00           | 597.00           |
| <i>Wristbands.com</i>             | Wristbands                           | 148.94           | 148.94           |
| <b>Event Logistics</b>            |                                      |                  |                  |
| <b>Hidden Treasures Trolley</b>   | Event Shuttles                       | 600.00           | 324.00           |
| <b>Police Department Security</b> | Security                             | 640.00           | 345.60           |
| <b>B&amp;J Restrooms</b>          | Facilities for Attendees (restrooms) | 500.00           | 270.00           |
| <b>King Horn</b>                  | Insurance                            | 430.00           | 232.20           |
| <b>Deas Guyz</b>                  | Sound & Stage lighting               | 2,300.00         | 2,300.00         |
| <b>Total Expenses:</b>            |                                      | <b>29,686.14</b> | <b>25,352.94</b> |

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# **Roots & Rivers Festival**

## **Town of Bluffton ATAX Grant Request**

**Presented by BlacQuity**

**Application Date:** March 27, 2025

**Event Date:** September 6, 2025

### **Sponsor:**

**BlacQuity**

PO Box 3132

Bluffton, SC 29910

Gwen Chambers, Executive Director

843-707-521

March 27, 2025  
 Town of Bluffton  
 20 Bridge Street  
 Bluffton, SC 29910

Dear Members of the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee,

BlacQuity, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, respectfully requests funding for the 2025 **Roots & Rivers Festival**, taking place on **Saturday, September 6th, 2025**, from **2:00 PM to 8:00 PM** at **Oyster Factory Park**.

The Roots & Rivers Festival is a celebration of Black culture, business, and creativity in the Lowcountry, showcasing local entrepreneurs, Gullah heritage, music, art, food, and community-driven experiences. Now in its third year, the festival has grown into one of Bluffton's signature cultural events, promoting economic empowerment through BlacQuity's **Black Equity University (BEU)** program and entrepreneurial initiatives.

We are focusing on cultural history and the enduring spirit of Black entrepreneurship and storytelling. We are expecting over **1,000 attendees** including local families, tourists, and regional supporters from surrounding counties.

**BlacQuity** was established in 2020 to support Black-owned businesses across Beaufort, Jasper, and surrounding counties. Our vision for the Roots & Rivers Festival is to build a dynamic platform that attracts tourism, drives local spending, and celebrates the diverse cultural roots of our community.

The event ticket price is **\$15 and open to the public**, with revenue generated through sponsorships, vendor booth fees, merchandise sales, reserved seating, and food/beverage sales. Confirmed vendor partnerships include food trucks, Gullah artisans, and small businesses from our BEU alumni.

We respectfully request that the committee consider funding support for the following:

| Line Item                             | Request |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Police/Security                       | \$600   |
| Sanitation/Utilities (40% total cost) | \$1,200 |
| Shuttle/Trolley Transportation        | \$1,800 |
| Stage/Production/Tents                | \$3,400 |

|                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Marketing Design & Branding    | \$6,000         |
| Media Buys (Print, Web, Radio) | \$14,000        |
| <b>Total Requested</b>         | <b>\$27,000</b> |

**Total Festival Budget: \$62,000**

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## 2025 Roots & Rivers Festival Program Highlights

**Time:** 2:00 PM – 8:00 PM

**Location:** Oyster Factory Park, Bluffton, SC

- **Live Music at the Main Stage** featuring:
  - *Deas Guyz* (Headliner)
  - *Dance & Gullah Drum Ensembles*
  - *DJ & Community Youth Performers*
- **Vendor Market** along the Bluff Walk
  - Black-owned businesses, artisans, and culinary vendors
- **Family & Culture Zone**
  - Storytelling circles
  - Book giveaways
  - Lowcountry farming + fishing heritage tent
- **Honoring Our Legacy Ceremony**
  - Community presentations
  - Roll Call of Black Farmers & Entrepreneurs
  - Emancipation Reflection led by Louise Cohen



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We sincerely thank the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee for its commitment to investing in cultural and economic tourism initiatives in Bluffton. We look forward to welcoming you to the Oyster Factory Park on **Saturday, September 6th, 2025**, for a celebration that will leave a lasting impact on our community.

Warm regards,

**Gwen Chambers**

Executive Director, BlacQuity

PO Box 3132, Bluffton, SC 29910

[gwen@blacquity.org](mailto:gwen@blacquity.org)

843-707-5271