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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20224

TAX EXEMPT AND
GOVERNMENT ENTITIES
DIVISION

Date: OCT 23 2002

Uniform Issue List Number: 4942.03-07

Contact Person:

Identification Number:

Telephone Number:

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Legend
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M =
T =
x =

Dear Sir or Madam:

This is in reply to your ruling request of September 26, 2001, and subsequent correspondence requesting approval of a set-aside of x amount of your income under the suitability test of section 4942(g)(2)(B)(i) of the Internal Revenue Code and section 53.4942(a)-3(b)(2) of the Foundation and Similar Excise Taxes Regulations.

You, F, are exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Code and are a private foundation under section 509(a) of the Code. You propose to set aside x dollars of your income pursuant to section 4942(g)(2)(B)(i) of the Code. Your specific project for the income is to purchase artworks to be displayed at art museum M at a university and at performing arts center T. Both facilities M and T have not yet finalized plans for their artwork displays so you cannot at this time reasonably expend your funds for the art. You represent that all of the amounts to be set aside for this specific project will be paid out for this project within 60 months from the time when your first amount of income is set aside. You indicate that the cost of this project can better be accomplished by the use of a set-aside of your income, rather than by immediate payment of your funds, because this project requires selection of the art objects as the facilities for the art displays become ready.

Section 501(c)(3) of the Code provides for the exemption from federal income tax of nonprofit organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable and/or the other exempt purposes stated in that section.

Section 509(a) of the Code describes organizations exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Code that are private foundations subject to the private foundation provisions of Chapter 42 of the Code.

Section 4942 of the Code imposes excise tax on any private foundation that does not expend qualifying distributions for exempt purposes at least equal to its distributable amount for its tax year.

Section 4942(g)(1) of the Code provides that, in general, a qualifying distribution is any amount, including reasonable and necessary administrative expenses, paid to accomplish, or to acquire an asset used directly in carrying on, one or more of the purposes described in section 170(c)(2)(B) of the Code, which includes charitable purposes.

Section 4942(g)(2)(A) of the Code provides that an amount of income that is set aside for a specific project within one or more purposes of section 170(c)(2)(B) of the Code may be treated as a qualifying distribution if the amount meets the set-aside requirements of section 4942(g)(2)(B) of the Code.

Section 4942(g)(2)(B) of the Code provides, in pertinent part, that an amount set aside for a specific project may be treated as a qualifying distribution if, at the time of the set-aside, the private foundation establishes to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the amount set aside will be paid for the specific project within five years and that the suitability test for a set-aside under section 4942(g)(2)(B)(i) of the Code is met.

Section 4942(g)(2)(B)(i) of the Code provides a suitability test in which the private foundation at the time of the set-aside must establish to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the specific project is one that can better be accomplished by the set-aside of income rather than by the immediate payment of funds.

Section 53.4942(a)-3(b)(1) of the Foundation and Similar Excise Taxes Regulations provides that the amounts of income set aside for a specific project for one or more of the purposes in section 170(c)(1) or 170(c)(2)(B) of the Code may be treated as qualifying distributions for the tax year(s) in which such amounts are set aside, but not in the tax year in which actually paid, if the requirements of section 4942(g)(2)(B)(i) of the Code are met. The requirements are met if the foundation establishes to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that the amount set aside will be paid for the specific project within 60 months after it is set aside, and the set-aside otherwise meets the suitability test of section 53.4942(a)-3(b)(2) of the regulations.

Section 53.4942(a)-3(b)(2) of the regulations provides that its suitability test for a set-aside is met if the foundation establishes that the specific project is one in which relatively long-term grants or expenditures must be made. The regulation cites, as an example of a suitable project, a plan to erect a building to house the direct charitable, educational or similar exempt activities of the foundation, such as a museum building, even if the exact location and architectural plans have not been finalized.

Section 53.4942(a)-3(b)(7)(i) of the regulations provides that a private foundation must obtain Internal Revenue Service approval of its set-aside of income under the suitability test by applying before the end of the tax year in which the amount is set aside.

e timely sought approval of your set-aside of income in advance of the time when the income are to be set aside, as required by section 4942(g)(2)(B)(i) of the Code and 942(a)-3(b)(7)(i) of the regulations.

-aside for the artworks will be for a specific project within the educational and charitable section 170(c)(2)(B) of the Code, as required by section 4942(g)(2)(A) of the Code and 942(a)-3(b)(2) of the regulations.

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You represent that your amounts of income to be set aside for this specific project will be paid out for this project within 60 months from the time when the first amount is set aside, as required by section 4942(g)(2)(B) of the Code and section 53.4942(a)-3(b)(1) of the regulations.

Your project is better accomplished by this set-aside of income, rather than by immediate payment, under the suitability test of section 4942(g)(2)(B)(i) of the Code and section 53.4942(a)-3(b)(2) of the regulations because this set-aside will provide adequate time for the artworks for the new sites to be selected.

Thus, your specific project for the artworks meets the requirements for a set-aside of income under the suitability test of section 4942(g)(2)(B)(i) of the Code and section 53.4942(a)-3(b)(2) of the regulations.

Accordingly, we rule that your set-aside of x dollars of your income for the artworks will be a qualifying distribution under section 4942(g)(2)(B)(i) of the Code and section 53.4942(a)-3(b)(2) of the regulations when such amount of income is set aside.

Section 53.4942(a)-3(b)(8) of the regulations provides that any set-aside approved by the Internal Revenue Service must be evidenced by the entry of a dollar amount in your books and records as a pledge or obligation to be paid at a future date or dates. Further, the amount of the set-aside must be taken into account in determining your minimum investment return (see section 53.4942(a)-2(c)(1) of the regulations), and any income attributable to a set-aside must be taken into account in computing your adjusted net income (see section 53.4942(a)-2(d) of the regulations).

Because this ruling letter could help to resolve any questions, please keep it in your permanent records, and include a copy in your annual return on Form 990-PF.

This ruling letter is directed only to the organization that requested it. Section 6110(k)(3) of the Code provides that it may not be used or cited as precedent.

Sincerely,

Jane Baniewicz
Acting Manager, Exempt Organizations
Technical Group 2