

## **Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies**

### **GIFT ACCEPTANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**Approved by the Board of Directors, Nov. 20, 2014;  
Revisions Approved by the Executive Committee, June 23, 2019**

The Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) is a leading international scholarly society dedicated to the advancement of knowledge about Central Asia, the Caucasus, Russia, and Eastern Europe in regional and global context.

As a private, non-political professional organization, we support our members, who are scholars and students in diverse disciplines and specialists in various professions, to share their knowledge and expertise and to foster greater understanding of the region and its impact in the world.

We promote intellectual vitality in all aspects of Slavic, East European and Eurasian studies by:

- Being a major center of information and resources;
- Holding annual conventions that feature scholarly presentations, exchange of ideas, and opportunities for social interaction and the professional development of its members;
- Publishing the prestigious peer-reviewed journal *Slavic Review* that disseminates research;
- Presenting annual awards and prizes to recognize outstanding scholarship and significant contributions to ASEEES and the field;
- Disseminating work and news of our members through its newsletter and online platforms;
- Offering financial support to members for the purpose of conducting and sharing their research;
- Engaging the membership in year-round programming and networking opportunities;
- Supporting teaching by disseminating best practices and curricular materials;
- Providing training/professional development and mentoring programs for graduate students and younger scholars;
- Developing programs, policies and resources to enhance interdisciplinary understanding;
- Fostering greater awareness of the region by engaging the general public and the media;
- Partnering with other organizations to advocate for sustained support of international studies and foreign language education.

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

This statement represents the policy of ASEEES governing the solicitation and acceptance of charitable donations. The terms contribution, donation or gift may be used interchangeably and, like the provisions in this policy, are meant to represent all forms of charitable giving eligible to be received by ASEEES as an incorporated non-profit organization. ASEEES's Board of Directors reserves the right to revise or revoke this Policy at any time and to make exceptions to the Policy.

The purposes of the policy are: to provide guidance for the ASEEES Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Executive Director, staff, and association members with respect to their responsibilities concerning charitable donations to ASEEES; to provide guidance to prospective donors and their professional advisors when considering a donation to ASEEES; to assure compliance with legal and ethical requirements; and to ensure consistency with the mission and priorities of ASEEES.

ASEEES encourages philanthropic creativity; therefore, this policy is to be interpreted liberally so that prospective donors may enjoy the greatest freedom possible in formulating their charitable donations.

## **1. Overarching Provisions**

ASEEES strongly encourages the solicitation and acceptance of private gifts and grants in accordance with its strategic plan to fulfill its mission, as stated above. Donations will be acknowledged in compliance with IRS guidelines/regulations.

Gifts and grants may be sought from individuals or organizations, including not-for-profit, academic, corporate entities, charitable foundations, and government entities for purposes, positions, and programs that have appropriate approval as specified below. The Board and the Executive Director of ASEEES will protect the Association's integrity and independence.

ASEEES shall not accept gifts from individuals or institutional donors that:

- a. Violate its corporate charter;
- b. Jeopardize its status as a tax-exempt 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization under federal or state law;
- c. Are too difficult or expensive to administer;
- d. Are too restrictive in purpose or inconsistent with ASEEES's mission and priorities;
- e. Prohibit ASEEES from accepting charitable donations from other donors;
- f. Involve unlawful discrimination based upon race, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability or any other basis prohibited by federal, state, and local laws and regulations or obligate ASEEES to violate any other applicable law or regulation;
- g. Could damage the reputation of ASEEES or would result in any unacceptable consequences for ASEEES.

## **FORMS OF CHARITABLE DONATIONS**

A gift is defined as any transfer of personal or real property made voluntarily and without consideration. All contributions will receive tax-deductions to the extent permitted by law.

ASEEES provides donors with giving options and time periods to meet their needs and preferences. Donors can make charitable donations that are unrestricted, temporarily restricted (designated for a specific purpose but time-limited) or permanently restricted (e.g. Endowment). Donations may support an existing program or establish a new one. Donors may also respond to Capital or Endowment Campaign priorities that may have special policies regarding gift crediting and expenditure but adhere to ASEEES Gift Policies. ASEEES may also identify special project needs from time-to-time that are one-time donation opportunities.

**Cash/Check/Credit Card:** ASEEES accepts contributions made by cash, check, money order, or credit card (including online giving).

**Stocks/Securities:** ASEEES may accept gifts of publicly-traded securities. Publicly-traded securities may be transferred to an account maintained by ASEEES at a brokerage firm or delivered physically with the transferor's signature or stock power attached. ASEEES has a "Standing Sell Order" with its brokerage firm to ensure that the securities are sold immediately after transfer or as soon as practical following receipt.

**Life Insurance.** ASEEES may accept gifts of life insurance where ASEEES is named as both beneficiary and irrevocable owner of the insurance policy. The donor must agree to pay, before due, any future premium payments owing on the policy. If the donor does not continue to make payments on the life insurance policy, ASEEES will surrender the policy for its current cash value. A designation will not be recorded as a gift until the gift is irrevocable. When the gift is irrevocable, the gift shall be recorded in accordance with GAAP.

**Retirement Plan Beneficiary Designations:** ASEEES may accept designations as beneficiary of donors' retirement plans. A designation will not be recorded as a gift until the gift is irrevocable. When the gift is irrevocable, the gift will be recorded in accordance with GAAP.

**Personal Property/Real Estate:** ASEEES may accept such gifts on a case-by-case basis. Such gifts will be processed according to type with the advice of ASEEES's outside attorneys.

**Charitable Remainder Trusts, Charitable Lead Trusts, and Charitable Gift Annuities:** ASEEES will consider the acceptance of these life income donations on a case-by-case basis.

### **Bequest**

A bequest is a gift of any amount or form made to ASEEES in a donor's will. Bequests may provide for a specific dollar amount in cash, specific securities, or specific articles of tangible personal property. A gift in any amount may be accepted as a contribution to an existing fund so long as the terms and conditions of the existing fund so permit.

Among donors' options are residuary and contingent bequests. A residuary bequest will give ASEEES all or a portion of the estate after all debts, taxes, expenses, and all other bequests have been paid. A contingent bequest will ensure that, despite unforeseen circumstances, specified property will pass to ASEEES rather than unintended beneficiaries.

Donors are encouraged to recognize that over the many years following the establishment of an endowment, the needs, policies, and circumstances of ASEEES can change in unforeseen ways. ASEEES's administration must have the flexibility to make use of funds in the best interest of the institution and in accord with donor interests and specifications. Thus, donors are advised to describe the specific purposes of the bequest.

In order to expedite Estate distributions, provisions in the donor's will or trust agreements should include the statement: "I give, devise, bequeath [assets/percent share of the residue of my estate] to the ASEEES, with its principal office at 315 S. Bellefield Ave, 203C Bellefield Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15260."

**ASEEES will count bequest intentions within the special project and/or campaign IF the bequest is documented in writing and a minimum value may be determined or if the donor is over the age of 70.** The estimated nature of the gift must be noted and appropriately excluded from reports on officially recorded gifts. Public recognition may not be based on a specific dollar amount nor may any gift opportunities be named unless the future gift value can be substantiated (i.e. not a % of the estate) and the gift is irrevocable. A donor(s) must be age 70 or older to receive full recognition for the value of a life income gift.

Although recognition is allowed and an estimated value of the gift may be included in the total achievement of the fundraising for the special project and/or capital/endowment campaign, a bequest will not be officially recorded as a gift until the gift is irrevocable. When the gift is irrevocable, it will be recorded in accordance with GAAP.

### **MINIMUM GIFT FOR NEW/NAMED PROGRAMS [SCHOLARSHIPS, AND AWARDS]**

The minimum gift to establish a named program is \$25,000. Allocations from an endowed fund may begin one-year after the minimum fundraising requirement is met. Allocations from an expendable or non-endowed fund may begin as soon as the minimum is received.

### **SPECIAL PROJECT OR CAMPAIGN-RELATED DONATIONS**

ASEEES may, from time-to-time, establish a fundraising priority (Capital Campaign, Endowment Campaign, Special Project) to fund one or more strategic priorities. ASEEES Gift Policies allow for special consideration related to gift crediting (donations eligible for credit in a Campaign) and recognition as long as they remain in accordance with the Overall Provisions of these policies.

Future of the Field Campaign – June 2018 (Board Resolution passed for the Campaign) – December 2021 (end of the pledge period). Active Campaign Period: June 2018 – September 30, 2019.

#### **Eligible Gifts:**

- All individual and institutional donations and pledges received between June 2018 and September 30, 2019, may be counted toward the Campaign Goal unless specifically excluded by direction of the donor and/or the Board of Directors.
- ASEEES will accept documented multi-year pledges made between June 1, 2018 and September 30, 2019. Pledges must be paid in full by December 31, 2021.
- ASEEES will count bequest intentions within the Campaign IF the bequest is documented in writing and a minimum value may be determined or if the donor is over the age of 70.
- ASEEES will count new and increased funding associated with the annual Convention.
- ASEEES will count new and increased donations made to existing programs and/or endowments.

### **AUTHORIZED AGENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **Executive Director/Main Office**

The Executive Director has the authority to accept all gifts or bequests to ASEEES after formal approval and is responsible for implementing the gift acceptance policy. All gifts to ASEEES should be directed through the main ASEEES office where they will be properly recorded and acknowledged.

The Executive Director will bring the following gift acceptance decisions to the Executive Committee for review:

- a. Acceptance of permanently or temporarily restricted gifts for new programs;
- b. Acceptance of gifts of over \$5,000 that are ambiguous with respect to conformity with this policy;
- c. Acceptance of gifts of over \$5,000 that are exceptions to this policy;
- d. Acceptance of gifts that present questions as to the impact on ASEEES, or a particular program or area;

- e. Acceptance of gifts that might raise questions about ASEEEES's integrity or independence, or potentially expose the ASEEEES to adverse publicity, financial risk, or litigation;
- f. Acceptance of gifts that present the potential for an obligation on ASEEEES under local, state, or federal law that ASEEEES either may be unwilling or unable to assume;
- g. Acceptance of gifts of real estate, tangible personal property, life insurance, retirement plan, charitable remainder trusts, charitable lead trusts, and charitable gift annuities; and
- h. Anything else at the Executive Director's discretion.

### **Executive Committee/Board of Directors**

ASEEEES is legally obligated to adhere to the terms and conditions of every gift. For this reason, the terms of each gift must be considered with the utmost care to be sure they are feasible, do not unduly hamper the usefulness and desirability of the gift, and are in conformity with ASEEEES policy.

Major gifts over \$25,000 that establish new or named programs must be approved by the full Board of Directors. After an initial assessment and discussion between the Executive Director and a prospective donor and after review by the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee will consult the board in writing for a period of no less than 21 days at which point the Board will vote on the general framework of the gift. If the Board votes to accept the general framework, then the Executive Director will negotiate the final agreement, which will be submitted to the Board for a final vote within 10 days of receiving the final agreement. All board discussions on major gifts will be held in executive session in person or by a conference call – never by e-mail – and considered confidential. A two-thirds majority of the Board will be required for approval of major gift under Board consideration. The final Board decisions are binding.

In addition, when the Executive Committee determines that a proposed gift may raise significant institutional concerns, it may recommend that the decision be brought before the full Board.

### **Use of Legal Counsel**

ASEEEES will seek the advice of legal counsel in matters relating to acceptance of charitable donations when appropriate. Review by counsel is recommended for:

- a. Gifts of securities that are subject to restrictions or buy-sell agreements;
- b. Documents naming ASEEEES as trustee or requiring ASEEEES to act in any fiduciary capacity;
- c. Gifts requiring ASEEEES to assume financial or other obligations;
- d. Transactions with potential conflicts of interest;
- e. Gifts of real estate;
- f. Pledge agreements with special requests for recognition or fulfillment; and
- g. Charitable lead and remainder trusts and gift annuities.

In order to avoid potential conflicts of interest, for non-standard gifts ASEEEES should encourage prospective donors to seek the assistance of their own legal and financial advisors in matters relating to their charitable donations and the resulting tax and estate planning consequences.

### **ACKNOWLEDGING AND RECOGNIZING DONORS**

ASEEES acknowledges all charitable donations by issuing receipts. When a gift of \$75 or more is made with no exchange of goods or services, a formal acknowledgement letter including the gift amount and date, the fund to which the gift is restricted, if appropriate, and a statement that “no goods or services have been exchanged” for the contribution is sent to each donor upon acceptance of the gift. Acknowledgement letters serve as legal receipts and are necessary to ensure that charitable donations are deposited correctly and also serve as additional verification of a tax-deductible gift for the donor.

All donors, with the exception of those who wish to be anonymous, may be recognized in the ASEEES newsletter and/or website.

ASEEES may develop special conditions for donor recognition within a special project and/or capital/endowment campaign for review and approval by the ASEEES Board of Directors as needed. ASEEES Gift Policies allow for special consideration related to gift crediting (donations eligible for credit in a Campaign) and recognition as long as they remain in accordance with the Overall Provisions of these policies.

#### **FEDERAL AND STATE TAX INFORMATION**

Since ASEEES is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes, it is exempt from income tax under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions made to ASEEES are charitable contributions for federal, state and local tax purposes, and are deductible by donors in computing corporate, partnership, gift, estate, and personal income taxes to the extent permitted by law.