

scout

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SCOUT SUCCESSFUL IN AUCTION FOR HISTORIC HAMILTON AND FURNESS BUILDINGS ON THE AVENUE OF THE ARTS

Philadelphia, PA – It is with immense honor, privilege, and a touch of disbelief that Scout (@scoutltd), a women-owned development and design company, announces its success in acquiring the historic Hamilton and Furness buildings on the Avenue of the Arts. This marks a significant milestone for our team and for Philadelphia, as we step into the role of stewards for these iconic structures. But more than that, these buildings hold extraordinary potential to cultivate and support Philadelphia’s creative community, reinforcing the value of the arts in our city and beyond.

The arts are a critical force in every city—bringing creativity, resilience, and joy. Artists help us all to understand and reflect on hardship, trauma, and hope in new ways. They challenge us to see the world differently, to push boundaries, and to imagine new possibilities. These buildings, steeped in history and culture, will continue to be spaces where artists and makers thrive, ensuring that Philadelphia remains a vibrant and innovative center for creativity.

This journey has been filled with challenges. At many points, the project seemed impossible. The speed of the auction process outpaced the ability of many to respond, and we did not have the immediate capital to compete. But in the final hours, an angel—an anonymous individual who deeply loves and believes in Philadelphia—stepped forward with an emergency bridge loan. This support, alongside contributions from 20 other philanthropists, foundations, and investors, made this acquisition possible.

While this is a moment to celebrate, our work is far from over. This will be a challenging project, and in the next 60 days, we must repay this emergency loan. To that end, we will be launching a crowdfunding campaign, inviting others to invest in the future of these historic buildings and ensure they remain a cornerstone of Philadelphia’s vibrant arts community.

Two weeks ago this project seemed unattainable. We felt the weight of the many voices—especially those of University of the Arts students and alumni—who feared this building would be lost. This experience serves as a reminder: even when the path ahead is

difficult and uncertain, perseverance is key. The support of many pushed us to continue to imagine and push forward.

We are eager to embark on this journey alongside our neighbors on the Avenue of the Arts, including the Kimmel Center, Wilma Theater, Ensemble Arts, Carl Dranoff, and Dwight Capital Group.

We extend our gratitude to Dwight City Group for recognizing the importance of a fully arts-centered project and for their leadership and grace in supporting our bid. We look forward to fostering a strong, collaborative relationship across the street and supporting their work at 333 S. Broad Street.

A heartfelt thank you goes to Council President Kenyatta Johnson for his resolution in support of this project and to the entire City Council for their unanimous backing. We also deeply appreciate the early support of Senator Nikil Saval and Councilmember Mark Squilla. Special thanks to former Mayor Michael Nutter, former Governor Ed Rendell, Commerce Director Alba Martinez, Planning Director Jessie Lawrence, and Arts and Culture Lead Val Gay (title to be confirmed).

We are profoundly grateful to the 600+ individuals who took time to write letters advocating for this project. Your voices made a difference. To journalists like Inga Saffron, whose words help shape this city for the better, and to Jake Blumgart and Sue Snyder, who followed every step of this process—thank you for your commitment and thoughtful reporting.

Finally, we want to acknowledge the entire Scout and Bok team, and the incredible Bok community, whose support, hard work, and dedication made this effort possible. This success is a testament to the power of collective action, shared vision, and unwavering belief in the importance of the arts.

The saying goes that the best days of a project are the first and the last—everything in between is sweat, tears, and hard work. Getting here has already been an incredible journey, and we know the road ahead will demand even more. But today, we celebrate.

Thank you to every single person who helped make this a reality.