



## Council on the Arts

**KATHY HOCHUL**  
Governor

**KATHERINE NICHOLLS**  
Chair

**MARA MANUS**  
Executive Director

**June 7, 2023**

### **NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS AND EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT CONGRATULATE THE BUSHWICK STARR ON THE GROUNDBREAKING FOR THEIR NEW PERMANENT HOME**

***\$5.5 Million Project Supported by \$1.4 Million in NYS Funding***

***New Space Will Create Accessible Cultural Resource for the Community and Improved Venue for  
Artists and Audiences***

The New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) and Empire State Development (ESD) congratulate the Bushwick Starr on breaking ground for their \$5.5 million new permanent home in Bushwick, Brooklyn. Founded in 2007, the Bushwick Starr is an Obie Award-winning nonprofit theater that has become a thriving theatrical venue, a vital neighborhood arts center, and a destination for exciting and engaging performance. The new location will feature a street-level lobby for events and community gathering, a 90-seat Black Box theater with flexible configurations, a private rehearsal studio and dedicated workshop, green room, office, and storage. The project is supported by \$1.4 million in funding from New York State, including \$900,000 from NYSCA and a \$500,000 ESD grant, recommended by the New York City Regional Economic Development Council.

**NYSCA Director Mara Manus said,** “Developed with a singular vision and an independent spirit, the Bushwick Starr has become one of our great cultural treasures. This new, permanent venue will further the Bushwick Starr’s role as a dedicated, community-driven incubator for vibrant performances and experimental works. Furthermore, this thrilling evolution underscores the importance of capital project funding for the arts, as it builds our neighborhoods, invigorates our health, and grows our economies. This new space will be a gift for Bushwick, the State, and all who pass through its doors. “

**Empire State Development President, CEO and Commissioner Hope Knight said,** “As we celebrate the groundbreaking of the Bushwick Starr, we lay the foundation for an innovative artistic beacon that will illuminate and inspire artists and audiences for generations to come. The new venue will expand the theater's capacity to nurture emerging talents, foster community engagement, and push the boundaries of artistic expression in Brooklyn and beyond.”

**New York City Regional Economic Development Council Co-Chairs Winston Fisher, Partner at Fisher Brothers, and Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, City University of New York Chancellor, said,** "Today we sow the seeds of creative growth as we break ground for the Bushwick Starr Theater. The new venue will support emerging voices and established artists, enriching our cultural landscape and captivating audiences for years to come."

**Noel Allain, Sue Kessler, and Lauren Miller of The Bushwick Starr said,** "We are thrilled to mark this very exciting moment as construction begins on The Bushwick Starr's new and improved home-- a place where we can build the future of this organization for the long term. The Starr's new facility will prioritize community gathering, sharing, and making. The theater itself will maintain its intimacy but will maximize its flexibility to meet each artist's vision. It's our dream to offer this kind of space to Bushwick, and we are building it with care so that it can support the big dreams of our artists and community for decades. We are so grateful that New York State, the Governor, our elected officials, NYSCA and Empire State Development have made such a meaningful investment in the arts and culture of Bushwick."

The Bushwick Starr's new home is scheduled to open in early 2024. The Starr purchased a single-story 5,000-square-foot former dairy plant at 419 Eldert Street and will transform it into a cutting-edge performance arts facility. Located one block from the L train, the new Starr will become a permanent cultural asset to the neighborhood, serving as a springboard for emerging artists, a space for performance companies to experiment, and a neighborhood playhouse. Its impact will extend beyond arts and culture by generating local economic growth through jobs, tourism, and cultural development. By supporting the creative sector and attracting diverse audiences, the Bushwick Starr will strengthen community ties, and further establish Brooklyn as a vibrant cultural destination through the transformative power of the performing arts.

### **About the New York State Council on the Arts**

The mission of the New York State Council on the Arts is to foster and advance the full breadth of New York State's arts, culture, and creativity for all. To support the ongoing recovery of the arts across New York State, the Council on the Arts will award \$127 million in FY 2024.

The Council on the Arts further advances New York's creative culture by convening leaders in the field and providing organizational and professional development opportunities and informational resources. Created by Governor Nelson Rockefeller in 1960 and continued with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, the Council is an agency that is part of the Executive Branch. For more information on NYSCA, please visit [www.arts.ny.gov](http://www.arts.ny.gov), and follow NYSCA's Facebook page, Twitter @NYSCArts and Instagram @NYSCouncilontheArts.

## About Empire State Development

Empire State Development (ESD) is New York's chief economic development agency ([www.esd.ny.gov](http://www.esd.ny.gov)). The mission of ESD is to promote a vigorous and growing economy, encourage the creation of new job and economic opportunities, increase revenues to the State and its municipalities, and achieve stable and diversified local economies. Through the use of loans, grants, tax credits and other forms of financial assistance, ESD strives to enhance private business investment and growth to spur job creation and support prosperous communities across New York State. ESD is also the primary administrative agency overseeing the Regional Economic Development Councils and the marketing of "I LOVE NEW YORK," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information on Regional Councils and Empire State Development, visit [www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov](http://www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov) and [www.esd.ny.gov](http://www.esd.ny.gov)