

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## CONTACT:

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[asthilaire@arenastage.org](mailto:asthilaire@arenastage.org)**ARENA STAGE SELECTED TO JOIN  
BLOOMBERG PHILANTHROPIES DIGITAL ACCELERATOR PROGRAM**

(Washington, DC) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announced today it has been selected to participate in the **Bloomberg Philanthropies Digital Accelerator Program**, a grant initiative designed to support arts institutions through strategic investments to its digital infrastructure. Joining a cohort of 200 nonprofit cultural organizations, the Tony Award-winning theater will leverage the resources of the Digital Accelerator Program into the complete redesign of its company website in service of updating its brand presence to better reflect recent changes in the organization's work, culture, and leadership.

"Arena's website is the most frequent starting point for what will hopefully be a long relationship between our theater and our audiences," said Arena Stage Executive Producer **Edgar Dobie**. "The support of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Digital Accelerator Program will help us better maintain those relationships by delivering a smoother, safer web experience for all patrons."

Launched in 2021, the Digital Accelerator Program helps shape organizations by strengthening technology and management practices in order to improve operations, drive revenue, increase fundraising, engage broader audiences, and deliver dynamic programming. With user experience as its top priority, Arena Stage ultimately seeks to upgrade to a system that will integrate smoothly with the pending update to Version 16 of the Tessitura customer relationship management (CRM) platform, as well as permit and improve site design, navigation, and functionality based on customer feedback. The new website will boost mobile conversions by shortening the ticket purchase pathway, significantly improving the customer experience, particularly for single-ticket buyers – a major audience for the theater's growth.

"The Digital Accelerator Program offers an exciting opportunity to enhance Arena's website, ensuring it remains secure, sustainable, and accessible for years to come," said Arena Stage Board Strategy Committee Co-Chair **Nicholas Goad**. "As the theater continues to grow and welcome patrons from across the region and beyond, this initiative allows us to put our best foot forward, providing an exceptional digital experience that meets the evolving needs of our audiences."

Arena Stage Junior Ticketing Systems and Tessitura Specialist **Aaron Hutchens** will helm the digital project as the theater's nominated **Bloomberg Tech Fellow**. With strong insight into the organization's operations and strategic objectives, Hutchens will champion innovation in collaboration with Bloomberg Philanthropies advisors to put together a project plan and budget that will result in the successful enhancement of the company's CRM, content management system (CMS), and website interface.

“The Digital Accelerator Program is an incredible opportunity for me to provide a vital service to Arena Stage, grow as a professional, and learn from experts and peer organizations from across the country and around the world,” said **Hutchens**. “I am honored to serve as the Bloomberg Tech Fellow for Arena and am confident the project will benefit the theater for years to come and contribute to the field-wide learning Bloomberg Philanthropies generates through the program.”

The project is expected to be completed by Spring 2026, in alignment with the theater's 75th Anniversary Season.

### **About Bloomberg Philanthropies**

*Bloomberg Philanthropies invests in 700 cities and 150 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on creating lasting change in five key areas: the Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's giving, including his foundation, corporate, and personal philanthropy as well as Bloomberg Associates, a philanthropic consultancy that advises cities around the world. In 2023, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$3 billion. For more information, please visit [bloomberg.org](https://www.bloomberg.org).*

### **About Arena Stage**

*The first racially integrated theater in our nation's capital and a pioneer of the regional theater movement, Arena Stage was founded in 1950 in Washington, D.C. Today, under the leadership of Artistic Director Hana S. Sharif and Executive Producer Edgar Dobie, Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. We produce plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep, and dangerous in the American spirit, and present diverse and groundbreaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Consistently contributing to the American theatrical lexicon by commissioning and developing new plays, Arena Stage impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement and serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. [arenastage.org](https://www.arenastage.org)*

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