

Office of the President  
December 2, 2025

Members, Board of Trustees:

ACCEPTANCE OF CHARITABLE GRANT FROM  
THE BILL GATTON FOUNDATION TO BENEFIT AND ESTABLISH  
THE ARTS DISTRICT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

Recommendation: that the Board of Trustees accept a charitable grant totaling \$150,000,000 from The Bill Gatton Foundation to provide capital support for the benefit of and to establish a new Arts District on the University of Kentucky's campus in Lexington, Kentucky. The grant would represent the single largest gift in the history of the University of Kentucky.

Background: The Bill Gatton Foundation was established in 1985 by C.M. "Bill" Gatton of Bristol, Tennessee (1932-2022). Mr. Gatton earned his Bachelor of Science in Commerce from the University of Kentucky in 1954, and Master of Business Administration from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He was an Honorary Member of the Board of Trustees, a member of the University of Kentucky Hall of Distinguished Alumni, and a member of the Gatton College Hall of Fame.

This charitable grant represents a continuation of Mr. Gatton's faith in the University's ability to improve lives through excellence in education, the arts, research and creative work, service and health care. The Donor intends to enhance the quality of life for all Kentuckians in the Commonwealth of Kentucky by making a charitable grant that will establish a new Arts District for the benefit of the University of Kentucky community, the city of Lexington, Kentucky and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. This new Arts District will serve as an important and vital hub of human flourishing through its promotion of the arts.

The Arts District will be on the western edge of the UK campus on real property owned now or in the future by the University of Kentucky, generally within the borders of Scott Street, South Upper Street, Bolivar Street and South Broadway in Lexington, Kentucky. This development has the potential to be a major entryway from the community into the campus as well as complement a growing and vibrant arts and entertainment district in Lexington.

Mr. Gatton and The Bill Gatton Foundation remain the largest private donors in UK's history, having funded hundreds of student scholarships, the Gatton Student Center, Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment and the Gatton College of Business and Economics, among other gifts to the University.

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Action taken:     Approved     Disapproved     Other \_\_\_\_\_

