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Dyer Brown designs Highland Capital Partners new 19,000 s/f office

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Dyer Brown Architects designed a new 19,000 s/f office for Highland Capital Partners, a venture capital firm. Dyer Brown provided interior architecture and design services for the company at One Broadway in Kendall Sq.

Formerly located on the Rte. 128 belt in Lexington, Highland Capital came to Kendall Sq. because of its proximity to MIT and Harvard.

The project team included Dyer Brown Architects, Lee Kennedy Company, AHA Engineers, CMS Audio Visual Consultants, Houghton Associates Acoustical Consultants, Haworth and Environments at Work, Adotta and Peabody Office Furniture, and Tank Design.

The space was designed to communicate the company's openness to young entrepreneurs. Highland Capital wanted the space to feel comfortable, casual, and friendly, yet also sophisticated and tasteful to its multi-generational visitors. With employees and clients spanning from Baby Boomers to Gen Y, it was crucial to achieve a balance between modern and traditional design.

Dyer Brown worked closely with Highland Capital's partners to find inspiration for the design. The team explored three possible design directions with "look and feel" boards of photos and product samples.

Ultimately, Highland Capital's partners selected a palette of sustainable woods, clear glass, modern lines, and small amounts of pattern with emphasis on texture. Primarily cool neutrals, clean whites, rich browns, and pops of deep blues and bright greens and oranges contrast with the richly textured material palette. Workstations are crisp, white, Euro-modern with contrasting natural elements that inject warmth. The other furniture pieces scattered throughout the composition are light in scale with an emphasis on comfort and accessibility.

A defining feature of Highland's new office is the large café that spans between the reception area and the large board rooms, which all afford sweeping views of the Charles River. The café was conceived as a space where employees and visitors would congregate, enjoy a beverage and conversation with colleagues, and relax before a presentation or meeting. Similarly, the firm incorporated two additional conference rooms with lounge seating in lieu of a conference table to encourage informal meetings.

"Highland's move to Kendall Sq. gave us an opportunity to create a much more open and inviting office space for them," said Brent Zeigler, director of design at Dyer Brown. "The extensive use of glass and the design of a strategically located open café facilitate a feeling of connection between all of the Highland partners and employees."