

BRITISH
FASHION
COUNCIL
FOUNDATION

IMPACT REPORT

2020 - 2024



Attracting and nurturing
fashion talent in the UK



Cover Credit:
RICHARD MALONE

Inside Cover Credit:
16ARLINGTON

The British Fashion Council Foundation furthers the charitable work of the British Fashion Council in championing British Fashion as a creative force on the world stage. The Foundation provides exceptional talent, access to education and support as they enter the industry to responsibly grow their business.



Letter from British Fashion Council CEO & BFC Foundation Trustee, Caroline Rush CBE

We are excited to bring you this report which is the first that reflects on the tangible impact that the British Fashion Council (BFC) Foundation has made over the past four years to future proof the pipeline of creative talent to the industry.

The work we do through the BFC Foundation (Registered Charity Number: 1185152) is entirely unique. The BFC Foundation is the only charity in the UK that comprehensively supports fashion talent from education and scholarships through emerging talent to growth funds. We are thrilled to announce that for the period March 2020 - March 2024, the BFC Foundation has remitted a total of £4.3million across its initiatives. This report demonstrates how funds released by the BFC Foundation in the form of grants and scholarships have impacted the British fashion industry and have helped establish a new generation of creatives, supporting their growth.

Despite challenges that continue to impact the UK fashion industry, including Brexit, the cost-of-living crisis and key retailers closing, I am excited and optimistic about the future of this industry. Our brands and designers are incredibly resilient and through the work of the BFC, we are able to alleviate various challenges they face in this volatile landscape, as well as highlight the importance of investment in creative industries during this time.

The UK is unique in that it fosters a culture of creativity, in part enabled by our brilliant art school education which must be protected and invested in. This in turn fuels the industry, providing the pipeline of talent that is essential to its success.

The BFC is a not-for-profit organisation focused on the responsible growth, innovation and amplification of the British fashion industry and is committed to strengthening and future proofing the UK's reputation as leaders in creative talent. The BFC continues to invest in this creative talent which ultimately drives the fashion industry globally and recognises the need to increase the diversity of the talent pool, and support businesses that are leading the way in terms of environmental, social and community impact.

The BFC strategically created the BFC Foundation in 2019 by bringing together all the BFC's charitable designer and education initiatives under one umbrella supporting the future growth and success of the British fashion industry by focusing on three areas: education, grant-giving and business mentoring. The BFC Foundation further enhances the UK's position as the best place to study, start and develop a fashion business. The BFC Foundation offers support to designers through the BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund, BFC/GQ Designer Fashion Fund, BFC NEWGEN, BFC Fashion Trust and the Queen Elizabeth II Award for British Design. The financial support given to NEWGEN designers is complemented by a free showcasing slot at the prestigious London Fashion Week NEWGEN venue run by the British Fashion Council. The costs of which are generously funded by the UK Government's Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and this is critical to the success of the NEWGEN programme by ensuring that designers get invaluable exposure to global press and buyers. With the support of the BFC Colleges Council, the BFC Foundation offers BA and MA scholarships to students, as well as links with industry through design competitions and Graduate Preview. The Fashion Awards, an annual event that celebrates

excellence in creativity in the fashion industry, is the primary fundraiser for the BFC Foundation.

Co-Chairs of the BFC Foundation Fundraising Committee, philanthropists and investors Narmina Marandi and Tania Fares, continue to work with us to build the international Foundation Patronage Programme which significantly contributes to the funding available for designers alongside a passionate group of individuals, the BFC Foundation Patrons, who value creativity in the fashion industry. Without their generous support, the ongoing work and impact of the BFC Foundation would not be possible. We thank you all.

We are committed to keeping this momentum going, this year we have extended our support to deepen our impact by increasing BFC NEWGEN grants, investing in LONDON show ROOMS hosting 16 BFC Foundation designers and their collections at an invaluable pop-up showroom in Paris this September, and commissioning the first Commercialising Creativity report this year which will culminate in a business networking event, exploring business models and commercial opportunities for designer businesses.

A huge thank you to our BFC Foundation Trustees David Pemsel, Laura Strain, Pam Batty and Andin Fonyonga; the BFC Foundation Fundraising Committee Co-chairs Narmina Marandi and Tania Fares; our BFC Foundation Advisory Committee; our BFC Ambassador for Emerging Talent, Sarah Mower MBE; the BFC Foundation Patrons for their continued support and everyone who has played a role as an advisor or sat on judging panels over the past four years. Lastly, thank you to the incredible BFC team for all of your hard work.



A note from the BFC Foundation Fundraising Co-Chairs, Narmina Marandi & Tania Fares

This Impact Report holds great significance for the Charity and for the BFC Foundation Patron community.

The report is an important reminder of the wealth of talent that exists in the UK and the need to future-proof this support for future generations of creative talent to come. From incubation to growth funds, the BFC runs the only programme of its kind and it is essential to support the pipeline of talent to the global industry.

Now, in its third (full) year, our BFC Foundation Global Patron Programme continues to be a growing beacon of support to our grant-giving programmes. A special thanks must go to our BFC Foundation Patrons who have helped not only via their donations, but also supporting various designers; offering events, mentorship and networking support with shared goals of developing creative businesses that focus on community, innovation and sustainability.

We hope to produce this Impact Report on an annual basis, to demonstrate our impact to our blossoming community and to those outside our immediate network.

p10-11
Our work: an overview

p8-9
Introduction



p12-13
Our values



p14-17
Education Initiatives



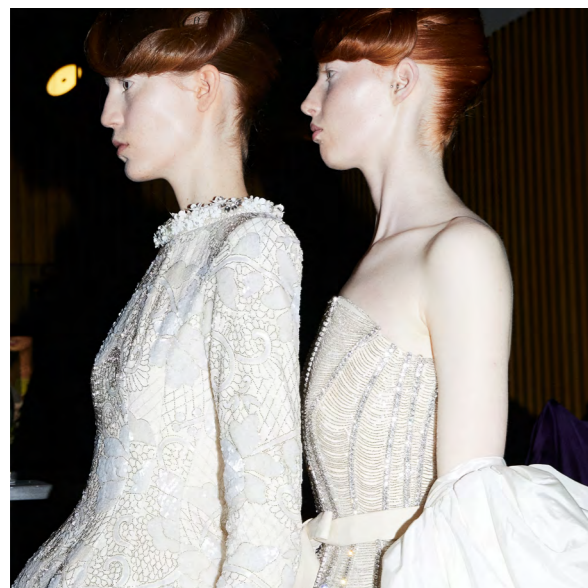
p18-19
Meet our scholar:
Joshua Ewusie



“We are committed to future-proofing
the pipeline of creative talent.”

Caroline Rush CBE, CEO & BFC Foundation Trustee

Contents



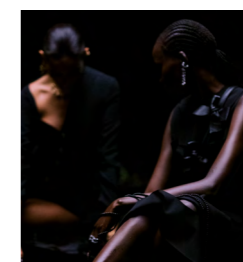
p20-21
Designer Initiatives



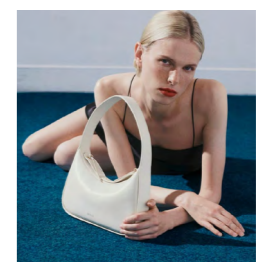
p22-23
Thriving Businesses



p24-25
Meet the designer:
Priya Ahluwalia



p28-29
Deepening
our impact



p30-31
Supported designer
businesses and
thank yous



Designer Credit:
MOLLY GODDARD

The Foundation was established in 2020 to bring together the BFC’s various charitable initiatives under one umbrella.

Charitable initiatives:

- BFC NEWGEN
- BFC Fashion Trust
- BFC/GQ Designer Fashion Fund
- BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund
- BFC Scholarships
- National Saturday Club
- The Queen Elizabeth II Award for British Design

£4.3M remitted across education and designer initiatives since 2020



Designer Credit:
S.S.DALEY



Designer Credit:
WALES BONNER

UK Fashion Colleges focus on pushing excellence in creativity. The BFC early stage programmes therefore provide the business guidance that designers need to make a success of their fashion career. Through our education and business support initiatives, we give them the tools, networks and funding they need to thrive in the fashion industry and make their talent shine.

In 2020, we set out with the goal of raising £10 million to fund the pipeline of talent from fashion design students to designer businesses over 10 years. And we’re on track: by the end of the 2023-24 financial year, we had channelled £1 million into our education programmes, and distributed funds to designers totalling £3.3 million.

We have developed both our education and business support initiatives to tackle four key

impact areas: creative excellence, holistic business support, environmental and social impact, and increasing access. Throughout this report, we will look at how the work we have done so far has achieved these key impacts, and where we must focus next.

The fashion industry is a massive part of the UK’s economy, contributing £28.9 billion to GDP in direct impact and over 800,000 jobs. By supporting young designers, we are ensuring not only that they can achieve their own creative goals, but also that their talent can be celebrated for its contribution to the UK’s fashion ecosystem and economic growth. Our industry must continue to secure the pipeline of talent to the industry – and we are here to make sure that their skills and vision have a chance to make their mark.

Our work: an overview



We exist to support Britain’s fashion talent pipeline. Our work starts with young students who are curious about a fashion career during their secondary school years, through to university education and designer businesses.

“We exist to support Britain’s
fashion talent pipeline”

SCHOOL EDUCATION

National Saturday Club

Giving 13 to 16 year olds the opportunity to study a subject they love and gain insights into the fashion industry



Supporting businesses

Providing designers with the business skills and finance to take their design work to the real world and global stage

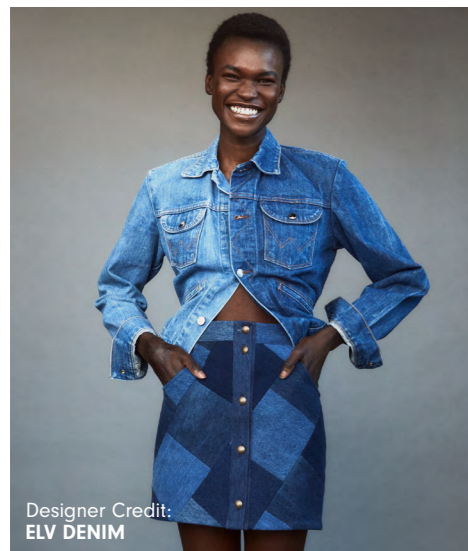


BA & MA Support

Helping to diversify the industry, giving opportunities for budding designers to explore their creativity at art school

CAREER & BUSINESS GUIDANCE

Our Values



Designer Credit:
ELV DENIM



Designer Credit:
16ARLINGTON



Designer Credit:
RICHARD MALONE

Creative excellence

We select our programme participants for their creative excellence. We look for a distinctive point of view, strong aesthetic and innovative approach to design.

Holistic business support

UK Fashion Colleges focus on pushing excellence in creativity. The BFC early stage programmes therefore provide the business guidance that designers need to make a success of their fashion career.

Environmental and social impact

An important criteria for selecting designers is their contribution to the wider social and environmental context that they are a part of. This could include circularity, job creation for under-privileged communities, or sustainable material innovations.

Increasing access

No one should be prevented from entering the fashion industry because of their background. Our initiatives are designed to reach young people whose circumstances might otherwise stop them from pursuing a fashion career – to make sure fashion is accessible to all. A strong fashion industry is a diverse one.



Designer Credit:
BETHANY WILLIAMS

Nurturing talent: our education initiatives

To maintain the UK's position at the forefront of global fashion, it is crucial that new talent is nurtured.

Fashion education is often inaccessible to many of the brightest and most creative young people in the UK, and the BFC exists to change that. Our scholarships help students studying at a BFC Colleges Council member university fund their fashion studies, and the financial support they receive is often the difference between a person studying fashion and not. Importantly, our scholarship programmes offer more than funding – we also help students to build networks and learn business skills that will set them up for success in their fashion career.

OUR SCHOLARSHIPS

BA Scholarship

For students commencing a BA Fashion Design course or part way through, to help towards course tuition fees with a contribution to course costs or living expenses.

BA Final Year Scholarship

For students in their final year of a BA Fashion Design course, to cover production costs for their final collections.

MA Scholarship

For students accepted on an MA Fashion Design course, to help towards course tuition fees, course costs and living expenses.

Chanel / Dior MEN / Joe Casely-Hayford Scholarships

These three separate scholarships are for students accepted on a Fashion Design course, to help towards course tuition fees, course costs and living expenses. They include bespoke mentoring from the Chanel, Dior MEN or Casely-Hayford team.

Over
£900,000

funding remitted for
scholarships during 2020-24



106
scholarships

granted since 2020



81
students

supported with their
BA, MA or both since 2020

NATIONAL SATURDAY CLUB

Alongside our scholarships, we also partner with the National Saturday Club (NSC): a charity that gives 13 to 16 year olds from across the UK the opportunity to study a subject they love for free at their local university, college or cultural institution.

The BFC Foundation supports the Fashion&Business Saturday Clubs, which connect young people with industry experts, offer insight into the fashion industry, and inspire them to explore the various career opportunities available in fashion. The BFC Foundation also organises a range of industry masterclasses for the students, on topics ranging from sustainability, brand communication strategies, stop motion animation and styling, and sessions have been hosted by the likes of Alexander McQueen, DAZED and Manolo Blahnik.



OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NSC HAS SUPPORTED

2022-23

2023-24

183
students

11 clubs

580 hours
of education delivery

218
students

10 clubs

550 hours
of education delivery

IMPORTANTLY, THE FASHION&BUSINESS SATURDAY CLUB REACHES A DIVERSE AUDIENCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE. OF THE STUDENTS TAKING PART IN 2023-24:

21% receive free school meals

33% are from an underrepresented ethnic background

11% have a disability

31% do not have a parent who has been to university

“Most students would not have access to the industry if it wasn’t for these Masterclasses”

Club tutor, London College of Fashion

Meet our scholar

JOSHUA EWUSIE



Joshua Ewusie is a young designer specialising in leatherwear. He describes his work as a conversation between two generations – his mother’s West African upbringing and his own experience of British culture.

“[The funds] allowed me to be on a level playing field with my classmates”

Joshua Ewusie

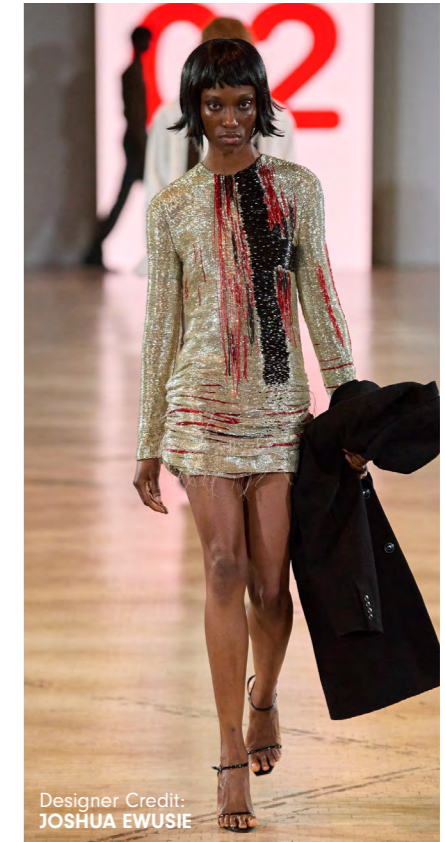
He recently completed his BA and MA at Central Saint Martins (CSM) in London. But achieving this is expensive – Joshua says that some of his peers at CSM spent thousands on their BA collections. “Especially coming from backgrounds where people obviously can’t afford that, it’s such a heavy burden,” he says. The BFC’s scholarship fund covered Joshua’s costs, so he could take a research trip to Ghana to learn about the fabrics that became his final BA collection. The funds “allowed me to be on a level playing field with my classmates”, Joshua says.

His next step was an MA – “I got in,” he says, “but I couldn’t do the MA if I didn’t have the MA scholarship”. The BFC Foundation Chanel Scholarship paid for Joshua’s course, and he launched his MA collection in February 2024. He opened the graduation show as part of London Fashion Week and had an exceptionally positive reception from the likes of British Vogue and the stylist Harry Lambert.

The BFC and Chanel’s support went far beyond funding, Joshua says. Talks and workshops held at the BFC gave him the chance to build a community with other designers, and mentors provided by the BFC and Chanel have become close advisers and friends. They have also introduced him to the King’s Foundation, a connection that helped him set up his first studio, so he has a space to work on designs that wouldn’t be possible from his bedroom. “They’re showing that they’re still invested in me,” Joshua says. “I definitely feel like I’m part of the BFC family”.



Designer Credit:
JOSHUA EWUSIE



Designer Credit:
JOSHUA EWUSIE

Supporting businesses: our designer initiatives

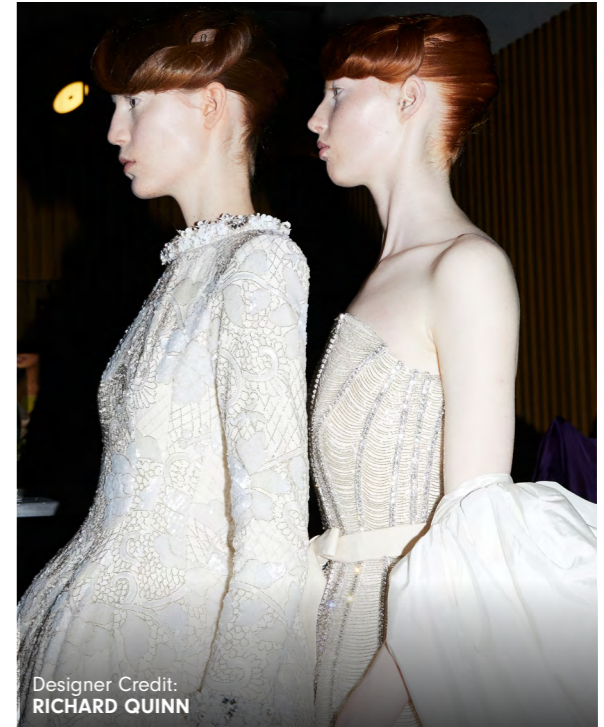
An art school education may give budding designers the opportunity for creative exploration, but it often leaves them without the business skills they need to take their design work into the real world.

We provide these designers with the injection of funds they need to launch or grow their business, as well as bespoke mentoring to shape their long-term business success.

We run four different designer initiatives, each supporting designers at different stages in their business journey. Additionally, in 2018 we launched the QEII Award for British Design and in 2020 the BFC Foundation Fashion Fund for the Covid Crisis in response to the pandemic.

94
designer businesses in total.
25 of whom have received multiple grants to support them throughout their fashion design journey.

38%
of the designers we have supported are from an underrepresented ethnic background.



BFC NEWGEN	BFC Fashion Trust	BFC/GQ Designer Fashion Fund	BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund	BFC Foundation Fashion Fund for the Covid Crisis	QEII Award for British Design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For designers with a fashion business that is less than three years old when they first enter the three-year programme Financial support to showcase at London Fashion Week and bespoke mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For designers running an established fashion business that is at least three years old, to accelerate and grow their business A grant of up to £50,000 to fund a specific business project and bespoke mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For menswear designers running an established fashion business that is at least three years old A cash prize currently at £100,000 plus bespoke high-level business mentoring and professional services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For womenswear designers running an established fashion business that is at least three years old A cash prize currently at £150,000 plus bespoke high-level business mentoring and professional services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established in March 2020 to provide emergency financial support for businesses affected by the Covid crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established in February 2018 in recognition of the role the fashion industry plays in society and diplomacy and to spotlight talented young designers making a difference through either sustainable practices or community engagement

Thriving

Our goal is to help fashion designers run businesses that are sustainable long-term, and that contribute to the UK's wider fashion economy.

£3.3million of funding provided
to designer businesses

80%: post-pandemic survival rate
of designer businesses supported
by the BFC Foundation

Many of the designer businesses we have supported have gone on to grow their businesses, creating employment opportunities. Data provided by the top 10 businesses supported by the BFC Foundation reported an increase in their turnover over the period 2020 to 2023.



businesses

Meet the designer

PRIYA AHLUWALIA



Priya Ahluwalia launched her brand Ahluwalia in 2018. She is a designer with Indian-Nigerian heritage and London roots, exploring the intersection of near and far, past and present. She has been interviewed for The New York Times, ELLE magazine, and GQ – who describe her as ‘an irrepressible mouthpiece for multicultural representation across the fashion industry’.



Designer Credit:
AHLUWALIA

Having graduated from the MA menswear course at Westminster University in 2018, she has gone on to make a series of collections, with a focus on using vintage garments and deadstock. In 2019 Priya became a BFC NEWGEN recipient, which helped kickstart her fashion business. In 2020 she was supported via the BFC Foundation Fashion Fund for the Covid Crisis, and the following year she received the QEII Award for British Design and also won the BFC/GQ Designer Fashion Fund – a cash injection that Priya invested strategically in expanding her team and acquiring warehouse services. “Each of these investments played a role in scaling up the business and helped me take it to the next level,” she says.

“The impact can’t be understated”

Priya Ahluwalia

Importantly for Priya, the BFC’s support was more than financial. She received mentoring that covered legal guidance, sustainability and marketing. “These resources have been valuable for both me and my team,” Priya says, “allowing us to connect with experts and gain insights that extend beyond what’s typically covered in school or some traditional work settings.” She has appeared on the cover of VOGUE, and was included on ELLE’s inaugural 2024 ‘Green List: Threads Of Change’, celebrating people, brands and collectives pushing for change in sustainability and fashion. Her talent speaks for itself, but she is clear that the BFC Foundation unlocked important opportunities for her business. “The impact can’t be understated. Without them, I’m not sure we would have had the same level of success in securing store placements and press accolades in the years after. I think they were pivotal in my journey.”

The BFC Foundation’s support has also helped raise her profile, Priya says – “they significantly enhance the reputation of both the designer and their brand, lending a level of gravitas and respect within the industry.”

Priya has gone on to showcase her brand at numerous Fashion Weeks in London and beyond.



Designer Credit:
AHLUWALIA

The Queen Elizabeth II Award for British Design was initiated in recognition of the role the fashion industry plays in society and diplomacy and to spotlight young designers who are talented and making a difference to society through either sustainable practices or community engagement.



The inaugural Award was announced and presented to Richard Quinn in February 2018 when The Queen made Her Majesty's first visit to London Fashion Week. In 2019, the prestigious Award was presented to Bethany Williams by The Duchess of Cornwall, in 2020 to Rosh Mahtani by Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, in 2021 to Priya Ahluwalia by Her Royal Highness The Countess of Wessex, in 2022 to Saul Nash by Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cambridge and in 2023 to Foday Dumbuya by His Majesty King Charles III.



The 2023 Award was presented to Foday Dumbuya by His Majesty King Charles III.



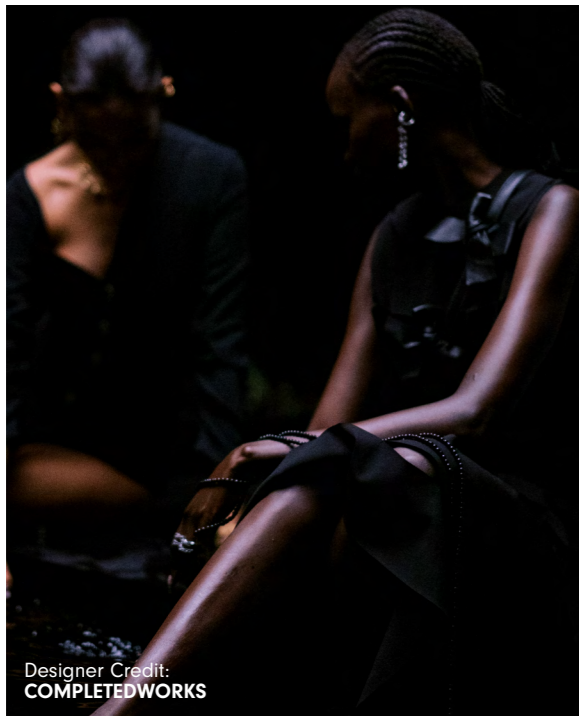
(Left) 2022 Winner: Saul Nash



(Right) 2021 Winner: Priya Ahluwalia

QEII Award For British Design

Deepening our impact



We are pleased with the progress made in the first four years of the BFC Foundation's work.

We have supported 175 scholars and designers, and hundreds of National Saturday Club students – many of whom may not otherwise have been able to pursue a career in the fashion industry. Our spending is on track, with £4.3 million so far remitted of our goal to distribute £10 million in 10 years.

Our first four years have set important foundations and given us a chance to learn about what works, and what doesn't. Our goal now is to push harder and deepen our support – particularly in relation to our four key values.

What has worked well

Providing a pathway:

Our grants are designed to provide stepping stones for emerging designers as they enter the fashion industry, with different scholarships and initiatives for different stages of the journey. As much as 27% of our designer businesses have benefitted from multiple BFC initiatives, each tailored to the relevant stage of their development.

Guidance, not just finance:

Feedback from our scholars and designer businesses has told us that the support that we offer – mentoring, training and talks – has been invaluable alongside the financial support they have received.

Commercialising creativity:

We are here to help emerging designers make a long-term career in the fashion industry. Their business success so far has been impressive, with some growing more than 600% in three years. They are also contributing to the economy and wider community by collectively creating more than job opportunities.

Adapting to industry needs:

During the Covid crisis, we were able to adapt to the emergency needs of the UK's designers. Our Fashion Fund for the Covid Crisis was launched swiftly and had flexible criteria that enabled us to help businesses that may not otherwise have survived.

Breadth, not just depth:

While many global fashion industry grants and prizes offer large grants to a small number of designers, we are pleased to have financially supported as many as 94 designers and 81 scholars in our first four years – while still offering meaningful sums of money that can unlock their next step.

How we will improve by 2025

We will look to increase our impact across our four value areas, with a particular focus on data collection – so that we can continue to improve our understanding of what we are doing well, and what we can do better.



Creative excellence

We will collect data on:

- The number of BFC Foundation grant recipients that show at a major Fashion Week.
- The number of BFC Foundation grant recipients that win other internationally recognised prizes.
- The number of BFC Foundation grant recipients that are recruited by major fashion houses into in-house roles.

Holistic business support

We will collect data on:

- The number of hours and type of mentoring support.
- Recipients' opinions of their experience with the BFC business support programme – what we do well, and where we can improve.
- Economic factors in each designer business, including turnover, job creation and export markets. We already collect this data, but will do so in a more consistent and structured way.

Environmental & social impact

- We will work with trusted technologies and software partners to formally monitor designers' environmental impact, and assist designers in using these services.
- We will collect data on the number of internships and apprenticeships created by recipients' businesses.
- We will celebrate and create case studies on socially and environmentally impactful projects run by recipients.

Increasing access

- We will keep collecting diversity data for monitoring and benchmarking purposes.

Designer businesses supported by the BFC Foundation 2020-2024

16Arlington	Emilia Wickstead	Nensi Dojaka	Ssōne
AARON ESH	EUDON CHOI	NEOUS	Stefan Cooke
Ahluwalia	FEBEN	Nicholas Daley	SUPRIYA LELE
Alighieri	Feng Chen Wang	Olubiyi Thomas	Teatum Jones
ANCUȚA SARCA	Fruity Booty	OSMAN	TEIJA
Aries	Fyodor Golan	palmer//harding	The Winter House
Art School	GOOMHEO	Paolo Carzana	Thom Sweeney
ASAI	HALPERN	Paper London	TOLU COKER
Bethany Williams	HRH	paria /FARZANEH	Toogood
BIANCA SAUNDERS	HARRI	Per Götesson	TOVE
Camilla Elphick	HELEN KIRKUM	PHOEBE ENGLISH	Wales Bonner
Chalayan	ISOSCELES	PĪFERI	Wicker Wings
Charles Jeffrey LOVERBOY	Jawara Alleyne	Preen by Thornton Bregazzi	yuhan wang
Chet Lo	Kazna Asker	PRISM	
Chopova Lowena	King & Tuckfield	RACIL	
clothsurgeon	Kwaidan Editions	RÆBURN	
Completedworks	LABRUM London	Richard Malone	
Conner Ives	Leo Carlton	Richard Quinn	
COTTWEILER	Liam Hodges	ROBERTS WOOD	
Craig Green	Marques'Almeida	ROBYN LYNCH	
Danshan	Mary Katrantzou	ROKER	
DERRICK	MASHA POPOVA	Rokh	
DI PETA	Matty Bovan	ROKSANDA	
E. Tautz	Maximilian	S.S.DALEY	
E.L.V. Denim	Molly Goddard	SAUL NASH	
EDELIN LEE	Mother of Pearl	Sharon Wauchob	
EFTYCHIA	Nabil Nayal	Sinéad O'Dwyer	

Thank you to our supporters

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Caroline Rush CBE	British Vogue	Eve Henderson	Zeynep Cizmeci
Laura Strain	Burberry	Faiza Seth	Zeynep Koseoglu
Pamela Batty	Clearpay	Felicia Brocklebank	BFC Foundation Named Scholarships
Andin Fonyonga	Paul Smith	Francesca Roni	Chanel
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