

ITS Contest 2025 – Borderless: A New Generation of Designers Without Boundaries. Meet The 10 New Faces of International Design.

- A new formula for the 2025 edition: all ten up-and-coming designers are already winners. They will each receive a €10,000 bursary and take part in a 10-day creative residency.
- Their works will be showcased for 10 months at ITS Arcademy – Museum of Art in Fashion, Italy's first contemporary fashion museum.
- Additionally they will further their understanding of the fashion industry through a series of immersive experiences, developed in collaboration with partners such as OTB, Swatch, and EssilorLuxottica.
- The final event is scheduled to take place in Trieste on 20 March 2025.

Trieste, 28 November 2024 – ITS Contest is one of the leading international platforms dedicated to discovering and preserving creativity. For more than two decades, it has showcased the brightest international talents in fashion, accessories, and jewellery.

Once again this year, the **ITS Contest international jury** gathered in Trieste to select the ten most compelling next-generation designers of the 2025 edition from **nearly 900 entries spanning 75 countries**.

Their names are:

Cindy Zhaohan Li - China

Gabrielle Szwarcenberg - Belgium

Macy Grimshaw - France

Maximilian Raynor - United Kingdom

Mijoda Dajomi - Germany

Naya El Ahdab - France

Patrick Taylor -United Kingdom

Qianhan Liu - China

Yifan Yu - China

Zhuen Cai - China

The Jury

The designs were judged by an authoritative panel of personalities with diverse skills and sensibilities—leading figures from the worlds of fashion, art, and culture. This list will be expanded for the final event next March.

Andrea Rosso - Diesel Sustainability Ambassador and Founder of MYAR

Barbara Franchin - President, Fondazione ITS

Carlo Giordanetti - CEO, Swatch Art Peace Hotel

Caroline Issa - Chief Executive and Fashion Director, TANK

Deanna Ferretti - Founder, Miss Deanna and Co-Founder Modateca Deanna and Sonia Veroni - CEO, Modateca Deanna and Director of Master in Creative Knitwear Design Accademia Costume & Moda

Emanuele Coccia - Philosopher

Luca Rizzi - Pitti Immagine Tutoring & Consulting Director, e-P Summit Project Leader

Marco Sammiceli - Curator for Design, Fashion, Crafts / Director Museo del Design Italiano at Triennale Milano

Maria Sole Ferragamo - Designer

Matteo Battiston - Chief Design Officer, EssilorLuxottica

Matteo Ward - CEO and Co-Founder, WRÅD

Orsola de Castro - Co-Founder of Fashion Revolution and Estethica

Sara Sozzani Maino - Creative Director, Fondazione Sozzani

Stefania Ricci - Director of Museo Ferragamo and Fondazione Ferragamo

Tom Eerebout - Stylist and Fashion Consultant

Valentina Maggi - Director of Creative Practice, Floriane de Saint Pierre & Associés

The Pulse of A Borderless Generation

For more than twenty years, ITS Contest has acted as a seismograph for global creativity, capturing and interpreting the emerging directions of international talent. This year's concepts once again reflect the pulse of the times, offering a glimpse into the inspirations of up-and-coming creatives from across the globe.

“Collections that embody both suffering and strength, evoked by textures reminiscent of skin, almost suggesting an emotional second skin. In a climate of global uncertainty, young people respond with protective designs, urban “armours” that offer a sense of security, crafted from reclaimed materials and bespoke details born from everyday objects. Even paper, an ephemeral material, finds new life as a design element, highlighting the boundary between the two-dimensional and the three-dimensional. This journey shows design as a response to emotion and the quest for authenticity, bridging past and future, tangible and digital, inviting us to rediscover the power of fashion as a profound and conscious form of expression.” commented **Barbara Franchin, President of Fondazione ITS**, regarding the design projects examined by the jury.

“It's inspiring to see how young talents redefine the boundaries of style, blending tradition with fearless originality and a strong sense of purpose.” stated **Matteo Battiston, Chief Design Officer EssilorLuxottica**.

“A recurring trait, not always positive but undeniably present, is the dominance of the personal sphere — a deeply intimate approach that often shapes and drives projects aimed at others, at the community.” noted **Marco Sammiceli, Curator for Design, Fashion, Crafts / Director Museo del Design Italiano at Triennale Milano**.

“In an age of ecological destruction, social disconnection, culture wars and political upheaval, the candidates and their work give us hope that creative design can provide some joy, thoughtfulness and inventive solutions to bring humanity closer together and start healing the planet - a beautiful thing to witness.” underlined **Caroline Issa, Chief Executive and Fashion Director, TANK.**

ITS Contest 2025 Prizes and Experiences

Each of the 10 designers selected for ITS Contest 2025 will receive the ITS Creative Excellence Award 10x10x10, which includes:

- a **€10,000** bursary
- a **10 days** creative Residency held between Trieste and signature locations of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region in Italy
- a **10 months** feature in the Borderless Exhibition at ITS Arcademy - Museum of Art in Fashion

ITS Contest Residency GO! 2025

The 10 chosen talents will take part in a 10-day creative residency in Trieste and other iconic locations in Friuli Venezia Giulia, including the historic Villa Manin. This unforgettable creative experience is organised in collaboration with the Friuli Venezia Giulia regional authority and coincides with GO! 2025 - Nova Gorica Gorizia European Capital of Culture.

A cornerstone of the ITS Contest experience, the creative residency provides emerging designers with a unique opportunity to develop new skills and build meaningful connections. Over the course of their stay, they will participate in experimental workshops, explore local craft techniques, and engage in meetings with industry experts and internationally renowned creatives. This immersive experience blends practical learning and inspirational encounters, offering invaluable insights that will shape their craft and future careers.

Rewarding Honours Powered by:

Fondazione ITS will offer a tailor-made experience designed to foster creative development and support the selected designer in their professional journey.

The OTB Group will offer the finalists a mentoring and coaching programme on best sustainability practices with the Group's experts. In addition, a training day visit of the headquarters of OTB and Staff International will be offered to the young designers who will be able to see first-hand the production stages of the garments and accessories of the Group's brands.

Swatch offers a special experience in Venice. Swatch will offer to the honouree designer an exclusive itinerary to discover Venice's artistic heritage through the centuries. The designer will discover the unique colourful craft of glass mosaics at Fornace Orsoni, explore centuries of luxurious textiles at the Rubelli Foundation, and experience the passion for modern art at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, with the privilege of meeting key players for each project. Finally, a visit to take in the history and beauty of San Giorgio Maggiore.

Rewarding Honours powered by **Vogue Eyewear parte di EssilorLuxottica**, will include: a full day at the prestigious EssilorLuxottica Tortona Experience Center. The selected finalist will present the project to an internal audience and engage with attendees during a dedicated networking session. Additionally, the finalist will be immer-

sed in the operational dynamics of the EssilorLuxottica Design Team, experiencing the creative and design process of the eyewear category.

Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana offers a scholarship worth €5,000, awarded based on the designer's creativity with particular attention to the theme of sustainability, in its broadest meanings of product sustainability, respect for the environment and social sustainability.

Fondazione Ferragamo is offering € 7,000 to a designer to be invested on his/her activity. The choice will be made based on the knowledge of materials and innovation.

Fondazione Sozzani offers one designer the opportunity to present their work in its spaces during 2025. The Fondazione will provide support for the exhibition setup and communication activities. Accommodation expenses will be fully covered.

Modateca Deanna offers an exclusive one-week experience at Modateca Deanna, where the designer will have the opportunity to conduct research at the Modateca's archives and delve deeper into knitwear techniques. The designer will also have the chance to visit some of the leading yarn mills, knitting factories, and workshops in the area, exploring all the key stages involved in bringing a creative idea to life.

Pitti Tutoring & Consulting Special Experience includes a 6-months mentorship program of Tutoring & Consulting activities, such as support in defining and establishing one's brand and/or identifying and analyzing the most suitable career path for the winning designer. Meetings will take place every two weeks to assess progress and equip the designer with valuable experience, enabling them to approach their career in the best possible way.

WRÅD will give a designer the chance to take part of a 2-day tour of innovative textile enterprises in Italy, the products and processes of which can provide further guidance and inspiration.

Out of Competition Awards

ITS Public's Choice Award

€5,000 awarded in January 2026 to the winner chosen by the public of the Borderless exhibition.

ITS Fashion Film Award

€ 3,000 assigned to the best Fashion Film, chosen by **Lee Swillingham**, Founder of Suburbia Creative Agency and Creative Director Harper's Bazaar Italia.

ITS Arcademy - Museum of Art in Fashion

The works of the 2025 finalists will join the permanent collection of ITS Arcademy – Museum of Art in Fashion, Italy's first contemporary fashion museum and an international exhibition space at the crossroads of fashion, art, and culture.

ITS Arcademy hosts major exhibitions curated by internationally acclaimed experts, complemented by a vibrant calendar of creative events and workshops. These initiatives are designed to engage and inspire design students, schools of all types and levels, and a broad audience ranging from local to international visitors.

A unique design archive, the **ITS Arcademy Collection** encompasses over **15,000 items**, including visionary creative projects, garments, accessories, jewellery, and photographs. This extraordinary collection is of significant historical value, charting the evolution of creativity in its most radical, artistic, and experimental expressions.

Generali Ensures the Future of the Collection

Generali is the first private partner of ITS Arcademy, to support and protect the innovative projects of young talents who, with their creativity, do business. At its heart, ITS Arcademy has the Collection: the precious custodian of the ideas and projects of young talents, accessible to the public, an element of growth and innovation for the community.

ITS Contest Partners

Io Sono FVG: I Am Friuli Venezia Giulia. ITS Contest 2025 is proud of its roots in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region and its role in shaping the cultural future of the territory. Embracing the spirit of cultural exchange that defines this region, ITS Contest serves as both a collector and creator of new perspectives. ITS Contest 2025 is supported by the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region and Promoturismo FVG. **#iosonofvg**

OTB is an international fashion group comprising brands Diesel, Jil Sander, Maison Margiela, Marni and Viktor&Rolf. It also controls the Staff International and Brave Kid companies and holds a stake in American brand Amiri. OTB – short for "Only The Brave" – believes in the possibility of pushing beyond the frontiers of fashion and style, expressing the innovative spirit and uncompromising courage of its Founder and Chairman, Renzo Rosso. With around 7,000 employees worldwide, the Group is founded on a digital approach centered on the consumer, a concrete long-term commitment to the creation of a sustainable, technologically driven business, and close attention to social issues through the OTB Foundation.

Since the first edition, **OTB** and Renzo Rosso have chosen to support the international ITS Contest, confirming their mission to support emerging designers from all over the world, encouraging their creativity and talent and promoting their growth and training in direct contact with professionals of the sector.

Since its creation, conceived as a universal, democratic object, **Swatch** has been thriving on diversity, multiplicity, dynamism, inclusion and positive energies that intertwine, feed on each other and multiply. In this vein, in 2011 the Swatch Art Peace Hotel opened in Shanghai: a remarkable position, in the heart of the most dynamic and vibrant of Chinese metropolis, a unique space in terms of dimensions, style and capacity, expressly conceived for artists of all generations, from all countries and all disciplines, that will make here their 'home' for a few months and have the chance to carry out their work and express their talent, meet other artists and interact with the local art community. Since its opening, the Swatch Art Peace Hotel has been hosting more than 540 artists from 58 countries. Ten of them were recipients of the ITS/Swatch Art Peace Hotel award in previous editions of the contest.

Vogue Eyewear by Essilor Luxottica

Vogue Eyewear - www.vogue-eyewear.com

EssilorLuxottica is a global leader in the design, manufacture and distribution of ophthalmic lenses, frames and sunglasses. With over 190,000 employees across 150 countries, 650 operations facilities and 18,000 stores, its mission is to help people around the world to see more and be more by addressing their evolving vision needs and personal style aspirations. EssilorLuxottica is home to the most advanced lens technologies including Varilux, Stellest and Transitions, the most iconic eyewear brands including Ray-Ban and Oakley, the most desired luxury licensed brands and world-class retailers including LensCrafters and Sunglass Hut. The company's OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation has given access to sustainable vision care to more than 760 million people in underserved communities.

ITS Contest 2025 is organised by **Fondazione ITS** with the patronage of **Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana**, **Fondazione Ferragamo**, **Fondazione Sozzani**, **Modateca Deanna**, **Pitti Tutoring & Consulting** and **WRÅD**.

The **Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana** is the non-profit association that disciplines, coordinates and promotes the development of Italian fashion. It represents the highest cultural values of Italian fashion and aims to protect, coordinate and enhance its image, both in Italy and abroad.

Fondazione Ferragamo was established in 2013 with the aim of making the new generations aware of the values of craftsmanship and Made in Italy according to Salvatore Ferragamo's work. The main purpose is to inspire young talents to pursue their creative dream.

Fondazione Sozzani is dedicated to the promotion of culture through photography, fashion, the fine arts, and applied arts. Since 2021, under the creative direction of Sara Sozzani Maino, the Fondazione curates projects dedicated to education, responsibility and awareness and supports the next generation of creatives.

Modateca Deanna, International Centre for Fashion Documentation, gathers and promotes the identity of the knitwear factory Miss Deanna, founded by Deanna Ferretti back in 1950. Modateca, research and creativity hub, under the leadership of Sonia Veroni, promotes the Italian Knitwear.

The Tutoring & Consulting Direction of Pitti Immagine supports designers and brands in their professional and creative development with orientation and consultancy activities.

WRÅD is a design studio for the sustainable evolution of the fashion industry. The collaboration with ITS supports the creativity of those who act for the realization of better systems - ethical and responsible.

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