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Everyone's a Winner at the 2025 Edition of the ITS Awards

The International Talent Support contest bestowed its 2025 awards on all 10 finalists and unveiled a new exhibition by Olivier Saillard and Emanuele Coccia titled "Fashionlands — Clothes Beyond Borders."

The winners of of the 2025 edition of the International Talent Support fashion contest. COURTESY OF ITS

MILAN — Everyone was a winner at the 2024-2025 edition of the International Talent Support fashion contest, known as ITS.

Shaking up its consolidated format, the talent search competition bestowed an initial reward on all the 10 finalists it shortlisted among 900 talents hailing from 75 countries.

The ITS Creative Excellence Award 10x10x10 included a scholarship valued at 10,000 euros, 10 days of creative residency in Trieste and Villa Manin, a landmark in Italy's Friuli-Venezia Giulia region, as well as the exhibition of the winners' works at the ITS Arcademy Museum of Art in Fashion for 10 months. The latter space was opened by ITS in 2022.

"Today, more than ever, fashion needs creative talent, but for many young people the path to embrace is marked with almost insurmountable obstacles, especially when they cannot count on adequate resources and networks," said Barbara Franchin, president of Fondazione ITS and the founder and mastermind of the ITS Contest. "Offering all designers the opportunity to grow together is a new answer to the global and ethical challenges of our time. Focusing on collaboration instead of competition was the most responsible choice in order to enhance the potential of this new generation of designers," she offered.

The ITS competition, which marked its 20th anniversary in 2022, has been a launchpad for marquee contemporary designers in the past including Chanel's Matthieu Blazy and Balenciaga's Demna, who's moving to Gucci later this year, as well as London darling Richard Quinn and Iceberg's James Long, among others.

The 2025 jury panel included Dame Zandra Rhodes, as well as Ann Demeulemeester's creative director Stefano Gallici; Andrea Rosso, OTB and Diesel sustainability ambassador; jewelry designer Maria Sole Ferragamo; Serge Carreira, director of emerging brands initiative at the French Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode and stylist and fashion consultant Tom Eerebout, among others.

The ITS Jury's Rewarding Honours was awarded to Maximilian Raynor for his use of "powerful historical traces and a conscious use of artistic codes that come from theater and music."

The U.K.-based designer was also among the 10 recipients of the Rewarding Honours Powered by OTB, alongside Macy Grimshaw; Cindy Zhaohan Li; Gabrielle Szwarcenberg; Mijoda Dajomi; Naya El Ahdab; Patrick Taylor; Qianhan Liu; Yifan Yu and Zhuen Cai. They will be offered an opportunity to visit the group's headquarters and learn about manufacturing processes and techniques, as well as sustainability practices under the guidance of Rosso.

"Creativity must dare, it has to be truly innovative and special, because it is through this creativity that talent manages to stand out," said OTB Group founder and chairman Renzo Rosso. "Over the years, ITS has discovered many designers who have risen to become the creative directors of the world's most important brands. I wish this year's finalists the same, that they find their path to success," he added.

Grimshaw scooped up the Rewarding Honours Powered by Swatch, which comes with a cultural experience in Venice, including an exclusive workshop at the historic Palazzo Mocenigo, home to the Museum of Textiles, Costume and Perfume.

Receiving the Rewarding Honours Powered by Vogue Eyewear, a house brand part of EssilorLuxottica, Szwarcenberg is granted a chance to visit the EssilorLuxottica Tortona Experience Center in Milan, a workshop with the design team and the opportunity to present her project to company representatives.

The Rewarding Honours Powered by Camera Nazionale Della Moda, which includes a scholarship worth 5,000 euros, was bestowed on Cai for the sustainbility credentials of the collection, while Yu received the 7,000-euro cash prize awarded by Fondazione Ferragamo.

Other Rewarding Honors were presented by Pitti Immagine's Tutoring and Consulting division, Fondazione Sozzani, Modateca Deanna and Wråd.

Meret Olympia Salome Baer from the Royal College of Art in London was awarded with the ITS Fashion Film Award for her fashion film "Lactic Acid," selected by Lee Swillingham, founder of the London-based creative agency Suburbia.

Ahead of the award ceremony, the finalists-cum-winners joined the ITS team in Trieste for the residency, which offered them a chance to attend experimental workshops, explore local craft techniques and meet industry experts and internationally renowned creatives.

The works of the 2025 finalists will join the permanent collection of the ITS Arcademy Museum of Art in Fashion and be displayed as part of the "Borderless" exhibition for 10 months starting March 27. A public choice award will reward the designer receiving the most votes from visitors of the exhibit throughout the 10 months. The winner will receive a 5,000 euro prize in January 2026.

Inside the "Fashionlands – Clothes Beyond Borders" exhibition at the ITS Arcademy Museum of Art in Fashion. MASSIMO GARDONE AZIMUT/COURTESY OF ITS

The award event also marked the opening of "Fashionlands — Clothes Beyond Borders," a second exhibition curated by Olivier Saillard and philosopher Emanuele Coccia drawing a parallel between fashion creations by 23 designers who have over the years participated in the ITS contest and photography by Gabriele Rosati centered on utilitarian clothing.