



Fondazione ITS takes the stage in 2026 with ITS Contest and ITS Arcademy

by Modem – Posted 17 novembre 2025

Now in its 24th edition, ITS Contest, a global platform for emerging designers, will take the stage in 2026. This year’s call has attracted over 700 applicants from 74 countries, representing 89 of the world’s leading art and design schools.

For more than two decades, Fondazione ITS has been at the forefront of protecting and promoting creativity. Its 2026 programme renews that mission, aiming to sustain young talent and cultivate a culture of creativity open to everyone.

“Every ITS project is born from an act of trust and a shared vision. I believe in creativity as a force that unites, heals, and builds bridges between people and generations. Those who choose to walk alongside us are not simply supporting a contest or a museum; they are joining a movement that places beauty at the service of the future,” said Barbara Franchin, president of the ITS Foundation and founder of ITS Contest and ITS Arcademy - Museum of Art in Fashion.

Rise and Shine is the theme that shapes ITS Contest 2026, an invitation for young creatives to take a stand and to face the challenges and uncertainties of our time with clarity, courage, and imagination.

Now in its 24th edition, ITS Contest reaffirms its status as one of the world’s leading platforms for discovering and promoting new talent in fashion design. Not only future creative directors, but also a new generation of artisans and entrepreneurs redefining fashion through innovation and sustainability, alongside pattern makers, product developers, coordinators, and many others who, behind the scenes, form a vital part of the global fashion ecosystem.

The ITS Contest 2026 builds on the successful format introduced in the previous edition. Ten designers, selected from hundreds of applications from around the world, will receive the I:C 10 × 10 × 10 Award, which includes participation in a ten-day creative residency in Trieste, guided by tutors and industry professionals; the opportunity to showcase their work for ten months in the exhibition Rise and Shine, hosted by ITS Arcademy – Museum of Art in Fashion; and cash of 10,000 euros.

The ITS Contest partners will accompany the selected designers through experiences and activities designed to broaden their understanding of the industry and strengthen the skills essential to their professional growth. The selection of new talents is led by an international Jury that will conclude its work during the final event on March 19 and 20, 2026.

In addition, ITS Arcademy – Museum of Art in Fashion will present exhibitions exploring the language of creativity and image. "Exposure – The Power of Being Seen, from Harry Styles to Lady Gaga" will be on display from March 26, 2026, - January 3, 2027. In this exhibition, curated by fashion historian Olivier Saillard, Belgian stylist Tom Eerebout, known internationally for his collaborations with artists such as Lady Gaga (for whom he curated the now iconic appearance at the Paris Olympics), Kylie Minogue, Rita Ora, and Harry Styles, reveals his world through a selection of creations worn by some of pop culture’s most celebrated figures, including pieces by designers who began their journey in Trieste through ITS Contest.

During the same period, the Museum will also host "Rise and Shine – Design Talent Now, the ten designers of ITS Contest 2026", a showcase presenting the projects of the ten designers selected for ITS Contest, chosen from hundreds of applications from around the world. Each edition renews the dialogue between young creatives and visitors through the Public’s Choice Award, which invites audiences to vote for the most inspiring project. After ten months, the ten designers will be part of the ITS Arcademy Collection, a remarkable archive of over 15,000 pieces preserved for future generations.

ITS Contest Final Event
March 19 - 20, 2026

Exhibitions @ ITS Arcademy – Museum of Art in Fashion
"Exposure – The Power of Being Seen, from Harry Styles to Lady Gaga"
"Rise and Shine – Design Talent Now, the ten designers of ITS Contest 2026"
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