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ITS Contest Names All 10 Finalists Winners for 2026

The International Talent Support contest bestowed its 2026 awards on all 10 finalists and unveiled a new exhibition by Tom Eerebout on celebrity image-making.

By MARTINO CARRERA MARCH 20, 2026, 5:31PM

The finalists and winners of the 2026 edition of the International Talent Support fashion contest. COURTESY OF ITS

MILAN — In continuity with last year, everyone was a winner at the 2026 edition of the International Talent Support fashion contest, known as ITS, which again bestowed an initial reward on all 10 finalists it shortlisted among 700 talents hailing from 74 countries.

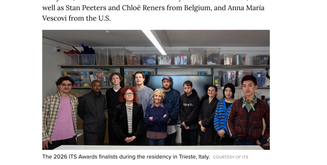
The ITS Excellence Award 10x10x10 included a scholarship valued at 10,000 euros, 10 days of creative residency in Trieste, Italy, as well as the inclusion of the winners' works in the "Rise and Shine" exhibit opening Thursday at the ITS Academy Museum of Art in Fashion. The latter space was opened by ITS in 2022.

On Friday night during a ceremony held at the ITS Academy in Trieste, Italy, additional prizes were awarded by the contest's different partners, which include the OTB Group, Swatch and EssilorLuxottica through its Ray-Ban brand. The event also received the patronage of Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana, Fondazione Ferragamo, Fondazione Sozzani and Pitti Immagine, among others.

"The ITS Contest jury has always looked for a distinct point of view and, above all, a strong ability to tell stories. For the 10 designers, the experience becomes a moment of clarity," said Barbara Franchin, president of Fondazione ITS and the founder and mastermind of the ITS Contest. "The exchange brings them face to face with a simple truth: the stories they tell, in their own personal way, have value. It is not a promise of a glittering career in an industry still struggling to redefine itself, but a confirmation that their thinking deserves attention and can help shape what comes next. At a time like this, fashion — and society — need new voices. Creativity is not an optional extra. It is a necessity," 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 Gucci's Demna, as well as London darling Richard Quinn and Iceberg's James Long, among others.

The 10 finalists-cum-winners included France's Darius Betschart, Steven Chevallier and Tidjane Tall; Chinese designers Yi Ding and Wenji Wu; the British talents Jamie O'Grady and William Palmer, as well as Stan Peeters and Chloé Reners from Belgium, and Anna Maria Vescovi from the U.S.



The 2026 ITS Awards finalists during the residency in Trieste, Italy. COURTESY OF ITS

In addition to Franchin, the 2026 jury panel included Carlo Capasa, president of Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana; Andrea Rosso, OTB sustainability ambassador; Serge Carreira, director of emerging brands initiative at the French Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode; Matteo Battiston, chief design officer at EssilorLuxottica; Sara Sozzani Maino, creative director at Fondazione Sozzani; stylist and fashion consultant Tom Eerebout, as well as designer Maximilian Raynor, last year's recipient of the ITS Jury's Rewarding Honour, among others.

All 10 finalists also brought home the OTB Award, which comprised a one-day training visit to the headquarters of the parent company to brands including Diesel, Marni and Maison Margiela.

"Creativity is this industry's strength, our weapon for building its future. Young designers must bring new ideas and the courage to break the mold, with sustainability as the focus, which for them is a natural value," said Renzo Rosso, chairman and founder of OTB. "For many years, ITS has been an important platform for those showing a distinctive vision and with something new to say. I wish this year's winners every success in investing in their talent, in what sets them apart from others, and in making it shine by transforming it into something unique and recognizable. This is how fashion continues to evolve," he said.

Chevallier scooped the Ray-Ban Part of EssilorLuxottica Award for "capturing today's social climate through a bold mix of clashing graphic prints and tactile design [inspired by] queer artist-activists of the 1980s." He will have a chance to visit the EssilorLuxottica Tortona Experience Center in Milan, attend a workshop with the design team and the opportunity to present his project to company representatives.

A look from Steven Chevallier's 2026 ITS Awards winning collection. MASSIMO GARDONE AZIMUT/COURTESY OF ITS

The Camera Nazionale Della Moda Award, which includes a scholarship worth 5,000 euros, was bestowed on Wu for valuing craft and responsibility, while O'Grady received the prize awarded by Fondazione Ferragamo, earning a stay in Florence to discover the brand's universe.

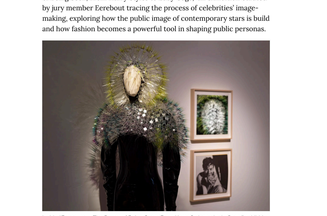
Other awards were presented by Fondazione Sozzani, Pitti Immagine, Modateca Deanna and Wråd.

Inside "Exposure — The Power of Being Seen, From Harry Styles to Lady Gaga," exhibition at the ITS Academy Museum of Art in Fashion. MASSIMO GARDONE AZIMUT/COURTESY OF ITS

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 2026 winners will join the permanent collection of the ITS Academy Museum of Art in Fashion and be displayed as part of the "Rise and Shine" exhibition for nine months starting Thursday. A public choice award will reward the designer receiving the most votes from visitors of the exhibit. The winner will receive a 5,000 euro prize in January 2027.

The award event also marked the preview of "Exposure — The Power of Being Seen, From Harry Styles to Lady Gaga," an exhibition curated by jury member Eerebout tracing the process of celebrities' image-making, exploring how the public image of contemporary stars is build and how fashion becomes a powerful tool in shaping public personas.



Inside "Exposure — The Power of Being Seen, From Harry Styles to Lady Gaga," exhibition at the ITS Academy Museum of Art in Fashion. MASSIMO GARDONE AZIMUT/COURTESY OF ITS

The showcase features garments and accessories worn by Lady Gaga, Harry Styles, Beyoncé Knowles-Carter, Madonna, Björk, Charli XCX, Gwyneth Paltrow, Kylie Jenner, Jenna Ortega and Chappell Roan, among others.