

BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

6th JULY 2018

BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP GRANTING ACCESS FOR INTERNATIONAL DESIGNERS, TALENT AND CREATIVES TO WORK IN THE UK

The British Fashion Council (BFC) is delighted to announce that it has been working with Arts Council England (ACE), in partnership with the Home Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to expand and promote the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa to fashion industry applicants, taking effect on 6th July 2018.

The BFC will work as an Independent Assessor for Tier 1 Exceptional Talent visa applications in the fashion industry, to secure a new route for talented designers and fashion sector individuals to work in the UK. The number of Tier 1 Exceptional Talent visas that the government is willing to approve was increased in November 2017 from 1000 to 2000, and half of these will be allocated on a demand-led basis. This creates a significant opportunity for the fashion industry in the UK to attract and retain key designers, talent and creatives.

The Tier 1 Exceptional Talent visa is available to individuals from outside the European Economic Area & Switzerland who have been endorsed in their field in arts, humanities, engineering or science as a recognised (exceptional talent) or emerging leader (exceptional promise).

Applicants of exceptional talent have established themselves as world class, are internationally recognised and have won awards across their peer group. Applicants of exceptional promise have exhibited exceptional promise and may have been shortlisted for an international prize previously. Successful applicants will be granted five years in the UK, which is open to extension if the applicant can continue to prove their exceptional talent.

Caroline Rush, CEO British Fashion Council commented: *"In light of Brexit, the British Fashion Council were thrilled to work with the Arts Council and the DCMS to extend the opportunity for talented individuals to secure Tier 1 visas, allowing them to continue to work as fashion designers in the UK and contribute to our growing industry. This is a great example of positive change to support the creative industries to improve access to the best international talent."*

Margot James, Minister of State for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport added : *“The UK is a global fashion capital and home to world-renowned brands such as Burberry, Alexander McQueen and Ozwald Boateng. Our innovative designers and fashion houses not only showcase the nation's creative zeal but are also a vital part of the economy. We are determined to do to all we can to support this hugely successful sector and these new visas will make it easier for brands to recruit the talent they need to continue to succeed in the future.”*

This follows the ground-breaking new Industrial Strategy deal agreed by government and the Creative Industries Council to ensure Britain's world-leading creative industries remain a global creative powerhouse. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/creative-industries-sector-deal>

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ABOUT BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL

The British Fashion Council (BFC) was set up in 1983 to promote British fashion internationally and co-ordinate this promotion through fashion weeks, exhibitions and showcasing events. The BFC now supports designers beginning at college level and extending to talent identification, business support and showcasing schemes to help British designer businesses develop their profiles and business globally and promote British fashion and its influential role in Britain and London. The BFC Colleges Council offers support to students through its Foundation, BA and MA scholarships, links with industry through design competitions and Graduate Preview Day. Talent identification and business support schemes include BFC Fashion Film; BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund; BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund and NEWGEN which includes womenswear, menswear and accessories. The BFC supports Boden's Future British initiative. The BFC also runs and owns charities including the BFC Fashion Arts Foundation, the BFC Fashion Trust and the BFC Education Foundation. Showcasing initiatives and events include London Fashion Week, London Fashion Week Men's, LONDON show ROOMS, International Fashion Showcase, London Fashion Week Festival and the annual celebration of creativity and innovation in the fashion industry: The Fashion Awards.