

FASHION

The Trinidad and Tobago Fashion Company Limited (FashionTT) was established in 2013 with the mandate to stimulate and facilitate the business development and export activity of the fashion industry in Trinidad and Tobago to generate national wealth. As a subsidiary of the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT), FashionTT provides service for local fashion industry stakeholders primarily fashion designers in the areas of fashion apparel, functional apparel and accessories.

The company's two main programmes arising from the Strategic Plan for the TT Fashion Industry are the Value Chain Investment Programme and the establishment of a Local Production Facility.

THE VALUE CHAIN INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (VCIP)

The Strategic Plan for the Fashion Industry was completed in March 2015, this plan has prudently earmarked vital near, medium and long term projects to aggressively drive the business development and export activity of the local fashion industry. The cornerstone of these is the Value Chain Investment Programme (VCIP).

This programme provides mentoring and training for designers according to their respective stages of business development.

The four (4) mentoring and training channels from entry level to advanced are as follows:

— **Future Support** – This form of annual training is for aspiring or entry level designers who need support in both the technical and business fields of fashion. FashionTT will host quarterly capacity building seminars, academic and practical in nature to ensure that participants are equipped to progress into their aspiring fashion professions in any of the categories of the fashion business value chain. This training will also strengthen these companies capability in communicating and building relationships with Suppliers, Buyers, Customers and Financial Institutions (This is an annual programme).

- **The Incubator** – FashionTT has partnered with NEDCO to provide business mentoring, training and financing (upon successful assessment) to designers who require support in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the core business fundamentals inclusive of business model formulation, business plan preparation, costing and pricing of products, financial and cash flow management (This is an annual programme).

Supplemental information on programmes and the strategic plan can be found at:

- www.fashiontt.co.tt

- www.fashiontt.co.tt/strategy

FASHION

- **The Non-Global Value Chain** – In this Tier, Expert Consultancy Support will be provided to Eligible Designers who already have a fully operational business however require intrinsic assessment and implementation of key tools to improve those value chain elements enabling the refinement of in-house performance to efficiently export. The current consultant for this tier of mentoring is Fashion Institute of Technology New York Professor, Mr. Vincent Quan who has been the consultant for this Tier in the first successful cohort in 2017 and now is working with the second 2018 cohort (This is an annual programme).

- **The Global Value Chain** - These advanced participants will benefit from export support professionals who have a proven track record for having helped other Caribbean firms for production and retail distribution partnerships with international companies. As part of this export support and market penetration drive, assistance will be provided for these designers to attend fashion trade shows for the purpose of sales, trade missions for the purpose of outsourcing supply of textiles and production and direct B2B meetings with potential Buyers and Suppliers. We have selected for the first time in this category, three designers successfully scoring in this tier, Meiling, Charu Lochan Dass and Ecliff Elie (This a three year programme).

The Future Support, The Incubator and The Global Value Chain Programmes will be commencing in Fiscal Year 2019 for chosen candidates. The Non-Global Value Chain has already started in June 2018 with Professor Quan.

In excess of 100 local fashion companies in total will benefit annually from the FashionTT Value Chain Investment Programme over the next 5 years based on their participation in these mentoring channels. These channels are cyclical so once a company has successfully improved in one tier, they can be eligible for advancement upwards into another channel of business mentoring.

An open call is advertised for designers to apply annually and then applicants are interviewed by an international expert panel comprising of impartial international and local fashion experts. This panel is charged with assessing designers via 15 in depth relevant and transparent criteria and accordingly recommends designers to be aligned to each of the VCIP categories outlined above based on the designers developmental stage.

On-Going Requirements for Global and Regional Fashion Expertise

- Annually, FashionTT seeks to procure and contract fashion experts with international experience to sit on the VCIP interviewing panel mentioned above. Three experts will be required and the next set of interviews will be in June 2019. Therefore FashionTT will be seeking to procure and contract said professionals in April 2019.

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FASHION



- A Request for Proposals will be advertised locally and internationally for a consultant to work with designers in the Global Value Chain Tier.
- FashionTT is always seeking companies/qualified persons in the business of fashion to lecture at the Future Support Training Seminars, this is on-going through out the year on a quarterly basis.

LOCAL PRODUCTION FACILITY

All Fashion Industry stakeholders have identified the actual production process of garments to be challenging because of a shortage of skills, poor work ethic as well as low productivity. Industry members have welcomed the possibility of establishing a production facility as a viable vehicle through which the most talented and skilled production staff can come together and scale up production, turnover, in an organizational form that encourages pride and high organizational values. Many fashion apparel designers have expressed an interest in being able to outsource locally the production run once quality and confidentiality can be guaranteed. The production bottleneck in the industry is large enough to warrant a concerted effort to find a way for firms to produce large enough quantities to be able to scale up their own design and distribution operations as well as produce sample batches.

FashionTT has partnered with the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) to implement a Local Production Facility on Block C of the University's Wrightson Road Campus, Port of Spain. The facility is currently being renovated by UTT with a projected building hand over date of November 30, 2018. In order to efficiently operationalise this facility, the government is currently seeking external funding by the European Union.

The five core manufacturing services: Screen printing, Heat transfer printing, Direct Embroidery, Sublimation printing, and Cut & Sew.

This Facility will:

- Increase local garment manufacturing capacity
- Increase the number of garments produced in Trinidad and Tobago
- Increase the availability of skilled labour available to designers
- Generate local job employment opportunities for this sector within this facility
- Designers have greater access to better technology and skilled labour in Trinidad and Tobago
- Bolster revenue generation within the local fashion industry

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FASHION



Once funding is obtained, the following will be required:

- Technical and Non-Technical Expertise (will be advertised)
- Quality Textiles, Notions, Trimmings from regional/international suppliers
- Key Equipment
- Buy in from Fashion Entrepreneurs regionally/internationally to manufacture at the Production Facility.

#SupportLocal – Marketing and Promotion of Trinidad and Tobago’s Fashion Industry

It will be great for all of T&T’s Diaspora to support Trinidad and Tobago’s Fashion Industry by viewing and promoting the local fashion companies via the Showcase page on the FashionTT website www.fashiontt.co.tt. Each designer’s social media handles and websites are on this page for the ease of navigating and sharing. Designers can be contacted via direct message on their social media or websites for the purpose of sourcing additional information and commerce.

Should there be any questions or other avenues persons/companies wish to support feel free to email info@fashiontt.co.tt and we will respond within 24 hours. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

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