



Designer-in-Residence Application

The Designer in Residence (DIR) Program

The DC Fashion Incubator at Macy's at Metro Center (DCFI) is the premier program of the DC Fashion Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization supporting the fashion business community in the Washington, DC area. DCFI provides six to ten emerging DC-based designers and international designers with the resources to launch their career in fashion. During a two-year residency, DCFI offers each Designer-in-Residence (DIR) a **rigorous training curriculum, work lab and show space, mentoring, and teamwork and leadership opportunities.**

Each DIR attends and completes a **core curriculum of workshops and seminars focused on business development and garment production.** Conducted at both Macy's Metro Center and offsite locations, **these workshops and seminars are essential to the DCFI experience, and attendance is therefore mandatory.** Each DIR receives a calendar with proposed curriculum dates at the beginning of the program, with at least two workshops or seminars per month. These dates may be subject to change, and the DIR must be ready to adapt to these changes as absences will not be permitted.

Each DIR also accesses **spaces to work independently, collaborate, and show their designs.** Each DIR has a workstation, a collective sample production space, and a shared conference room and showroom. Each DIR receives **mentoring from fashion design professionals, DC-Metro Area fashion designers, and the DCFI Advisory Council.** Each DIR also receives **feedback from Macy's Corporate and Macy's DC-based merchant team,** and is afforded press and event opportunities.

In addition to building his or her own business, each DIR has **the opportunity to take on teamwork and leadership responsibilities** as a part of the Incubator community. Designers may be called upon to elect members of the group to speak on their behalf or organize group efforts. Each DIR will also contribute a small, nominal monthly fee to support DCFI operations.

The next two-year DCFI residency programs are slated to run from October 2017 to September 2019, and October 2019 to September 2021. **Each DIR is expected to complete the full two years. A DIR is limited to going through DCFI's two-year program only once.** After the two-year period, DCFI encourages alumni to stay connected through various programs and events.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants seeking to become a DIR must meet the following requirements and pass through a three-phase review process.

- **Residency:** Must be a resident of the District of Columbia. Proof of address is required; accepted forms include a lease, driver's license, passport, and two utility bills.
- **Age:** Must be 21 years or older.
- **Designs:** Must submit three to five images of designs; images should be the best expression of the company's brand.
- **Company:** Must submit company logo. Must either plan to start, or have already started, a fashion business in the City of the District of Columbia and be looking to expand. Must have the primary design business based in the U.S. Designers with a home-based business *do* qualify to apply to become a DIR. Note: Business location requirements are waived in the case of international designer applicants.
- **Commitment:** Must be able to commit to DCFI using all resources at his or her disposal, as with a full-time job. Must have the appropriate professional staff, paid or voluntary, capable of devoting the time and effort required to accomplish the stated aims of the applicant's design career plans.
- **Application:** Must submit this application, accompanied by a 350-word biographical statement summarizing his or design career and confirming eligibility.
- **Application fee:** Must submit a non-refundable \$75 application fee.

Ineligibility Criteria

Designers who meet the following criteria are ineligible to apply to become a DIR. We recommend that individuals who remain interested in DC Fashion Foundation programs but do not qualify to become a DIR look to our Associate Designer offering or Public Program, both of which are described later in this document.

- Established designers who have been in business for more than seven years.
- High school students or recent graduates.
- Designers whose fashion business is located fully outside of the City of the District of Columbia (except in the case of international designers), or designers who plan to establish a fashion business outside of the City of the District of Columbia.
- Designers who cannot commit to DCFI on a full-time basis, which includes:
 - Attending the core curriculum of workshops and seminars, two to three times per month.
 - Utilizing the design, production, collaboration, and show spaces at Macy's Metro Center.
 - Interacting with mentors.
 - Completing the full two-year residency period.
- Designers who cannot fund their new business or sustain their business expenses.

Judging Criteria

The DCFI Board and a team of industry professionals will judge DCFI applicants based on the criteria below. Each aspiring DIR should:

- Have the ability to commit to DCFI completely, utilizing all available resources, with the intent to launch his or her businesses as a full-time career.
- Have a strong vision for his or her collection, and/or a great business concept.
- Demonstrate the highest level of responsibility and dedication to both the program and his or her business.
- Display the ability to fund and manage finances for his or her business.
- Show his or her ability to work well with others.
- Engage in, and be respectful of others during, the program's many collaborative opportunities.
- Understand that while DCFI and its parent organization, the DC Fashion Foundation, are here to provide resources and assist each DIR with establishing his or her business, each

- Recognize that DCFI and its parent organization, the DC Fashion Foundation, are not here to teach the DIRs how to design but rather to provide the resources to lay a proper foundation for business and production.

Three-Phase DIR Application Process

Phase 1

Fashion designers visit the DC Fashion Foundation website at www.dcfashionfoundation.org to download and complete the DCFI application. The DCFI Selection Committee reviews all applications submitted by eligible candidates, and narrows the group to approximately twenty candidates to be reviewed during Phase 2. Applicants who are not invited to continue are notified, by email, of the Selection Committee's decision.

Phase 2

Upon request, each of the twenty selected candidates submit additional information.

- Short- and long-term business goals and objectives.
- How DCFI would encourage and enable the applicant to pursue his or her design career plan.
- Details on his or her existing business, including:
 - Current organization and staff structure (for example: layout of organizational structure, descriptions of company roles or positions, use of employees or volunteers).
 - Consultants, outside advisors, mentors, and professional firms or entities that the applicant works with.
 - Current brand positioning and where the applicant envisions his or her brand in the future.
- Portfolio of work from his or her latest collection(s), including sketches, photos, editorial photos, and/or videos.

Based on these materials, the DCFI Selection Committee narrows the pool of potential DIRs to about eight finalists.

Phase 3

The eight finalists complete face-to-face interviews and present five to eight looks from past, present, and upcoming collections to the Selection Committee. The look(s) for upcoming collections should define the work that the applicant plans to launch through participation in DCFI. The Committee reviews samples for quality, fabrication, details, and finishing. The interview also includes an assessment of each applicant's business mentoring needs. The Selection Committee may request additional information during Phase 3.

Submission, Timeline, and Fees

Each applicant must submit **the items below** to the DCFI Selection Committee in electronic format, via email to info@dcfashionfoundation.org. Use the subject line: "[FIRST AND LAST NAME] – DCFI DIR Application."

- The application form below
- Answers to application form questions that required a separate document
- Any supplemental materials deemed necessary
- A resume and/or designer timeline
- The designer's most recent press kit and/or look book
- Two letters of recommendation from fashion industry contacts, an employer, or accounts

Each applicant must also submit a **non-refundable \$75 application fee**. Payment may be sent online at www.dcfashionfoundation.org under "Incubator." Alternatively, applicants may mail a cashier check or money order payable to DC Fashion Foundation to:

Attn: Christine Brooks-Cropper/DCFI at Macy's
1629 K Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20006

Timelines vary and will be updated on our website, www.dcfashionfoundation.org. In general:

- Application acceptance periods close in the Winter-Spring prior to the DCFI program start date.
- DIRs are selected in the Spring-Summer prior to their residency, and they may be asked to keep this news private until a date set by DCFI leadership.
- DIRs may be asked to attend a variety of events prior to the start of their residency.

Please send questions on the application submission process to info@dcfashionfoundation.org or call (202) 355-3929.

The DCFI Associate Designer (AD) Program

If not accepted as or eligible to be a DIR, a designer may be eligible to become a DCFI Associate Designer (AD). This preparatory program encourages and prepares designers for re-application to become a DIR in the next session by offering quarterly workshops, roundtables, and (by appointment) workspace and machinery. ADs share resources while connecting with other local designers and industry organizations. Becoming an AD does not guarantee future acceptance as a DIR in the future.

The AD application is available by request only; please email info@dcfashionfoundation.org for more information. The program requires a \$100 monthly fee, payable by cashier check or money order.

The Public Program

Open to all stakeholders in the DC fashion industry, the Public Program seminars encourage and equip talented local professionals to maintain and grow their businesses in the Washington, DC area. It offers a track for designers, a track for business leaders, and a hybrid track.

To learn more about the Public Program and download an application, please visit www.dcfashionfoundation.org.

The DC Fashion Incubator at Macy's Metro Center Designer-in-Residence Application

Instructions

Complete the application by either:

- Directly editing this PDF with text boxes and images.
- Copying-and-pasting the questions into a Word document and typing your answers.
- Printing this document, hand-writing answers, and scanning your completed application to convert it into an electronic format.

Introduction

Name

Name (or planned name) of business

Business URLs (if applicable)

Website

Blog

Instagram

Facebook

Twitter

LinkedIn

Other sites

Phone

Email

Mailing Address

Birth date

Last four digits of social security number

EIN:

Optional: Email address to receive DCFF newsletter and updates

Describe your collection in no more than 350 words. (Please use a separate document, not this application, and attach this description to your application email).

Below or in a separate document, please attach three images from your collection.

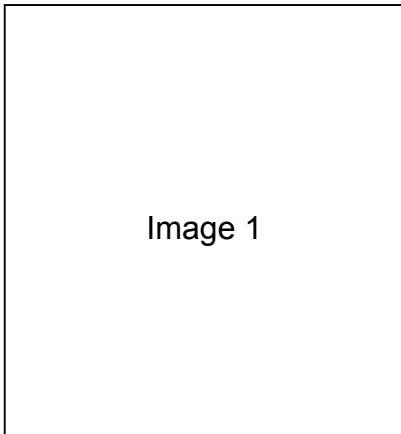


Image 1

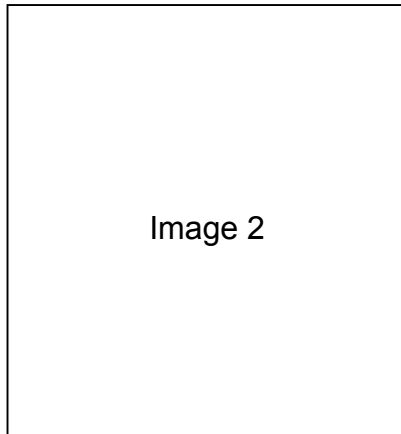


Image 2

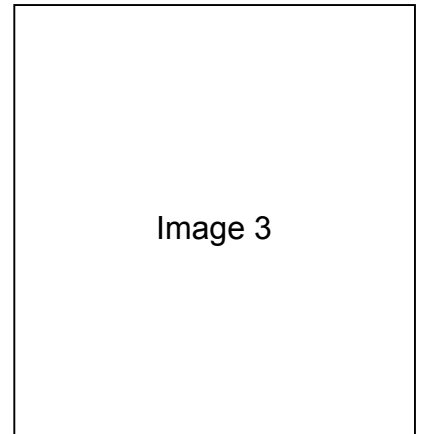


Image 3

Business or Planned Business Information

Please bold or circle: Mark the status of your business. Note that DCFI welcomes businesses in a range of formats and stages of development.

- Sole Proprietorship
- Corporation
- C-Corporation
- S-Corporation
- Limited Liability Company
- Limited Liability Partnership
- Partnership
- Not Yet Registered

Please bold or circle: Are you incorporated in the District of Columbia? Note that your answer will not impact your eligibility to become a DIR.

- Yes
- No

Please bold or circle: Is your business woman-owned or minority-owned? Note that your answer will not impact your eligibility to become a DIR.

- Yes
- No

Please bold or circle: Which broad category best describes the type(s) of products that you currently produce or plan to produce? Please note all that apply.

- Womenswear
 - Menswear
 - Accessories
 - Jewelry
 - Shoes
 - Other (please specify):
-

Please bold or circle: Which more specific type(s) of products do you currently produce or plan to produce? Please note all that apply.

- Athleisure
 - Blanks or printable
 - Bridal
 - Denim
 - Dresses
 - Children's clothing
 - Coats
 - Eveningwear
 - Formal wear
 - Infants' clothing
 - Knitwear
 - Limited editions
 - Maternity
 - Minimal
 - One-of-a-kind
 - Outerwear
 - Sportswear
 - Tailored sportswear
 - Logo active sportswear
 - Street wear
 - Suits
 - Undergarments/ foundation wear
 - Women's separates
 - Work wear or uniforms
 - Other (please specify):
-

Please bold or circle: During which seasons do you release a collection? Please note all that apply.

- Spring/ Summer
 - Fall/ Winter
 - Other (please specify):
-

- Please note: How many looks per season do you release?
-

Please bold or circle: Where and how are your designs produced? Please note all that apply.

- Home-based studio
 - Design studio, show room, or office
 - Local production
 - Factory production
 - Overseas production
 - Comments (optional):
-

Please describe the type(s) of products noted in the checklist above that you produce or plan to produce.

Describe your target audience, such as but not limited to age, gender, and lifestyle.

What factors do distinguish or will distinguish your line from everything else on the market for your target audience?

Please bold or circle: What is your current or intended channel of distribution?

- Online – Please specify site(s)
-

- Direct-to-consumer
 - Specialty stores
 - Boutiques
 - Pop-up shops
 - Department stores
 - Other – Please specify
-

Who is your competition, and why? (You are welcome to provide supplemental attachments.)

Please bold or circle: Beyond your fashion business, are you currently employed?

- Yes – Please specify employer name and your position
-

- No

Please list an awards or notable press coverage. (You are welcome to provide supplemental attachments.)

How do you plan to fund your business during your DCFI residency? (You are welcome to provide supplemental attachments.)

Incubator Aspirations

If accepted, what do you hope to achieve or gain from this experience?

Please write a short essay about your business and how you see it growing in the next five years. Key elements may include:

- Explaining why you have chosen to produce this particular product or line.
- Identifying your strengths and areas for development as a designer or business owner.
- Discussing the opportunities you foresee resulting from your participation in this program.

Please use a separate document, not this application, and attach your answer to your application email.

When submitting your final application to info@dcfashionfoundation.org, please be sure to include the following items. Also, please remember to submit your non-refundable \$75 application fee.

- **The application form above**
- **Answers to application form questions that required a separate document**
- **Any supplemental materials deemed necessary**
- **A resume and/or designer timeline**
- **Your most recent press kit and/or look book**
- **Two letters of recommendation from fashion industry contacts, an employer, or accounts**

Thank you for applying to the DC Foundation Foundation's premier program, the DC Fashion Incubator at Macy's. We look forward to reviewing your application and wish you luck. As you await our decision, we encourage you to explore and consider all of our programs on our website, www.dcfashionfoundation.org.