**OVERVIEW: Fashion Incubators at Macy’s**

**Chicago Fashion Incubator at Macy’s on State Street (CFI)**

* Established in 2008
* 6 apparel designers currently in residence
* 2 year program
* http://www.chicagofashionincubator.org/

**Fashion Incubator San Francisco at Macy’s Union Square (FiSF)**

* Established in 2011
* 6 apparel designers currently in residence
* 2 year program
* http://www.fashionincubatorsf.org/

**Philadelphia Fashion Incubator at Macy’s Center City (PFI)**

* Established in 2011
* 4 apparel designers currently in residence
* 1 year program
* http://www.philadelphiafashionincubator.com/

**DC Fashion Incubator at Macy’s Metro Center (DCFI)**

* Entered Macy’s in 2015; established in 2009
* 5-10 apparel designers currently in residence
* 2 year program
* http://www.dcfashionfoundation.org/incubator/

**Mission:**

The mission of the Fashion Incubators at Macy's is to assist emerging local apparel and accessories designers to build sustainable businesses in Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington D.C. that compete in the global fashion industry, while supporting fashion industry economic growth and job creation in their respective cities. The Incubators are independent 501C3 non-profits with work space donated by Macy's.

**Program:**

Participating designers, referred to as “Designers in Residence,” (DIR) are required to have 2-5 years design experience, complete a lengthy application and rigorous interview process and commit to a one or two year term, depending on the respective incubator.

During the time in residence, designers receive premier sample-making production space, office space and showroom space along with a full curriculum of seminars, one-one-one mentorship. Topics include fashion design and commerce, creating a business plan, brand development, funding, selling techniques as well as legal and business assistance. Local fashion and business experts help DIR’s stay current on industry trends through educational courses and provide access to public programs that bring together the regional design community. Finally, wherever there is opportunity, DIRs are showcased in publicity opportunities – fashion shows, features, trunk shows, etc. (not necessarily at Macy’s). DIR’s pay a nominal monthly rent ($250-$400) for the space and services.

**Leadership:**

Each incubator has an Executive Director who oversees the day-to-day management and reports to the respective incubator’s board of directors. The ED relies heavily on the community at large – civic, business and fashion leaders in the local market who assist with mentorship and programming.

**Funding:**

All are 501C3s – many once were supported by city and state grants which no longer exist. Working with in-kind partners have been successful, however, with “Macy’s” name included in the title, many believe that this is a Macy’s initiative supported by Macy’s.

**Alum:**

Once the DIR’s complete the program, they become the program’s best advocates and serve as ambassadors. It’s their success that builds the incubator’s reputation of producing successful designers.

"The Chicago Fashion Incubator, which is hosted in Macy's landmark State Street store, provides a unique opportunity for emerging Chicago designers to create and showcase merchandise with the hands-on support of experienced mentors from the local retailing and fashion industries. Fashion is a fiercely competitive business, and through the Incubator, we enhance the opportunity for Chicago designers to succeed by nurturing and encouraging them at an important developmental stage in their careers. Macy's State Street store sells merchandise created by many local Chicago designers and donates office and showroom facilities for the incubator. This is an important part of Macy's commitment to building strength and economic vitality in our local community." -- Terry J. Lundgren, Chairman, President and CEO, Macy's, Inc. (June 2009 for AT Kearny study on fashion in Chicago)