

CALL FASHION PROMOTION PLATFORM

Initial situation

The Zurich Silk Association ZSIG and the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia see the great potential of Swiss fashion designers for both the Swiss and the international market.

ZSIG sees it as one of its central tasks to sustainably promote value creation through design in Zurich and in Switzerland. It has many years of experience in promoting Swiss fashion platforms, from Gwand to Stella and Mode Suisse.

Since 2017, the design promotion of the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia has been providing targeted support to young and innovative design talent on their way to the market through annual calls for project support, organising delegations to international design platforms or supporting projects that implement the foundation's strategy in supporting emerging design talents.

In order to continue to promote Swiss fashion designers in the future, ZSIG and Pro Helvetia have decided to combine their commitment to the development of a contemporary fashion platform in a joint partnership. The partnership would like to give actors based in Switzerland who have proven competencies and forward-looking concepts in the field of fashion promotion the opportunity to apply for financial support for a multi-year platform project.

The term "fashion promotion platform" includes a comprehensive spectrum of possible support measures and channels, from the classic fashion show to tailor-made coaching for fashion start-ups.

The proposed projects are expected to have both a national and international scope. ZSIG will be responsible for the promotion of the potential fashion platform within Switzerland, in particular in and around Zurich. Pro Helvetia will concentrate on the promotion of the fashion platform abroad.

Goals

- Increase visibility for young, innovative and talented Swiss fashion designers from all language regions.
- Measurable matchmaking measures between young fashion designers and potential business partners (buyers, retailers, media, producers, etc.).
- Establishment of a platform with a national and international scope.
- Participate in important international platforms abroad in order to increase the visibility of the design talents and companies promoted in Switzerland and to achieve measurable results through matchmaking events.

Context analysis

In order to promote sustainably the value creation of fashion designers and entrepreneurs in Switzerland, the project must undertake a comprehensive context analysis:

1. Analysis of the business models and opportunities that are available in the fashion industry today and in the near future. In addition to classic strategies such as own label and shop, also the opportunities and risks of social media, digital advertising platforms and sales channels must be examined.
2. Analysis of the national and international "state of the art" in the field of fashion promotion. In addition to domestic promotion measures should also be examined. In addition to Swiss fashion promotion, the most important international platforms and fashion promotion possibilities should also be analysed. In particular, the markets of the countries in which Pro Helvetia is present with its global network of offices should be taken into account. (See list of PH branch offices)

3. Analysis of the changes that have taken place or are currently taking place during the pandemic in the international fashion industry (turning away from superlative fashion events, towards alternative, often digital formats, away from seasonal collections, etc.). The changes need to be explained plausibly and it needs to be taken into account which developments remain important in the longer term and which are only temporary in nature.

Strategy

- As a conclusion of the context analysis, the project must develop a convincing strategy with project goals and milestones that would ensure a sustainable promotion of Swiss fashion production.
- In addition to a national strategy, an international strategy must also be outlined. This must include a sustainable internationalisation, including collaborations with existing platforms. This includes a plausible description of the markets and the opportunities they present, as well as the description of planned formats (matchmaking events, collaborations with existing platforms, etc.) and their measurable objectives.

Transparent & professional quality management

The project must have a transparent & professional quality management in all areas. For example, the criteria and processes to be used for the selection of individual fashion designers and companies must be shown, and it must be demonstrated how it will be checked whether the goals pursued by the strategy are actually being achieved.

Realistic financial planning and proper bookkeeping

The project must have a realistic financial plan of all income and expenditure for the entire duration (budget). Furthermore, bookkeeping and auditing must be ensured.

- The budget to be submitted must be for a three-year funding period, beginning in January 2022, with an option for extension.
- When financing the budget, a distinction must be made between own funds and third-party funds.
- Own funds can be both own financial resources that the applicant plans to use and own contributions in the form of work.
- In the case of third-party funds, a distinction must be made between contributions from the institutions issuing the call for proposals and contributions from other possible or assured project sponsors.
- Maximum ZSIG funding for activities in Switzerland: CHF 140,000 per year.
- Maximum Pro Helvetia funding for activities abroad: CHF 60,000 per year.

Requirements for participation

- Legal entity (Ltd, association) domiciled in Switzerland
- Participants may also join forces with other interested parties for the domestic and international strategy, but this must be clearly stated in the documents in a project organisation with clear responsibilities and structure.
- Know-How of the young, upcoming Swiss scene, including its needs and challenges
- Know-How of the international fashion scene and its latest developments
- New concepts / formats with a sustainable and diversity-oriented mindset.

Documents to be submitted

- Information on the institution including balance sheet, proof of experience, statutes incl. organisational regulations and Code of Conduct
- Context analysis
- Strategy paper for national and international platforms in the next 3 years including indicators (PDF max. 15 A4 pages)
- Business plan and long-term business strategy
- Budget incl. financing plan

Call process

- 14th of June 2021, start of tender process
- 24th of June 2021, 09.00, Online event with tender presentation and Q&A
- 25th of July 2021, 24.00, submission deadline
- Early August 2021, Selection committee decision on a shortlist / communication to shortlist candidates
- 16th of September 2021, project presentations of the shortlisted candidates (pitch) followed by a decision
- January 2022: earliest start of possible funding

Conditions

- There is no legal entitlement to funding from ZSIG and/or Pro Helvetia. ZSIG and Pro Helvetia reserve the right to terminate, postpone or otherwise adjust the tender process.
- Expense allowance shortlist: Those projects that make it onto the shortlist will receive a lump-sum compensation for expenses of CHF 5000.
- Conclusion of contract / evaluation phase: In the event of support, a service performance agreement will be drawn up with ZSIG and Pro Helvetia in which the framework conditions for the years 2022- 2024 will be defined. After the first year, an overall evaluation will be carried out in the sense of a trial period to check whether the requirements have been met. Depending on the outcome of this evaluation, ZSIG and Pro Helvetia will decide whether the funding should continue unchanged, whether the funding conditions should be adjusted - if this is found to be necessary -, or whether it should be terminated.

Applications may be submitted through the [online form](#) until **July 25, 2021**.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions:

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