RALPH LAUREN

CFDA and Ralph Lauren Announce Two New Grant Programs to Strengthen American Fashion Manufacturing

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CFDA x NY Forward Grant Fund, funded by New York State Department of State and Ralph Lauren Corporation, will help sustain New York City's historic Garment District

The U.S. Fashion Manufacturing Fund, launched by CFDA with Ralph Lauren Corporation as founding partner, will expand support for fashion manufacturers nationwide

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan. 7, 2026-- The Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) today announced two new initiatives designed to strengthen American fashion manufacturing, drive innovation, support workforce development, and promote economic growth in key apparel-producing regions across the country.

The CFDA x NY Forward Grant Fund, developed with funding from both the New York State Department of State and Ralph Lauren Corporation (Ralph Lauren), will provide partially matching grants to designers and manufacturers based in New York City's Garment District. The U.S. Fashion Manufacturing Fund, created with Ralph Lauren as founding partner, will support apparel manufacturers nationwide. Both programs aim to help companies to modernize equipment, expand services, and train workers – building the capacity and resilience of American fashion manufacturing.

These programs build on the success of the CFDA's Fashion Manufacturing Initiative (FMI), launched in 2013 in affiliation with the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), Andrew Rosen, and with the long-term support of Ralph Lauren, among others. To date, Ralph Lauren has contributed $2 million as FMI's Premier Underwriter, enabling grants to 54 factories and positively impacting more than 2,000 jobs.

"Strengthening American manufacturing to ensure designers have local partners has long been at the core of CFDA's mission," said Steven Kolb, CEO and President of the CFDA. "We are proud to extend our decade-plus work with Ralph Lauren Corporation and expand to a national level while also continuing our local NYC investments alongside our first-ever partnership with the New York State Department of State."

Together, these new grant programs mark a landmark commitment: sustaining New York's Garment District while bolstering U.S. manufacturing nationwide — ensuring that American fashion continues to lead globally through innovation, craftsmanship and community.

"Our expanded partnership with the CFDA reflects Ralph Lauren's enduring commitment to advancing innovation and supporting American fashion," said Katie Ioanilli, Chief Global Impact & Communications Officer, Ralph Lauren Corporation. "This is not only an investment in our industry — it's an investment in a vital part of American culture that we share with the world."

The CFDA x NY Forward Grant Fund
The CFDA x NY Forward Grant Fund, created in partnership with the New York State Department of State, is dedicated to sustaining the New York City Garment District, the historic heart of American fashion production. The program will provide grants to New York City Garment District-based fashion manufacturers as well as designers producing in-house. Two rounds of funding will be distributed, one in 2026 and another in 2027, empowering businesses to invest in innovation, expand production capacity, and preserve local jobs, contributing to the revitalization of this commercial hub. In each round, one manufacturer recipient will also receive the *Ralph Lauren Manufacturing Award*, providing the full grant amount in recognition of the most innovative approach to advancing their business.

The U.S. Fashion Manufacturing Fund
The U.S. Fashion Manufacturing Fund, supported by Ralph Lauren as Founding Partner, will run from 2027 through 2029 and will extend grant funding for innovation and workforce development beyond New York to key regions across the country, including California, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Florida and others. The program will provide partially matching grants to manufacturers investing in advanced machinery, software, and workforce training, covering 80 percent of each grant award, with recipients contributing the remaining 20 percent.

About CFDA
The Council of Fashion Designers of America, Inc. (CFDA) is a not-for-profit trade association founded in 1962 with a membership of more than 360 of America's foremost womenswear, menswear, jewelry, and accessory designers. Pillars include Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion through the IMPACT initiative, as well as Sustainability in Fashion. The organization provides its Members with timely and relevant thought-leadership and business development support. Emerging designers and students are supported through professional development programming and numerous grant and scholarship opportunities. In addition to hosting the annual CFDA Fashion Awards, the organization owns the Fashion Calendar and is the organizer of the Official New York Fashion Week Schedule. The CFDA Foundation, Inc. is a separate, not-for-profit organized to mobilize the membership to raise funds for charitable causes and engage in civic initiatives. For more information: www.cfda.com

About Ralph Lauren Corporation
Ralph Lauren Corporation (NYSE:RL) is a global leader in the design, marketing and distribution of luxury lifestyle products in five categories: apparel, footwear & accessories, home, fragrances and hospitality. For nearly 60 years, Ralph Lauren has sought to inspire the dream of a better life through authenticity and timeless style. Its reputation and distinctive image have been developed across a wide range of products, brands, distribution channels and international markets. The Company's brand names – which include Ralph Lauren, Ralph Lauren Collection, Ralph Lauren Purple Label, Polo Ralph Lauren, Double RL, Lauren Ralph Lauren, Polo Ralph Lauren Children and Chaps, among others – constitute one of the world's most widely recognized families of consumer brands. For more information, go to https://corporate.ralphlauren.com.

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