# African Fashion Foundation and UDGN launch incubator to boost African diaspora designers ahead of London Fashion Week



In a significant stride towards advancing African and minority representation in the global fashion industry, the African Fashion Foundation (AFF) has partnered with the UK-based Unity in Design Global Network (UDGN), founded by Nigerian entrepreneur Tare Isaac. This alliance launches the UDGN Cultural Threads Incubator, a tailored mentorship and brand growth programme designed to support 12 emerging designers from across the African diaspora. The initiative aims not only to provide hands-on runway preparation but to equip designers with comprehensive skills in fashion finance, marketing, PR, branding, and storytelling, culminating in a high-impact showcase at London Fashion Week in September 2025.

According to Tare Isaac, founder of UDGN, the collaboration is “not just a show. It’s a launchpad,” emphasising the network’s commitment to building sustainable pathways for these designers by connecting them with critical industry players including press and stockists worldwide. The African Fashion Foundation, led by Roberta Annan, contributes rich expertise in fashion development and investment strategies. Annan highlighted the foundation’s dedication to empowering African creatives globally through strategic mentorship, particularly around investment readiness and international scaling.

The incubator programme runs from June to September 2025 and prepares participants for more than just the runway. It sets them up for enduring success by focusing on post-show retail placements, addressing a frequent gap in emerging designers’ trajectories. Mentorship is provided by prominent figures from the London College of Fashion, the British Fashion Council, and AFF itself, ensuring a robust, multifaceted learning experience that merges creativity with commercial viability.

This initiative joins a broader landscape of African fashion promotion in London in 2025. Africa Fashion Week London (AFWL), the world’s largest and longest-running African fashion showcase, celebrates its 15th season in August 2025 at Space House, London. The event features multiple catwalks, exhibitions, fashion talks, and cultural activities that spotlight African heritage and artistry in fashion. Impressively, AFWL has connected nearly 3,000 designers and creatives with global audiences and industry professionals over the years.

Adding to AFWL’s rich programme, a special partnership with Disney’s The Lion King will feature a performance of the iconic "Circle of Life" song during the event’s Saturday evening catwalk show. This collaboration draws on shared themes of heritage, identity, and storytelling central to both the musical and African fashion narratives. Furthermore, the British Council has partnered with AFWL to bring a delegation of 10 emerging pan-African designers from Ethiopia, Uganda, Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria to present their latest collections. These designers are alumni of the Creative DNA fashion accelerator programme, which aims to elevate the next generation of African fashion talent.

Together, these initiatives reflect a dynamic, flourishing ecosystem within London that seeks to nurture African and minority designers beyond the runway, helping them to establish long-term careers while celebrating cultural roots and creative innovation. The combined efforts of UDGN and AFF, alongside flagship events like Africa Fashion Week London, underscore an encouraging trend towards greater inclusion, equity, and sustainable growth in the global fashion industry.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://businessday.ng/sponsored/article/african-fashion-foundation-and-udgn-announce-global-fashion-partnership-ahead-of-london-fashion-week/), [[2]](https://www.unityindesignglobalnetwork.com/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://businessday.ng/sponsored/article/african-fashion-foundation-and-udgn-announce-global-fashion-partnership-ahead-of-london-fashion-week/), [[2]](https://www.unityindesignglobalnetwork.com/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://businessday.ng/sponsored/article/african-fashion-foundation-and-udgn-announce-global-fashion-partnership-ahead-of-london-fashion-week/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.africafashionweeklondonuk.com/), [[6]](https://styleafrique.com/2025/03/29/afwl2025-15-years-strong-and-back-for-a-summer-celebration/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://www.africafashionweeklondonuk.com/afwl-news/africa-fashion-week-london-announces-collaboration-with-disneys-the-lion-king), [[5]](https://www.africafashionweeklondonuk.com/afwl-news/new-postafrica-fashion-week-london-announces-partnership-with-british-council), [[7]](https://styleafrique.com/2025/06/24/africa-fashion-week-london-announces-15th-season-on-9th-10th-august/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://businessday.ng/sponsored/article/african-fashion-foundation-and-udgn-announce-global-fashion-partnership-ahead-of-london-fashion-week/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.unityindesignglobalnetwork.com/> - Unity in Design Global Network (UDGN) is a UK-based platform founded by Nigerian fashion entrepreneur Tare Isaac. UDGN aims to support and elevate minority fashion designers by providing mentorship, brand development, and runway access. The platform focuses on closing the opportunity gap for underrepresented creatives, offering tools, guidance, and visibility to help them build impactful brands in the global fashion industry. UDGN's mission centres on inclusion, cultural equity, and sustainable growth for minority designers, fostering a collaborative ecosystem where diverse talents can thrive.
3. <https://www.africafashionweeklondonuk.com/> - Africa Fashion Week London (AFWL) is the world's largest and longest-running showcase of African and African-inspired fashion and design. Celebrating its 15th season in 2025, AFWL will take place on 9-10 August at Space House in London. The event features catwalk shows, exclusive designer showcases, exhibition shopping halls, fashion talks, influencer interviews, and cultural experiences celebrating African heritage in fashion. AFWL has provided a platform for nearly 3,000 designers and creatives, connecting them with new audiences, industry professionals, students, and fashion enthusiasts.
4. <https://www.africafashionweeklondonuk.com/afwl-news/africa-fashion-week-london-announces-collaboration-with-disneys-the-lion-king> - Africa Fashion Week London (AFWL) has announced a partnership with Disney's The Lion King for AFWL2025. The collaboration will feature a special performance from Disney's award-winning West End musical during the 7pm catwalk showcase on Saturday, 9 August at Space House, London. Audiences will experience 'The Circle of Life,' the opening track from the iconic show. This partnership underscores the shared themes of heritage, identity, and African storytelling, enhancing the cultural experience of AFWL2025.
5. <https://www.africafashionweeklondonuk.com/afwl-news/new-postafrica-fashion-week-london-announces-partnership-with-british-council> - Africa Fashion Week London (AFWL) has partnered with the British Council to present the Creative DNA London Showcase at AFWL2025. The initiative brings a delegation of 10 pan-African designers to London, all alumni of the Creative DNA fashion accelerator programme. These designers from Ethiopia, Uganda, Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria will participate in an immersive programme during AFWL2025, unveiling their latest collections during a catwalk showcase on Saturday, 9 August at 4pm. This collaboration aims to spotlight the vibrant next generation of African fashion.
6. <https://styleafrique.com/2025/03/29/afwl2025-15-years-strong-and-back-for-a-summer-celebration/> - Africa Fashion Week London (AFWL) is celebrating its 15th season in 2025, marking a significant milestone in championing African fashion, culture, and creativity on the global stage. The event promises two days of show-stopping catwalks featuring trailblazing designers, exclusive shopping halls, inspiring fashion talks, influencer interviews, and cultural experiences that honour Africa's rich heritage in fashion. AFWL has been a platform for nearly 2,000 designers and creatives, connecting them with industry leaders, fashion lovers, students, and content creators.
7. <https://styleafrique.com/2025/06/24/africa-fashion-week-london-announces-15th-season-on-9th-10th-august/> - Africa Fashion Week London (AFWL) has announced its 15th season, scheduled for 9-10 August 2025 at Space House in London. The event will feature three catwalk showcases filled with African design collections, a full exhibition hall, and a special performance by the cast of Disney's The Lion King. In partnership with the British Council, AFWL will welcome ten emerging designers from Ethiopia, Uganda, Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria through the Creative DNA programme, amplifying fresh African voices in global fashion.