

Edcon Design Innovation Challenge launches today

The three-month education and mentoring programme, the Edcon Design Innovation Challenge, launches today, 6 September 2016 at 6.30pm at the Edgars store in Melrose Arch. Designers such as Shaldon from Naked Ape and Ephymol's Ephraim Molingoana, as well as media and bloggers will be in attendance.



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The challenge is open to final year, honours and masters fashion students in Gauteng to develop further their fashion, design and entrepreneurial skills through the learning platforms created by Edcon in partnership with Runway Productions. Edcon intends rolling out the challenge to the rest of the country, upon completion of the Gauteng pilot, which is taking place from January to April 2017. The selection panel for the challenge is made up of representatives from Edcon and the, fashion journalists, designers and The Fashion Agent.

The prizes for the winning students include:

- Three months business and collection design training from specialists to fast forward their careers;
- A years business-to-business support;
- A show launching the collections of selected designers to the media, VIPs and celebrities;
- The opportunity to be selected to be part of the design team at Edcon.

It is an integral part of Edcon's transformation objectives and its overall strategy to develop talent and leverage its expertise to the benefit of fashion students and the retail industry at large.

Elelwane Phahlana, GM for Transformation at Edcon said, “The Edcon Design Innovation Challenge forms part of the transformation journey that Edcon, as South Africa’s largest non-food retailer, has undertaken to develop a pool of local talent with the necessary knowledge base and skills by bridging the gap between academic learning and industry. This initiative follows closely on the heels of the Edgars UNiTE Orange Day Campaign, also aimed at training women in shelters as seamstresses and introducing them to the basics of fashion and design.”

Lucilla Booyzen CEO Runway Productions added, “The Edcon Design Innovation challenge will bridge these gaps. It will prepare the fashion students for the realities of ‘the business of fashion’, which will fast-forward their careers on every level.

“Fashion has the potential to bring forth changes that can have a huge impact on our economic and social life. A key element in the success of the creative fashion design industry of a country is its ‘luxury, ready to wear’ clothing created by its designers. This creates both wealth and employment within the value chain, from which textile designer to the service sector can benefit.”

In the creative fashion industry, designers must invent their own work whilst at the same time building their own enterprise. It is important that they not only design and make clothes for important occasions, but also for everyday life. The initiative’s main aim is to create a pool of talented young designers across the South African fashion industry.

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