

BRITISH FASHION COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

Friday 5th June 2020

British Fashion Council Announces Launch of ‘Great British Designer Face Coverings: Reusable, for People and Planet’ Campaign

British Fashion Council (BFC) is announcing today the launch of ‘Great British Designer Face Coverings: Reusable, for People and Planet’, a joint campaign with Bags of Ethics, to manufacture and retail internationally, sustainable and reusable non-medical face coverings to use alongside existing social distancing measures. Designed in London by six British designers, Halpern, Julien Macdonald, Liam Hodges, Mulberry, RAEBURN and RIXO the project aims to raise £1 million with 100% of sale profits going to charity and split between NHS Charities Together Covid-19 Urgent Appeal, BFC Foundation Fashion Fund and Wings of Hope Children’s Charity.

The non-medical face coverings are manufactured at Bags of Ethics™ 100% owned partner factories and provide a reusable and sustainable option for the environment with no single-use plastic. The non-medical face coverings will not deplete healthcare system. The product will be retailed at £15 for three reusable, washable, fabric face coverings with two protective pouches. These non-medical face coverings will be available to buy online through britishfashioncouncil.com and through partner retailers soon including Asos, Boots, John Lewis & Partners and Sainsbury’s (in Tu Clothing sections in selected superstores, convenience stores and online at Tu.co.uk and Argos.co.uk)

Caroline Rush, Chief Executive BFC said: *“Fashion is a unifying force and now, more than ever, it is essential that we collaborate and come together to support each other through difficult times. Our ambition is to contribute to the fight against COVID-19, while protecting vital PPE supplies reserved for the NHS. Through this project, we will not only celebrate British designers but also champion sustainability in a time of crisis. “*

Dr R Sri Ram, Chairman, Bags of Ethics: *“We have always been at the forefront of supporting the public through mass behavioural changes in positive and useful ways. Since the early 2000s we helped supermarkets, and retailers reduce their single-use plastic bag consumption by 5+ billion units through sustainable and reusable bags. A new challenge arises with the Coronavirus pandemic. Our aim is to*

manufacture high quality reusable non-medical face coverings for the public which reduces stigma through great British design, in line with advice from our scientific community, whilst having a positive effect on both people and planet.”

Justine Simons OBE, Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries said: *“Wearing of non-medical face coverings when you can’t socially distance is important to help stop the spread of COVID-19. It is great to see such leadership from our fashion industry – this partnership will help slow the spread of COVID-19 and raise money for important causes.”*

The project is part of BFC’s wider initiatives to support creative fashion businesses and individuals to survive the pandemic. It aims to instill public confidence and unite the country through creativity, prevent further depletion of medical mask supplies, champion British designers and maximize fundraising opportunities in a time of crisis.

Most recently, the Government issued guidance for the public to wear face coverings in enclosed spaces where social distancing is not always possible. The reason why a non-medical facial covering is important is not that it keeps you safe, but because it stops you from inadvertently giving someone else the virus if you are pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic.

Since the beginning of the crisis, the BFC has acted as a vital resource and worked tirelessly to brief Government on the challenges facing the industry, while keeping all stakeholders up to date through letters, social media updates, digital Town Hall meetings and newsletters**. The money raised for the BFC Foundation Fashion Fund will support the next round of funding to give back to the designer businesses and protect the future of a generation of businesses that support the eco-system of design, creativity and positive cultural influence.

-ENDS-

To obtain face coverings for retail or use within your business please contact:

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About British Fashion Council

The British Fashion Council (BFC) was set up in 1983 to promote British fashion internationally and co-ordinate this promotion through fashion weeks, exhibitions and showcasing events. The BFC now supports designers beginning at college level and extending to talent identification, business support and showcasing schemes. The BFC promotes British fashion and its influential role at home and abroad, helping British designer businesses develop their profiles and business globally. The BFC Foundation (Registered Charity Number: 11852152) was created for charitable purposes and grant giving; attracting, developing and retaining talent through education and business mentoring. The BFC Colleges Council offers support to students through BA and MA scholarships and links with industry through design competitions and Graduate Preview Day. Through grant-giving and business mentoring the BFC support designers through four talent identification and business support schemes: BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund, BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund, NEWGEN which includes womenswear, menswear and accessories, and the BFC Fashion Trust, a charity supporting UK based designers. The BFC showcasing initiatives and events include London Fashion Week, LONDON show ROOMs and the annual celebration of creativity and innovation in the fashion industry: The Fashion Awards.

About BFC Foundation Fashion Fund for Covid Crisis

The BFC Foundation Fashion Fund for the Covid Crisis was established in March 2020 to support creative fashion businesses and individuals to survive the Coronavirus crisis. The BFC, through its charity the BFC Foundation, made £1,000,000 of emergency funds available with the majority supporting designer businesses and with a portion of funds allocated to students, underpinning the future generation of creative talent. This was made possible through pooling the BFC talent support grants that would have traditionally been awarded for either early stage showcasing support or business growth and promotion.

BFC has called on both Government to step in to work with them on significant industry stimulus, and on the industry and individuals to support the BFC Foundation Fashion Fund for the Covid Crisis through donations, so that more businesses can be supported at this time.

More information on the BFC Foundation Fashion Fund is available [here](#).

****BFC Action on Covid-19 To Date can be found [here](#).**

About Bags of Ethics

Bags of Ethics is a positive label that promotes the people and planet behind reusable products. Our mission is to offer brands across the world the ability to create beautifully designed, eco-friendly products made in an ethical way. The BOE community spans designers, technicians, growers, tailors, printers, packers, merchandisers, buyers, and everyone along the supply chain. We, along with our partner factories, have worked with over 60,000 clients across the world, including Tesco, Nike, The Co Op, Topshop, London Fashion Week, and several small businesses who have promotional and packaging needs. All BOE products are designed to be reused several times, from our 50+ wears reusable face masks, to our 5,000+ times reusable packaging, tote bags, and merchandise. For our 20 years we have been at the forefront of positive behavioural changes, from reducing single-use plastic consumption to promoting the concept of reusing. The Bags of Ethics label was created to unite consumers, businesses, and makers, across three key pillars: PEOPLE, PLANET, and PRODUCT. Bags of Ethics partner factories have won several awards for our work including HRH Prince of Wales' Most Ethical Supply Chain and are also the UK Government's Business is GREAT ambassador. www.bagsofethics.org

About Wings of Hope

We believe that young people have the power to change the world for the better. The Wings of Hope is a UK based children's charity, providing education and support for young people around the world. We currently run school projects in the UK, India, and Malawi. We believe that if young people are given the right guidance, skills-training and holistic education they can be enablers of positive change in their communities, workplaces, and countries.

Our main project is the Wings of Hope Achievement Award (WOHAA), was set up in 2004. Over 15 years, 40,000 students from over 450 schools in the UK have taken part in the programme. WOHAA is designed to recognise and reward student social enterprise projects whilst students develop key life. Student projects include 24-hour football matches, delivering bottled water to HM The Queen, virtual bake-a-thons, school-wide sponsored no-technology days, and litter-picking. 60% of the students are from 30 different cultural heritages include BAME, and 71% of students are from state-funded sector. Signature events for WOHAA include speed mentoring to demystify the world of work; skills workshops in media, engineering, university access visits; LBS Accelerator Day, and Back to School Day – world-class speakers teaching life skills. Supporters of the charity include Sir David Jason, Lord Robin Butler, Baroness Verma, Professor Lord Parekh, Professor Robert Winston, and senior representatives from Boots, The Financial Times, and Edelman.

The international projects span giving free education to economically underprivileged in India – in two school and after school projects in Chennai, and an HIV education support centre in Malawi. Wings of Hope is currently fundraising for a digital WOHAA programme to support the wellbeing of the UK students.

Wings of Hope Children's Charity registered charity number is 1099685 www.thewingsofhope.org