



# DESIGNER MENSWEAR FUND

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **British Fashion Council Announces Two-Year Partnership with JD.com and Ruyi in Support of BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund**

Today in Shanghai, The British Fashion Council (BFC) announced that it will partner with JD.com Inc, and Ruyi for two years, as the two leading Chinese companies provide sponsorship to the BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund.

At a lunch hosted by BFC Ambassadorial President David Beckham at The Middle House Shanghai, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Dylan Jones, BFC Chair of Menswear and Editor of British GQ, Caroline Rush, BFC Chief Executive, Xia Ding, President of JD International Fashion and Francis Srun, Executive President of Ruyi International Group that confirms funding, mentorship and additional opportunities to develop partnerships for the shortlisted designers into China.

**Dylan Jones**, BFC Menswear Chair and Editor of British GQ, commented: *"We are delighted to re-instate the BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund thanks to JD.com Inc. and Ruyi who have committed to two years of support for our brilliant emerging menswear designers. It is also fantastic to have the support of such a great ambassador in David Beckham who has already become a huge force within the BFC. The last British designer to win the BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund was Craig Green, a talent and business that has gone from strength to strength."*

**Xia Ding**, President of JD International Fashion said: *"Our joint sponsorship of the BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund with Ruyi is a great example of how JD is working with partners both inside and out of China to build new links in the global fashion industry. The UK is now increasingly recognized by Chinese people as a global fashion centre and JD is proud to serve as the most convenient channel for British designers to reach China's many discerning fashion consumers."*

**Francis Srun**, Executive President of Ruyi International Group commented: *"Ruyi is pleased to see our partnership with JD.com blossom into practical action with this move to help British designers expand into the Chinese market. Aside from a range of joint initiatives in offline retail and e-commerce, Ruyi's extensive collection of global brands are already*

*working closely with JD and we are confident that this network will give a strong boost to designers supported by the BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund."*

**David Beckham**, BFC Ambassadorial President said: *"Promoting the British Fashion industry in China is an important part of my new role with The British Fashion Council. It is great to be able to celebrate this new funding for emerging British menswear talent today. The menswear category is so energised at the moment and I can't wait to see and meet the talent that will be involved - it's very exciting."*

The sponsorship was one of several BFC strategic partnership announcements in Shanghai and is a key pillar of the organisation's China Partnerships Strategy 2018-2020.

The BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund is the UK's biggest menswear prize for emerging talent. The prize was established in September 2013 following the success of the BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund providing one designer with a £150,000 grant to provide necessary infrastructure to take them to the next stage of their business and significant value in kind services as part of a bespoke, high level mentoring support programme over a twelve-month period.

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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 harnesses the collective knowledge of the industry to support growth of the sector, including helping British designer businesses develop their profiles and businesses globally and promote British fashion and its influential role in Britain and London. The BFC Colleges Council offers support to students through the BFC Education Foundation Scholarships, links with industry through design competitions and Graduate Preview Day. Business support is at the heart of talent development, with charitable grants awarded through charitable initiatives BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund, BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund, BFC Fashion Trust and NEWGEN. The BFC owns and runs global fashion events including London Fashion Week, London Fashion Week Men's, LONDON show ROOMS, London Fashion Week Festival and the annual celebration of creativity and innovation in the fashion industry: The Fashion Awards.

#### **ABOUT BRITISH GQ**

Urbane, upscale, bold and always stylish, GQ's status as a byword for men's style is unparalleled. Known for the highest standards in feature writing and photography, the UK's leading quality men's fashion and lifestyle magazine has won innumerable awards in its 30-year history. The monthly magazine has a combined print and digital circulation of 110,051 (ABC Jan-June 2018); a readership of 939,000 (PAMCO Apr'17- Mar'18); and GQ online has 2,564,073 unique users (Omniure June- Aug 2018). In addition to print and digital,

GQ hosts events including the annual GQ Men of the Year Awards, GQ Food & Drink Awards, GQ Grooming Awards and GQ Car Awards.

<http://www.gq-magazine.co.uk/>

#### **JD.COM INC**

JD.com is a leading technology driven e-commerce company and retail infrastructure service provider in China. Its cutting-edge retail infrastructure enables consumers to buy whatever they want, whenever and wherever they want it. The company has opened its technology and infrastructure to partners, brands and other sectors, as part of its Retail as a Service offering to help drive productivity and innovation across a range of industries. JD.com is the largest retailer in China, a member of the NASDAQ100 and a Fortune Global 500 company.

#### **ABOUT DAVID BECKHAM'S BFC AMBASSADORIAL PRESIDENT ROLE**

In May 2018, the British Fashion Council appointed David Beckham OBE in a newly created role of Ambassadorial President. The global role has an initial two-year tenure and will support the organisation in its goal to build networks and partnerships in the United States and Asia. David partners closely with the BFC team to help the BFC boost support for the British fashion industry on a global scale – raising the profile of emerging British fashion talent with the global investment and media communities alike. In addition to promoting ongoing innovation in the sector, a key focus of the role is to support the BFC across their Education pillar – helping them to reach young talent from all backgrounds across the UK - through BFC run Saturday Clubs, scholarships and apprenticeships and via increased engagement in arts education. The first twelve months of activity see David and industry leaders including leading editors and designers, visit fashion education programmes across the UK, as well as, hosting events in China and the United States, unlocking his global network to convene support for the BFC's work in these markets.