

## Entries are now open for #Made\_In\_TheCaribbean, the Transcultura Fashion Design Competition

Apply to showcase your creative work at 'Fashion in da House', a unique fashion event to be held at the UNESCO Regional Office in Havana in May!

**Transcultura**, a UNESCO programme funded by the European Union, **invites young fashion designers from the Caribbean** to submit their best works, showcasing the outstanding creativity and craftsmanship in the Caribbean fashion industry.

If you:

- are a fashion designer aged between 18 and 35,
- are national and permanent resident of any of the 17 Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS): Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago,
- have a fashion design proposal that captures the essence of the Caribbean soul and is ready for market exposure,
- are available to travel to Havana to be part in the finalists' exhibition in early May 2024.

... this call is for you! Apply [here](#) to participate in the **Transcultura Fashion Design Competition** and compete for the opportunity to express your unique talent at the finalists' ceremony in Havana!

### What is the Transcultura Fashion Design Competition

The *Transcultura* Fashion Design Competition is the first in a series of thematic calls for the *Transcultura* Award, to acknowledge and celebrate the creative talent of young Caribbean fashion professionals. With an ambition to connect creativity beyond Caribbean boundaries, the *Transcultura* Award is launched regionally to recognize, explore and amplify the creative talent and entrepreneurial potential of exceptionally skilled young cultural professionals in the Cultural and Creative Industries in the region.

#### Competition Theme: #Made\_In\_TheCaribbean

The theme for submissions is open; however, for added merit, the presented work should have some relevance to the competition's theme: #Made\_In\_TheCaribbean. In this way, the *Transcultura* Fashion Design Competition challenges you to present a contemporary, fashion-forward mini collection (of 3 to 5 pieces) that represents Caribbean identity, the cultural diversity of the region, its cultural and artistic expressions, its exchanges and mutual influences and/or evokes the common cultural traits of the Caribbean. Your proposal should demonstrate your creative and innovative design potential around this theme. #Made\_In\_TheCaribbean should not be taken literally. The challenge is also to interpret the theme in your own way.

## Categories

The *Transcultura* Fashion Design Competition is organised in three categories:

- Category A: fashion design (particularly related to garments).
- Category B: accessories design – craft (this category includes, but is not limited to, shoes, hats, scarves, bags and belts made using any handicraft technique).
- Category C: jewellery – craft.

Note that you may apply for all categories but will only be selected as a finalist in one category.

## Who can apply?

The competition is open to all young fashion creatives between the ages of 18 and 35 who are citizens and legal residents of one of the 17 Caribbean countries within the geographical scope of the *Transcultura* programme: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

Designers who have launched a fashion business are particularly encouraged to apply. Priority will be given to women-led fashion businesses and to participants who are leading a creative initiative where the creative process has a potential cultural, social and/or economic impact, whether at community, regional, national or industry level.

## Entry requirements

The competition is free to enter. You can enter all categories, but each entry must be submitted separately. You must not submit more than one entry in each participating category. *Remember, you will only be selected as a finalist in one category.*

To enter the competition, you are required to submit a mini collection consisting of between three to five pieces, all in the chosen category of the competition. You may present original designs that have never been shown to the public or pieces that have already been made and debuted.

Entries may be submitted as existing finished works or as hand-drawn sketches or designed using any type of computer software. You do not need to produce the work at this stage. However, if you are selected as a finalist, you will be required and responsible for producing the finished work originally submitted as a design sketch.

You must present a portfolio in DIN A3 format (42cm x 29.7cm), including the following mandatory minimum contents:

- collection name;
- 1 artboard: mood board illustrating your concept, inspiration and colour-theme of your entry.
- One artboard corresponding to each of the collection's pieces, showing:
  - o colour sketches for the piece, including illustration and technical drawings with scaled measurements. Each sketch must include at least front and back views. If you have already made

your pieces at the time of the submission, you may also include pictures of the finished work. Sketches' technique is free.

- Description of the piece's manufacturing and creative process.
- Material swatch(es) and colour story.
- Gain an edge in your competition application by providing a mood board illustrating how your work addresses sustainability issues, including information about your choice of materials, production methods and the minimization of waste, where relevant. This may also include, if desired, a short explanation on how fashion can fit into a circular economy.

File size must be less than 5MB and in PDF format. Please ensure the images are clear and of the best possible quality. For the sake of fairness, no participant/business name should appear on your portfolio or else your submission will be disqualified.

### Selection criteria:

Entries will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- **Concept (20%):** explanation of design concept, that demonstrates an original interpretation and a clear vision on what the author wants to express.
- **Originality & innovation (40%):** the creative strategy and the final design reflect the originality of the idea, resulting in a form of innovative fashion product and artistic quality that:
  - creatively communicates the spirit of *#Made\_In\_TheCaribbean* and pushes boundaries to challenge stereotypes about the Caribbean region and its culture,
  - raises awareness of sustainable fashion principles and/or adopts sustainable practices.
- **Technical quality, functionality and practicality (30%):** the work demonstrates a mastery of fashion productions, using disruptive techniques and making expressive use of visual elements and resources in terms of creating innovative pieces without sacrificing functionality and practicality.
- **Narrative and Quality of visual presentation (10%):** the work meets the competition's thematic requirement and presents the theme in an attractive and coherent way.

### Submission instructions:

Applicants should follow the following steps:

1. Send the following documents to: [transcultural.programme@unesco.org](mailto:transcultural.programme@unesco.org) with the subject: *#Made\_In\_TheCaribbean*;
  - a digital copy of your national identity document or valid passport (preferred);
  - your CV;
  - a portfolio of your collection (*see Entry Requirements Section for further details*);
2. Complete your application through the [online application form](#) to provide personal information and information on your entry.

Once all the applications are received, the jury may request additional information, so keep checking your inbox regularly.

### Dates to keep in the loop:

- Open Call for entries: 9 February 2024
- Questions and answers: 9 to 22 February 2024
- **Application deadline: 29 February 2024, at 23:59, Havana time (UTC/GMT -5 hours).**
- Announcement of finalists: early March 2024
- Finalist exhibition and award ceremony: early May 2024

### Finalists and Winners' Benefits

Finalists will receive an invitation to the finalists' exhibition and to *Fashion in da House*, an exclusive event taking place in Havana in early May. This event will feature a comprehensive capacity-building programme, catwalk shows and networking opportunities. Through this invitation, *Transcultura* will cover all expenses for the participation in the finalists' exhibition, including:

- a return trip, with flights in economy class to Havana, Cuba;
- accommodation in a 4-star hotel or similar;
- 3 meals per day,
- Transfers in/out and daily transportation, if needed.

*Transcultura* will award the best entry in each category and the People's choice. The Judging Panel may award special awards to promote and recognize emerging eco-friendly works.

The awards consist of development opportunities for their creative initiatives which may include, but are not limited to, entrepreneur mentoring, product development, branding and business coaching.