

**REAL LEATHER. STAY DIFFERENT.**  
**UNIC and LINEAPELLE open their doors to the WORLD LEATHER CONTEST, the International annual competition for students attending the most exclusive fashion schools of the World**

*The creativity and innovative approach of the students attending the most prestigious fashion institutes in the world. A competition that compares their vision of the future with the excellence, versatility, beauty and sustainability of a benchmark material for the world of fashion, luxury and design: LEATHER.*

UNIC - Italian Tanneries, in collaboration with Lineapelle, opens its doors to the WORLD LEATHER CONTEST, an annual international competition based on the topic "Real Leather. Stay Different." which, in its first year, gathered more 800 applications from 25 international universities.

Designed and launched in 2019 by the LHCA (Leather & Hide Council of America), the US trade association, the WORLD LEATHER CONTEST includes, in addition to Italy, Leather UK for Great Britain, CLIA (China Leather Industry Association) for China and TLIA (Taiwan Leather Industry Association) for Taiwan.

The WORLD LEATHER CONTEST invites students to create unique and innovative accessories, using leather only or, as an alternative, combining it with other natural materials. The aim is to explore new stylistic and application fields of leather within 3 product categories, by giving voice, space and visibility to the ideas of the creative people of the near future. And, first of all, to offer new generations technical and cultural tools in order to understand and explore the identity and value of leather. Thanks to the collaboration of UNIC - Italian Tanneries and Lineapelle, the WORLD LEATHER CONTEST was launched in Italy in January 2020, engaging about 80 students from three different schools:

- Istituto Marangoni of Milan for the apparel category (Master in Fashion Design Womenswear and Fashion Design Meanswear);
- Polimoda di Firenze for footwear category (Undergraduate in Leather Technology);
- Accademia Costume & Moda di Roma for leather goods category (First Level Academic Diploma in Costume and Fashion).

*“Promoting and spreading knowledge about leather among young people and, in particular, among young people who are entering the world of fashion and design is a goal that UNIC - Italian Tanneries has pursued with strong determination for years. - comments Fulvia Bacchi, UNIC’s General Manager. “It is therefore with enthusiasm that we have joined the Real Leather. Stay Different design competition, which involves 4 countries/regions. All together we can achieve better and more effective results. The beauty and charm of leather are not second to its intrinsic and sustainable qualities, which must be an integral part of the cultural background of those who work with this material and choose it in their consumption.”*

The didactic program built by UNIC - Italian Tanneries and Lineapelle started in January 2020, proposing to the students activities on leather, with the training scope of making them understand the material, its possible processings and the countless types of finished articles. Once the theoretical part was complete, the operational phase had to cope with the global health emergency of Covid-19, which imposed a different management of the project, both in remote and digital mode. The evaluation of the projects, therefore, is ongoing online and will be completed in the coming weeks. Due to the pandemic, the next steps are still being defined, which include the sourcing of materials, their distribution to students, the creation of prototypes, the selection of the winning models and their public exhibition during the first useful edition of Lineapelle.

*“As a global leader in leather, we are committed to promoting best practice in quality leather production.” - comments LHCA President Stephen Sothmann, “And we are committed to supporting fresh talent, at a time when they need it most. We are therefore delighted to announce the continuation of this unique competition. It gives students with an interest in promoting style ahead of fast fashion the opportunity to innovate and inspire, using a natural and incredibly durable material. We would like to thank all participants in 2020 for their patience and look forward to the year ahead.”*

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