

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Saint Laurent nourishes future couturiers with hands-on educational course

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*Saint Laurent is offering students a hybrid internship/academic course on innovation and sustainability. Image credit: Saint Laurent*

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By DANNY PARISI

French fashion brand Yves Saint Laurent is nurturing the next generation of fashion talent with educational programs in partnership with two major French fashion schools.

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Partnering with the Institut Franais de la Mode (IFM) and the cole de la Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne (ECS), Saint Laurent is offering prospective designers a program that combines an internship at the company with courses at the schools to nurture innovation and sustainability. The programs will begin in September and last six months.

### New generation

Fashion is a generational industry. Brands that have operated undisrupted for decades have ensure the legacy would continue with new generations of designers, craftsmen and models coming through, making their mark and then passing the baton to their contemporaries.

That is why it is in the best interest of most fashion brands to cultivate and nurture the next generation of designers who will take over once the current generation ages out of the work force.



*Students will present a final project at the end of the class. Image credit: Saint Laurent*

Saint Laurent is the latest brand to establish such a program, by partnering with two major fashion schools in France.

The program that Saint Laurent has devised is a hybrid internship and academic course. In addition to classes at either the IFM or the ECS, students will also work part-time with Saint Laurent to get practical, hands-on experience in the fashion world over the course of six months.

Saint Laurent will work with students from each school on an ongoing project, which they will present to members of the company in March at the end of the program.

**Environmental stewardship**

A major focus of the project will be sustainability, something that is key to the overall strategy of Saint Laurent's parent company, Kering.

Kering regularly debuts new sustainability initiatives and maintains a transparent list of its various eco-friendly projects across all its brands.

For example, Kering is working to educate future members of the luxury business in methods on meeting their own sustainable goals through an educational partnership and course with New York's Parsons School of Design ([see story](#)).

That desire to create more sustainably-focused fashion is at the core of this new educational effort.



*The innovation lab established by Saint Laurent parent company, Kering. Image courtesy of Kering*

As climate change predictions grow ever worse, cultivating a sense of a responsibility towards the environment in younger generations is absolutely imperative, as it is they who will have to lead the fight against the worst effects of climate change, which will be devastating for the luxury industry and the world at large.

The most obvious way that climate change could affect the luxury world is that temperatures will increase. Colder areas will benefit in the short-term, increasing the length of time in which crops can be planted and harvested, which will be a benefit for luxury vineyards in colder areas.

On the other hand, this will mean droughts and heat waves throughout the world, significantly increasing the difficulty of manufacturing in warmer areas of the country. Factories need water for most product creation and workers cannot work in extreme heat ([see story](#)).

Saint Laurent is using this course as an opportunity to build a generation of fashion designers for whom the environment is a priority and not an afterthought.