

NONPROFITS

Burberry Foundation funds Oxfam's Florentine anti-poverty efforts

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Burberry's work with Oxfam focuses on youth. Image credit: Burberry, photo by Broth Tam

By STAFF REPORTS

British fashion label Burberry's foundation is helping Oxfam as it tackles poverty in Florence, Italy with a multimillion-pound grant.

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The 3 million pound, or approximately \$4 million, grant will go towards furthering Oxfam Italia's existing efforts in the area, which include outreach in education, employment and health. Running through 2022, this program fits into the Burberry Foundation's goal of helping 1 million people in areas that feed into the luxury industry.

Anti-poverty program

Working together, Oxfam Italia and the Burberry Foundation will focus on developing community centers, adding new facilities and expanding existing centers.

In addition to providing services to people regardless of their background, the centers will host social events, Italian language classes and multicultural affairs. One of the goals of these centers is to integrate both local Italians and immigrants.

"We are proud to be supporting Oxfam's work in the region of Tuscany," said Leanne Wood, a trustee of The Burberry Foundation and chief people and corporate affairs officer at Burberry Group. "Their investment in community centers and educational programs are vital in helping the local communities, who play such a vital role in the luxury and fashion industries, come together and have the tools to build a bright and prosperous future."

According to Roberto Barbieri, executive director of Oxfam Italia, one in four people in Italy is at risk for poverty or social exclusion. Additionally, one in 13, or 4.74 million, lives in absolute poverty, without enough food, heating or clothing.

This partnership also focuses on the youth in Tuscany, tackling the school dropout rate through in-school workshops focused on building skills and increasing students' employability. About 11 percent of those aged 18-24 in the region do not complete their formal education, and about one-third of residents between 15 and 24 does not have a job.



Burberry Foundation's effort focuses on employment. Image courtesy of Burberry

In addition to preparing students, Oxfam will use funds from Burberry to help parents and educators better help students struggling in school.

"Oxfam Italia and The Burberry Foundation will work together to support individuals struggling in Tuscany to deliver the help they need to get on in life," Mr. Barbieri said in a statement. "Without this practical intervention, like skills training, counseling, childcare, language classes, homework clubs and financial advice, their circumstances are likely to get worse.

"Oxfam is extremely grateful to The Burberry Foundation for its considerable investment. The program, developed with Oxfam's expertise, will particularly focus on supporting younger people, whatever their background, to bring brighter, fairer, futures for everyone."

The Burberry Foundation is also encouraging disadvantaged youth in Britain to consider careers in creative industries through a new grant program.

The fashion house's philanthropic arm is providing grants to charity Teach First and the government supported Careers & Enterprise Company. Centered on Yorkshire and the Humber, this five-year initiative gives back to local communities integral to the Burberry business ([see story](#)).

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