

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Models gain tools to combat misconduct as fashion embraces #MeToo movement

February 21, 2018



*We Care For Models and Humans of Fashion Foundation have both launched to advocate for models. Image credit: We Care For Models*

By DANNY PARISI

As the conversation surrounding sexual harassment, abuse and the issues plaguing women across industries continues, two new platforms have sprung up to advocate for models, who are among the most visible yet least protected members of the luxury business.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**  
Plus: Just released  
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

The newly launched Humans of Fashion Foundation is a nonprofit group dedicated to addressing and preventing the issues of sexual harassment and abuse in the fashion industry, with a particular emphasis on the abuse suffered by models. Similarly, luxury conglomerates Kering and LVMH are building on their existing co-signed charter to improve models' working conditions with the launch of a model wellness site.

### Worker advocacy

Since the advent of the #MeToo movement, which raises awareness of and demands consequences for perpetrators of sexual abuse and harassment in the workplace, abusers from across the worlds of media, entertainment and sports have been ousted from their respective industries.

Fashion has not had nearly the number of highly public issues as Hollywood has, but the problem of sexual harassment and abuse remains.

Some fashion publishers, sensing the potential problems in the future, have prematurely ended relationships with rumored abusers such as Terry Richardson, the photographer who has been accused of physically abusing models for years.



*In some states, models are not protected from sexual harassment due to their status as freelancers. Image credit: Louis Vuitton*

In the fashion world, it is models that suffer the most. Despite being the most highly visible members of the fashion world, models' safety and working conditions are routinely overlooked in a notoriously tough business.

Together LVMH and Kering have launched [Wecareformodels.com](https://www.wecareformodels.com), a wellness site dedicated to models, serving as a resource for them to learn about their rights, how to deal with sexual abuse and harassment and empower themselves to fight back against abuse.

Another organization, Humans of Fashion Foundation, which was cofounded by model Kristina Romanova and singer-songwriter Antoniette Costa, has also launched a new initiative at this year's Milan Fashion Week with a launch event featuring notable women from across the industry.

The foundation is using the event to mark the beginning of its advocacy for women in the fashion industry facing abuse and harassment. HOFF is introducing a mobile application that will provide real-time consultation to models, offering advice and guidance through difficult times.

### **Protecting models**

Despite being the most visible members of the fashion world, models have relatively little power or protection in an industry that can be incredibly hard on them.

For instance, until recently, models were not technically protected by child labor laws in New York City. Models are still not protected against sexual harassment in the workplace due to their status as freelancers ([see story](#)).

Many publishers have begun publishing their own guidelines and charters explaining how they will work to avoid these problems. For instance, Cond Nast International has announced behavioral guidelines for its photoshoot partners.



*Cond Nast is working to protect its models. Image credit: Cond Nast*

Published Jan. 31 on the British Vogue Web site, Cond Nast's Code of Conduct, effective immediately, is designed to "safeguard the dignity and well-being" of anyone working with the publisher's brands in all operating markets. Cond Nast's Code of Conduct is an update to its 2012 Model Health Initiative ([see story](#)).

Concrete written statements such as this one from Cond Nast or the joint charter written by LVMH and Kering are an excellent first step to holding institutions accountable for the treatment of their workers. As the fashion industry has built so much of itself on the backs of the women who grace the ads in magazines, it is vital that they do whatever they can to protect them.

---

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.