

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Burberry investigates impact of the arts in educational program

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Burberry Inspire will include a dance program. Image courtesy of Burberry

By STAFF REPORTS

British fashion house Burberry's corporate foundation is exploring the impact that the arts have on students' development and lives through a new research program.

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The four-year-long "Burberry Inspire" initiative will roll out educational programs for art, dance, theater and film at Yorkshire schools, the effects of which will be studied by The Policy Institute at King's College London. Said to be the first of its kind in-school arts program, the project builds on the Burberry Foundation's educational and youth-centered outreach.

"We are very proud that the Burberry Foundation will deliver this unique program in the heart of Yorkshire in partnership with these leading organizations," said Leanne Wood, a trustee of the Burberry Foundation and chief people, strategy and corporate affairs officer at Burberry, in a statement. "At Burberry, we believe that creativity should be nurtured, and we are passionate about championing the benefits of making arts and culture available to all.

"We want to inspire young people across the country to explore the wide variety of ways they can be involved in the creative industries, and help to create a wealth of talent for one of Britain's most important sectors," she said.

Arts education

Burberry Inspire, created in partnership with the Ideas Foundation, will span eight schools. For the program, the Burberry Foundation is teaming up with art organizations in the area to teach key stage three students, or those between the ages of 11 and 14.

Leeds Playhouse will run coursework in theater centered on the play "Partition." Voice coaches, public speakers and performers will also be available to work with students.

Facilitating students' creative communication, Leeds Young Film will launch workshops on filmmaking, teaching students how to produce in formats including virtual reality, music video and vlogging.

Northern Ballet will teach students about dance, aiming to help them both discover a creative outlet as well as

teamwork skills.

Students will also be able to take classes in fine art with The Hepworth Wakefield, as they learn how to sculpt or create prints.

Burberry Inspire is a four-year education program focused on the arts

As part of the experience, students will also have the chance to attend performances or venture outside of their classrooms to explore.

Each of the organizations will work with two schools per year, placing an artist in residence to each school. This individual will collaborate with students and teachers to create events.

At the end of the four-year program, each will have worked with every school.

"The Policy Institute is delighted to be involved in this initiative," said Dr. Benedict Wilkinson, senior research fellow at the Policy Institute at King's College London, in a statement. "Too many cultural and educational programs are introduced without being adequately evaluated, so we're thrilled that the Burberry Foundation has set out to rigorously analyze the impact of this project from the get-go.

"Doing these kinds of evaluations, rather than relying on anecdotes, is how we come to know how what actually works, and gives us the best chance of making a difference to young people's lives," he said.

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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