

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

UKFT, in coronavirus guidance, recommends "business as usual" attitude for trade shows

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Britain's Plus Samples specializes in the production of high-end garments in smaller volumes, and is exhibiting in the UKFT Manufacturing Zone at Textile Forum March 11-12. Image credit: Plus Samples

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

The U.K. Fashion & Textile Association has recommended members continue conducting business in a normal vein, especially with trade shows and other activities they would have supported this year and beyond.

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The organization is in touch with the British government for clarity of the TAP program beyond June for early decision-making and planning, as well as flexibility for smaller brands' whose cash flow is affected by the coronavirus outbreak.

Here is the UKFT's letter to members and those on its list in its entirety:

UKFT Guidance on Coronavirus

UKFT continues to monitor all its TAP supported tradeshow (and many others) very carefully with regard to their intentions around the global Covid'19 outbreak. In the period from February-March 2020, most fashion and textile related tradeshow took place, albeit with fewer buyers than usual, especially from Asia and the U.S. Since then, some larger shows in Asia and Europe have been cancelled or postponed.

Looking ahead to the fashion and textile trade fairs from June onwards, most are recruiting (or have already done so) but all of them are keeping a close eye on the situation.

It is very important that business carries on with a *business as usual* attitude wherever possible. This means committing to the tradeshow and other activities you would normally have supported in 2020 and beyond. The shows are accepting space bookings. If space bookings are down, some may decide to reduce hall space so it would not be a sensible approach to wait and see nearer the time.

UKFT has already been in touch with Government to request an urgent confirmation of the TAP program beyond June (which is late again this year) and to highlight the need for early decision-making and planning as well as

flexibility if things have to change nearer the time. Outside the TAP program, we are campaigning for greater flexibility and support for smaller companies which find their cashflow affected by the fallout from the outbreak.

If you are committing to a tradeshow in the next few months, it is worth asking the show organizer the following questions:

- When will they make their final viability (go-ahead) decision for the fair?
- What will be their cancellation/postponement policy?
- Will they guarantee to refund all monies in the event of postponement or cancellation?

You may also wish to ask the same questions of your stand constructors and freight companies and check your insurance policies to see whether you would be covered in case of postponement or cancellation and what would need to happen. Clearly, no insurance policy can cover you if a show goes ahead but suffers from reduced turnout. You will also need to consider what would happen if key sales personnel were unable or unwilling to travel. Please plan ahead and speak to your insurance company or broker if you are in any doubt.

UKFT will keep a close eye on the situation but in the meantime we urge companies to make their grant applications (where appropriate) and confirm space at the shows without delay.

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