

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Sephora reveals new BIPOC participants in incubator program

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The Sephora Accelerate program is now dedicated to BIPOC brand founders. Image credit: Sephora

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

LVMH-owned beauty retailer Sephora continues to spotlight BIPOC brand founders with its newly announced participants for the 2022 Accelerate brand incubator program.

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The Sephora Accelerate program is welcoming a group of 10 BIPOC brand founders for its seventh year. To improve diversity and representation in the prestige beauty industry, and within its own offerings, Sephora has shifted the program to focus on entrepreneurs of color ([see story](#)).

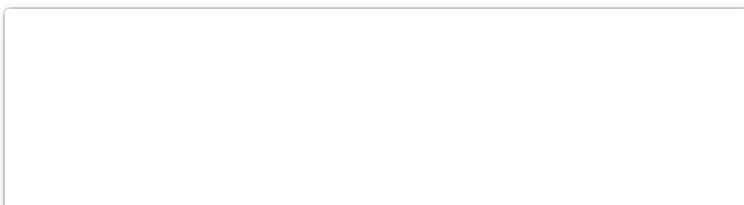
"We are committed to ensuring that the brands and products found at Sephora represent all the colors, races and ethnicities that make up America, effectively building a beauty community to which everyone feels they belong," said Priya Venkatesh, senior vice president of merchandising, skin care and hair at Sephora, in a statement.

"To do so, it's important that brand founders of all backgrounds have the opportunity and resources they need to grow their businesses and thrive," she said. "Through the Accelerate program, Sephora is committed to giving founders the long-term mentorship, access to market and scale they need to truly accelerate growth, with the program serving as a springboard for nascent brands to become visible, viable, stable and financially solvent."

Accelerating representation

For the first time, a fragrance brand is included in the Accelerate program. This year's participants cover all of Sephora's categories, from makeup and skincare to haircare.

The program offers a curriculum centered on mentorship and merchandising support to help participants make connections with investors and potential funders.



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A post shared by 54 Thrones (@54thrones)

54 Thrones was one of the participants in the 2021 Accelerate brand incubator program

Starting in mid-January, Accelerate begins with an orientation to onboard the brand founders in the Sephora ecosystem. Through March, this allows them to form relationships with merchant sponsors and other participants and begin developing their branding, product development and finance journeys.

Bootcamp begins in early April with a week of educational sessions and intensive workshops spanning marketing, omnichannel strategy, media relations, supply chain and operations, inventory planning and more. Then, participants can join brand-building sessions and one-on-one meetings with advisors and Sephora experts.

The program ends in the early summer with a graduation ceremony. Brand founders will also present to Sephora's senior leadership about their experience and pitch for an opportunity to land at the retailer.

This year's brand founders are Basma Hameed and Parisa Durrani of BASMA Beauty; Fara Homidi of FARA HOMIDI, Selah Lemon of House of Foster, Nisha Phatak and Madhu Punjabi of Lion Pose, Rimah Husain of Kempt, Sravya Adusumilli of Mango People, Carolina Contreras of Miss Rizos, Kiku Chaudhuri of Shaz & Kiks, Krys Lunardo of Sistine and Scarlett Rocourt of Wonder Curl.

"We know that business growth in communities of color creates jobs, opportunity, stability and generational wealth having the potential for decades of positive impact," Ms. Venkatesh said. "With the program's focus on BIPOC-owned brands, Sephora is committed to making a difference."

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