

City of Cape Town, AFI partner for Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week

The Spring/Summer fashion showcase, Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Cape Town 2014, takes place from 24-26 July at the CTICC.

This year, the city of Cape Town has officially partnered with African Fashion International (AFI), in hosting the annual event, recognising that it is a major catalyst for the growth of and creation of jobs in the fashion, design, textile & tourism industries, both locally and countrywide.



The show features South Africa's top designers and draws thousands of industry entrepreneurs, buyers, influencers and local and international media to Cape Town.

"The powerful impact of events like this cannot be understated. The fashion, design and tourism industries, grown and supported by AFI initiatives such as Fashion Week, are a significant contributor to Cape Town's economy and, by extension, the national economy," says Anton Groenewald, city executive director of tourism, events and marketing.

AFI has numerous ongoing initiatives, including the various Fashion Weeks (Joburg A/W Cape Town S/S and Africa), Fastrack & the Next Generation incubation programmes, Africa Fashion Awards, Privé, Africa Trade Expo and its Fashion Talks seminars. He hailed these as being instrumental in the fact that, in 2013, textiles and clothing accounted for about 14% of South Africa's manufacturing employment as well as being its second largest source of tax revenue.

Fashion ranking of South African cities

Further reflecting the economic power forged by South African fashion are the impressive rankings of Cape Town and Johannesburg on the Language Monitor 2014's list of world fashion capitals, with these cities being ranked at 27th and 37th, respectively. The partnership between the City of Cape Town and AFI goes a long way in recognising the impact that a sustainable and thriving fashion industry will have on the overall economy.

"AFI is proud to work with the City of Cape Town once more to build on the already significant growth in local design-related industries. The city's continued endorsement and support in showcasing the country's best design talent, providing designers with access to global markets and helping them to develop sustainable business models, is invaluable to the growth of the continent's fashion industry," says AFI spokesperson, Sizwe Nzimande.

The city has similarly recognised AFI's efforts and the fashion show in particular in its successful tenure as World Design Capital (WDC) 2014, which was awarded to the city in recognition of its efforts to utilise design as a tool for social, cultural and economic development.

This year, 27 of the country's top designers will present collections in 15 shows over three days at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Cape Town 2014.