

# Tommy Hilfiger launches programme to address racial inequality

Tommy Hilfiger, owned by PVH Corp., is launching the People's Place Program, which aims to advance the representation of black, indigenous and people of colour (BIPOC) within the fashion and creative industries. The brand has announced an initial minimum commitment of \$5m in annual funding towards the programme for the next three years.



At the end of May, American designer Tommy Hilfiger [shared a personal call](#) to action for himself and his namesake business amid the Black Lives Matter movement. The brand says the ensuing commitment puts into action his wider vision to drive change throughout the industry and reinforces the company's social and environmental sustainability mission to "create fashion that wastes nothing and welcomes all".

The three-pillared platform seeks to achieve "consistent, long-term change" through the following methods:

**Partnerships and representation:** Tommy Hilfiger will enhance its diverse talent pipeline, focusing on purpose-led collaborations that specifically increase minority visibility, and partner with organisations and creative peers whose mission is to advance BIPOC representation and equity in the fashion industry.

**Career support and industry access:** To advance representation of minority communities within the fashion and creative industries, the brand will use its knowledge and resources to ensure career opportunities by providing access to information or physical materials, specialist advice, industry introductions, and more.

**Industry leadership:** To increase representation at every level, Tommy Hilfiger will commit to independent, industry-wide analyses of diversity, equity and inclusion in the fashion industry, and will work towards creating concrete action plans to use internally that can also be shared with the broader fashion industry.

The programme takes its name from Tommy Hilfiger's first store which opened in 1969 in his hometown of Elmira, New York. At 18 years old, Hilfiger created the People's Place as a dedicated space for people from all walks of life to come together to enjoy art, music, fashion and pop culture.

Shaped by the cultural revolution of the 1960s, the original store fostered an exchange of ideas, encouraged authentic self-expression and challenged social norms. It is in this spirit that the new People's Place Program has been founded and will continue to expand.



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Khanyisa Nomoyi 22 Jun 2020



"What is happening to Black communities in the US and around the world has no place in our society," said Tommy Hilfiger.

"The fact that it has continued to exist in our industry – overtly and systemically – is unacceptable. We are far behind where we should be in achieving diverse representation. It shouldn't have taken us this long to acknowledge that, but we are determined and committed to changing it going forward. We will be intentional, fearless and unwavering in the actions we take. Through the People's Place Program, we will use our platform to create opportunities and stand up for what is right."

## Governance structure

Tommy Hilfiger is building a governance structure to oversee the People's Place Program and ensure its success. Senior leadership will be appointed to direct the programme, accelerate its growth internally and externally, and maintain focus on transparency through regular reporting on progress and impact made. The People's Place Program team is currently engaging in discussions with industry peers and partners who can help advance the platform mission and maximise impact throughout the fashion landscape.

"As a company, we haven't done enough, but we are determined to do better. We are taking immediate action to ensure that BIPOC communities in the fashion industry feel represented, heard and equally welcome to their seat at the table," said Martijn Hagman, CEO, Tommy Hilfiger Global and PVH Europe.

## Addressing shortcomings in BIPOC representation

PVH Corp. will be joined by its entire brand portfolio in taking a stand against racism. PVH said it will use its resources and the platforms for Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Izod, Van Heusen, Arrow, Warner's, Olga, True&Co. and Geoffrey Beene to help end racial inequality.

As part of the PVH family, Tommy Hilfiger says it will also be making immediate internal strides to become a more informed, less biased organisation with a strong sense of belonging. To address shortcomings in its internal BIPOC representation, the company has launched a Comprehensive Action Plan as the starting point in its journey to further address discrimination, injustice, inequality and racism.

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17 Jun 2020



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The Plan will shape how the company moves closer to reflecting the diversity of its consumer base. This starts with the following steps:

**Listen:**

- Creating more opportunities for all associates to listen and be heard.
- Equipping leaders and hiring managers at all levels with tools and resources to develop a deeper understanding of systemic racism, privilege and bias to become stronger allies and advocates for change.

**Learn:**

- Rolling out mandatory continuous unconscious bias training to all associates.
- Building out a dedicated Inclusion & Diversity digital resource channel accessible to all associates.
- Launching an educational and informational event series for associates on racial justice.

**Act:**

- Broadening Business Resource Groups (BRGs) to include regional chapters dedicated to advancing, empowering and amplifying BIPOC voices in our offices around the world.
- Attracting more diverse talent by evolving recruitment policies and practices, casting a wider net and thoughtfully increasing representation at all levels of the organisation.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>