



Left to right: Chelsea Grays, Lucky + Lovely, Oak & Acorn ~ Only for the Rebelles, Credit: Informa Markets Fashion

## **Informa Markets Fashion for Change Incubator Program Returns with New Participants Announced for PROJECT Las Vegas**

*Highlighting diversity and emerging design talent within the fashion industry, the program offers qualifying brands complimentary live event inclusion, marketing promotion, and mentorship.*

**New York, NY -- July 26, 2021** – Informa Markets Fashion, leading industry connector and host to premier fashion trade events including, *MAGIC*, *COTERIE*, *PROJECT*, and *SOURCING at MAGIC*, announced today the selection of *Informa Markets Fashion for Change* (IMFC) Incubator Program participants in its upcoming *PROJECT Las Vegas* trade event. The IMFC initiative fosters allyship, inclusion, and equality within the fashion community through programs that support, nurture, and elevate minority-owned, women-owned, and LGBTQIA+-owned fashion brands across men’s and women’s apparel, accessories, and footwear categories. The IMFC Incubator Program will highlight up-and-coming contemporary brands as the industry convenes in Las Vegas during Informa Markets Fashion’s twice annual market events.

The 2021 *PROJECT* edition of the Program features Black-owned designers and brands, who will each receive complimentary space for one season at the upcoming *PROJECT Las Vegas* event on August 9 - 11, 2021 at the Las Vegas Convention Center. In addition to physical space and presence during market, the participating brands will be highlighted via an omnichannel approach through various custom content, marketing, and social media promotions leading up to and throughout the live event. They will also receive mentorship and leadership guidance provided by the IMFC Committee, which consists of executives from across Informa Markets Fashion with backgrounds in branding, marketing, social media, finance, and sales.

“Investing in initiatives that support diversity and inclusion needs to be top priority for all of us in the fashion industry,” says Kelly Helfman, Commercial President at Informa Markets Fashion. “We recognize the responsibility we have as a key connector of the industry to use our resources and platforms to elevate and better support design talent.”

As the industry readies for the highly anticipated return of *PROJECT Las Vegas*, Program participants to be featured include:

- Oak and Acorn ~ Only for the Rebelles is the first sustainable denim-based brand made in Harlem, New York where genderless, luxury denim pays homage to the legacy of the enslaved African & Black Indigenous contributions to American denim.

- Ollivette is an accessories brand focused on creating durable and sustainable handbags that are both beautiful and classic.
- Chelsea Grays is a menswear designer whose passion for change and positive influence is expressed through creative design, using fashion to address social issues from around the world in creating protective and political fashion.
- Lucky + Lovely is a womenswear brand which features joyful, colorful, and personalized ready-to-wear collections and accessories, founded by Melanie Hernquist.
- Keith and James is a menswear milliner brand creating quality hats that serves as a modern symbol of its founder's heritage: strength, unity, and love.
- BAO - The Black Apothecary Office is a beauty, health and wellness brands owned by people of color, as well as an educational consulting accelerator for Black and Brown beauty, health and wellness businesses.
- Melrose High is an American luxury brand based around streetwear infused with elevated fabrics from around the world, founded by Daryl Mapp.
- Visionary Society is a lifestyle streetwear brand conceptualized for motivational purposes and founded by Diosdado Sima, an emerging figure in the landscape of East Coast streetwear and fashion.
- Earth Chic Resort Wear by Neshia Farhangi is a women's and men's resortwear and swimwear brand inspired by the beauty of nature and in celebration of togetherness by design student, Neshia Farhangi.

“Consumers crave uniqueness and newness – that’s no secret,” Helfman adds. “Shining the light on often underrepresented brands and talent not only provides a platform for these brands to expand their industry reach, but it connects them to retailers who are looking to diversify their retail assortment and better deliver on what consumers are looking for– fresh points-of-view, and from designers and brands that authentically represent and reflect who they are.”

New IMFC initiatives and participants will be announced for future events. Brands interested in being considered for upcoming opportunities featuring minority-owned, women-owned, and LGBTQIA+-owned fashion brands are invited to apply [HERE](#).

To register for **PROJECT Las Vegas and/or MAGIC Las Vegas, SOURCING at MAGIC Las Vegas – August 9-11, 2021**, please visit [HERE](#)

To exhibit at **PROJECT Las Vegas, MAGIC Las Vegas or SOURCING at MAGIC Las Vegas – August 9-11, 2021**, please visit [HERE](#)

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#### **ABOUT PROJECT:**

Representing what's new, now, and next in men's and women's contemporary apparel, footwear and accessories, PROJECT is a live event and digital platform where domestic and international buyers go to be inspired by higher-end brands, find margin-building products from relevant mid-market labels, and connect with likeminded industry thought leaders and fashion insiders. Through a fusion of community, education, media, and experiences, PROJECT propels the next season's top trends, generates global awareness, and ultimately, drives commerce. For more information, please visit [www.projectfashionevents.com](http://www.projectfashionevents.com)

#### **ABOUT INFORMA MARKETS:**

Informa Markets Fashion connects and inspires the global fashion community through online experiences, industry insights, and worldwide fashion trade events including MAGIC, COTERIE, PROJECT, and SOURCING at MAGIC. From more effective manufacturing and supply chain opportunities to creative design inspiration and retail on the wholesale floor, Informa Markets Fashion's diverse portfolio supports the entire fashion ecosystem - fostering innovation and driving creativity year-round. For more information on upcoming events, please visit: [www.findfashionevents.com](http://www.findfashionevents.com)