

**STAFF INTERNATIONAL (OTB GROUP) LAUNCHES STAFF ACADEMY:
THE ACADEMY FOR FASHION MAKERS 4.0**

19 "Knowledge Masters" and courses combining practice and theory at the centre of the new Academy, set up to train a new generation of Italian talents and transfer to the younger generations the craftsmanship that has made Italian fashion a worldwide example of excellence.

15 September 2021 - Staff International, part of the Only The Brave Group (OTB), has launched Staff Academy business school. A skills academy that will welcome its first 8 students in the next few months, created to pass on to the new generations the knowhow and competences that have made Staff International an example of Italian excellence and a leader in the global fashion industry.

The OTB Group has always been committed to the training and development of future talents, for example through the cooperation with fashion schools in and outside Italy, and support to projects such as International Talents Support. In the Group's vision, promoting the talent of future professionals and offering them the best opportunities to cultivate that talent is the key for the development of the Italian fashion industry, as well as to transfer the traditions and capacity for innovation of the craftsmanship synonymous with "made in Italy" all over the world. For this reason, as a production platform for Italian and international brands, Staff International is ideally placed to turn the links between fashion professionals and a new generation of talents into a reality.

Planned and established during the recent lockdown by an internal cross-functional team, Staff Academy intends to optimise the experience and competences inside the company, by identifying 19 "Knowledge Masters" – Staff International employees – and involving them in the training of a new generation of talents, or Fashion Makers 4.0. The aim is to preserve and pass down more than 40 years of a *savoir-faire* culture and tradition with an innovative approach that takes account of the new competences of industry 4.0 and the organisational models founded on the Agile method.

The Academy will use a teaching method combining theory and practical experience, with on-the-job laboratory training for 3 days a week and theory lessons with the "Knowledge Masters", who will themselves be appropriately trained to pass on their knowhow to the future professionals.

The first Staff Academy classes will be attended by 8 students selected from 6 schools and fashion schools who are taking part in the pilot stage of the project. The course consists of a 6-month training period followed by a 24-month apprenticeship, with the possibility for the students to be hired by the company.

Forty years of craftsmanship and now also a digital *savoir-faire* culture and tradition form a legacy that is unique of its kind. Staff International has therefore decided to invest in decoding, safeguarding, enhancing and passing on its knowhow by founding a skills academy. The business school is a key asset to provide the company with a guarantee of the generational turnover required to preserve and develop Italian excellence and promote it all over the world.

"We are proud to present the new Staff Academy, a centre of knowledge and training for the dissemination and, equally, the innovation of the knowhow that makes our Italian craftsmanship unique and recognisable around the world," said **OTB Group CEO Ubaldo Minelli**. *"The OTB Group has always invested in the training of Fashion Makers 4.0 and the new Academy is part of this commitment: we want to maximise the competences of our professionals by giving them the possibility to train a new generation of talents. A way to pass on to the young people, who are our future, the experience, professionalism and craftsmanship built up over time by the previous generation. We believe that synergetic inter-generational ties are the only way for our country's areas of excellence to be maintained and to evolve over time,"* **Minelli** added.

In addition to the training course for the Academy students, Staff International will launch an internal digital communication and teaching program to circulate the knowhow of the Staff International Masters through monthly in-house newsletters providing digital training "pills", together with an open, intuitive and multidisciplinary multimedia company platform, a Staff International Wikipedia, with input from all company employees.

STAFF INTERNATIONAL - With more than 40 years of experience in the fashion industry, Staff International was acquired by OTB in 2000, and has since evolved to become an ecosystem of services and skills at the disposal of the brands in the Group portfolio. Today, Staff International is directly responsible for product R&D, production and logistics of some of the brands in the OTB portfolio, including Maison Margiela, Marni and the Diesel footwear and leather goods collections. It also has exclusive worldwide licensing agreements with a number of international brands, including Dsquared2, Just Cavalli and Koché, for whom it follows all go-to-product and go-to-market phases.

For more information:

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OTB Group

OTB is an international fashion group, powering a range of global, unconventional brands, including Diesel, Maison Margiela, Marni, Viktor&Rolf, and Jil Sander. The group also controls the Staff International and Brave Kid companies, and holds a minority investment in L.A. brand Amiri. As its name suggests, - OTB stands for "Only The Brave" – the group pushes boundaries and challenges established rules to re-define the world of fashion and lifestyle, by fostering the creativity of international talents. OTB embodies the brave, innovative and unapologetic spirit and vision of its founder and president Renzo Rosso. Embracing consumer-centric digital innovation, together with a concrete and long-term commitment to creating a sustainable business, are the pillars of the development philosophy of the Group that employs over 5,500 people worldwide.

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