



TRUE FASHION MANIFESTO

—
PORTUGAL FASHION
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WHY WE NEED THIS MANIFESTO

Portugal Fashion is entering a new phase in its history. After a brief hiatus, it returns with a renewed image and a reinforced mission: to be a reference platform not only in promoting national creativity, but also in its commitment to sustainability, ethics and positive transformation in the fashion sector in Portugal.

In this context of renewal, the ***True Fashion Manifesto*** is born — a collective commitment that aims to guide the transition of the Portuguese fashion ecosystem towards more conscious, responsible models that are aligned with the challenges of the present and the demands of the future. More than a declaration of intent, the manifesto is a practical tool, built on active listening to the sector and structured to support brands, partners, suppliers and the Portugal Fashion organisation itself in adopting sustainable principles.

At a time when fashion is undergoing profound changes, the manifesto affirms the ambition to position Portugal as an example of ethical creativity and responsible innovation. Through key areas of commitment, clear criteria and progressive actions, it proposes a vision of the future where sustainability is integrated across the board — from design to production, from events to communication, from working conditions to consumer relations.

The True Fashion Manifesto also stems from the conviction that true fashion is, by its very nature, sustainable. Designer fashion, the work of young creators and projects that value know-how, time and originality already represent a concrete response to the challenges of the global industry. This manifesto therefore aims to recognize, amplify and give visibility to these practices, showing that sustainability is not just a destination, but the starting point for contemporary Portuguese fashion.

With this manifesto, Portugal Fashion takes on a new role: a catalyst for change and an active platform in building a fairer, more transparent and regenerative sector.

THE VISION THAT GUIDES US

With the launch of the ***True Fashion Manifesto***, Portugal Fashion affirms a new vision for the future of Portuguese fashion: a more ethical, sustainable, innovative industry that is aligned with the environmental, social and cultural challenges of our time.

This vision stems from the recognition that fashion is a creative and economic force with enormous influence, and that Portugal has unique conditions to position itself as an international reference — thanks to the quality of its production, the talent of its designers, the agility of its industry and the richness of its traditional know-how.

To achieve this ambition, the manifesto is based on five fundamental principles that should guide the decisions of all stakeholders involved:

- **Sustainability** – Integrate environmental and social concerns into every stage of the process, focusing on reducing impact, circularity, and responsible use of resources.
- **Ethics** – Ensure transparency, fairness, and respect for everyone involved in the value chain, from creation to consumption.
- **Identity** – Value what makes us unique: cultural heritage, craftsmanship, local production and Portuguese creativity.
- **Inclusion** – Promote representation, accessibility and diversity, both in communication and in internal practices.
- **Innovation** – Leverage technology, *design* and creative thinking as drivers for new, more sustainable business models.

The ***True Fashion Manifesto*** is also aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in the areas of decent labour, equality, responsible production, climate action and partnerships for change. With this alignment, the manifesto reinforces the ambition to make Portugal Fashion — and all its *stakeholders* — active agents in building a fairer, more transparent and regenerative fashion industry, both nationally and internationally.



THE ROLE OF PORTUGAL FASHION IN THIS CHANGE

As the main platform for promoting national fashion, Portugal Fashion is taking an active and responsible role in transforming the sector. More than just a stage for showing collections, the organisation is committed to being part of the change - leading by example, encouraging collective progress and integrating sustainability as a central axis of its action.

In this new cycle, Portugal Fashion has adopted the ***True Fashion Manifesto*** as the guiding document for its positioning and actions. The organisation undertakes to:

- Apply sustainability principles in the production of its events, with a focus on waste reduction, energy efficiency, accessibility, mobility and well-being;
- Integrate sustainability criteria into the selection of brands, partners and suppliers, encouraging responsible practices throughout the value chain;
- Facilitating access to knowledge, training and support tools, especially for emerging labels and young designers.
- To give visibility to the good practices that already exist in the Portuguese sector, reinforcing Portugal Fashion's role as a driver of positive change.
- Review and update this manifesto on a regular basis, ensuring its relevance and applicability as the sector evolves.

Portugal Fashion is thus renewing its role as a strategic platform for valorising Portuguese fashion, taking on sustainability as a cross-cutting priority - and not as an isolated issue. With this commitment, the organisation intends not only to accompany change, but to lead it with ambition, responsibility and coherence.

This commitment also applies to Portugal Fashion's internal activities, covering brand curation, event production and its own organisational management. Sustainability will be progressively integrated into all of the institution's processes - from strategic decisions to daily operations - consolidating Portugal Fashion as an example and practical reference for responsible transformation in the sector.

HOW THIS COMMITMENT WORKS

The ***True Fashion Manifesto*** is organised around key areas of commitment, each with a set of principles and priority themes for sustainability in the fashion sector.

To make this commitment clear, feasible and adapted to the diversity of the Portuguese ecosystem, each area has two levels of criteria:

- **Minimum requirements** - These are the basic conditions that all brands and partners must fulfil in order to take part in the events organised by Portugal Fashion. They represent the essential level of commitment to sustainability and will be applied transparently and progressively.
- **Recommended good practices** - These are examples of voluntary measures that brands, suppliers and partners can adopt to deepen their commitment to sustainability. These good practices act as a source of inspiration and guidance, promoting continuous improvement, innovation and evolution in the sector.

This model is designed to be scalable, inclusive and action-orientated. It allows entities with different levels of maturity to get involved in the manifesto, recognising the diversity of the sector and creating a joint path towards more conscious fashion.



Susana Bettencourt - Foto: Ugo Camera

WHERE WE WANT TO ACT: OUR PRIORITIES

The **True Fashion Manifesto** structures the commitment to sustainability around six key areas, which reflect the main points of intervention along the fashion value chain. These areas were defined on the basis of the priorities identified by Portugal Fashion and the contributions gathered from brands, partners, educational organisations and sponsors during the consultation process.

Each area corresponds to an essential dimension of the sector's transformation: from strategic management to *design*, from the choice of materials to working conditions, from the relationship with the consumer to the production of the events themselves. Together, they form an integrated and progressive basis for guiding the sustainable evolution of the Portuguese fashion ecosystem.

The key areas of commitment are:

- 1 Leadership** - Integrating sustainability into the structural decisions of Portugal Fashion's brands, partners and organisation.
- 2 Design** - Creating pieces with intention, reducing impact from conception and promoting durability, efficiency and inclusion.
- 3 Materials, Production and Tradition** - Conscious choice of raw materials and production methods, with a focus on traceability, circularity and valuing local know-how.
- 4 Decent Labour** - Promoting decent, safe, inclusive and transparent labour practices throughout the supply chain.
- 5 Consumer** - Clear communication, information sharing, alternative consumption models and public co-responsibility.
- 6 Events** - Adoption of sustainability, accessibility, mobility and well-being criteria in the production of fashion shows and other activations.

Each of these areas is accompanied by a set of minimum requirements - essential criteria for taking part in Portugal Fashion actions - and a list of recommended good practices, which act as additional guidance and inspiration for a deeper and more innovative commitment.





MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

The minimum requirements are the essential criteria that all brands and partners must fulfil in order to take part in Portugal Fashion events. They represent the basic commitment to sustainability - realistic, measurable and applicable across the board.

KEY AREA	MINIMUM REQUIREMENT
Leadership	Integrates sustainability into the overall strategy of the brand or organisation.
	There is a person or team responsible for the issue.
	The brand prohibits the destruction of stock and implements responsible solutions for its disposal, favouring donation, upcycling or recycling.
Design	The <i>design</i> of the garments takes durability and waste reduction into account.
	Elements that make recycling difficult are avoided (e.g. non-separable mixtures).
Materials, Production and Tradition	Preferential use of materials with a lower impact (recycled, organic or certified).
	There is basic traceability of the origin of the main materials.
	No hazardous chemicals are used in the production process, in accordance with national and European legislation.
	The brand values traditional Portuguese techniques, materials and know-how.
	All production must take place in Portuguese territory, enhancing the national supply chain and ensuring high standards of quality, social responsibility, and environmental sustainability.



Ernest W. Baker - Foto: Dulce Daniel

KEY AREA	MINIMUM REQUIREMENT
Decent Labour	The brand ensures fair and safe working conditions at its direct suppliers.
	The brand implements clear guidelines to guarantee a safe, healthy and respectful working environment in its own offices or internal teams - free from harassment, discrimination and with equal opportunities.
	Good responsible purchasing practices are taken into account so as not to generate excessive pressure or unfair practices in the supply chain.
Consumer	The brand's communication is clear and does not induce <i>greenwashing</i> .
	The brand is actively working to reduce the environmental impact of its packaging, both in shop and when ordering <i>online</i> .
Events	Single-use objects and scenographic elements are avoided, favouring reusable, recyclable or rental solutions.
	All waste generated is properly separated.
	Event production does not use disposable physical gifts.
	The brand promotes diversity and representation in its castings, encouraging a selection of models that reflect different body types, ages and identities in an authentic and respectful manner.

To support the implementation of these requirements, Portugal Fashion provides a Support Guide to the True Fashion Manifesto that complements this document with practical guidelines, examples and technical solutions.

Recognising the diversity and different levels of maturity within the sector, a one-year adaptation period will be ensured so that all brands can progressively comply with the minimum requirements. During this period, Portugal Fashion will provide technical and training support to emerging brands, promoting an inclusive and realistic transition towards sustainable practices. This support will include information sessions, sharing of best practices and support tools that will help brands apply the requirements at their own pace.



Marques' Almeida - Foto: Dulce Daniel



IDEAS FOR GOING FURTHER

GOOD PRACTICES

Good practices are suggestions for additional measures, aimed at organisations that want to deepen their commitment to sustainability, test new approaches or inspire the sector with more advanced solutions.

These practices are not compulsory, but they serve as benchmarks of excellence and innovation, reinforcing the positioning of the most committed brands and partners.

KEY AREAS	GOOD PRACTICES
Leadership	There is a sustainability strategy with defined targets and deadlines.
	Internal training on sustainability is carried out.
	The brand publicly communicates its progress in this area (e.g. reports, indicators, commitments).
Design	Collections are designed using circularity principles (e.g. mono-materials, repairable and recyclable)
	The <i>design</i> approach aims to eliminate the production of waste during production (e.g. <i>zero-waste modelling</i> and cutting, 3D knitting).
	The garments are inclusive (e.g. extended sizes, adapted clothing, gender neutral).



KEY AREAS	GOOD PRACTICES
Materials, Production and Tradition	Locally sourced, regenerative or recycled fibres are used (e.g. deadstock, production surpluses).
	The brand demonstrates a trajectory of continuous increase in the use of certified, organic or surplus production materials.
	The brand works with suppliers who adopt more sustainable production practices.
	The integration of local co-operatives and artisans in the creative and production process is promoted.
	The brand incorporates elements into its collections that contribute to the preservation and celebration of cultural identity, whether through conceptual inspiration or the appreciation of traditional materials and techniques.
Decent Labour	Regular monitoring is carried out (e.g. self-assessments, audits, training).
	The brand actively supports diversity in its teams and recruitment processes.
	There is a formal Code of Conduct shared with suppliers.

KEY AREAS	GOOD PRACTICES
Consumer	Repair, customisation, rental or resale services are offered.
	Consumers have access to clear information about the origin and impact of parts.
	The brand promotes sustainability literacy (e.g. educational content, <i>workshops</i>).
	The brand offers garments with an inclusive <i>design</i> , adaptable to the needs and abilities of individuals with varying degrees of disability.
	The brand develops initiatives that involve the public in circularity practices (e.g. <i>upcycling</i> , repair, co-creation).
	The brand develops accessible formats to bring designer fashion to new audiences through collaborations, limited editions, and democratic cultural experiences.
Events	Low-impact practices are promoted, such as public transport, local sourcing, efficient resource management and reusable set design.
	Local suppliers are favoured to reduce the carbon footprint associated with logistics and assembly.
	No single-use plastic packaging is used and all waste generated is properly separated.
	Accessibility is guaranteed for everyone (reserved seating for people with reduced mobility, sign language interpreters or inclusive signage).
	The use of disposable materials, single-use gifts and printing of reading materials is avoided, promoting digital, reusable or sustainable alternatives.



Alves/Gonçalves - Foto: Dulce Daniel

HOW TO JOIN AND PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

O ***True Fashion Manifesto*** was conceived as a practical, flexible and progressive instrument. Rather than imposing rules, it aims to inspire real and viable commitments, adjusted to the reality of each organisation in the Portugal Fashion ecosystem. The success of this manifesto depends on collective mobilisation and the ability of each agent - brands, partners, suppliers, sponsors and the organisation - to get involved in a conscious, informed way that is proportional to their scale and maturity.

WHO CAN JOIN

Can join the manifesto:

- **Fashion brands**
(emerging, independent or structured);
- **Partner organisations**
(e.g. technical suppliers, producers, logistics operators and sponsors);

Joining the manifesto will be done through a formal subscription form, made available by Portugal Fashion, where each organisation declares its commitment to the minimum criteria defined.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Portugal Fashion undertakes to:

- Review the manifesto periodically, based on developments in the sector and the European regulatory framework;
- Promote moments of active consultation and listening to stakeholders;
- Provide support tools, including the ***True Fashion Manifesto*** Support Guide, as well as information sessions and sharing of best practices.

FAQ

1 What is *True Fashion Manifesto*?

It is a collective commitment promoted by Portugal Fashion that defines principles, criteria and good practices to make the Portuguese fashion sector more sustainable, ethical and responsible. It covers topics such as *design*, materials, production, decent labour, events, consumer engagement and much more.

2 Who can sign the manifesto?

Any organisation linked to the Portugal Fashion ecosystem: brands (emerging or structured), suppliers, logistics partners, educational institutions and sponsors.

3 Is signing up to the manifesto compulsory in order to take part in Portugal Fashion?

Yes, signing up to the manifesto will be required to take part in Portugal Fashion events. However, implementation will be adapted to the level of maturity of the Portuguese industry. There will be room for evolution.

4 What if my brand is still taking its first steps towards sustainability?

The manifesto is designed to be accessible to everyone, including brands in their early stages. The minimum requirements are realistic and applicable, and there are recommended good practices that can serve as a guide for gradual evolution. The important thing is commitment and the will to improve.

5 I have a small brand. Is this for me?

Yes. The manifesto recognises the diversity of the sector and has been designed to include small-scale brands. Often, these brands are even closer to sustainable models and can lead by example. The manifesto is a tool for support, not exclusion.

6 Does the manifesto only include environmental criteria?

No. The manifesto has a broad, transversal approach. It also includes social, cultural and economic principles - such as decent labour, inclusion, valuing Portuguese identity and consumer education. Sustainability is about more than the environment.

7 What's in it for me?

Joining the **True Fashion Manifesto** means publicly affirming a commitment to the future of fashion. The brands and organisations that join will benefit from greater visibility, credibility with consumers and alignment with the new demands of the market and European regulations.

8 Is Portugal Fashion also committed?

Yes, the manifesto is also an institutional commitment. Portugal Fashion undertakes to apply the principles of the manifesto in its own activities - from curating labels to producing events, including communication, support and training for *stakeholders*.

9 How can I join the manifesto?

You can join by signing a commitment form made available by Portugal Fashion. This form will act as a declaration of intent, in which the brand or entity recognises the principles of **The True Fashion Manifesto** and undertakes to comply with the minimum requirements defined for its participation in the events.

10 What if my brand has partial production outside Portugal?

The **True Fashion Manifesto** favours production carried out in Portuguese territory, valuing the national supply chain and local know-how. However, it recognises exceptions in projects that, while based in Portugal, establish collaborations with specific cultural or artisanal contexts in other regions, provided that these partnerships respect principles of ethics, transparency and sustainability, contributing to the preservation and enhancement of the communities involved.



Maria Gambina - Foto: Dulce Daniel

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