In response to the Black Lives Matter movement, Tommy Hilfiger has announced a new platform dedicated to uplifting Black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) working within the fashion industry "and beyond," dubbed the 'People's Place Program'.

The PVH-owned brand said that it will commit a minimum of $5 million in annual funding for the next three years to the program, which draws its name from Hilfiger's first-ever retail business.

To achieve its goal of increasing BIPOC representation, Tommy Hilfiger said the program will use a three-pillared strategy.

The first pillar - partnerships and representation - will mean the brand will focus on "purpose-led collaborations" that increase BIPOC visibility and partner with organizations and creative peers whose mission is to advance BIPOC representation and equity in the fashion industry.

The second - career support and industry access - will see the brand "use its knowledge and resources to ensure career opportunities [for people of color working in fashion or other creative industries] by providing access to information or physical materials, specialist advice, industry introductions, and more."
The third pillar - industry leadership - will see the brand work to "increase representation at every level," by launching "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," throughout the fashion industry.

“What is happening to Black communities in the U.S. and around the world has no place in our society,” designer Tommy Hilfiger said.

“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.”

The brand said it will form a team of senior leadership members to direct the program, promote its growth and "maintain focus on transparency through regular reporting on progress and impact made."

“As a company, we haven’t done enough,” said Martijn Hagman, CEO, Tommy Hilfiger Global and PVH Europe. “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. The People’s Place journey starts now with a dedicated internal governance structure that will drive and report regularly on the long-term objectives of the platform. This is a firm commitment and first step in a long journey for what the People’s Place Program can achieve.”

The Tommy Hilfiger brand further announced that it has launched a 'Comprehensive Action Plan' in an effort to "address shortcomings in its internal BIPOC representation."

The plan includes policies to equip leaders and hiring managers with tools to develop a deeper understanding of issues like systemic racism and privilege, build out a dedicated inclusion and diversity digital resource channel for its associates, and evolve its recruitment policies, among others.

By Gabriella Lacombe

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