

KAIN FASHION INCUBATOR

AN INITIATIVE BY

**SEMUA
HOUSE**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



thinkCITY



INTRODUCTION

Kain Fashion Incubator (KFI) is a programme that provides a platform and physical space to support and nurture emerging and established Malaysian fashion designers and fashion businesses through their creative and entrepreneurial journeys via a structured incubation programme. KFI is made possible through the Downtown Kuala Lumpur Grants Programme, supported by the Ministry of Finance and administered by Think City, together with the investment and partnerships mobilised by Semua House.

KFI will be located within Semua House, the iconic shopping landmark on Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman (Jalan TAR), which has now been renewed as a vibrant, community-driven space.

MAIN FUNCTIONS

- To select 10 programme participants to build their fashion, business, and technical knowledge.
- To offer access to the local network and fashion ecosystem through programs, panel talks, and workshops led by industry experts.
- To provide physical spaces through a co-working studio and pop-up retail space for showcasing and sales.
- To develop a capsule collection of 4 looks to be presented at KFI's final exhibition and showcase.

Open Call: 8th October 2026 - 6th November 2026

Programme Duration: December 2026 - May 2027

Successful applicants will be informed no later than 30th November 2026

OBJECTIVES

KFI will address a critical gap in the support for fashion designers, independent labels, and creative entrepreneurs.

Many in the industry face challenges such as limited access to financing, networks, and retail opportunities. KFI is designed to nurture, support and empower makers to elevate their craft and business — transforming potential into progress through its 6-month programme and incubator workspace.

1

INCUBATOR HUB

Provide structured support, platform, and workspace for emerging and practicing fashion designers and brands in the heart of Kuala Lumpur's Textile District.

2

ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Offer mentorship, business tools, networks, and a shared ecosystem to overcome challenges in financing and exposure.

3

ELEVATE VISIBILITY

Equip participants with the resources and knowledge to build strong brand identities and reach new markets.

4

GROWTH AND IMPACT

Monitor outcomes such as business and retail readiness, product development, and improved skills.

5

HANDCRAFTED HERITAGE

Preserve, inform and innovate Malaysia's heritage and identity in fashion and design segments.

PROGRAMME JOURNEY

HOW IT RUNS

■ APPLICATIONS OPEN

OPEN CALL

8TH OCTOBER 2026

Application form accessible via
www.kainfashionincubator.com

■ APPLICATIONS CLOSES

6TH NOVEMBER 2026

■ SHORTLISTING

Successful applicants will be contacted
Mid November 2026

■ INTERVIEWS

Mid to late November 2026

■ INCUBATION

December 2026 to May 2027

■ FINAL SHOWCASE

Located at Semua House

Post program monitoring and support will be provided from June to August 2027 to ensure participants are fully supported on their journey beyond KFI.

ELIGIBILITY

KFI is looking for applicants who demonstrate potential and a constant commitment to growing their practice. The programme is designed to support emerging and established fashion designers or fashion businesses.

Interested applicants must meet the following criteria:

- ✓ Malaysian citizens aged between 18 and 40 years old.
- ✓ Business/brand is registered with SSM.
- ✓ Must demonstrate a craft-based approach, with the ability to design and produce samples or small-batch products. *Outsourced production is permissible, but sample development must be led by the applicant.*
- ✓ Established businesses applying should not have revenue exceeding RM200,000 per annum. (Financial documents may be requested for verification)
- ✓ Works with garments OR fashion accessories (e.g. shoes and bags), with a focus on products that are or have potential to be commercially viable.
- ✓ Submit all documents requested. (Listed on Page 6)

Applicants may be:

- Fashion entrepreneurs (recent graduates with a new label)
- A practicing designer/label owner seeking to scale their brand
- A design collective with a clear design brief (To assign 1 representative as signatory)

KFI will prioritize applicants who can articulate a clear design vision and demonstrate readiness to engage in a structured incubation environment.

SUBMISSIONS

Applicants must submit the following documents to be qualified.

- Application form via [link](#)
- Brand owner Resume or CV
- Designer profile or brand write-up (not more than 300 words)
- Write-up on how KFI will benefit your brand (not more than 500 words)
- Design portfolio including but not limited to:-
 - Research and design development
 - Coloured design sketches
 - Garment prototypes
 - Line sheets
 - CAD drawings
 - Collection images or videos
 - Any past works
- Copy of SSM Registration
- Copy of IC (Front and Back)
- Description of your collection and how you would like to develop it.
(This may be an extension of existing work or new)

*Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for an interview.
Successful applicants will be contacted via email and phone call.*

COMMITMENT

Participants are expected to dedicate sufficient time throughout the incubation period, this includes:

- Attending ALL workshops, talks, and mentorship sessions between **December 2026 — May 2027.**
- Advancing their proposed project or collection independently.
- Participating in peer sharing, progress reviews, and collaborative efforts.
- Engaging with shared workspace and/or retail showcase opportunities.

This structure is designed to provide meaningful support while remaining flexible enough to accommodate freelance work, academic obligations, or part-time employment.

COMPONENTS

Each participant will receive a production grant payment of RM5,000 for the duration of the 6-month programme. (Terms & conditions apply)

INDUSTRY NETWORKING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Direct contact with fashion professionals through the planned workshops and panel talks are to strengthen business fundamentals, enhance creative thinking, and provide insights spanning across fashion business and management, branding, merchandising, garment production, and financial management.

The final showcase aims to provide increased visibility and opportunities to potential partnerships, and validate the brand in a real-world setting.



KFI ATELIER

KFI will be based at the newly renovated incubator space in B1 of Semua House.

- Open-plan workstations with power access and storage
- A private mentorship zone for 1-on-1 sessions
- A flexible classroom space for workshops and talks
- A retail showcase area for product display
- A fully functioning workspace with tools for product sampling and development

EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS OUTPUT

- 01 Compulsory attendance at all workshops, panels discussions, and reviews.
- 02 A tailored business model or strategic plan outlining their brand direction, production approach, and market entry strategy.
- 03 A capsule collection comprising a minimum of 4 complete looks.
- 04 Documentation of the project (physical sketchbook or digital format) including but not limited to research and development, collection line-up, and experimentation
- 05 Participation in a final showcase exhibition and pop-up.

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- As part of the showcase, designers may adapt the KFI atelier or other designated spaces within Semua House into immersive exhibition environments that reflect their brand identity and visual language.
 - The showcase will include a press and media preview, followed by an on-ground activation offering the public opportunities to engage with designers, view their collections, and place pre-orders.
 - Designers will be encouraged to exhibit not only their final garments but also their design journey – including moodboards, sketchbooks, fabric experimentation, and prototypes – to reinforce process-based storytelling.

PROGRAMME MODULES

Each session runs for approximately 2 hours, including peer discussions and a Q&A segment to deepen learning and engagement.

INTRODUCTION: INSIGHT TO IMPACT

Workshop 1 – “Insights: Behind the seams”

Workshop 2 – “Impact: Moving forward”

Designers to identify existing problems or obstacles within their existing business. To brainstorm an effective solution alongside industry experts to overcome these hurdles. Guest speakers to share their experience and best practices.

PROGRESS CHECK-IN

Workshop 3 – Progress Check-In

Participants to present the collection line-up, pitch material/techniques and progress on their respective designs.

DESIGN IN NUMBERS

Workshop 4 – “This or that: Intersection of creativity or sales?”

Workshop 5 – “Designing numbers”

This topic focuses on the financial side of fashion – how money shapes design choices and discuss how a collection or design is commercially viable. Participants will work through real-world trade-offs and explore how this may impact their designs, collection planning, and merchandising strategies.

BEYOND DESIGN: COMMUNITY AND SYSTEMS

Workshop 6 & 7 – “Weaving Dialogues”

Explore how design impacts individuals and communities – how both elements connect and affect business and social systems. Designers interpret heritage with relevance and explore Malaysian Identity in Fashion by integrating local crafts into contemporary design.

FASHION IS NOT ABOUT CLOTHES

Workshop 8 – “Beyond design: Aesthetic to advantage”

Beyond designing, designers are to discuss alongside panelists to determine what other factors make or break a fashion business. How do we adapt technology and social media strategies to further strengthen a brand’s visibility and public relations.

RETAIL READINESS

Workshop 9 – “Retail readiness”

Understand Malaysia’s Fashion ecosystem and prepare for pop-ups/showcases. Explore opportunities for market access and production planning to build long-term brand resilience in a highly competitive market. Prepare your brand for global relevance beyond Malaysia.

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

All events will be hosted at Semua House.

■	WORKSHOP 1 'INSIGHTS: BEHIND THE SEAMS'	DECEMBER 2026 WEEK 2
◆	WORKSHOP 2 'IMPACT: MOVING FORWARD'	DECEMBER 2026 WEEK 3
■	WORKSHOP 3 I-TO-I PROGRESS CHECK-IN	JANUARY 2027 WEEK 1
◆	WORKSHOP 4 'THIS OR THAT: INTERSECTION OF CREATIVITY OR SALES'	JANUARY 2027 WEEK 2
■	WORKSHOP 5 'DESIGNING NUMBERS'	JANUARY 2027 WEEK 4
◆	WORKSHOP 6 & 7 "WEAVING DIALOGUES"	FEBRUARY 2027 WEEK 3
■	WORKSHOP 8 'BEYOND DESIGN: AESTHETIC TO ADVANTAGE'	MARCH 2027 WEEK 1
◆	WORKSHOP 9 'RETAIL READINESS'	MARCH 2027 WEEK 3
■	PROGRESS REVIEW	APRIL 2027
◆	FINAL SHOWCASE	MAY 2027

Further details will be shared with confirmed participants.

FAQs

Q: Can established fashion brands apply for this programme?

A: Yes as long as annual revenue does not exceed RM200,000

Q: I am a recent graduate just starting a fashion business, can I apply?

A: Your application will be evaluated based on your submission and supporting documents in line with the eligibility criteria.

Q: I have not studied/practiced in Fashion Design or other fashion-related subjects. Am I eligible?

A: Yes. All applicants will be evaluated fairly based on your submission and the eligibility criteria.

Q: I do not have a label / collective registered with a SSM, can I register after applying instead?

A: You will need to be SSM registered (Sole proprietor, partnership or Sdn Bhd) to receive the grant. This may be set up upon the launch of the programme.

Q: We have multiple people in our collective, do all of us have to apply separately?

A: No, only one person (the representative) has to apply.

Q: What if the business has multiple co-founders?

A: Only one person has to apply. The grant value will be awarded once as a single entity.

Q: Can someone under 18 apply with parental consent?

A: No. All applicants must be 18 years of age or older at the time of application.

Q: My work is focused on textiles or craft rather than garments. Is it accepted?

A: Yes. Applicants working in textile-based or craft-driven fashion practices are welcome to apply, provided they meet all other eligibility criteria.

Q: What kind of applicants is KFI looking for?

A: KFI seeks driven, self-directed individuals with a distinct creative vision who are preparing to launch their label or take their fashion businesses to the next level.

Q: How will I know if I've been selected?

A: All selected applicants will be notified directly by a KFI programme representative via email or phone. Judges' decisions are final.

Q: Are there any registration or participation fees?

A: No. There are no registration fees for applying or participating in the programme.

Q: Will I need to fund my own collection?

A: Each participants will receive a RM5,000 grant (disbursed in tranches). Co-investment is encouraged where possible. Participants should be prepared to self-fund any additional costs if the cost of producing their collection exceeds the allocated grant amount.



FOR FURTHER INQUIRIES:
inquiries@kainfashionincubator.com