



The Irish fashion edit

Are you eager for a career in the fashion industry and want to further your education? If so, The Maria Wallace Foundation is here to help you with a generous scholarship opportunity

By Orla Dempsey

Christina Wallace, Director of The Maria Wallace Foundation, and Katriona Flynn, lecturer in fashion and luxury, met with me to explain the ins and outs of TU Dublin's MSc in Fashion Buying and Management Scholarship 2024. "Master's fees are so expensive right now. The Maria Wallace Foundation is not only covering the master's fee but also living expenses," says Christina Wallace, adding: "With the fashion industry, it can be difficult to get in when you don't have the money behind you."

Wallace wants this Foundation to honour her mother, after whom it is named, and reflect the mentorship Maria gave throughout her life: "My mum has passed four years now; from the start, she was always interested in mentorship and education. She was in the fashion industry her whole life, so this is a really personal scholarship for us." Maria Wallace ran Styletex, a Dublin-based fashion manufacturing business, with her siblings. During that time, they took on TU Dublin students and helped mentor them. "It's a huge legacy, and education is such a gateway to opportunities," says Katriona Flynn. "It's amazing for TU Dublin as well because Christina has been on the Fashion Buying and Management programme."

"It's important to us to find



someone who, without this scholarship, wouldn't have been able to afford the opportunity," explains Christina. "With the cost of living right now, these opportunities can be cut off to people before they even get to the front door."

So, who is the ideal candidate for this scholarship? "Someone who has had a fashion focus their whole life. Having done this course myself, it's very focused on that," says Wallace. "We're opening it up to anyone with an undergrad background." Past students' undergrads have varied from archaeology, dietetics and politics, so a fashion-based undergrad isn't a necessity. "Even academically, there are no stipulations," says Flynn. "You don't need a certain grade from your undergrad. So

many people are drawn to the fashion industry, and in their gut, they know it's what they want. We're very open to looking for the right person.

She adds: "The course's employability rate is very high. A lot of our graduates go into fashion buying but some go into merchandising or creative direction. We have past students in the British Fashion Council, Gucci Dubai, Primark, ect." The college also brings industry insiders to lecture for the master's course. They include guest lecturers such as Ashley McDonnell (luxury and tech at PUIG); Isabella Rose Davey (Director of Comms & Digital for CPHFW) and Stephen King (Sustainability at Selfridges).

This tight link with the fashion industry allows the college to arrange summer internships for their master's students. "Our placements



Left: Christina Wallace and her mother, Maria Wallace; above: Katriona Flynn, lecturer in fashion and luxury

during the summer are based in Brown Thomas, Arnotts, Penneys and Dunnes. Three of the biggest fashion-buying offices within Ireland," says Wallace. "The placements are 12 weeks in length and paid," Flynn adds. As well as a paid internship – a rarity in the fashion industry – the course students also get to go to Paris. "We do a field trip to Paris in the first semester," says Flynn. "While we have the core lessons like the supply chain and finance, we have some of that magic, it will reinforce why you're doing what you're doing." And there is no better place to reinforce your love of fashion than Paris. ●

For more information on the The Maria Wallace Foundation – MSc in Fashion Buying and Management Scholarship 2024, see tudublin.ie