

# LEATHER AND HIDE

COUNCIL OF AMERICA



PRESS RELEASE  
27 September 2022

***Leather and Hide Council of America partners with the  
African Leather and Leather Products Institute to launch  
Real Leather. Stay Different. African Talent Leather Design Showcase 2023  
(RLSD African Showcase '23)***

- *Partnership commits to “Educating the Next Generation of Creatives and Re-Shaping our Fashion Futures”*
- *RLSD African Showcase '23 will promote sustainable leather and leather products production among small and medium sized enterprises*
- *Dedicated series of fashion, production and sustainability workshops to empower African designers of tomorrow.*

**27 September 2022:** The Leather and Hide Council of America [L&HCA] and the African Leather and Leather Products Institute [ALLPI] have partnered to launch the Real Leather. Stay Different. African Talent Leather Design Showcase 2023 [RLSD African Showcase '23]. The new partnership, which commits to 'educating the next generation of creatives', aims to reshape education around the production and use of sustainable leather across Africa.

Through the RLSD African Showcase '23, L&HCA and ALLPI will promote the development of sustainable leather production among small and medium sized enterprises. As part of the initiative, a dedicated education program will be delivered, via a workshop series hosted at ALLPI's satellite design studios located in its ten member countries, that explores fashion, production and sustainability.

The workshops will be designed to help improve business efficiency and minimize negative environmental and social impacts. They will be open to creatives studying or working at small and medium sized enterprises and will showcase the future of leather design, its sustainability benefits and how innovations can be implemented within their creative practices to further reduce waste.

Real Leather. Stay Different. has a strong ethos of supporting the next generation of creative business talent with an aim to re-build, re-educate, and re-position. The new partnership brings to the forefront a common set of values to support sustainable leather value chains and emerging creatives through education.

The RLSD African Showcase '23, is open to talent studying or working in art and design via the ALLPI's design studios. Showcase participants will be challenged to design a single piece of apparel, accessory, footwear or furniture item using natural materials and 50% or more leather. Shortlisted finalists will be

invited to create their design concept at one of the ALLPI's satellite design studios. Finalists will present their work during a live showcase finale at the All Africa Leather Fair 2023 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Mr. Gehbregziabher Ghebremedhin, Programs Coordinator at the African Leather and Leather Products Institute, said:

*“The RLSD African Showcase '23 extends our commitment to bring the highest ethics for business and the environment to leather production systems, supporting sustainable small and medium sized enterprises and businesses while improving business practices and the environment.*

*“Not only will it become a platform to showcase beautiful leather and leather products but it will also highlight that leather bags, clothes, footwear and furniture, if maintained properly, can last indefinitely. As part of the prize for making the global finale, finalists will have their design on display at the African Talent Leather Design Showcase 2023 as part of the All Africa Leather Fair 2023, an invaluable and significant opportunity.”*

Steve Sothmann, President for Leather and Hide Council of America, commented:

*“The showcase’s mission is to spark the interest of African designers to work with responsibly produced real leather which puts hides that would otherwise go to waste, to good use. Real leather doesn’t just look good, it is better for the environment than its man-made alternatives and they make products so durable that each can last a lifetime – its quintessentially ‘slow fashion’.*

*“Too many of our fashion choices end up in landfill, creating an unwanted legacy from today’s society that will damage the environment for centuries. Fast fashion means not only more consumption, but the increased use of fossil fuels and associated environmental impacts in the form of toxics and microfibers. Working with ALLPI gives us the opportunity to empower the next generation with skills that reduce waste in the design process.”*

For more information on the Real Leather. Stay Different. African Talent Leather Design Showcase 2023, visit <https://chooserealleather.com/competition/africa-competition-2022/>

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#### NOTES TO EDITORS

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For more information on RLSD please visit:

<https://chooserealleather.com/sustainability/>

<https://chooserealleather.com/international-competition/#/projects>

#### **ABOUT THE LEATHER AND HIDE COUNCIL OF AMERICA**

The Leather & Hide Council of America (L&HCA), founded in 1917, is a powerful voice for the sector

The council supports the industry through government engagement, public relations, and international trade assistance and support. L&HCA works with the international leather industry to support leather trade and to provide the insights and support services necessary for success.

As well as promoting the quality of US-sourced products, L&HCA also lead the way working to establish and promote best practice in leather production, to set new international standards in sustainability and traceability, and to promote those values to stakeholders around the world. Important stakeholder communication efforts include Real Leather. Stay Different. to share leather's story with consumers worldwide. L&HCA is at the forefront of the industry's needs, providing the industry and stakeholders with education and technical information to compete in today's global marketplace.

### **ABOUT THE AFRICAN LEATHER AND LEATHER PRODUCTS INSTITUTE (ALLPI)**

The African Leather and Leather Products Institute is the leading African institute providing development support for the leather industry through community training, regulatory development, investment facilitation. ALLPI links partners, enterprises and institutions for value addition, sustainability and competitiveness in the leather sector through sharing of knowledge and innovation.

In keeping with core values supporting integrity, knowledge, empowerment, opportunity, results and transformation, ALLPI supports industry first bringing together leather communities in Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda, and Zambia. In partnership with Europe and the Trade and Development Bank, ALLPI has developed small and medium sized leather business manufacturing clusters that integrate small business supply chains and support artisanal manufacturing. ALLPI has trained over 2000 artisans footwear manufacturing, business management, marketing and sales, and supply chain partnership development. ALLPI has sponsored small and medium sized business participation in trade facilitation through participation in leather trade fairs in Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. For more information, please visit <https://allpi.int/>.

### **ABOUT REAL LEATHER. STAY DIFFERENT.**

Real Leather. Stay Different. is a global campaign that has reached some 750 million people and hundreds of thousands of students. It makes the case for cattle leather (and other natural materials) and for making the best use of society's waste and that hides, as the by-product of the dairy and meat industries, should be considered before looking to the petrochemical industries for manmade materials. Flexible and durable, leather is the natural alternative to fast fashion.

The African Talent Leather Design Showcase will run alongside the annual International Student Design Competition and regional competitions in Italy, China, the Nordics, Taiwan and the UK. These competitions are run by Real Leather. Stay Different. on behalf of the Leather & Hide Council of America [L&HCA]. US Leather accounts for more than 10% of all hides produced globally each year. As such, L&HCA recognizes its role and responsibility in promoting leather to a broad audience and in working with the industry around the world to ensure best practice and a sustainable future. For more information, please visit <https://chooserealleather.com/sustainability/>.