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**European Confederation of the Footwear Industry**

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**SECOND EDITION OF THE EUROPEAN “#INMYSHOES TALENT SHOE” CONTEST:  
FINAL AWARDS CEREMONY SHOWS THAT TALENT KNOWS NO BOUNDS**

*In early 2020, over 70 Footwear students from across Europe and their teachers signed up for a challenge: participate in the second edition of the #InMyShoes Talent Shoe contest – organised in the framework of an EU Social Dialogue project promoted by Assocalzaturifici, the European Footwear Confederation (CEC) and IndustriAll Europe Trade Union – with the hopes of seeing their work make it to the finals and win the competition. Despite COVID-19 restrictions, the contestants have come up with innovative and thoughtful ideas that materialised in well-executed projects that perfectly reflect current market trends. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September, the Jury selected five winning teams during a final awards ceremony organized via duplex transmission from MICAM Milano. This year's contest may be over, but the contestants' brilliant ideas will carry through as a testament to the talent of this up and coming generation, hopefully inspiring many others to follow in their footsteps and join the footwear sector.*

**Promoting the European footwear sector to a young audience**

The #InMyShoes contest is one element of a wider strategy carried out by the Italian Footwear association Assocalzaturifici and the EU social partners, CEC and IndustriAll Europe with the support of SPIN360, to promote the footwear sector among a young audience. Under the tutorship of their teachers, students from European footwear design and fashion communication schools from across Europe could submit their projects in two distinct categories: “Design a footwear product” and “Campaign to raise awareness & communicate the footwear sector”. Because students worked on their projects from the ground-up, participating in the contest gave them a glimpse of what working in the sector looks like: research the market, devise precise design specifications, create a prototype, and pitch your idea to convince other people of its merits. But the contest format and its wide communication via digital channels are also meant to put the footwear sector in the limelight and draw public attention to the many opportunities that it can offer young students today.

**Green products under the limelight**

Based on the projects received this year, one thing is for certain: the future of the sector is green! From shoes made out of recycled materials to biodegradable shoes that plant trees or shoes entirely made out of natural materials, green and sustainable products are not only popular among younger generations, but they have become a self-evidence. In addition, the footwear products of the future will not just be consumer goods but also convey strong values: one of the winning projects used design to raise awareness about the fate of orangutans, while another winning team bridged sustainability with traditional folklore by creating a 21<sup>st</sup>-century version of the traditional Estonian shoe.

Due to the circumstances, the success of this second edition of the contest was not a given. Yet, this year's edition more than ever revealed the energy and strong values that drive today's students' passion for the footwear sector. The project partners will continue their commitment to promoting the footwear sector and are confident that the contestants' enthusiasm is contagious and that it will inspire many others to choose a rewarding career in the footwear sector.

Learn more about the Contest and the shortlisted projects here:  
[https://inmyshoesproject.eu/contest\\_2020/](https://inmyshoesproject.eu/contest_2020/)