

PRESS RELEASE

Shining Stars Receive Industry Recognition

Professional Clothing Show closes on a high.

All aspects of the professional clothing industry came together under one roof, as the seventh edition of Professional Clothing Show took place at the NEC Birmingham last week.

Exhibitors culminated in Hall 8 of the iconic UK exhibition venue, spanning their wares from the three sectors of corporatewear, workwear and PPE. Over the course of the two day event on 1st and 2nd April, they met with an array of domestic and international buyers keen to get their hands on the latest innovations – from the latest slick suits and tailoring, to personal protective equipment that can literally make the difference between life and death for its wearers.

2014 marked many significant changes for the exhibition, with a name rebranding, return to the NEC and well-received events on the show floor such as the return of 'Pro Show Live' – the live catwalk show at the heart of the exhibition hall and the addition of on-topic industry speakers, sharing their thoughts and expertise on hot issues such as Fairtrade, recyclable workwear and CSR.

Awarding talent across the industry

Adding a significant spark for celebration on site was co-hosting of the much anticipated biannual event the Professional Clothing Awards, peaking excitement at the end of the first day of the show at the adjacent Hilton Birmingham Metropole.

Despite the event being entirely sold out, enquiries came in thick and fast until the eleventh hour with companies and visitors looking to secure a last minute ticket to the glamorous black tie gala event.

A judging panel of industry experts ploughed through over 120 entries from companies all over the world to make their final decisions in each award, which spanned the three categories of SATRA PPE Innovation, Supplier Manufacturer and Distributor Awards, and the highly sought-after Business Manager Awards. In many cases, the high calibre of entries and difficult judging decisions were reflected with the awarding of Highly Commended recognition in addition to winners.

The evening saw the victors walking away with approximately thirty certificates and trophies across the corporatewear, workwear and PPE sectors, recognising and celebrating achievements and innovations within their chosen sector. Hosting the prestigious event and steering course for the evening were honoured guests Ruth Morris, Uniform Manager of the Rugby World Cup 2015 and John Miln, CEO of the UKFT.

SATRA backs PPE winners

Highlight wins of the night included Outdry Technologies and Creative SRL, taking home the SATRA PPE Innovation of the Year Award for their Fire-Flow Outdry Gloves. In addition to taking the overall PPE title, the team won an exclusive opportunity to undertake at SATRA Technology Centre research, testing and certification to a maximum full price value GBP 10,000, in addition to the opportunity to discuss working with SATRA to develop a product or products for commercial exploitation.

Austin Simmons, CEO of SATRA said: "Choosing the winners proved to be extremely difficult for the judges as the standard was high. But decisions had to be made. Each application was considered equally regardless of whether it came from a large global company or an individual. Across all categories the judges reported that the winning entries were able to balance innovation with commercial viability, and provided detailed but concise reasons as to why they deserved to win."

New for 2014: The ASBCI Student Design Award

The 2014 event welcomed a brand new awards category to the fold, driven with the purpose of welcoming fresh new design talent into the professional clothing industry. In conjunction with the ASBCI and with the support of Dimensions, students from colleges and universities across the country were invited to submit their 'vision' of corporatewear, workwear or PPE for the year 2020. The garments of the nine finalists were seen live on the catwalk at the Professional Clothing Show, pleasing the crowds with some very quirky spins on a view of the future. In addition to cash prizes and certificates, the winner will go on to a three month work placement at Dimensions Headquarters to kick start their career.

Awards recognised not only product innovations, but also the achievements of individuals who have made significant contributions to working in their chosen industry. Footwear veteran Frank Van Wezel, Founder and Chairman of Hi-Tec Sports took home a lifetime achievement award for over 30 years' service and innovation in his company. A surprise award for Long Service to the Textiles Industry went to William Sudgen & Sons, who were overwhelmed to learn their nomination came from their own staff to recognise their steep 144 year history in the business.

Business Managers get their time to shine

Bringing the event to a close was the much anticipated Business Manager of the Year Award, which specifically recognises the importance of Business Managers in serving clients in high profile contracts to understand and fulfil briefs, and deliver on target. Taking home the crystal in this category was Samantha Heilling & Team for their Home Office uniform, supplied by Hunter Apparel Solutions. The judges were bowled over by Samantha's attention to detail on an incredibly high profile UK contract for uniform, with over 11'000 users kitted out over 177 sites.

Yvette Ashby, managing director for the Professional Clothing Awards and the supporting Professional Clothing Show commented: "It was fantastic to see that yet again, the Professional Clothing Awards was so well supported by the industry. These awards were created specifically due to demand, and to recognise talent and achievements and it was great to see a mix of all companies take the stage – from the big names, down to the students just starting out in their careers. I am incredibly proud to be able to bring all facets of our industry together for a celebration which means so much to all those involved."

About the Professional Clothing Awards

The Professional Clothing Awards have been established to recognise the international uniform supply chain and reward exceptional workwear, corporate clothing and PPE from around the world. After a fantastic event in 2016, The Professional Clothing Awards is back and will be held in the nation's capital at the new 5-star venue: Intercontinental – The O2.

The awards will cover all facets of the working garment industry from Business Manager Awards, PPE Innovation Awards, Supplier, Manufacturer and Distributor Awards and Industry Recognition Awards. 2017 also sees the return of 'Project 20/20', our quest to shine a light on young designers looking to make their mark on the professional clothing industry.