

NEW CHAPTER FOR POLIMODA: LAURA MILANI APPOINTED GENERAL DIRECTOR

With the new governance in place, President Niccolò Ricci moves into the implementation phase of his mandate

Florence, September 10, 2026 – Forty years after the first courses began in September 1986, Polimoda is preparing for a new chapter. The Board of Directors, chaired by Niccolò Ricci, has **appointed entrepreneur Laura Milani as General Director of Polimoda**, with management and strategic responsibility for the school's development, working alongside the board and the faculty. With this step, Ricci **enters the second phase of his mandate**, dedicated to implementing and building out his vision.

"In the early months of my mandate, we worked to lay the groundwork for a new phase at Polimoda — addressing governance and organization, the academic area and infrastructure, institutional recognition, and the School's internationalization. With Laura Milani now joining us, we open a second phase: putting into practice and building on what has been set in motion. This will be entrusted to the General Director, following the strategic guidelines set by the Board of Directors" says Niccolò Ricci.

Laura Milani, from Turin, is a cultural entrepreneur, manager, and consultant with over twenty years of experience in education, design, innovation, and contemporary art. As Founder, President, and CEO of IAAD, the Institute of Applied Arts and Design, from 2000 to 2020, she led its growth and accreditation through to international recognition and the establishment of academic partnerships across Europe. Active in cultural development and public policy, she has held institutional roles at major Italian cultural organizations, including the National Museum of Cinema, where she served as President; she has curated exhibitions and international projects, chaired Paratissima, and served on advisory committees for the Ministry of Culture supporting the development of design.

"Taking on the role of General Director of Polimoda is both an honor and a responsibility. Polimoda has always stood as a unique meeting point between the excellence of Italian craftsmanship and an international vision of fashion, design, and contemporary culture. In a global landscape in constant flux, I firmly believe that italianità — Italian character — remains a living force: an approach that brings together culture, quality, ethics, and the ability to innovate. Education is the true engine of the future. Investing in young people means shaping generations of professionals who are thoughtful, prepared, and equipped to navigate complexity with skill, sensitivity, and vision.

I want to thank the entire Board for their trust. I'm delighted to begin this journey of growth alongside President Niccolò Ricci and the whole Polimoda community, with the goal of further strengthening the Institute's role as an international benchmark in advanced creative education" says Laura Milani.

Building on the new governance, Ricci's vision for Polimoda's future centers on showcasing the school's excellence worldwide, starting with the **growth of its academic offering and identity**. Among the upcoming goals is the project for a **new Library** at the Manifattura Campus, which will become not just a place to study but a genuine fashion research center and one of the school's defining features. The **MUR accreditation process**, launched in April with ministerial recognition of Polimoda's first Undergraduate course in Fashion Marketing Management, is a key step toward the progressive recognition of Polimoda's educational programs and the future evolution of its academic offering. The **opening of a representative office in Austin, Texas**, marks an important first step in a strategy to expand the school's international presence and build new academic and industry relationships in the United States.

As the new academic year gets underway, Polimoda is set to continue its **40th-anniversary celebrations**, which began with the Graduate Show in June at Manifattura Tabacchi, with a packed program of events. These include the **Back to School** celebration, an event dedicated to students, and the launch of Polimoda's **first-ever merchandising capsule**, designed by alumnus Domenico Orefice. There will also be a dedicated **Alumni Days** program, bringing back to Florence some of the talents trained at the school, now established professionals in the industry, reuniting its international alumni network. There will be a **special volume** published, tracing the history of the institute alongside the history of fashion and Florence. And finally, a **special edition of AN/ARCHIVE**, Polimoda's creative hub for fashion research, is planned for next January.

www.polimoda.com

Polimoda Press Office

Polimoda Media Relations Coordinator
Tessa Pisani, press@polimoda.com