

## **The Beauty is in the Design**

designedge - belmont is an oasis of designer talent and product. The store is decorated in a simple black and white theme that is careful not to put forward a specific attitude or intention and allows customers of all ages and styles to walk comfortably through the aisles.

Each section of the shop is a moment unto itself. Every area of the fashion industry is supported and showcased in this shop. From casual surf wear to glamorous evening wear, from quirky corporate to alternative menswear, every taste is catered for.

So how did such a broad range of labels come to be housed under the one roof?

designedge – belmont is a fashion incubator. It is a fashion concept store that has attracted over 50 of Western Australia's most talented and promising designers. It was established by the Textiles Clothing Footwear Resource Centre of Western Australia Inc. (TCFWA), a not-for profit organization that aims to promote and support the WA fashion industry. The store aims to provide assistance to both emerging and established WA designers, to provide them with an outlet to sell their collections to the general public and to further aid them in the development of a successful small business. The store also endeavours to expose its designers to West Australian retailers and to act as a base for national or international agents wishing to pick up new labels.

designedge has leapt from strength to strength during its relatively short lifespan. It grew from humble beginnings to the point where it can now claim to be Australia's largest retail fashion incubator. Its success has been such that there has been an interest from other like-minded organizations that has led to the possible beginnings of a national fashion incubator network.

Carol Hanlon, the manager of TCFWA and the instigator of designedge – Belmont is chuffed with the success of the community based project.

“designedge – belmont gives Western Australian fashion designers the chance to showcase their works in a new and exciting environment. For the up and coming designers it gives them their first chance to show their works to the buying public and possibly agents. For the more established designers it gives them the opportunity to display some of their prototype designs or perhaps whack out an old favourite to the public. It also gives them the opportunity to declare to the public that they are Western Australian and achieving great things in the fashion industry.”

designedge – belmont will soon launch a program linking its incubator participants with the Melbourne Design Fashion Incubator (MDFI), giving them the chance to display their designs in the MDFI Melbourne Central retail space.

designedge – belmont will also accept selected designers from MDFI who wish to showcase in Western Australia and recently introduced a designer from both Ireland and Scotland which is leading towards the possible future growth of an international fashion incubator showcases for emerging designers.

Designedge belmont is also used as the TCFWA's venue for its monthly networking meetings. This is a great opportunity for designers to get to know each other and organize

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their own opportunities and partnerships. People from all trades and areas of business are invited so that networking opportunities of all shapes and sizes can be made. These networking meetings are doubly beneficial to those designers showcasing their works in the incubator as each month a couple of designers are asked to put together a short fashion parade of their latest designs.

designedge – belmont has many successes, one of which is the interest expressed from overseas Austrade in emerging designers. Another is the commitment received from international fashion agent Margaret Farrell from Suki Moo. Margaret has committed herself to personally view every label at designedge - belmont to access their suitability for European, Ireland, UK and USA markets.

designedge - belmont is a project of not for profit organisations the Textile Clothing Footwear Resource Centre of WA (TCFWA) and Belmont Business Enterprise Centre (BEC) in conjunction with supporting sponsors of the Belmont Forum Shopping Centre, Wool Program Department of Agriculture WA, Sportslane Perth, Niche Fashion Technology, Bridget Robertson, Seragraph Prints, Belmont Auto Carpets, Belmont Rotary Club and many other volunteers and supporters.

If you are interested in becoming a participant in the designedge fashion incubator program or you would like to support this fantastic concept store please contact designedge – Belmont on 61 8 9479 6888 or email [designedge.belmont@tcfwa.com](mailto:designedge.belmont@tcfwa.com)

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