

## URBAN FOOD & DESIGN 2026

### Biofabrique Vienna Challenge: Colours at Work

#### Who can apply?

Creative professionals of all disciplines with expertise in textile and clothing technology, textile design, and fashion.

#### What does the workwear of bioregional designers look like?

The Vienna Business Agency and the VIENNA DESIGN WEEK are calling for projects as part of a design competition aiming to create workwear that embodies the attitude and practice of a new generation of designers—those working with living systems, bio-based materials, and regional value chains.

The use of dyes produced within the Biofabrique Vienna must be central to the design. The challenge is both a design task and a beta test of the dyes from the “Wiener Farben” (“*Vienna Colours*”) project under real conditions.

We are looking for functional workwear that makes materiality visible and embodies the mindset of a new design practice—circular, explorative, bio-based.

**Application deadline:** April 14, 2026, 23:59

**Completion by:** September 15, 2026

**Fee and production budget:** up to EUR 7,500 excl. VAT

## **Biofabrique Vienna**

Biofabrique Vienna is a project of the Vienna Business Agency that brings bioregional design into practice: Vienna's residual materials and "waste" are used as the raw material basis for new materials. The development of circular materials for architecture, design, and the creative industries succeeds only through close collaboration among research, industry, and the creative sector.

The goal of Biofabrique Vienna is to develop alternatives to conventional, often unsustainable materials that are both aesthetically and ecologically convincing.

The current edition focuses on the topic of "Wiener Farben". They aim to create alternatives to synthetic dyes and globally standardized colour concepts. "Wiener Farben" are obtained from unavoidable food waste and invasive plants. They stand for regionality, resource conservation, and creative innovation, reflecting the unique character of the city and its surroundings. In addition to textile applications, new perspectives are emerging for use in many other materials.

Strong partnerships form the backbone of the Biofabrique Vienna initiative: the renowned dyeing studio Färberei Fritsch, specialized in natural dyes, and the Vienna design label Rudolf Vienna play key roles in implementation. The project is supported scientifically by experts and students from the University of Applied Arts Vienna, TU Wien, and the University of Art and Design Linz.

## Challenge Content

The Vienna Business Agency and the VIENNA DESIGN WEEK commission a person or a collective/studio to design and produce workwear for the Biofabrique Vienna teams. The pieces will also be showcased by the mediation team of the VIENNA DESIGN WEEK during its 20th anniversary edition. In addition to recognizability and branding, functionality and comfort are essential.

We are looking for identity-building, functional unisex workwear in a small series that embodies the values of the Biofabrique Vienna (bioregional, circular, modular, repairable...) and functions as a wearable manifesto of a new design practice.

At the centre of the project is the colour itself. The natural pigment-based colours are not merely decorative elements, they form the conceptual basis of the collection. They influence material selection (natural fibres!), pattern-making, and overall aesthetics and may even make the dyeing process and properties of natural pigments visible.

Thus, colour becomes an active design, research, and narrative element.

The workwear serves as a beta test for the “Wiener Farben” and a visible statement for a new colour and material culture.

Guiding questions include: How do bioregional dyes change the aesthetics of workwear? How do they age? How do they respond to use, light, movement, and washing?

During the project, the design development will be carried out in consultation with the Vienna Business Agency, Biofabrique Vienna, and VIENNA DESIGN WEEK teams. By 15 September, 2026, a minimum of 20 pieces of the garment must be completed in durable quality.

Selected participants become part of the Biofabrique Vienna network, remain in close contact with the research team, and gain access to relevant information. They have the opportunity to exchange ideas with an international network of experts in material innovation, design, and circular economy. They may also use the Biofabrique Vienna facilities in the Papageienhalle at Nordwestbahnhof during production.

The dyeing itself will be carried out by Färberei Fritsch at the expense of Biofabrique Vienna; scheduling will be arranged after nomination.

## Process and Timeline of the Biofabrique Vienna Challenge

**03 March**

**– 14 April, 2026:** Application period

**20– 24 April, 2026:** Jury meeting

**Mid-May, 2026:** Submission of first designs, continuous exchange thereafter

**July, 2026:** Interim presentation

**July/August, 2026:** Fittings

**TBA:** Dyeing days

**Early September, 2026:** Completion and refinements

**16–23 September, 2026:** Setup of presentation at festival headquarters

**24 September, 2026:** Festival opening with press tour and preview

**25 September**

**– 04 October, 2026:** VIENNA DESIGN WEEK festival period

**05–07 October, 2026:** Dismantling and transport of presentation

## Info & FAQ

### Who can apply?

Designers and creative professionals of all fields with expertise in design, textiles, and fashion. Experience with natural dyes is an advantage.

### What should be produced?

A series of 20 wearable workwear pieces. It is up to the selected winners whether they modify ready-made garments into new designs or create entirely new pieces. The use of natural fibres, especially protein-based fibres (e.g., wool, silk), is preferred due to optimal dyeing results. If weaving is planned, yarn dyeing must be considered in the schedule.

### Requirements of the garment:

- At least one pocket
- Must be wearable over sweaters/jackets or function as a jacket
- Unisex design suitable for people with different proportions
- Must include placement for the Biofabrique Vienna and VIENNA DESIGN WEEK logos

### Organizational & Legal

The garments must be designed and produced by the winners in consultation with Biofabrique Vienna and VIENNA DESIGN WEEK. They will be worn daily during the 10-day festival and receive special attention through programming.

The design copyright remains with the creators. The produced garments remain the property of the Vienna Business Agency and the VIENNA DESIGN WEEK.

### Presentation

The workwear will be worn by team members during the VIENNA DESIGN WEEK festival from Sept 24–Oct 4, 2026. One set will be exhibited both at the festival headquarters as part of the format “Urban Food & Design” and at the Biofabrique Vienna showcase in the Papageienhalle.

### Budget / Fee

The individuals selected by the jury will receive up to EUR 7,500 (excl. VAT) as a fee and for the implementation of the project.

**Fee:** EUR 2,500

**Production budget:** up to EUR 5,000 (in agreement with Biofabrique Vienna)

### Q&A Session:

**16 March 2026 at 3:00 PM**, online via Microsoft Teams. Please [register here](#).

## Terms & Conditions

### Selection

A jury of independent experts as well as representatives of VIENNA DESIGN WEEK and the Vienna Business Agency will select one person (or project team) according to the criteria listed below. The decision is made by majority vote.

### Evaluation Criteria

- Experience in textile and fashion design
- Experience in the production of garments
- Conceptual and design quality of previous work
- Experience with natural dyes and dyeing processes is an advantage, but not a requirement

### Application

All applications must be submitted via the [website](#) by 14 April 2026, 23:59, and must include the following information:

- Full contact details of the applicants (first name, last name, company name if applicable, email address, phone number, address)
- Short motivation letter (max. 3,000 characters including spaces)
- Portfolio
- Initial sketches and ideas related to the assignment

The following documents may be uploaded via the designated [cloud link](#) using the password „WienerFarben2026“:

- CVs of the applicants, including an overview of previous, thematically relevant activities
- Portfolio
- Initial sketches and ideas related to the assignment

Please label all files with your name or project title in the file name; otherwise, the documents cannot be considered during the evaluation process.