

## **Creative Hubs As Catalysts: The Influence Of Ziphouse On The Fashion Industry's Value Chain In Moldova**

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**Abstract:** This paper explores ZIPhouse Fashion Design Hub's role in evolving Moldova's fashion industry from traditional low value added manufacturing to design and brand creation. Highlighting the resilience of Moldova's fashion exports, it analyzes the shift towards local branding and its economic impact. The study also underscores creative hubs' importance in fostering innovation and growth in the fashion industry. It suggests that these hubs, empowered by contemporary dynamics, are crucial for microbusinesses and emerging independent designers. ZIPhouse's role encompassed fostering talent, entrepreneurial growth, and modernizing business practices for the local fashion sector. The paper highlights the strategic development of ZIPhouse's programmatic pillars, the university-industry synergy in its governance and management. It also touches on ZIPhouse's contributions to sustainable fashion education and the broader fashion ecosystem in Moldova, emphasizing community building and international collaboration. The paper concludes that ZIPhouse has been a critical catalyst in advancing the Moldovan fashion industry, nurturing a new generation of brands, and positioning Moldova within the international fashion arena.

**Key words:** fashion sector, competitiveness, value added, creative hub, innovation