

The change-makers' manifesto

Challenge stereotypes, take a stand, tell your story, design your life and more totally doable ways to make a difference, by the rule breakers, system shakers and change makers leading the way



JAMIE WEARS: ASOS DESIGN POP WAISTED SUIT BLAZER £52; ROLL-NECK TOP, EARRINGS, RINGS & GLASSES [Jamie's own]

Take a stand for what you believe in by **JAMIE WINDUST**, non-binary award-winning journalist, founder of *Fruitcake* magazine, model and activist

'I stand up for LGBTQ+ rights in the UK. Through my writing, people can understand specific issues non-binary people face, but also the joys and beauty of our identities. Although topics are heavy and potentially triggering, I approach them with humour and frivolity. Instagram has proved most effective to channel my message, allowing me to speak to thousands at once and foster a community that uplifts and supports. *Fruitcake* magazine is a place where people can tell their stories in their own words. People tell me how much it means to them to see themselves represented in print. My goal this year is to continue working on the petition I started – allowing people in the UK to identify outside of male or female on legal documentation – after realising I wouldn't be able to self-identify when renewing my passport. I want to change how our institutions treat non-binary people.' @leopardprintelephant

Celebrate your heritage, but make it modern, by **FAAI KERDPHOL**, co-founder of Greedy Khao

'Our aim was to revive the reputation of classic Thai dishes, like green curry, which were seen as boring. We started with street food as it's relatively low-cost, serving dishes learned from my grandma, a keen home cook. For branding, we avoided stereotypes, like buddhas and elephants, choosing to be vibrant and playful to represent modern Bangkok. Switching to plant-based in 2017 was a risk and sales dropped, but corporate opportunities with forward-thinking companies grew. Now we have an additional purpose, demonstrating that a plant-based Thai meal can be delicious and fulfilling.' @greedykhao

Raise cash for your start-up, by **ABI MOHAMED**, co-founder of CGV, an angel investment firm

Have a solid business before money investment 'I've run several UX [user experience] workshops to help founders access resources to build their first MVP [minimum viable product] and gain attraction before funding. The aim was to teach the value of testing via UX tools to ensure the product/service was customer-focused and the customer journey was polished and amazing.'

Look to change the communities you operate in 'Afrocenchix, for example, make high-performing products for afro and curly hair, a massive market other investors/VCs [venture capitalists] didn't understand. We invested after months of due diligence – a risk but worth it. They currently retail at Whole Foods Market [UK], independent health stores and online, and are expanding.'

Make introductions that can be life-changing 'I introduce underrepresented founders [women, people of colour, LGBTQ+] to bigger VCs and give them the all-important warm introduction, the recommendation of a start-up to a venture capitalist by someone who knows both.' @cgventureshq

Keep your integrity, by **ERIN SLAVEN**, co-founder of the On The Ball campaign for free period products at football stadia @onthebaw

'We don't collaborate with brands or political parties – it doesn't correlate with our grass-roots ethos and would be less relatable. You can make change without money and sponsorships – your voice is enough!'

Self-publish in a digital world, by art collective SHY BAIRNS @shybairnsgetnowt

'You can make a zine with whatever you have – paper, scissors, staples or thread to bind it. We mostly print on a risograph printer but there are cheaper options. Photocopying is the traditional way. Digital media is dead – long live recyclable paper!'

Win over an audience with your words by **SOPHIA THAKUR**, poet and performer

Make them feel like the only person in the room 'I'm extremely candid and conversational. I want you to get it, feel it and understand it. This leads to major over-sharing at times, but whatever. I tend to step on and have a good old natter with the audience and then smoothly beeline into a poem.'

Leave stage gimmicks behind 'If I'm really unprepared, it's easy to slip into dad jokes before starting. I get told I'm a very intimate performer. My voice commands the attention of a mind and heart, and my actual performance is minimal in movement. I'm only 23, but have performed on over 1,000 stages.'

Speak straight into the soul 'I tell stories and try to paint a vivid picture of the character's heart. I stay away from describing clothes or features and focus on their behaviour in the hope that people will see themselves in the protagonist.' @sophiathakur

Know better and do better, by SARAH CAULFIELD, founder of fashion brand/ social enterprise We Are Hairy People

Be proud of what you offer the world 'We Are Hairy People is a hand-painted clothing brand that stands for a lot of things, but mental wellness is our priority. We run "warrior workshops" – painting workshops for people struggling with mental health or negative self-image.'

There's always more to learn and ways to improve 'All our clothing is ethically sourced and we're plastic-free, vegan, size-inclusive and ecobricking as much as possible. One of my artists had lots of knowledge about sustainability from her degree and I know she learned from me, too. It's all about keeping the conversation going and being open.'

Set goals to keep pushing forward 'I set yearly goals because some things take time. I've just moved out of my home studio to a pizzazzy therapeutic studio where I'll be able to take on more artists and see them more regularly to create a supportive community – crucial in recovery journeys – and respite space.' @wearehairypeople

Challenge stereotypes creatively, by TARIK CARROLL, photographer, visual artist, activist and founder of The EveryMAN Project

Align your intention and execution 'The EveryMAN Project started off as a personal photography project, a visual conversation about male aesthetics and body diversity. As we held castings and produced more shoots, I knew I had to delve deeper than just creating images – the stories drive this project. We've built a website and community where we can share them, and we're currently working on a coffee table book and documentary.'

Take steps to lift the stigma 'I aim to challenge the misconception that being plus size means you're unhealthy. We're promoting wellness, mindfulness, self-love and healing with meditation classes, body-positive yoga and fitness classes to provide a safe space for men of all body types to pursue their fitness goals without judgment. I want to create work that serves a higher purpose and is a catalyst for healing.' @theeverymanproject

Change the face of disability, by OLIVER LAM-WATSON, Team GB wheelchair fencer

'I was born with a disability that affects my left leg and have been on crutches for 16 years. My doctor told me I'd never walk and run "normally" or be an athlete. I don't like being told what to do and, in August 2017, I picked up a sword for the first time. I trained hard, did my first competition in October and was selected for Team GB in February 2018. I want to change preconceptions of people with disabilities. I show what I'm capable of on social media. I'm less about words – what can a paragraph say that a photo of me doing a one-armed handstand with my crutches won't?' @oliverlamwatson

Tell your story to empower others, by male model KROW, whose gender transition is detailed in upcoming documentary Krow's TRANSformation @krowwithak

'Knowledge is key for empowerment. In my documentary, I wanted to show the transition process and the emotional impact, to make it relatable. Most movies depicting trans men end in tragedy. I hope showing my growing modelling career, including walking at Louis Vuitton, will inspire courage and save lives.'

Create a brand with a conscience, by YOLANDA COOPER, founder of hair brand We Are Paradoxx

'I've always been obsessed with hair, from cutting it to trying every colour. Two years ago, I noticed my skincare and cosmetics were natural, organic and high quality but my haircare wasn't. Organic shampoo was lacklustre, while innovative products contained toxic ingredients and both had plastic packaging. I'd developed products for organic beauty brands so I created We Are Paradoxx – up to 97% natural products that work, in aluminium bottles. Raising investment while the brand was just a concept was challenging, but if you knock on enough doors, one opens. In a start-up, you're CEO, HR, Finance, Operations, even cleaner – so you never switch off. You have to roll up your sleeves and work harder than you ever thought you could.' @weareparadoxx

Start a network around your passion, by skateboarding collective LEEDS SKATE GALS AND PALS @leedsgalsnpals

'We saw other girls skateboarding so made a Facebook group and asked them to join. Now there are 250 of us. Make the most of social media. Hashtags are a way for people to find you and vice versa.'

KESANG WEARS: ASOS DESIGN SHIRT WITH SHORT PUFF-SLEEVE DETAIL £32; TROUSERS (Kesang's own); ASOS DESIGN ANKLE SOCKS (pack of 3) £8; ASOS DESIGN SHORT CHUNKY CHAIN IN SILVER TONE £6; EARRINGS (Kesang's own); SANDALS (Kesang's own)

SAM WEARS: ASOS DESIGN T-SHIRT WITH CREW-NECK AND ROLL-SLEEVE IN BLACK £6; OBEY LEOPARD PRINT LABOR JACKET £95; OBEY OUTLANDER TRACK JOGGERS IN BLACK £70; NIKE REACT ELEMENT 55 TRAINERS IN GREY AND GREEN £115

YASMIN WEARS: ASOS DESIGN CREW-NECK FITTED TOP WITH RUCHED SIDES £16; ASOS DESIGN FARLEIGH HIGH-WAISTED SLIM MOM JEANS IN LIGHT BLUE £32; ASOS DESIGN STERLING SILVER TUBE HOOP EARRINGS IN 25MM £12; RINGS (Yasmin's own); TRAINERS (Yasmin's own)

Travel the world like a local by KESANG BALL, SAM BLENKINSOPP and YASMIN SHAHMIR, Trippin platform co-founders

'We collaborate with local creatives at the emergent edge of music, art, fashion and culture around the world to create our travel guides. You end up with the most authentic lens into local culture and communities, one that's not distorted by traditional media and guidebooks. It's the best way to tap straight into the good shit and avoid the tourist-bait hotspots. Trippin started through our own travel experiences and, as it's grown, it's also powered by our community. They request and share secret spots and travel tips on a daily basis in the Facebook group, which progressed to app format and then, to provide a better experience, trippin.world [the website] was born. When you're exploring always be respectful and aware of your surroundings. Learn a few phrases in the local language and seek out independent stores and spots. Look for lower carbon emission flights. Hotels can be more sustainable temporary accommodation because they provide locals with secure employment, unlike Airbnb.' @trippin.world

Collaborate and compromise when working with your crew, by FON and FA WATKINS, art directors and twins

'We realised we could work harmoniously together in our second year of uni. Our personalities are the complete opposite, but we can guess what the other is feeling and know each other's strengths and weaknesses to fill in the gaps. [Fon has a graphic design background and prefers minimalism, while Fa is more editorial and eccentric with her ideas]. It works out because we critique each other to find level ground. It's crucial to communicate and make sure everyone is on the same page. Don't think you're always right. Approach people, collaborate, make contacts. Ask for feedback. Go for it! Our proudest project together is "Our mother and the women who fed us rice", a performance and art installation. We explored what we felt passionate about – how immigrants, specifically Thai women, were portrayed in a predominately white area. It taught us to be fearless, proud of who we are and where we came from.' @fa_fon_

FA WEARS: ASOS DESIGN LEATHER-LOOK SUIT BLAZER IN TAN £55; ASOS DESIGN FITTED MESH TOP IN TIE DYE WITH CAP SLEEVE £14; ASOS DESIGN LEATHER-LOOK SUIT SHORTS IN TAN £28; NECKLACES [Fa's own]

FON WEARS: ASOS DESIGN LEATHER-LOOK TRENCH COAT £65; MONKI CROPPED SINGLET IN ANIMAL PRINT £10; ASOS DESIGN UTILITY JOGGER £22; NECKLACES [Fon's own]; ASOS DESIGN HOOP EARRINGS IN BALL SHAPE IN SILVER TONE £5

Run for inspiration, by RUDDY TROBRILLANT, ASOS Insider and founder of Power Up running club @asos_ruddy

'Running totally changed my life. It benefits my body, but my mind and inspiration more. You connect to your body and breath, and focus on real sensations. Don't think too much. Enjoy the street/park and what you see. Live your moment.'

Take up space, by CHELSEA KWAKYE and ORE OGUNBIYI, #Merky Books authors and Cambridge University graduates

'We decided to write *Taking Up Space: The Black Girl's Manifesto For Change* to explore what it means to be a black woman within education – everything from entry barriers into university to diversifying curriculums – and give black and non-binary students a platform. It's not often that black girls are given an opportunity to tell their stories in an authentic way, archive their experiences and begin to remedy the erasure that black women have suffered for generations. Through our stories we're taking on an elite institution – it's not an attack, we hope it's a wake-up call for universities that think they're doing enough to protect black women. It's important not just for us but so generations after us can stand on our shoulders and do the same. Stormzy and Penguin [are] helping to usher more underrepresented voices into the literary space [and] we want this book to reach people who need it the most.' @takingupspacebook

Design your life, by CHRISTIAN COWAN, fashion designer and soon-to-be ASOS collaborator

Grow your brand via Instagram 'I've done all my PR myself getting through to high-profile people on Instagram. While I was at uni, Lady Gaga saw outfits I made online, got in touch and wore one [in 2014]. I got shit-loads of press out of it and started dressing lots of other celebrities, like Miley Cyrus, Nicki Minaj and Charli XCX. Celebrity commissions is how I paid for the brand initially.'

Be brave, leave your support system behind 'I had to take myself away from everyone so I could grow into who I want to be and what I want my brand to be. I arrived in New York with zero funding, zero family money and no real plan. There are so many young designers in London that I felt like I could make a better impact in NYC. It's easier to get sponsorship and grants competing with fewer people. I like the constant change of New York, you can do whatever you want here.' @christiancowan

Turn your hobby into your main hustle, by ELZ THE WITCH, who left a job at IBM to be a gaming influencer and Rinse FM presenter

Do your prep 'I knew I wasn't meant to be behind a desk. For over a year I worked outside of my full-time job, sacrificing sleep and social life to write in the evenings, make contacts and raise my profile. I had a gut feeling I needed to sacrifice those things to open other doors. I saved money so I had a safety net.'

Find your niche 'After swapping the structure of a corporate job for self-employment, I felt lost. Then I had a lightbulb moment – I loved gaming and saw a gap for a commercial female gamer. I stand for squashing stereotypes. For years people told me I don't look like I should be into computers/gaming. You should never be pushed into a box based on your image, background or gender.'

Be yourself 'The more I'm unapologetically myself, the more people connect to me. I gave up my income, company car and traditional CV to see what happened. But if you never jump, you'll never fly. I've just reached 100K views and 10K subscribers. My hard work's paying off!' @elzthewitch

Tell untold stories, by filmmaker DOROTHY ALLEN-PICKARD, who made a BTS film of Candoco Dance Company x ASOS Training Intensive

'My films challenge perceptions around issues like mental health and homelessness. Telling these stories has direct social importance. Ideas come from people and places I'm surrounded by – I've worked with friends on films about their experiences of bipolar and living with a disability. I balance hard-hitting stories with more playful, upbeat films. I met a group of older women at South London Cares, where I volunteer, and came up with the idea of making a docu-drama about them forming a Spice Girls tribute band. One thing's for sure, I'll never make a film just for it to look good.' @dorothyallenpickard

Do it all, whatever all means to you, by LAILA NASSALI, COLLUSION collaborator and computer scientist @lailanassali

'The best tip is to write a list of things to do in a day or week and actually commit to it. Also being around like-minded people who want to get things done. Motivate your friends and family because it will motivate you!'