

## APLF Leather fair off to a flyer

Hong Kong  
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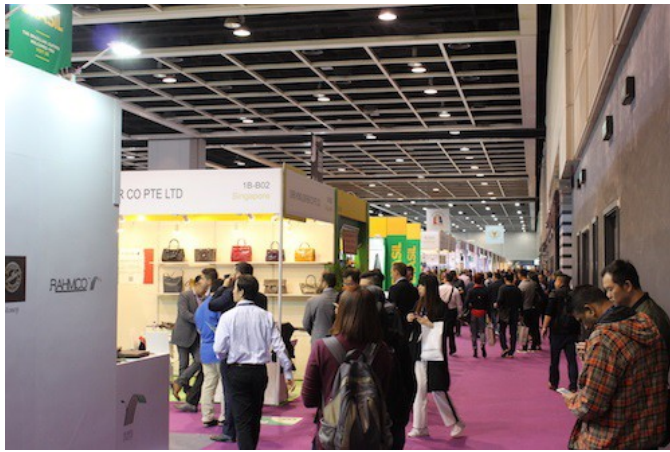
The opening day of the 2018 edition of APLF Leather and Materials+ fair began in Hong Kong on March 14 bringing together leather industry professionals from all over the world. The three-day show takes place at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), March 14-16.

APLF Leather and Materials+ is the leading materials sourcing fair in Asia and is the most international in the fair calendar attracting visitors and exhibitors from all over the world. Most exhibitors that ILM spoke with on day one of the three-day show were very happy with the volume of visitors at the fair. There was a very positive buzz around hall one of the HKCEC which houses the leather industry stands. "I think we have seen more people here today than we did for three days last year," Alessandro de Sousa from Brazilian tanners and meatpackers, Minerva, told ILM.

This year's leather fair is seen by many industry observers as critical with leather facing growing competition from other materials and an increasingly negative viewpoint from some consumers, NGOs and pressure groups related to its perceived environmental record and connection with animals and the meat industry.

This has eroded the market share of leather into the footwear and garment segments, but there is some optimism that the fair this year could see an improvement in market conditions with a 20% fall in raw materials prices seen since the 2017 edition.

This year's edition sees a record number of special events, workshops, paid conferences and free seminars for the visitors to attend as well as the exhibition itself. There is a pavilion from Sudan for the first time and a group of Egyptian tanners has returned to exhibiting at the fair. The APLF Leather and Materials+ fair includes 25 group pavilions from 21 countries. There are 94 new exhibitors attending for the first time from 22 countries covering a total gross surface area of 25,000 sq m.



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