

The Inaugural Franca Fund Gala Will Take Place This November in Doha

V vogue.com/article/franca-fund-gala-2025-doha

Leah Faye Cooper

August 21, 2025



There is a new addition to the 2025 gala calendar: This November in Doha, filmmaker and photographer Francesco Carrozzini, Her Excellency Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad Al-Thani, and Anna Wintour, global editorial director of *Vogue* and chief content officer of Condé Nast, will host the inaugural Franca Fund Gala—a fundraiser to support ongoing preventative genomics research in honor of Carrozzini’s late mother, longtime Italian *Vogue* editor Franca Sozzani.

“The bond I had with my mom—and her being a single mother for most of her life and then going so early—really made me want to do something to remember her,” Carrozzini tells *Vogue*, adding that his mother’s diagnosis of a rare lung cancer led him to the work of Harvard medical geneticist Dr. Robert C. Green, in hopes of finding her a cure. That Sozzani’s illness was too advanced to be successfully treated, and she died in late 2016, prompted Carrozzini to establish [The Franca Fund for Preventive Genomics](#), alongside Green and artist and investor D.A. Wallch. The initiative supports genetic research to identify, treat, and prevent a myriad of diseases—from minor ailments to life-threatening illnesses.

Since launching in 2018 at Harvard Medical School and Mass General Brigham, the fund has raised money through the exhibition and sale of pieces from Sozzani's wardrobe; a Zara collection of tees and sweatshirts featuring Peter Lindbergh photos; and an awards dinner that has honored Julianne Moore, Salma Hayek, and Iman. Still, Carrozzini has often found himself thinking, "this is not enough, we need something bigger," he says. Enter the Franca Fund Gala, which was conceived in collaboration with Sheikha Al Mayassa.

"I was looking to do something with someone who understood my mother's values and what she did for the arts and for fashion," Carrozzini says, noting that before her death, Sozzani befriended Sheikha Al Mayassa through those shared interests. The chairperson of Qatar Museums and co-chair of Fashion Trust Arabia, Sheikha Al Mayassa "kindly offered to host" the Franca Fund Gala, Carrozzini adds.

The evening will be held in collaboration with the Qatari cultural center M7, a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship across design, fashion, and technology. Additional details regarding the guest list, venue, dress code, and entertainment are forthcoming, but the mission, Carrozzini says, is already clear: "To promote research, and to honor someone who so many people thought was special."