

SPACE NEEDLE

By Luly Yang

The Seattle Space Needle partnered with seasoned uniform designer Luly Yang for a new team uniform refresh. Working to innovate the uniform industry towards elevating style, performance and pride, Yang brought her experience in design, architecture, and her understanding of the human form, creating a one-of-a-kind uniform collection for the Space Needle.



Garments were created for team members of various work groups: from outdoor and active valet attendants to operators of the 41 second elevator ride up to the observation deck. Included in the collection are polo shirts, mid-layer fleece jackets, rain jackets, hats, and vests.



The Luly Yang process is centered on the "Form Follows Function" principle.

To best understand the roles of Space Needle employees and the utility necessary in their uniforms, Yang conducted a thematic breakdown of the associates' job functions, wear, care, and maintenance routine before identifying challenges the pieces would need to address. From this research, the team learned where the most wear and tear can occur with daily use and created solutions that extend the lifecycle of their garment with fabric and care choices that allowed for easy maintenance.



Recognizing that the Space Needle prominently decorates the skyline for the Seattle community and its visitors, Yang turned directly to the architecture for design inspiration and researching the history of the building's construction. Yang referenced the iconic shape of the building's retro silhouette. The garment's seams, color blocks, textures, and reflective trims were designed to mirror architectural lines while also flattering the human form. The Space Needle's brand was referenced for the colors and logos, which were custom created for the collection.



The building itself was constructed for the World's Fair in 1962 and is a historic icon to Seattleites. Respecting the architecture and history of the landmark was integral to the uniform design's success. The original hue of the Space Needle, Galaxy Gold, can be found lining the mid-layer jacket pockets and along the collar of the polo shirts. The linear pattern resting on the shoulders of the polo and mid-layer was taken from the blueprint of architectural firm Olson Kundig Architects, designer of the 2017 Space Needle renovation.



Space Needle employees serve a myriad of different functions throughout the historic landmark and tourist destination. As with uniform programs past, Yang took it upon herself to truly understand the purpose and utility her garments would need to possess. After speaking with several travel and tourism industry professionals and focus groups, Yang was able to deliver on key features requested by future wearers including pockets (sized specifically to accommodate the items they'd most likely hold), comfortable stretch, and breathability.



Luly Yang's innovative 3D garment-fitting approach has reinvented the sampling and manufacturing process. By using several solutions to reduce the sampling process timeline and resources, Yang has minimized each collection's carbon footprint below industry average. Her forward-thinking design practices bring elements of high fashion and sustainability into uniform design.

To achieve the perfect fit, Yang is using a couture-based 3D approach to garment fitting where the pattern pieces are manipulated around the body to achieve a flattering sculptural look for all body types, instead of using the industry standard flat pattern manipulation.



Every aspect of the collection was thoughtfully considered with Space Needle brand details and high-performance ability in mind and is intended to be layered up or down to accommodate varying climates. The reflective material of the moisture wicking rain jackets serves to keep the valet attendants visible during the wet climate of the Pacific Northwest. The fabric of the polo shirts stretch so that staff can move comfortably in the uniform and feel a sense of pride while wearing it. Security and polo vests are constructed out of wrinkle-free neoprene and have both interior and exterior pockets and were designed to hold pens for an accessible reach.



Following production and delivery of the Space Needle uniform program, Yang personally met with employees to collect feedback regarding their uniform wear and care. Employees praised the comfort and ease of movement, warmth and ability to layer, and the number of useful pockets.

