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UKFT Q4 2024

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What we've been doing on your behalf

Contents

3	<u>A letter form Ada</u>
6	Voice of the Indu
11	<u>Membership</u>
14	<u>Skills & Training</u>
19	International Busi
21	Innovation & Sus

<u>m Mansell, UKFT's CEO</u>

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A letter from Adam Mansell, CEO

It's been another busy year for us at UKFT and the incredible, We launched resources covering everything from EU IOSS dynamic industry we're proud to represent. I'm delighted to and digital tools to exporting to Canada and trading with see our membership growing stronger, with new businesses South Korea, and shared insights on EPR Packaging, and organisations joining us from every part of the fashion Ecodesign for Sustainable Products, new employment and textile supply chain here in the UK. We are proud to unite rights, EU deforestation regulation, the Plastic Packaging manufacturers, brands and retailers of fashion and textiles Tax and more. sold all around the world, the innovators creating fabrics for From funding calls like the various Network+ research industries from agriculture to space, and those preparing the next wave of industry professionals. Together, our collective opportunities, the Creative Catalyst R&D grants and the Earth Shot Prize through to the International Woolmark voice is making an even bigger impact.

Since the new government was elected, we have worked closely with the government on key topics like industrial strategy, creative industries, curriculum and assessment, manufacturing and regulatory reform. We've advised on five UK trade agreements with major markets (India, Turkey, South Korea, Canada, and the Developing Countries Trading Scheme) and secured a six-year extension to the Climate Change Levy scheme, saving the UK textile industry £5 million annually.

We've provided tailored support on compliance, labelling, sustainability, export strategies and market legislation. We also hosted webinars and events on diverse topics ranging from responsible supply chains and environmental due diligence, through to weaving technology, circular design and robotics, as well as opportunities in India and selling to the EU.

From funding calls like the various Network+ research opportunities, the Creative Catalyst R&D grants and the Earth Shot Prize through to the International Woolmark Prize, King's Award for Enterprise and the London ReWear grants, we've highlighted countless opportunities for members.

We have been delighted to visit so many of you at your facilities throughout the year, learning about your latest projects, and discussing the challenges and opportunities you face.

On the global stage, we continue to support UK brands at major international tradeshows and events through our **Discover British Brands and Textiles campaigns**, ensuring the UK fashion and textile industry is well represented worldwide. Our export programme took us to Paris, Florence, Milan, Shanghai and Chicago. As part of our commitment to promote the wealth of careers, employers and training opportunities available in the UK fashion and textile industry, we work with local industry, training providers, schools and recruitment organisations to deliver an annual series of career events and job fairs across the UK. We've been delighted showcase our sector at events in Exeter, Edinburgh, Derby, Huddersfield, Leicester and London.

We have been developing new opportunities in universities. We are also dedicated to supporting the next generation and we are delighted to now oversee more than £225,000 annually in bursaries and training funds, helping new talent gain the skills our industry needs.

We're also actively involved in large-scale projects aimed at tackling some of the industry's biggest challenges, including the Circular Fashion Innovation Network (CFIN) and the ACT UK projects.

This year's Sustainability Conference focused on textile EPR and recycling technologies, and our growing Sustainability 101 series now includes guides and webinars encompassing standards and certification, due diligence and green claims.

We also launched new projects like the Production Sewing Machinist Programme with HM Prison Service and a Shared Prosperity Fund initiative in Skelmersdale to attract fresh talent.

LOOKING AHEAD

As ever, we exist to serve you, our members. Your ideas and feedback are invaluable in helping us shape what we do. Please don't hesitate to share your thoughts with us.

Thank you for being part of our journey this year. We can't wait to collaborate, grow and achieve even more together in the year ahead. Keep an eye out for the launch of Innovation 101 and Export 101. Join us in engaging with government, supporting our mission to place industry at the centre of university R&D, and come with us to explore exciting new markets together.



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UKFT activity highlights: The year in numbers

In 2024, we...



Secured a saving of £5m each year for the UK textile industry through a six-year extension to the Climate Change Levy scheme



Were involved with innovation projects worth



Supported over **50** young people taking next steps in their careers with £225,000 worth of grants for bursaries and training

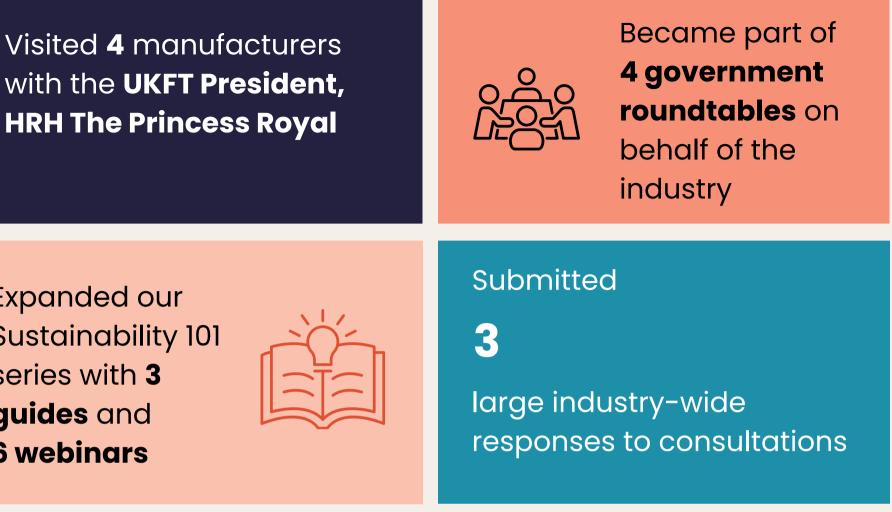
Supported 670

brands at international tradeshows, showrooms and events

Expanded our Sustainability 101

series with 3 guides and **6 webinars**

Advised government on 5 UK trade agreements with key markets



Secured a

60%

rise in funding for the Level 2 Footwear Manufacturer apprenticeship to £8,000

> Secured support for a three-year programme to develop UKFT Futures our campaign to attract new entrants into our industry



As the voice of UK fashion and textiles, UKFT is committed to creating the best environment for our industry. We represent the entire fashion and textile supply chain, promoting our industry in the UK and overseas.

We demonstrate the strategic and economic value of our vibrant industry to government and policymakers, ensuring the key issues are on the agenda. We champion our diverse and valuable industry through campaigns and key activities. Discover some of our recent updates here...

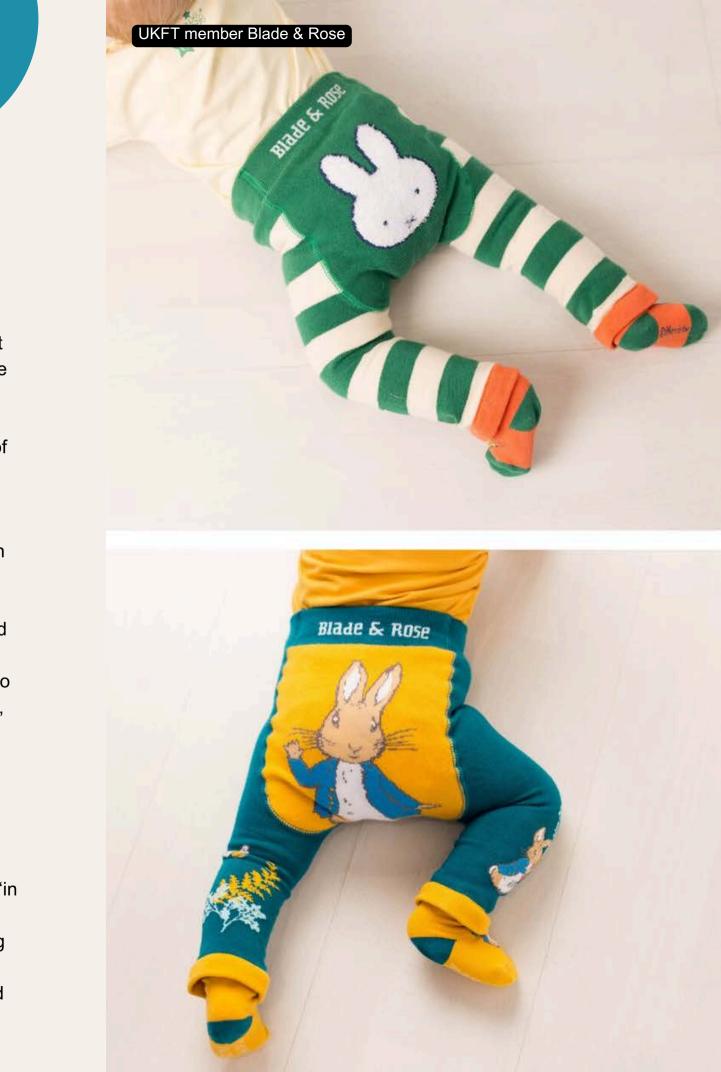
MEETING WITH BUSINESS MINISTER

UKFT had a very constructive meeting with Gareth Thomas MP, the Business Minister. UKFT raised the significant impact of the change to Employer NI contributions and the cumulative negative effect of the timing of the changes to NI and the increase in the NLW. UKFT also raised the very real need to simplify trade with the EU under the upcoming renegotiation of the UK-EU trade deal.

UKFT and the Minister went on to discuss the potential to develop a world leading fibre to fibre recycling infrastructure in the UK and the need for a sector specific EPR scheme to hep drive circularity. UKFT showcased the enabling role that technical textile played across a multitude of other sectors and went on to raise the need for government to use public procurement to both support industrial development but also to ensure a security of supply for critical products for the military, health care and more.

UKFT raised the importance of export support for the sector. UKFT demonstrated the significant return on investment that was generated for government under the Trade Show Access Programme and how critical it was to see the scheme reintroduced. UKFT also highlighted the significant decline in 'in market' support that the sector received from key Consulates and Embassies and the detrimental effect that this was having on export growth. Finally, UKFT raised the opportunities that joining the PEM convention would bring to the UK fashion and textile sector.

07



INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY ROUNDTABLE WITH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR BUSINESS & TRADE

UKFT was invited to a discussion on the Governments ambitions for an Industrial Strategy. Issues discussed included the need for long term support for manufacturing and the creative sector and the need for the Industrial Strategy to 'join the dots' between industrial growth, skills needs and exports.

INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY RESPONSE SUBMISSION CREATIVE INDUSTRIES MARKET PRIORITISATION RESPONSE

UKFT submitted a detailed response to the consultation on the Industrial Strategy.

The submissions key demands were for

- Much greater use of public procurement to drive security of domestic textile supply chains
- A change in the way government assessed value a shift away from a simple unit price calculation
- The need for government to provide capital support to derisk investment
- The opportunity that EPR legislation would bring to driving a new green industrial textile recycling industry
- · The need to invest in skills and export support

80

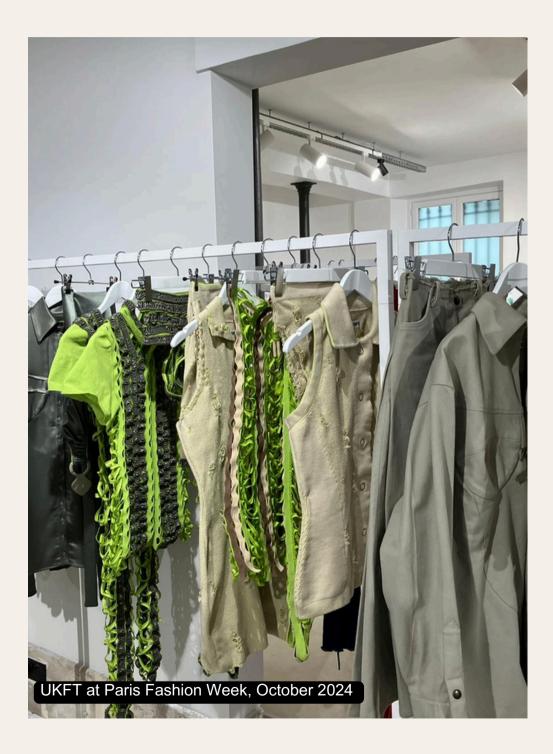
UKFT was asked by DBT to provide input on the priority markets for the creative industry. UKFT identified the following key markets for fashion and the textile industry, as well as footwear, jewellery and accessories:

- European Union (especially: Italy, France, Germany and possibly Scandinavia)
- USA
- Japan
- South Korea
- Middle East (especially Dubai and Saudi Arabia)
- India (for larger companies, textiles and brands)

UKFT's submission went on to detail the specific support needed across those markets.

CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT REVIEW – DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

UKFT submitted a very detailed response to the DfE's consolation on the current national curriculum and assessment system in England. Our response focused on the development of the curriculum and qualification landscape for post-16 year olds.



REGULATORY REFORM ROUNDTABLE WITH THE DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS & TRADE UPDATE

Hosed by DBT's Regulation Directorate the meeting looked at the challenges and opportunities for British business. UKFT raised a wide range of concerns and proposals including the need to remain as closely aligned to EU regulations and Standards as possible. UKFT highlighted its concern over the EU's Product Environmental Footprint assessment methodology and the risk it was posing to the UK's wool industry. UKFT also made the case for a new VAT Refund scheme to boost overseas consumer spending.

BUDGET ROUNDTABLE WITH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR BUSINESS & TRADE

UKFT attended a post budget roundtable with Jonny Reynolds and Treasury colleagues. The key issue raised at the roundtable was the huge impact of the change in employers National Insurance.

TRADE POLICY

UKFT is in constant dialogue with the trade policy team at DBT providing DBT's trade negotiators with information and advice of detailed trade issues such as rules of origin, product specific rules, defensive instruments and so on. This quarter UKFT has advised government on UK trade agreements with India, Turkey, South Korea, Canada and the Developing Countries Trading Scheme. UKFT has been invited to contribute to a review on UK Trade Policy. We have also confirmed our membership of the UK's Domestic Advisory Group (DAG) for trade agreements outside the EU.

UKFT has also raised the industry's growing concerns over the potential impact of any defensive import tariffs that the incoming US administration might impose.

MANUFACTURING ROUNDTABLE WITH BUSINESS MINISTER

UKFT and several members attended a roundtable event with the Business Minister. Several issues were discussed including the challenge of investment and export growth.

SKILLS ROUNDTABLE WITH DBT

UKFT chairs the DBT manufacturing sector skills group. The group met recently to discuss the shortcomings of the governments changes to the apprenticeship levy (now known as the skills and training levy) and to share best practice on careers promotion.

CLIMATE CHANGE LEVY EXTENSION

Following demands from UKFT and other associations, DSIT have annopunces a new six-year extension to the Climate Change Levy rebate scheme. The current scheme saves the textile industry approximately £5 million a year so a new six-year scheme is extremely positive news.

DEFRA BRIEFING

At their request, UKFT met with DEFRA, DBT, the Environment Agency and Nations Governments to present the industry's views on the potential ban of PFAS, how a ban would affect the UK textile and fashion industry and to help shape the restriction that is likely to be added to UK REACH in the near future.

TAX FREE SHOPPING

Along with 200 other business and trade organisations, UKFT signed a letter to the Chancellor asking for the reestablishment of tax-free shopping for tourists. The letter was featured across a wide range of national press including the Telegraph, Daily Mail and Sky News.

10





Membership

Membership

We provide businesses from across the industry with knowledge and support that covers business essentials, sustainability, international business, skills, compliance, manufacturing and more.

As part of UKFT's broad and valuable network, members can make new connections, stay up-to-date with the latest industry insights, join exclusive events and access benefits and services from our partners.

UKFT Membership offers opportunities to showcase your business, get involved in UKFT campaigns and activity, shape debates and influence key issues for the industry.

Expand your **Knowledge**, **Network** and **Profile** with UKFT.

In Q4, we welcomed a wide range of new members including Albion Knitting, Carl Stuart Tailors, House of Grey Wolfe, House of Grey Wolfe, Marame, Nobody's Child, Peper Harrow, Question Everything Kids, Roberts Recycling, Somerset Yarn Dyeing Co, The College of Master Kilt Tailors and Uist Wool.



UKFT Member: Carl Stuart Tailors

UKFT Member: The College of Master Kilt Tailors

We continue to share a wide range of opportunities with our members, from gaining recognition to exploring new markets. As well giving a wide range of one-to-one advice to members, we also provided:

- Access to the new Peclers A/W 2026/7 colour and textile trend information
- Updates on the new Employment Rights legislation, the EU Deforestation regulation, the plastic packaging tax, the Dutch EPR scheme and how to access Energy Compensation Schemes
- Webinars with Associate Partner Langton's on credit insurance, the use of chemical in the fashion and footwear supply chain
- A new member discount for access to Intertek testing services
- A range of funding opportunities

The UKFT team visited a range of members over the past three months including AW Hainsworth, Abraham Moon, Seal International, Luxury Fabrics Group, British Wool, Roberts Recycling, Somerset Yarn Dyers, Isidore Bryant, Fox Brothers, Heathcoats, Yarmouth Stores, Failsworth Hats and Weavabel.

We love visiting members so do let us know if you would like us to see your facilities and meet your teams.

Membership

COMPLIANCE SUPPORT

Compliance support for members includes:

- · Global labelling compliance: Guidance on meeting international labelling requirements, including care, safety, environmental (e.g., EPR) and certification labelling.
- Global EPR obligations: Support for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) requirements, including data reporting, payment compliance, and labelling for packaging and textiles.
- · Product testing: Advice on chemical, safety, and performance testing to meet market standards, reduce complaints/returns, and ensure compliance with certifications.
- Performance and safety standards: Recommendations for adherence to standards to minimise complaints, returns, and recalls.
- Import and export regulations: Assistance with trade rules to reduce costs, avoid customs delays, and ensure compliance with paperwork like certificates of conformity.
- · Proposed regulation and legislation: Advocacy and expertise for member interests with bodies such as Euratex, DEFRA and DBT on regulations like the EU Green Deal, tax and the circular economy.

Ongoing compliance projects include:

- Euratex engagement: Active participation in workshops on EU Green Deal themes, including traceability, eco-design, durability and waste management.
- FCS and EUDR: Collaboration with the Forest Stewardship Council (FCS) and creation of resources for EU Deforestation Regulation compliance.
- Intertek UK Partnership: Securing xclusive discounts for members on testing, certifications and advisory services.
- PFAS Regulation Advocacy: Presenting to UK government bodies on PFAS restrictions and their impact on textiles and fashion.
- BSI Standards Development: Contributing to performance and safety standards with UK, EU and international committees (CEN/ISO).
- Responsible Supply Chains: Collaborating on a UK manufacturing Code of Conduct for ethical practices.
- · REACH Webinar: Educating members on chemical regulations in the UK, EU and PFAS compliance.
- AAFA Collaboration: Quarterly meetings with the American Apparel and Footwear Association to address global regulations and support members.

TEXTILE FORUM

Textile Forum is UKFT's fashion fabric sourcing show. Showcasing short and forward order collection with low MOQs, the exhibition also features trimmings, label and button suppliers and a dedicated garment manufacturing zone.

> The two-day event, held in central London on 9-10 October 2024, attracted a wide range of visitors from the UK and beyond. The latest edition was the largest since the 2020.



Textile Forum. October 2024

Skills & Training

Skills & Training

UKFT is the Sector Skills Body (SSB) for fashion and textiles. Our activity is focused around addressing critical skills gaps and creating industry-led solutions to ensure that the UK fashion and textile industry remains competitive on a global stage. We help fashion and textile businesses to attract, train and retain the best people, as well as promote careers and opportunities to the next generation of talented workers through UKFT Futures and our careers campaigns.

We are increasingly focused on developing new vocational and academic routes into industry that meet the needs of business, such as the online production sewing machinist course, the work with HM Prison Service or the new BSc in Textile Technology at the University of Leeds. Through our schemes like MADE IT and the Drapers Bursary scheme, we also bring together education and industry to ensure graduates have relevant experience and knowledge to enter the workplace.

NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS (NOS)

UKFT is developing a new Sustainability in Fashion & Textiles Manufacturing National Occupational Standards (NOS) Suite concentrating on key areas of repair, recycle, reuse and reduce.

UKFT APPROVED SCHEME

In November UKFT added another training course to the UKFT Approved portfolio with the approval of the Bespoke Tailoring of the Kilt course offered by The College of Master Kilt Tailors.

UKFT Approved has a portfolio of 13 accredited qualifications and four independent non accredited courses.



Technician on the Young Textile Technician Fund at DP Dyers in Huddersfield.



Skills & Training - Specialist Developments

PRODUCTION SEWING MACHINIST PROGRAMME (PSM)

UKFT's PSM programme covers everything from industrial sewing techniques and best- practices, essential knowledge on quality, costs, efficiency, materials and machines, health and safety, working relationships and employability skills. Designed to be flexible, the programme allows learners to fit the training around busy schedules as all courses are prerecorded.

The course has now been completed by 82 online learners and 23 offline learners to-date, as well as 20 Tutors.

HMPS PSM PROJECT

UKFT is working with HM Prison Service to deliver the PSM course to trainers in prisons. A third PSM Instructor training course will take place in January 2025 across three prisons.

UKFT RECRUITMENT & CAREERS CAMPAIGN

UKFT is promoting the wide range of career paths available in the fashion and textile sector, from pattern cutting to leather craftsmanship, buying through to textile design, at a series of job fairs and careers fairs across the UK. We have invited with local employers, hiring managers and recruitment consultants with live vacancies in the sector to promote their roles and tell new entrants more about the sector. The 2024 schedule included:

Job fairs:

- Exeter, Sandy Park Stadium, 4 September
- Huddersfield, John Smith Stadium, 6 September
- Derby, Pride Park Stadium, 11 October
- Edinburgh, Tyne Castle Park Stadium, 30 October
- Bristol, Ashton Gate Stadium, 8 November
- Leicester King Power Stadium, 29 November

CAREER EVENTS (EDUCATION SHOWS AIMED AT SCHOOL LEAVERS)

The following Careers events have now taken place:

- Saracens Stadium North London: 8 October 24.
- Kia Oval, South London: 5 November 24.

Exhibits contributed by Westminster University and employers from a range of subsectors including footwear, technical textiles, automotive, medical textiles, and fashion/clothing where well received and provoked discussion with visitors.

Activities were delivered by Fashion Enter (hand sewing /recycling), the London Leather workshop (leather key rings) and UKFT staff (draping). Talks and presentations were delivered by UKFT staff at each event. The audience consisted of students and teachers; each event was delivered to a packed house.

Skills & Training - Specialist Developments

UKFT BURSARIES

UKFT now has an annual £250,000 bursary programme to support new people into the industry or those taking their first steps in careers. The programme includes:

MADE IT - The programme is designed to enrich the production and sourcing knowledge of graduates and to illustrate the wealth of technical and creative roles throughout the supply chain. The scheme offers undergraduates a production and sourcing masterclass and 10 funded placements annually within a production environment thanks to the generous support of the Worshipful Company of Clothworkers and CapitB.

This 23/24 Made It programme is underway with five partner universities and 10 internships scheduled.

UKFT NEW TALENT BURSARY - This is designed to break down the financial barriers that can limit fair access to industry placements. The bursary enables 15 students annually to take up placement opportunities they may otherwise struggle to afford thanks to generous support of The Worshipful Company of Drapers and The Worshipful Company of Weavers. We are now trialling the delivery of placements within Further Education.

The 2023/24 Programme is in partnership with the Education Partners: Nottingham Trent University, Winchester School of Art and Northumbria University.

The 15 internships are currently ongoing with companies including Barbour, New Balance and Minnessak Bags.



Henna Ibrahim, from Winchester School of Art, interning at Sirplus, as part of the MADE IT programme

Skills & Training - Specialist Developments

YOUNG TEXTILE TECHNICIAN FUND - This quarter nine textile technicians at DP Dyers received in-depth training on a new colour weigh system at their facility in Huddersfield thanks to support from the Fund and applications are progressing from Alex Begg, Knockando Woolmill Trust and Bowmer Bond Narrow Fabrics.

Since 2019 more than 60 young people in the industry have received support from the shceme receiving specialist training to support their development and careers.

A new generation of talent have been up-skilled in engineering, CAD, repair, maintenance, servicing, data mapping, colouration, on all manner of machinery from the worlds most advanced looms and software to irreplaceable knitting machines and boiler systems.

Thanks to the ongoing support from the Weavers Company and the Clothworkers we are now able offer further 10 training opportunities in 2025. The training provided by Dornier in their factory has given me confidence and knowledge to bring back to Pennine. Without the support and funding of the UKFT scheme I might not have had the opportunity to have this detailed level of training

- Danny King, 23, Peninne Weavers

Although I was taught dyeing at University, I did not have the technical knowledge to upscale recipes in our tanks. I now feel confident, following the in-house training

- Emma Smith, 27, The Natural Fibre Co

The course gave me the amazing opportunity to travel and learn from the best, exposing me to knitwear designs on a new technical level

- Kate Wilson, 25, Harley of Scotland

BSC IN INNOVATION & SUSTAINABILITY

This course was established with support and evidence from UKFT. UKFT is managing a multi-year funding programme, provided by a group of Livery Companies, to support entrants to the course.

The first cohort started in September 2024.10 UK students are receiving funding to support with academic and living costs. UKFT will follow the students as the progress through the degree as well as help deliver industry speakers and placements.



International Business

International Business

UK fashion and textiles have a global reputation for quality, creativity and innovation. Through our international trade campaigns, we showcase and promote the UK fashion and textile industry at events around the world.

Our tailored international business support helps UK companies to navigate changing markets, understand complex global trading arrangements and comply with international regulations.

GENERAL EXPORT ISSUES

The industry is anxious over the results of the US elections which could significantly impact global trade particularly if there is a a new US-China trade war.

UKFT continues to watch the US review on the De Minimis exception on imports which so many UK fashion brands use to ship B2B goods duty and tax free to the US where the value of the goods is below US\$800 per day. UKFT has long been of the opinion that that exception would come to an abrupt end or the ceiling substantially reduced. The scheme is currently being evaluated by the current administration and it looks almost certain that there will be major changes or possibly an end to the scheme altogether.

Greenway Logistics, UKFT's EU logistics partner spent four days in London in October, both at Textile Forum and with one-to-one meetings with members which have been reported as being very positive by members and the Greenway Team.

UKFT also hosted a webinar on Credit Insurance with Landon Associates in November.

SOURCING ACTIVITY

UKFT led a delegation of retail buyers to the MIM show in Morocco, a strategic location offering quick shipping times to Europe and North America. The country's skilled labour force and robust infrastructure further enhance its appeal as a sourcing destination.



The group of UK retailers and brands at MIM in Casablanca



Innovation & Sustainability

Active poll

Performance

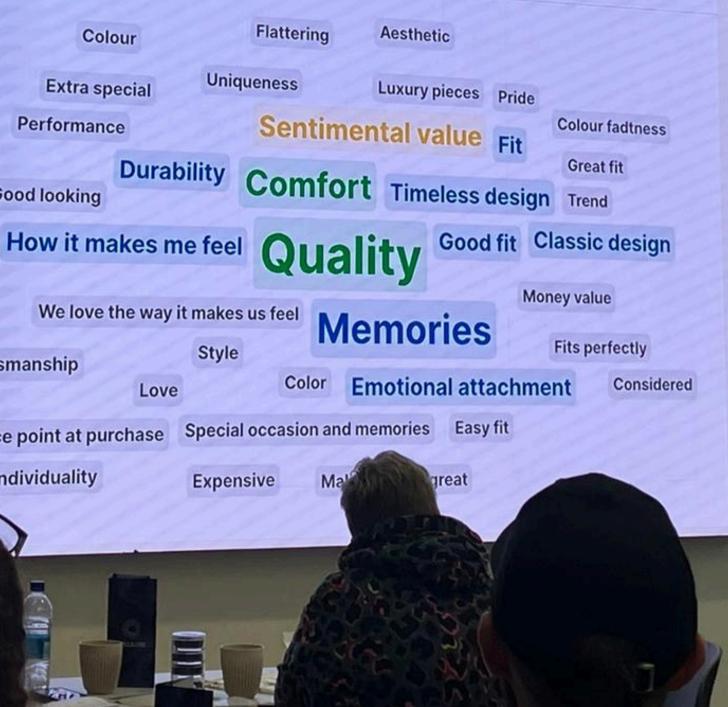
Good looking

Craftsmanship

Price point at purchase

Individuality

What makes us keep our clothing for longer?



26 8

Innovation & Sustainability

UKFT is at the forefront of large-scale innovation projects to tackle some of our industry's biggest challenges. We help to attract research investment and unite the industry in pre-competitive collaboration.

We provide practical help and guidance to help members meet their sustainability goals and share best practice. Through our close connections with the UK and European governments, we help companies prepare for changes in future sustainability legislation.

We actively engage with the global sustainability and circularity network, attending events such as the BIR Conference and the ECOSYSTEX Conference. UKFT has recently been appointed to the Advisory Board of the ReLondon led London Textiles Action Plan. CIRCULAR FASHION INNOVATION NETWORK INTERIM REPORT





Automation and Robotics in fashion and textiles event as part of CFIN

22

CIRCULAR FASHION INNOVATION NETWORK

CFIN published its **interim report** in October at an event where both Nigel Lugg and Adam Mansell spoke.

UKFT has continued with the delivery of key project outcomes under the sustainable manufacturing and textile recycling infrastructure pillars. Key highlights include:

- Publication of textile dyeing innovation review.
- Publication of circular manufacturing report.
- Delivery of 'Mapping the post-consumer textiles pipeline' report.
- Publication of 'Advancing Automation and Robotics for Sustainable Manufacturing: Strategic Pathways for the UK Fashion and Textile Industry' document together with Manchester Metropolitan University and The Robotics Living Lab.
- Delivery of workshop on 'Mastering Design Opportunities for Durability and Recycling' together with the Circular Textiles Foundation, Trustrace and The Mills Fabrica.

The current CFIN Programme will run will May 2025.

Innovation & Sustainability

NETWORK+

The £7 million university NetworkPlus project embeds research into the development of solutions that will support the fashion and textiles sector to transform into sustainability. NetworkPlus is made up of three networks: Back2Baselines, Impact+ and Future Fibres. UKFT chairs two of the three Advisory Boards and also chairs two of the three investment panels. UKFT also chairs the overarching PCT committee that co-ordinates work across the three networks.

Together with partners, UKFT is supporting the following projects

- Future Fibres Network Project together with University of Leeds on post-consumer textiles.
- Back 2 Baselines project together with University of Leeds on non-clothing textile material flows.
- Back 2 Baselines project together with Manchester Metropolitan University on legi-standards.

ACT-UK

UKFT is leading a £4 million project to develop and pilot a pioneering fully-integrated, automated sorting and preprocessing plant for waste textiles (ATSP). Key progress in Q4 includes:

- Industry report on innovative solutions to post
 consumer textile collection challenges
- A condition of supply report
- The ATSP Capacity analysis and DES simulation
- The market analysis for the ATSP in the UK
- The analysis of the Cost model for NRTs as-is and tobe in the UK
- The Life Cycle Assessment for the full textiles'
 ecosystem





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