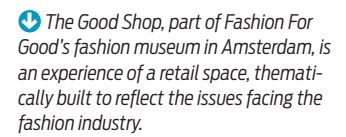


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 *The Good Shop, part of Fashion For Good's fashion museum in Amsterdam, is an experience of a retail space, thematically built to reflect the issues facing the fashion industry.*

Central Valley alone, honeybees produce a summer harvest that leads to more than 80 percent of the world's almond supply. In 2018, California produced more than \$5 billion worth of almonds, according to the state's food and agriculture department.

And that is just one crop. Edete's artificial pollination process could potentially be used to pollinate cherry, apple, and pistachio crops—sparing, and saving, thousands of bees in the process. ■

ARTS & CULTURE

The Future of Fashion

BY PAYAL MOHTA

The fashion industry has a pollution problem. The \$2.5 trillion global industry contributes 20 to 35 percent of microplastic flows into the ocean, and it reuses less than 1 percent of the 53 million tons of textiles it produces annually.

To address this problem, Amsterdam-based Fashion for Good created the Good Fashion Fund (GFF), the first investment fund focused exclusively on encouraging collaborations between fashion and technology.

Launched in September 2019, GFF is one of Fashion for Good's three programs that leverage technology to transform the fashion industry to become more sustainable while not sacrificing profit. One is an accelerator; the second is an information hub; and the third—GFF—invests in the implementation of cutting-edge technologies to help the

textile and apparel manufacturers in Southeast Asia (specifically, India, Bangladesh, and Vietnam) scale while also recycling and using less energy.

Fashion for Good has allocated \$60 million in total for GFF, with an investment range between \$1 million and \$5 million per recipient, which they would disperse in a three-to-seven-year period. The loans are intended for small- and medium-size manufacturers, who generally lack both the finances and the knowledge to make their production processes sustainable.

For GFF's director, Bob Assenberg, the fund's particular marriage of environmentally mindful technology and textile production fills a significant gap in the industry.

"In contrast to other industries, much of the work in the apparel industry is still being done through manual labor," he explains, "so there are relatively fewer changes in adoption of new technologies."

Initiatives currently under consideration for GFF include US-based SeaChange Technologies, which has created a one-step wastewater treatment system for textile and apparel manufacturers; Israel-based Sonovia, which uses an ultrasound-based technology to make textile fibers more durable and reusable; and Netherlands-based DyeCoo, which has developed a water-free dye process.

Yee Chain International, a fabric and rubber foam manufacturer with factories in Taiwan, Vietnam, Indonesia, and China, is also being considered as an investment. The company is looking to innovate in ways that



both "lower that cost" and prove "better for the environment," says Martin Su, sustainability officer at Yee Chain.

"The Good Fashion Fund suits our fundamental goals of being more circular [eliminating waste and reusing resources] in our operations," says Su.

For Fashion for Good, GFF's investment in sustainable solutions encompasses "five goods" that apparel manufacturers, in a joint action plan, must agree to meet in order to receive a GFF loan. This plan makes suggestions for improving their supply chains across these five goods: good materials that are safe and designed for recycling and reuse; a good economy that is circular and benefits everyone; good energy that is renewable and clean; good water that is clean and available to all; and good lives, which ensures safe and dignified living and working conditions for employees.

"If manufacturers fail to implement the action plan during the tenure of their loan, then we have the right to call an 'event of default'" and have

a legal right to a repayment of the outstanding balance, says Bernadette Blom, GFF's head of investor relations.

The two major investors are Fashion for Good's founding partner, Laudes Foundation, and Hong Kong-based "techstyle" incubator The Mills Fabrica.

"We decided to become an investor in the Good Fashion Fund to drive the adoption of sustainable technologies in manufacturers and their supply chains," says Alexander Chan, The Mills Fabrica codirector. "This social mission is well aligned with our own vision to create an open innovation platform where innovators, brands, manufacturers, and investors can come together to push the industry forward."

However, Blom notes, finding "like-minded investors" who are confident in the untested GFF model has been GFF's greatest challenge.

COVID-19 has compounded this challenge. The global pandemic has destabilized the fashion industry and consequently delayed the fund's

WHAT'S NEXT

plans with potential manufacturers. A major reason for such delays, Assenberg explains, is that “most manufacturers are focused on getting operations back to normal and prioritizing the welfare of their workers.”

But Assenberg remains optimistic that the action plans will resume later this year, once manufacturers restart production. He attributes his positive outlook to the fact that all the original investors have remained on board, and together they are continuing discussions with their network of manufacturers on long-term sustainability goals.

“The Good Fashion Fund,” he says, “has the patience to work through such situations.” ■

HEALTH

Centering Disability in Health Care

BY VICTORIA A. BROWNWORTH

One billion people—15 percent of the world’s population—have a disability. Yet, a dearth of research and resources has cloaked the problem and compounded the disadvantages they face.

The Missing Billion initiative aims to end the health-care gap for disabled people by 2030—part of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal

3 to “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.” The project “arose from our recognition of the fundamental neglect of disabled people in global health care,” explains cofounder Hannah Kuper, an epidemiologist and director of the International Centre for Evidence in Disability at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM).

The inspiration for the initiative came from The Missing Billion Report, a research collaboration between LSHTM, the Office of the World Health Organization (WHO) Ambassador for Global Strategy, Leonard Cheshire and the UN Partnership to Promote the Rights of

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Persons with Disabilities, and five additional partners. Kuper coauthored the report in 2019 with Phyllis Heydt, director at the Office of the WHO Ambassador for Global Strategy. In addition to detailing the challenges that disabled people face in receiving health care, it offers recommendations for governments to remove barriers to health services and ensure access to assistive technologies and rehabilitation services.

The document includes a vast amount of data on the state of health care and health-care access in the global disabled community. “Disabled people are three times as likely to be denied health care and four