

Centre for Sustainable Fashion

Convening the Fashion Education System



centre for
sustainable fashion

Ten years of | CSF

08
|
18



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Centre for Sustainable Fashion would like to thank the following people for their contribution to Convening the Fashion Education System:

Eva Kruse
Jonas Eder-Hansen
Johan Arno Kryger
Christina Iskov
Tina Hjort
Helene Jeune

Centre for Sustainable Fashion

Project Lead
Professor Dilys Williams

Project Managers
Renee Cuoco, Nina Stevenson

Project Assistant
Mina Jugovic

Graphic Design
Studio LP

CONTENTS

Overview	3
Partners	4
A Call to Action	5
Context: Fashion Education for Sustainability	6
Engaging Elements Across the Fashion Education System	8
Academic Leaders Roundtable	9
Educators Summit	12
Student Voices at the Youth Fashion Summit	14
Provocations for the Copenhagen Fashion Summit 2018	15
Appendices	16



In May 2017 at the Copenhagen Fashion Summit, Centre for Sustainable Fashion (CSF) and the Global Fashion Agenda (GFA) brought together a select group of academic leaders and educators from locations around the world to explore the development of sustainability across fashion education and its distinction in the overall sustainability agenda.

The partnership between CSF and GFA seeks to make a distinctive contribution to ensuring that fashion students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development. This ambition supports the United Nations 2015-2030 Sustainable Development Goal 4.

This report, compiled by Centre for Sustainable Fashion, summarises the context, activities and findings of the 2017 discourse between three identified change-makers within the fashion education system – academic leaders, educators and students. It presents a set of provocations to be explored through activities at the Copenhagen Fashion Summit 2018.

ABOUT CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE FASHION

Centre for Sustainable Fashion (CSF) is an internationally recognised University of the Arts London research centre, based at London College of Fashion. Established in 2008 by Professor Dilys Williams, the centre's unique focus lies in the development of fashion design for sustainability. CSF's founding vision was to realise design-led innovation that connects fashion's ecological, social, economic and cultural elements to contribute to sustainability in and through fashion's artistic, business and educational practices. Operating at the nexus of research, industry and education, CSF seeks to contribute to new knowledge, transform the learning environment with future-facing curriculum and to partner with industry, government and non-governmental organisations in innovative projects that address real-world needs.

ABOUT GLOBAL FASHION AGENDA

A non-profit initiative founded in 2016, Global Fashion Agenda is a leadership forum on fashion sustainability. Anchored around the world's leading business event on sustainability in fashion, Copenhagen Fashion Summit, Global Fashion Agenda advances a year-round mission to mobilise the global fashion system to change the way we produce, market and consume fashion, for a world beyond next season. GFA collaborates with a group of Strategic Partners on setting a common agenda for focused industry efforts on sustainability in fashion.

A CALL TO ACTION

Education and information are more accessible today than at any previous time, but we have yet to resolve humanity's two fundamental challenges: co-existence with each other and in nature, our only home.

Universities play a dynamic and far-reaching role in change in the world, affecting those who study and teach in them, as well as the environment, economies, societies and cultures within which they interact. Those in fashion education systems know that we must simultaneously change ourselves, as we seek to change the wider systems within which we intermingle. Universities are communities where students, educators and academic leaders can be levers for change, through creating and participating in experiences, practices and designing structures that encourage a changing of things. The exchange of wisdom from experience in the now, with those who will be living far into the future, gives universities a vital role in imagining and realising sustainability. There are, however, increasing pressures on students, educators and academic leaders to foreground economy over ecology and this tension must be dissolved if we are to pursue progress.

CONTEXT: FASHION EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

In an information-rich world, the acquisition of knowledge about sustainability is becoming increasingly attainable. To make the deep systemic change that is needed in the context of climate change, education for sustainability is needed. To know about sustainability is not the same as enabling learners and tutors to move towards an ultimate transformational state of education as sustainability.¹ Fashion education's contribution to sustainability is a vital area of discussion.

Its participants interface a global industry worth \$2.4 trillion² and employing around 50 million people³ with a complex web of issues evident across economic, ecological, cultural and social agendas. A sustainability-led fashion education system teaches students about the complexities and impacts of an industry of such magnitude and equips them with the skills and competencies to thrive in a rapidly changing world. Such a system creates the space for its community to imagine, experiment and create ideas that have positive impact in and through fashion.

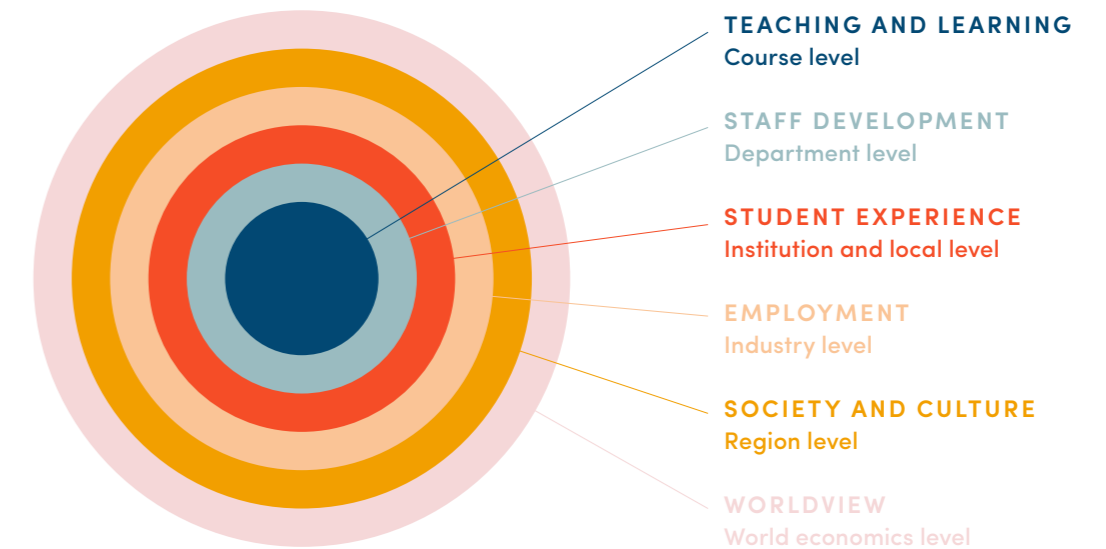
In the 2011 publication *Learning for the future: Competences in Education for Sustainable Development*, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) identified:

“Education should play an important role in enabling people to live together in ways that contribute to sustainable development. However, at present, education often contributes to unsustainable living. This can happen through a lack of opportunity for learners to question their own lifestyles and the systems and structures that promote those lifestyles. It also happens through reproducing unsustainable models and practices. The recasting of development, therefore, calls for the reorientation of education towards sustainable development.”⁴

Taking a systems approach to education recognises interdependencies across a range of levels and participants within fashion education's system, the broader fashion industry system and still wider socio-economic and ecological systems within which we all interact. Different levels of intervention across the fashion education system can be summarised as:

1 Sterling, S. (2001) *Sustainable Education: Re-visioning Learning and Change*. Cambridge, Green Books.
 2 According to *Business of Fashion* and McKinsey report, *The State of Fashion 2016/2017*, the global projected value for the fashion industry for 2016, was \$2.4 trillion.
 3 As of 2017 it was estimated that 50 million people worked in the Fashion Industry. *Global Fashion Agenda & The Boston Consulting Group 'Pulse of the Fashion Industry'* reports suggest that the figure is 60 million people, p.2.
 4 United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (2012) *Learning for the Future*. Available from: https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/esd/ESD_Publications/Competences_Publication.pdf.

Fig 1. The Fashion Education System⁵



Building on its research, education and industry partnerships over the past ten years, CSF has developed a framework for education for sustainability in fashion. It is an approach which examines agendas, contexts, issues, and mindsets for sustainability as applied to fashion. Curriculum developed by CSF recognises sustainability as a holistic, interconnected concept. Recently this has been demonstrated in *Fashion & Sustainability: Understanding Luxury Fashion in a Changing World*, the first online course to be created in fashion and sustainability hosted by FutureLearn. CSF has co-created this curriculum with luxury fashion group Kering, to connect academic and industry practice in design education for sustainability. Working within its own fashion education system, CSF collaborates with the schools at London College of Fashion to implement the Education for Sustainability Transformation Strategy, a five-year commitment to change in both informal and formal education settings across the college.

In addition, CSF has engaged with a variety of international academic partners over the past decade through pursuits such as Erasmus intensive programmes and student and staff exchanges. Of particular note is a long standing collaborative relationship with Copenhagen School of Design and Technology (KEA).

In the words of David Orr,

“It is not education, but education of a certain kind, that will save us.”⁶

A realising of education's potential for change can only be made possible through a convening of players across the fashion education system, to share a multiplicity of approaches. As academic partners to the Copenhagen Fashion Summit, CSF and the Global Fashion Agenda seek to amplify changes taking place towards sustainability across the fashion education system.

5 Williams, D. (2018) *The Fashion Education System*.
 6 Orr, W. D. (2004) *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect*. Washington, DC, Island Books.

ENGAGING ELEMENTS ACROSS THE FASHION EDUCATION SYSTEM

The following activities were developed and delivered at the Copenhagen Fashion Summit 2017:

1. **ACADEMIC LEADERS ROUNDTABLE**
2. **EDUCATORS SUMMIT**
3. **A LISTENING PROJECT AT THE YOUTH FASHION SUMMIT⁷**

Together these events engaged a range of voices from across the fashion education system. In 2017, 9% of surveyed attendees at Copenhagen Fashion Summit identified themselves as from academia, representing a significant proportion of the audience at this industry facing event.

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) play an active role in fostering economic growth but they also play a vital role in shaping our societies, through contributing to new knowledge and our understanding about the world. HEIs are in a unique position to be able to reflect upon our current reality and develop new and relevant kinds of knowledge. How this knowledge and understanding is applied to society and industry has great impact. The Academic Leaders Roundtable and Educators Summit set out to convene, imagine and ask what commitments and actions must be made by academia. The Youth Fashion Summit provides an opportunity to capture the student voice to ensure a multi-layered response. Together they provide a chance to illuminate the distinction, power and agency of individuals and the possibility of the collective academic voice.

⁷ The Youth Fashion Summit is hosted by Copenhagen School of Design and Technology (KEA).

ACADEMIC LEADERS ROUNDTABLE

Aim

To convene an informal discussion between senior level fashion education, fashion industry and other organisational decision-makers. Discussion to respond to future-facing provocations by sharing visions for a 2030 fashion system through a sustainability lens.

Purpose

To collate and analyse shared imperatives, ambitions, needs and opportunities for fashion education. To recognise fashion education's distinction in transforming fashion's current standing from being one of the world's most polluting industries, involving modern slavery in its mainly female workforce; to its being a contributor to nature, community, culture and economy across its geographic locations.

Overview

Convened on 10 May 2017, the first Academic Leaders Roundtable invited participants to share visions of their organisations in 2030. A provocation was presented of a scenario in 2030 with a global population of around 8.5 billion people, in a world with fashion's production and consumption figures showing an increase of 63% from current figures. The scenario included an increase in water use by 50% and CO2 emissions by over 60%. In the scenario, land use for cotton is up 35%, waste is 60% higher and more than a third of workers are paid less than the minimum wage, exacerbating precarious environmental, social and economic conditions.⁸ It presented the view that even if the entire fashion industry matched currently recognised best industry practice, it would still not be enough to create the change that is required for future, equitable sustainability.

Findings

Through the course of the roundtable discussion, two potential future fashion education scenarios emerged, representing the ideas shared by the participants.

SCENARIO 1

The first scenario paints a picture of 2030 where the fashion industry continues to operate on the same economic and consumerist foundation we know today. It is powered by a technology-enabled, structurally connected fashion system, where data sharing relating to science-based targets has been developed into industry-wide standards and formats. This universal measurement system, updated through the sharing of data, based on academic findings and industry experience, enables all fashion businesses to make better decisions. This includes extending the value of resources, through a range of value extension practices.

Universities collaborate closely with industry and are often financially supported by businesses. Companies have a vested interest in ensuring graduates are

⁸ 2030 scenario provocation presented by CSF, based on statistics presented in Pulse of the Fashion Industry 2017.

ready to contribute to the success of their business, and in some instances, businesses have developed their own private education institutes. Fashion education draws on multidisciplinary research and knowledge from a range of credible academic and industry sources. These findings inform design and product development decisions. This vocational form of education enables students to prepare for livelihoods in industry as their skills and knowledge are immediately recognisable to employers. Fashion customers are able to access data relating to the contents of potential purchases and legislative intervention means that some materials, processes and products are highly regulated and, in some cases, and locations, certain materials and products have been banned.

SCENARIO 2

The second scenario paints a picture of 2030 where the fashion industry is responsive to demands of engaged citizens who are eager to explore their own hybrid identities and create new communities, based on shared intentions. This switch from the supply of fashion, to interaction with active citizens, slows the consumption of the entire system down. The fashion industry has responded to a desire for longer term relationships with fewer things through creating new business models and ways to integrate more into wider society. Reputation is built on a broader range of success indicators, including profitability, creative excellence and a valuing of people, whether employees or customers.

In this version of 2030, universities are a place where people study at various stages of their lives, to develop new knowledge and capabilities that enhance their life experiences through social interaction, experimentation and transferable skills that can be applied to employment. Education informs industry yet remains a separate entity where experimental forms of knowledge and practice can be pursued, some of which is recognised by employers. Student fees have been abolished, but there are fewer places on courses. Universities take an active role in pressuring governments to influence policy that supports environmental, social and cultural prosperity.

These findings propose two distinctive fashion industry and fashion education systems, each assuming different roles, practices and goals. They act as observations from informed participants, each visioning sustainability from a different perspective. The challenge in the 2018 discussions will be to co-sense and co-create ways in which a pluralistic view of fashion industry and education futures can create sustainability.



EDUCATORS SUMMIT

Aims

To convene senior level fashion educators from a range of global universities to explore and exchange insights into ways in which fashion education can contribute to the achievement of UN Sustainable Development Goal 4. To share best practice of transformation towards sustainability in the learning experience of fashion students. To better understand the agency of the educator in transforming fashion education towards sustainability.

Purpose

To create and communicate a collective understanding (dependent on representation of a wide range of locations) of the role of fashion educators in contributing to UN Sustainable Development Goal 4. Taking place on 10 May 2017, over the course of a day, 32 educators from 12 countries came together to share and discuss teaching practice, learning experience, curriculum development and to explore a collective vision for fashion education for sustainability.

Overview

To help shape the discussion and exchange of ideas throughout the day, participants were invited to deliver short, dynamic case studies that showcased a curriculum based project or teaching method, exemplifying sustainability in the learning experience, relating to one of the following themes:

- › Industry collaboration or industry informed curriculum
- › Futures thinking
- › Community exchange
- › Interdisciplinary teaching and learning
- › Data informed curriculum
- › Nature based teaching and learning

Presentations were made by educators from nine universities (appendix i). Through the case studies, a range of innovative approaches to teaching sustainability were demonstrated, applicable to both fashion education more broadly as well as to specific courses, including design. Some of the concepts explored sustainable design tools, social responsibility, circularity, supply chain management, entrepreneurship, re-thinking consumption, alternative business models, activism and more sustainable methods of making.

Following the presentations, the summit broke into eight groups, each led by one of the presenters, to engage in a critical analysis and discussion of one of the case studies. This exercise stimulated an examination of key elements involved in developing sustainability learning and teaching practices, as well as new ideas to scale and apply practices within different institutions.

Findings

Through the breakout group process, four themes emerged:

1. When collaborating with industry or community partners, it is vital to understand the motivations of all participants.

2. Physical context plays a significant role in providing appropriate learning environments.
3. Fostering critical thinking is key to embedding sustainability across all types of courses.
4. How we measure the learning experience from a sustainability perspective must change, as the current measures of success have severe limitations.

Educators' opportunities, limitations and imperatives were identified as:

EDUCATORS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO:

- › Be vocal within their institution
- › Lead by example
- › Link students to local communities
- › Provide students with insights from experience
- › Work collaboratively with other educators
- › Experiment with the curriculum
- › Question the current system
- › Test new models
- › Teach students holistically
- › Provide students with knowledge and tools
- › Share with other educators
- › Be receptive and supportive of new ideas

EDUCATORS FACE THE FOLLOWING BARRIERS AND LIMITATIONS:

- › The personal cost of speaking up
- › Student demands as customers
- › Lack of sustainability knowledge and understanding by staff members
- › Lack of funding
- › Limited ability to work with industry in a meaningful way
- › Lack of time
- › Institutional structure and bureaucracy
- › The need to educate for change and the duty to educate students for existing jobs
- › Limited opportunities to work with communities in a meaningful way
- › Lack of strategy and leadership for change

EDUCATORS HAVE THE IMPERATIVES TO:

- › Provide a platform of knowledge for all citizens
- › Change the metrics of success in education
- › Educate to reduce consumption of nature's resources
- › Engage all students with sustainability
- › Foster and assess critical thinking in students
- › Support student initiatives
- › Dedicate budget towards sustainability in the curriculum
- › Teach empathy and understanding
- › Empower students to be activists
- › Influence society and policy

STUDENT VOICES AT YOUTH FASHION SUMMIT

Students from around the world convene in Copenhagen for the Youth Fashion Summit, led by Copenhagen School of Design and Technology (KEA). CSF took the opportunity to capture student insights relating to the Academic Leaders Roundtable and Educators Summit. Twenty students were interviewed from a range of countries, institutions and fashion disciplines. They were asked how students and universities can make a distinctive and impactful contribution to the development of sustainability in fashion. Through these interviews students spoke about what they feel they can contribute to sustainability and what they need in order to go out and be change-makers in the world. Findings evidence six elements that would better enable students to be change-makers:

- › Knowledge and practical experience in sustainability
- › The right tools to work with towards sustainability
- › A means for their voices to be listened to
- › The opportunity to collaborate and learn from each other
- › Transparency from their university on practices and policies
- › Regulation from government towards sustainability

Findings summarise the role of academic leaders, educators and industry in contributing to sustainability as:

A CALL TO ACADEMIC LEADERS TO:

- › Provide a mandate that sustainability is embedded into every course
- › Support the development of more specialist fashion and sustainability courses
- › Learn more about sustainability
- › Use their leadership to positively encourage educators and ensure all educators are trained in sustainability
- › Support student led groups and give them a platform for their voice
- › Implement sustainability culture on campus

A CALL TO EDUCATORS TO:

- › Talk more about sustainability to students
- › Learn and gain knowledge about sustainability in relation to their discipline
- › Share sustainability through their teaching
- › Give students the hard facts
- › Encourage students with even the smallest of actions, to be honest and take first steps

A CALL TO INDUSTRY PRACTITIONERS TO:

- › Reconsider and innovate their business models
- › Take more responsibility for where and how they produce across their supply chains
- › Provide open and honest transparency
- › Talk less and act more
- › Take funds from the top to invest across their workforce

PROVOCATIONS FOR COPENHAGEN FASHION SUMMIT 2018

This report captures initial findings from a range of presentations, semi-structured discussions and interviews. They relate to the three academic elements of the Copenhagen Fashion Summit 2017. They raise questions and seek actions which need to be addressed in order to develop broader tactics for change across the fashion education system. The following provocations, drawn from the findings, will be discussed in the academia events at Copenhagen Fashion Summit 2018.

1. WHAT WILL THE NEW VISION OF FASHION EDUCATION LOOK LIKE?

It is clear that a new, visionary education system with sustainability at its core is required, however what this entails needs further discussion and refinement. A framework with values, actions and measures of success is required as a roadmap for transformation.

2. HOW DO WE ENSURE ALL PARTS OF THE SYSTEM AND GLOBAL VOICES ARE REPRESENTED?

Whilst the Academic Leaders Roundtable and Educators Summit had good representation from across Europe and North America, a new vision requires a global perspective, the voices of educators and academic leaders from all parts of the world. We must find ways to open up and exchange ideas on a wider scale. How can the cumulative findings of the 2017 summit contribute to those of a wider set of stakeholders developing a sustainability-led vision for fashion education?

3. HOW SHOULD THE RELATIONSHIP PARAMETERS OF EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY BE DEFINED?

There is a need to shift from the dominant hierarchies of education and industry interaction. There needs to be a debate around what education offers industry and vice versa and what kind of relationship education should have with industry and government.

4. WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES AND BARRIERS TO FASHION EDUCATION CHALLENGING CURRENT POLITICAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AGENDAS?

Educators, academic institutions and students can challenge local and global policies and practices to address the widening gap between wealth and poverty. Clarification needs to be articulated of the role of academia in the commitments made through the Paris Agreement on Action on Climate Change.

These questions will be raised and explored at Copenhagen Fashion Summit 2018 where academic leaders and educators will again convene. By bringing a global academic network together, we can imagine a new vision for global fashion education and work towards realising it. Only then will we create the deep change that is needed across the fashion system and exemplify ways in which we can live well with each other in nature.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I EDUCATORS SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS

1.1 EDUCATION

- › Aalto University, Finland
- › ArtEZ University of the Arts, Netherlands
- › British School of Fashion, Glasgow
- › Caledonian University, United Kingdom
- › Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London, United Kingdom
- › Copenhagen Business School, Denmark
- › Copenhagen School of Design and Technology, Denmark
- › ESMOD Berlin, Germany
- › The Iceland Academy of the Arts, Iceland
- › Instituto Felipe Martins de Melo, Brazil
- › Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo, Oslo National Academy of the Arts, Norway
- › London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London, United Kingdom
- › Minneapolis College of Art and Design, United States of America
- › Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Science, Norway
- › The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Denmark
- › Saxion University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands
- › Shenkar College of Engineering, Design and Art, Israel
- › St. Pius X – St. Matthias Academy, United States of America
- › The University of Borås, Sweden
- › University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering, Slovenia
- › The University of Texas at Austin, United States of America
- › VIA University College, Denmark

1.2 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS, CHARITIES AND OTHER SOCIETAL REPRESENTATIVES

- › Abit The Brazilian Apparel and Textile Industry Association, Brazil
- › The Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA), United States of America
- › The OR Foundation, United States of America
- › Sustainable Apparel Coalition, United States of America

1.3 FASHION BUSINESSES

- › C&A Foundation, Worldwide
- › Fjord, Worldwide
- › Fung Academy, Hong Kong
- › Li & Fung, Hong Kong
- › Swarovski, Austria

APPENDIX II EDUCATORS SUMMIT PRESENTATIONS

No of presentations: 10
No of countries: 7

1. Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London, United Kingdom
2. Design School Kolding, Denmark
3. Felipe Martins de Melo, Brazil
4. Minneapolis College of Art and Design, United States of America
5. The Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås, Sweden
6. University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
7. The University of Texas, United States of America
8. VIA Design, Denmark
9. London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London, United Kingdom
10. Li & Fung, Hong Kong

APPENDIX III ACADEMIC LEADER ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

3.1 EDUCATION

- › Copenhagen School of Design and Technology, Denmark
- › ESMOD, Germany
- › London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London, United Kingdom
- › Polimoda, Italy
- › RMIT University, Australia
- › The Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås, Sweden

3.2 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS, CHARITIES AND OTHER SOCIETAL REPRESENTATIVES

- › Greenpeace, Italy
- › Sustainable Apparel Coalition, United States of America
- › Cultural Brokers, United Kingdom
- › UN Global Compact, Worldwide

3.3 FASHION BUSINESSES

- › ASOS, United Kingdom
- › Fung Academy, Hong Kong
- › H&M, Sweden
- › Target, United States of America

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Business of Fashion, McKinsey & Company (2016) The State of Fashion 2016/2017. Available from: www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Industries/Retail/Our%20Insights/The%20state%20of%20fashion/The-state-of-fashion-2017-McK-BoF-report.ashx [Accessed 5th January 2018].

Global Fashion Agenda & The Boston Consulting Group (2017). Pulse of the Fashion Industry. Available from: www.globalfashionagenda.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Pulse-of-the-Fashion-Industry_2017.pdf [Accessed 16th November 2017], p.2.

Orr, W. D. (2004) Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect. Washington, DC, Island Books.

Sterling, S. (2001) Sustainable Education: Re-visioning Learning and Change. Cambridge, Green Books Publishing.

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (2012) Learning for the Future. Available from: www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/esd/ESD_Publications/Competences_Publication.pdf [Accessed 3rd March 2018].

sustainable-fashion.com
arts.ac.uk/fashion
[@sustfash](https://www.instagram.com/sustfash)