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What we've been doing on your behalf

UKFT Q2 2025

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A letter from Adam Mansell, CEO

UKFT continues to champion the UK fashion and textile industry by engaging actively with government, promoting the sector's strategic and economic value, and ensuring key issues remain on the political agenda. In Q2 2025, this included high-level discussions on international trade agreements, lobbying for an eco-modulated textiles EPR and responding to multiple consultations across the UK. UKFT is actively exploring opportunities via newly-announced national strategies, such as the Industrial and Creative Industries Strategies, with potential emerging in skills investment, manufacturing energy support and next-generation materials. We are pleased that our work in championing technical textiles is gaining greater recognition, with government now acknowledging their broader economic potential.

Our membership continues to grow from across the supply chain and during the last three months, we visited more than 30 members in their studios, offices and factories across the UK, as well as attending a wide range of industry events. Members consistently highlight the value of being part of a knowledgeable, supportive and well-connected community. Whether navigating international compliance, sustainability or product development, they appreciate having access to timely advice, tailored guidance and practical resources. Across brands of all sizes and types, there's a shared sense that the membership helps them feel less isolated and more confident in growing their businesses.

This quarter we launched a new category of membership designed for businesses operating in the reuse, recycling and circular innovation space, including collectors, graders, sorters, mechanical recyclers, upcyclers and technology developers. This move recognises the increasingly central role this sector plays in the transition to a more sustainable UK fashion and textile industry. It is scaling fast and looking to grow cross sector collaboration.

In April, we launched the Small Marketing Team Network, which brought together marketing professionals from over 30 fashion brands, textile companies and other organisations across the fashion and textile sector. The first event focused on strategies for small teams and AI in marketing, and will be followed by a series of online monthly catch ups.

The annual Summer Member Reception in June had a strong turnout, making it one of our most diverse and engaged receptions to date.

Our president HRH The Princess Royal made visits to [Toray Textiles Europe Ltd's \(TTEL\)](#) fully vertical Mansfield factory on in April, celebrating the company's commitment to innovation and investment in the UK textile industry and highlighted its role in advancing high-performance textiles for sectors ranging from healthcare to defence. In May, she visited [LLUK](#), a British manufacturing facility specialising in luxury textile goods, to highlight the ongoing importance of supporting UK-based craftsmanship, skills and sustainable manufacturing within the textile industry.

On international trade, trade deals and US tariffs remain a key concern across industries, with particular uncertainty around US policy and its impact on pricing and exports. We are actively advising on complex issues such as changes to the US and UK De Minimis thresholds and non-preferential rules of origin. We continue to call for improvements to the UK-EU trade agreement and are engaging directly with MPs to push for stronger trade support.

We are now increasingly offering practical, business-focused support to help UK fashion and textile businesses navigate regulatory compliance across global markets and launched our new series, Compliance 101, during the quarter. These guides and webinars have been developed to help members understand their obligations across a wide range of issues and materials.

As the Sector Skills Body for fashion and textiles, we are dedicated to addressing critical skills gaps and creating industry-led training and career pathways to ensure the UK industry remains globally competitive. Recent updates include collaborating with HM Prison Service to deliver consistent training across prison workshops, the launch of a new fashion and textiles qualification in Scotland and the approval of new courses through the Albion Knitting School in London. We hosted a successful Education Partner Conference and continue to invest in future talent through schemes like MADE IT and the Young Textile Technician Fund.

Finally we are pleased to play a leading role in driving collaborative innovation across the UK fashion and textile industry, with a strong focus on sustainability. We provide hands-on support through initiatives like the newly-launched Sustainability Clinics and a CPD course developed with the University of Huddersfield.

This quarter we launched a new category of membership designed for businesses operating in the reuse, recycling and circular innovation space, including collectors, graders, sorters, mechanical recyclers, upcyclers and technology developers. This move recognises the increasingly central role this sector plays in the transition to a more sustainable UK fashion and textile industry. It is scaling fast and looking to grow cross sector collaboration. Our Sustainability 101 series offers clear, accessible guidance through issues such as certifications, green claims, due diligence, chemical compliance and more, supported by webinars covering key regulatory and operational topics including ISO standards, energy audits and GHG accounting.

This quarter saw the successful conclusion of two of our major initiatives that united academia and industry: the Circular Fashion Innovation Network (CFIN) and ACT UK. CFIN focused on sustainable manufacturing and textile recycling infrastructure, while ACT UK addressed the challenge of non-rewearable textiles through advanced sorting and processing innovation. These projects have delivered strategic blueprints, pilot studies and key technology investments that will help build the UK's capacity for circular textile systems.

As ever, we exist to support our members and the sustainable growth of the industry. We want to hear from you. Tell us about your challenges and your good news stories so we can build a brighter future together. Get in touch at info@ukft.org

Voice of the Industry



Voice of the 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.

In Q2 2025, our engagement with the Government remained at an all-time high, with ongoing conversations and consultations on the UK's position on UK-US tariff policy, the UK-EU renegotiation, UK-India FTA, UK-Canada FTA and especially UK-South Korea FTA. UKFT met several Ministers over the past three months to discuss the sector's challenges and opportunities. UKFT has been particularly active in lobbying government for the adoption of an eco-modulated textiles EPR for the UK.

UKFT continues to respond to a wide range of consultations from the UK government, notably on the potential withdrawal of the UK's De Minimis regime, as well as consultations from Scotland and other nations.

Most recently, government attention has been focused on the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review and the conclusion of the Industrial Strategy, along with the supporting strategies for eight key sub-sectors, including the Creative Industries Sector and Advanced Manufacturing.

The Creative Strategy presents opportunities to work with the British Business Bank to support fashion businesses. There is also strong potential to highlight investment opportunities in next-generation materials. There are a range of ambitions in the Industrial Strategy which could support the sector, in particular a commitment to reduce the cost of energy for manufacturing business. All of the strategies highlight the need to invest in skills, with a particular emphasis on making the Apprenticeship Levy more flexible. Notably, it will be possible to use the levy to fund short courses in disciplines such as engineering. There was a real focus on security of supply chains and opportunity in the Advanced Manufacturing strategy which we believe can offer great potential for our sector in the years to come.

We have long pressed for the UK to join the Pan-European-Mediterranean (PEM) Convention as our industry stands to gain significantly from the harmonised rules of origin that PEM offers. We are pleased that the Trade Strategy has now committed to considering these advantages.



UKFT member: Only the Blind



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.

WHAT OUR MEMBERS SAY...

“

Our UKFT partnership proved its worth before we even signed up. We are happy beneficiaries of the UKFT suite of services – from labelling requirements, to new product area testing, to tariff updates. UKFT has supported us across functions, from QC and garment tech, to sustainability and operations – being part of this network means we are guided by the UKFT's wealth of expertise. The on-demand services and resources are also incredibly valuable for upskilling new team members and connecting with other businesses in our sector. Thanks a million UKFT!

-Nobody's Child

“

We joined UKFT because we are keen to explore partnerships & collaborations within the UKFT community and leverage the wealth of resources, events and connections that the beautiful UKFT team can support us with. It's our first year with UKFT and so far it's been so great!

-Post Carbon Lab



UKFT member: Post Carbon Lab

Membership

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Passenger is a growing UK and international brand, so we were keen to join like-minded businesses in the apparel sector seeking to do business the right way. As well as accessing support from UKFT for international compliance, we've utilised their support and expertise on product and packaging compliance, and we found their position statements on US tariffs incredibly useful

-Passenger Clothing



UKFT member: Passenger Clothing

“

I've found the organisation incredibly supportive, with consistently useful information and excellent communication. If I ever need anything, I can send a quick email and always get a helpful response. If the person I reach out to doesn't have the answer, they'll connect me with someone who does. I was also really impressed when I received an email saying someone would be visiting me at my studio. It made me feel like I'm not just working in isolation, but part of a wider, connected community. The member reception was the first event I've attended, and it's been a brilliant experience. We happened to be in London, so we came along - and I've already made some valuable connections, including a new button supplier. It's been a really positive and welcoming experience.

-Lindsay Girvan

UKFT team visit Lindsay Girvan



Membership

NEW MEMBERS INCLUDE

J Barbour & Sons
Continental Textiles (South Beach)
Queens of Archive
Sait Recycling
Savanna Rags
Genevieve Sweeney
Rockahula Kids
Wigan and Leigh College
Savile Row Bespoke Academy
The University of Manchester
Northern Brands
Serena Bute
Tower Garments
Frahm Jacket
Little Tiger Press
Gooddrop
Rainbow Designs
Only The Blind
Au Concours
La Lunah
Pulsar
Mademoiselle Prune
Babes In Armour
Rainbow Designs
Y Patrol

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

In Q2, we:

- Visited more than 30 companies in their studios, factories or offices across the country
- Attended a wide range of events from the Outdoor Trade Show to Charity Retail Association conference, Future Fabrics Expo, Leicester Made and more

SHARING NEWS AND UPDATES FROM MEMBERS

- Championing the industry and sharing best practice: The quiet return of UK shirt production; how UK textile companies are embracing change to attract new talent; King's Award for Enterprise winners Peregrine, Roberts Recycling, ACS Clothing and Sudbury Silk Mills; Royal visits to LLUK and Toray Textiles; plus sustainable innovations in UK fashion and textiles: Processes, products and technologies
- New product and collection launches: Coco de Mer's luxury lingerie championing female empowerment; Passenger Clothing's outdoor clothing featuring recycled fishing nets; Pulsar introduced its new PPE REACT range; A-T-Five debuted a music- and street art-inspired collection; Future Vintage and Lalunah launched new knitwear, homeware, and bridal collections; House of Grey Wolfe and Mademoiselle Prune unveiled debut and heritage-inspired sustainable ranges.
- Sustainability and Innovation: Post Carbon Lab's regenerative dyes and Frugi's BCorp
- Design and culture: Irregular Sleep Pattern's gardening-inspired designs featured at V&A Dundee; Burberry partnering with the V&A to redevelop the Fashion Gallery.
- Skills: Albion Knitting Co launched new knitwear training courses to support talent development.
- Recognition and milestones: ApparelTasker featured on The Apprentice; Shima Seiki Europe celebrated 40 years; Camira welcomed a visit from the Prime Minister.
- Business developments: Glenlyon Tweed Mill announced new ownership; John Smedley appointed a new Managing Director.

Membership

UKFT Members can also access the Peclers Paris' SS27 colour and textile trend information on the Peclers+ online platform and via a physical SS27 trend book.

We also highlighted services and opportunities from our associate members including:

- Strategic branding solutions from Westbrook
- Energy and low carbon advice for UK textile businesses from Envantage
- Securing funding with Innovation Tax
- Specialist insurance for fashion and textile businesses (Parasol Insure via Langton London)

WEBINARS

We held eight webinars for members on topics ranging from managing currency risk, AW26/7 and SS27 colour trends, an accelerator programme to help fashion businesses sell into Canada and North America, Première Vision, energy saving scheme ISO 50001, climate and energy reporting, EU GPSR and the EU Deforestation Regulation.

SMALL TEAM MARKETING NETWORK

In April, we launched the Small Marketing Team Network with an event called Maximum impact, minimal resources: Strategies for small marketing teams, brought together marketing professionals from over 30 fashion brands, textile companies and other organisations across the fashion and textile sector.

This new initiative was developed in response to member enquiries about tailored support for marketing professionals working in small or one-person teams. With limited internal resources a common challenge, the network is designed to provide relevant, peer-led support throughout the year via in-person and digital sessions.

The launch featured members who offered practical advice on navigating small-team marketing. A collaborative session followed, addressing common challenges such as limited budgets, content production, and demonstrating ROI. The day concluded with an interactive workshop from AI specialists Push Group, offering practical tools and strategies for leveraging AI in marketing.

The network will continue through regular gatherings, including a new online series, Marketing Mornings with UKFT – a monthly 30-minute meet-up designed for members in small marketing teams to stay updated, share knowledge and build connections.



Membership

COMPLIANCE & REGULATION

We published key guidance and reports on compliance and regulatory issues spanning the Product Environment Footprint (PEF), Better Cotton Initiative certification updates, the Windsor Framework (moving goods from GB to NI), the Furniture & Furnishings Fire Safety Regulations 2025, new EU Toy Safety Regulations, the Competition and Markets Authority's new consumer protection powers, France banning PFAS on consumer products and the all important EU EPR.

COMPLIANCE & REGULATION

We published a wide range of opportunities for UK fashion and textile firms encompassing funding and financial support, business development and incubation, trade, export, networking, skills and talent development.



REUSE AND RECYCLING MEMBERSHIP

UKFT launched this new category of membership in April, which was developed following our increased profile in this sector due to our broader sustainability activity.

Specifically designed for businesses operating in the reuse, recycling and circular innovation space, including collectors, graders, sorters, mechanical recyclers, up-cyclers and technology developers. It recognises the increasingly central role this sector plays in the transition to a more sustainable UK fashion and textile industry.

For recyclers and re-processors, the membership offers targeted, practical support across regulation, funding, infrastructure and compliance, as well as greater visibility through UKFT's communications channels, events and trade shows. For brands, the value is equally significant. This new network of members will help brands find sustainable solutions as brands seek to decarbonise, reduce waste, and meet voluntary or upcoming regulatory targets (e.g. EPR)

International Business



International Business

TRADESHOW ACTIVITY

This season, our tradeshow programme to support and promote British brands and textiles at events around the world has been further reduced due to continued uncertainty around DBT funding. While some events benefit from limited DBT support, the wider funding landscape remains unpredictable.

In response, we are working hard to secure alternative backing and are pleased to have obtained promotional funding for key textile events from other sources.

Our planned activity for the season includes promoting and supporting British brands and textiles at:

- Pitti Uomo, June – including a visit by HM Consul General
- Paris Men's Fashion Week, Swim and Women's
- Milano Unica, July
- A Fabric Affair, New York, July
- Intertextile Shanghai, September
- Première Vision, Paris
- Paris Women's Fashion Week, October

GENERAL EXPORT ISSUES

Trade deals and the US tariffs are at the top of everyone's agenda, across all industries.

The US President's erratic and unpredictable policies are the major concern of most businesses, both for their sales to the US and globally. For the short term, Landed DDP transactions need to be handled carefully with some renegotiation where possible. For the longer term some companies will want to pass on the cost of additional tariffs to their buyers wherever they can.

We are pushing HMG to negotiate as low as possible tariff arrangements for B2C and B2B sales to the US and advising on the issues around the changes we expect to see to US De Minimis. This is complex as most UK companies export goods made elsewhere. Helping members and HMG to understand the US non-preferential ROO is ongoing.

We are advising HMG on the UK's own review on UK De Minimis threshold which is likely to go down (currently at £135).

We have briefings for members for when the UK-India agreement comes into effect but the final treaty text is still being scrubbed so we will update once the detail is agreed. Importers will benefit from day one but exporters generally manufacture locally to meet India's tight price points.

There has been a dramatic upturn in the number of face to face and online calls to discuss landed pricing and tariffs to the US and beyond.

As a consequence, many members have started to look back at the EU as a potential saviour market but the UK-EU trade agreement is still severely lacking and needs to be improved.

We continue to advocate strongly for improved trade support. Through Export Partners UK, we've engaged directly with five newly elected MPs, providing briefings and follow-up to equip them to raise informed questions in Parliament. Each meeting was constructive, and while we've made important early progress, ongoing engagement will be key to building a deeper understanding of the value of sustained business support.

International Business: Royal Visits



Royal Visit to Toray Textiles Europe

VISIT TO TORAY TEXTILES EUROPE IN MANSFIELD

On 7 April 2025, Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal visited Toray Textile Europe's (TTEL) fully vertical factory in Mansfield in her capacity as President of UKFT. The visit recognised TTEL's sustained investment in UK manufacturing and its leadership in high-performance textiles for sectors including healthcare, defence and industry. Since 2014, the company has invested over £20 million in advanced equipment across warping, weaving, dyeing and finishing, demonstrating a long-term commitment to innovation, scale and sustainability.



Royal Visit to LLUK

VISIT TO LLUK IN MAIDENHEAD

On 12 May 2025, the UKFT President visited LLUK's production facility in Maidenhead, Berkshire, recognising the company's contribution to sustaining UK-based textile manufacturing, specialist skills and ethical production. LLUK is a British manufacturer of luxury textile goods, supporting mills and leading brands across fashion, hospitality, automotive and events. With a strong commitment to craftsmanship and sustainability, the company is also focused on developing the next generation of skilled makers.

The 12,500 sq ft site includes over 60 sewing machines, 15 hand-sew stations and dedicated areas for embroidery, cutting and quality control. During the visit, Her Royal Highness met founder Rachel Walker, the Lord-Lieutenant of Berkshire, the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, and local partners. A tour of the facility showcased the company's machine and hand sewing capabilities, CMT services, and bespoke production, with LLUK's team demonstrating the high level of expertise and precision behind every stage of the process.



Compliance

Compliance

Meeting or anticipating global regulation and compliance is the biggest challenge facing members. As part of UKFT membership, we offer practical, business-focused support to help UK fashion and textile businesses navigate regulatory compliance across global markets. Our team works to ensure businesses are informed, prepared and aligned with current and upcoming legislation affecting the UK fashion and textile industry.



COMPLIANCE 101

In Q2 we introduced a new series of guides to help members understand their obligations across a wide range of issues and materials. The webinar series includes updates on the EU GPSR and EUDR have been delivered. Upcoming webinars on the EPR, GINETEX & Care Labelling and De-mystifying the ESPR & DPP. New member resources have been delivered alongside the webinars.

A global Compliance Overview webinar will be delivered at the end of July to highlight existing support to members and the importance of UKFT engagement. We continue to offer support on EPR schemes globally and our member exclusive testing and auditing offer with an associate partner has been well received.



EUROPEAN REGULATION FORESIGHT

Our activity in the EU is increasingly important and as well as being actively engaged with Euratex, we also interact directly with the EU Commission. This quarter our Compliance Manager was invited to present to the Commission on the need for derogations for PPE from new restrictions to the use of PFAS.

EU Commission to Withdraw Green Claims Directive & PEF: The future of the Green Claims Directive remains uncertain after the European Commission suggested it could be withdrawn if agreement isn't reached on its application to micro-enterprises, despite earlier consensus on their exemption. While withdrawal would halt the introduction of the Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) through this route, it remains part of other EU legislation, and companies must still substantiate environmental claims under existing regulations. UKFT is monitoring the situation as it develops.

USA: The compliance team hold quarterly meetings with the American Apparel and Footwear Association (AAFA) to discuss current and proposed US, EU and UK regulations. UKFT will participate and present at the upcoming AAFA Conference.



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 New Talent programme, we also bring together education and industry to ensure graduates have relevant experience and knowledge to enter the workplace.

NEW FASHION AND TEXTILES QUALIFICATION LAUNCHES IN SCOTLAND FOLLOWING INDUSTRY-LED DEVELOPMENT

A new qualification in fashion and textiles will be available to learners in Scotland from August 2025, marking the first time the BIIAB Award in Fashion and Textiles (Sewing and Textiles) at SCQF Level 4 (R895 04) has been offered north of the border. The expansion has been driven by industry collaboration and the active involvement of UKFT, whose role has been central to the qualification's development and accessibility in Scotland.

The Award, which has already seen strong uptake across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, has been developed in direct response to industry demand for a practical, pre-employment qualification. With over 1,700 learners registered for the Award and more than 600 on the Certificate since 2019, the qualification supports a range of manufacturing sub-sectors including sewn products, leather work, footwear, textile manufacturing, soft furnishings, surface patterning and textile care services.



Bowmer Bond technicians upskill with UKFT's Young Textile Technician Fund



Heriot Watt student Rhianne Dagg's work – Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Communication Design

Skills & Training

CRAFT AND DESIGN 'T' LEVEL

UKFT gave a keynote at the Craft and Design webinar hosted by the Education and Training Foundation, attended by a range of colleges already delivering the training and those new to delivery from September 2025.

UKFT APPROVED SCHEME

UKFT approved four new courses for delivery through the new Albion Knitting School in London. The school was established with support from UKFT and we attended the opening of the school on 23 June. The launch of the extended UKFT Approved Scheme into Higher Education was announced at the Education Partner Conference on the 20 May.

PRODUCTION SEWING MACHINIST PROGRAMME (PSM)

PSM is an online programme developed by UKFT, which 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 pre-recorded.

In Q2, there were 14 online learners and 40 offline learners. 70 people have now completed the course online and 59 offline, as well as 20 tutors. The update and extension of the PSM course is well underway .

HM PRISON & PROBATION SERVICE: PSM PROJECT

As a member of UKFT, His Majesty's Prison and Probations Service (HMPPS) has been working closely with UKFT to develop specialist Production Sewing Machinist Training for both Production Instructors running on-site prison workshops and prisoners working within textile workshops.

There are currently 73 textile workshops across 50 UK prisons. The programme designed by UKFT and HMPPS will help to standardise sewing machinist training across these workshops. It will support internal production processes while reflecting current practice within the fashion and textile manufacturing sector.

In Q2 2025, UKFT presented at the HMP Internal Annual Textile Conference, attended by Prison Governors, Prison Industry Managers, Textiles Workshop Instructors and external stakeholders. Since the event two new prison have come on board and course registrations processed.

The next PSM Train the trainer course is to be held in August at HMP Newton.

UKFT delivered a 'Meet the sector' day at HMP Hewell on 18 June 2025.

Skills & Training

PROMOTING CAREERS AND JOBS IN OUR INDUSTRY

As part of our commitment to promote the wealth of careers, employers and training opportunities available in the UK fashion and textile industry, UKFT works with local industry, training providers, schools and recruitment organisations to deliver an annual series of career events and job fairs across the UK.

On review of member locations, we will show at a series of new events across the UK starting in August in Leicester.



UKFT stand at Career Fair, November 2024

EDUCATION PARTNER CONFERENCE

UKFT held its first Education Partner Conference on 20 May bringing together a wide cross-section of representatives from the UK fashion and textile education and training landscape, including leading universities (such as London College of Fashion, Central St Martins, De Montfort, Leeds, Northumbria and Manchester), specialist institutions (like JCA Fashion Academy, The Tailoring Academy, and The College of Master Kilt Tailors), industry training providers (including Fashion Enter and The Sewing Rooms), and national organisations such as IfATE and The King's Foundation.

The conference focused on aligning education and skills development with the evolving needs of the UK fashion and textile industry. Key topics included the national skills agenda, the newly approved National Occupational Standards, UKFT's careers initiatives and the UKFT Academy. Sessions and breakout groups explored how to bridge gaps between education, research, training and industry, identify targeted interventions, address structural barriers, and maintain momentum in improving the sector's education and skills landscape.

During the conference UKFT outlined the findings of a new report, convened via a working group to address concerns from higher education institutions about how graduate job outcomes in fashion and textiles are classified in the HESA Graduate Outcomes survey. The group found that many graduate roles are misclassified as negative outcomes, despite being recognised by industry as graduate-level jobs, leading to reputational and recruitment risks for affected courses. The resulting detailed report outlines a series of recommendations, including reclassifying key job roles, influencing ONS classifications and improving sector understanding through dedicated resources.



UKFT's Education Partners Conference, May 2025

Skills & Training

UKFT BURSARY PROGRAMMES

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.

The 24/25 Made It programme is well underway, with the masterclasses concluded and 10 student finalists selected. We received 39 applications and selected the 10 students from the following universities:

- De Montfort.
- University of Leeds.
- Heriot Watt University.
- Nottingham Trent University.
- London Metropolitan University.
- Manchester Metropolitan University.
- Loughborough University.
- Bath Spa University.

We have secured internships at the following UK businesses for finalists:

- Barrie Knitwear.
- Suzie Turner Couture.
- KC Manufacturing.
- Barbour.
- Knitster London.
- E.L.V Denim.

Businesses interested in hosting interns for these types of programmes should contact info@ukft.org



Skills & Training: Education Partner Activity

UKFT Young Textile Technician Fund:

Designed to allow businesses across the UK to train their young textile technicians. The fund covers 50% of the costs of in-depth training for young textile technicians, thanks to the generous support of The Worshipful Company of Weavers, The Worshipful Company of Clothworkers and The Worshipful Company of Drapers.

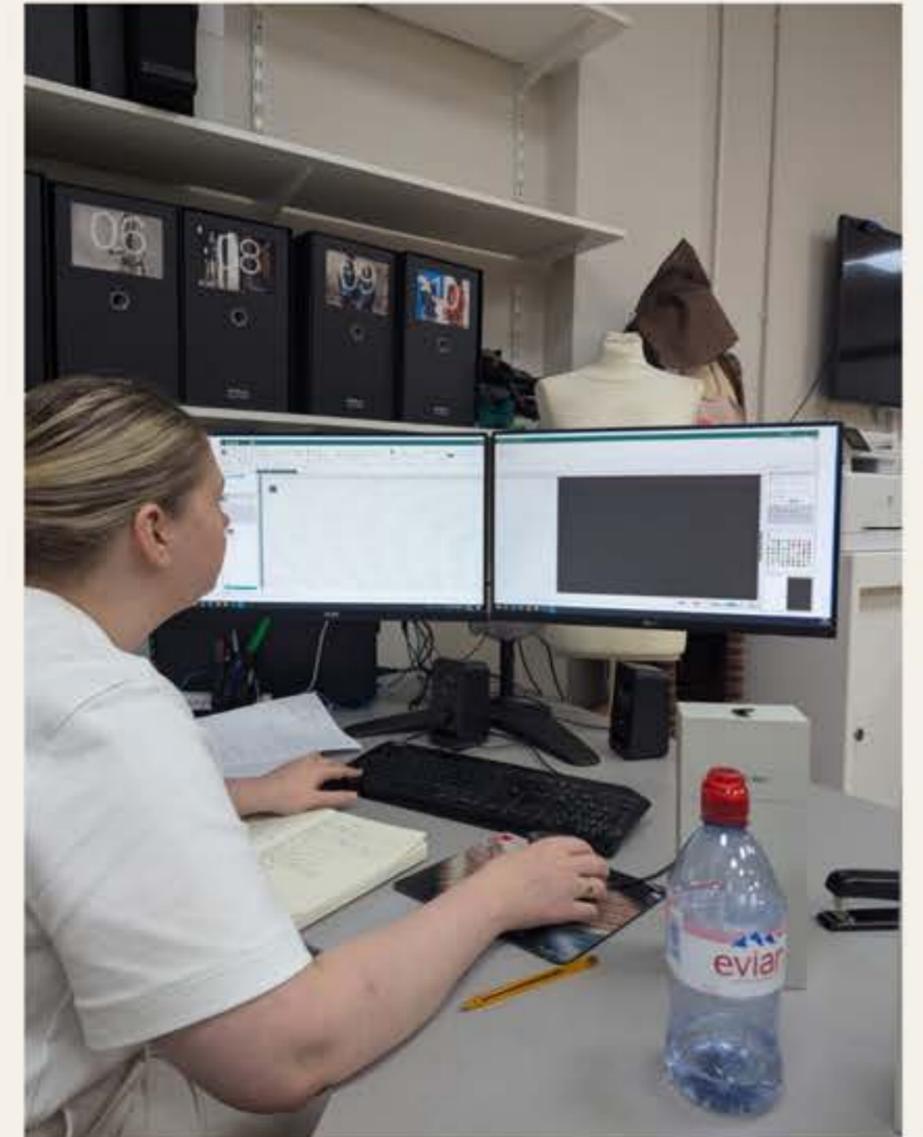
In Q2, we supported three companies and nine young textile technicians. These included two members of the design team at Robert Mackie of Scotland who completed specialist training on Stoll Create software.

Samantha Davidson (32), Design and Product Co-Ordinator, and Cara Anderson (26), Designer, took part in the course at Stoll Knit-Design Centre in Leicester.

“

Stoll Create allows us to create visually realistic CADs to present to customers, which helps reduce the number of samples we need,' said Samantha.

'It can also be used alongside our current M1 Programme, which would allow us to make technical changes based on customer feedback. That saves time for our technicians and reduces overall sample lead times.



Samantha Davidson at Robert Mackie took part in the course at Stoll Knit-Design Centre in Leicester, with support from the Young Textile Technician Fund

Innovation & Sustainability

The launch of FASHTRAX – a digital compliance platform developed by UKFT Education Partner Manchester Fashion Institute with support from InterAct



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.

SUSTAINABILITY SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS

We have launched the UKFT Sustainability clinic, which is an opportunity to provide members with more tailored support, and have engaged with a range of brands and retailers.

We have launched the UKFT and University of Huddersfield CPD on Sustainable Practices in the Textile and Fashion Industry. Three members are currently trialling the course.

SUSTAINABILITY 101

UKFT's Sustainability 101 series been created to support and guide the sustainable development of the fashion and textiles industry in the UK. The guides and webinars delve into the core principles of sustainability and what it means for our industry. It explores the fundamental concepts and practices required to shape a more sustainable industry via simple guides and thought-provoking but practical webinars.

The series now comprises:

- Issue 1: Standards and Certifications
- Issue 2: Green Claims
- Issue 3: Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence
- Issue 4: Chemical Compliance

Plus accompanying webinars

Coming soon:

- Issue 5: EU Legislation Issue 6: Energy and Carbon

During Q2 2025, we held Sustainability 101 webinars related to energy and carbon on:

- The business case for ISO 50001 energy audit, how this can support energy regulation in UK and also support best practice/efficiency
- A deep dive into legal compliance relating to energy, carbon and climate, which businesses are in scope and how to effectively comply with it using tools and frameworks etc.
- GHG accounting



Innovation & Sustainability

SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS: UNITING INDUSTRY AND EDUCATION

Circular Fashion Innovation Network:

The Circular Fashion Innovation Network (CFIN) is an industry-led programme led by UKFT and the British Fashion Council (BFC) in partnership with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to accelerate the UK towards a Circular Fashion Ecosystem. UKFT leads on the Sustainable manufacturing and Textile recycling infrastructure pillars.

The CFIN project came to an end in May 2025.

During Q2, we ran:

- An AI-enabled UK manufacturing pilot that improved turnaround and cut fabric waste
- Robotics and automation research with MMU focused on productivity and skills
- A reshoring feasibility study involving major retailers, identifying knitwear, jersey, print and CMT as viable UK production areas
- The creation of a National Textile Recycling Infrastructure Plan, aligned with ACT, to provide a strategic roadmap for UK recycling

ACT UK:

Every year, the UK generates over 1 million tonnes of used textiles. Around one-third are non-rewearable textiles (NRTs) that are typically landfilled, incinerated or exported. The ACT UK project set out to address this by enabling the transition from manual sorting to scalable, automated processing of NRTs—supporting the UK's shift towards a circular textiles economy.

Led by UKFT and funded by Innovate UK, this two-year collaboration brought together 20 partners across recycling, retail, manufacturing, collection and academia to design and develop a national model for Advanced Textile Sorting and Pre-processing (ATSP). The project concluded on 31 March 2025 with the following key outcomes:

- A UK-first blueprint for an automated textile sorting facility, ready for implementation
- Consumer trials that demonstrated practical approaches to household-level pre-sorting
- A major technology investment to strengthen domestic fibre-to-fibre recycling infrastructure
- Independent research highlighting the economic challenges facing textile recyclers and identifying areas for policy and investment support

Together, these outcomes create the foundation for a scalable, UK-based sorting solution that can supply high-quality feedstock for fibre-to-fibre recycling—positioning the UK as a leader in automated textile circularity.



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