



ukft[®]

What we've been doing on your behalf

UKFT Q4 2025

www.ukft.org

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A letter from Adam Mansell, CEO

The final quarter of 2025 closed with strong membership growth and sustained engagement across the UK fashion and textile sector. Our focus remained clear: supporting members through practical guidance, strengthening skills and education, and ensuring the sector's voice is heard at home and internationally.

We welcomed new members across fashion, textiles, education and recycling, while deepening relationships through visits, events and targeted roundtables. Members told us they value the clarity, connections and hands-on support that membership brings, particularly at a time of financial pressure, trade uncertainty and regulatory change.

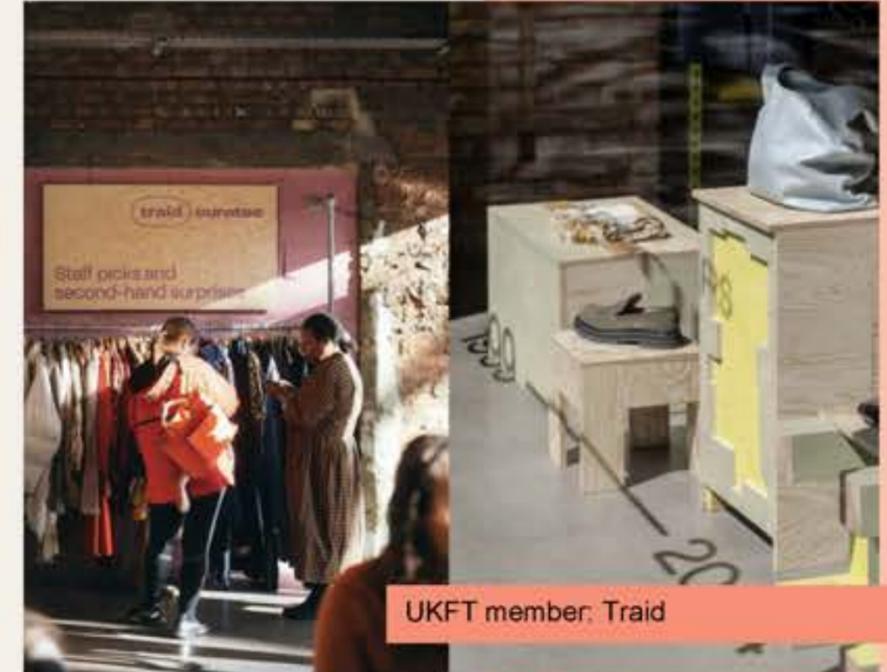
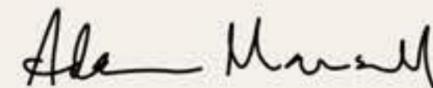
Advocacy remained central to our work. We continued to press government and EU stakeholders on the challenges facing our sector, from industrial strategy exclusion to skills funding, trade agreements and sustainability regulation. Alongside this, our international activity supported members navigating global supply chains, new tariffs and sourcing opportunities, with strong engagement around trade shows, missions and export advice.

Across innovation, sustainability, compliance and skills, our team delivered practical support, trusted guidance and forward-looking projects, from sustainability clinics and compliance webinars to education partnerships and workforce development. Our communications and thought leadership strengthened visibility and influence, ensuring members' priorities were reflected in policy discussions and public debate.

Once again, this quarter reinforced our role as a trusted membership organisation funded by the industry for the industry. We remain focused on keeping our members informed and connected, supporting both immediate business needs and the long-term strength of the sector.

Please keep sharing your successes and challenges with us. Your insight helps us champion members' interests, address shared issues and identify new opportunities. Together, we can achieve more.

Kind Regards
Adam Mansell, CEO of UKFT



UKFT member: Traid



UKFT member: KC Manufacturing

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.

IN Q4, NEW MEMBERS INCLUDE:

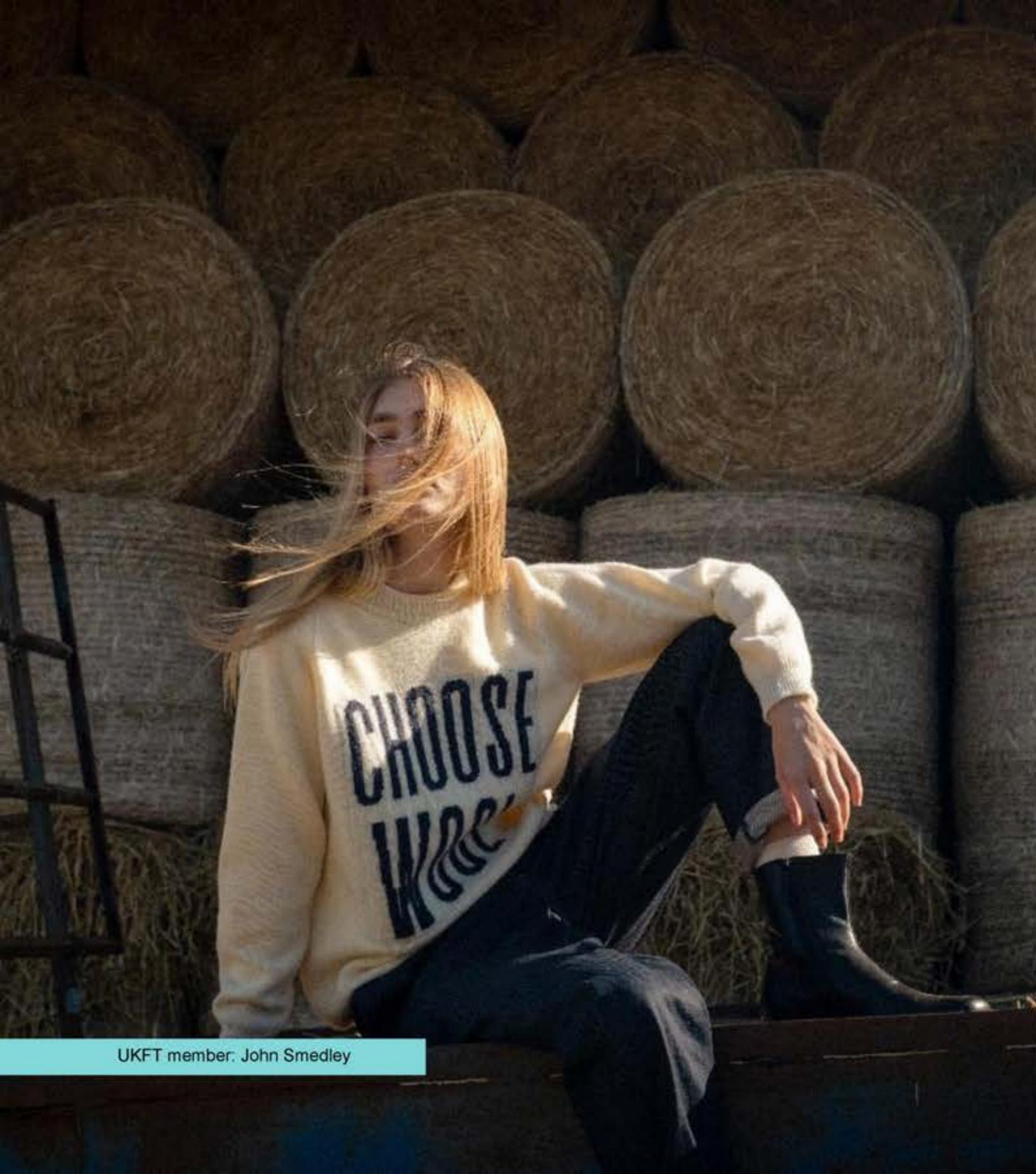
- Women's Best
- Montane
- Elizabeth Scarlett
- Fanatics
- Lululemon
- The Manchester College
- Fab Materials



UKFT member: Continental Textiles



UKFT member: Only the Blind



UKFT member: John Smedley



UKFT member: Post Carbon Lab

Membership

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

In Q4 2025, we...

- Visited more than 50 members in their offices, studios, factories and stores.
- Published [21 member spotlights](#)
- Shared a steady programme of member opportunities from craftsmanship programmes to innovation funding, manufacturing support and international trade missions
- Held the [2025 Sustainability conference](#): Innovation in Action in London, attended by more than 250 people
- Hosted the Weaving networking dinner in Bradford, attended by more than 100 people
- Held our first Policy & Regulation roundtable for very large members and retail partners
- Continued our textile industry roundtable series
- Held our first roundtable for the reuse & recycling sector to discuss trade challenges and the impact of legislation on the sector
- Launched the UKFT Industry Energy Portfolio Scheme with our partner Envantage
- Launched our new podcast and video series, [Grow Your UK Fashion & Textile Business](#), now available on YouTube, Spotify and Apple Podcasts. This series is designed to deepen understanding of UKFT's work and provide accessible, expert insight to members and the wider sector.

WHAT OUR MEMBERS SAY

“

Thank you so for taking the time to visit us in Harrogate and for all the help and introductions as well, it is so valuable and I feel much clearer and excited about being a member of UKFT now

- Eleanor Charles



UKFT member: Lindsay Girvan Future Vintage

“

I became a member in 2025 and haven't looked back. UKFT have been absolutely fabulous! From the connections made (and subsequent business done) at the London summer reception in 2025, to the true support from the wonderful team, I couldn't speak more highly of UKFT. I have been impressed by the organisation, excellent communication and depth of knowledge on offer by the friendly people working in UKFT.

- Lindsay Girvan Future Vintage

Membership

“

Thanks again compiling such an in-depth list of recourses for me. You've been a great support for the project!

- Abi McMahon, KTP Associate / Business Strategist, Abraham Moon

“

In response to a Member Spotlight promo:

Amazing, thank you for turning this around so quickly! It's great and I'm really happy with it

- Adam Robertson, Director, KC Manufacturing

“

Being a UKFT member has given me access to support across every area of my business, from marketing guidance to sustainability insights and wider opportunities for collaboration. The team has been genuinely proactive in helping me connect with the right people, explore new partnerships, and take part in industry talks that have raised the visibility of Fashion Toolbox. It's been a valuable network for both personal growth and business development, and I'm pleased to be part of a community driving the industry forward.

- Fashion Toolbox

“

Well done Katie and a huge thank you to you and the UKFT team for organising the dinner. It was great to see everyone, meet new people and get together as an industry

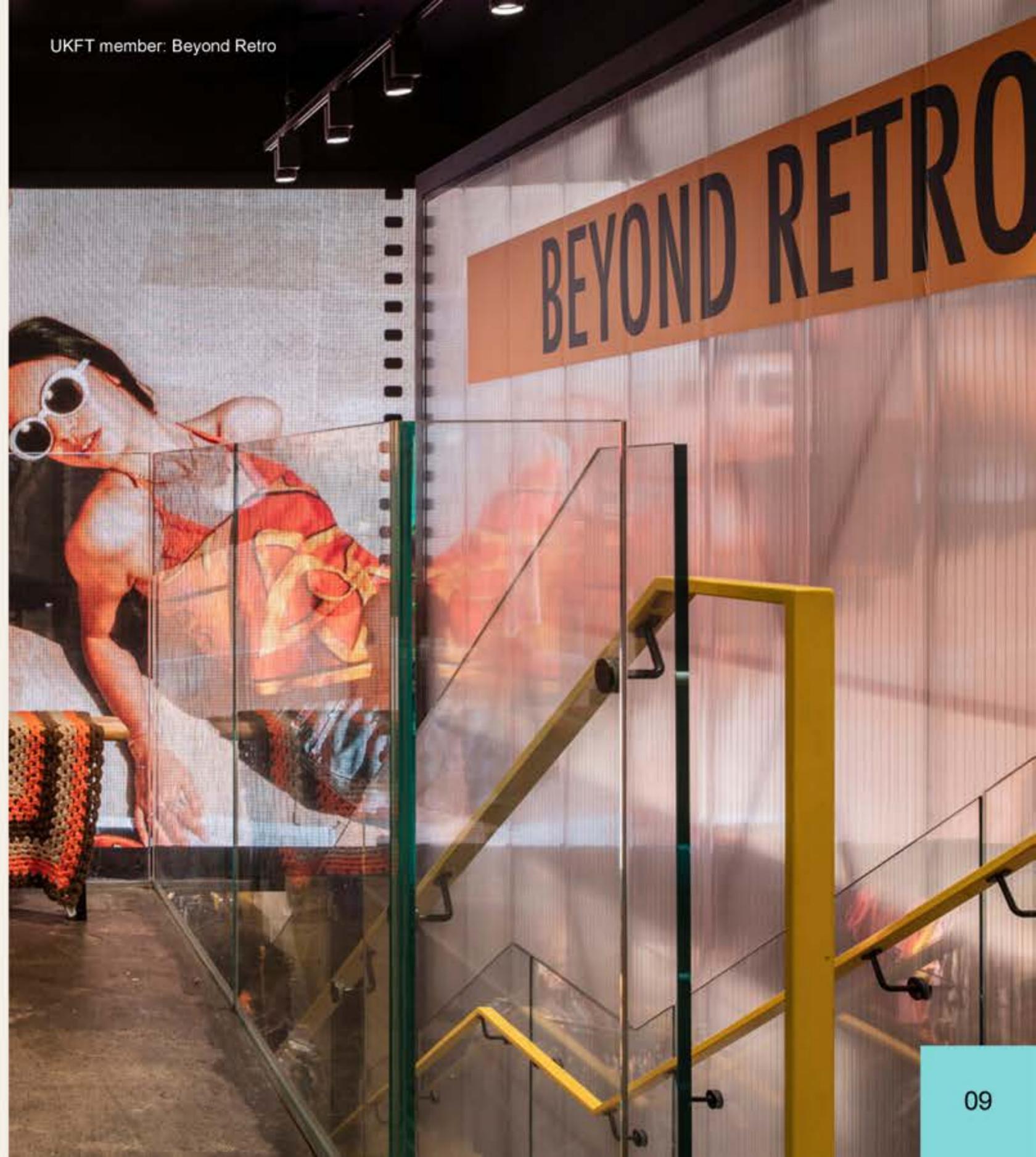
- Julius Walters, MD, Stephen Walters



UKFT member: Stephen Walters



UKFT member: iinouio and SATCoL





Voice of the Industry



Royal visit to British Wool, October 2025

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.

Earlier in the year the government announced plans to cut electricity bills for manufacturers. However, recently published details on the British Industrial Competitiveness Scheme reveal that the fashion and textile industry is not eligible to access the scheme. This is clear example of the impact of the Government's decision to only provide support for the eight sectors of the economy (IS8) specified in the Industrial Strategy. The recently launched Post-16 Skills White Paper also makes it very clear that new skills support will only be focused on the IS8. Although not yet confirmed it is expected that R&D funding available through Innovate UK and UKRI will also only be targeted to the IS8.

This focus on the IS8 will be very damaging to the UK fashion and textile sector and will act as a significant break on industrial growth at a time when the general economy and international trade is very challenging. UKFT has started a campaign to highlight the detrimental impact of the focus on IS8.

At the same time, considerable funding is being devolved to Combined Authorities and regional powers. While these regional funds are also focused on the IS8 there is greater flexibility in regional funding to support important regional economic or manufacturing clusters. To ensure the fashion and textile sector is able to make the best use of regional funding opportunities, UKFT will increase its engagement with local government in key regions.

Once again, however, UKFT is being consulted by government on a very regular basis particularly on international trade issues. UKFT has been closely involved in the final stages of the negotiation of the UK-South Korea Free Trade Agreement and has also given oral evidence on the UK-India FTA to a House of Lords Select Committee.

The Government has recently launched a consultation on the potential impacts of the joining the Regional Convention on Pan-Euro Mediterranean (PEM) Preferential Rules of Origin. This is very encouraging as UKFT has been urging the government to join the Pan-Euro-Mediterranean Convention since Brexit. We have consistently highlighted the benefits of PEM membership to every Secretary of State at the Department for Business and Trade and every Prime Minister since the UK's departure from the EU. We have submitted the organisations response and have actively encouraged members to respond. On behalf of the government we have also asked Euratex and other EU associations to respond to the consultation.

In November UKFT submitted a response to UN Environmental Programme's (UNEP) draft Global Guidelines on Used Textiles. The UNEP guidelines pose a significant risk to the UK reuse and recycling industry.

The publication of DEFRA's Circular Economy Strategy has been delayed until Spring 2026. It is hoped that the Strategy will contain recommendations for a UK textiles EPR. In collaboration with the BRC and BFC, UKFT continues to lobby government on the pressing need for UK EPR, particularly in light of the EU's announcement that EPR will be mandatory across the EU by 2028. UKFT's National Textile Recycling Infrastructure Plan was launched in late September as part of UKFT's broader push for a fully operating circular economy.

UKFT is a very active member of Euratex, the European Apparel and Textile Federation and uses this channel to help shape the development of legislation in the EU. This quarter has seen UKFT take a leading role in shaping the European industry's response to a raft of environmental and regulatory challenges. UKFT also maintains a close connection with the America Apparel and Footwear Association (AAFA), with both organisations sharing insights and foresights on legislative challenges.

Voice of the Industry

ROYAL VISITS

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal has served as President of UKFT for 40 years and remains a committed advocate for the UK fashion and textile sector. Each year she visits UKFT member companies to recognise the innovation, creativity and craftsmanship that underpin British manufacturing. This quarter, she visited British Wool's South Molton depot to mark its 75th anniversary and Edward Green's Northampton factory to highlight the strength of British shoemaking and its export success.

The visit to British Wool was particularly significant, coinciding with Her Royal Highness's own 75th birthday year. At the South Molton depot, one of eight regional centres operated by British Wool, she toured the grading facilities, met farmers and staff, and learned more about the organisation's work to promote natural, traceable fibres for fashion, furnishings and interiors. British Wool, based in Bradford, is owned by around 30,000 UK sheep farmers and plays a central role in collecting, grading and marketing British wool internationally.

Andrew Hogley, CEO of British Wool, said the visit was “a fitting tribute to an industry that is proud of its heritage and focused on a sustainable future.”

At Edward Green, Her Royal Highness viewed her own lasts originally made in the 1990s and toured the workshop, seeing both traditional handcraft and modern techniques such as CAD pattern development. The family-owned company employs around 60 craftspeople in Northampton, producing approximately 8,000 pairs of Goodyear welted shoes each year, with 80% exported to markets including Japan, Italy and the US. Managing Director Hilary Freeman said the visit recognised “the enduring strength of Northampton's shoemaking heritage,” which the company has upheld since its founding in 1890.



UKFT Royal visit to Pincroft



Royal visit to British Wool, October 2025

International Business



Paris Fashion Week, September 2025

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.



Hong Kong Fashion Summit, December 2025

INTERTEXTILE SHANGHAI APPAREL FABRICS (AUTUMN 2025)

We supported UK textile companies at Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics – Autumn Edition, held from 2 - 4 September 2025 in Shanghai. UKFT coordinated a Discover British Textiles stand featuring samples from 20 UK mills and innovators, showcasing a broad range of heritage and technical fabrics, including woven and knitted textiles, performance materials, silks, linens and denim. The stand complemented individual UK exhibitors and provided a platform for targeted introductions between UK suppliers and international buyers. On the first day UKFT hosted a seminar outlining the current capabilities of the UK supply chain, sustainability progress and collaborative opportunities. The event served to raise the profile of British textile expertise in one of the largest apparel fabric trade shows globally and to connect ethical, sustainable UK partners with potential customers and collaborators.

PREMIÈRE VISION PARIS (SEPTEMBER 2025)

From 16 - 18 September 2025, UKFT accompanied a delegation of 29 British textile companies to Première Vision Paris, an influential sourcing fair for high-end fabrics and design. The UKFT stand in Hall 6 displayed samples from 20 UK mills in addition to the exhibitors' own stands, while a strong contingent of UK designers and surface specialists featured in Hall 5. The show's revised layout emphasised luxury trends and global sourcing, with a focus on quality, innovation and technology. Visitors included predominantly European buyers, with notable engagement from Middle East representatives. UKFT observed steady interest despite lower overall footfall compared with past editions, and exhibitors reported valuable engagements across both AW26/7 and upcoming SS27 collections.

International Business

PARIS WOMEN'S FASHION WEEK (SEP–OCT 2025)

Paris Women's Fashion Week (29 September–7 October) provided opportunities for over 110 UK brands across tradeshows, showrooms and independent showcases supported by UKFT's Discover British Brands in Paris Map. Most UK exhibitors reported positive meetings with key buyers and press, particularly from the EU, US, Canada, Japan and the Middle East. Tradeshows such as Première Classe and Splash! Paris delivered constructive engagement, while independent catwalk shows highlighted UK creativity and design excellence. Despite economic uncertainty and ongoing tariff challenges, the overall sentiment was optimistic, with improvements in business discussions and international visibility for British designers.

TEXTILE RESEARCH TRIP TO SOUTH KOREA

Our team visited Seoul in South Korea in early December, undertaking meetings and visits with the British Embassy, the British Chamber of Commerce in Korea and key textile agents. At the same time, we updated our knowledge of key fashion stores.

NEXT SEASON

We have confirmed a supported programme with the Department for Business and Trade to cover a limited number of key events between September 2025 and March 2026. With the exception of Milano Unica in January 2026, these will all be fashion-based events as this is the area of key interest for government. For all other activity we have secured funding from the Worshipful Company of Clothworkers to take UK textiles to new markets.

SOURCING

We have been curating a series of strategic sourcing opportunities for members, building on the success of last year's trial and in response to the evolving global geopolitical landscape. During the quarter, our sourcing trips to Ethiopia, Egypt, Jordan and Morocco have been well received by members.

MEMBER SUPPORT

There have been many calls about the end to US De Minimis Rules and the new US Additional Tariffs. Additionally, companies have been affected by the volatility around the US tariffs in China and India with companies increasingly looking to safe-shore their manufacturing. Our sourcing trips have been well timed in this regard although the safest form of safe-shoring would be reshoring and many UK CMT manufacturing factories are desperate for some new business.

Looking ahead, we see changes to EU De Minimis and UK De Minimis which will come in to effect in 2029/30.

We travelled to Paris with some members to support their conversations with the French equivalent of the MOD to secure new export orders for UK technical textiles.

International Business

GENERAL EXPORT TRENDS

Business remains challenging in most markets. Whilst some of the key US department stores have begun making payments in arrears again, many businesses have been putting off key decisions and investments in 2025 due to concerns over an erratic market.



UKFT and DBT with Chinese buyers in Edinburgh

SUCCESSES THIS SEASON FROM OUR INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

A number of major brands and retailers have been closely involved with our sourcing activity this season.

A group of textile companies have agreed to accompany UKFT to Vietnam in February for the second UKFT presence at VIATT. We are working on a new offer of small pod-stands with a member discount which has been negotiated.

A major Spanish retailer has asked UKFT to guide them to new UK partners in Paris Fashion Week in 2026. This has been some time in the pipeline and is an activity where we are being supported by our Embassy in Madrid.

MIM in Morocco in November 2025



Compliance

Ava gave a presentation on PFAS in Brussels



Compliance

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 and international fashion and textile industry. We engage with policymakers in the UK government and in the EU Commission through our active participation in Euratex, ensuring members are kept up to date with developments across Europe. The Compliance team provide support and advice across a large portfolio of compliance and regulatory issues. The team is extremely busy and receive multiple queries every day.

In Q4 2025, we...

LABELLING COMPLIANCE

- Created UKFT Guide to Pony Leather and Pony Hair for labelling and ecommerce sales.

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

- Delivered a C101 webinar on the EU EPR & DPP to stop the spread of misinformation.
- Delivered a talk at the Society of Dyers and Colourists Conference on the current and proposed regulatory landscape.
- Delivered a C101 webinar on Understanding Green Claims.
- Delivered a paid lecture at the University of Leeds on Sustainability Legislation to Masters students.
- Created UKFT Guide to UK Pricing Compliance prior to Black Friday promotions for members.
- Created UKFT Guide to Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive.
- Created UKFT Guide to Sustainability Certifications for ECGTD Compliance.

EPR OBLIGATIONS

- Published member guidance on new EU Waste Framework Directive which requires EU member states to introduce mandatory Textile EPR schemes.

TRADE REGULATIONS

- Created a UKFT Guide to Non-Preferential Certificates of Origin for second-hand goods.
- Created a UKFT Guide to the End of the EU De Minimis Rule.

IN PRACTICE CASE STUDY

UKFT members have required additional support regarding the ECGTD and existing certification schemes as they may no longer comply following the implementation date of 27 September 2026. The team had meetings with legal counsel, certification providers, Euratex and others to generate detailed guidance on next steps. Many UKFT members have chosen to wait until UKFT guidance was provided.

Skills & Training

Alice Newton, Young Textile Technician Fund



Skills & Training

As the Government appointed Sector Skills Body (SSB) for fashion and textiles, UKFT works to address critical skills gaps and develop industry-led solutions. We help to elevate the skills of the UK fashion and textile industry to maintain its competitive position globally.

We bring together education and industry to respond to current and future workforce requirements. We develop new vocational and academic routes that meet the needs of business and promote careers and opportunities to the next generation.

We help fashion and textile businesses to attract, train and retain the best.



SECTOR SKILLS BODY OVERVIEW

Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper (England):

The white paper sets out the Government vision for Post-16 Education and Skills with most recommendations/ interventions commencing in 2027. Industrial Strategy sectors are prime beneficiaries.

Skills England already modelling several approaches to match 'priority' vocational qualifications and Apprenticeship standards alongside funding allocations.

Impact: 2026 will be a year of turmoil and change. Employers will be asked for additional monetary contributions for training. Existing funding methodology being reviewed and major changes to Apprenticeships and Vocational Qualifications.

ENGLAND

'T' Levels:

The Craft & Design 'T' Level was first taught in September 2024, with more colleges coming on stream from September 2025. Though much turbulence in the education sector is anticipated in 2026, 'T' Levels will continue to be the main concentration for government.

Impact: Many Colleges are reporting multiple issues within delivery structure (too much emphasis on written tests) leading to students dropping out or failing their first year. Colleges are now withdrawing the 'T' Level from portfolios and transferring students onto alternative vocational provision. UKFT will set up a working group in early 2026 to investigate further.

WALES

Qualifications Wales approved the extension of the use of the 11 SEG Awards fashion and textiles vocational qualifications until the end of 2028.

Impact: Our Welsh Apprenticeship Framework covering Levels 2,3 and 4 continues to be available and funded for the near future.

Skills & Training

SCOTLAND

The new Modern Apprenticeship frameworks have been approved and published by the Scottish Apprenticeship Approvals Group.

Impact: Three Modern Apprenticeship (MA) Frameworks are now available in Scotland (Modern Apprenticeship in Fashion & Textiles Manufacture and Aftercare at SCQF Level 5; Modern Apprenticeship in Fashion & Textiles 'Heritage' framework at SCQF Level 6 (hosts Kiltmaking); and Modern Apprenticeship in Fashion & Textiles 'Heritage' framework at SCQF Level 7.)



CONSULTATION

We have responded to a Scottish Government questionnaire around the different elements of the Modern Apprenticeship certification function and the value added that certification bodies provide to the process. This process is to potentially centralise certification activity to The Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

Impact: The SFC does not have the ability nor expertise to confirm competence within the Modern Apprenticeship programme and any transfer of responsibility would be a major concern.

COLLABORATION

GLA - London Growth Plan:

The Strategy aims to build a more connected and responsive employment, skills, and careers system to enable Londoners to gain the skills they need to enter and progress in good work and give employers the skills they need to grow. UKFT attended the first Creative Sector roundtable to help shape the Inclusive Talent Strategy, which is a key action from the **London Growth Plan**.

UKFT's Director of Skills has been appointed to the Interim Creative Talent Board.

Skills & Training



UKFT Futures at Job Fair in Manchester, October 2025

EDUCATION PARTNERS

Graduate Outcomes:

Limitations in the Graduate Outcomes Survey methodology are resulting in several legitimate graduate-level roles being recorded as negative outcomes. This conflicts with employer classifications, which recognise these roles as appropriate graduate employment.

In response, UKFT convened a working group of higher education institutions from its Education Partner membership to examine the issue and produce an evidence-based report. The report, alongside a joint letter setting out recommended actions, was submitted to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Impact: HESA responded promptly and convened a constructive meeting at which next steps were agreed. HESA described the report as *“very impressive, with clear recommendations and robust data”*.

PROJECT UPDATES

UKFT Futures:

As part of UKFT’s commitment to promoting the breadth of careers, employers and training opportunities within the UK fashion and textile industry, we work in partnership with local industry, training providers, schools and recruitment organisations. Together, we deliver an annual programme of careers events and job fairs across the UK. The UKFT Futures website supports this activity by showcasing job roles and career pathways within the sector, alongside a dedicated jobs board.

Job fairs:

During Q4, UKFT attended job fairs in Wrexham, Glasgow, Manchester and London meeting over 325 job seekers.

Careers events:

UKFT attended the London School and College Leavers Festival in partnership with five Education Partners. At the event, we engaged with approximately 150 young people.

Skills & Training

UKFT Futures content:

New careers-focused articles have been developed in collaboration with members including Camira, AW Hainsworth and Wooltex. These pieces highlight a wider range of job roles and companies, helping to inspire more people to consider careers in the sector.



Edinburgh Careers Fair, September 2025

TRAINING SUPPORT FOR COMPANIES

BAE Systems:

We delivered Sewing Machinist Training for BAE SOLENT 967 in October; with a second cohort planned for Spring 2026 delivery. This resulted in standardised training across all BAE stitch departments.

Bursary schemes:

In 2025, UKFT ran a £250,000 bursary programme to support new entrants to the industry or those taking their first steps in fashion and textiles careers. The programme includes:

- **Leeds University BSc in Textile Sustainability & Innovation:** With the support of several Livery Companies, UKFT is funding a second cohort of 13 students starting the course, alongside the original cohort of 6 students now entering their second year.
- **Weavers × UKFT Bursary:** Five paid internships have been provided for students at:
 - Chinti & Parker
 - Dash & Miller
 - Barbour
 - Oxfam
 - Margo Selby

- **MADE IT:** In the final year of this scheme, UKFT has supported 10 students with paid placements at:
 - Barrie Knitwear
 - Suzie Turner Couture
 - KC Manufacturing
 - Barbour
 - Knitster London
 - E.L.V Denim
 - The London Embroidery Studio
 - Standing Ground
 - Carl Stuart Tailors
- **Haberdashers × UKFT Internship Bursary:** The first Haberdashers' scholarship has been awarded, with the recipient placed at Patrick McDowell.



Innovation & Sustainability

Lauren at the WTIN Innovate event in Shanghai, October 2025

International Textile Innovation Conference 国际纺织创新大会

What's next for 新一代材料是

Challenges

- Water footprint (e.g. 12.5 billion litres of water annually for cotton cultivation).
- Chemical pollution (e.g. dyes and fertilisers) and water contamination.
- Energy footprint.
- Biodiversity and land use.

行业挑战

- 水足迹（例如，仅棉花种植每年消耗12.5万亿升水）。
- 化学污染（例如，农药与染料）和水污染；
- 能源足迹；
- 生物多样性丧失与土地退化。



Innovation & Sustainability

The sustainability and innovation team provide crucial support for members trying to navigate the ever-changing sustainability landscape. In a recent industry survey 76% of respondents said their number one source of information on sustainability was UKFT.

UKFT also continues to lead or participate in a wide range of research projects on sustainability.

In Q4, we...

- Held sustainability clinics with a wide range of members.
- Concluded our Sustainability 101 series for 2025 with two webinars on demystifying GOTS and developing a decarbonisation strategy.
- Provided targeted sustainability support for members, including guidance on waste targets, next-generation materials, certifications, green claims, modern slavery compliance, responsible sourcing strategies, surplus material commercialisation, and supply-chain responsibility
- Delivered a series of three lectures for MA students at the University of Westminster.
- Worked with the skills team to redefine the national occupational standards on sustainability and circularity.
- Delivered a workshop at The Mills Fabrica with 20 UKFT members as part of the Environmental Impact Project with Northumbria University and the Royal College of Art.
- Published the report "Investment in Sustainable Fashion: Opportunities and Success Stories", in partnership with the British Fashion Council (BFC).
- Joined the judging panel at a Blue Garage 'Innovation Demo Day' event in October 2025.
- Delivered a presentation as part of the 'Innovate China' event on "Threading the Future: Innovation Across the Fashion & Textile Supply-chain" in city of Keqiao, November 2025.
- Attended the Ellen McArthur Foundation event in November 2025 'Turning the Promise of the Circular Economy into Real-World Systems Change'.

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www.ukft.org
info@ukft.org