Innovative Solutions Win Fabric of Change Award to Tackle Fashion Industry’s Sustainability Problems

New technologies for renewable cotton & polyester, plus initiative supporting ethical artisan supply chains win challenge launched by C&A Foundation & Ashoka

Copenhagen, Denmark (May 13, 2016) -- Three extraordinary initiatives received Fabric of Change awards yesterday at the Copenhagen Fashion Summit, hosted by fashion icon Amber Valetta and fashion writer Derek Blasburg. The Summit convened key players seeking to solve the industry’s sustainability challenges.

Evrnu, Ambercycle, and Nest were awarded grants totalling €100,000 by C&A Foundation, which, in partnership with Ashoka, launched the Fabric of Change challenge last year to spotlight and support fresh approaches to transforming the fashion industry.

- **Evrnu™ Social Purpose Corp - €50,000 Grand Prize Winner**: Transforms cotton garment waste into fiber for the creation of new, quality clothing.

- **Ambercycle - €20,000**: Engineers microbes that eat waste plastic and produce the raw materials for 100% renewably sourced polyesters. Rather than starting with petroleum, waste plastic becomes the raw material for new fabric that has the same qualities as virgin polyester—and it’s cheaper to produce.

- **Nest - €20,000**: Develops compliance standards to ensure women artisans benefit from ethical and economically viable sourcing partnerships with leading retailers.

The winners were selected by a panel of judges from a pool of 10 Finalists that emerged from more than 300 online entries from 55 countries. Judges included Amy Hall, Director of Social Consciousness of EILEEN FISHER, Inc., and Leslie Johnston, Executive Director of C&A Foundation. (See below for the names of all members of the judging panel.)

“Is it possible to eliminate waste? When 70-85% of our clothes end up in landfills and 415 billion pounds of plastics are consumed each year, we need the innovative technologies developed by Evrnu and Ambercycle," Johnston said. "When taken to scale, these two companies can help bring new life to old plastic and textile waste."

“Nest could be a game-changer for brands, because right now there isn’t any way to accurately evaluate and monitor artisan supply chains for ethics and sustainability,” Hall said. “Their methodology could enable brands like us to support artisan supply chains.”
In a next phase of Fabric of Change, C&A Foundation and Ashoka will elect new Ashoka Fellows, who will receive three years of financial support for their work and access to a global network of changemakers.

“With their visionary work, passion, and perseverance, social entrepreneurs give us all a reason to be optimistic about the future of fashion,” Stephanie Schmidt, Managing Director at Ashoka, said. “We want Fabric of Change to become a platform for social entrepreneurs to connect with each other, scale their impact, and build more bridges with the industry to open up new opportunities. This is the power of collaborative entrepreneurship.”

Additional Information

Judging Panel of Industry Experts
Tamara Hasan Abed, Senior Director - BRAC Enterprises
Edward Brenninkmeijer, Chairman - C&A Foundation; Global CEO - C&A
Anna Burger, Executive Director - New Conversation’s Project
Amy Hall, Director of Social Consciousness - EILEEN FISHER, Inc.
Leslie Johnston, Executive Director - C&A Foundation
Scott Leonard, CEO & Co-Founder - Indigenous Designs
Helio Mattar, CEO - AKATU Institute of Conscious Consumption

Winners Video, Additional Quotes and Images of Challenge Participants
Visit: bit.ly/fabricofchangepresskit

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About C&A Foundation
C&A Foundation is a corporate foundation affiliated with the global clothing retailer C&A. The Foundation works to transform fashion by helping to build a more industry that respect the rights of workers, improve livelihoods and the conserve the environment. We work together with key partners to achieve the best results and greatest long term impact. From farmers to factory workers, we help build strong and resilient communities in all the countries we touch.

About Ashoka
Ashoka's vision is an “Everyone is a Changemaker” society. Founded in 1980 by Bill Drayton who coined the term “social entrepreneurship”, Ashoka is the largest global network of leading social entrepreneurs. Every year we select about 150 Fellows around the world based on their social innovation, creativity, entrepreneurial qualities and potential to achieve large-scale impact. We build and activate networks of individuals and organizations to support them to address the world's biggest social challenges and foster collaborations for greater effectiveness and results.

About Ashoka Changemakers
Changemakers convenes and connects high-potential changemakers, their ideas, and their resources, through the power of collaborative competitions and partner networks. Together, we advance an “everyone a changemaker” world where people gain the skills and resources they need to collaborate on solving complex social problems.