Innovation Forum
events and insight for sustainability

Sustainable Apparel and Textiles Conference

The say-do gap: Who is putting the money where their mouth is and delivering?

June 23-24 2027 | New York City

The Sustainable Apparel and Textiles Conference brings together brand leaders, manufacturers, investors, policymakers and innovators for two days of practical debate and workshops.

Held behind closed doors, the agenda is designed to unpack the how and, crucially, the how not to, as the industry works toward the transformation it needs.

PLEASE NOTE THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Overview:

The 2027 program is structured around six pillars:

- **Fiber security** ●
- **Supplier partnerships** ●
- **Climate resilience** ●
- **Scaling circularity** ●
- **Financing the change** ●
- **Data and consumer trust** ●

Day 0 – Tuesday, 22nd June

Afternoon: **Workshop on regenerative cotton** ● ●

The afternoon offers a hackathon-style session for 40 participants: deep thinking on one topic per table, paired with the chance to rotate through groups and get a broad view across a transformed cotton value chain that pays a living income and has regenerative impact.

Held strictly under the Chatham House Rule with a follow-up briefing shared to all participants.

17.30-18.30: **Early-registration networking drinks**

For more information or to get involved, please contact Rebecca Fairbeard.

Day 1 | Wednesday, 23rd June | Risks

8.00-9.00 **Arrival, light breakfast and matchmaking**

9.00-9.05 **Opening remarks from the chair**

9.05-9.25 ***Diagnosing the say-do gap: Why good intentions stall and what makes behavior change*** 🟣 🟠 🟡 🔵 🟤 🔵

9.25-10.10 ***Energy security and net-zero: A brand, a supplier and a bank sit down to agree what each needs from the others to withstand shocks*** 🟡 🟤

10.10-10.55 ***Flexibility vs efficiency: As brands double and triple source, what are the impacts on sustainability and cost margin?*** 🟠 🟡

10.55-11.35 **Break and speed networking**

11.35-12.15 ***Reporting season: What the industry is reporting, who it is for, and where AI should help*** 🟡 🔵

12.15-12.30 **Too hot to work: What one factory changed and what it cost** 🟠 🟡

12.30-13.30 **Lunch**

An open chair at 13.00: one thing I'm weirdly passionate about within sustainability

13.30-14.15 **Breakout sessions**

Each slot runs in one of three formats: breakout sessions are small panel discussions; "This house believes"* are high-energy debates where participants are randomly assigned a side to argue, limited to 15 participants per room for more intimate, engaging discussion; and "Ask me anything" puts one speaker in front of the group to field questions on their topic.

1. *Worker accountability* – ***Forced labor enforcement: the evidence customs and regulators are asking for, and how brands are building it*** 🟠 🔵
2. *Product footprint and the investment case* – ***Cutting microfiber shedding: What is working, what has been hard, and what brands can copy from the Microfiber Action Alliance*** 🟣 🟠
3. *Decision-grade data and regulation* – ***EPR, one year in: you've registered, now what? How brands are building it into operations*** 🔵 🟤
4. *This house believes** - ***"The decline of the chief sustainability officer is progress, not a walk-back"***

14.15-15.00 **Breakout sessions**

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5. *Worker accountability* – ***Higher prices, union wage talks or sector deals. Which route will deliver living wages?*** 🟤🟤
6. *Product footprint and the investment case* – ***AI and the footprint: Where it cuts emissions, where it adds to them, and where it is "slop"*** 🟡🔵
7. *Decision-grade data and regulation* – ***How PFAS regulation has changed product development, and what it has done to performance*** 🔵🔵
8. *This house believes** – ***"An overcommitment to virgin natural fibers is stalling brands' climate progress"*** 🟣🟡

15.00-15.40 **Networking break**

15.40-16.25 **Breakout sessions**

9. *Worker accountability* – ***Responsible disengagement: When to walk away from a supplier, and how to do it without harming workers*** 🟤
10. *Product footprint and the investment case* – ***Increasing the polyester share: How T2T polyester can outcompete virgin and bottle polyester*** 🟣🔵
11. *Decision-grade data and regulation* – ***Digital product passports: How teams should be preparing for the delegated act*** 🟤🔵
12. *This house believes** – ***"Resale doesn't advance the sustainability movement, it accelerates overconsumption"*** 🔵

16.25-17.00 **Breakout sessions**

13. *Ask me anything* – ***An insurance underwriter on climate risk and who absorbs the cost of insuring stock and factories*** 🟡🟤
14. Ask me anything – ***A standards writer on simplifying the many certifications brands juggle?*** 🟣🔵
15. Ask me anything – ***A trade lawyer on UFLPA compliance across regions*** 🟤🔵
16. Ask me anything – ***A materials innovator on what it took to reach commercial scale*** 🔵🟤

17.00- **Networking drinks**

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Day 2 | Thursday, 24th June | Rewards

8.00-9.00 **Arrival and light breakfast**

9.00-9.35 ***The ROI of circularity: The most investable strategies and the transferable lessons*** 🔵🟤

9.35-10.25 ***Which innovations that cut overproduction and waste pay for themselves, and which are still experiments?*** 🔵🟤

10.25-10.35 **The next bet: One leader on what to invest in now** 🟤

10.35-11.10 ***Networking break***

11.10-11.55 ***Origin unknown: Can brands trace every product to its raw materials at scale, and how much do they need to know?*** 🟣🔵

11.55-12.30 ***Regenerative cotton, one year on: Is the investment in farmers and soil health working?*** 🟣🟤

12.30-13.30 **Lunch**

An open chair at 13.00: one thing I'm weirdly passionate about, outside sustainability

13.30-14.00 **A chief marketing officer shares how to make the most technical parts of sustainability engaging** 🔵

14.00-15.15 **Scenario roundtables**

These scenarios are focused discussions for deeper engagement and collaborative problem-solving. Each table gets a real-world scenario and 35 minutes to work through it with peers and a facilitator. We'll run two rounds of each session for participants to join two different tables on a first-come, first-served basis.

1. ***Score each other: A supplier rates your brand poorly on payment terms and late order changes. Build the scorecard both sides would sign, and agree what changes first.*** 🟠🔵
2. ***Say it right: Marketing wants to keep its green claims on EU product pages under EmpCo. Which stay, and what proof do you need?*** 🔵
3. ***Designed to be recycled: Your CEO wants every new jacket to survive 50 washes and be recyclable, but your designers have no training in either. Build the 90-day plan: what do they learn first?*** 🟣🔵
4. ***Does repair pay? Your repair program is growing, but new-product sales are not falling. Is it making money, or just looking good?*** 🔵🟤

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5. ***Water security: A key mill's groundwater is running low, and a wastewater recycling plant would cost $3 million with no clear payback. Do you co-fund it, and what do you ask in return?*** 🟡🟤
6. ***Your CFO offers to double the budget for one decarbonization initiative: supplier renewable energy, scope 3 engagement or low-carbon materials. Which do you pick, and what case do you bring?*** 🟡🟤
7. ***Overtime in shared factories: Ten brands buy from one mill, and all want their orders first in peak season. Workers are well past the legal hours limit. Whose orders move, and how do you fix it together?*** 🟠
8. ***Does anyone listen? A supplier's worker hotline gets steady complaints, but few lead to change. What would you measure to show whether it works, and what do you fix first?*** 🟠🔵

15.15–15.45 **Key takeaways and closing remarks**