

**FASHION AS
SUSTAINABILITY
IN ACTION**



HOW MICRO AND SMALL FASHION BUSINESSES CARE FOR CULTURE, NATURE, LIVELIHOODS AND EACH OTHER

KEYWORDS: MICRO AND SMALL BUSINESS, FASHION
DESIGNERS, CARE, COMMUNITY, SUSTAINABLE
PROSPERITY

The COVID-19 crisis has shown with startling clarity that both societies and businesses singularly driven by economic profit are alarmingly ill-equipped to face a crisis of this magnitude. As it turns out, when times are difficult, it is not short-term, resource-intensive industrial innovation that helps us pull through. Rather, it is people familiar with local context, who have the courage and integrity to lead the way, driven by purpose and community spirit.

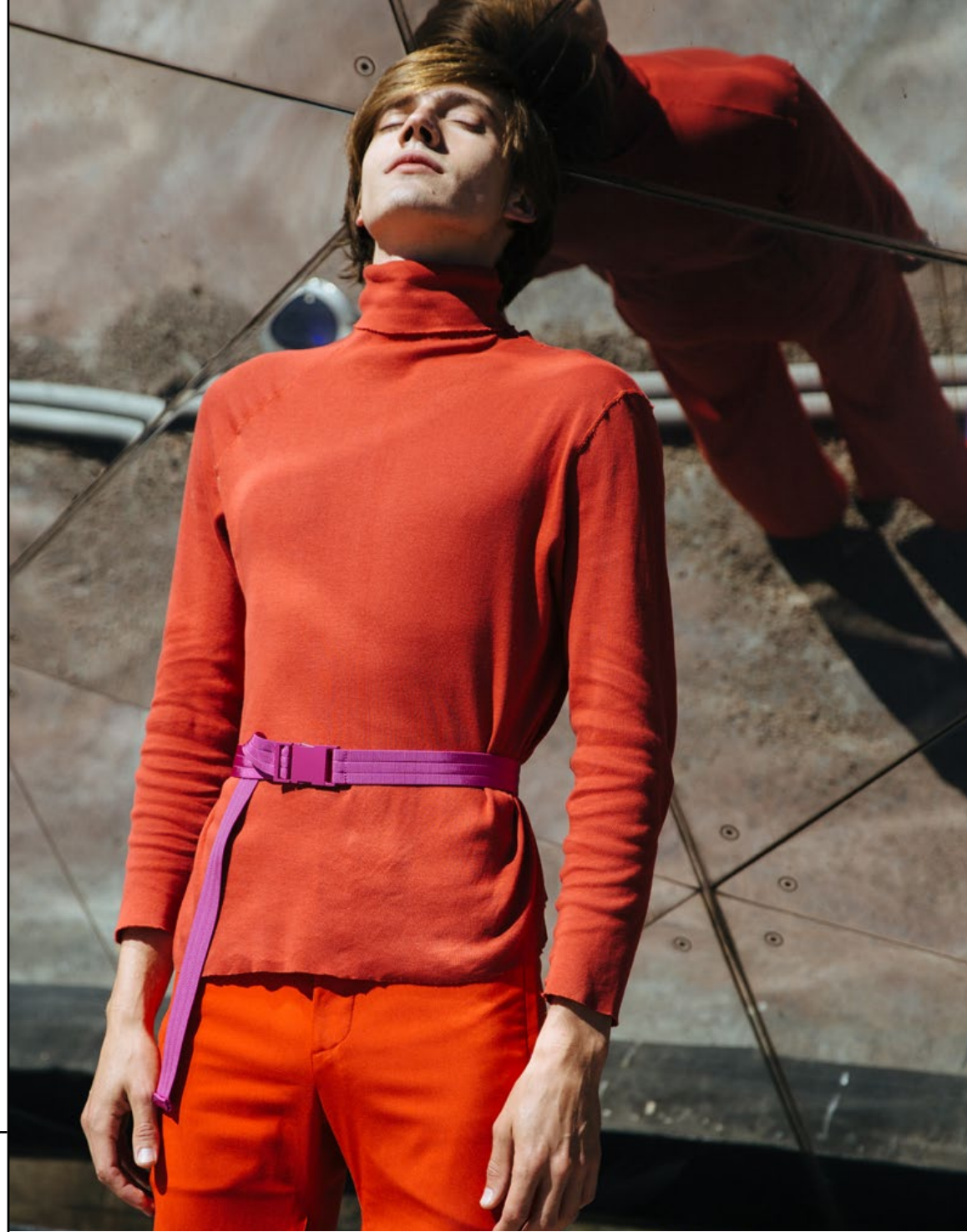
In the early days of the pandemic, in stark contrast to the behaviour of leading brands, countless designer-owners in the micro and small fashion sector have shown incredible compassion and creativity. They have proven that fashion can be a reciprocal, mutually supportive process whose core foci are people, empathy, and well-being of all, within the environmental limits of our planet.



Since 2018, a team from Centre for Sustainable Fashion has been working with such designers to reveal what sustainability looks like in action, elevating and promoting best practice in the sector. This collaborative research project, underpinned by 100 in-depth interviews with UK fashion creatives and support organisations, has been translated into an interactive guide, [Fashion As Sustainability in Action](#).

The guide shows that a new kind of fashion already exists. However, those who practice fashion in this way need greater recognition and a greater visibility to encourage others to learn from and with them. This guide helps us to better understand their distinctions and acknowledge their new markers of success. To recover from COVID-19 is not about returning to the old trodden paths. We need to rethink where we want to get to in the first place and then build new and much more diverse pathways, likely also in different places.

Our contribution can be presented as a workshop (1-1.5hrs), an interactive presentation with case studies and rich visuals, or even as a paper. We are open to discussing formats that would best suit the occasion and purposes of the programme.



IMAGES

MENU

CONTENTS

0 ABOUT THE GUIDE

PART ONE

1 WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY?

PART TWO

2 CULTURAL PROSPERITY

③ SOCIAL PROSPERITY

> WHAT IS SOCIAL PROSPERITY?

SOCIAL PROSPERITY IN ACTION

HOW CAN MSEs CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL PROSPERITY?

HOW TO SUPPORT SOCIAL PROSPERITY

CASE STUDIES IN SOCIAL PROSPERITY

4 ENVIRONMENTAL PROSPERITY

5 ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

PART THREE

6 WE NEED TO DARE

7 USEFUL RESOURCES



68

Key points in social prosperity:

Moving away from designer as sole creative, recognising other contributors

Creating and contributing to communities

Flat, non-hierarchical company structures

Building long-term relationships based on trust and mutual respect

Making positive impact on employees, supply chains and customers



"There is a certain trend in saying 'Yeah, I'm a Founder'. It is very problematic because this sells a wrong story of how you, as one person, can change the world. As a network, as a community, we can change the world, not necessarily as one person."

SABINNA

Image: Sabinna

FASHION AS SUSTAINABILITY IN ACTION

IMAGES

MENU

CONTENTS
0 ABOUT THE GUIDE

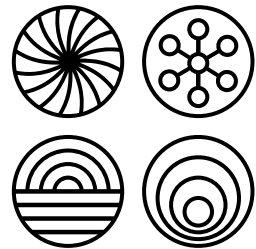
PART ONE
1 WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE
PROSPERITY?

PART TWO
2 CULTURAL
PROSPERITY
3 SOCIAL PROSPERITY
4 ENVIRONMENTAL
PROSPERITY
5 ECONOMIC
PROSPERITY

PART THREE
6 WE NEED TO DARE
7 USEFUL RESOURCES

6

WE NEED TO DARE



187

FASHION AS SUSTAINABILITY IN ACTION