



MINDFUL FASHION
NEW ZEALAND

Dear Likeminded Designer,

We passionately support the New Zealand designer clothing industry, and so do our customers.

Our industry is unique in both its strengths and challenges however, we are currently at a crossroads. The fashion industry has been ranked as one of the world's most highly polluting industries and there is an increasing demand from consumers to justify our practices and be more responsible, ethical and transparent.

As responsible designers we need to ensure that there is a strong and credible framework so that our customers know that our products have been made ethically – from the final stage of production all the way back to the generation of the source fibres.

We pride ourselves on knowing and trusting our makers and suppliers on a first-hand basis. New Zealand's manufacturing industry is unique with designers working with anywhere between 10-30 independent manufacturing partners who cover a range of garment production processes including cutters, CMT's, pleaters, buttonholers, embroiderers, pressers etc. When manufacturing offshore, suppliers tend to be one-stop-shops for a majority of the production processes. However as small New Zealand brands we tend to have very little buying power or influence compared to international fashion giants, limiting our ability to influence change or demand traceability back to source.

To evaluate a brands supply chain, international reports such as Tearfund's Ethical Fashion Report require designers to provide independent audits of suppliers - from the raw materials right through to final stage production.

We approached international audit company Qualspec to price audits for local and offshore suppliers and were quoted \$2000 to audit each individual supplier. The cost of these audits is prohibitive and not sustainable for the majority of small NZ designer brands. This led us to look at setting up an industry group which in New Zealand could share the costs of auditing as we share many of the same makers and suppliers, and also investigate discounts for offshore auditing as a collective.

By working collaboratively as an industry, we can develop useful, industry specific initiatives that will help us address the challenges that we currently face, as well as making a stronger framework to address the challenges that we do not yet know.

Dame Pieter Stewart, founder of New Zealand Fashion Week, has come on board as our patron and we have received statements of support from both Tearfund and the Sustainable Business Network.

We acknowledge that the conversation around ethics and sustainability in clothing production is one which is vast and at times overwhelming. However, we see it as an opportunity to strengthen our industry and lead positive change if we face it openly, honestly and collectively.

We believe that we would be incomparably stronger as a united and collective voice to both articulate our sustainability vision for the New Zealand industry and to tackle the increasing challenges our industry faces.

We have named this collective Mindful Fashion New Zealand.

Our first objective is to create a Mindful Fashion New Zealand Code of Conduct that all members can sign and pass on to all of your makers and suppliers to sign. This initial stage is basically the architect's plans.

From this initial platform of support, we can then launch individual and exciting projects that will build the bricks and mortar strength our industry needs to survive. Every business in our community has a unique production process, and so we see all these initiatives working as independent projects that collective members can sign up to as appropriate to their specific needs, budget and priorities. Project participation will be costed on case by case basis.

MINDFUL FASHION'S 2019 AGENDA

- 1) Collectively conduct a local fabric supplier and New Zealand garment manufacturing industry scoping project to get a better understanding of the current best practises and areas of risk in our industry.
- 2) Share costs of auditing local manufacturing partners and fabric agents in New Zealand.
- 3) Members receive discounted rates for offshore auditing.
- 4) Hold training seminars on sustainable and ethical production and fabric options.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF MINDFUL FASHION

- Create relevant, useful and measurable benchmarks for ethical and sustainable production practices to ensure that New Zealand Designers can confidently say their product has been made ethically.
- Act as a united industry body to be able to work with Government to ensure the industry is supported effectively.
- Potential to push for development of a greater variety of sustainable fabrics.
- Support the training of new and established local makers.
- Potential for collective purchasing power with fabric suppliers.
- Potential for global marketing of our industry collective leading the way to change for good.
- Continue to support Made in New Zealand and the future of our industry.

STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR MINDFUL FASHION

"Tearfund is very supportive of Mindful Fashion and its aims. Brands that are manufacturing in New Zealand face a unique set of challenges to uphold sustainable and ethical standards in our small, boutique context. Seeing players in the designer clothing industry join forces to create solutions for some of the bigger challenges is encouraging. As the initiative says, it's by working together that the industry will have a stronger voice and create change. Mindful Fashion sets a very positive example to other industry players in NZ and around the world. We commend their efforts!"

Claire Hart, Education & Advocacy Manager, Tearfund

“At SBN we are delighted to support the creation of Mindful Fashion NZ, founded by SBN member Kate Sylvester and Emily Miller-Sharma from Ruby. The fashion industry faces severe challenges globally due to its inattention to and poor performance on issues of clothing waste, emissions, chemical pollution and the conditions of its workers. Against that backdrop, we see enormous promise in this group of leading NZ fashion designers to articulate a meaningful vision of sustainability for small NZ fashion companies. We wish them good luck, grand ambition and a positive reception for their initiative.”

Rachel Brown, CEO, Sustainable Business Network

We believe that you, like us, love our industry and are committed to sustaining and strengthening it.

What we ask from you, the designers, is simple. For you to join our collective Mindful Fashion New Zealand, just by signing up and showing your support of our designer clothing industry.

Designers, please email ask@mindfulfashion.co.nz to indicate your interest in joining Mindful Fashion New Zealand.

Sincerely,

Mindful Fashion New Zealand

www.mindfulfashion.co.nz