



**Responsible Innovators for Fashion & Textiles**

Recap | #1 | 2017



# RIFT

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## SHORT SUMMARY

Responsible innovators of the fashion and textile industry combined their expertise to discuss the latest developments and current changes in the fashion and textile industries to influence their responsible transformation. Forerunners in the field opened the sessions, concentrating on three main topics; Market, Values and Technology. Referring to these topics, moderated round-table groups discussed and developed strategies to improve the industry in a sustainable way.



(SEE ATTACHMENT)

# 2

## INTRODUCTION



**Max Gilgenmann** (Future Fashion Forward e.V.) and **Marte Hentschel** (Sourcebook) welcomed the 80 participants and underlined the core questions of the summit: “How can we trigger responsible innovation in our industries? Can a multi-disciplinary dialogue build a communicative bridge for experts and makers to collaborate on a the future of fashion?”

The introduction was followed by short lectures by Christopher Döring (Fraunhofer Center for Responsible Research and Innovation), Carolin Bohrke (Hessnatur Foundation), Dr. Carolijn Terwindt (ECCHR) and Anne Prahl (Design Research Lab) to give an initial input on themes such as “Textile Ecology”, “Legal Arguments in the Textile Sector”, “Digital Change in the Fashion Industry”, “Smart Materials” and “New Technologies”.

*“What will the future bring if we keep everything we know a secret?”*

– Marte Hentschel (Sourcebook)

# 3

## TABLE DISCUSSIONS

After the short introduction, everyone got together in three different table discussions divided in themes; **MARKET**, **VALUES** and **TECHNOLOGY**. Each discussion was supported by several experts.





**The MARKET table** focused on sustainability as a value driver, economical indicator and success trigger. Moderated by Melanie Seifart (Kulturwirtschaftberatung Berlin) the three speakers David Schmelzeisen (RWTH), Thimo Schwenzfeier (Messe Frankfurt) and Thekla Wilkening (Kleideri) agreed that to sell sustainable fashion to the market, the products have to tell their special story. But they also have to be sexy and cool in their own right and of high quality. The producers have to teach their suppliers that they can earn more by producing more sustainably. Even if the participants see it as important to support the sustainable efforts of big market players like Adidas, H&M or C&A, they also see the worth in trying to change the consumption habits of the customers. This might be another key for a fundamental change. A forerunner example is Kleideri, who is already working according to a *sharing is caring* attitude.

*“To establish the concept of sustainable fashion successfully in the market all stakeholders have to be engaged: designers, producers, big brands, costumers, politicians, bank houses etc. Therefore we need more platforms and match making events to bring all this different stakeholders together.”*

– Melanie Seifert (Kulturwirtschaftsberatung)

*“On which aspect of the market or which brand should strategic litigation by ECCHR focus?”*

– Carolijn Terwindt (ECCHR)

*“Sustainable fashion should learn more from conservative industries”*

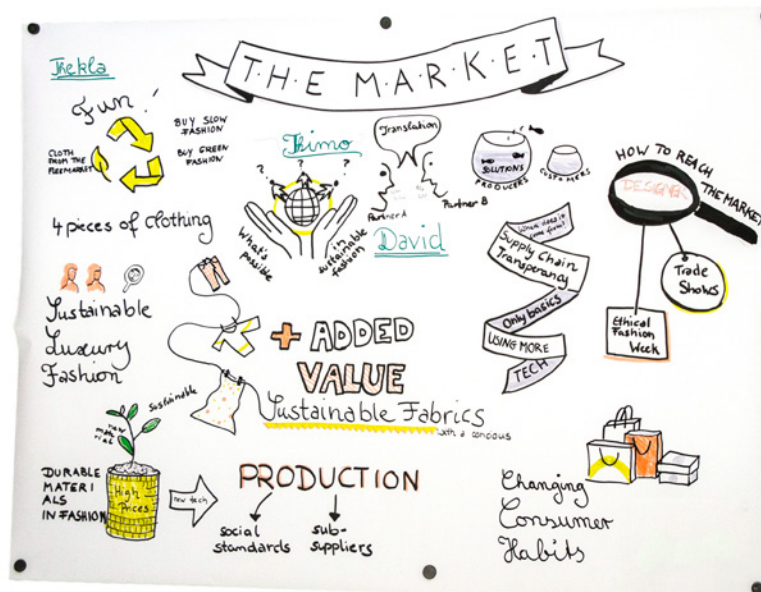
– Thekla Wilkening (Kleideri)

*“When it’s about market potential all stakeholders need to come together and work together – cooperation and collaboration is key.”*

– Thimo Schwenzfeier (Messe Frankfurt)

*"More interdisciplinary cooperations to satisfy needs of the customers is the central key for sustainable textile products of the future."*

– David Schmelzeisen (RWTH Aachen)







**The VALUES table**, hosted by Daniel Gebhardt (Sourcebook) was defined by a lively debate about how to give values and responsibility for one's business relations a strong presence in the market and for its consumers. Pola Fendel (Kleiderrei), Lisa Jaspers (Folkdays) and Ina Budde (Design for Circularity) as speakers of this workshop described the difficulties and obstacles of communicating the core values of their products and designs using contemporary technological tools such as Social Media. It's hard to reach a broader, not only niche, market filled with very price-sensitive consumers who are used to a certain degree of convenience. The current democratisation of access to information for nearly everybody does not by itself lead to a change in the mindset of the customers, but only a shift in the mind of the customers will produce a higher disposition for sustainable quality in the products.

*"Dialogue and transfer of knowledge are the key to a positive change."*

– Ariane Piper (hessnatur Stiftung)

*"I appreciated the collaborative spirit of the discussion to agree on using technology to join solutions and transport new value systems for designers, customers and all stakeholders. We need to grow all together to create a strong big scale momentum."*

– Ina Budde (Design for Circularity)

*"Today i learned many new things about Circular Economy in the fashion industry!"*

– Lisa Jaspers (Folkdays)







Contrary to the topics MARKET and VALUES, **the TECHNOLOGY table**, hosted by Marte Hentschel (Sourcebook), focused on why the core stakeholders need to achieve responsible innovation and what the core user needs in the future of fashion and textiles. Following this topic the technology table discussed who the stakeholders for responsible innovation are. Agreeing on the point that there is not only one mainly responsible stakeholder group, the participants stated that besides brands, consumers and manufacturers also investors, politicians and stakeholders from non-textile industries – in short ALL – should be included in fostering responsible innovation.

Technology could become a game changer as soon as the value of innovation in terms of education, space to create and the shift in consciousness is ensured. To overcome the speed of innovation – storytelling and customer empowerment could also be tools for meeting and satisfying customer needs. That's why many agreed, that responsible innovation always needs to have an holistic approach in order to close the gap between responsible design and technology.

*“Responsible Innovation needs to be inclusive and engage all stakeholders, from design, manufacture, sales, consumers etc.”*

– Anne Prahl (Design researcher)

*“Technology is the trigger for transfer and communication processes.”*

– Marcus Winkler (Denkendorf)

*“The best way to build the future is to co-create it by bringing a broad range of perspectives into the dialogue and making this happen.”*

– Chris Doering (Frauenhofer Center)

*"It's not enough to educate, we must empower. We can do this by being more inclusive, by shattering the idea of the "expert" to encourage the power of co-creation collaboration."*

– Lusi Ajonjoli (Design researcher)

*“Responsible solutions out of the interlink of fashion and textile innovations depend on a subtle mix of persons, products, platforms and ecosystem design.”*

- Ingo Rollwagen (HMD Berlin)

*"I appreciated the willingness of the participants to get into the "hard" discussions. These different industry players rarely speak to each other – it was refreshing to have such open conversations."*

– Anita Heiberg (Esmod Berlin)



# 4

## FEEDBACK AND SUGGESTIONS

**After the table discussions** all participants came together for a feedback round. The main outcome, most participants agreed, was that formats like the RIFT summit are very important and ought to happen again. The industry is lacking these kinds of formats – which are needed to strengthen the discussion about sustainable development and technological innovation. The summit has proven to be a great platform for a dialogue on closing the gaps between the global fashion industry, politics and responsible innovators. It also offered some surprising links between technology and craftsmanship. The atmosphere was good, although the next time the groups could be smaller and even more niche. Also more stakeholders from the industry and financial markets as well as politics and media should be invited to widen the perspective of and input to the discussion.

Berlin has a great potential for hosting future RIFT summits, although the city needs to participate more in such an important topic and support such events logistically. Some participants from other cities offered to host future RIFT editions.

# 5

THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

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**KREATIV  
WIRTSCHAFTS  
BERATUNG  
BERLIN**

**Texpertise Network**  
by Messe Frankfurt

A satellite event of

**WEAR IT**



# 6

## PHOTOS



## PHOTOS





## PHOTOS



A group of people are walking along a paved path outdoors. A man in a blue blazer is in the center of the group, talking to others. The group is dressed in casual to semi-formal attire, including jackets and blouses. The background shows a building and some greenery.





## PHOTOS

