1 million euro up for grabs when the world’s largest challenge to make fashion sustainable opens its fifth round

By 2030, the global middle class is expected to have increased to 5 billion people and the consumption of textiles and shoes by 65% compared to 2015. The world is already using around 1.6 planet’s worth of resources every year. But creativity and innovation can flip the numbers in planet’s favor and help enable the biggest transformation ever in the fashion industry. Today, the non-profit H&M Foundation opens the fifth round of its innovation challenge Global Change Award at globalchangeaward.com, trying to move the needle in this space.

With a circular mindset fashion can be designed, produced, sold, used, reused and recycled in a way where resources are used and reused indefinitely in a closed loop. The Global Change Award was initiated in 2015 by H&M Foundation, in collaboration with Accenture and the KTH Royal Institute of Technology. It has received over 14,000 entries from 182 countries. Named the Nobel Prize of fashion, it aims to reduce fashion’s impact on the planet and our living conditions by helping groundbreaking ideas move from tissue-sketch to market. Several of the previous winners have on-going cooperations and pilot projects with the industry, and some are already on the market.

“"In its fifth year, the Global Change Award has proven a great gateway for innovators to enter the fashion industry and transform it from the inside. We’ve seen previous winners move from sketching table to market — but more importantly, inspiring a new generation of creatives, scientists and entrepreneurs to reduce the planetary impact of the fashion industry through innovation. The next big idea that will change the game can come from anyone anywhere. So, if you have an idea you believe in this is the place to go”, says Karl-Johan Persson, board member of the H&M Foundation and CEO of H & M Hennes & Mauritz AB.

Maybe even more important than the 1 million euro grant, the five winners embark on a one-year Innovation Accelerator Program taking them to Stockholm, New York and Hong Kong. In the accelerator, H&M Foundation, Accenture and the KTH Royal Institute of Technology support the winners in taking their ideas to the next level, with guidance on how to scale up quickly and maximize their impact on the industry.

““This year, we are especially looking for innovations that make it easier for us as consumers to act more sustainably, ideas that use technology and data that make the fashion industry smarter and solutions that facilitate design with a circular intention”, says Erik Bang, Innovation Lead, H&M Foundation.

To win, the innovation should have the potential to make fashion circular and to scale. Other criteria are novelty, that the idea is economically sustainable, and that the innovation team is committed to making a difference. H&M Foundation initiated the challenge to find innovations that allow major change for the entire industry, and the winner can collaborate with whoever they want. Neither the non-profit H&M Foundation nor H&M Group take any equity or intellectual property rights in the innovations.

Submission deadline is 16 October 2019 and the five winners are crowned at the Grand Award Ceremony in Stockholm City Hall in April 2020.

About the Global Change Award and how to apply: https://globalchangeaward.com/
Media library: https://globalchangeaward.com/media-library/

For more information or to schedule interviews:
Malin Björne, Communications Manager, H&M Foundation
Malin.bjorne@hmfoundation.com, +46 (0)70 796 39 75
NOTES TO EDITORS:

GLOBAL CHANGE AWARD EXPERT PANEL 2020
An international expert panel with extensive knowledge within fashion, environment, circularity, entrepreneurship and innovation selects the five winners. For quotes, go to: https://globalchangeaward.com/the-expert-panel/

- Abrima Erwiah, Co-Founder and President Studio One Eighty Nine
- Betelhem Dessie, CEO of iCog Anyone Can Code and Project Advisor of Solve IT
- Burak Çakmak, Dean of the School of Fashion at Parsons School of Design
- Malin Åkerman, Actress and environmental activist
- Rosario Dawson, Actress and Co-Founder Studio One Eighty Nine
- Sonam K Ahuja, Actress and sustainability influencer
- Tariq Fancy, Founder and Chairman at Rumie, Chief Investment Officer of Sustainable Investing, BlackRock
- Vanessa Cheung, Founder, The Mills
- Wanjira Mathai, Chair, the Wangari Maathai Foundation
- William McDonough, Chief Executive McDonough Innovation and Co-Founder, Fashion For Good

GLOBAL CHANGE AWARD WINNERS 2019
The winners from last year are currently taking part of the one-year Innovation Accelerator Program. For more information about their progress: https://globalchangeaward.com/winners/

- €300,000 – The Loop Scoop by circular.fashion (Germany): A digital system aiming to close the loop on every garment from design to wear to recycling: https://youtu.be/MkgAKsiqyQk
- €250,000 – Sane Membrane by dimpora (Switzerland): A biodegradable and mineral-based membrane for outdoor wear: https://youtu.be/ITnbnxVz-F0
- €150,000 – Sustainable Sting by Green Nettle Textile (Kenya): Growing nettles to create sustainable fashion fibers and opportunities for farmers in Kenya to boost their livelihoods: https://youtu.be/zsUfKXHienc
- €150,000 – Clothes that Grow by Petit Pli (UK): Outfits that expand with the child, while reducing environmental impact: https://youtu.be/Pr5sV4vhLZA
- €150,000 – Lab Leather by Le Qara (Peru): Using microorganisms to create vegan biodegradable leather for the fashion industry: https://youtu.be/j_q9SYeZr-Q

Global Change Award was initiated 2015 by the non-profit H&M Foundation. By catalysing early stage innovations that can accelerate the shift from a linear to a circular fashion industry, the aim is to protect the planet and our living conditions. Each year five winning teams share a grant of €1 million and get access to a one-year Innovation Accelerator Program provided by the H&M Foundation, in collaboration with Accenture and KTH Royal Institute of Technology. Neither H&M Foundation nor H&M Group take any equity or intellectual property rights in the innovations. The H&M Foundation is a non-profit global foundation, privately funded by the Stefan Persson family, founders and main owners of H&M Group. Its overall aim is to accelerate the progress needed to reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
