

The fabric of a circular future



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REGENERATIVE
By Sherrell Dorsey

Your front row seat to the future
of sustainable innovation.

Back in undergrad at FIT, I remember sitting in a textiles production course, I was an international trade and business major, deeply fascinated by what fabrics could *become*. Around that time, companies like Nike and NASA were experimenting with textiles that could heal wounds or safely cover burn victims — innovation driven by necessity and empathy. That was what groundbreaking fashion innovation was said to bring forth: problem-solving through design.

But as wearables and social media marketing for cheap apparel hit the market, so did an avalanche of waste.

Fast fashion brands scrambled to cover their tracks, launching "eco" and "conscious" collections — a kind of penance for the mountains of discarded poly-blends and synthetic fibers clogging landfills and, heartbreakingly, washing up on the shores of developing countries. The damage, however, was being done at massive scale, and for many of us — broke but style-hungry college students — those poly-blend pieces made up most of our closets.

For decades, the conversation circled around cotton's water impact and the ethics of production, but rarely about the lifespan of the clothing itself. How do we embrace design, self-expression, and the thrill of newness without... consuming ourselves into a crisis?

Like many others, I've tried no-buy and low-buy challenges, but individual choices only go so far when the system itself is built for disposability. The good news? That system is finally beginning to shift.

Today, we're seeing fashion tech companies rethink every part of the supply chain. AI tools that let consumers inventory what they already own, resale platforms making it easier to circulate pieces rather than trash them (I just sold a pair of earrings on Fashionphile this week), and startups working with biodegradable materials I first saw on display at the FIT museum.

Is it enough to offset the stockpiles of discarded clothing leaking microplastics into waterways? Not yet. But the growth areas are undeniable: innovations in **deconstruction**, **low-impact dyeing**, closed-loop recycling, and **smart textiles** built to last — or to harmlessly return to the earth when they don't.

Private capital is leaning in, though public investment lags behind. The recent pullback of federal dollars for climate tech and circular economy solutions is a setback we can't afford, but it makes the role of entrepreneurs and investors in this space all the more critical.

This week's issue highlights the innovators leading the charge, and what it means for the future of regenerative fashion — a future where style doesn't have to cost the planet.

Side note: I'm happy to announce that I'm leading the **Women in Business & Tech community** over on the new **Kyndr** app — a platform designed for meaningful conversations without the noise of traditional social media. The community is designed to be a resource for women navigating careers and businesses and in need a safe space to get advice, grow knowledge, and mentor others. **Come connect with us here.**

Stay sharp,



Provides a SaaS platform that enables fashion brands to track environmental and social impact across their supply chains, from raw material sourcing to final production. Offers digital product passports to enhance transparency.

<https://www.fairlymade.com/>

Headquarters

Paris, France

Why it matters

Fairly Made addresses the fashion industry's significant sustainability challenges, including:

- Lack of supply chain transparency.
- Difficulty in measuring and reducing environmental and social impacts.
- Growing consumer demand for sustainable and ethical products.
- Need for credible communication of sustainability efforts.

The scale of the industry

The market for sustainable fashion and supply chain transparency solutions is expanding rapidly, driven by:

- Increased awareness of the fashion industry's environmental footprint.
- Stricter regulations and reporting requirements.
- Pressure from consumers and investors for greater accountability.
- The global scale of the fashion industry and its complex supply chains.

Traction

- \$21.6 million (€20 million) raised in total funding.
- Customers include major fashion brands like Versace, LVMH, Paul Smith, and others.
- Issued over 100 million digital product passports.
- Team of 80 employees with offices in Paris and Milan.
- Demonstrated ability to scale its SaaS platform and attract significant investment.

Major investors

- BNP Paribas Solar Impulse Venture Fund
- GET Fund
- ETF Partners
- Frenchfounders

BIG BILLS, BIG DEALS

- **Electra Steel, a Boulder-based company producing low-emissions, electrified steel, raised \$186 million** in Series B funding from investors including Capricorn Investment Group, Temasek Holdings, BHP Ventures, Breakthrough Energy Ventures, Builders Vision, and others. [Finsmes](#)
- **OnePlanet Solar Recycling, a Jacksonville, FL company, Secures \$7M** in Seed funding from Khasma Capital. [USGlass](#)
- **PHNX Materials, a Palo Alto, CA-based coal ash recycling and material recovery service, raised \$3M** in Seed funding from Divergent Capital, KdT Ventures, and Overture VC. [TechCrunch](#)

- **RSF invests \$23 million for community solar, affordable housing and social services** in new loans this year to seven organizations via its Social Investment Fund. [ImpactAlpha](#)
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POLICY PLAYS

- **Green bank grantees** may get access to loan funds after judge orders **\$20 billion in loan funds** be released from the federal "green bank" program. [ImpactAlpha](#)
 - World Leaders From China to EU Hold **Climate Meeting** Without US. Only 19 of the 195 signatories to the 2015 Paris Agreement deal have presented new emissions cutting plans for the next decade, also known as nationally determined contributions or NDCs. [Bloomberg](#)
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INDUSTRY EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

- **LG** is looking for an Entrepreneur-In-Residence for its Cleantech innovation enter. [Apply here](#)
 - **MetLife Foundation is accepting applications** for its 2025 Community Impact Grant Program, awarding up to \$200,000 to nonprofits working to improve food security, mental wellbeing, environmental sustainability. Deadline: May 2
 - **TOTAL IMPACT SUMMIT: Invest in Transformative Impact.** May 14-15. [Learn more.](#)
 - **SOCAP 25** features a day-one focus on creating capital connections for LPs and GPs. Oct 27-29. [Learn more.](#)
 - [Reuters Responsible Business USA 2025 summit.](#) June 23-24
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