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# Sustainable Fashion: Power in the remake



**Domain:**  
Climate Action and  
Environment



**Place:**  
Norrköping,  
Sweden



**Duration:**  
Half-a-day workshop



**Target audience:**  
Young girls

## Mission

The EU textile waste directive, implemented on 1 January 2025, is part of a wider push toward sustainable and circular textiles, aiming to reduce waste, extend product lifespans, and encourage recycling. But regulations alone cannot shift the industry: lasting change also depends on how people consume and value clothing in their everyday lives. Rethinking habits and expectations around fashion, especially among younger generations, is key to lowering the sector's ecological impact and opening space for more responsible, creative, and durable ways of engaging with what we wear.

## Engagement activities

This interaction took the form of a workshop that aimed to empower girls with the enthusiasm, confidence and basic skills to customise secondhand clothing so that they would change their mindsets towards secondhand textiles.

## Artistic activities

A fashion designer was invited to train young girls to customise secondhand clothing.

## IMPACT

Boosting confidence  
and creativity

Rethinking habits and  
expectations around fashion

Creating connections for a more  
sustainable fashion system

Broadening horizons of young girls  
from a socially vulnerable area



# WHAT HAPPENED?

This interaction was setup thanks to the collaboration between Olle Bush (ollebush apparel) a fashion designer who sews and designs clothes from recycled materials, Stadsmission, a non-profit, non-governmental organisation focused on providing social and humanistic services to those in need, and design researchers from RISE.

The objective was to engage with and inspire young girls in the conversation about the quality of textiles and their attitudes towards second-hand clothing. Participants were invited from Stadsmissionen and Trygga Orten; "Power in da Hood", an initiative that invites girls from a socially vulnerable area to activities that strengthen their empowerment and self-leadership.

## PARTICIPANTS ENGAGEMENT

The workshop took place in a community space in Navesta, Norrköping, where Power in da Hood gather once a week. The community space is in an old shopping mall that has been repurposed into spaces and offices for community gathering and social support services. The invite was sent to members of "Power in da hood" as an additional event to their weekly gathering, and 20 girls signed up.

The 2 hour workshop was hosted by the fashion designer with the support of the social leader and design researchers. The community space was arranged together by the organising collaborators to make the space feel tactile and engaging. Secondhand clothing was hung across the room, 2 large group tables set up with piles of clothes, tools, trims and other materials. Inspirational clothing pieces made from secondhand clothing and textiles from Olle Bush and from Stadsmission's own brand ReMake hung on clothing rails to be touched and tried on.

The social leader, innovation manager, and design researchers also joined in part of the workshop in addition with supporting the fashion designer during the workshop. To round up the workshop, the girls had dinner together, during which those who wanted to could share any reflections they had of the workshop.



## Artistic activities

For the workshop, a wide selection of secondhand clothes (jeans, skirts, jackets, trousers, tops and more) was sourced from local second-hand stores run by a social organisation. Alongside these garments, a rich array of creative tools and materials was made available: needles, thread, fabric paint, stencils, and a variety of trims such as ribbons, chains, and buttons. Together, these resources created a playful and accessible starting point for experimentation.

The session began with the fashion designer sharing a series of his own creations, offering concrete examples of how discarded clothing can be transformed into something new, personal, and expressive. This introduction provided inspiration while also highlighting a set of techniques that the participants could try during the workshop. Once the presentation was over, the participants were invited to choose pieces of secondhand clothing that spoke to them. With complete freedom to alter, embellish, or radically reshape their chosen garments, they explored a hands-on process of reimagining fashion. The atmosphere was intentionally relaxed, encouraging each participant to follow her own curiosity, while also fostering dialogue and exchange of ideas.

Throughout the session, the designer moved between the participants, answering questions, offering demonstrations, teaching small skills, and engaging in conversations about creativity, style, and sustainability. His role was less that of an instructor and more of a guide, helping the girls to unlock the potential of the materials in front of them.

By the end of the workshop, the garments had begun to take on entirely new identities, reflecting both individual imagination and a collective exploration of how fashion can be reinvented sustainably.



Find the  
video on  
Vimeo !





The girls got started much faster than I thought, and many of them had an idea of what they wanted to do almost immediately. It felt like the majority of the participants were positively surprised by the workshop and would love to do something similar again.

**Fashion designer**

## Impact of the interaction

The collaboration between the social organisation Stadsmission and the design researchers from RISE has laid the foundation for a long-term partnership, including the preparation of a joint application to a Horizon Europe call on the future of sustainable textiles. This connection bridges academic research, social innovation, and community engagement, showing how different actors can come together around the shared goal of creating a more sustainable fashion system.

For the young participants, the workshop did not end when the session was over. Many expressed a desire to continue experimenting with secondhand clothes, eager to build on the skills they had begun to develop. To support this, they were given the tools and materials needed to finish their individual projects at home, and a collective box of supplies was prepared for their community space, thus ensuring that creativity and learning could continue beyond the workshop. This gesture turned the activity into an ongoing resource, encouraging collaboration and shared ownership within their peer group.

Several participants also articulated a wish to deepen their knowledge, asking to learn more advanced techniques such as machine sewing. For some, the experience sparked an ambition to pursue education in fashion design, highlighting how a single creative encounter can broaden horizons and open up new possibilities for the future.

Finally, the workshop will have a life beyond the participants themselves. A short film capturing the process and the energy of the event is being produced by Power in da Hood, who will share it within their networks. This not only amplifies the voices of the young people involved but also spreads awareness of sustainable fashion practices to a wider audience, demonstrating the ripple effects that such small-scale interventions can have.





**Looking to replicate this impactful experience?  
RISE has identified a few key ingredients to  
ensure success:**

- Collaborate with a fashion designer whose style and personality connects with the participants.
- Introduce low barrier techniques that are easy to learn quickly and require simple tools.
- Be flexible in what happens during the workshop, and let participants engage in a way that they are comfortable with.
- Leave tools and materials for participants to continue after the workshop.



## Resources

The second hand clothes were brought by the social organisation.



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