Leeds City Region

TEXTILES SECTOR SHOWCASE
A sector steeped in industrial heritage, developing ground-breaking technologies of the future
This document is a showcase of the innovation, ambition, and expertise of the world-renowned textile sector in Leeds City Region.

Our aim is to introduce the high-quality products and services created by our businesses to a wider international audience.

We invite you to experience for yourself the fabrics of the future and see what opportunities there are to engage with our business and universities.
Welcome to Leeds City Region

Leeds City Region is the home of textile innovation. It is an industry built on remarkable history and heritage and one which continues to lead the way in innovation, sustainability and design for the future.

Our world-leading companies are the forefront of everything from sustainable fashion to textile and product manufacturers creating new and innovative fabrics and finished garments. Over 10,000 people are employed in this sector across the region.

Businesses in Leeds City Region have access to the support and expertise of world-class universities and centres of excellence, giving them the opportunity to develop, create and adopt ground-breaking new technologies, improving their agility and efficiency.

We are driving forward innovation, harnessing new technologies and investing in collaboration and research. Textiles from this region are globally recognised and respected by the leading international designers and fashion brands.

This document showcases the significant strengths of the textile industry in Leeds City Region. I hope you enjoy reading about the amazing businesses from across the region and finding out more about how you can work with us in the future.

Roger Marsh OBE DL, Chair of Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership and NP11
An exciting centre for the fashion and textile industry

With its global reputation and long-standing international connections, we are delighted to showcase some of the dynamic businesses that make Leeds City Region such an exciting centre for the fashion and textile industry.

Companies in the region supply the world’s most iconic luxury fashion brands, creating fabrics for companies such as Burberry, Chanel, Prada, Alexander McQueen, Paul Smith, and Savile Row tailors. Many of the region’s companies have been operating for generations, offering unique design and manufacturing expertise.

Each mill has a history and reputation within the luxury sector for creativity, innovation, and quality. In 1874, in recognition of the region’s industry strength in textiles, the Department of Textile Industries and Dyeing opened at the Yorkshire College. This later became the School of Design at the University of Leeds.

Today, based in the same location in Leeds, Future Fashion Factory is leading a programme of industry-led research and development. This aims to create new products capable of driving new revenue streams, increasing competitiveness and reducing environmental impacts across the sector.

Our Future Fashion Factory member community consists of hundreds of businesses from across the textile, fashion, digital and creative sectors. Working with our core partners including British Fashion Council, UK Fashion and Textile Association, Burberry, digital media companies and many of Yorkshire’s independent fashion design brands and world-renowned mills, we are continuing to forge collaborations that help to make the UK fashion and textile industry unique.

Future Fashion Factory is creating new products and processes capable of driving innovation and growth.

I look forward to working with you in the future.

Professor Stephen Russell,
Professor of Textile Materials & Technology at the University of Leeds, and Director of Future Fashion Factory
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Did you know?

Today innovations are seen in new manufacturing and processing technologies including 3D Weaving, anti-counterfeit DNA marking of fabrics, and finishing treatments. MTIX’s Multiplexed Laser Surface Enhancement surface finishing treatment uses atmospheric plasma and UV laser technologies, reduces the use of water, energy, and chemicals by over 95% for the ultimate environmentally friendly textile processing.

INNOVATION

Leeds City Region’s historic textile industry is home to innovative businesses that continue to search for new solutions to industry challenges and identify ways to evolve and improve product and process.

Businesses work together with universities on research and development, supported by organisations like the Future Fashion Factory, who co-fund grants to support collaborative projects.

Innovation has been at the heart of the textile industry in the region since its earliest days.

Did you know?

The Jacquard loom, which was created in the region, is credited as the earliest form of modern computer coding, with designs programmed using punch cards.

Early synthetic dyes were also produced in the region, allowing the creation of vibrant and bright textiles.
Advanced Dyeing Solutions
(Roaches International)
Fabric Evaluation System

Working in partnership with the Future Fashion Factory, Advanced Dyeing Solutions is currently developing a new digital fabric evaluation system which measures the tactile properties of a textile fabric. This is then relayed over the internet, building an accurate reproduction and an immersive visualisation for a customer in a different location.

This example of digital communication of aesthetics, when commercialised, could reduce the need for excessive sampling in the textile and fashion industry, as well as the time and resources involved in building a global customer base. As a result, it has the potential to slash costs, improve sustainability through reduced waste, and reduce product development lead times.

Once this technology has been fully released into the marketplace, the possibilities are huge. Not only will this be used for comparison of textile properties globally, but we also see interest from online retailers who would like to be able to accurately display the way that a particular fabric drapes on a person.

Sean O’Neill,
Managing Director, Advanced Dyeing Solutions (Roaches International)
Hainsworth integrates the traditional qualities of craftsmanship with cutting edge innovation and product development to meet the needs of a growing and diverse global customer base. Their patented products, The Queen's Award for Enterprise in Innovation, and their Royal Warrant to supply HM The Queen, demonstrate their ability to deliver fabric to the highest possible standards. The ever-changing needs of apparel, technical, and interior fabric customers drive their commitment to maintaining the Hainsworth name as the benchmark in all textile manufacture.

Hainsworth cloth has been at the heart of national pride the world over. Their protective fabrics safeguard emergency services in the Middle East, Asia, Europe, and North America. Their interior fabrics furnish Royal palaces and homes throughout Europe and the Middle East. Their snooker and pool cloth is undeniably the best in the world, and their award-winning innovation centre is an internationally recognised authority in the design and development of woven textiles.

Hainsworth also delivered the first inherently heat and flame-retardant fabrics in the UK and now protect emergency services and military personnel around the world from the damaging effects of fire. Hainsworth also enables musicians, designers, tailors, and world championship snooker players to reach the pinnacle of their professions.
Hainsworth are continually adapting to ensure we put the changing needs of the customer at the forefront of everything we do. We respect the past but equally, look to the future. We are able to push forward interesting sustainable textile innovations in the way we process our fabrics, create our designs and products, and the initiatives we put in place through working collaboratively with our suppliers and customers. Hainsworth have been trading for over 237 years. It is only by continuing this ethos of change, Hainsworth can remain the respected business in the field of textiles in the future.

Diane Simpson,
Director, A W Hainsworth

"
Locating our business in the Leeds City Region has been instrumental to NIRI’s success. Having world class manufacturers on our doorstep has enabled us to innovate, develop and scale-up nonwoven and textile technologies - helping companies speed up getting new products into the market.

*Dr Matthew Tipper,*
Chief Executive Officer, NIRI

As nonwoven materials specialists, NIRI helps organisations to develop and improve their products. This involves improving the performance of existing nonwoven components or developing completely new materials and technologies. NIRI have successfully completed over 500 projects for over 220 clients. Their expertise lies in their ability to optimise the properties, process, and cost of nonwoven fabrics. This improves product performance across many different market sectors and their innovation expertise has a proven record of helping businesses to grow faster.

Spun-out from the University of Leeds, with over 15 years’ experience in the research & development of nonwovens, NIRI has helped companies launch over 100 commercial products. NIRI is the global leader in nonwoven consultancy with a proven record of delivering results. NIRI offers a confidential service where clients own new IP, which is why 80% of customers return to NIRI to speed up their innovation.
Surfaceskins

Alongside consultancy services, NIRI also develops new, high value intellectual property which is delivered to market under licence agreements.

One of the award-winning technologies developed by NIRI is Surfaceskins. A novel infection control device designed to prevent the spread of pathogens in hospital environments. Surfaceskins has won numerous innovation awards including the Medilink Healthcare Business award and INDA's Research Innovation Science and Engineering award.

Surfaceskins is a self-disinfecting alcohol gel pushpad which is engineered to stop the spread of infection, killing germs in seconds and effective against bacteria and viruses including Coronavirus.

SofMat

SofMat has developed a flexible technology that is used to verify authenticity of a wide range of products. The patented technology involves the controlled marking of surfaces to produce a three-dimensional code that can then be decrypted by a SofMat reader when required. SofMat has the capability to mark a variety of surfaces, mainly polymers and most low to medium strength metals.

The advantage of the technology is being physical in nature, it cannot be hacked or electronically adulterated unlike some other types of protection. If SofMat markings are damaged the key will be invalidated and entry to the system will be prevented.
Sam Weller

As an independent mill, Sam Weller has complete autonomy over its entire weaving process. From the smallest concepts in textile design to national projects, Sam Weller can adapt its processes to respond to all types of client queries quickly and efficiently. Samples can be created to a range of specifications with regards to weave, construction, weight, and finish.

Mark Yare,
Managing Director, Sam Weller and SDC Enterprises

SDC Enterprises

SDC Enterprises (SDCE) is a name familiar to textile testing professionals worldwide. As the manufacturer and supplier of premium test consumables for use in BS, EN, and ISO test procedures, SDCE is the name specified by leading apparel brands and retailers seeking the highest levels of accuracy and consistency in testing before they put their brand name to their fabrics. SDCE’s product range has become the international standard for ISO textile test procedures. As the textiles trade becomes increasingly globalised - and consumer expectation for quality rises accordingly - it has never been more imperative to standardise the colour fastness, strength, and performance of fabrics for apparel on a global scale.

The industry is evolving, and Sam Weller prides itself on combining its extensive heritage with ongoing innovation. The company has played its part in chapter after chapter of the textile innovation story, from the production of super-tightly woven fabric with natural water repellent properties, to the manufacture of high-strength, stab-resistant textiles used in protective outerwear. Whatever the project, Sam Weller weaves a new standard in fabrics, putting Leeds City Region at the heart of textile excellence.

Mark Yare,
Managing Director, Sam Weller and SDC Enterprises
We are at the forefront of helping leading aerospace and automotive manufacturers reduce weight in their aircraft and vehicles. We are producing an innovative fabric which allows aircraft to be designed with greater seating densities at lower weight, improving fuel efficiencies per passenger mile, and allows electric cars to be produced with more compact seats to accommodate the extra height of the floor plans needed to accommodate the battery packs required.

*Jim Wright,*
Managing Director, Arville Group
For over 250 years Joshua Ellis has been at the heart of the textile manufacturing industry within the Leeds City Region and we are very proud of our long history making fabrics and accessories for the world’s finest luxury brands. We now export to over 23 countries and sell our own brand in many of the top department stores across the globe.

While we are custodians of this unrivalled heritage, we continually look to innovate our products and supply chain to ensure that our business is sustainable for the next 250 years. We are investing heavily in new state of the art finishing machinery and 15% of our workforce are part of our apprenticeship scheme which will safeguard the skill and craftmanship that has made us famous within the luxury textile industry for so long.

Oliver Platts,
Managing Director, Joshua Ellis
The UK is one of the most influential and creative fashion hubs in the world, with nearly one million people employed in the industry and a contribution to the nation’s economy worth £32 billion. Leeds City Region’s fashion and textile industry is part of what makes the UK’s fashion industry a global leader.

Using cutting-edge design and manufacture techniques, Leeds City Region’s textile companies supply fabric to the world’s most prestigious and best-known fashion brands. Their products are exported across the world, with some companies exporting in excess of 90% of their production.

Leeds City Region designers are creating luxurious and stylish sustainable fashion pieces.

Cloth made in the region can be found in collections by Chanel, Gucci, Erdem, Paul Smith and many more, as well as London’s iconic Savile Row tailors.
Burberry

Founded in 1856, Burberry is one of the most recognised luxury brands globally.

Thomas Burberry was just 21 years old when he founded his outfitting business, however, it was in 1879 that he secured his legacy as a visionary and innovator with his invention of gabardine. Celebrated explorers and adventurers turned to Burberry gabardine in the years that followed, including Sir Ernest Shackleton who wore gabardine for his expedition to Antarctica. Gabardine is still used in the manufacture of Burberry Heritage Trench Coats and Burberry’s operations in Yorkshire are at the heart of this.

Burberry started making fabric at a mill in Keighley in 2010 and in 2012 took over the site that is now known as the Burberry Mill. It is here that gabardine is woven.

The fabric is then shipped to Burberry’s factory in Castleford where both the Trench Coat and other fashion styles have been finished by hand since the 1960s.

In 2017, the company further strengthened its ties with Leeds City Region, opening Burberry Business Services in Leeds, bringing together teams from Finance, HR, IT, Procurement and Customer Service.

Burberry contributes to local economies and drives positive change in the communities who support the luxury industry. In Yorkshire, it does this through Burberry Inspire, run by The Burberry Foundation. The first project of its kind, Burberry Inspire aims to give young people deep and varied experience of arts and culture while studying the impact on their development.
Abraham Moon are proud to have been the recipients of The Queen’s Award for Export, presented by Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace. In 2015, the business also hosted a four-hour visit from Prince Charles as part of HRH’s Campaign for Wool, a campaign which they fully endorse.

Abraham Moon craft their beautiful ranges of fashion fabrics and accessories from the historic Moon mill in Yorkshire. Established in 1837 and with over 180 years of proud British manufacturing and design heritage, they are now one of Great Britain’s last remaining vertical woollen mills.

The term ‘vertical’ is a throwback to the Victorian era when mills would rise several stories, with each floor containing separate parts of the manufacturing process. Today it remains a unique confirmation of Abraham Moon’s authenticity, who control every stage of production from raw wool to finished product including dyeing, blending, carding, spinning, warping, weaving, and finishing.

Abraham Moon create collections with a balance between innovative design and traditional craft, maintaining their position at the forefront of commercial trends with consistent high quality. Their passion for distinction remains as strong now as ever, carrying the message of what it truly means to be ‘Made in Great Britain’.
Established in 1767, Joshua Ellis celebrates a distinguished heritage of British manufacturing with a steadfast reputation for luxury and quality. Renowned the world over for producing the finest handcrafted cashmere and woollen cloth and scarves, their products are highly sought after by luxury fashion houses and exported from their Yorkshire mill to over 23 countries.

Joshua Ellis won the Textile Business Award at the 2015 UK Fashion and Textile Awards, presented by HRH Princess Royal.

In-house specialists scour the world, working with tried and trusted supply routes to purchase the finest raw materials. From this moment, until products leave the mill Joshua Ellis are in control of the entire process. Every Joshua Ellis scarf, stole, throw or fabric is unique and goes through 21 different processes before it is deemed perfect for sale.

Joshua Ellis is proud to work with some of the finest luxury fashion brands and couture houses around the world with a particular focus in France, USA, Italy, and Japan. Their cashmere scarves sell in many of the world’s finest department stores and online shops.
Cunnington & Sanderson have always proudly worked with traditional Yorkshire mills as they believe Yorkshire textiles to be some of the highest quality, sustainable and desirable fabric in the world. Accessible to independent designers and carrying the heritage of the textile industry which contributes to giving fashion their heart and soul.

**Matthew Cunnington,**
Founder, Cunnington & Sanderson

Cunnington & Sanderson design clothes that are seasonless and timeless. Strong believers that clothes should be cherished and long lasting, the brand believe it is important to promote sustainability and slowfashion.

Draped by hand, every garment design is unique and holds within its own emotional symbolism and characteristics. Every collection starts from a narrative. Volume, detailing, garment structure and emotional embodiment, are all important to the brand’s ethos. Irregular draping, creative cutting, sculptural silhouettes are combined unexpectedly to portray something new, something innovative and something people appreciate as the craftsmanship signature of the brand.
Leeds City Region has been a fantastic place to start our new textile design business with its amazing heritage and such a range of incredible mills on our doorstep. Easy connections to London have also been a benefit to us for visiting customers and trade fairs, and we have been able to take advantage of the many local organisations providing help and support to new start-ups.

Charlotte Raffo, Founder and Director, The Monkey Puzzle Tree
The textile industry in Leeds City Region is incredible, the heritage and knowledge behind these carefully crafted fabrications are invaluable for the luxury element needed for our pieces.

Sonya Bachra-Byrne, Co-Founder & Creative Director, AVIE.
Winners of the “Best Emerging Brand of the Year 2019” by Drapers.

Leeds and Yorkshire have been the centre of textiles for luxury and quality for fashion, and the tailoring industry for hundreds of years, with the finest wools and cashmere fabrics coming from the region.

Anita Massarella, Founder, Anita Massarella Design
Sustainability is key to the textile and fashion industry in Leeds City Region, with businesses taking a lead on innovative sustainable products and ethical techniques and processes. Blending heritage with the latest technologies, businesses in Leeds City Region are leading the way in sustainable practices to reduce impact on the environment.

A wealth of independent fashion designers have chosen to launch their brands in Leeds City Region. Using the luxury cloth and quality fabrics produced by local mills, these start-up labels prioritise sustainability and distinctive designs.

Batley and Dewsbury were hubs for recycling waste fibres into useful fabrics from the early 19th century, with the emergence of the shoddy and mungo industries in these areas. The region was a hub for sustainable fashion long before this was a major public concern.
Mobus was established in 1994 with a mission to manufacture high quality, fashion inspired, upholstery fabrics which are ethically sourced, globally distributed, and with full traceability and due diligence. Since its inception, the business has grown from a small barn in West Yorkshire to an international company with sites across the globe. Still headquartered in West Yorkshire, the purpose-built headquarters has a large warehouse facility, a fabric testing lab, and a showroom.

All Mobus fabrics are offered with the UK Fire Retardant finish. All fabric is tested and certified to ensure full compliance. Mobus have developed a new type of fire-retardant finish which is a greener alternative to the old Deca-brominated FR systems. This new chemical will launch at the end of 2020 on the Mobus Eden which is a new 100% recycled polyester velvet. This new technology will then be rolled out across all the products produced.

Textile businesses in Leeds City Region are incredibly innovative, designing the eco-friendly fabrics of the future. At Mobus we have developed a new Green-Fire Retardant finish which will be rolled out across all our collections and we are committed to driving forward other eco-friendly products and initiatives.

Lee Paxman
Sale Director, Mobus
With roots stretching back to 1793, Camira is well-established as both a leader and pioneer of the textile industry. Camira employs over 750 staff, sells over 8 million metres of fabric each year to over 80 countries worldwide, and offers over 2,500 products in a colour palette that covers the spectrum. Capabilities extend from raw yarn to finished fabric, through textile spinning, weaving, finishing, technical knitting and specialist cutting and sewing.

Camira design and manufacture fabrics that stand up to the most demanding of environments, for the spaces that lie at the heart of people’s lives. The spaces we learn in, work in, recover in, relax in – and even the spaces in-between - the coaches, buses and trains that get us to where we need to be.

As testament to their work in furthering this cause, Camira have been recognised for their outstanding product innovation and environmental stewardship, receiving the Queen’s Award for Enterprise in Innovation and Sustainable Development, and, most recently, being announced as the winner in the ‘Green Materials’ category in the HiP awards held by North America’s prestigious Interior Design magazine.
From the creation of our very first recycled polyester fabric in 1997, through to the 2020 launch of Oceanic – our first textile to include marine plastic waste – our commitment to creating beautiful fabrics, without damaging the world around us, is long and enduring. Whether we are exploring the textures, tones and types of textiles we can create using discarded plastic, or innovating a brand new sustainable fabric crafted from renewable materials, we place our vision for a sustainable future at the heart of everything we do.

_Ian Burn,_
Director of Marketing, Camira
Deluxe Beds – Modular Mattresses

Combining traditional craftsman skills with cutting edge technology, Deluxe Beds is recognised as one of the leading bed manufacturers in the UK.

Deluxe Beds are working in partnership with Future Fashion Factory to create a modular mattress that can revolutionise how mattresses are used, recycled and reused. This will increase longevity and reduce the need for full replacements when only one section or component fails meaning less waste and fewer mattresses going to landfill each year.
Bombyx PLM
(Product Lifecycle Management)

Bombyx PLM is a solution and process of managing the entire lifecycle of a product from inception through engineering design and manufacture, to service and disposal of manufactured products.

Bombyx PLM aids brands and manufacturers to track and trace sustainability, as well as compliance, and the social impact of a manufactured product.

Bombyx PLM is used to manage and utilise supply chains, and has a critical role to play in the movement towards the circular economy. Apparel supply chains are complex, with many processes, ranging from the sourcing of dye and textile manufacturers, to pattern drafting and grading, artwork appliance, and tailoring, all the way up to its point of sale.

Bombyx delivers accurate, transparent, and auditable information throughout the product lifecycle, helping those in the product development roles make smart decisions at every step of the process, allowing the industry to predict and forecast more accurately.
We work with wool, the ultimate sustainable and renewable material, to produce luxury fabrics which are shown on the world’s leading catwalks as well as worn by discerning customers worldwide. We are based in Yorkshire with our own spring water supply and are very proud of our 183-year heritage. The skill and craftsmanship of our long serving employees allow us to produce fabric to the highest quality.

Laurence Brophy,
Finance Director, Abraham Moon
Sustainable fashion brand Cooli recycles fabrics such as denim and cotton from unwanted clothes to create unique, and wearable fashion collections.
The region’s textile sector has long been recognised for high quality products, borne out of the unique skills and knowledge we have in the region.

These craft skills and expertise have developed over many generations, leading to the creation of excellent quality cloth, and the production of items which are renowned the world over for their beautiful and high-quality finish.

These traditional skills are still in use today, by textile businesses producing bespoke and hand-crafted items for a modern world.
Something Wicked is an independent British brand. Their luxury lingerie and accessories are carefully handmade in the UK using the most exquisite materials such as Japanese plonge leather. Never off-the-rack, every piece is made to order, providing a more sustainable and unique service.

Our lingerie is made from start to finish by our team of skilled seamstresses. Run by women, made by women, for the empowerment of women. That is our brand statement and we truly feel that you can’t empower women in one country and exploit them in another. We have such a rich pool of talent in our region and we are proud to be part of this growth in UK manufacturing.

Steff McGrath,
Managing Partner, Something Wicked
Established in 1910 in Bradford, Joseph H Clissold & Son has been making cloth for over 110 years. Clissold exports to more than 30 countries manufacturing not only stock supported collections, but also crafting exceptional bespoke fabrics for exclusive top designers and retailers around the world.

Clissold has developed a number of unique fabrics including a washable wool denim. The iconic denim has been reinvented into a 100% pure new wool which is both unique, stylish and suitable for any occasion.
Nomad Atelier

Nomad Atelier is a unique brand of luxury essentials, designed and made in-house. Using the finest materials from local mills, the company produces stunning, adaptable pieces to love and wear for a lifetime.

The brand is driven by the creative imagination of Rita Britton, an icon of Yorkshire’s fashion industry with over 50 years’ experience. Launching her fashion boutique Pollyanna in 1967 at the age of 23, Rita built the Yorkshire store into an international luxury fashion hub.

Rita was awarded Drapers’ Lifetime Achievement Award in 2014. She is now focused on creating her own designs at Nomad Atelier.

With exquisite materials such as cashmere, wool and gabardines sourced from mills within the region, Nomad Atelier pieces are designed to last and be practical – a beautiful silk shirt that’s machine washable, an oversized cashmere sweater for long weekends at home. Skilled craftspeople make each piece in Yorkshire and Nomad Atelier ships orders worldwide.
The textile industry in Leeds City Region is second-to-none, and in my opinion, it has gone from strength to strength over the last decade. The beauty of this sector is we have local mills, fabric resources, a huge directory of creative talent and the best University and educational support. My business, What's Your Skirt, has thrived because of the exceptional textile sector in the region.

Siobhan Thomas,
Design Director, What's Your Skirt

What's Your Skirt specialises in elegant, luxurious, beautifully crafted skirts for various occasions defining timeless key looks. All their collections are designed and manufactured in the UK, utilising high quality fabrics sourced locally.

What's Your Skirt's exclusive skirts are exquisitely hand-crafted in Leeds City Region with incredible attention to detail on each piece. Each key piece is named as part of the brand ethos and to show that every woman has an identity, and the skirts are no different. 'What's Your Skirt?' loves to make women look and feel beautiful, accentuating the waist and bringing out the inner confident woman to the outside. Timeless pieces, attention to detail and flattering cut is what makes the brand unique.
Pinning Hopes produces a range of *bespoke tweed garments*, accessories, dog coats, and upholstered furniture. All products are designed and made in their fully purposed Yorkshire studio.

"I’ve created my own business to showcase tweed and wool fabrics from Yorkshire, as their colours, quality and weaves are second to none."

*Lisa Barker,*
Founder, Pinning Hopes
The creation of beautiful textiles runs through each and every element of Camira; it is what we do and who we are. Honing our craft throughout the decades, we have been based in the Leeds City Region since our formation – the passion, history and expertise present in this small part of the globe is unparalleled, and we are proud to call it home.

Ian Burn
Director of Marketing, Camira
The textile sector in Leeds City Region has access to the support and expertise of the nine world-class universities within the region. These universities have developed diverse strengths in fashion and textiles, supporting students and industry partners to create ground-breaking new technologies to improve sustainability and efficiency.

The University of Leeds is at the forefront of research and innovation in fashion and textile science and the University of Huddersfield is home to the Technical Textiles Research Centre, which was established to work with businesses and equip students to solve industry challenges, with a focus on high-performance technical textiles.

The region is also home to the Textile Centre of Excellence and the headquarters of The Society of Dyers and Colourists. These organisations support the development of the textile sector, both in the region and internationally, providing world-leading expertise, training, qualifications and resources.

These universities and institutions are ensuring that the next generation have the skills and expertise required to continue to drive forward innovation in the fashion and textile manufacturing sector.
The Technical Textiles Research Centre at the University of Huddersfield aims to reinforce Leeds City Region’s reputation as a world leader in textiles by harnessing the newest technology and manufacturing techniques.

The focus is on high-performance technical textiles that are bespoke and of high quality. Huddersfield’s heritage as a major centre for the chemical industry is another catalyst for the research centre.

The technical textiles industry is flourishing, and products are used in a wide range of consumer and industrial products with diverse properties, including agriculture, apparel, electronics, and medical.

A key objective of the Research Centre is to address a number of serious global challenges, including dealing with the quality of life of an ageing population, which is one of the four grand challenges announced by the UK Industry Strategy. Another desire of the Centre is to influence the replacement of petrochemical-derived fibres with more sustainable, renewable alternatives, which is in direct synergy with the Global Challenges Research Fund. The Centre takes a holistic approach to tackling these challenges, which is enabled by the diverse nature of the academics involved.
“At the heart of the Technical Textiles Research Centre is our passion for the textile industry that gave Huddersfield its global reputation for excellence and innovation. Through the adoption of novel textile chemistry, combined with engineering expertise and digital technologies we can help UK textiles recapture an increasing share of global markets.

Professor Parik Goswami
Founder and Director of the Technical Textile Research Centre,
The University of Huddersfield
Leeds City Region’s fashion and textile industry supplies international luxury brands, while we also have a wealth of unique independent fashion designers who are making their mark. With Future Fashion Factory’s support, this region’s diverse and exciting industry will continue to innovate and grow.

Suzy Shepherd,
Founder of Yorkshire Textiles, and Co-Director of Future Fashion Factory

Future Fashion Factory is a ground-breaking industry-led research and development partnership, exploring and developing digital and advanced textile technologies to drive innovation in the UK fashion and textile industry.

Led by the University of Leeds, in partnership with the University of Huddersfield and the Royal College of Art, the Programme aims to help designers and manufacturers work collaboratively and access the expertise of fashion and textile researchers. Together, they work to develop technologies to increase productivity, cut lead times, lower costs, and reduce waste.

Future Fashion Factory focuses on five Core Research Themes to develop cutting-edge technologies that enable businesses to make the right product for the right customer at the right time:

- Late-stage customisation
- Sustainability and circular economies
- Digital communication of fabric aesthetics
- Data-driven design
- Skills and education

Future Fashion Factory has more than 250 members, of which over 100 are in Leeds City Region, including independent fashion brands, textile mills, and a range of technology providers. Businesses join Future Fashion Factory’s network to access exclusive events and resources, creating a supportive community where industry leaders and members can share and develop ideas. They gain insight into the new technologies being developed through the Core Research Themes and have opportunities to pilot them or become early adopters. Future Fashion Factory members are at the forefront of innovation in textiles and fashion design.
The Centre for Immersive Technologies connects internationally regarded researchers with partners from the public and private sectors to accelerate innovation and place people at the heart of the new augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) revolution. The Centre works collaboratively, across a range of disciplines, to help companies and organisations use immersive technologies for maximum benefit and competitive edge.

The Centre works with textile manufacturers and product developers to co-produce approaches that inspire user engagement and transform decision making, enabling partners to achieve their goals more effectively and safety. The potential for product design is vast: immersive technologies can be used to help fashion designers simulate how a new fabric might drape or help garment manufacturers understand how a new technology might be used. At a strategic level, companies can test new approaches to factory design or production processes, simulating different scenarios and using the data generated to provide robust evidence for decision making or policy change.

The research offers a number of benefits to the textile industry. Immersive technologies allow employees to train safely, whether for activities such as manufacturing with delicate fabrics, or learning to operate large and powerful looms. It can bond teams together, allowing them to practise until they act together seamlessly. For an individual, it can provide that crucial perceptual experience, to enable informed decision making in complex manufacturing environments.

Our goal is to enable an immersive technologies business ecosystem and we welcome regional, national and international partners to help us achieve our vision of driving business growth through the digital revolution.

Professor Mark Mon-Williams,  
Director of the Centre for Immersive Technologies, The University of Leeds
The Textile Centre of Excellence has developed and provided various forms of vocational training to textile manufacturers continuously for over 40 years. The Centre works with funding and policy bodies and a wide range of partner organisations including universities and colleges to ensure that the needs of the sector are recognised, and that relevant skills provision is available.

The Centre is a membership organisation with over 100 member companies, mainly producers of high-quality textile products for a range of global markets including fashion, furnishing, transport, medical and other ‘technical textile’ applications.

The Centre is a not for profit organisation, guided by a private sector Board of Directors drawn from some of the world’s major textile producers that supply the world’s premier fashion houses and technical fabric markets.

The Centre operates from Textile House in Huddersfield, the heart of Yorkshire’s woollen trade, providing a wide range of state-of-the-art facilities from its 27,000 sq. ft. headquarters.

Facilities include:
- A textile manufacturing workshop for commission warping and weaving operations
- A research and product-testing laboratory including authentication technology
- A fully equipped clothing studio for bespoke suit manufacture
- Award winning multi-meeting and conferencing facilities
- Fashion and textile-based business incubator units

As the largest provider of Fashion and Textile Apprenticeships in England, the Centre continuously reviews and develops learning content that meets the needs of businesses across the sector.

The Centre is researching the future skills needs of the fashion and textile manufacturing sector and developing new content to incorporate the best sustainability practices and to accelerate the adoption of digital technologies across all aspects of manufacturing and commercial activity.
The adoption of digital technologies will be crucial to the future success of the sector. The government’s Made Smarter Review recognised that the specific characteristics and opportunities in the UK textiles sector create an excellent prospect for the application of digital technologies for value creation in the sector where skills can be developed to realise the full potential. The Centre is working with partners to create the skills necessary to accelerate industry adoption.

Bill Macbeth OBE FRSA,
Managing Director, Textile Centre of Excellence
The SDC is the outstanding provider of colour education for the textile industry, offering a range of internationally recognised coloration courses and qualifications. Their mission is to educate the world in the science of colour.

Founded in 1884, the SDC became a registered charity in 1962 and was awarded a Royal Charter in 1963. The SDC is unique in being the only organisation in the world able to award the Chartered Colourist status.

The SDC works globally, with worldwide membership. It is a focus for networking and community engagement amongst the textile coloration industry. SDC members represent a community of nearly 2,000 people in around 50 countries, from textile artists and designers, to colour technologists and educators. In addition to individual members, the SDC has a worldwide membership base of company and college members representing all sectors of the textile industry.

The SDC is at the forefront of research through Coloration Technology, the world’s leading peer-reviewed journal dealing with the application of colour, and the only journal that covers all aspects of coloration technology. The SDC organises events, webinars and conferences that present the latest research and best practice, with sustainability a key focus.
Leeds City Region has been at the heart of the UK’s textile industries for many years and continues to be home to many unique and resilient companies which draw on their heritage to provide quality products to the global market. The SDC’s Head Office is in Bradford, and since our foundation we have been at the heart of a thriving textile sector. We are pleased to be part of such a strong textile sector in the north of England, working with many examples of world leading textile organisations and providing coloration skills and qualifications.

Dr Graham Clayton,
Chief Executive Officer, SDC
Leeds City Region is the largest economy and population centre outside of London and the South East, with a GVA of £69.6 billion and a population of over 3 million. The region is also home to over 126,000 businesses, including a large number of corporates and headquarters undertaking advanced operations.

Leeds City Region has experienced a wholesale transformation over the last century, from a predominantly manufacturing-based economy to a highly innovative and high-value economy. Centre for Cities recognised that Leeds has successfully reinvented its economy to meet the demands and opportunities of the 21st century. The City Region is great place for businesses to thrive and expand. Bradford was voted the best city to start a business by Barclays, and Leeds is home to the most scale-up businesses outside of London.
Leeds City Region has an unrivalled supply of talent. Home to nine universities and a further 14 further education colleges, there is no better place to locate to ensure a sustainable supply of skilled candidates. The region is only one of only two areas outside of London which is a net importer of graduates. We retain an exceptionally high level of students, with 56 per cent of students educated here staying to live and work after graduating. Just as importantly, our talented young people come back, with 70 per cent of graduates that leave the region to study elsewhere returning to live and work within the City Region.
Leeds City Region is at the heart of the UK, in a location that offers unbeatable access to everything the country has to offer. With frequent two-hour train journeys to London Kings Cross, access to Manchester in under an hour, and direct rail connectivity to Bristol, Newcastle, Glasgow and Edinburgh, the region is well connected across the UK. Leeds Bradford Airport also offers direct connections to over 75 destinations, and onward access to hundreds more via the hub airports of Heathrow and Amsterdam Airport Schiphol.
With special thanks to our partners
For further information please contact:
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