

Collective Fashion Justice Strategic plan 2023/24

Contents

1. Message from the Director
2. The need for a total ethics fashion system
3. Our approach
4. Our 2023 strategic goals
5. Our 2024 strategic plan
6. Closing message

Message from director

The concept of total ethics fashion is simple: the life and wellbeing of the planet and all those who live here; us humans and our fellow animals, must be prioritised before profit and production. Before the inception of Collective Fashion Justice two years ago, this term did not exist, and the landscape of advocacy for more responsible fashion too often failed to acknowledge that if we do not address harm and destruction in fashion holistically, we will never be rid of harm and destruction. Our goal of shifting fashion advocacy from binary or only partially collective thinking of 'fashion which values humans,' or 'fashion which values the planet,' or both, or 'fashion which values animals' alone is well on its way. While there is plenty more work to do, and I am eager to get to it, our first two years of advocacy and subsequent action have been more effective than I could have hoped for, given the relative infancy of the organisation.

Since the creation of our first strategic plan, our understanding of fashion's key problem has never swayed: fashion today reduces individuals to commodities and resources, and destructive and oppressive practices in fashion supply chains can be moved beyond when we prioritise life, autonomy, consent, innovation, creativity and justice in the making of clothes, shoes and bags. The dangers of the interwoven environmental and ethical crises we face as a global community have not changed in the past two years, and so our work to address these must only improve.

Change will never come from the top down without external pressure and influence, or solely from the grassroots: we must work at a citizen consumer, industry and government level should we effect lasting and meaningful change. With this in mind, our goals for the next year are spread across these three groups, and are interconnected in their approach.



First, we will continue to demand that total ethics fashion thinking and production be seen as an industry wide goal. Before we change practice, we must change minds, and this work is ongoing and uphill, especially as we combat green-washing and ethics-washing from lobbying groups and companies with deeper pockets than thoughts for our collective future. We must reach a point in which those not working for total ethics fashion are outliers, even while we are still far away from seeing a total ethics fashion system before our eyes.

Next, we aim to move the fashion industry and related decision-makers beyond discussion and to action. This is critical. Nuanced conversations, in-depth analyses and lively debates are only as useful as they are effective at bringing about substantial, tangible change. We aim to bring about policy at an industry and government level, which will steer fashion in the direction of total ethics.

Finally, we plan to grow our future capacity for change, and we plan to do this with youth. Young people are too often excluded from conversations about the world they are inheriting, and this is to the detriment of us all. By strengthening our engagement with the future generation of fashion designers, policy-makers, thinkers and advocates we ensure total ethics fashion to be something which only builds better as time goes on. We ensure that this concept and movement become something larger than any one organisation.

This document outlines our immediate goals for the year ahead, and the trajectory for the year following. By digging into the specifics for 2023 while remaining more open for 2024, we ensure progress while inviting flexibility and growth.



Emma Hakansson

The need for a total ethics fashion system

Today the fashion industry is harmful and destructive. It treats people like machines to profit from, animals like mere objects to exploit and skin as materials, and the planet like an endless resource to extract from. This cannot be sustained: we need a total ethics fashion system.

While advocates have called for 'sustainable fashion' which protects the planet, for 'fair fashion' which protects people, and for 'vegan fashion' which protects animals, these binary ways of thinking fail to recognise the need for a collective liberation approach: none of us are free from oppression and harm until we all are.

A total ethics fashion system puts all animals, whether human or non-human, as well as the planet we share before profit.





Our approach

In fashion's animal-derived material supply chains, animals themselves, the people exploiting them and our shared planet are all harmed. If we seek to change the fashion industry, while we must address all encompassing problems like over consumption and a lack of circularity, the most effective way to shift away from harm is by addressing these animal supply chains.

Leather production, for example, can cause deforestation and subsequent Indigenous land rights issues, it causes massive greenhouse gas emissions, water extraction and pollution, intensive chemistry use, forms of environmental racism through pollution, the exploitation and ill health of tannery workers, the psychological disturbance of farm and slaughterhouse workers trapped in inherently and unnaturally violent jobs, and cattle themselves, who are killed as commodities. To move fashion beyond the use of animal-derived leather and towards just alternatives is to address a collective crisis. To look beyond the concept of individuals as commodities killed for fashion or treated as machines is to look to Collective Fashion Justice.

2023 strategic goals

Our goals next year focus on a few key audiences: policy-makers outside of the fashion industry, the industry itself, fashion students and educational institutions, as well as citizens themselves. Invariably, citizen consumers are impacted by all of our work, even if they are not directly targeted by a specific goal.

Audience key



policy
makers



educational
institutions



industry








citizens

1. Demand total ethics fashion as the industry's goal




Over the last two years, we have brought 'total ethics fashion' into fashion's sphere of conversation. Now, we must push these conversations further and make it an unignorable goal for the industry to work towards: acknowledged and prioritised by industry leaders. All animals whether human or non-human, as well as the planet, must be prioritised before profit.

In order to create change, our concept of total ethics fashion must be accepted and acknowledged as essential by those with power in the fashion industry. It is critical we do not allow the industry to be 'all talk', so this first goal is complemented by the following action-focussed goal.





1.1 Educate and advocate for total ethics fashion in leading fashion industry spaces

-  Deliver at least 4 presentations calling for the fashion industry to prioritise the planet, people and our fellow animals before profit in at least 4 major industry events and conferences. All 4 engagements must result in substantial follow up discussion and action towards total ethics from brands and decision-makers, and should focus on animal-derived materials which harm all three aforementioned groups.
-   Release 1 book regarding the importance of total ethics fashion, cementing the concept in academic spaces. This book must be listed as recommended or essential reading for students across at least 5 universities, and be featured across 10 media outlets. To ensure accessibility, this book must also be digestible for a wider audience, and used to create conversations within the fashion industry itself.
-  

1.2 Build powerful industry allies for total ethics fashion, minimising the spaces in which unholistic views of sustainability or ethics are accepted

-  Create a manifesto for total ethics for the fashion industry members, publications, schools and NGOs to sign onto. At least 20 leading signatories should sign on, with a larger number of total signatories: at least 60.
-   Bring discussion and analysis of total ethics fashion and how the industry can progress towards it in at least 10 media outlets it has not previously been featured. These features may be brought about through coverage of our book release, reports, campaigns, resources and industry engagement.



1.3 Release and promote a certification for brands working towards total ethics fashion, increasing citizen consumer awareness and improving purchases, while offering incentive to brands improving their production

-   Certify a minimum of 50 quality brands and their products and collections within a year of release, and these brands should be highlighted above others in at least 4 online retail stores, to positively improve consumer behaviour.
-  Secure positive endorsement of this certification as more holistic and critical to the fashion industry compared to other more limited certifications by at least 3 fashion organisations, 10 fashion influencers and 5 media outlets.
-  Research and prepare for the release of additional certification tiers, to ensure that brands must continually improve and become more responsible. This research should involve certified brand consultation and collaboration.




2. Move fashion from discussion to action through policy

In the midst of intertwined and unravelling climate, biodiversity and ethical crises, the fashion industry must act now, not later. In order to move fashion from discussion to action, we believe policies at a brand, council, local, state, national and international government level are essential.



2.1 Develop our capacity for industry consultation providing resources and proposed targets for improvements towards total ethics production for fashion brands and retailers

-  Share resources with and consult at least 15 significant brands regarding the use of unsustainable and unethical materials, securing at least 7 policy commitments or targets to shift beyond their use.
-  Provide improved online resources and training for brands looking to understand total ethics fashion, material sourcing and production better, in order to improve our capacity to engage with brands. These resources should be used by some hundreds of individuals within the industry.

2.2 Use the power of investigative footage to enact policy change which shifts fashion beyond cruel and unsustainable materials

-  Investigative footage released or disseminated by our organisation must receive mainstream media and contribute to the introduction of at least 5 new brand, fashion council or government policies banning or reducing the permitted use of animal-derived materials.
-   Activate citizens by encouraging them to use their voices to support policy change following the release of investigative footage, supported by a campaign making it easy to do so. At least 10,000 people should engage in this campaign.



2.3 Introduce total ethics fashion concepts to government and peak body policy, guidelines and laws which previously did not exist or did not include these principles

-  Review and contribute to the amendment of at least 3 pieces of governmental and intergovernmental guideline and policy works which impact the fashion industry, ensuring people, animals and the planet alike are considered where they otherwise may not have been.
-  Contribute to the introduction and ultimate passing of at least 1 piece of legislation which aims to protect animals, people and planet in the fashion industry at a government level.





3. Grow our future capacity for change through education

The future of fashion will be shaped by young people. Without engaging with future fashion designers, marketers and corporate social responsibility directors, we will not be able to build lasting momentum for real change. As such, in 2023 we will focus further on our engagement with fashion schools and universities.

3.1 Educate students on total ethics fashion, how it relates to their potential careers and how they can contribute to the creation of such a system

-  Lecture, host screenings, Q&As and provide educational resources to at least 10 educational institutions around the world, and foster ongoing relationships with these institutions.
-  Create at least one course in partnership with a university, to allow for a deeper level of total ethics fashion education.

3.2 Support students in moving into industry responsibility, advocacy and policy roles which benefit the cause of total ethics fashion

-  Offer students across a number of universities internship opportunities at Collective Fashion Justice, as well as with a number of certified brands, in order to develop these students' work experience for the future.
- 
 Involve students in lobbying efforts relating to at least 1 piece of policy or legislation, developing their capacity to think about change-making at a large scale.
- 

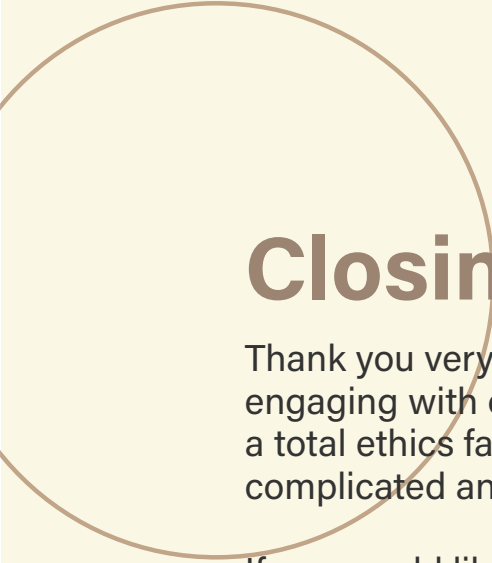
2024 strategic plan

While our organisation is still young and growing at a rapid rate, our plans for 2024 must be less specific than those for 2023, to allow for flexibility and adaptation. Some of our 2023 goals may flow into 2024, as these goals are ongoing. In 2024, our theory of change in which citizen consumers, industry and government must all be addressed at once will remain key, with work addressing each group influencing the others.

While deepening our existing works, we will also aim to expand our focus as our capacity increases. This will mean exploring in more detail specific material supply chains and systems in fashion which are yet to be uncovered enough to understand all of the associated issues which must be unpacked and moved beyond.

Too, in 2024, with hopes of a greater portion of fashion industry members and policy-makers engaged in work for a total ethics fashion system, our goals will expand to become more solution focussed; looking not only at work to educate society and industry on current issues, or at policy to move beyond destruction and harm, but at tangible opportunities for just transition.

People working in industries which harm them, their communities, animals and our shared environment need opportunities to move into more fair and sustainable work; whether these people are miners, slaughterhouse workers, animal production farmers, or tannery workers. Similarly, the fashion industry needs materials and systems which are future-proof, environmentally and socially responsible. Collective Fashion Justice will aim to create blueprints for and real just transition opportunities for the benefit of both groups, and us all.



Closing message

Thank you very much for supporting and engaging with our work. The road towards a total ethics fashion system is long, complicated and cannot be taken alone.

If you would like to support our work as a volunteer, collaborating organisation, fashion industry member ready to move forward, educational institution, policy-maker or donor, please reach out.

info@collectivefashionjustice.org

