

# LEVI STRAUSS & CO.

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## LEVI STRAUSS & CO. ANNOUNCES MORE THAN \$380,000 TO FUND FUTURE APPAREL LEADERS

*Funding part of global fellowship program to accelerate innovation in sustainable apparel*

**SAN FRANCISCO (September 26, 2019)** – Levi Strauss & Co. (LS&Co.) today announced it is granting more than \$380,000 to the second class of LS&Co. Collaboratory fellows who are working to create a more sustainable apparel industry. The funding will go toward new approaches and innovations in the apparel supply chain that address issues related to climate change. Projects include rescuing excess fabrics to create beautiful clothes designed by award-winning sustainable designers, a data platform for garment factories and textile waste recyclers that enables end-to-end trading and tracing, and reinventing the way goods are sent and received.

The Collaboratory is a fellowship program for entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs who see design and sustainability as inextricably linked and are working to create a more sustainable apparel industry. The program tackles different social and environmental sustainability challenges that are critically important to the future of the apparel industry and the planet. The first Collaboratory class focused on water. This class focused on climate change.

LS&Co. believes that climate change is one of the most important issues of our time and a critical challenge for the apparel industry. Mitigating climate change and transitioning to a low-carbon, more circular future are vital to the health and well-being of the people who wear and make our products, and the future supply of raw materials needed to make those products. For those reasons, LS&Co. released its [Climate Action Strategy](#) in 2018, setting very ambitious carbon emissions reduction targets based on a 1.5-degree temperature rise scenario.

This class of Collaboratory fellows attended a weekend workshop at LS&Co.'s Eureka Innovation Lab, where they had the unique opportunity to work through ideas and challenges with LS&Co. leaders and employee mentors, along with sustainability and apparel industry experts, as they developed concrete, tangible plans for reducing their organization's, and the industry's, climate impact.

Fellows came from around the U.S., as well as Europe, Asia, and Central America. Following the Collaboratory workshop weekend, they submitted project proposals focused on innovative and impactful solutions tied to climate change, with the opportunity to receive funding from LS&Co. to implement their solutions. The ideas selected represent bold, cutting-edge ideas from leaders who represent the future of the apparel industry. (A full list of Collaboratory fellows and their projects is below.)

“Taking part in the Levi's Collaboratory gave my passion for a more sustainable fashion industry the perfect supportive and amplifying sounding board, which allowed ideas to grow from concept into real change,” said Christina Dean, founder of the Hong Kong-based Redress and the R Collective. “Being around the table with my fellows – from around the world and from around Levi Strauss & Co.'s business – to look at life and fashion's bigger picture gave me a new spring to my stride, so needed on the long climb ahead.”

“Getting a seat at the table in the Eureka Lab, sharing perspectives and debating climate action in our industry alongside the other fellows, internal leaders from Levi Strauss & Co. and outside speakers was recharging and inspiring,” said Amanda Grogan, founder of Make It Black. “Levi Strauss & Co. put so much thought and consideration into the structure and programming of the Collaboratory. I came away

from my time at the Eureka Lab feeling so inspired to push forward with actionable climate crisis solutions.”

“The energy and creativity on display from this class of fellows was wonderful to see,” said Paul Dillinger, vice president of global product innovation at LS&Co. “We all know how urgently our industry, and our planet, need real solutions to the challenges presented by climate change, so we are proud to support ideas and projects that can help get us closer to where we need to be.”

A full list of all Fellows is below. To learn more about them, visit <http://levistrauss-collaboratory.com/>

**About Levi Strauss & Co.** Levi Strauss & Co. is one of the world's largest brand-name apparel companies and a global leader in jeanswear. The company designs and markets jeans, casual wear and related accessories for men, women and children under the Levi's®, Dockers®, Signature by Levi Strauss & Co.™ and Denizen® brands. Its products are sold in more than 110 countries worldwide through a combination of chain retailers, department stores, online sites, and a global footprint of approximately 3,000 retail stores and shop-in-shops. Levi Strauss & Co.'s reported fiscal 2018 net revenues were \$5.6 billion. For more information, go to <http://levistrauss.com>.

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### **Collaboratory 2.0 Fellows and Projects**

The second class of Collaboratory fellows was chosen through a two-step process that commenced in 2018. First, the Proposal Review Committee reviewed project proposals in their entirety and scored them on the following criteria: feasibility, climate impact, community impact, outsized impact, project leadership, alignment with Levi Strauss & Co. priorities, potential for learnings, and overall quality. Then, the Funding Decision Committee reviewed summaries of each project proposal, including the recommendations of the Proposal Review Committee.

The selected fellows are listed below, in alphabetical order, along with brief descriptions of their projects:

- **Christina Dean, Co-Founder & CEO of The R Collective (Hong Kong)**  
The R Collective is an upcycled fashion brand that rescues brands' excess fabrics to create beautiful clothes designed by award-winning sustainable designers to raise funds for Redress
- **Ali El Idrissi, Founder & CEO of UpChoose (San Francisco, CA)**  
UpChoose is a sustainable consumption platform that designs smarter services for key life moments, starting with a circular baby wardrobe solution through which new parents receive curated sets of organic clothing essentials at each phase of a baby's growth and send them back after use.
- **Ashley Etling, CEO & Co-Founder of LimeLoop (Emeryville, CA)**

LimeLoop is reinventing the way goods are sent and received via a full-circle shipper solution and sensor-driven platform.

- **Amanda Grogan, Founder of Make It Black (New York, NY)**  
Make It Black is an overdye re-manufacturer that collaborates with brands to transform pre- and post-consumer waste clothing into new by making it black. Make It Black is developing a circular garment overdye technology.
- **Eleazar Guevara, Co-Founder of Novabori (Tlaxcala, Mexico)**  
Novabori is a B2B company that works with brands to develop eco-friendly fabrics from recycled materials such as cotton, polyester, wool, and acrylics.
- **Molly Hemstreet, Co-Founder, The Industrial Commons/Opportunity Threads (Morganton, NC)**  
The Industrial Commons provides educational tools for frontline textile workers responsible for implementing the local circular economy. This project is calling special attention to the importance of workers' role in the circular economy and engaging them in the tool development process.
- **Marianne Hughes, Founder and CEO of GetKno (London, England)**  
GetKno is the world's first real-time transparency platform – for brands, factories and workers – verifying worker happiness and pay and giving workers a voice 24/7.
- **Ryan Huston, Founder & General Manager of Huston Textile Company (Mather, CA)**  
Family-owned and operated business since 2013, Huston Textile makes high-quality fabrics sourced from domestic sustainable, organic, and climate beneficial fibers.
- **Isaac Nichelson, Co-Founder of Circular Systems (Los Angeles, CA)**  
Circular Systems is a new materials startup that is developing innovative circular and regenerative technologies.
- **Ann Runnel, Founder of Reverse Resources (Talinn, Estonia)**  
Reverse Resources has built a software-as-a-service platform for garment factories and textile waste recyclers to trade and trace waste end-to-end.
- **Kushagra Srivastava, CEO of Chakr Innovation (Gurgaon, India)**  
Chakr Innovation is a three-year old startup that developed a technology to capture particulate matter emissions from diesel generators and convert it into inks and paints.