

Curricular Community Engagement Award

Invitation to submit one nomination per Faculty for the UP Curricular Community Engagement Award

Curricular community engagement (CCE) aligns with Goal 5 of the University of Pretoria (UP) 2025 vision and aims to enhance the university's impact on South Africa's social and economic development. Curricular community engagement creates opportunities for innovative learning environments, experiences, assessment practices and university social responsibility.

The call for nominations for the Community Engagement Award is herewith opened. Each Faculty may nominate one CCE module for the award. The nominees must be the lecturer(s) responsible for a module registered on the Community Engagement Management System (CEMS). The module should have operated for at least three years as data are required. The role of the students within the module must be highlighted as the criteria are aligned with the Talloires Network's criteria for the MacJannet Awards, as reflected in the nomination template (Addendum A). The winner of the institutional award may be nominated for the MacJannet Award if the role of the students within that module meets the criteria for that award.

The following process is proposed:

- Each Faculty may nominate one CCE module's lecturer(s) for the award.
- The nomination must be completed using the attached template (Addendum A).
- The completed form must be submitted to Maliga Govender via email (maliga.govender@up.ac.za) by 13 September 2024.
- A panel will evaluate submissions.
The evaluation panel will sit in October and comprise the Vice Chancellor, Vice Principal: Academic, Vice Principal: Research, previous year's winners of Laureates, Academic Achievers, Chancellor's Award, Young Researchers and Head of Community Engagement.

Only one institutional award is made annually. The template to be completed (Addendum A) and the evaluation rubric (Addendum B) are attached.

ADDENDUM A: Curricular Community Engagement Award¹

1. Nominee's information

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Title	Dr		
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2. Nominator Information

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Title	Prof		
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3. Recommendation by the nominator (100-200 words)

The TKS 411 module exemplifies the University of Pretoria's commitment to enhancing social and economic development in South Africa through impactful, community-based initiatives. In alignment with Goal 5 of the UP Vision 2025, which focuses on sustainability and transformative engagement, this module has successfully integrated real-world challenges into academic learning, empowering students with skills in sustainable textile management. Since 2021, the collaboration with Clothes to Good (CTG), a textile recycling and disability empowerment organization, has allowed students to address critical issues such as textile waste and disability inclusion. By converting theoretical knowledge into practical, innovative solutions, students actively contribute to sustainable economic growth and community empowerment.

Under the leadership of Dr Nadine Sonnenberg, the module has expanded to address the circular economy, waste reduction, and entrepreneurship in the textile industry, garnering national recognition. Through its focus on textile-to-textile recycling and upcycling initiatives, TKS 411 not only contributes to environmental sustainability but also creates meaningful employment opportunities, especially for marginalized communities. This engagement directly reflects UP's dedication to addressing pressing socio-economic issues, fostering a culture of responsibility and innovation among its students. The module serves as a model of university social responsibility, advancing both academic excellence and community development.

4. Nominated Module's Information

Name of module	Textiles: new developments, sustainability and textile use
Module code	TKS 411
Module outcomes	The B Con Sci Clothing Retail Management is a vocational programme that balances theory, practical application, and experiential training in the industry. Through the programme, students are exposed to the entire clothing supply chain and can specialise in a particular area of interest once they graduate. Graduates are typically employed as clothing buyers and planners, brand managers, product developers, fashion designers, fashion marketers, social media content managers, quality assurance managers, sourcing coordinators, textile technologists, visual merchandisers, and pattern technologists or can become entrepreneurs. In line with the above, the outcomes of the TKS 411 module are designed to ensure that graduates possess both a theoretical understanding and practical application of

¹ Adapted from the MacJannet Award Criteria, Talloires Network

	<p>sustainability and innovation in the textile industry. Students must be able to (i) demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of sustainability principles (including the environmental impacts of textile production, use and disposal) in proposing innovative solutions for reducing waste, energy consumption and carbon emissions across the textile value chain; (ii) integrate concepts of circularity into textile design and manufacturing by creating strategies for textile reuse, upcycling and downcycling while considering the economic, social and environmental implications of these practices and (iii) develop leadership and project management skills by designing and executing a community or industry-focused project that promotes sustainability and innovation in textile use, contributing to broader societal and environmental goals. As will be gathered from the sections to follow, the Clothes To Good (CTG) community engagement project, which is integrated into the practical component of the TKS 411 module and its accompanying assessment plan, is closely aligned with these outcomes.</p>		
Number of credits	13		
Student success rate over the last three years (2022 – 2024)	<p>2022 31 students 100% success rate</p>	<p>2023 28 students 100% success rate</p>	<p>2024 23 students 96% success rate</p>
Number of students registered in the current academic year	23 students		
Number of years the programme has been running	3 years (first semester of 2022 – 2024)		
Total number of academic or administrative staff involved in the current academic year	<p>1 Lecturer and course coordinator: Dr. Nadine Sonnenberg 1 Technical assistant: Ms. Emmy Lombard 1 External examiner: Prof Elizabeth Kempen (UNISA)</p> <p>Co-investigators and partners in a DSI and CSIR-funded circular economy technology demonstration project (linked to the TKS 411 CTG project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Güera Romo – Hernieuw (Pty) Ltd • Dr Nadine Sonnenberg – University of Pretoria • Dr Sweta Patnaik – Cape Peninsula University of Technology 		
Total number of community members served by the programme in the last 3 years	<p>2022 <i>CTG Management:</i> Jesse Naidoo, Tammy Greyling, and Liza Zondagh</p> <p>26 full-time staff in addition to volunteers and contractors</p> <p>Micro businesses empowered by CTG: 108</p>	<p>2023 <i>CTG Management:</i> Jesse Naidoo, Tammy Greyling, and Liza Zondagh</p> <p>26 full-time staff in addition to volunteers and contractors</p> <p>Micro businesses empowered by CTG: 150</p>	<p>2024 <i>CTG Management:</i> Jesse Naidoo, Tammy Greyling, and Liza Zondagh</p> <p>40 full-time staff in addition to volunteers and contractors</p> <p>Micro businesses empowered by CTG: 300</p>

	(56 owned by mothers of children with disabilities)	(60 owned by mothers of children with disabilities)	(80 owned by mothers of children with disabilities)
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5. Please provide a brief overview of the module, describing each of the following in order: History (when the module was established, who established it and for what purpose), how the module is currently run (role of lecturer, students, Community Engagement Office, community members). (300-400 words)

TKS 411 was proposed as a core module in the B Con Sci Clothing Retail Management programme in 2013 to replace the previous TKS 310 module, which, up until then, had solely focused on new developments in the textile domain. With the curriculum change approved in 2013, TKS 411 was integrated into the B Con Sci Clothing Retail Management programme in 2014 and was to be presented for the first time at the fourth-year level in 2017. Following the resignation of Mariette Strydom (who was initially tasked with developing the TKS 411 content), the module was facilitated by part-time lecturers from 2014 up until 2017 with minor adjustments to the original TKS 310 content. In 2018, the module was allocated to Dr Nadine Sonnenberg, who redeveloped the TKS 411 course content to focus on sustainable initiatives and developments in the textile and apparel industry, as was initially envisaged for this module. Since textile waste is a critical issue in the global and African context, much attention is devoted to the topic in the module content, as well as innovative practices and new developments to mitigate the volume of waste generated in this industry.

In 2021, a departmental visit by Jesse Naidoo and Tammy Greyling – founding members of Clothes To Good (CTG) – initiated discussions surrounding the integration of a curricular-based community engagement component in the TKS 411 module. CTG is a textile recycling and disability empowerment organisation that has, over the past decade, recycled a vast amount of post-consumer textile waste sourced from schools, corporate volunteerism programmes and H&M stores nationally. CTG urgently needed innovative solutions to absorb the excess volume of textile waste they were receiving. This served as an ideal platform for TKS 411 students to convert their theoretical knowledge into practice and broaden their understanding of the complexities of dealing with textile waste. Following further discussions with CTG, the project was registered at the Community Engagement Office in 2022 and led to the format in which the module is currently managed: Dr Nadine Sonnenberg, in her role as module coordinator and lecturer, liaises with CTG management yearly to specify dates, activities and assignments that align with their needs and the specified outcomes of the module. The assessment plan and schedules are updated accordingly and made available to students. Site visits to the CTG premises in Centurion, Gauteng, are compulsory. The technical assistant liaises with the Community Engagement Office to arrange student transport to the CTG premises. During these site visits, students are expected to work closely with CTG management and staff to execute the tasks in the module's assessment plan. At the end of the semester, students' proposals for expanding and streamlining CTG's operations are jointly assessed by CTG management and staff, Dr Nadine Sonnenberg, and Prof Elizabeth Kempen, the TKS 411 external moderator.

6. How are lecturers and administrative staff involved in the leadership or advising of the module? In particular, give some details of the involvement of the lecturer nominated for this award. (200-300 words)

Dr Nadine Sonnenberg played a key role in developing the TKS 411 course content and integrating CTG community engagement activities and assessment opportunities into the curriculum. Her research interests in sustainable clothing consumption practices and textile waste management aligned with CTG's goals, leading to a collaboration that benefits both students and the community. Dr Sonnenberg worked closely with the CTG team to understand their needs and registered the

project with the Community Engagement Office. Assisted by administrative staff and the Community Engagement Office in arranging transport to the CTG premises, she accompanies students to the site visits and ensures that they gain optimally from their time on site without excessively interfering with fundamental CTG daily activities.

Through her involvement with CTG, Dr Sonnenberg identified the need for additional solutions to manage the surplus textile waste that CTG could not process in their current waste streams. This led to her collaboration with Dr Güera Romo, founder of Hernieuw (Pty) Ltd, and Dr Sweta Patnaik from the Department of Clothing and Textile Technology at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Together, they responded to a call from the Department of Science and Innovation and the CSIR for circular economy demonstration funding in 2023. Their project entitled “Textile-to-textile recycling using SMME scaled needle felting technology” received R3.1 million for 2024–2025. This initiative aims to showcase the application of needle felting technology to create fabric from blended textile waste in an SMME set-up. It is envisaged that this application may create entrepreneurial opportunities through closed-loop recycling and further extend textile waste initiatives such as those practiced within the CTG community. A chapter that sketches the background to this project entitled “*Pursuing Zero Waste in the South African Textile Industry: A Case Study of SMME Scaled Needle Felting Technology*” has been accepted for publication in the Springer Nature Textile Science and Clothing Technology book series.

7. What is the role of communities in the module’s activities? Do community members have leadership roles in the activities? Are communities engaged in sustaining the activities for the long-term? (200-300 words)

CTG draws together a broad community base consisting of 300 micro-businesses (approximately 80 owned by mothers of children with disabilities), other non-profit organisations, as well as major retail brands, such as H&M and Levi’s, that have partnered with CTG in driving meaningful, sustainable positive social impact in enterprise development, inclusion (especially people with disabilities), and caring for the environment. Through this community base, CTG has, over the past decade, set up the infrastructure to process and recycle hundreds of tons of post-consumer textile waste annually (<https://clothestogood.com/>). All sourced items are processed and sorted at their recycling facility in Centurion by their team of full-time staff, volunteers and contractors, of whom approximately a third are individuals with disabilities.

Donated items are channeled into four waste streams: (1) Clothing, shoes, and other textile items in good condition are sold to their micro-businesses, many of which are managed by mothers of children with disabilities. They resell to their communities to generate income for their families. (2) Clothing items that could still be worn but are not “sell-quality” are donated to CTG’s non-profit partners. (3) Certain textile waste categories (e.g., denim) are earmarked for upcycling into early childhood development resources, soft toys and various homeware products through the Enabling Denim programme. (4) “Unusable” textile waste is delivered to a company that shreds the textile waste into stuffing for the mattress, insulation and motor industries. Students are exposed to all these waste streams during their site visits to CTG.

CTG continually generates funds through the number of usable kilograms they process, which they reinvest in various other social impact projects such as “Clothes to Trees,” “Clothes To Play,” “Clothes To Wheels,” or “Clothes To Cash.” During the past year, CTG has also received funding from prominent industry stakeholders to enlarge its current facilities and expand its operations to Cape Town and KwaZulu Natal.

8. Write a short description of what the students actually do in the community. Do students have leadership roles in the activities? What roles do students play? (200-300 words)

At the start of the semester, TKS 411 students receive two assignment briefs aligned with module outcomes and planned CTG site activities. Preparatory materials, including video clips on CTG operations and values, are provided to ensure students are well-informed. Students are also briefed on the constraints of working on-site, particularly when interacting with disabled CTG team members. Due to challenges with coordinating site visits around students' timetables and the limited space and staff at CTG, students are divided into smaller groups. These groups visit the site at scheduled times, which are confirmed weekly with CTG management. Communication through WhatsApp and Blackboard ensured timely updates and equal exposure to on-site activities for all groups.

The first assignment introduces students to textile waste sorting, based on European Union (EU) Waste Hierarchy principles. It allows them to gain in-depth insight into the methodologies, benefits, and challenges associated with post-consumer textile waste accumulation, sorting, and redistribution from the CTG community perspective. The students work in groups to first source relevant background information surrounding the EU textile waste hierarchy before visiting the CTG premises. During the site visit, students are coached by community members on how to inspect and sort the waste into various categories for reselling, repair, upcycling or downcycling and, in so doing, gain first-hand experience on how CTG practically implements the waste hierarchy. After that, students are exposed to each waste stream to gain insight into what happens with the waste once it has been sorted.



Figure 1. CTG community members guide students on how to sort post-consumer textile waste into various categories based on waste hierarchy principles

Equipped with the exposure they have acquired on-site and the background they have gained through their course material, students are challenged in the follow-up assignment to independently develop innovative solutions that could potentially streamline and expand CTG's current upcycling, downcycling, and reselling operations through technology media, or other resources. The above aligns with the B Con Sci Clothing Retail Management programmes' vision to produce creative and analytical graduates who can function well under pressure and in team-oriented environments. Students' solutions are formally presented to CTG community members and academic moderators. Solutions are judged based on various criteria compiled by the TKS 411 lecturer in collaboration with CTG management and external moderators (Addendum E).

9. What is (are) the primary issue(s) addressed through this module. How were the issues identified and how are they significant concerns of the community? How is the community involved in decision making about module outcomes and activity outputs? Include any relevant historical background or contextual information. (200-300 words)

The global clothing and textile supply chain is reported to be the second most polluting industry worldwide, with environmental and social impacts from initial raw material extraction up until waste disposal. The outcomes of the TKS 411 module narrowly focus on these issues. Textile waste is a primary concern globally, but also more specifically in the local South African clothing industry and thus represents an important study theme in the TKS 411 module. With excessive volumes of donated post-consumer textile waste passed on from developed countries to African communities in addition to textile waste generated locally, the pursuit of sustainable textile waste management strategies is much needed (Sonnenberg *et al.*, 2022). The CTG community handles approximately 700–1000kg of textile waste weekly, highlighting the need for additional solutions to effectively deal with this waste problem and contribute to the reduction of the industry's environmental footprint.

The TKS 411 module addresses these challenges through students' exploration of innovative textile waste solutions. Collaboration with the CTG community is crucial in this regard, as their practical experience in managing textile waste offers valuable insights that theoretical learning alone cannot provide. As such, community members help assess the feasibility of proposed solutions within their operational parameters. This engagement ensures that the strategies not only work in theory but are also viable in real-world contexts. When textile waste strategies involve the creation of entrepreneurial opportunities and employment for, amongst other, disadvantaged communities and individuals with disabilities (such as those involved in the CTG team), the resulting outputs offer substantial social, economic, and environmental gains (Patnaik & Sonnenberg, 2023). These initiatives align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDG 8, which is focused on sustainable economic growth and decent work for all and SDG 12, which is focused on sustainable consumption and production patterns.

10. How has the module affected students who have participated? What knowledge or skills do they gain in the module? How are they assessed (be specific, including any role played by the community in the assessment)? (200-300 words)

The verbatim reflections from students involved in the CTG community project over the past three years (2022–2023) highlight the transformative learning experience it provided. Many students found the project to be an eye-opener, offering them valuable insights into sustainability, waste management, and social responsibility within the fashion and textile industries. They emphasised the hands-on nature of the project, noting how it helped them apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations. They appreciated the opportunity to see the impact of textile waste first-hand, reinforcing the importance of sustainable practices in line with the TKS 411 module's purpose and learning outcomes (Addendum D: comments 1, 3, 9 & 10). Students noted how they learned the importance of collaboration and teamwork, learning how to adapt to different personalities and work styles while also developing crucial problem-solving and communication skills (Addendum D: comments 4, 7, & 14). Many also found inspiration from interacting with CTG management and recognised the value of forming professional connections for future mentorship and career growth (Addendum D: comments 5 & 13). Others highlighted the project's social impact, particularly in terms of inclusivity and creating job opportunities for marginalised communities and people with disabilities. This broadened their understanding of how businesses can contribute to society beyond profit, fostering an environment of care and responsibility (Addendum D: comments 8, 16 & 18). Overall, the experience made students more conscious of the environmental and social implications of their future careers in fashion and retail. Many expressed their commitment to incorporating

sustainable and ethical practices in their work, with some already planning to integrate recycled materials into their future business ventures (Addendum D: comments 12, 19, 20 & 21).

In terms of assessment, students appreciated community members' involvement. Community members and external examiners were invited to participate in defining the criteria upon which their students' work was assessed and also took part in the final assessment thereof. Addendum E includes email communication received from TKS 411 external examiners following students' proposal assessments. They commended the students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations and their commitment to sustainability and community engagement.

11. How engaged or supportive of this module is the Faculty/ university? What resources are provided by the university? How will the module find the needed resources to continue running into the future? What policies or mechanisms support the ongoing success of the module? (200-300 words)

To ensure that community engagement remains aligned with the University of Pretoria's teaching and learning objectives, the Institutional Unit for Community Engagement has developed tools to assist in preparing students for community engagement. This includes, among others, orientation video clips (addressing various issues ranging from dress code and respectful communication with community members to safety guidelines), which were shared with students prior to CTG site visits. Since the CTG project is registered as a community engagement project on the Community Engagement Management System, the students pay a community engagement fee as part of their TKS 411 tuition. These fees are utilised to cover expenses related to transport between the Hatfield campus and the CTG premises in Centurion. Moreover, the TKS 411 CTG community engagement project has received exposure through various faculty and university publications, including the T&L@NAS Bulletin (No. 8, November 2022, p.19) and *Lentsu La Sechaba, The Voice of the Community* (Volume 15, February 2023, pp. 7–8).

While CTG has independently generated resources to function in its current capacity over several years, its future expansion and success could benefit from partnerships with tertiary institutions. The current DSI and CSIR-linked circular economy funding may serve as an example that further leverages CTG capacity and empowers women through additional income-generating opportunities. This year, Dr Sonnenberg, in collaboration with colleagues at the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences at the University of Pretoria and the Department of Art, Art History, and Design at Michigan State University, also applied for an Alliance for African Partnership (AAP) grant, which if successful, will allow for the development of vocational sewing programmes that may further serve the CTG community in teaching women basic and advanced sewing skills to repair and upcycle excess post-consumer textile waste, thus extending CTG's operations.

12. What has the module accomplished to date? Please be specific in describing positive outcomes, using qualitative and quantitative examples when available. Also indicate how the module has facilitated the ideal of university social responsibility (200-300 words)

Since its inception in 2022, the project with CTG has drawn attention, inspiring other institutions such as STADIO School of Fashion and the University of Johannesburg to join similar initiatives. Over the past year, CTG received funding from industry stakeholders to expand its operations to Cape Town and KwaZulu Natal. From the onset, collaboration with CTG has strengthened ties between the University of Pretoria's Department of Consumer and Food Sciences and major role players in the clothing supply chain, such as H&M, which donated 50 mannequins (each valued between R5

000-R20 000) to the B Con Sci Clothing Retail Management programme and granted students access to their warehousing facilities, which they would otherwise not have allowed.

The partnership with CTG has also led to significant funding applications, including R3.1 million from the DSI and CSIR circular economy demonstration fund, to establish SMME-scaled needle felting technology. This technology will repurpose textile waste sourced from CTG (amongst others) into recycled materials for the South African retail market, creating entrepreneurial and employment opportunities, both locally and across Africa, which faces environmental challenges due to the influx of textile waste from developed countries (Sonnenberg *et al.*, 2024). Hence, it can be argued that the outcomes of the TKS 411 module are well aligned with the University of Pretoria's ideal of social responsibility and finding solutions for communities confronted with South Africa's pressing socio-economic and environmental problems.

The University of Pretoria takes pride in producing socially conscious, active graduates who address societal issues and positively impact local communities. Examples of TKS 411 students' reflections (included in addendum D) provide evidence of the impact of curricular community engagement activities, showing how it has shaped their sense of responsibility in applying their knowledge and skills for societal benefit. As a further example, two B Con Sci Clothing Retail Management graduates continue to support CTG by creating social media content and managing their social media platforms.

ADDENDUM B: Rubric

Nominee's first name and surname: Nadine Sonnenberg

Each Criterion counts 25%	Exceeds expectations (5)	Meets Expectations (3)	Total (25% x 5/ 3)
The general impact of module (See section 4, Nominated Module's Information; section 5, Brief overview of the module and Section 12, Accomplishments to date)	The module outcomes are coherent and enable student learning and application of learning. Module outcomes are aligned to programme outcomes Activities are aligned to the learning outcomes of the module Assessment is aligned to learning outcomes, activities and the context Student success rate exceeds UP target success rate Outcomes enable full community participation The module has proven sustainable, flexible and scalable Evidence shows that activities have made a difference/ had impact Publications on curricular community engagement in the discipline or more generally and/ or joint research projects	The module has clear and achievable outcomes aligned to the programme outcomes Activities are aligned to learning outcomes Assessment is aligned to learning outcomes, activities and the context Student success rate is at least equal to target UP success rate (±82%) Outcomes enable some community participation The module is fairly new so sustainability not yet fully established The module is fairly new so evidence of making a difference not yet available	
Impact on UP, lecturers and staff (See sections 6, 11)	Degree of involvement of nominee Leadership of nominee Influence on resource allocation and policy to sustain community engagement Evidence of institutional, national or international, impact through committee work, subject or community engagement associations Independent evidence showing impact, level of engagement, leadership, etc.	Degree of involvement of nominee Student advising/ briefing by the nominee Liaison with other UP staff Use of UP resources, policies, etc. to sustain the module	
Impact on students (See sections 8, 10)	Students achieve learning outcomes aligned to the purpose of the module and relevant to their field of study Students are clear about what they need to do in the community Students are clear about the knowledge and skills they gain in the module The knowledge and skills are rigorously assessed The community participates in the assessment Student leadership is evident	Students achieve learning outcomes aligned to the purpose of the module and relevant to their field of study/ Activities address the primary issues identified by the community, are sustainable and making a difference (even if they might not directly relate to a student's field of study) Students are clear about what they need to do in the community Students are clear about the knowledge and skills they gain in the module The knowledge and skills are rigorously assessed	
Impact on community (See sections 7, 9)	Partnership in an equal and developmental relationship with communities, NPOs, municipalities, professional councils, private sector etc. in line with Goal 3 of the UP 2025 Community leadership is evident. There is evidence of mutually beneficial relationship(s) (qualitative and/ or quantitative). Activities address the primary issues identified by the community. Procedures to identify issues are transparent. Beneficiaries of activities are asked to provide formal feedback (qualitative or quantitative) ² Communities are involved in sustaining the activities in the long term.	Partnership in an equal and developmental relationship with communities, NPOs, municipalities, professional councils, private sector etc. in line with Goal 3 of the UP 2025 Community leadership is evident. There is evidence of mutually beneficial relationship(s) (qualitative and/ or quantitative) Activities address the primary issues identified by the community. Beneficiaries of activities might or might not provide feedback.	
TOTAL/100			

² A maximum of 5 pages of evidence may be submitted.

Addendum C:

List of references:

- Sonnenberg, N.C., Stols, M.J., Taljaard-Swart, H. & Marx-Pienaar, N. J.M.M. (2022) Apparel disposal in the South African emerging market context: Exploring female consumers' motivation and intent to donate post-consumer textile waste. *Resources, Conservation & Recycling*, 182:106311 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2022.106311>
- Sonnenberg, N.C., Patnaik, S. & Massyn-Romo, G. (2024 - in press). Pursuing Zero Waste in the South African Textile Industry: A Case Study of SMME Scaled Needle Felting Technology. In *Zero Waste Sustainable Apparel Industry – concepts, case studies*. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Sonnenberg, N.C. (2023). Post-consumer textile waste put to good use in collaboration with Clothes to Good (CTG). *Lentsu La Sechaba, The Voice of the Community*, Volume 15, February 2023, pp. 7-8.
- Sonnenberg, N.C. (2022). Second-hand clothes put to good use. *T&L@NAS Bulletin*, No. 8, November 2022, p.19.
- Patnaik, S & Sonnenberg, N.C. (2023). *Towards building a sustainable community through social platforms*. [Case study presented at the 22nd European Conference on e-Learning (ECEL 2023) 26-27 October, Pretoria, UNISA, oral presentation]
- Sonnenberg, N.C. (2023). *The Clothes To Good community project*. [Oral presentation at the Transdisciplinary Community Engagement Seminar, 10 October, University of Pretoria].

Addendum D:

TKS 411 Student Reflections: 2022-2024

- [1] *"I think the Clothes To Good community project was the most enlightening and insightful experience our department could offer to us as students who will soon enter the industry. It taught us the true meaning of reuse and recycling as well as the importance of sustainability for the safety of our environment"* (Van Staden, J. 2022).
- [2] *"Working at Clothes To Good was a serious eye-opener. I really enjoyed it and think it is crucial to integrate into the clothing retail management degree as we are the next future designers and retail influencers"* (Allan, C., 2022).
- [3] *"I experienced the community project as a learning opportunity, firstly because it showed a real-life example of the theory we were learning. I love learning through practically seeing the theory, and so by seeing the site and having the theory applied using the site as an example, I can confidently say I will leave this module having a clear understanding of the theory. Secondly, seeing the amount of consumer waste really opened my eyes to how important being environmentally conscious and sustainable is"* (Sinclair, C.S., 2022).
- [4] *"This whole experience has taught me how to be realistic and rational in my ideas and opinions. I have learned the value of a business and how important it is that business is not something you do alone but rather alongside people who believe in the same dream and also together with a community that depends on the responsible way of business. Business is not a selfish thing that only makes money but it is rather an opportunity to uplift and contribute to a better future for everyone around it. I would definitely say that it is an outstanding way to learn and to open our eyes to what it is actually like out there and the serious struggles that the industry faces because this is where we find our part in the industry and where we can learn how to make a difference. Teamwork is very valuable to move forward. The biggest success comes from creative minds collaborating to bring the dream to life"* (Van Renssen, I., 2022).
- [5] *"There were a good number of highlights during the project. But without a doubt, my favourite had to be the conversations with the important key players in the industry that we were so fortunate to have been introduced to. (Jesse, Dr. Romo, Dr. Sonnenberg, and Mr. Wadhvani) This is because experiencing their passion ignited my spirit and made the content of the module come alive. Further, knowing that the relationships formed during interactions give me access to people who are experts in the field and can one day become mentors gave so much meaning to my learning process. Secondly, I enjoyed the fact that we were given room to voice opinions, concerns, and advice. Having that platform to express made the experience very immersive. I really enjoyed how our lecturer pioneered a project that truly reflects a dynamic and ever-changing industry"* (Phiri, V., 2022).
- [6] *"I thoroughly enjoyed my learning experience in this community project. It has elevated my awareness and knowledge about how important sustainability is and how there are already multiple individuals who have started up businesses and organisations"*

that spread awareness and practice sustainability across the textile industry's value chain. I was quite intrigued about knowing who these businesses and organisations are and how they contribute to sustainability in the textile industry" (Tsotetsi, 2022).

[7] "The community project was a great, positive experience for me, I learned so much while attending the site visits as well as doing research for the assignments. This community project was a great opportunity to learn about sustainability as I gained knowledge about things I have never heard of. I think by working in a team with everyone having different personalities is very good, it learns you so much about how to adapt and how to step up your game and time management in the industry one day. It was an experience that was new and something we have never done before; it will help you by getting out of your comfort zone and taking initiative to create new ideas to help the process and to take control when you need to one day. It will help me by thinking out of the box because you know there is a lot of ideas been given in the past and they want something different. It will help to understand that your way is not the only way and that you need to work together and listen to be an effective team and it will help with people skills, like communicating and asking" (Seeger, M. 2022)

[8] "It was an incredible learning opportunity as I was able to discover more about the fashion industry and the different spheres one can go into other than just the traditional avenues. I also learnt a lot about the waste and negative impacts of the fashion industry and that there are ways in which we can reduce this. It was also a learning opportunity as growing up in a more privileged life; I was unaware of some of the difficulties that some people have to endure, such as mothers with differently abled children that are not able to have full-time jobs. It was also a learning opportunity to learn more about people that are differently abled as I found it incredible to learn how hard they actually work and can perform in tasks and jobs the same as everyday people" (Greveling, A. 2023)

[9] "The experience at Clothes to Good was an eye-opener for me, and it really complemented the theory component of the TKS module as we got the opportunity to go there and get involved in the process; that practical involvement helped cement the knowledge we learned in class and on the topic of sustainability. Going out there and dealing with actual waste exposes you to the effects of the fashion and textile industry because it is one thing to learn about it but another to experience or deal with it rather. The visits were really encouraging and motivating, especially getting the opportunity to witness Clothes to Good implement the change and spread awareness by including a lot of other parties as well; this makes one want to be a part of the change" (Kubheka, N., 2023).

[10] "As a learning opportunity, the community project allowed me to apply relevant theoretical concepts in real life. I found I was able to take the theory from class, e.g. the waste management framework, and see its implementation on a practical level. It further opened my eyes to the amount of textile waste/donated items that there really is in society – all good and well to read it in an article, but it has a larger impact to see it first-hand. I feel I learned a lot more than if we were only looking at theory" (Lombard, E., 2023)

[11] "It was an incredible learning opportunity as I was able to discover more about the fashion industry and the different spheres one can go into other than just the traditional avenues. I also learnt a lot about the waste and negative impacts of the fashion industry and that there are ways in which we can reduce this. It was also a learning opportunity as growing up in a more privileged life; I was unaware of some of the difficulties that some people have to endure, such as mothers with differently abled children that are not able to have full-time jobs. It was also a learning opportunity to learn more about people who are differently abled as I found it incredible to learn how hard they actually work and can perform in tasks and jobs the same as everyday people" (Greveling, A., 2023).

[12] "I found my experience so eye-opening, and it has really just broadened my way of thinking in terms of how I can make a difference, too, with my role in the fashion industry. I also really loved how the whole community is involved, even those that are marginalised, which I find so heart-warming as that is how it should be everywhere, giving everyone an equal chance to do their bit. I felt so inspired after my visit to Clothes-to-good, and my new outlook on the industry and the concept of circularity really got me excited for my future in retail as I really hope to be able to incorporate sustainable practices as well as potentially work with clothes-to-good in the future" (Gullan, J., 2023).

[13] "I admired how they are open to collaborating with various organizations, standing together to provide solutions, and being willing to help other companies. They know the value of experience and pay it forward, be it by opening their facility for students to learn even though it might hinder productivity, investing in the second generation. I really appreciated that as they did not condescend us but engaged with us every time we were there, being very open to our questions. I truly enjoyed the management aspect and the hospitality that CTG showed to us. These aspects are, in my opinion, the things that will change the world, albeit for one person" (Grobbelaar, M., 2023).

[14] "I gained useful skills, information, and views from working with group members on this project and through their community involvement experiences that will help them in their future career in the garment and retail industries. I gained valuable insights into sustainable practises thanks to direct experience with the procedures and difficulties of textile recycling, enabling me to make

well-informed choices about sourcing, production, and retail practices. The project has also improved my cooperation, communication, and problem-solving abilities, all of which are essential in any profession, including the apparel and retail sectors. The project also emphasised the benefits of inclusion and diversity in the workplace, emphasising the need to foster a welcoming atmosphere that values variety. Overall, I gained valuable skills, information, and views that will help me succeed in the clothing and retail industry through my involvement in the community and my collaboration with group members" (Du Toit, N., 2023).

[15] "Exploring textile waste in South Africa was eye-opening and sobering. I hadn't realised the extent of the problem, especially with regard to how much textile waste is downcycled and its implications for the environment and the people who must work with these forms of waste. However, it also inspired me to make more conscious choices about my consumption habits - one interesting thing was that they handpick buttons and other trims and closures of the clothes, so things like sequins make their job a lot harder and time-consuming. Throughout the experience, I developed various skills related to sustainability. I learned practical techniques for upcycling and repurposing clothes, such as sorting according to the weight of the fabric and not the brand or label. Working with group members on this project has enhanced my teamwork and problem-solving abilities. These experiences will definitely help me navigate the clothing retail industry, and I can honestly say that I will make it my mission to promote sustainability in every job position or role I occupy going forward in the fashion industry" (Vermaas, J.H., 2024)

[16] "I feel that the experience opened my eyes to a world of possibilities and what channels are still open and available in South Africa regarding textile recycling and upcycling. It is something that I will always have in mind when it comes to designing and making clothes, especially in the world of commercial fashion. Working with and chatting with the various group members made me realise that certain people may be better suited to certain jobs than other people. Especially special needs people who are very good at doing repetitive tasks and can stay focused for long periods a lot better than those without special needs. It is very important to give everyone a chance when it comes to employment as everyone has something very valuable to offer" (Sililo, R., 2024).

[17] "Through the project which we just experienced together with Clothes to Good we convey the message that we have been all enriched with new knowledge. It made for an interesting experience to see the effects of sustainability and societal impact at a local level. The reality of textile waste problems became personal through my direct participation, which turned it into an opportunity for them to express exactly the challenges they faced and propose the exact solutions that they required as a community" (Van Rensburg, T., 2024)

[18] "I experienced this community project as a transformative learning experience. This experience really put all the theories that we have been taught into perspective and helped me to understand the physical human application of a closed-loop system. I feel like I better understand how important it is for us as consumers to participate in mindful consumption and to all do our part in contributing to sustainability. Working with group members definitely prepares us to go into the fashion industry, as we will have to work with many different people throughout our careers. It teaches us how to listen to other people's ideas and how to collaborate with someone on a project. The community experience taught me how to interact with people who have special needs and how to find ways to communicate with them in a way that is easily understandable, which could also be a necessary skill in the industry. The community project also taught me how it is possible to incorporate jobs for people with disabilities or special needs into operations and that there are opportunities for this in the fashion industry" (Aucamp, J., 2024)

[19] "I want to start my own business when I finish my studies. I want to start a handbag brand. I want to be part of the solution. I think that through this experience I saw a lot of ways that I can make use of donated things instead of buying new ones. Like zips and enclosures. When I start my business, I would like to work with CTG and buy the zips and enclosures they cut off to reuse for my bags. I also asked, and they said that they also cut embellishments from the C-grade clothes, so I would also want to look into how I can reuse them. I really wanted to start my own business, and after seeing how much textile waste there is, I just know I can't work for a company that contributes to that problem. I love fashion, and I think the only way I can work in this industry is if I know I am doing everything I can to not contribute to that problem and actively work towards the solution. I also learned a lot of what extended producer responsibility looks like, and it is something that I will implement into my business" (Beeslaar, K., 2024)

[20] "I think this trip will stay with me for life, especially when I enter the retail industry in the future. It has made me be more considerate in terms of the surrounding communities, the fact that it's all about contribution rather than competition, that profit should not come at the cost of the environment and those inhabiting it. I will make an effort to remember this when I am making decisions as a buyer or designer to ensure that I am playing my part in supporting a more sustainable fashion industry that taps into utilizing existing resources creatively and innovatively rather than consuming new ones and further causing damage. I will enforce more renewable energy efficient practices, with closed-loop recycling, in styles that are made to last in terms of durability and style to lessen the effects of fast fashion/worn for-one-season garments being disposed of" (Schmidt, D., 2024).

[21] "Making a change in the world or in South Africa in terms of sustainability is not possible alone. Working together with other people and the community (by getting as many people involved as possible) is important to ultimately make a difference. Working with members and the community helped me gain a lot of knowledge regarding textile waste and sustainability which will help me implement better or encourage sustainability in the fashion industry" (Pistorius, G., 2024)

Addendum E: TKS 411 External moderator comments: 2022-2024

E-mail communication received from Dr Güera Romo - External moderator (2022)

"Thanks so much for yesterday, and please share my gratitude with the students. Their input is immensely valuable. Their coverage of the range of issues across different disciplines in the business was also phenomenal for students without work experience. They showed a practical understanding of these business aspects and, more importantly, demonstrated the ability to scope practical application, which came from a strong business theoretical foundation. I wish there was a way that we could easily capture such a moment to share with HR personnel in the industry. I have worked with consultants and employees alike who are incapable of doing this. Well done to these students. They have a bright future."

E-mail communication received from Prof Elizabeth Kempen (UNISA) - External moderator (2023-2024)

Dear Dr Sonnenberg

As an External Examiner of the TKS411 module, I would like to share with you my impression of the valuable contribution this module is making to Community Engagement and the Social Responsibility strategy of the University of Pretoria. I have been involved in the evaluation of the final presentations on the different projects the students in TKS411 undertake with Clothes To Good textile recycling and disability empowerment organisation. Students sign up to work in the (1) Re-use (includes Repair & Resell), (2) Up-cycling or (3) Down-cycling activities offered within the Clothes To Good organisation. The student presentations include the ideas and solutions they have identified to improve the functionality of Clothes To Good within the three different segments they signed up for.

Each year the level of commitment students invested in these projects stands out. Their analysis of the activities occurring in each of these segments at Clothes To Good shows their deep level of understanding and thorough engagement with the team at Clothes To Good. Students' theoretical strengths in sustainability are very obvious, as well as their ability to apply their knowledge to the practical context Clothes To Good offers. From their analysis of the operations at Clothes To Good, they excite the audience with well-thought-through recommendations to improve the different segments at Clothes To Good. They have been capacitated to deliver a professional, well-organised and justified presentation about their plans, suggestions and ideas that Clothes To Good could consider in future business operations.

The engagement with Clothes To Good allows students to practically experience a real-world textile recycling context that not only deals with textile waste but, through this initiative, empowers people from the surrounding community. This collaboration exposes students to the value system of such an organisation and how it functions. It also creates an opportunity for students to experience the value of community engagement. These students are receiving first-hand experience in the mantra of Social Responsibility accentuated within the principles of the University of Pretoria. This is because the mission of Clothes to Good is not only to take care of the environment by addressing textile waste but to alleviate poverty through job creation and further to include women and mothers of children with disabilities to become successful entrepreneurs within the textile waste context. Therefore, students from the University of Pretoria can be part of and engage with an organisation that has made it their responsibility to uplift, engage and provide opportunities to improve the livelihood of people within the community and, in so doing, also improve the environment. The TKS411 project is the best example of how students are engaging with an organisation to benefit the broader community through job creation and environmentally sustainable activities.

Students in this module are presented with a wonderful opportunity to become more involved in community-engaged projects through the many skills they have to teach and train community members on textile recycling activities. Their rich academic background and creative textiles, design and production skills open up many more opportunities to expand the social responsibility commitment of the University of Pretoria to the broader community. The meaningful ideas, suggestions and recommendations students have presented through the engagement with Clothes to Good attest to the valuable contribution made to the community the University of Pretoria serves.

*It has been a privilege to be part of such a worthy and enriching experience undertaken by the TKS411 students.
Thank you*