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Working towards a sustainable future for textiles

CREATIVESUNITE

Co-funded by the European Union

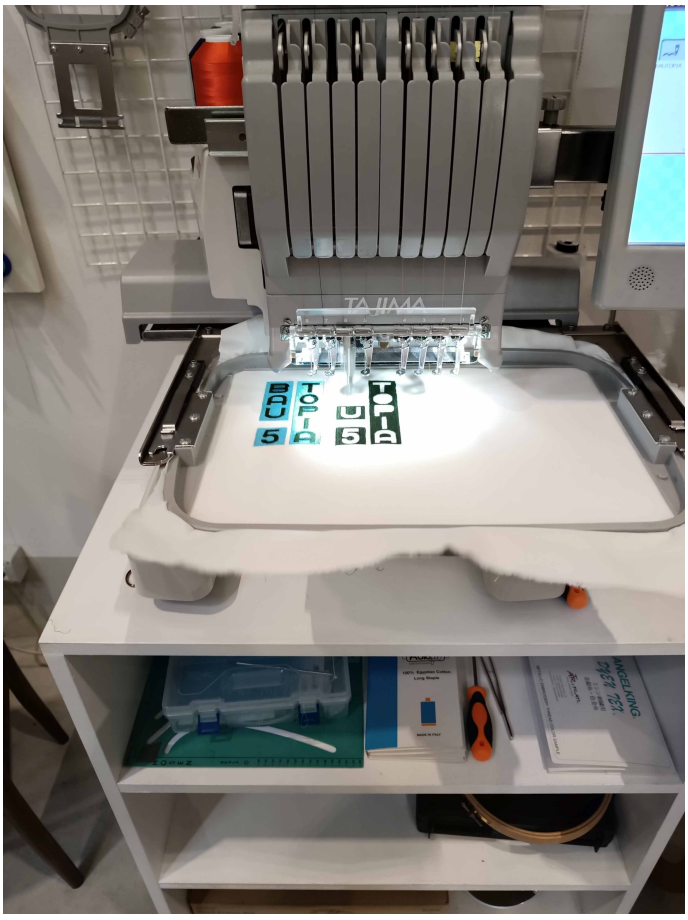
The Lottozero creative hub in Prato shows the sustainable way to fashion and textiles and teaches young people how to upcycle their clothes.

Economic and environmental sustainability, inclusiveness, non-profit mentality, cooperative spirit... Tessa and Arianna Moroder, an economist and a textile designer and artist, had a vision and they made it happen. They took the old warehouse they inherited from their Sicilian grandfather, which had been empty and abandoned since 1979, and created Lottozero. creative hub and a design studio, with a textile laboratory, a shared studio space/coworking and an exhibition area. Lottozero is a fertile environment for textile research and experimentation in design, fashion and art, and an international base for people working with textiles.



Prato, the city of textiles

Inspired by Prato's great heritage in the field, the Moroder sisters created a model centre for textile design, art and culture in the Italian city, just a few kilometres from bustling Florence. Lottozero, is an immensely welcoming creative hub and residency center that has been operating since spring 2016, offering specialised tools to artists, students, professionals, designers and materials researchers.



After the Second World War, thanks to the American Marshall Plan to support the European economy, the Italian city of Prato was chosen as a centre for textile processing. As Tessa Moroder confided, since the raw material for wool fibres in Europe was not of good quality, Prato collected used woollen clothes from America and other places, which were specially

processed into raw material for reuse. This completely ecological practice was kept a secret for years, but it boosted the textile industry in the area and established Prato as the textile centre of Italy and Europe.

Following this tradition, Lottozero was created as a center for sustainable fashion in practice. As Arianna Moroder puts it “Lottozero sees sustainability as the opposite of a trend. In fact we see it as a long-term mentality that should pervade all aspects of a company’s life, resulting in a radical (re)evaluation of its objectives and values and inducing structural changes.”



The textile lab

At the heart of the hub is the textile laboratory. An open workshop fully equipped with machinery and tools for research into textile materials and the development of textile-related projects. The laboratory has a wide range of machines covering manual and industrial techniques: spinning, weaving, knitting, dyeing, screen and sublimation printing, sewing, tufting and embroidery.



The tools are usually used by designers, craftspeople, artists, creative students and people who want to learn, experiment, prototype or produce limited series. The members of Lottozero community build upon the know-how, capacity and heritage of the historical textile district, using it as base for research and a diffused laboratory and they work with their network and community to create information, new partnerships, working relationships, synergies and cross pollination between stakeholders. Every single project developed at Lottozero shares the organizations core values: quality, collective vision, inclusion, sharing, openness, economic and environmental sustainability and a non-profit mentality.

The ReFashionized project

Committed to the idea of spreading the values of sustainability to the younger generations, Lottozero has created, together with other European partners, the platform ReFashionized. The project, co-funded by the European Union, aims to shape young people's attitudes and behaviour towards climate change and sustainable fashion consumption models, while promoting European values and history through teaching the history of fashion in the 20th century and its evolution in the 21st

century.



Fashion is a $2.4 trillion global industry. It is also the second largest polluting industry after aviation and is responsible for 10% of global pollution, according to a 2021 study by Aalto University in Finland.

At ReFashionized, young people can learn about the environmental impact of the fashion industry, the human rights and working conditions of the people who make our clothes, animal rights and many sustainable practices. They can also practice different ways of upcycling used fabrics and clothes through ten videos.

The exhibition center

In addition, Lottozero is a unique art space dedicated to fabric, its techniques, design and fashion. It regularly presents the results of research and experimentation developed by the artists and designers who work at Lottozero, or exhibits selected artists who give textiles an important role in contemporary artistic research.



This time Lottozero is hosting the weaving exhibition "Dentro il verziere" by the great Italian Graziella Guidotti. Guidotti is a living legend in the history of textiles, a weaver, artist and designer who has dedicated her entire life to researching, studying and teaching the art of weaving.

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Photo credit: Ilias Maroutsis