H&M Global Change Award makes a comeback with new, wider outlook

By Sandra Halliday - 26 August 2021

H&M Group has announced the return of the Global Change Award “with new scope” as the biggest global innovation challenge to transform the fashion industry opens for applications.

The 2022 edition is looking for “early-stage innovations contributing to a planet positive fashion industry by addressing the earth’s global commons: land, water, oceans, climate and biodiversity”. The prize on offer for the winners is a share of a grant of €1 million, provided by the H&M Foundation.

The award has been running since the non-profit H&M Foundation started it in 2015 in collaboration with Accenture and the KTH Royal Institute of Technology. And it has attracted more than 20,000 entries since then.

But it was paused due to the pandemic, which makes the new edition a big deal both for the Foundation and for the industry.

Recognising that the consumer and the industry have changed for good post-pandemic, H&M said: “We are changing the scope, where we previously recognised ideas that can make the fashion industry circular we are now looking for solutions that address one or several of the global commons to create a planet positive fashion future. The GCA is all about speed, scale and impact and we are now raising the bar and taking a more holistic approach in order for the fashion industry to achieve radical change before 2030 and fulfil the UN Sustainable Development Goals.”

Erik Bang, Innovation Lead at the H&M Foundation, added that “focusing on land, water, oceans, climate and biodiversity will lead to a true shift for the fashion industry, transforming this industry into a planet positive one. With all creative innovations out there ready to scale, there is real hope that the fashion industry can become truly sustainable.”

Five winners will be chosen by a panel of experts and, as well as sharing the grant money, they’ll be able to access the year-long GCA Impact Accelerator. This is designed to “enable accelerated scaling of ideas and brings winners invaluable coaching and support along with a fierce network of brilliant minds and memories for life”
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Applications are open from today until October 20.

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