

Case Study 10: Textiles - iinouio

Jules Findley

“Textile materials (normally referred to as 'waste' or 'by-products'), are better interpreted as 'raw materials' that are sometimes limited by our imagination and innovation. All of us can do better.”

Dr John G Parkinson, iinouio: recycling our past; creating a future.



unravelling mixed fibres ©iinouio

Unravelling Wool

Dr John Parkinson, CEO & Founder of iinouio has worked in textile recycling since 1977. In 1990, he co-launched 'Evergreen' the first UK business of its kind, to produce fibres, yarns and fabrics using responsible materials and production methods, however with the setback of a fire in 1995, John had to start the company again from scratch. After peaking in the 1990's, there has been a global decline of the woollen industry, being substituted by mixes of synthetic fibres and blends. (Gro Intelligence, 2017).

In 2019, John co-founded iinouio with his wife Linda, (acronym: 'It Is Never Over Until It Is Over'), to re-energise the 'endangered' craft of traditional UK textile recycling.

Based in Yorkshire, iinouio are working with various partners in order to create a future for the UK's wool and cashmere recycling industry. Through John's experience, he has been able to unravel knitted wool into recycled yarn from knitted and woven waste streams. This has allowed for the creation of closed loops in the knitwear industry.

The company provides bespoke opportunities to clients, taking part in reducing the estimated 92 million tons of textile waste in the fashion industry created each year. (Dean, 2019).

More recently, iinouio have built a £165k mechanical textiles recycling plant through funding from WRAP in 2021. The R&D was supported by a government backed scheme from The Business of Fashion, Textiles and Technology, <https://bftt.org.uk/> to deliver market leading innovation in textile recycling.

Dr John Parkinson has a highly skilled team including, two kickstart apprentices who are working on the project, together with a Textiles R&D project lead, Alice Timmis (MA RCA), with circular textile experience and two high profile academics in research and innovation who are experienced in recycling from UAL, London.

The new mechanical plant is the only machine of its kind in the world and iinouio are the only known R&D facility providing recycling with pre and post-consumer wool and luxury fibres. With John Parkinson's over 40 years of experience in developing circular textiles from wool waste in partnership with the Business of Fashion, Textiles & Technology [BFTT] will develop a unique textiles and recycling R&D service.



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How iinouio develops waste recycling

As manufacturers, iinouio consult companies in order to discover the best frameworks to feed pre and post consumer waste back into textile production for the highest quality finished outcomes.

Waste streams may include spinning waste, knitting or weaving waste, knitted panel or pattern cutting scraps, deadstock fabrics or knitwear, textile take back schemes or deadstock.

Applying experience in developing waste streams into new desirable textiles, iinouio offers both development and production in developing custom recycled yarns for knitting and weaving, recycled woven fabric development and production. In partnering with UK spinners and mills putting textiles back into fibres, using the new mechanical machinery, iinouio can offer 100% Made-in-Britain recycled fibres, yarns and woven fabric closing the loop in yarn in knitting and weaving textiles industry.

Over the next 15 months iinouio will be working with their research partners to develop a scalable and replicable R&D production service for global manufacturers and brands.



textile waste in bales ©iinouiio

In future endeavours iinouiiio look to working with fashion and textile companies that are sustainably conscious, developing research in oversupply knitted yarns or unsold knitted up knitwear, woven textile deadstock and yarn waste continuing to develop research to supply recycled high-quality yarns and fabrics.

The future feels bright for iinouiiio with potentially really interesting R&D in waste streams which can only enhance the recycling area in knitted and woven fibres in textiles.

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<https://www.iinouiiio.com/>

Photographs from iinouiiio

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