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What we've been doing on your behalf

UKFT Q2 2026

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A Letter from Adam Mansell

The second quarter of 2026 has seen continued growth across all membership sectors, with new members increasingly seeking impartial guidance on regulatory and compliance challenges and evolving legislation and market requirements. Areas such as US E-Filing, the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) and wider sustainability compliance are creating opportunities to attract and engage new members. UKFT is also strengthening its position as a trusted source of insight and horizon scanning for international apparel brands seeking to understand UK policy and regulatory developments.

Member engagement remained high throughout the quarter. The annual Member Reception attracted almost 120 attendees from across the membership community, providing valuable opportunities for networking, collaboration and knowledge exchange between brands, manufacturers, educators, innovators and service providers. Feedback continues to demonstrate the value members place on these opportunities to connect and build new relationships across the sector.

Policy, advocacy and stakeholder engagement activity has continued at pace. UKFT is leading efforts to secure changes to UK public procurement rules to support domestic fashion and textile manufacturers, particularly within defence supply chains, while maintaining active engagement with government, industry partners and key stakeholders across trade, sustainability and skills. During the quarter, we responded to

government consultations, continued advocacy on circular economy policy, PFAS, due diligence and corporate disclosure requirements, and contributed to international trade discussions including negotiations with Canada and ongoing engagement with the EU and WTO.

International trade and export support remain a core area of activity. A key highlight was UKFT’s presence at Techtextil Frankfurt, which provided an important platform to engage with the UK technical textiles sector and demonstrate its strategic contribution to national priorities including defence, healthcare and critical infrastructure. Support for exporters and members navigating increasingly complex global trading arrangements continues across all markets.

The inaugural UKFT Regulation Summit, held in June, brought together more than 100 industry leaders, policymakers and regulatory experts to discuss sustainability legislation, circular economy policy, Extended Producer Responsibility, trade developments and compliance challenges. Delegate feedback was highly positive and reinforced UKFT’s growing role as a platform for industry dialogue and a trusted source of regulatory insight.

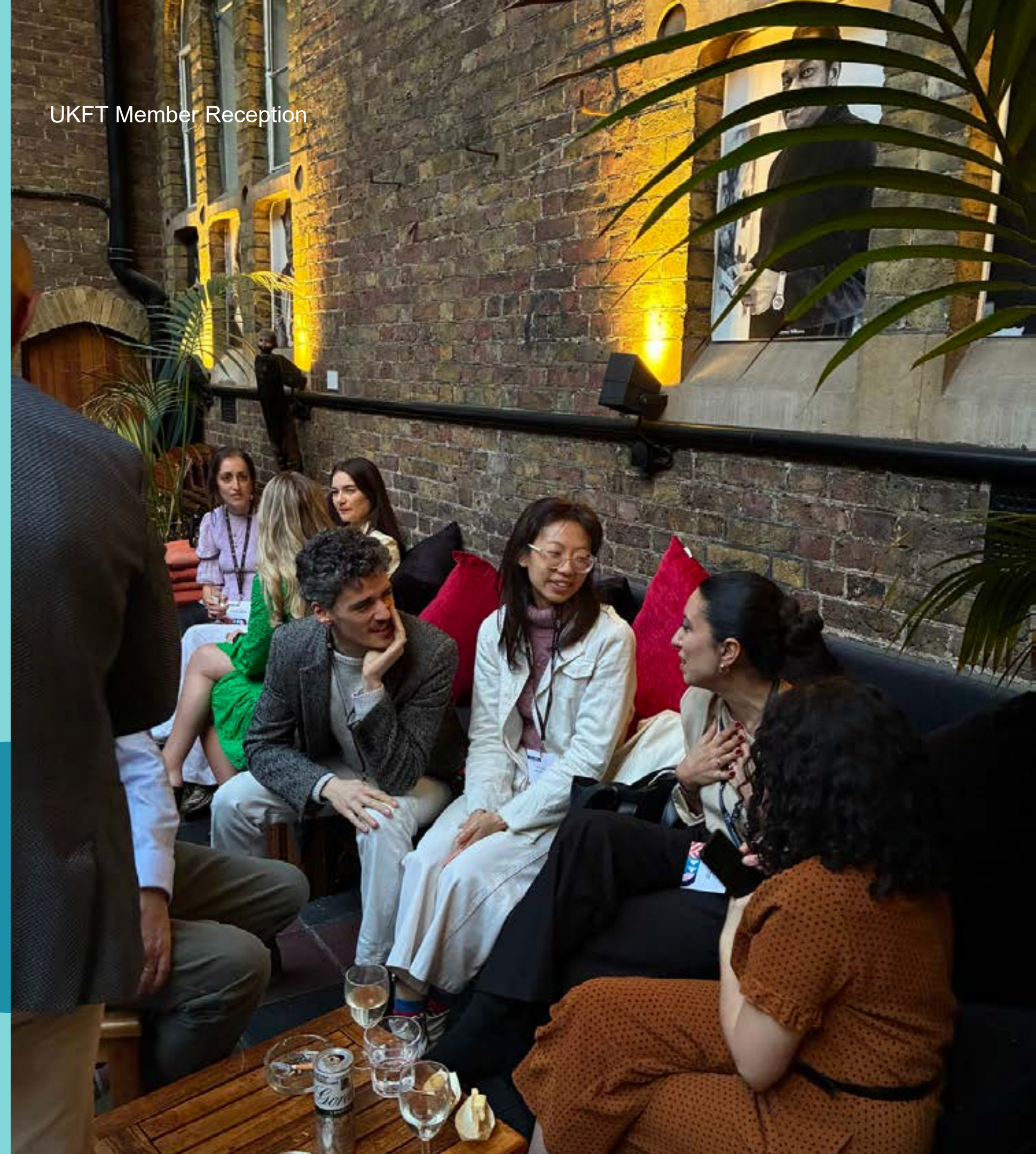
Skills and workforce development remain a strategic priority. The UKFT Education Partner Conference, hosted by The University of Manchester, attracted more than 70 representatives from education, industry and government and

was the largest conference of its kind delivered by UKFT to date. Alongside this, work is progressing on a major review of vocational skills provision across UK textile manufacturing and sewn products. Initial findings highlight significant challenges in apprenticeship uptake and workforce development, with the next phase focused on industry consultation and recommendations for reform. Demand for paid internship opportunities continues to exceed supply, with applications for the MADE IT programme reaching almost four times the number of available places, underlining the importance of structured pathways into employment.

Our innovation and sustainability team continues to deliver targeted sustainability clinics, innovation support and member engagement activities, including a Textile Innovation Showcase delivered in partnership with HSBC. Innovation membership continues to grow, reflecting increasing demand for support in this area.

Membership

UKFT Member Reception



Membership

Membership Sectors: Fashion, Retail, Textiles, Manufacturing, Reuse & Recycling, Innovation and Education Partnership



Women in Tailoring visit UKFT member Abraham Moon

We provide businesses from across the industry with knowledge and support that covers business essentials, sustainability, international business, skills, compliance, manufacturing and more.

As part of UKFT’s broad and valuable network, members can make new connections, stay up to date with the latest industry insights, join exclusive events, and access benefits and services from our partners.

UKFT membership offers opportunities to showcase your business, get involved in UKFT campaigns and activity, shape debates and influence key issues for the industry.

IN Q2 2026, NEW MEMBERS INCLUDE:

- Nike
- You Must Create
- Le Mieux,
- TOAST
- Centric Brands
- Derek Rose
- Deckers (Hoka, UGG, Teva)
- Arville
- British Millerain
- The Croft House Education
- Lamhan
- The King’s Foundation
- Konica Minolta
- Circle-8
- Sole Responsibility
- The R Collective
- Specialised Covers

Membership

IN Q2 2026, WE...

- Delivered 15 member events, including webinars, conferences, networking and in-person events. The programme featured Sustainability 101, Compliance 101, Business 101 and Marketing Network sessions, alongside the UKFT Education Partner Conference, Member Reception and Regulation Summit, covering sustainability, compliance, business, employment, energy, colour forecasting and global regulation.
- Visited more than 25 members across offices, studios, factories and retail stores to strengthen engagement and understand business priorities.
- Published 20 member spotlights and maintained a regular programme of member opportunities and updates.
- Continued to convene regular member roundtables for different business communities and sectors.
- Published 21 guidance articles covering sustainability legislation, environmental compliance, international trade and tariffs, packaging, product safety, employment law, taxation, intellectual property, policy consultations, workforce development and practical business support, alongside a dedicated regulation and compliance newsletter.
- Produced a range of research reports and publications, including UK Fashion & Textile Industry: Facts and Figures 2026, a guide to UK technical textiles capability, a publication showcasing members active in reuse and recycling, and specialist briefings on China's Regulation on Industrial and Supply Chain Security and the Ireland Circular Textiles Roadmap.
- Launched a redesigned UKFT website, improving navigation, accessibility and the overall member experience.
- Expanded member services with the launch of Sustainability Clinics and a Sustainability Communications and Green Claims Review service, alongside Peclers Paris SS28 trend forecasting, on-demand access to the What does ChatGPT say about your business? webinar, discounted British Footwear Association Summit tickets and preferential Mintel market intelligence rates.
- Strengthened UKFT's sector engagement through attendance at Source Fashion, Textile Recycling Expo, Future Fabrics Expo and other industry events, alongside a research visit to Ghana (Accra and Kantamanto Market), and promotion of UK groups at Milano Unica, Paris Fashion Week, Pitti Uomo and Techtextil and Texprocess Frankfurt. Members also received market intelligence from nonwovens show INDEX 2026.
- Released three new episodes of the UKFT Podcast covering sustainability, skills and training, and textiles, bringing the total number of published episodes to six.



UKFT member: British Wool



UKFT member: Deni Deni Academy



UKFT member: Matoha

Voice of the Industry



The UKFT Regulation Summit

Voice of the Industry

Creating the best environment for our industry

As the voice of UK fashion and textiles, UKFT is committed to creating the best environment for our industry. We represent the entire fashion and textile supply chain, promoting our industry in the UK and overseas.

We demonstrate the strategic and economic value of our vibrant industry to government and policymakers, ensuring the key issues are on the agenda. We champion our diverse and valuable industry through campaigns and targeted projects.

UKFT is campaigning to change the rules on UK public procurement to create a level playing field for UK manufacturers in apparel and textiles, with a particular focus on defence. We are working with DBT, CBI, Make-UK and others, on high-level engagement to create the policy conditions needed for UK procurement to be possible.

In Q2 2026, we responded to a number of government consultation including on the redevelopment of Standard Occupational Classifications. Other consultation, particularly on changes to employment rights have been flagged to members. We continue to develop our feedback mechanisms with members to help shape our lobbying priorities and responses to consultations.

Publicly and privately, UKFT has continued to push DEFRA and The Treasury to publish the Circular Economy Plan and recently supported an open letter from the Green Alliance to

the Chancellor. Representatives from both DBT and DEFRA attended the UKFT’s first Regulation Summit.

UKFT met with the Environment Agency and DEFRA to discuss the challenges facing the reuse and recycling sector. We continue to meet with DEFRA on the UK’s PFAS plan.

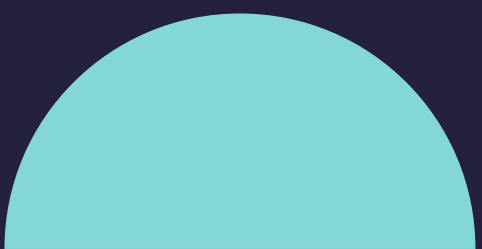
With a renewed focus on due diligence and corporate disclosure, UKFT continues to work with the Home Office and the newly formed Fair Work Agency.

UKFT continues to push DBT for direct export support for companies in the sector and it is encouraging that senior civil servants have recently visited both Techtextil and Pitti Uomo. UKFT also continues to support HMG with negotiations with Canada on a new trade agreement.

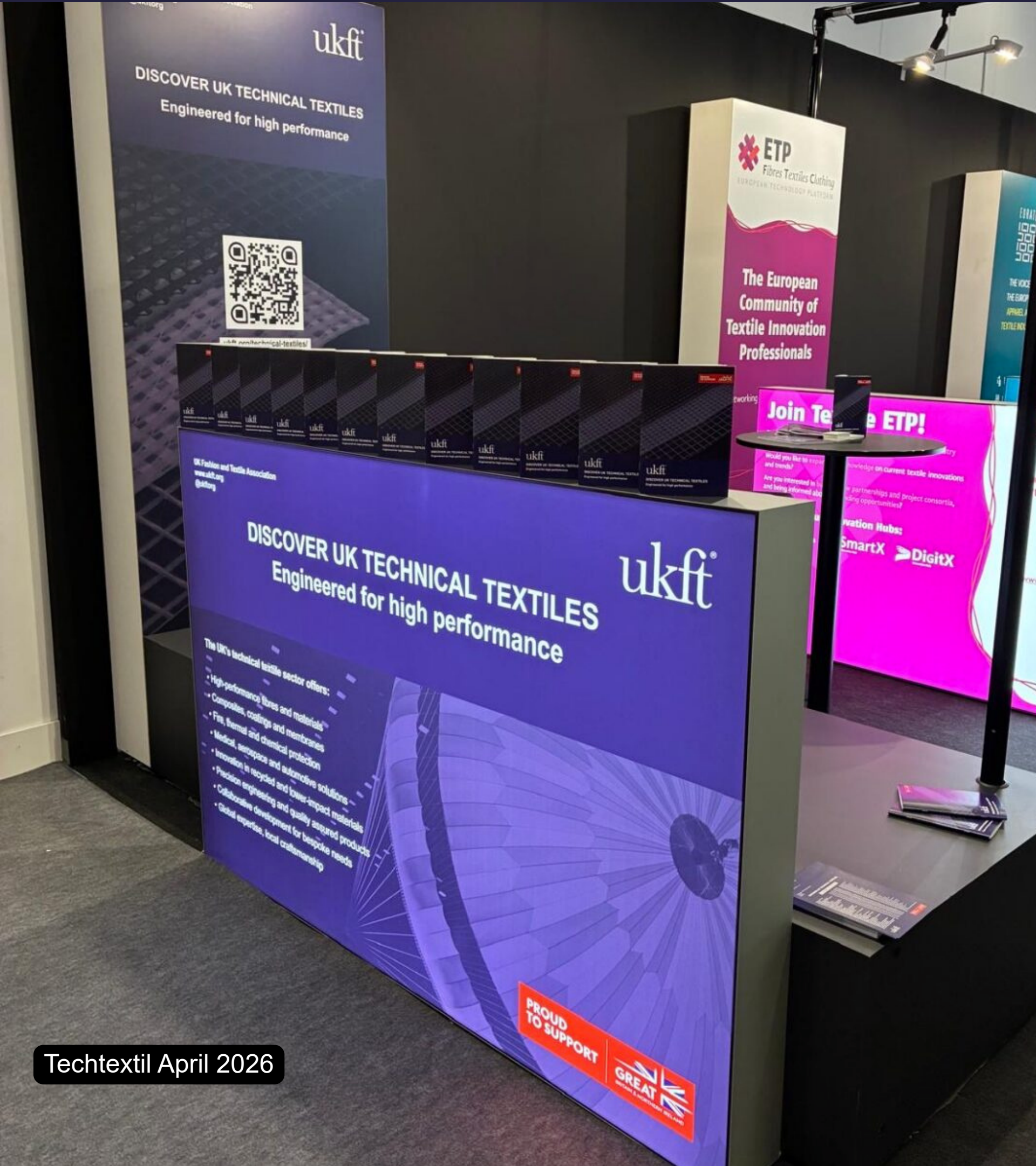
UKFT has given its support to a campaign to encourage the Scottish Government to adopt a strategy for wool.

Internationally UKFT continues to be a very active member of Euratex and maintains a close dialogue with the American Apparel and Footwear Association. UKFT also has a close dialogue with the European Commission and this quarter, we met the Commission on five different occasions. During the period, we also met with representatives from the World Trade Organisation to raise our concerns that some new EU regulations could become Technical Barriers to Trade.

International Business



Techtextil April 2026



International Business

Activities supporting members in global markets

UKFT's presence at Techtextil Frankfurt in April strengthened support for technical textile members while creating new opportunities to influence government on behalf of the sector. By providing both a physical and digital UK presence at the exhibition, UKFT helped raise the profile of UK companies internationally and deepen engagement with existing and prospective members. The event also enabled UKFT to demonstrate to the DBT the challenges facing UK manufacturers, while advocating for procurement policies in areas such as defence and healthcare that better support UK industry and British manufacturing.



Paris Fashion Men's Week, June 2026

Our upcoming programme includes:

2026 (June to October)

- Pitti Uomo, June
- Paris Men's, Women's Precollections and Swim Fashion Week, June
- Milano Unica, July
- Intertextile Shanghai, August/September
- Cinte Technical Textiles Shanghai, September
- Paris Women's and Swim/Resort Fashion Week, **October**

2027 (January to March)

- Pitti Uomo, January
- Paris Men's, Women's Precollections, Childrenswear, Lingerie Fashion Week, January
- Milano Unica, February (subject to confirmation)
- Chicago Men's Collective, February
- VIATT Vietnam, February (subject to confirmation)
- Paris Women's Fashion Week, October

International Business

MEMBER SUPPORT

Following the upheaval caused by last year’s US IEEPA tariffs, Russia’s war in Ukraine and ongoing military campaigns in the Middle East, an intensely difficult trading environment has left many companies looking for new markets – this is challenging as there are not many unaffected options for them to choose from.

UKFT sees many companies look to redirect sourcing to India. The UK India trade agreement comes into force in July this year.

GENERAL EXPORT TRENDS

In fashion and textiles, whilst many members still report good business with the US, with retailers such as Saks Global now trading normally again, Japan and Korea are much softer than before. The EU is in favour with UK brands but difficult because of the post-Brexit trading rules, especially around VAT and compliance. The Middle East, initially seen as a good market for many, is also flatter than last year. Companies fear an anticipated global recession so our advice is to be cautious, trade on secure terms of payment wherever possible and spread risk in their business rather than being overdependent on one or two markets or sourcing countries.

The market for defence and technical textiles has remained comparatively stable. UK companies can supply most NATO forces relatively easily, and there is demand for British-made products. However, the UK market continues to present a challenge. If UK procurement became a more consistent source of demand, it would provide greater confidence for investment, business growth and the creation of skilled manufacturing jobs.



Paris Fashion Men’s Week, June 2026

Regulation & Compliance

UKFT Regulation Summit, June 2026



Regulation & Compliance

Supporting members to comply with international regulations



The Regulation and Compliance team continue to have very close engagement with members and policy makers regarding the huge range of global regulation that the sector faces.

Due to the huge increase in demand for detailed knowledge from members UKFT launched its first ever Regulation Summit on 9 June. More than 100 industry leaders, policymakers and regulatory experts attend the inaugural UKFT Regulation Summit to examine the rapidly evolving legislative landscape shaping the future of the fashion and textile sector.

Hosted by UKFT and sponsored by Valpak by Reconomy, the event brought together speakers from the UK, Europe and the United States to provide practical insights into sustainability legislation, circular economy policies, trade developments and product compliance requirements affecting businesses operating across international markets.

Circular economy legislation was a key theme, with Stuart Hayward-Higham (Suez) highlighting the need for government and industry collaboration to deliver effective policy. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) remained a major focus, with discussion on the challenges of developing consistent schemes across the UK, EU and US.

Ava Kenny-Colwell (UKFT), Chelsea Murtha (AAFA), Anaïs de Bergeyck (Euratex), Aimée Campanella (Reconomy), Mauro Scalia (Euratex), Jonas Stracke (Textil+Mode) and Jerome Pero (FESI) explored evolving global regulations, while brands including Seasalt and Passenger shared practical perspectives on balancing circularity with product performance and durability.



UKFT at British Footwear Association's Sustainability Summit, April 2026

Regulation & Compliance

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

For members, we:

- Held Compliance 101 (C101) sessions with Reuse & Recycling membership re waste shipment regulations and the Basel Convention
- Hosted a C101 Packaging & Packaging Waste Regulation Overview webinar to UKFT members.
- Provided a detailed C101 countering misinformation on Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) & Digital Product Passport (DPP).
- Provided JD Sports with a paid workshop specifically developed to support Design/PD functions in embedding sustainability considerations into day-to-day decision-making and product development processes.

We also:

- Gave a talk on policy to practice implementing ESG in footwear at the British Footwear Association Sustainability Summit.
- Attended University of Manchester C.T.E.M. Fashion Collective’s Rewiring Fashion Systems: Circularity, Infrastructure & Innovation event providing content for workshops for industry and students covering legislation to circularity.

PRODUCT STANDARDS & TESTING

- Met with DBT and OPSS on Authorised Representatives within the EU
- Attended Intertek Lab visit in Leigh and provided talk on ESPR & DPP, and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Obligations
- Worked with Euratex on joint statement on the PPWR supporting a harmonised EU labelling system and the removal of national symbols.

TRADE REGULATIONS

We also:

- Attended DBT Session on WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee to raise non-tariff trade barriers, particularly regulatory issues, that are impacting companies’ ability to place products on the market or operate across borders.
- Provided detailed member regulatory support with incoming US e-filing requirements deadline of July 2026.
- Highlighted new China regulation on supply chain security and controversy with US law that will prevent Chinese manufacturers from disclosing data.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

During Q2 2026, we:

- Attended the European Parliament in May to discuss Product Compliance, Customs and Digital Reforms and measures to tackle non-compliant products entering the EU market.
- Attended the European Commission to meet with the Compliance and Responsible Business Conduct Director and team. Discussions focused on horizontal policy developments (particularly around DPP), alongside broader implementation considerations for industry.
- Met with European Commission’s Textile, Food and Retail Legal and Policy Officer to discuss sector-specific developments under the ESPR, with a particular focus on the forthcoming Delegated Regulation for apparel and textiles, including obligations and expected timelines. Contributed to Interactive consultation workshop on DPP economic, policy, and consumer benefits in CIRPASS
- Submitted a UKFT response to the EU’s Joint Research Council consultation on DPP.

Skills & Training



Skills & Training

Addressing critical skills gaps and developing industry-led solutions

UKFT SKILLS RESEARCH PROJECT 2026

This project is reviewing the current failing vocational skills system across the UK. Specifically concentrating on textiles manufacture and associated sewn products. UKFT produced an in-depth interim report which highlighted the very low take up of apprenticeships compared to the number of entry level short courses. The next phase of the project is industry consultation on how vocational training can be improved.



UKFT ANNUAL EDUCATION PARTNER CONFERENCE 2026

We held our fourth annual Education Partner Conference on 19 May at The University of Manchester. It was the largest yet bringing together more than 70 representatives from across the skills and training sector for a day focused on collaboration, future skills and shared opportunities.

The event included presentations from government agencies Skills England and JISC. A panel discussion on graduate expectations and industry realities, featuring speakers from Abraham Moon & Sons, JD Sports, AW Hainsworth and Heathcoat Fabrics. There were presentations by the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre, Fashion Toolbox, Nottingham Trent University and ACS Clothing, s well as sessions led by the UKFT skills, sustainability and compliance teams.

Skills & Training

CAREERS EVENTS

UKFT attends a series of careers shows and job fairs throughout the year to engage with learners, jobseekers and advisors about jobs and training opportunities in the sector. In Q2, we attended the Scotland School & College Leavers Festival in Glasgow and National Apprenticeship & Education Event in Salford, engaging with almost 500 people to increase awareness of training opportunities among young people.



MADE IT

UKFT MADE IT programme is a training and paid internship initiative to connect second-year fashion and textile students with hands-on manufacturing experience. 10 students for the 2026 cohort have been selected and matched with employers, with placements starting in June. We received almost four times' more applicants than places this year, showing the pressing need for structured, paid internships to help graduates into full employment.



Innovation & Sustainability

UKFT member: Tera Mira



Innovation & Sustainability

Helping to accelerate circularity and inform best practice



UKFT at ‘Making Recycled Content work at Scale’ hosted by the [Circular Textiles Foundation](#) and [Recover](#)

The Innovation and Sustainability team has continued to strengthen member engagement, industry partnerships and sector leadership through sustainability support, innovation activity, collaborative projects and industry events. Key activity included growing the innovation membership, delivering Sustainability 101 webinars, publishing new industry resources, building strategic partnerships, and progressing EU Horizon funding activity.

IN Q2 2026, WE

- Delivered targeted sustainability support to members including policy reviews, sustainability strategy guidance, communications audits and advisory clinics.
- Hosted expert led Sustainability 101 webinars focused on Nature-related Financial Disclosure, forests, climate risk, compliance, and resilience in fashion and textiles.
- Continued recruitment of innovation members including Konica Minolta, Weffan, Seff, Papillon Bleu, Arda, DyeRecycle, Sparxell and Demeter Bio.
- Delivered tailored innovation support sessions with member brands seeking guidance on innovation opportunities and solutions.
- Published the Circular Design Playbook, A Focus on Fibre-to-Fibre Recycling, with the Circular Textiles Foundation and launched at Textiles Recycling Expo in Brussels. It is a practical guide to help brands transition to circular product design and prepare for upcoming regulations.



UKFT at ‘Making Recycled Content work at Scale’ hosted by the [Circular Textiles Foundation](#) and [Recover](#)



Textile Innovation Showcase, hosted by HSBC Innovation Banking and UKFT

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