

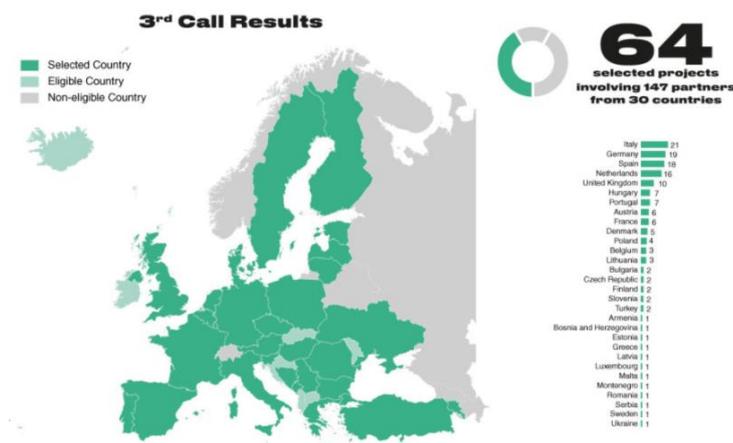
LESS WASTE AND MORE INCLUSION: IN THE COVID ERA, EUROPEAN DESIGNERS START AGAIN FROM RAW MATERIALS AND CO-CREATION

Priority to sustainable production and consumption, war on environmentally damaging plastics and materials, inclusive and collaborative design so that differences and potential can be expressed and well represented.

30th November 2020 - A collection of leather bags made from apple waste, designer eyewear created specifically for "Afropolitans", innovative curtains that change color with the passage of time, luxury shoes with interchangeable and recyclable jeweled heels, a platform where designers and customers can co-create through new processes of collaboration, garments that clean oceans and the earth from plastic wastes: the green and inclusive vocation of new generations of European designers goes beyond regional borders and shares resources, combining and renewing them, to create value through new forms of interaction.

"The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic has radically changed the way we work, use technology, and relate to others, bringing society's attention back to the impact of man on nature more than ever before - underlines Korinna Mollá of Aitex, leader of the Consortium headed by WORTH Partnership Project. In the front line, young European designers are committed to questioning the pillars of society, to highlight the defects of our business models and production processes, to rethink the problem of the exploitation of ecosystems by experimenting with new materials, innovative production models and alternative solutions that are crying out for digitization, multifunctionality and collaboration in the name of sustainability and inclusion".

Funded by COSME, the European Union's Programme for the Competitiveness of Small and Medium Enterprises, [WORTH Partnership Project](#) is Europe's largest creative incubator where designers experience the benefits of transnational collaborations to create innovative products and processes that benefit from the participation of over 500 million people in an internal market. It is a four-year project that, through three calls, has led to the selection of 152 projects involving 345 partners from 34 EU-COSME countries - from France to Germany, Spain, UK Italy, not forgetting the Netherlands, Slovenia, Moldova, Estonia, Sweden, Finland, Montenegro, Serbia, etc..



The last call, the third, registered 169 partnership candidates, 97 pre-selected projects from 32 countries of the European Union.

64 were the winning partnerships formed by 147 international partners from 30 different countries.

Below are some of the projects from the third call, whose images are available [here](#)

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Modifiable Vegan Bag Collection

Countries involved: United Kingdom, Italy



The leather industry is one of the most polluting in the world and the number of customers who are reluctant to buy animal leather accessories is growing. With this observation in mind, KZENIYA LTD, an English brand created by designer Kseniya Oudenot and SUPER COMPANY SRL, an Italian manufacturer operating for 30 years in the fashion industry, have collaborated in the creation of [a collection of bags made with bio/vegan leather created from apple waste](#).

"The collection, consists of 3 pieces, will be created without the use of animal or synthetic materials and will be designed so that the bags can be reinvented from time to time, offering a simple but effective solution to the excessive consumption and negative environmental impact of the fashion industry". Explains Kseniya Oudenot, a designer loved by the stars who has fully embraced the concept of circular economy.

The bags of the collection will also have a distinctive feature: a distinctive perforated structure, so that each one can add details such as jewelry and accessories, customizing them further .

ENAONA

Countries involved: Serbia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Style and sustainability often do not go hand in hand, which is why it is sometimes necessary to invent innovative solutions that can combine them. With this in mind, Glass Slipper, a Serbian company founded by Jelena Olsson Sasha Raca and Zoran Mihajlovic, CDT Group, a Slovenian company producing high quality carbon fiber components for the motorcycle industry, and Progetti Bosnia, a Bosnian company producing shoes for the most important brands - have collaborated in the creation of ENAONA, a [collection of shoes with modular jeweled heels and recyclable components, combined in a unique design](#).



The partnership has devised a series of proprietary components that combine creative industrial design with modern materials; the shoes will incorporate an ergonomic insole, an ultra-thin, reusable carbon fiber core and a hidden pivot mechanism to change the height and shape of the heel.

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"The shoes of the ENAONA collection give a unique experience to the wearer, offering comfort and wearability as well as the possibility to reuse them and add a personal and distinctive touch". Explains Jelena Olsson of ENAONA.

Agogic- Be prepared for more

Countries involved: Italy, the Netherlands



Women's outerwear that combines style, technology and sustainability. This is the idea behind the project "Agogic - Be prepared for more", the result of the collaboration between Salome Wilson of Agogic, a designer with extensive experience with major European clothing brands, NT Majocchi - Majotech, an Italian company specializing in the production of high quality fabrics for the fashion tech and military world and Roger Leebod, partner of The Brave New Now, a Dutch creative advertising and marketing company.

The 4 garments in the collection, which can be purchased at <https://www.agogic.it/>, have been created using only materials of responsible origin, high performance and eco-friendly materials such as recycled nylon, Primaloft and Polartec Power Air.

"The collection is deliberately reduced, so as to focus on quality rather than quantity, the garments are light and designed to adapt to all weather conditions without sacrificing style. The outdoor and urban men's clothing provides a multitude of options to choose from, including the extensive use of lightweight, high-performance fabrics and the ability to combine the garments with each other. Usually it is the men's collections that have the highest number of combinations: working on this collection we wanted to reverse this trend". Explains Salome Wilson from Agogic.

Vivid

Countries involved: Germany and Austria

Curtains for interior decoration whose appearance changes over time thanks to the particular mix of materials used to make them. Meyers & Fügmann, a German textile and product design studio based in Berlin and Luxembourg, Färberei Fritsch GmbH, an Austrian dyehouse working on commission, and Rohleder, a German manufacturer of upholstery and interior fabrics, have worked on this concept.



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The first material used is a naturally colored yarn, which is less resistant to light than the second, synthetically colored. Over time the natural dyes fade, revealing a new pattern. A surprise effect given by the passage of time.

"The aging of the curtains, in this case intentionally designed, makes them highly innovative. The idea is not only to create a design that is interesting, but also to encourage a debate on sustainability and the relationship we have with our assets over time". Explains Sarah Meyers of Meyers & Fügmann. "According to Bauhaus principles, social awareness and economy should be integrated into design, and this includes ensuring socially equitable production. European products should be socially innovative in their use, encouraging people to value the entire lifespan of an object. And that's exactly what we wanted to do by designing Vivid". He concludes.

REFRAMD

Countries involved: Germany, Spain



Glasses are not usually designed to fit people with low and wide nose bridges. From this observation, REFRAMD was born, [a collection](#) created focusing on the design and production of glasses suitable to be worn with total comfort by people of color.

Most of the glasses to buy and wear are designed to fit high and narrow nose bridges, characteristic of Caucasians. As a result, people with lower and wider nasal bridges, such as African descents, have little choices and must adapt to wearing sunglasses that do not fit well, or would require custom-made frames at a very high cost or even giving up on wearing them altogether. For this reason REFRAMD and Castor Sunglasses have joined forces to find a solution that

combines style and practicality.

"Our products are aimed for 'Afropolitans': young, urban and cultural generations of Africans and people of African descents with a global perspective that can be found in the world's largest metropolises and have a passion for style and self-expression. They want to be represented in the products they buy and support independent brands that represent them globally." Explains Ackeem Ngwenya of REFRAMD.

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WeAr Design

Countries involved: Italy, United Kingdom, Romania

This innovative project aims to develop **a platform that revolves around the concept of design through which artists and customers can collaborate in the creation of products in fashion, with new processes.** The goal is to build a working prototype that allows to test and validate the business value through a series of workshops and to test it in real market conditions by producing a series of physical garments.

Among the realities involved in the project are the Sicilian SME Eithne, AER IT Consulting, a British company that provides LEAN consulting to Start-Up and IT product developers, and the Romanian fashion designer Dana Tanase.

"The challenge we wanted to take up is to involve clients in the creation process, while building a resilient community of artists." Explains Ruxandra Lupu of Eithne.



WORTH Partnership Project

A European Commission initiative that aims to support collaboration between PM and start-ups of designers, producers and technology companies to create new products and implement innovative and disruptive ideas. The initiative is implemented by a consortium across Europe, with the belief that creative industries (SMEs and start-ups) are the main drivers of economic growth in Europe.



The WORTH Partnership Project is funded by COSME, the European Union Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises.

Consortium:



*AITEX Research Institute. Project Leader
Centre of excellence in applied research and advanced technical services for industry*



*KEPA Business and Cultural Development Centre
Intermediary authority and management of support programs for SMEs and entrepreneurs*



*IED Istituto Europeo di Design
International Institute of Higher Education specializing in design, creativity, communication and management*



*DAG Communication
Communication agency with experience in complex projects around the world and with a special approach for different target media*

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