

VISIONARY TALKS - B2B Torino Fashion Match 2026

Enterprise Europe Network

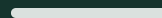
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RiTessiAMO

A pioneering pilot on fibre-to-fibre
recycling of post-consumer textiles

SPEAKERS

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Summary

The project aims to **maximize the value of post-consumer textiles as resources (through reuse, upcycling and fiber-to-fiber recycling)** and **reduce the amount that is wasted**.

The project involves a Turin-based charity dealing with the collection and donation of pre-loved clothing, a Piedmont-based company specialised in textile recycling, and a Turin-based startup that has developed innovative technologies for circular fashion.



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closing the loop

Atelier  Riforma


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CITTÀ DI TORINO

How the initiative was born

“Cultura e Imprenditorialità incardinate
nell'Economia Circolare e nel Tessuto
Urbano” call for proposal

The **City of Turin** launched a **call for proposals** for selecting projects dedicated to culture and entrepreneurship rooted in the **circular economy and the urban ecosystem**, as part of the PN Metro Plus and Città Medie Sud 2021–2027.
In the provisional rankings, RiTessiAMO is among the projects selected.

RiTessiAMO project has a total budget of **around €125,000** and will last **10 months (from September 2026 to June 2027)**.

Starting context

About fiber-to-fiber recycling

The management of **post-consumer textiles** collected via street bins or donations prioritises **reuse as the primary destination**: items that are unsuitable for reuse (because they are too worn or unsuited for the charities' beneficiaries) are sent for **downcycling** (rags, insulation, padding), energy recovery or **landfill**. To date, around 50% (L'Italia che Ricicla, 2024) of post-consumer textiles has been destined for reuse, but with the rise of fast fashion, the **quality of clothing has declined and quantities have increased**, making reuse increasingly difficult and waste management costly.

Fibre-to-fibre recycling can only be done with textiles that are homogeneous in terms of material and colour. The extreme heterogeneity of textile products, which are composed of many different materials and

often contain **non-textile elements** that **must be removed** before recycling (e.g. buttons, zips, etc.), means that currently **less than 1%** of all textile material **is recycled**.

Furthermore, the market for upcycled and recycled products is still limited and, for this reason, sorting, disassembling and recycling textiles is currently more **expensive than simply discarding them**. As the **sorting and disassembly** processes are unprofitable yet labour-intensive processes, they are **mainly carried out abroad** (particularly in **Asia**), where labour costs are lower. **The material is then re-imported** (Italy is a world-leading hub for fibre-to-fibre recycling, particularly in the districts of Prato and Biella) **to be recycled**. The same process applies to the recycling of pre-consumer textile waste from companies. The **environmental inefficiency** of this supply chain have prompted **EU policies to promote the relocation of the entire recycling chain to Europe**.

Starting context

Turin textile management

In Turin, the local multiutility AMIAT has entrusted the **separate collection** of textiles to two organisations: Cooperativa Lavoro e Solidarietà and Humana People to People, which together collect 2,156 tonnes of textile waste per year. In addition to this collection via **street bins**, there are various **charities** in the city, including Progetto Abito. This direct collection via **donations** is significant in terms of volume and exceeds 590 tonnes a year in Turin, when all the organisations involved are taken into account.

The **RiVestiTo project**, carried out in Turin between Oct. 2024 and Oct. 2025, **monitored the quality of the textiles collected and the activities of all these organisations**, discovering that approx. **60%** of the items collected are **reusable** and approx. **55%** are potentially recyclable (because they are **made of a single material**).

However, to date, **the % of post-consumer textiles sent for fibre-to-fibre recycling or upcycling is practically zero** (as in the rest of the country).

The RivestiTo project also conducted a **survey** to investigate **citizens'** knowledge and habits regarding textiles and circularity. The survey highlighted that there are still **many uncertainties** and areas for improvement **in behaviour, which would require** action through **information campaigns**: almost 70% of the sample stated that they use just over half of their wardrobe; almost 40% dispose of worn-out textiles in the general waste bin rather than in the bins for textiles, and 48% donate them to charities (even if they are no longer reusable). As for second-hand clothing, it is common practice to wear clothes received from relatives or friends; while buying second-hand is less common, particularly among older age groups. Clothes are only repaired when they are of value, and this practice has therefore become less common with the rise of fast fashion.

Starting context

Regulatory framework

In recent years – particularly at EU level – **policies have been pushing strongly for a transition of the textile and fashion sector towards a more circular model and more responsible management of end-of-life products.**

The **EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles** (part of the Green Deal) is the regulatory framework for circular fashion.

This framework also includes **EU Regulation 2024/1781 on Ecodesign**, which aims to improve the durability, reparability and recyclability of textiles and to **encourage the use of recycled materials** in products.

Of fundamental importance is EU Directive 2025/1892, which amends the **Waste Framework Directive** and introduces, for al

Member States, **mandatory separate collection of textiles (from 2025)** and an **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)** scheme. The latter will require producers to pay an eco-contribution for every product placed on the market. This tax will **fund the collection, sorting and reuse/recycling of textile waste**, the development of new infrastructure and technologies for separation and recycling as well as information campaigns aimed at consumers on the proper management of end-of-life products. As regards separate collection, Italy has brought this obligation forward to 2022, whilst regarding EPR, it is currently preparing to implement the legislation, with a legislative decree expected within the end of 2026. Finally, the **Circular Economy Act** is currently under consultation, aimed at strengthening the **market for secondary raw materials and recycled materials**.



Team

The partnership behind the project

Atelier Riforma s.r.l.

Turin-based **innovative startup** that **provides services and technologies to facilitate the fashion industry's transition towards circularity**. Its offering ranges from Re4Circular (an AI technology for classifying second-hand clothing and channelling it into circular processes) to consultancy services on circular fashion. Atelier Riforma is one of the leading voices on circular fashion issues at an international level.

The team has expertise in project development and management, in establishing partnerships focused on sustainable development, in public relations and communications, and more broadly in the field of social innovation. They have also led various funded projects, coordinating consortia of partners and successfully managing funds.

ODV Società di San Vincenzo de Paoli – Consiglio Centrale di Torino

Non-profit organisation that has been working to combat poverty for over 170 years. Since 2019, they have been running the **Abito social shop**, which combines inclusion and sustainability through reuse, social tailoring and environmental education. The project manager coordinates a team of 3 staff members and **around 100 volunteers**, managing activities that reach **over 3,500 beneficiaries** in financial difficulty and dozens of schools through educational programmes on the impact of fashion and the reuse of clothing.

Closeoop - a division of DBT FIBRE S.P.A. Group

DBT FIBRE is a leading **manufacturer of slivers, tops and fibres** for the spinning and textile industries. They process both natural and synthetic fibres. **Closeoop** is its division, established in 2023 to **recycle textile waste into new fibres**, using mechanical processes that preserve the fibres' characteristics, with Made in Italy products that can be certified to international standards such as GRS.

DBT FIBRE's team includes: a **R&D Manager** who is responsible for the development of products and processes related to the company's recycling division; other members of his team who deal with operational and quality aspects; DBT Fibre's manager, who is very active in **circular economy** projects, ranging from luxury brands to projects linked to the world of workwear.

The team will also have access to **Magnolab**, a textile R&D hub with a focus on sustainability.

OUTCOMES

- Abito acquires a stable operational capacity to manage non-donatable textiles;
- volunteers develop technical skills that can be used in circular fashion;
- the feasibility of fiber-to-fiber recycling in a nonprofit setting is demonstrated.

OUTPUT KPIS

- Active sorting infrastructure in place by M3
- # of people trained (baseline: 0, target: 25)
- Quantity (kg) of textiles sent for recycling (baseline: 0% of waste, target: 30% of waste)
- Quantity (kg) of recycled material produced.

IMPACTS

- Reduction in textile waste destined for disposal/incineration/downcycling
- GHG Emissions avoided (0.5–9.5 kg CO₂eq / kg fiber, source EEA 2024)
- Reduction in virgin fiber consumption thanks to regenerated fibers.

Project activities

Activities 1 and 2. Textile sorting infrastructure and fibre-to-fibre recycling

At **Progetto ABITO** an infrastructure will be set up to sort and prepare for fiber-to-fiber recycling the collected textiles, which are not suitable to be donated to the beneficiaries. Selective collections will also be launched to increase the collection volumes suitable for recycling.

Atelier Riforma will provide a **NIR spectroscopy reader** able to detect the composition of textiles, so that they can be divided by material, structure and color (essential parameters to enable high-quality recycling).

Dedicated Abito **staff (trained by DBT Fibre)** will manage the **selection, disassembly, and removal of non-textile elements** (buttons, zippers, labels) that hinder recycling.

The selected material will be periodically transferred to **DBT Fibre** in Biella to undergo **mechanical recycling**. Another NIR reader will be provided to DBT Fibre to verify the composition of the output downstream of the process.

OUTCOMES

- Local entities have a circular solution for their textile waste;
- the local network of upcyclers gains access to otherwise wasted material

OUTPUT KPIS

- # organizations taking advantage of the service
- # local artisans involved in reusing the material
- Quantity (# pieces) of textiles received and successfully sent for reuse/upcycling/recycling

IMPACTS

- Reducing textile waste sent for disposal by local businesses and entities
- Strengthening the local circular fashion ecosystem

Project activities

Activity 3. Management of textiles “discarded” by local organizations

Abito, together with Atelier Riforma, will launch a collection and circular management service - free of charge - for **pre-consumer** textiles (**scraps, faulty, unsold, or returned** products) and **post-consumer** textiles (used **workwear**) from **local businesses, professionals, and organizations**.

The spaces at Abito and Atelier Riforma will be available for storage. If requested (for ex. in case of workwear), ABITO team will also remove logos and/or distinctive elements from the items received.

To reuse the material locally, Atelier Riforma will coordinate the delivery of the textiles to **local artisans** and upcyclers, matching the distribution to their production needs.

To create further opportunities for valorizing the textiles collected and ensure their traceability, Abito will use Atelier Riforma's **Re4Circular technology**, which enables the automatic cataloging and **digitization** of textiles with AI, integrated with a **marketplace** for wholesale resale.

OUTCOMES

- Citizens acquire repair and upcycling skills;
- the perception that repair is difficult decreases

OUTPUT KPIS

- New equipment bought and installed within M3;
- # Volunteers involved in activities (baseline: 9, goal: +75%)
- # participants in workshops & courses (goal: 40)
- # Upcycled capsule collections created

IMPACTS

- Extending the useful life of garments
- Reducing replacement purchases
- Establishing repairs as standard practice.

Project activities

Activity 4. ABITO's tailoring studio

Abito will strengthen its social tailoring workshop with **new** tools and **equipment for repairing, sewing and upcycling** the collected textiles.

Local artisans and upcyclers will be involved in offering there free **repair and upcycling courses and workshops for the citizens.**

OUTCOMES

- Increased knowledge of the environmental impact of fashion (pre/post questionnaire with a 40% improvement target);
- Increased knowledge about the proper management of end-of-life textile products;
- increased propensity to purchase secondhand and repair

OUTPUT KPIS

- # lectures in schools
- # events held
- # participants
- # people reached online

IMPACTS

- Reduced % of incorrectly disposed textiles
- Reduced demand for new garments in favor of second-hand and upcycled ones
- Building a city culture oriented toward sustainable fashion

Project activities

Activity 5. Raising citizens' awareness about sustainable fashion

Abito and Atelier Riforma will carry out **educational and awareness-raising activities** on responsible fashion consumption targeting citizens, including: **school lectures, events and workshops, guided tours of the local textile ecosystem, and online information campaigns**. Interactive and pop educational methodologies will be used, in order to involve all the different groups of citizens (even those who are usually less interested to these topics). Among the topics covered: buying less fast fashion, choosing durable or recycled products and prolonging their life through care, swapping, repairing and upcycling, correctly distinguishing between solidarity donation of used clothes and disposal in separate waste collection.

OUTCOME

industry workers acquire concrete tools to integrate eco-design and circular management into their business

OUTPUT KPIS

- # training/consulting sessions carried out;
- # participants

IMPACTS

- Reduced textile waste generated upstream in the supply chain
- Accelerating compliance with EU regulations
- Strengthening the competitiveness of local businesses in the transition to sustainable fashion.

Project activities

Activity 6 Training for industry professionals & students

Atelier Riforma will offer free **training and/or consulting** services to **local fashion** companies, professionals and students on the principles of **eco-design** and responsible **textile waste management**.

The uniqueness of the project

Technology supporting a non-profit entity

This is a truly pioneering project: there are no similar experiences where a **non-profit organization** dedicated to the solidarity collection of clothing has advanced technologies (such as a **NIR spectroscopy reader** for fiber identification and **AI technology** for digitizing and automatically listing garments on a marketplace) combined with a **trained staff to prepare textiles for fiber-to-fiber recycling**. Such equipment has so far been the prerogative of large industrial operators.

Entirely local circular supply chain

By leveraging local expertise, RiTessiAMO's **circular model will be almost zero-mile** (collection, sorting, disassembly, recycling and - potentially - spinning within 80 km). In a highly globalized (and opaque) supply chain like the post-consumer textile industry, this is an extremely ambitious goal, establishing an **international best practice for Turin and Piedmont**.