

For immediate release

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## **Patagonia backed workshop leads the charge in sustainable fashion**

Amsterdam garment repair company expands to keep up with growing demand

**AMSTERDAM, June 1, 2024** – United Repair Center is making sustainability possible for everyone through new growth efforts. URC employs immigrants worldwide to use tailoring skills to repair clothes in partnership with Patagonia. Due to growing demand, URC expanded into a larger space last week. It hopes to employ 60 tailors who will mend 150,000 garments within two years and employ 140 tailors in the Netherlands by 2027. This will be made possible with United Repair Academy, a tailoring training program launching in February 2025.

Patagonia, the city of Amsterdam, and URC CEO Thami Schweichler founded the clothing repair workshop in 2023. The company was created after Patagonia noticed an opportunity to expand within Europe and a need to shift consumers' perception of clothing from "consumption to ownership." At the same time, Amsterdam was looking to implement its textile "green deal," which committed to increasing textile recycling and reaching zero waste by 2050. With a joint commitment to sustainability and social impact, Patagonia and Amsterdam saw URC as a critical partner to achieve their goals. Now, clients include major global brands including sportswear behemoth Decathlon and yoga wear brand Lululemon.

"In the Netherlands, the average unemployment rate now is around 3%; for the refugee population it's much higher. Why? Are they less smart? Are they less skilled? It's just unfair. They want to work; they want to deliver," said Thami Schweichler CEO of URC. "A lot of newcomers come to the Netherlands with skills in textiles; they wouldn't find satisfaction somewhere else. Feeling you belong, that you can contribute meaningfully with your skills, is one of the biggest challenges that an incomer has to face."

URC has an employee benefits package in place to support adjusting immigrant workers:

- Union-negotiated wages
- Competitive pay
- Complimentary pension plans
- Five vacation days in addition to four statutory
- Wellbeing and self-development program

### **About Patagonia**

Patagonia is in business to save our home planet. Founded by Yvon Chouinard in 1973, Patagonia is an outdoor apparel company based in Ventura, California. As a certified B Corporation and a founding member of 1% for the Planet, the company is recognized internationally for its product quality and environmental activism, as well as its contributions of nearly \$200 million to environmental organizations. Its unique ownership structure reflects that Earth is its only shareholder: Profits not reinvested back into the business are paid as dividends to protect the planet.

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## Relationship

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## What we do

### Repair services

- Collect damaged clothing from companies like Patagonia, Lululemon and Decathlon.
- Offer high-quality garment repair to extend the life of up to 30,000 articles
- Save 12 tonnes of textile from landfills



### Immigrant support

- Provide refugees with meaningful work
- Offer fair wages and benefits
- Help refugees adjust to life in a new country



### Foster circular economy

- Reduce 70.680 KG of CO<sub>2</sub>
- Promote repair instead of consumption
- Support Amsterdam's zero waste initiatives

## How it works

1. Customer buys product
2. Product needs repair
3. Customer contacts us
4. Customer sends product to URC
5. URC receives product
6. URC repairs clothes
7. URC sends back to the customer



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