

# Decolonising Fashion, for Emergency and Emergent Times



class code: 653033

Dr Francesco Mazzarella & Prof. Helen Storey  
Centre for Sustainable Fashion, 18/10/2023

**ual:** london college  
of fashion



centre for  
sustainable fashion



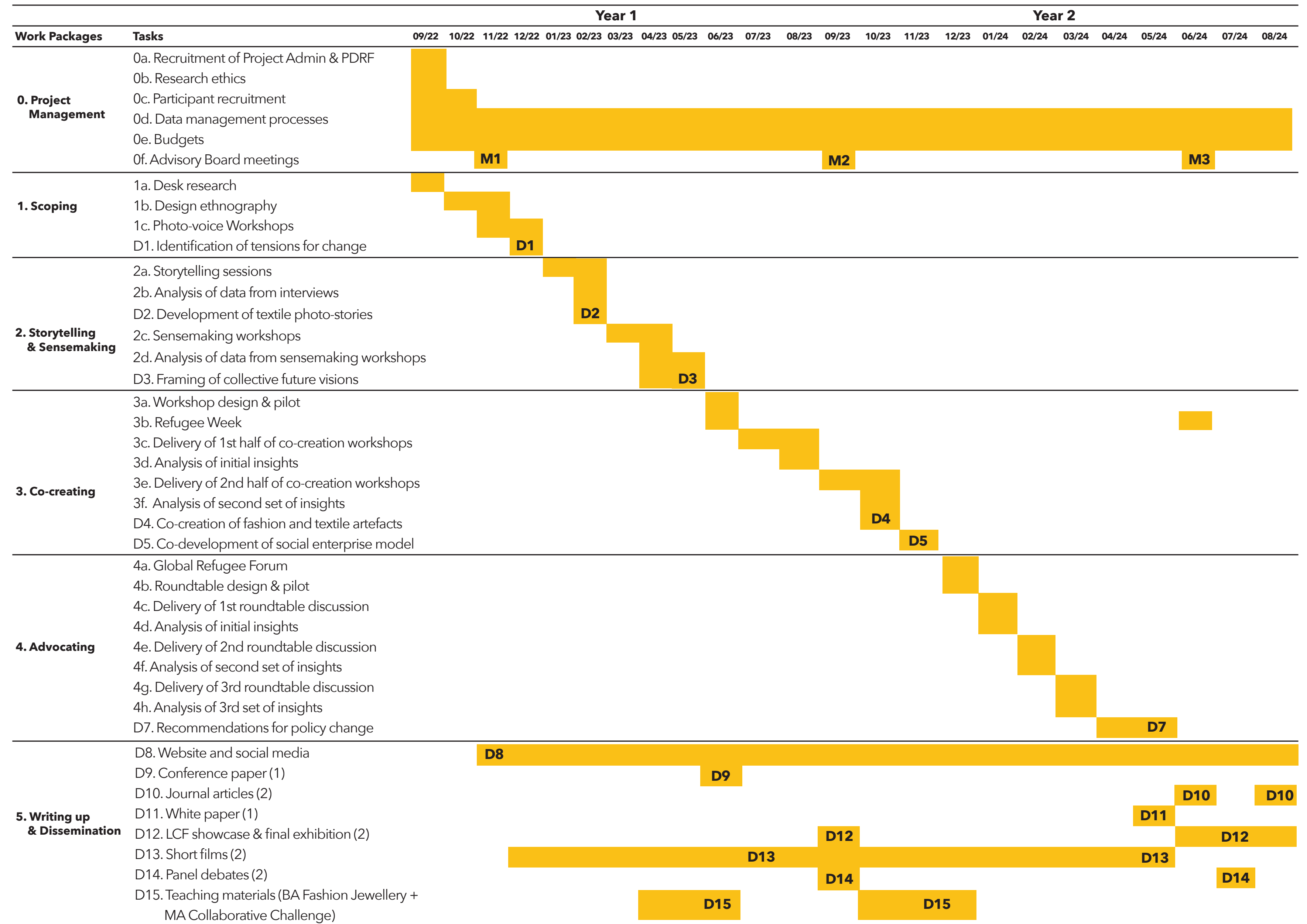
# A Challenging Context

- Refugee crisis and hostile environment.
- Textile heritage of minorities subjected to cultural appropriation.
- Culture as an essential component of a sustainability agenda.
- Social designers 'parachuted' into marginalised communities.
- Need to decolonise dominant design practices.





# You are Part of a Larger Project



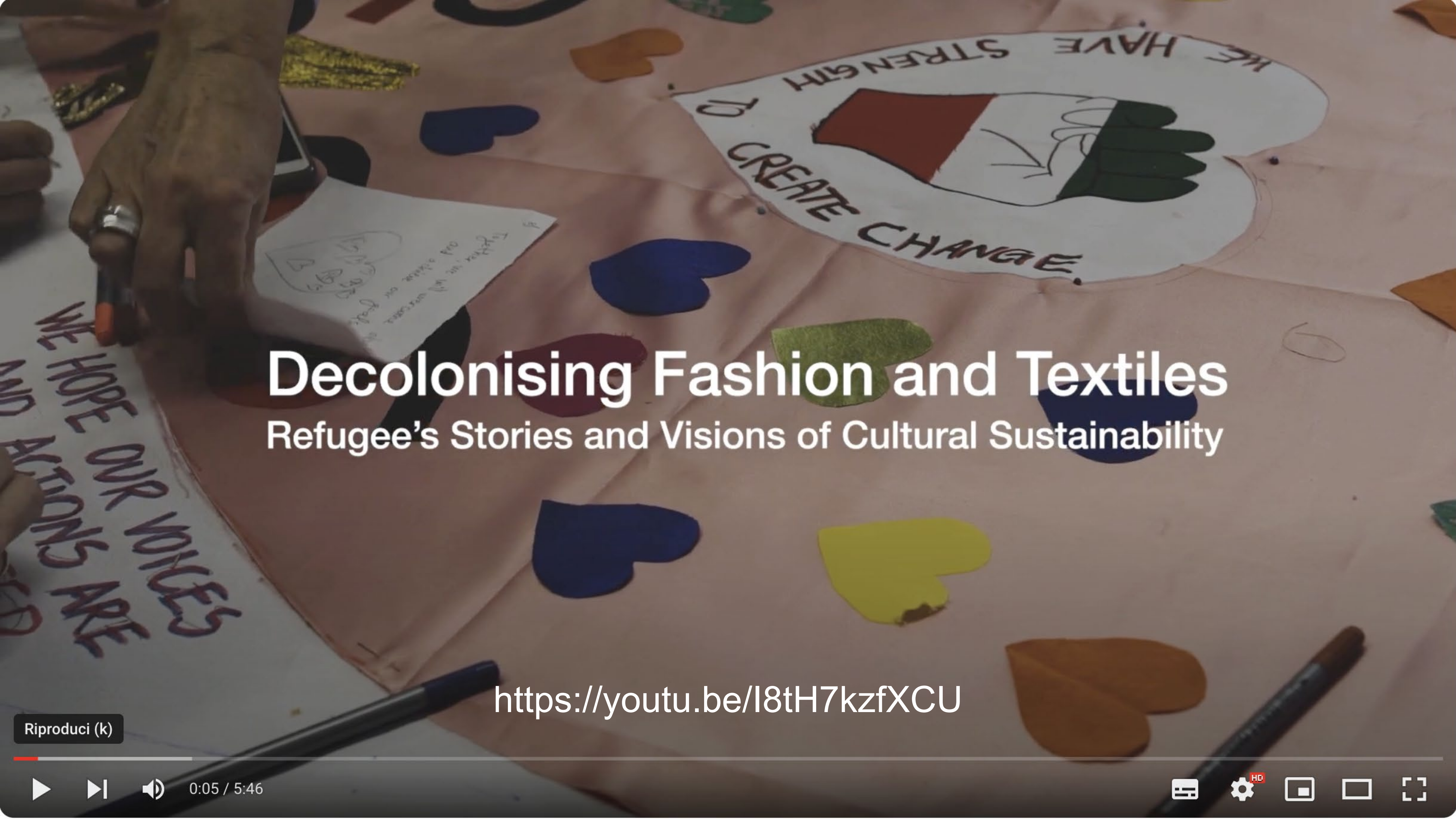


# Project Aims

Shifting narratives around refugees, mapping ways to build resilience within the local community, framing collective visions for a sustainable future, co-creating culturally significant fashion and textile artefacts, developing a social enterprise model, and outlining recommendations for policy change







# Decolonising Fashion and Textiles

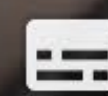
## Refugee's Stories and Visions of Cultural Sustainability

<https://youtu.be/l8tH7kzfXCU>

Riproduci (k)



0:05 / 5:46



HD





# Shifting Identities

“I’m here to find myself. I’m here to find myself. We can pray for this to happen every day and night [...] The reason why I do this is because I know [that] a picture can send a message to the outside world. If someone sees this [referring to her textile artwork], they know that this lady is still fighting for her freedom”.







# Cultural Sustainability

“This project made me love my culture more. No matter where I go, my culture will remain with me”.



# Community Resilience

“People from the Global South are really resilient, although [...] they shouldn’t have to always be resilient, because they also deserve tenderness and loving care, instead of violence and resilience. [...] Sometimes, resilience is worshipped because it’s easier to worship resilient people rather than deconstructing and dismantling the system that oppresses them. Many of them do not even want to be resilient or face this violence, but they have no choice”.





# Collaborative Challenge

How can we use design activism to prevent cultural appropriation and craft commodification while shifting power dynamics in the fashion system?





# Project Timeline

- Decolonising Fashion, for Emergency and Emergent Times – F. Mazzarella & H. Storey, 18/10/23
- Art / Design / Fashion as Social Practices for Cultural Sustainability – L. Orta & S. Mirza, 01/11/23
- Shifting Identities and Perceptions through Ethical Storytelling – K.K. Pelen & T. Stephens, 08/11/23
- Empowerment and Entrepreneurship with a Social Purpose – S. Escobar & S. Lleshi, 15/11/23
- Building Community Power and Campaigning for Policy Change – F. Legaspi & T. Gbomedo, 22/11/23
- Final presentations and pop-up showcase – All teams, 06/12/23



# Considerations

- Shifting Designer Roles
- Ethics of Care
- Empathy and Reciprocity
- Cultural Routes and Shifting Identities
- Impact Evaluation
- Project Legacy





# 3 Briefs x 6 Teams

- Co-design of **fashion and textile artefacts** showcasing your identity, cultural heritage, and sense of displacement / belonging;
- Shift the prevailing negative narratives around refugees and develop an ethical **storytelling campaign**;
- Contribute to the **project legacy** (e.g. social enterprise model and/or a creative campaign for positive policy change).





# Your Supervisors



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# economy

changes towards economic sustainability,  
supporting fair work, resilient infrastructure,  
industrialization and innovation

# society

changes towards social sustainability,  
fostering equity, diversity, inclusion,  
social justice, health, wellbeing, etc.

—

considering the current emergencies,  
what would you like to change  
in the world and fashion system ?

—

# environment

changes towards environmental  
sustainability, in terms of use of resources,  
production processes, end of life, etc.

# culture

changes towards cultural sustainability,  
maintaining cultural beliefs, cultural  
practices, heritage.



values

roles

skills

potential

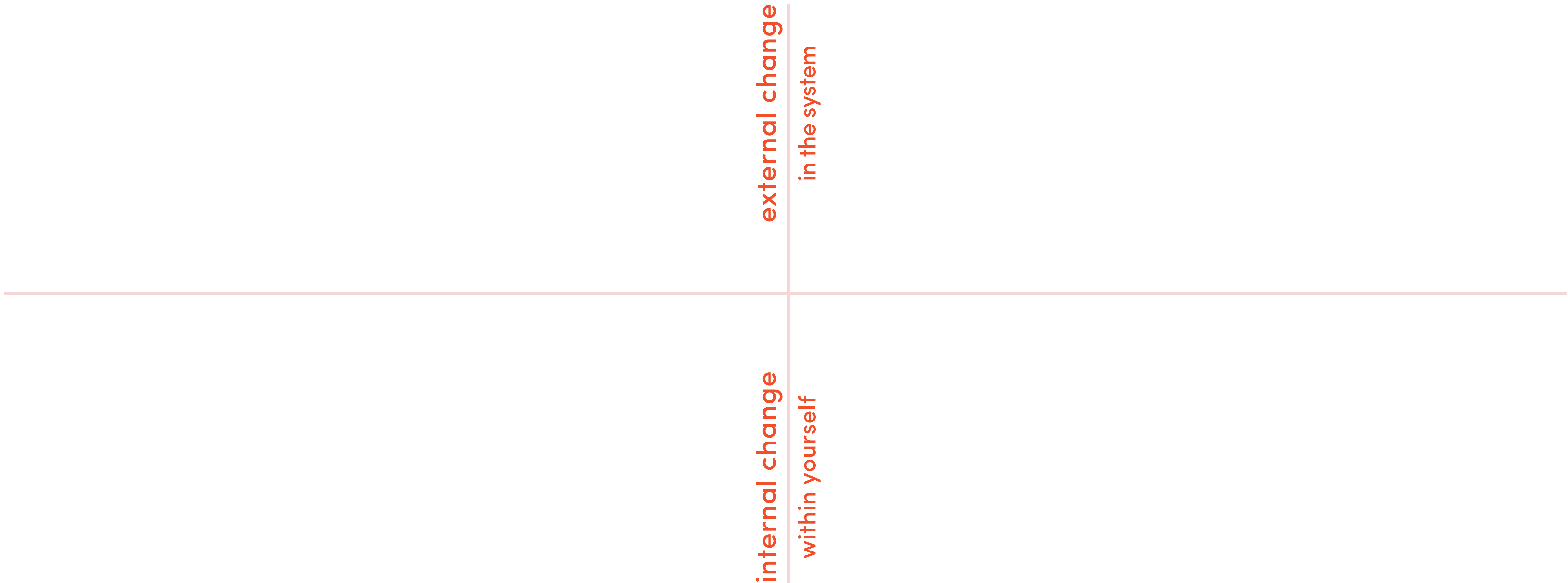
current

reflect on who you are, and write down your values, current role and the role you could potentially play in the future, and the skills you could contribute to this collaborative project.



challenges

opportunities



reflect on the process of change towards your envisaged future, and write down potential challenges and opportunities for change (both within yourself and in the system).



We cannot 'save' other people  
and we should never imagine we can;  
instead, we can fine-tune into reality  
as it presents itself and let it determine  
what needs expression, making, changing,  
inventing, or letting be, together

Helen Storey, 2022

