

New ideas emerged from participating in the Textile Re-design Jam

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The international [Textile Redesign Jam](#) was organized online from February 29 to March 1, 2024. In the event organized by the Baltic2Hand project, participants from different countries of the Baltic Sea region came up with ideas and developed circular economy solutions to the challenges set by five different companies. One of these companies was Kesko.

[Kesko](#) is one of Northern Europe's largest operators in the trade sector, operating in three different industries. The grocery stores are probably the most famous one of Kesko's industries, there is hardly any Finn who has not visited Kesko's K-stores. In addition to this, Kesko also works in building and technical trade, as well as in car sales. Kesko has its own textile-related brands in grocery and construction stores.

Kesko is strongly committed to responsible and sustainable operations, which can be seen from their comprehensive website. There are many goals, clear strategies and reports related to these themes. Regarding textiles, Kesko has its own [cotton policy](#), which they have committed to fully implement by 2025, regarding their own textile brands. The aim of the policy is to procure the cotton used sustainably, certified organic, recycled, produced in accordance with the [Better Cotton](#) or Fairtrade guidelines. In 2022, 92.2% of the cotton used for Kesko brand products were produced according to the cotton policy.

After the event, we interviewed Kesko's environmental manager Hanna Lehmuskoski and asked, what made Kesko take part in this event.

"We wanted to see what kind of innovative ideas students can come up with when it comes to enhancing circularity in hypermarkets in Finland."

In Kesko's challenge, participants were tasked with coming up with ideas on how Kesko could contribute to accelerating the transition to a circular economy in textiles and footwear at K-Citymarkets.

Hanna describes the background of the task as follows:

"Circular economy is much more than just recycling or utilizing our own side streams to new products, as important as these are too. We wanted to see what kind of innovative ideas students can come up with considering services, reuse, repair, and second-hand business."

Two groups competed in Kesko's challenge. The ideas of the groups were related to the recycling and repair service and the exchange point for used clothes between customers in the premises of K-Citymarket. The winner was rewarded – there was a donation made in the name of the winning team to the [Finnish Natural Heritage Foundation](#) for Finnish nature.

"The ideas were innovative, bold, well-structured, and very versatile in their circular aspects. There is real potential in applicability too."

Innovation project students

Turku UAS

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