

Leith social enterprise named in dozen 'most exceptional' businesses in the UK

A Leith social enterprise which manufactures ethically, efficiently and sustainably-made textile products has been named one of the UK's 12 most exceptional businesses contributing to economic growth and the social and environmental vibrancy of their communities.

Kalopsia Collective was established as a textiles artists' collective in 2012 by Adam Robertson and Nina Falk. It's now a forward-thinking social enterprise, capable of competing against traditional businesses, selling to mills, retailers and independent businesses nationally and internationally. It strives to minimise the environmental impact of the business and manufacturing operations.

The business, which has developed resource-efficient manufacturing techniques for its products such as accessory bags and clothing, doubled its turnover from 2017 to 2018.

It has partnered with industry in sustainability projects, run pilots for a Government environmental agency, designed costumes for films, constructed murals and manufactured products for international clients.

Kalopsia Collective has now been named one of only 3 candidates from across the entire UK to be named

“Social Entrepreneur of the Year” in the Citi Microentrepreneurship Awards, funded by the Citi Foundation.

The Citi Microentrepreneurship Awards are the annual celebration of Britain’s microentrepreneurs that have accessed “responsible” business finance, and the three social entrepreneur of the year award finalists are in the running for a £7,500 cash prize and national and international recognition in this year’s awards.

Nina Falk of Kalopsia Collective said: “We are so honoured to have been recognised and shortlisted for “Social Entrepreneur of the Year”. As a Social Enterprise working in the Textiles and Fashion industry it’s amazing to have our contribution acknowledged and we hope that we can begin to set a new standard for ethical working and environmental practices within our industry.”

The entrepreneurial journey for Nina, Adam and Kalopsia Textiles has been supported by three rounds of investment from Glasgow-based responsible finance provider, DSL Business Finance.



Alison Wibmer of Kalopsia Collective

Stuart Yuill of DSL Business Finance commented: “We are delighted that the business has been shortlisted. Adam and Nina’s innovative approach to the manufacturing process whereby they are essentially upcycling materials that would otherwise not be used is both socially and environmentally responsible and has real economic benefit too.

“That they are also reviving the skill of “Patch Construct,” something that was popular in mills years ago adds further appeal. We are delighted to have been able to support the business with 3 tranches of loan funding at specific times to assist with growth and look forward to noting its continued success.”

“The Citi Microentrepreneurship Awards are a celebration of the enterprises and local businesses – like Kalopsia Collective – that are the backbone of our communities. Year upon year, we see the increasing value of microenterprises in the UK, from businesses that have created jobs for marginalised youth, to businesses providing low-cost

services for charities, or developing innovative and sustainable food sources,” said Bob Annibale, Global Director, Citi Inclusive Finance and Community Development.

“This year’s Citi Microentrepreneurship Awards align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals agenda and the shortlisted businesses and responsible finance providers all contribute to economic growth and the social and environmental vibrancy of their communities.”

Kalopsia Collective and DSL Business Finance must now wait until 13 March 2019 when the winners of the Citi Microentrepreneurship Awards will be announced at an Awards Ceremony in Liverpool.