



## **Sustainable Fashion Industry Report**

### **Executive Summary**

VERA is a sustainable fashion platform designed for late teens to young adults who are active on social media and online shopping malls. With a strong awareness of environmental issues and an appreciation for trendy, high-quality clothing, our users are driven by values and innovation. Through gamified features and community engagement, we aim to empower the next generation to make eco-friendly fashion choices a habit, not a hassle.

Our team, Vera, consists of four members: Jane Oh, Rachel Jung, Callista An, and Juha Kim. Based in Seoul, Korea, our business - named VERA - is a sustainable fashion platform that empowers Gen Z and young adults to build eco-friendly shopping habits through gamification and community engagement.

Our mission is to redefine clothing consumption by helping young shoppers build sustainable habits—proving that every choice makes a difference. The platform offers unique features such as reward-based eco-friendly purchases, fashion challenges, and partnerships with influencers and designers committed to environmental causes.

Our strengths lie in creativity, innovation, and alignment with current consumer values. As a youth-led venture, we also benefit from potential government support for young entrepreneurs. Despite challenges in expertise and funding, we are positioned to grow within the expanding slow fashion movement. With rising demand for sustainable materials and growing interest in social impact-driven brands, our business is ready to meet both environmental and consumer needs in a fresh and engaging way.

## Company Description

VERA is a youth-led social enterprise located in Seoul, Korea, founded by a team of four student entrepreneurs, Jane Oh, Rachel Jung, Callista An, and Juha Kim. VERA is developing a sustainable fashion platform designed to help members of Gen Z and young adults develop eco-friendly shopping habits using gamification, digital engagement, and a community element. We are reimagining sustainable fashion by making it accessible, engaging, and rewarding, and demonstrating that responsible consumption can be stylish and impactful.

The app and web platform will allow users to earn eco-points for verifiable sustainable actions, such as completing daily challenges or exploring educational material on environmental issues. Users may redeem these eco-points to purchase curated fashion items made from verified eco-friendly materials. To ensure transparency with our users and to actively eliminate greenwashing practices, we will utilize Google Cloud's NLP tools to scan and verify sustainability documents from brands. We will create additional incentive features like leaderboards, impact-tracking, and educational sustainability badges to help motivate and educate users.

The team operates collaboratively across different functions in the business. Jane and Rachel are completing market research and analyzing user needs, while Callista leads product design and UX/UI, ensuring our platform is beautiful, easy to use, and intuitive; and Juha, ensuring a strategy for growth of brand and organization to align with our mission. Everyone in our team has assisted in the technical development of the platform, building a mobile-responsive application utilizing Firebase, Kotlin, and VS Code.

VERA was born from a real problem - sustainable fashion is a focus for our generation, but too many young people feel like they are not a part of the sustainable fashion revolution - many barriers to accessibility (price, transparency, or awareness are primary factors). As a group of people who truly want to create a digital native, trust-based experience that enables sustainable shopping to be both fun and rewarded - and ultimately evolve fashion from a linear habit into a circular consumption and value-driven lifestyle.

The next portion of this stage is to build the user base acquisition, continue to refine our eco reward system and increase awareness through social media and influencer campaigns. We want to increase the number of brand partners and ensure we conduct audits to keep our sourcing reputable and ethical.

Over time, VERA will become a global authority on youth-centred sustainability. Our vision includes scaling globally, adding subscription options, and adding A.I. driven personalization to customize user journeys. We want to have community challenges, collaborate with public sector sustainability initiatives, and eventually launch our own certified fashion line. VERA is more than just a platform—it's a movement to change the relationship youth have with fashion one choice at a time.

## Product Description

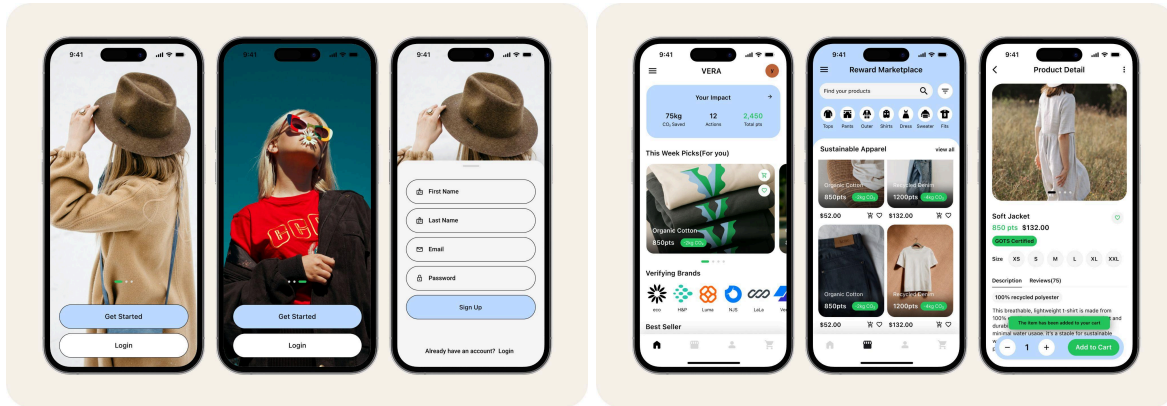


Figure 1 & 2. The pre-login and main display of the application

When developing our sustainable fashion mobile app, we were motivated by the principles of clean code, user experience, and environmental impact. The app was aimed at a younger eco-conscious audience and combined gamified elements like eco-points and daily challenges with a marketplace that rewards users for purchasing sustainable fashion items. In order to maximize scalability, maintainability, and compatibility across platforms, we strategically decided on a modern tech stack and executed a collaborative workflow to design and develop everything.

For version control and team coordination, we utilized GitHub. We followed a branch-per-feature workflow to manage larger pieces of functionality (e.g., the eco-points dashboard, sustainability impact tracker, and reward marketplace) on separate branches. Every pull request was reviewed by either myself or a teammate for front-end consistency, performance and load time of implementation, and reliability of the app's functionality.

Using modern technologies, we created a responsive, scalable, and user-centric multi-platform mobile experience for the user with VERA, our sustainable fashion platform. The app helps users track their clothing habits, find brands that are environmentally and socially responsible, and take real world steps to offset their impact.

We used Visual Studio Code (VS Code) as the primary development environment. VS Code included an integrated terminal to conduct real-time UI testing from the emulators that helped the team quickly iterate via its live reload.

Firebase powered out back-end services and complemented our front end with an easy integration. In addition to Firebase handling additional user authentication, it provided real-time database updates and cloud storage for features like eco-action logging, eco-points tracking, and real-time updates of leaderboard ranking and score.

To promote trust and transparency in our market place, we integrated Google Cloud's Natural Language Processing (NLP) services to automatically scan sustainability documents submitted by brands, verify eco-certifications, and flag unsupported "greenwashing" claims. Verified brands with official certification badges distinguish this app as an authority in the sustainable fashion industry.

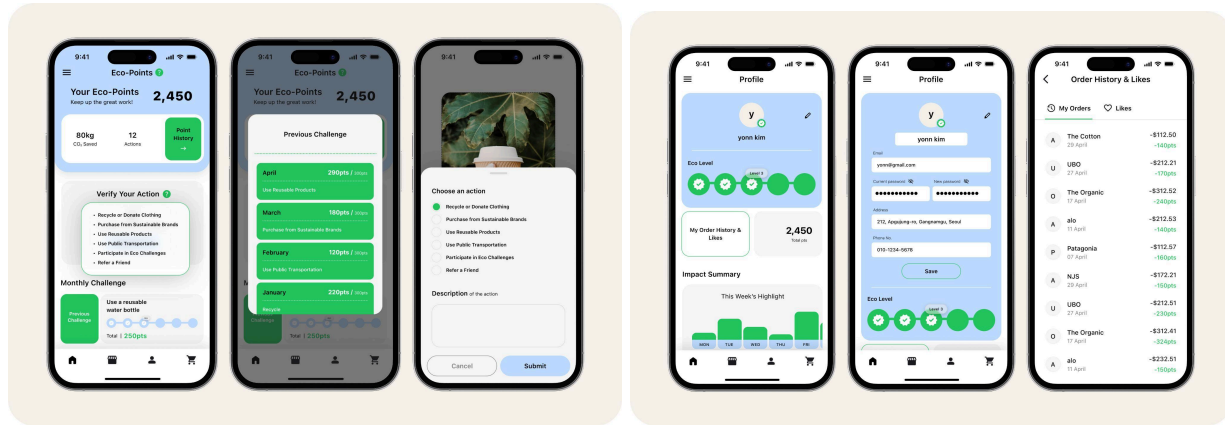


Figure 3 & 4. The point screen display and User profile UI

Users could earn points by conducting verifiable eco-actions that were then redeemable for sustainable clothing items. To solve the complexity of the logic governing the points system we wrote a lot of this backend logic using Kotlin and were able to take advantage of Kotlin Multiplatform's strong typing and structure for business logic.

The UI/UX design was created with our end-user profile in mind - Gen Z, a generation that is fashion-forward, comfortable with technology, and conscious of their environmental impact. We designed a clean, simplistic interface with bold color palettes as a background to emphasize key features within the app, including daily challenges and eco-point balance.

During user testing, which I enjoyed immensely, we made incremental design adjustments, particularly with respect to how we shared sustainability indicators with each product we highlighted in our app. We strategized to keep the details short, visually simple and easy to navigate while providing educational indicators to support the user with making better-informed shopping decisions

# Strategy and Implementation

## Product Positioning

The sustainable fashion industry is witnessing exponential growth, along with an increased interest in circular fashion, slow fashion, and ethical sourcing. Nonetheless, many existing platforms do not connect to young users or offer reasonable prices and good quality combined. Our platform addresses this gap by having a curated shopping experience that incentivizes sustainable behavior, creates community interaction, and uses social media to scale impact.

Rather than traditional eco-fashion brands that are targeting a niche demographic or older audience, we take a youth-centered approach and optimize for the digital experience. We identify that gamification, such as eco-challenges, point-badging systems, and a community challenge are the best way to show engagement and connection.

## Sourcing Strategy & Sustainable Business Model

Although VERA does not produce or sell clothing directly, we work with many suppliers and fashion labels to curate and source the garments that meet our high conscious fashion sustainability standards. We only create relationships with suppliers and fashion labels that provide traceability to their sourcing along with certified sustainable materials. For garments, we require that any garment we are selling on our site, including high end basics like organic cotton, recycled nylon, or Tencel, have documented information on ethical labor practices, chemical use and environmental footprint. We have used the Google Cloud Natural Language Processing (NLP) to analyze the sourcing documents to create a baseline of confirmable transparency and to help minimize the risk of greenwashing.

On VERA, our pricing model reflects the quality and sustainability in the clothing. Even once the eco-point credits have been applied, the clothing is (to a certain extent) still relatively premium. This is intentional! Vera is not positioning itself as a fast fashion option, but as a value-based long-term investment platform, where users are encouraged to buy less, but better. By suggesting that the user is expected to take conscious-purchase or preppy-step towards conscious consumption, we promote aspirational sustainable clothing in a way that addresses value. In our buying premise, prioritizing quality or reduced quantity of less, we generate an incentive to impact the reduction of overproduction in the industry while extending the lifecycle of fashion goods.

## SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
A. <b>Creativity and Innovation:</b> As a team of young entrepreneurs, we bring fresh ideas and approaches to both design and business	A. <b>Lack of Industry Expertise:</b> With limited experience in fashion production and supply chain

<p>strategy, making our brand highly adaptable and trend-aware</p> <p>B. <b>Policy Benefits:</b> Youth-led initiatives are often eligible for government support or startup programs focused on innovation and sustainability</p> <p>C. <b>Digital Fluency:</b> Strong understanding of online platforms allows for high user engagement through tailored UX/UI and marketing strategies</p>	<p>management, early-stage development may face operational inefficiencies</p> <p>B. <b>Financial Bottlenecks:</b> As a small, self-funded startup, we face challenges in attracting large investments or scaling operations quickly</p>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <p>A. <b>Growing Awareness of Slow Fashion:</b> Public discourse around environmental issues and fast fashion's harms is on the rise, creating a receptive market.</p> <p>B. <b>Cost-effective Sourcing:</b> Recycled or upcycled materials can be more affordable and scalable as the market expands</p> <p>C. <b>Influencer Collaborations:</b> There's strong potential to collaborate with content creators who are already advocating for environmental responsibility, allowing for rapid brand exposure</p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Political Backlash Against Environmental Agendas:</b> Shifting political leadership may roll back environmental protections</li><li>• <b>Quality Control Limitations:</b> Recycled materials and smaller-scale production can result in inconsistent product quality</li><li>• <b>Technological Gaps:</b> Lack of access to advanced production or inventory systems may limit efficiency and scale in comparison to fast fashion competitors</li></ul>

## Market Analysis

In order to strategically position our sustainable fashion platform in the global market, we investigated the consumer behavior, geographic trends, product preferences, and distribution patterns of the end-consumer in a MECE (Mutually Exclusive, Collectively Exhaustive) Scope. The MECE approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of all relevant market segments without team overlap.

### Demographic Segmentation

#### Age / Generation

##### Generation Z (18 to 24):



- A. 51% are more likely to buy sustainable clothing
- B. High digital engagement with an awareness of trends
- C. Strong interest in value-based purchasing but limited spending power

#### **Millennials (25 to 34):**

- A. 44% stated that they make sustainability a priority in their fashion purchasing habits
- B. Additionally, they have more disposable income and are more likely to pay more for ethical products.
- C. These two age brackets show both interest and intent, making them the core of sustainable fashion consumers.

Sustainability is becoming an increasing concern for all genders; however, women under the age of 35 continue to be the most engaged consumer group in ethical fashion. In a 2022 global survey, 82% of female users reported shopping on the internet for fashion, compared to 73% of men. This suggests that women may be more active in digital fashion purchases. [1]

### **Product Segments**

#### **Primary Product Focus: Apparel**

- A. Apparel represents the largest market share of the sustainable fashion sector driven primarily by demand for:
  - Organic cotton shirts/tops
  - Recycled polyester/nylon pants/trousers
  - Basic apparel (t-shirts, hoodies, denim, outerwear) [2]

#### **Secondary Categories (long-term growth trajectory)**

- A. Footwear (made with cork, organic leather, etc.)
- B. Accessories (bags, belts, jewelry, etc.) made with recycled materials

### **Material Segments**

#### **Organic Cotton**

Organic cotton is cultivated without synthetic pesticides, herbicides, or GMOs. It uses significantly less water than conventional cotton and is cultivated with sustainable practices that benefit soil health and mitigate water pollution. [3]

#### **Recycled Polyester/Nylon**

Recycled polyester/nylon is a synthetic fiber produced from repurposed post-consumer plastic waste, such as PET bottles or abandoned fishing nets. While these fibers are still not biodegradable, recycled synthetics offer a more circular and responsible practice for producing apparel, especially for items meant for performance or athleisure that need durability and flexibility. [4] [5]

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[1] Plus, T-shirt. "Understanding the Fashion Trends of x Gen, y Gen and z Gen." *Medium*, Medium, 16 Aug. 2023, [medium.com/@tshirtplusaus/understanding-the-fashion-trends-of-x-gen-y-gen-and-z-gen-5e766e196e6a](https://medium.com/@tshirtplusaus/understanding-the-fashion-trends-of-x-gen-y-gen-and-z-gen-5e766e196e6a).

[2] "Sustainable Apparel Market Growth Analysis Report: Fact.MR." *Fact.MR, Market Research Company*, [www.factmr.com/report/sustainable-apparel-market#:~:text=Sustainable%20Apparel%20Market%20Outlook%20\(2023,by%20the%20end%20of%202033](https://www.factmr.com/report/sustainable-apparel-market#:~:text=Sustainable%20Apparel%20Market%20Outlook%20(2023,by%20the%20end%20of%202033). Accessed 5 May 2025.

## Segmentation of Channels of Distribution

### Online Channels (Predominant - 39.8% market share) [7]

- Customers prefer online sales channels primarily because they provide convenience, selection, and incorporate social experiences.

### Offline Channels (Secondary Role)

- Independent boutiques, pop-up shops, stores that market sustainability in their retail environment

## Competitive Landscape

The sustainable fashion sector features established brands such as **Reformation**, **Patagonia**, and **ThredUp**, with distinctive tactics such as eco-friendly high fashion, resale, and upcycling. Still, many of these competitors lack an authentic, new, gamified shopping experience geared toward Gen Z, or social media integrations.

Where larger brands might fall short in speed and affordability, our platform can provide on-demand collections and community challenges that respond to trends and insights. We are focused on affordability—both with our price points and designs, ensuring that we're not creating a luxury around sustainability, but an everyday option.

Finally, we provide peer influence loops through social media challenges and reward structures to blend conscious shopping into one's digital lifestyle.

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[3] Srivastava, Shraddha. "Why Organic Cotton Is the Future of Sustainable Fashion." *NoName*, NoName, 20 Mar. 2025, [www.nonameglobal.com/post/the-role-of-organic-cotton-in-sustainable-fashion](https://www.nonameglobal.com/post/the-role-of-organic-cotton-in-sustainable-fashion).

[4] "What Is Polyester? Material Guide, Ethics and Sustainability." *Good On You*, 18 Mar. 2024, [goodonyou.eco/how-sustainable-is-polyester/](https://goodonyou.eco/how-sustainable-is-polyester/).

[5] *Sustainability & Innovation Eco-Nylon*, [www.fittdesign.com/blog/sustainability-and-innovation-eco-nylon?srsId=AfmBOopst-kfEMxcluqmi65nI\\_Aj58V1kXTcfSqP6wcx3M0PL2blTaB](https://www.fittdesign.com/blog/sustainability-and-innovation-eco-nylon?srsId=AfmBOopst-kfEMxcluqmi65nI_Aj58V1kXTcfSqP6wcx3M0PL2blTaB).

[6] [www.fibre2fashion.com](https://www.fibre2fashion.com). "TENCELTM: Redefining Sustainable Fashion With Innovation." *Fibre2Fashion*, [www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/10365/tencel-redefining-sustainable-fashion-with-innovation#:~:text=What%20makes%20TENCEL%E2%84%A2%20fibres,ensuring%20minimal%20waste%20and%20pollution](https://www.fibre2fashion.com/industry-article/10365/tencel-redefining-sustainable-fashion-with-innovation#:~:text=What%20makes%20TENCEL%E2%84%A2%20fibres,ensuring%20minimal%20waste%20and%20pollution). Accessed 5 May 2025.

[7] "Sustainable Clothing Market Size, Growth Outlook 2025 – 2034." *Global Market Insights Inc.*, [www.gminsights.com/industry-analysis/sustainable-clothing-market](https://www.gminsights.com/industry-analysis/sustainable-clothing-market). Accessed 5 May 2025.



# Financial Plan and Projections

## Startup Capital

To kickstart our sustainable fashion platform, we will need initial seed funding to build a website and mobile application, find ethical sourcing channels, and maintain a basic inventory. We expect to get the startup capital through a combination of:

- A. Government grants for youth-led and green businesses**
- B. Crowdfunding campaigns geared toward eco-conscious consumers**
- C. Angel investors and socially responsible venture capital**
- D. Personal contributions from the founding team**

Due to the increasing focus on ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) investing and a youth-led entrepreneurial spirit, we are hopeful that we can raise a mixture of public and private early-stage funding.

## Revenue Model

The revenue model is designed to align with our target market's buying habits and sustainability values. In the beginning, the platform will be free to use to cultivate growth and brand loyalty. Revenue will be realized from:

- A. Product sales:** Selling sustainable clothing on our e-commerce site
  - a. In-app purchases: Selling eco-challenges and unlocking badges and other features to gamify the app
- B. Collaboration with ethical brands:** Partnering with external eco-brands via affiliate links and/or storefronts
- C. Sponsored content & advertising:** Carefully curated ads or sponsorship from an aligned eco-business
- D. Subscription model:** Exclusive access to premium content and early access and sustainability workshops.

We will avoid overloading the platform with advertisements to maintain a smooth and trustworthy user experience.

## Operating Costs

The primary expenses during the launch phase will involve technology development, branding, ethical supplier onboarding, and marketing. As we scale, marketing and logistics will become the major recurring expenses.

Fixed Costs	Variable Costs
Web/App Development	Packaging and shipping
Branding & Logo Design	Inventory restocking
Salaries for core team	Social media marketing
Platform licensing	Influencer partnership costs
Tech infrastructure	Customer support operations

Tracking these categories helps us allocate resources effectively, prevent overspending, and make informed adjustments as we grow.

### 5-Year Financial Projection (USD)

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>Startup Capital &amp; Revenue</b>					
Personal Finance	1,000	1,200	1,400	1,600	1,800
Government Grant	3,000	4,000	5,000	6,000	7,000
Crowdfunding	1,500	2,000	2,500	3,000	3,500
Angel Investment	2,500	3,000	4,500	5,500	7,000
Product Revenue	0	5,000	15,000	25,000	40,000
Partnerships & Ads	0	1,500	3,000	5,000	8,000
Premium Features & Subscriptions	0	0	1,000	3,000	5,000
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>16,700</b>	<b>32,400</b>	<b>49,100</b>	<b>72,300</b>

## Web landing page

The VERA web landing page serves as a digital extension of our mobile application and showcases our app's key functionalities in a visually appealing and engaging format. Simplified by aesthetics and clarity, the page introduced our audience to our mission, provided an overview of Eco-points, fashion challenges, sustainable brands, and our value proposition as a simplified and intuitive effort to communicate our work. The site is useful for both promotional work and educational content and is built to attract our target audience, Gen Z and young adults, with curtail avenues for navigation, rich visual appeal, and links that allow the user to easily and directly set up or deepen the community experience.

The landing page utilizes the tone and aesthetic of our mobile app, which is desirable for transparent, innovative, and empowering user experience commitments. Acting as another opportunity for user acquisition, the web landing page builds an initial trust and curiosity, and again represents the landing page its evolving purpose not as just a point of discovery but as a chance to convert as well.

Visitors can investigate our design ethos, see how gamified sustainability works, and preview the impact they will make with their fashion selections all before signing up. We welcome you to explore the experience here: <https://verafromkorea.netlify.app>

## References

- [1] Plus, T-shirt. "Understanding the Fashion Trends of x Gen, y Gen and z Gen." *Medium*, Medium, 16 Aug. 2023, [medium.com/@tshirtplusaus/understanding-the-fashion-trends-of-x-gen-y-gen-and-z-gen-5e766e196e6a](https://medium.com/@tshirtplusaus/understanding-the-fashion-trends-of-x-gen-y-gen-and-z-gen-5e766e196e6a).
- [2] "Sustainable Apparel Market Growth Analysis Report: Fact.MR." *Fact.MR, Market Research Company*, [www.factmr.com/report/sustainable-apparel-market#:~:text=Sustainable%20Apparel%20Market%20Outlook%20\(2023,by%20the%20end%20of%202033](https://www.factmr.com/report/sustainable-apparel-market#:~:text=Sustainable%20Apparel%20Market%20Outlook%20(2023,by%20the%20end%20of%202033). Accessed 5 May 2025.
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- [4] "What Is Polyester? Material Guide, Ethics and Sustainability." *Good On You*, 18 Mar. 2024, [goodonyou.eco/how-sustainable-is-polyester/](https://goodonyou.eco/how-sustainable-is-polyester/).
- [5] *Sustainability & Innovation Eco-Nylon*, [www.fittdesign.com/blog/sustainability-and-innovation-eco-nylon?srsId=AfmBOopst-kfEMxcluqmi65nl\\_Aj58V1kXTCfSqEP6wcx3M0PL2blTaB](https://www.fittdesign.com/blog/sustainability-and-innovation-eco-nylon?srsId=AfmBOopst-kfEMxcluqmi65nl_Aj58V1kXTCfSqEP6wcx3M0PL2blTaB).
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