

# COLLECTION AS A SERVICE FOR DENIM BRANDS & RETAILERS

This project researched a new collection method for worn denim garments that fits the (future) context and the needs of ecosystem stakeholders / In a circular economy, denim is recycled at the end-of-life. This means we need to scale up collection. Now, municipalities grant collecting rights to collectors. This system faces challenges like a high waste percentage. The government is working on an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for textiles,

which means brands and retailers will be responsible for collecting garments. / This thesis proposes the Collecting Collective: a service for brands and retailers for denim collection in stores. With this service they meet the requirements of the EPR and they collaborate on a circular fashion industry. / The service will be implemented in a pilot in Amsterdam starting April/ March 2022.



A person owns 49 garments (coats, trousers, sweaters, shirts). How many of these do you actually wear? \*1



Collection through textiles containers leads to a waste percentage of 16% \*2



Out of 554kt taken out of stock 174kt was discarded as residual waste \*1

## COLLECTING COLLECTIVE | Collection as a service Give worn denim a new life!

All denim clothes deserve a new life and it is the responsibility of the fashion industry to achieve this. No denim belongs in the trash bin, even those items with holes. Let's collect in all stores for circular fashion!

For the consumer who... doesn't know what to do with that pile of jeans in the back of their closet



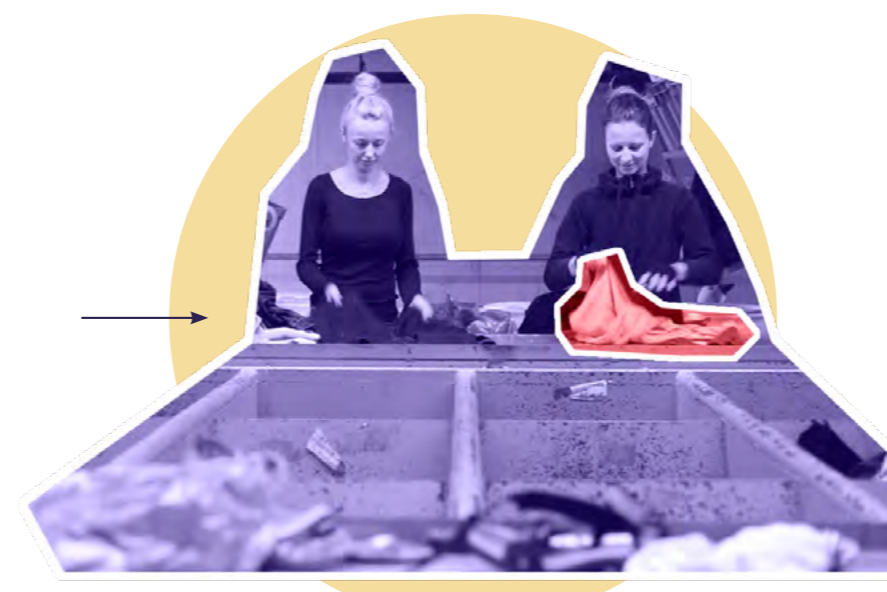
For the denim brand & retailer who... wants to build circular streams & prepare for the EPR



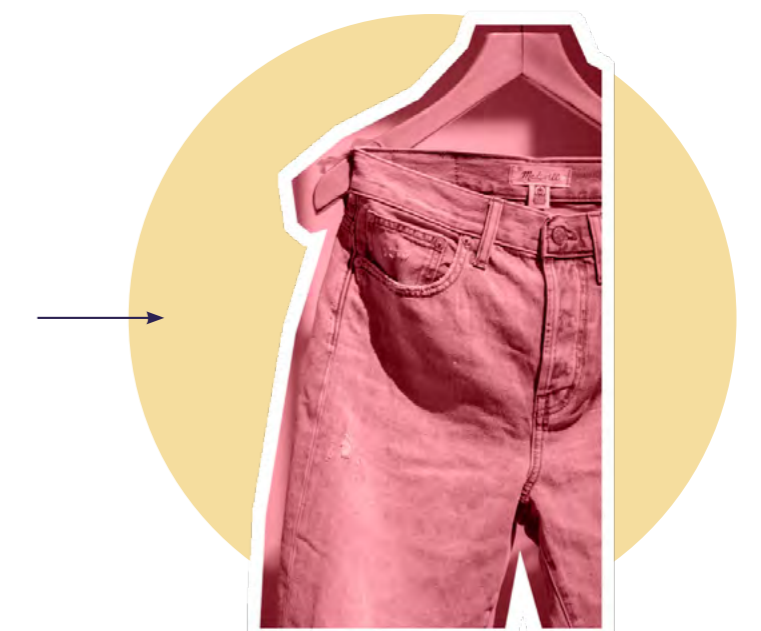
Consumer locates store and brings back denim item in return for 10% discount



Collection bin full? Retailer sends notification for transport



Collecting Collective sorts the clothes and sends them to next step



You might even find your item back in the same store, recycled into something new!

### Denim brands & retailers with physical stores that want to participate

Price/ collected kilo €0,19+ starting fee of €400

- 😊 Attracting new customers
- 😊 Option to sell second-hand items
- 😊 Preparing for EPR
- 😊 Discounts on recycled fabrics
- 😊 Participating in green initiative

High quality material? You receive a discount!

### CLIENT COMPANIES

**Retail Experts (RE)**  
ICT provider for retail and wholesale

**House of Denim (HoD)**  
Non-profit organization on a mission for a sustainable denim industry

**TEXTILES2 textiles (T2T)**  
Processes non-rewearable garments into resources

### PROBLEM

Textiles collection is needed to scale up recycling. Textiles collection in the Netherlands is mainly a municipality's responsibility. They grant collection rights to collectors. Collection happens mostly through textiles containers.

Ecosystem stakeholders encounter barriers when collecting and working with post-consumer (recycled) denim. The most important barriers to solve are clothing being treated as a waste stream; the stakeholder's scale being too small for impact; fast fashion working counteractive to circularity; encountering financial barriers; a lack of transparency in the industry; needing to convince the consumer; and uncertainties around legislation. The most important drivers to tap into are legislation leading to action; financial incentives; more attention for sustainability; and consumer enthusiasm for sustainability.

Trends that might impact the ecosystem include trends in logistics and regulations like the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).

Interviewees mentioned important aspects for an ideal situation for collecting and working with post-consumer (recycled) textiles. The most important ones to serve as inspiration are collaboration between stakeholders; sustainability being profitable, brands and retailers taking care of different steps in the value chain and more transparency.

### OPPORTUNITY

Brands and retailers will be affected by the Extended Producer Responsibility and will need to collect garments at the end-of-life. They are struggling with this responsibility.

The design brief describes the design challenge as: to design the means for brands and retailers to facilitate the collection of worn denim. This challenge was the starting point for ideation.

After ideation, the concept of collecting in clothing stores was chosen. This creates an opportunity to educate the consumer and use existing networks and logistical streams.

Collection at De Rode Winkel was studied to learn about collection in stores. Consumers could hand in their jeans in the store or send them with a shipping label. All in all, collecting in stores in this way was interesting for the retailer, but not profitable for the sorter. Therefore, the thesis introduces collection as a service to take a different approach to the business model.

The second version of the design brief redefines the design challenge as: to develop the business case and concept of collection as a service.

### SOLUTION

The Collecting Collective offers collection as a service (CaaS) to brands and retailers to collect in stores. Textiles sorter T2T is the service director.

The consumer hands in their denim garments at a connected denim store and receives a 10% discount. The retailer scans a QR code once the collection bin is full, after which the logistics company will "swap" the bin. The batches are sorted and sold to the appropriate buyer in the supply chain.

The three core activities of the Collecting Collective are 1) educating the consumer; 2) providing brands and retailers with the means to collect; 3) sorting the garments and passing them on in the supply chain.

The service will first exist in a system without EPR. In the future, the Collecting Collective however might be paid by the EPR fund.

The service will be implemented in practice with a pilot in Amsterdam after the graduation project.

References: \*1) Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek. (2021, February 4). *Steeds meer textiel in Nederland*. Retrieved October 23, 2021, from <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/nieuws/2021/05/steeds-meer-textiel-in-nederland>

\*2) Leger des Heils. (2021). *Stichting Leger des Heils ReShare Jaarverslag 2020*. <https://www.legerdesheils.nl/files/Jaarverslag-ReShare-2020.pdf>

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