



Partner Meeting

Tuesday 12th December 2023

1.30 pm to 5.00 pm

Venue:

Leathersellers' Hide
4th Floor Learning Hub
University of Northampton
Waterside Campus
Northampton
NN1 5PH



*Transparency
you can see...*

WELCOME

Welcome to our 2023 end of year Partner Meeting.

As we prepare to close out 2023 and start to plan for the new year ahead, I am sure that many of us will have mixed emotions and will be dealing with some degree of uncertainty for the future of the leather industry in light of ever-increasing demands from legislators and civil society.

Uncertainty can lead to inaction and apathy, not because we don't want to improve but because we don't know which path to take or which decision to make. I remember clearly when I set up SLF during the summer months of 2020 when the world was under lockdown, being asked constantly "Deborah, are you sure this is the right time to be setting up a new initiative?". I always replied that this was the ideal time, because people would have time to consider a new approach and idea. Three years on and I'm so glad that I had the faith to drive forward with SLF, especially as we can now see the value of our approach being felt in organisations internationally.

Evolution is inevitable. As much as it is tempting to "stick with what we know", the society we live in today demands change and improvement, especially in environmental, social and governance issues. The consumer has more knowledge and information than ever before and expects more as a result. As an industry we must respond – both to correct false information or assumptions and to inform on the improvements that take place. SLF's focus extends beyond the traditional scope of audit certification to connect continued improvement to corporate sustainability - profitability and viability. We provide a suite of tools to support organisations to understand and make changes independently, in addition to offering training workshops and support around the key areas of responsibility.

There are several pieces of incoming regulation and legislation that have been in development since 2020 and we'll discuss these during today's meeting, but the most pressing of those is the EUDR – European Union Deforestation Regulation. Back in 2020 I was warning that our industry needed to start preparing, but little action was taken. Now the legislation is in force, and we are running out of time to meet the requirements of the regulation. Other key directives include the EU CSRD – Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive and the EU CSDDD – Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive.

Our development work within SLF is centred around helping our partner members with meeting these regulatory challenges and today's meeting focuses on some key areas: **Are You Ready?; Traceability as a Foundation to provide reliable reporting; and Technology and Collaboration for Sustainability.**

Just a note on collaboration; SLF continues to see collaboration as an essential ingredient for a cohesive industry approach to our shared challenges. With many initiatives now overlapping on objectives, it is important for SLF to ensure that we manage the demands placed on our partner members and to alleviate that duplicative burden wherever possible. It is equally important however that we maintain an integrity of scope and purpose in order to remain objective in our approach to sustainable improvement and ESG responsibility for the leather manufacturing industry.

Managing SLF gives me immense purpose and along with the whole team we remain committed to drive the Foundation forward and ensure it remains credible, effective, relevant, and valuable for its partner members and the wider industry.

Enjoy the meeting and join the conversation!

Deborah

Founder & Managing Director, SLF



TODAY'S AGENDA

13.30	Welcome Suzie Fletcher, Master Saddle Maker & Leather Expert for BBC's The Repair Shop, SLF Patron
13.40	Benchmarking and SLF Annual Report 2023 Deborah Taylor, Managing Director, SLF
14.10	Are You Ready? An update on the incoming requirements for EU CSRD, CSDDD and the EUDR Deborah Taylor, Managing Director, SLF
14.40	Introducing Weev: How technology and collaboration support industry to meet future demands Joanne Stetson/Chris Hillyer, Weev.one
15.00	Technical Update: Development of the SLF Audit Standard, Benchmarking, Guidance & Templates Deborah Taylor, Managing Director, SLF
15.30	BREAK / NETWORKING
15.50	Traceability Session: Need, Systems and Collaboration Moderated by Gustavo Gonzalez-Quijano, Secretary General of COTANCE Panel: Stuart Cranfield, LWG, Sabrina Frontini, ICEC, Carolin Franitza, Oeko-Tex, Deborah Taylor, SLF
16.20	The value of public, private and academic collaboration Prof. Will Wise, Leather Science and Research Lead, ICLT, University of Northampton
16.40	Open Q & A Session All Participants
16.55	Closing Remarks Hans van Haarst, Chairman of the SLF Advisory Board

Following the main meeting, there will be Networking from 5.00 pm to 6.30 pm along with an opportunity to take a tour of the Institute for Creative Leather Technologies, led by Prof. Will Wise.

TODAY'S GUEST SPEAKERS



Suzie Fletcher:

Suzie is a Master English Saddle Maker and member of the Society of Master Saddlers. She also specializes in the restoration and repair of saddles, leather goods and solid leather furniture from her workshop in Oxfordshire. Now in addition to her own workshop, Suzie is the leather expert for the BBC's "The Repair Shop" and is Patron for the Sustainable Leather Foundation.

Chris, Hillyer, Global Business Development, Weev:

After a lengthy career working as a designer for brands such as Salomon, Black Diamond Equipment, Teva and HOKA, Chris transitioned into an innovation role focusing on Digital Product Creation. At Deckers, he initiated the creation of a team dedicated to the research and implementation of 3D design, 3D printing, integration with PLM and development. "I'm enthusiastic about WEEV.one for the transformative level of clarity and efficiency it provides for both material suppliers as well as brands. It is staggering how much redundancy and busy work still exist in our industry due to the lack of centralized data sources".

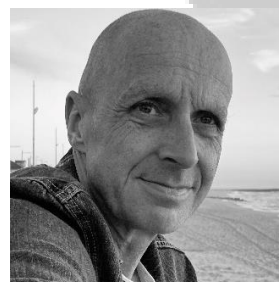


Gustavo Gonzalez-Quijano, Secretary General, COTANCE:

Since 1987, Gustavo has led the Brussels-based leather industry association COTANCE, the sector's EU umbrella organisation gathering the National Tanners' Associations of 11 European countries and representing over 90% of the continent's leather production. Gustavo Gonzalez-Quijano is a qualified lawyer specialising in European Law.

Stuart Cranfield, Head of Standards & Assurance, LWG:

In March 2022, Stuart joined the LWG team to head up Standards and Assurance for the group. Stuart joined LWG following 36 years at Clarks, working across multiple different locations and functions. In his previous role, Stuart was central in establishing and managing the social audit program at Clarks and has taken active roles in multi-stakeholder initiatives including SLCP, CGF SSCI and BSI PAS24000.



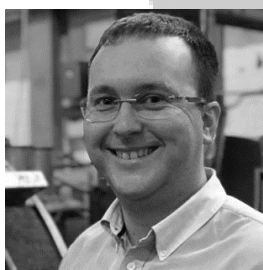
Carolin Franitza, Stakeholder Manager, OEKO-TEX:

Carolin is the Stakeholder Manager at OEKO-TEX®. Her main responsibilities are the exchange and committee work related to stakeholders of OEKO-TEX® and the associated institutes. Prior to her appointment to this role, she had been part of the product management team at OEKO-TEX®.

Carolin holds a bachelor's degree in Textile- and Clothing Management.

Sabrina Frontini, Director, ICEC:

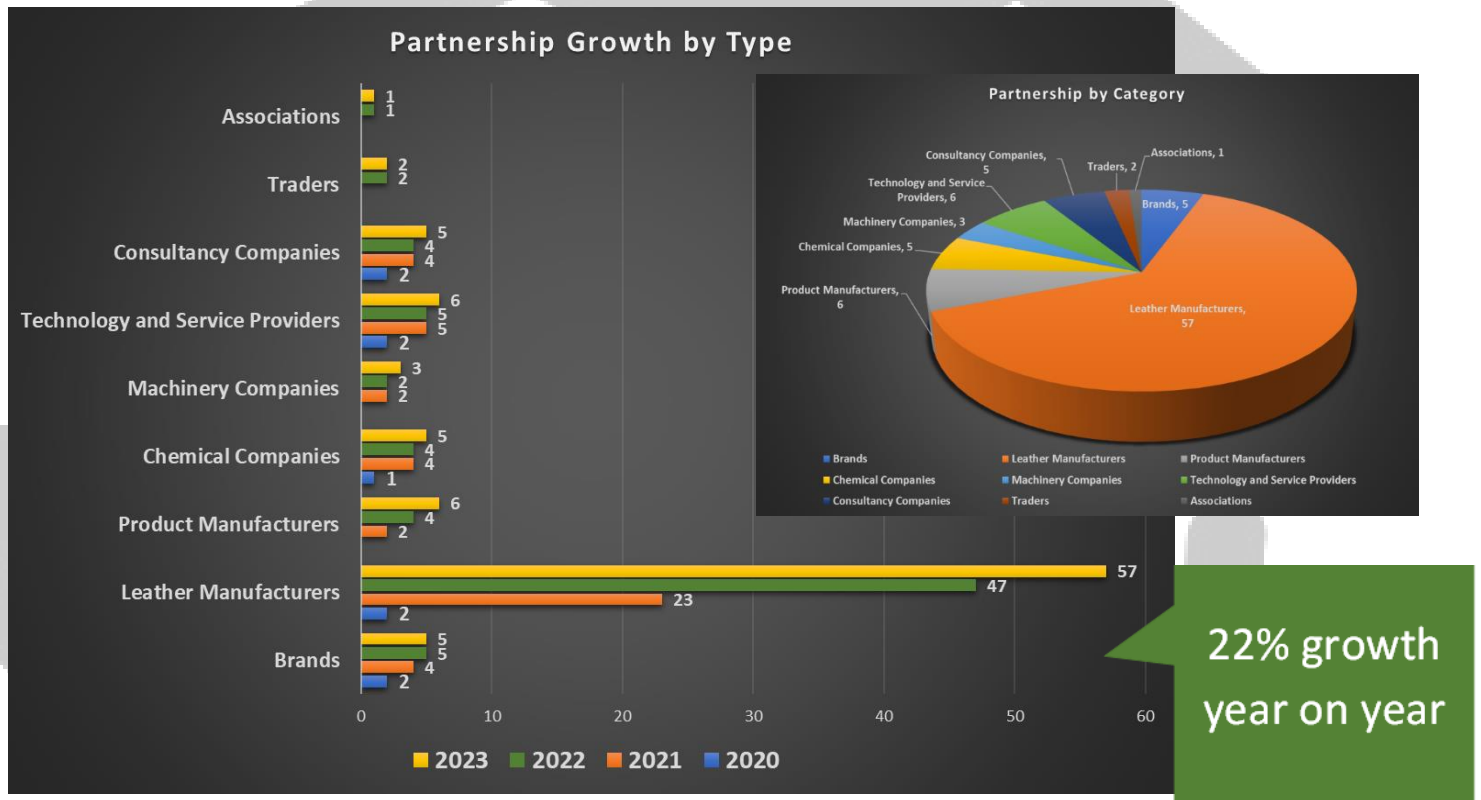
Sabrina graduated with a degree in Engineering Management from Milan Polytechnic. Since 2002 she has been the Director of ICEC, in Milan, the certification body that certifies all the companies related to the leather industry. Sabrina is a lead auditor qualified to inspect management systems for quality, products, processes, as well as raw material origin and traceability.



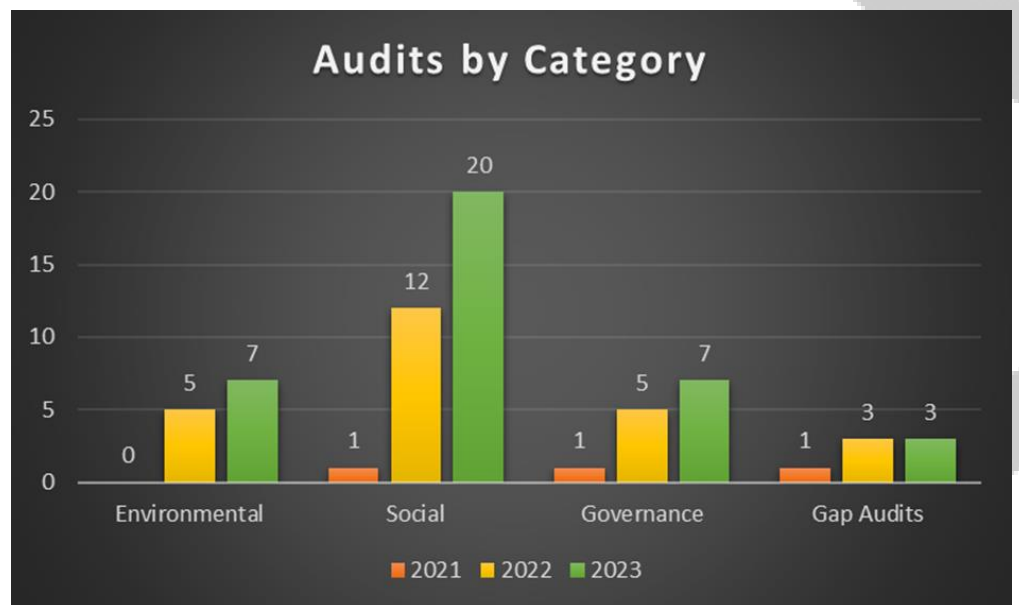
Prof. Will Wise, Head of Research, ICLT, University of Northampton:

Will is a Professor in Leather Science and is the Research Leader for the Institute for Creative Leather Technologies. He is a chemist by training but subsequently diversified and started at ICLT in 2014 as a senior lecturer. He uses his chemical background to apply pure science principles to the development of new leather technology; moving the industry forward by pushing the boundaries of what is currently possible.

ANNUAL REPORT KEY TAKEAWAYS



37 Audits conducted in 2023



[CLICK HERE FOR THE FULL REPORT](#)



ARE YOU READY?

RESOURCES AND USEFUL INFORMATION

Key Pieces of legislation and regulation that will affect the leather industry:

EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive

EU CSRD

This new requirement replaces the existing “Non-Financial Reporting” requirement and is intended to force organisations to actively report on their ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) risks, mitigation, objectives and KPIs.

The rules will apply for the largest companies in 2024 for reporting in 2025 and will extend to full value chain accountability for all organisations by 2028.

[Click here for the EU Directive](#)

EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive

EU CSDDD

This is the mechanism that requires companies to take responsibility for social and environmental aspects of their operations.

The aim of this Directive is to foster sustainable and responsible corporate behaviour and to anchor human rights and environmental considerations in companies’ operations and corporate governance. The new rules will ensure that businesses address adverse impacts of their actions, including in their value chains inside and outside Europe.

[Click here for the EU Directive](#)

The EU CSRD and EU CSDDD should be considered together.
Due diligence Directive for Action and the Reporting Directive for reporting

EU Deforestation Regulation

EUDR

Entered into law on 29th June 2023, operators and traders will have 18 months to implement the new rules that were first published on 17th November 2021. The regulation will ban the import of any commodities that are linked to deforestation into EU markets. This means that the commodity / product could not have been produced on land subjected to deforestation after 31st December 2020.

This applies to raw hides/skins, pickled, or preserved, part processed material, finished leather.

[Click here for the EU Regulation](#)

EU Green Claims Directive


EU GCD

Adopted by the commission in March 2023, this directive aims to address greenwashing, and protect consumers and the environment.

Environmental labels and claims must be credible and trustworthy to allow consumers to make better informed purchasing decisions

“Companies making ‘green claims’ should substantiate these against a standard methodology to assess their impact on the environment”.

[Click here for the EU Directive](#)



*"Let's be the change
that secures the
future..."*

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

**More information about the Foundation
is available on our website:**

www.sustainableleatherfoundation.com