



MATERIAL
INNOVATION
INITIATIVE

MEDIA RELEASE

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MII Launches Virtual Material Innovation Conference May 18 & 19

Forager, MycoWorks, VitroLabs, Modern Meadow, NFW, Everlane and others partner with MII for the inaugural gathering of industry experts discussing the future of the material sectors

To support the development and adoption of next-gen materials, the Material Innovation Initiative is launching the inaugural Material Innovation Conference. This event will bring together retailers, brands, entrepreneurs, scientists, investors, academia, business incubators, suppliers, mills, and nonprofits to explore opportunities to accelerate the commercialization of next-gen materials.

Confirmed partners include Forager, MycoWorks, VitroLabs, Faircraft, NFW, Everlane, Polybion, Modern Meadow, and Veshin Factory. Confirmed speakers include representatives from Lululemon, IndieBio, Material Impact, Sylven New York, Bucha Bio, and RethinkX. They will share their insights into how next-gen materials can out-compete animal-based materials and provide solutions that are functional, fashionable, and cost-effective.

Created through a variety of biomimicry approaches, these high-performance, animal-free materials replicate the aesthetics and performance of leather, wool, silk, down, fur, and exotic skins while enabling more environmentally-friendly production. The conference will bring together all key players along the innovation path, from concept to commercialization.

By bringing together thought leaders with the research insights, the market expertise, and the vision to see past the status quo, MII is doing crucial work to gain traction for the products and solutions that will transform our world for the better.

–Gavin McIntyre, Co-founder & Chief Commercialization Officer at Forager

With 38 of the 40 leading fashion brands actively searching for next-gen materials and many brands already taking an active role in promoting R&D, it truly is an exciting time to be part of this growing industry. Just a few recent collaborations include Lululemon, Kering, Adidas, and Stella McCartney partnering with Bolt Threads; Ralph Lauren and Allbirds investing in Natural

Fiber Welding; Hermès partnering with MycoWorks; Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger partnering with Forager. And with \$1.29 billion invested between 2015 and May 2021, it is clear the field is expanding rapidly.

The conference's unique virtual platform not only allows for interactive panels and exhibition booths, but also makes it simple for attendees to network effectively through public and private chat rooms and one-one video conferencing.

“This will be the first time so many influential industry players will come together to share information and discuss needed innovations. I am excited to see what connections and collaborations this gathering sparks!”

–Nicole Rawling, MII's co-founder and CEO.

[Benefits of attending](#) include:

- Discovering recent advances in science and technology.
- Understanding consumer preferences and intents.
- Navigating collaboration strategies between material companies and brands.
- Exploring sustainability developments.
- Uncovering whitespace and investment opportunities.

[Registration opens January 26](#). Guaranteed early-bird prices are available until March 11 at MaterialInnovation.org/conference

Contact:

For further information on the conference please contact MII at events@materialinnovation.org

Or if you'd like to join as an event partner please contact Ana Orth at anastasia@materialinnovation.org

About MII:

The Material Innovation Initiative is a nonprofit that accelerates the development of high-performance, eco-friendly, and animal-free materials for the fashion, automotive, and home goods industries. MII serves as a critical connector along the path to market adoption for new materials, partnering and consulting with scientists, startups, brands, and retailers to direct the industry toward areas of maximum impact. Learn more at materialinnovation.org