

# Fashion Industry's Challenges and Opportunities: Local and Global Sustainability and Social Impact

April 15, 2024

Cooperman Commons, Geffen Hall, Columbia Business School



*Featuring:*

**Kikka Hanazawa**, Trustee, Columbia University; Fashion Social Entrepreneur; and Nonprofit Founder

**Miki Higasa**, Founder, Kaleidoscope Consulting

**Ngozi Okaro**, Founder and Executive Director, Custom Collaborative

**Wendy Waugh**, Global Head and SVP of Sustainability, Theory LLC

*Moderator:*

**Constance White**, Award-Winning Journalist and Author of *How to Slay*

*Opening Remarks:*

**David E. Weinstein**, Director, CJEB; Carl S. Shoup Professor of the Japanese Economy, Columbia University

*Note:*

This event was part of the Women's Career Advancement Initiative of CJEB's JMLP Program.

The speakers discussed problems in the fashion industry, including fashion waste and the industry's impact on the environment, human rights, and low wages. They also commented on opportunities in fashion, outlining how entrepreneurship and women's empowerment could be fostered. The speakers emphasized the potential for making a social impact through fashion ventures and nonprofit organizations. They shared how global fashion businesses can partner with nonprofits to make an impact locally and globally, citing examples such as Theory's partnership with Custom Collaborative and Fashion Girls for Humanity's partnership with fashion designers such as VPL and Athleta. They also highlighted initiatives in fashion sustainability, particularly by Theory and Yabbey—a digital library that aims to decentralize production to reduce fashion waste.