



MINNA



Impact – Report

2020



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01 Introduction

Dear friends,

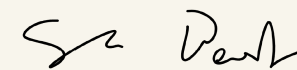
2020 was a year of great growth and introspection for so many of us. Each of us had to grapple with our place in the world while navigating a global pandemic, confronting systemic racism, and the destruction capitalism and white supremacy have caused.

MINNA exists in a complex industry, shaped by layers of racial, geographic, linguistic and economical power dynamics to name a few. Deconstructing this complexity is critical and something we have been and continue to actively address. In order to deconstruct our place, we must first recognize where we stand in relation to power. We are a queer owned business. We're also predominantly white. In some spaces some of us have a marginalized identity, but in most spaces we don't. It's important to acknowledge that, to show the humanity, facets, and intersectionality of our reality.

We took a lot of steps this year to formalize how we approach running our business with equity and justice. We've always said we do things differently, and this year, we took action towards really challenging each aspect of how we run our business. So much was behind the scenes: from introspective conversations with the team about systemic racism to changing our hiring practices to try to combat it to rethinking how we both approach and communicate our impact within the artisan sector. We invested in truly evaluating how we approach equity across our business. We put systems in place to begin diversifying our team and are proud to see the results — we received more BIPOC applicants than historically and hope to continue seeing this growth for future hiring.

A large part of our work this year also involved our commitment to community, both locally and globally. Despite navigating the uncertainty brought about by a global pandemic, we continued to place regular orders to make sure our artisan partners had steady work. We introduced masks to increase access to PPE and keep teams working. Masks became a way to support artisan partners, their communities, and communities across the United States. We donated masks to protestors, shelters, and grassroots organizations. Most importantly, we made a commitment to redistribute 3% of our yearly profit in the form of sustained, monthly recurring donations.

Looking forward into the new year, I am both hopeful and excited about all the growing that is yet to come. We are constantly evolving, because if there is anything that 2020 taught us, it is that progress is a process. I am both inspired and honored to work alongside a team of dedicated individuals who are committed to challenging one another and growing together. Thank you for being part of this journey with us, we are so glad you are here.



Sara Berks



— How We Work

We care about the world and our place in it. Our collections are made in small batches by artisans who carry generational knowledge of the beautiful heritage techniques incorporated into each of our products. Our values guide every decision we make — from how we design to how we manufacture and price our products. We are in a state of continual improvement. We invite you on this journey with us as we strive to build a more equitable future for manufacturing, one rooted in transparency and respect.





— Design Philosophy

Our pieces meld together a contemporary aesthetic grounded in traditional techniques. We strive to do our part in supporting the preservation of these ancient crafts, in the face of mass production. We recognize these efforts must be community led, which is why we work collaboratively with master craftspeople, the generational stewards of heritage techniques, to design and co-create each of our products. We believe that by working within the realm of responsible design, we can assist in bringing the work of our artisan partners to a wider market.

— Values

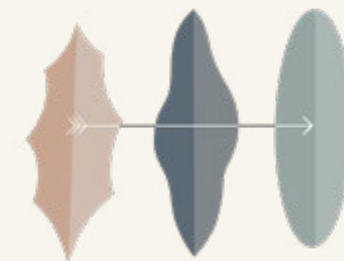
Honest

We believe in creating a world where transparency, accountability, and vulnerability are the norm. Sustainable change is a process. We believe in acknowledging when we are wrong and are dedicated to do our part in learning how we can continue to do better.



Intentional

We think of our work as a place where home and values can meet. We care about the impact of our intentions. Every decision we make as a business prioritizes people and the planet. From the materials we use to how we create, we are in a state of continual improvement. Because progress is a process.



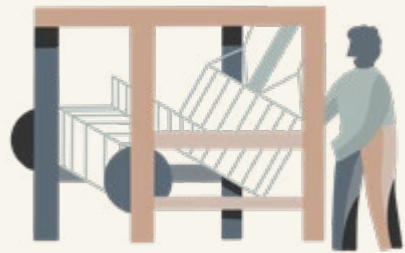
Human

We consider the human at every step. MINNA is a queer led business which informs our approach to just about everything we do. We care deeply about building relationships rooted in mutual respect and nurturing an inclusive community dedicated to challenging injustices both locally and globally.



– Stakeholders

We believe good design goes hand-in-hand with being considerate of people, the planet, and its resources. We're committed to running our business through a lens of equity - whether that's interacting with our customers, team, artisan partners, or local communities. By considering the impact we have on the lives of each individual we touch and the environment, we can further our goal of building a more equitable and just future.



Artisan Partners

Our artisan partners are the backbone of our business. Their expertise guides how we think about design. Together, we co-create each new collection with respect for traditional techniques.

Employees

We strive to create a company culture built on transparency, vulnerability, and collaboration. We believe in creating safe spaces that allow individuals to be creative, learn new skills, find joy, and grow.

Customers

We are committed to ensuring that our customers are part of our journey. We treat them with compassion, respect, and bring them into our process by engaging with them as we continue to improve and expand our collections.

Community

We believe that true sustainable change happens when communities come together and collaborate. Which is why we are committed to donating 3% of our yearly profits to community-led projects and organizations.

Environment

We are constantly evolving. We are proud to share that most of our collections are zero-waste by design. We also work closely with our production partners to further our commitment to low-impact production methods.

– Measuring Impact

We are changing the way we measure impact. All too often in the artisan-made sector, the impact of a business is measured by turning the lives of those contributing to create each collection into a metric. As a business striving to create more equity across each aspect of our business, we are challenging that narrative. Our relationships with our artisan partners is mutually beneficial, and we want to honor that.



02 Manufacturing



26

Artisan groups contributing
toward our collections

115

New products added

143

Purchase orders placed

13

Traditional techniques used

— How We Source

We assess the groups we collaborate with on 4 basic principles:

- Cooperative or Artisan Run
- Family Run Workshop
- Supportive Working Environment
- Certified Fair Trade

As a business, we strive to keep sustainability at the forefront of all we do. Instead of placing one massive order a year, which is a common trend in the artisan sector, we place consistent, predictable, and frequent orders several times a year. Our artisan partners communicated that they prefer this because large one-off orders often aren't achievable and create instability within the supply chain. This approach allows for work to be more consistent throughout the year in communities primarily reliant on seasonal employment. We're aware of these seasonal positions (coffee farming, agave processing, etc) and adjust our ordering to accommodate.



– Artisan Partners

We work with family-run workshops and independently-run cooperatives. We seek out partners who are interested in design innovation and thinking outside the box. We have a different method of working with each group and often these processes have been refined and evolve over time. Many of the artisans have been working in their mediums for generations and are masters at their craft.

– Process

Our process is highly collaborative. When possible, we design in-person. The artisans' expertise guide how things are made - they know the techniques better than we ever could. While our designs are contemporary and unique, they are rooted in the shapes and patterns inherent to each technique.

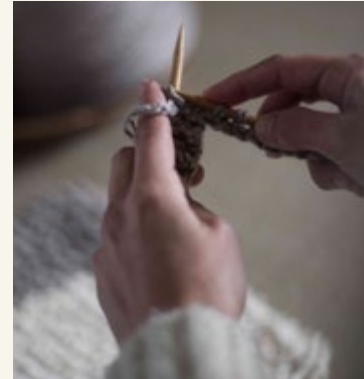


– Techniques



Backstrap Loom

An Indigenous technique commonly practiced by women. The loom is worn around the weaver's hips. Weavers use their body to create the tension needed to weave each design.



Hand Knitting

Knitting is a looping technique that uses one continuous thread of yarn and two needles.



Natural Dyeing

Natural dyeing is our response to creating more environmentally sustainable methods of production. We utilize non-synthetic, non-toxic products to create dye baths for our yarn.



Braided & Sewn Palm

After the palm has been dried, it is braided in long strips and then sewn into a circular round using a sewing machine.



Hybrid Crochet Weaving

Not requiring a machine or loom, this weaving technique can be done wherever the artisan chooses with single crochet hook needle. A repeated looping technique that integrates a stiffer yarn continuously running through.



Pedal Loom

This technique is used to create a majority of our pieces. The loom is set up and operated by hand. The weaver uses pedals to guide the weave, controlling which set of threads are lifted as they pass the yarn back and forth on shuttles.



Felting

The felting process is manual by design. Long, loose, unwound swaths of wool fiber called Top are joined with a base fabric by puncturing both layers repeatedly with needles.



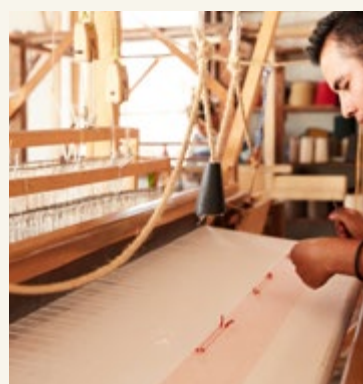
Ikat / Jaspé

Ikat patterns are a result of a resist dyeing technique used before the thread is warped on the loom. Groups of threads are counted and sections are wrapped tightly so that they do not absorb any dye when put into a dye bath.



Vertical Loom

Typically used by multiple weavers at one time, Vertical Looms are designed to be collaborative and allow weavers to see more of their work as they create. Used for rugs and tapestries, the techniques often used on this loom are pile and knotting.



Flying Shuttle Loom

More automated than a traditional pedal loom. Made with a track so that the shuttle can be shot side to side rapidly by pulling on a cord. Allows wider pieces to be woven by a single weaver.



Manual Knit Machine

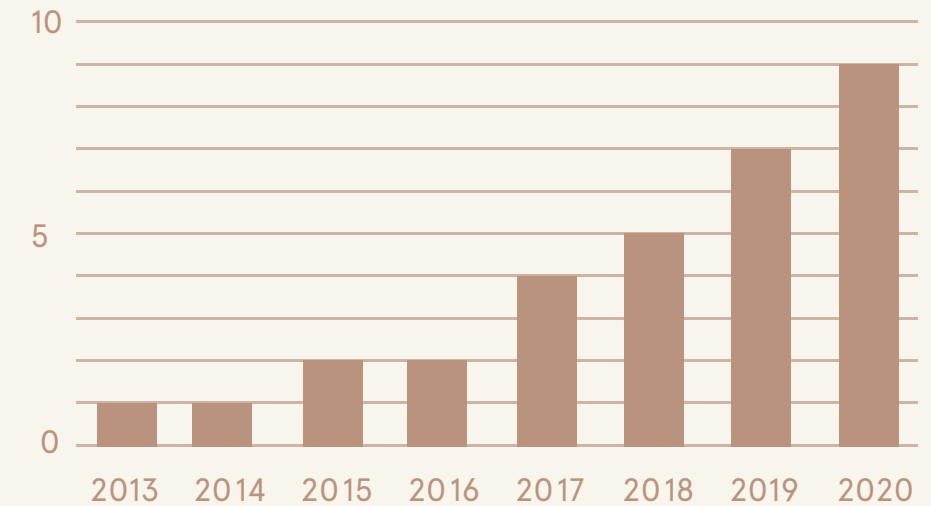
Utilizing a series of hooks to create loops, the carriage carries the yarn over the open hooks and then closes them to let the last row of stitches fall. This process allows for simple stitches and color changes.

03 Operations



As a queer woman led business, we recognize the importance for creating opportunities for individuals navigating intersectional identities. However, we really struggle with turning gender into a metric, because it disregards the various ways in which we as individuals identify. This is why we do not actively share metrics rooted in hetro-normatic constructs of gender, celebrating each individual and how they choose to show up in the world.

Team Growth Since Founding



Employment Breakdown



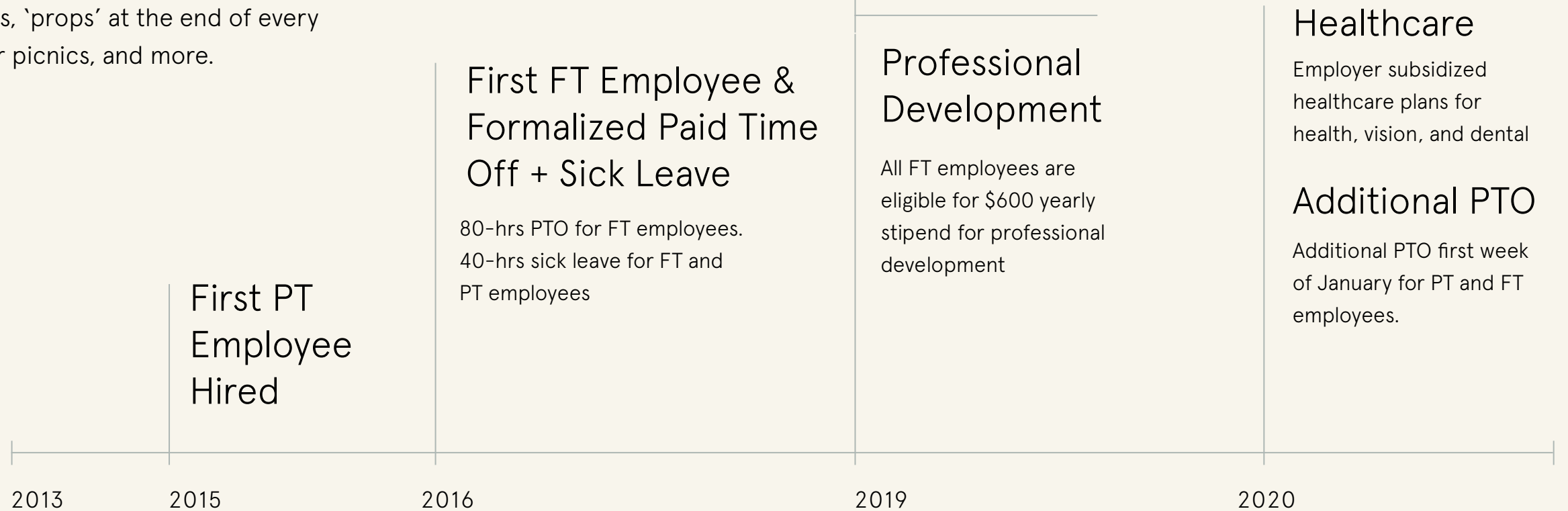
– Culture

Collaboration is at the core of how we operate within the world and as a team. We actively work to create safe spaces for open conversations, while ensuring that everyone feels welcomed and heard. Transitioning to work from home and having everyone in separate spaces was a big challenge for our collaborative team. Which is why, our priority this year was to ensure everyone felt safe and comfortable.

We formalized our extra curricular stipend, where every full-time MINNA employee gets a stipend for career development classes. And while we've always said we offer insurance, nobody had opted in until this year. Being able to offer healthcare is something we are deeply proud of. In addition to tangible benefits, we also found ways to nurture connection and camaraderie throughout the pandemic with weekly team meetings, 'props' at the end of every meeting, more one-on-one, outdoor picnics, and more.

Uses of the MINNA Professional Development Stipend:

- Digital Marketing at General Assembly
- Spanish Rosetta Stone Subscription
- Plaster 101 Workshop
- Quickbooks at SUNY CGCC
- Zingerman's Leading with Zing





– Hiring Practices

We are proud to share that all of our employees are at or above New York’s living wage for a family, even in the face of COVID. One of the hardest days of the year was the day we had to tell the team that we could only guarantee two more paychecks due to COVID. We had to lay off several team members and put some on a partial work program. Fortunately, we were able to offer these positions back and even hire for additional ones.

We realized there were gaping holes to fill in our hiring process. With two main hiring needs: Warehouse Manager and Marketing Manager, we decided to rethink our process and take our time.

Making Our Hiring Practices More Equitable

- Implemented blind hiring process.
- Rewrote job descriptions to remove higher education barriers, emphasizing skills and experience over academic or professional degrees.
- List salaries and wages to reduce wage negotiations
- Weighted scorecard system to reduce bias and ask script of questions.

– Anti-Racism Integration

Whiteness at Work

Leadership took a 4-part workshop with the Adaway Group to help our team develop shared language, frameworks and skills around white dominant culture, anti-Blackness, institutional racism, and racial equity. The first module is required for all new hires and optional for BIPOC employees.

Spiritual Activism

At the start of the protests, all staff partook in an online course with Rachel Ricketts on anti-racism, internalized oppression and addressing whiteness/white supremacy.

Decolonizing Impact

After taking Art of Citizenry’s workshop on Decolonizing Ethical Storytelling, we began working with Manpreet Kalra to rethink how we approach and communicate our impact with cultural humility.

04 Community



\$14,785.85

Redistributed to Social
Justice Organizations

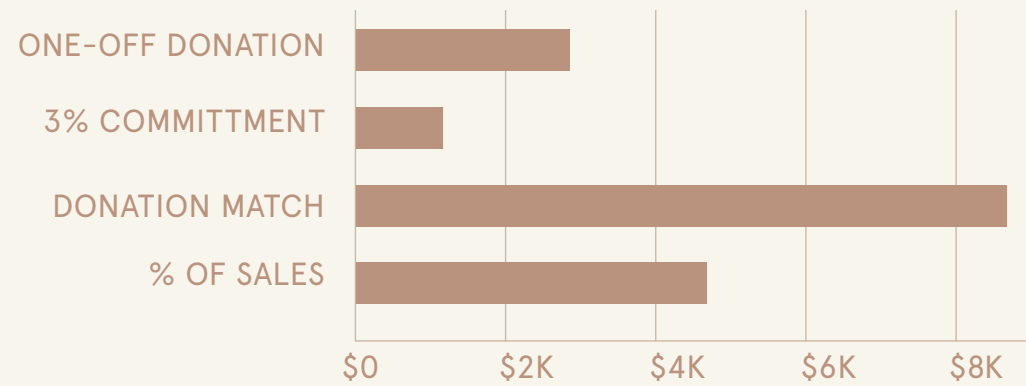
3237

Masks Donated

34

Organizations and Community-Led
Initiatives Supported

– Redistribution



– Black Lives Matter

2020 solidified our commitment to the Black Lives Matter movement and redistributing resources. When the protests began in late May, we used our platform to share resources by amplifying information from BIPOC educators. Algorithms aside, MINNA has over 50,000 followers. It’s our hope that someone learned from the information we shared.

We created a call to action asking our community to donate to their preferred BLM or social justice organizations promising to match up to \$5000 in one weekend. We matched that and then donated 100% of our sales from that weekend. All donations outlined here including the match call to action, one-off donations, and our 3% commitment.

NATIVE LAND CONSERVANCY	\$2112.37	CHICAGO BAIL FUND	\$57.57
NAACP LEGAL DEFENSE FUND	\$1625.00	NY BLACK LIVES MATTER	\$50.00
THE BAIL PROJECT	\$1329.55	WE THE PROTESTERS	\$50.00
TAKE ACTION MINNESOTA	\$1235.06	ACLU	\$45.00
SOUL FIRE FARM	\$1210.00	GEORGE FLOYD GOFUNDME	\$44.00
COLOR OF CHANGE	\$1185.00	FLORIDA RIGHTS RESTORATION	\$38.50
BORDER KINDNESS	\$1045.00	BRING ANTHONY HOME	\$27.50
MINNESOTA ACLU	\$650.00	WATER BEAR PROJECT	\$27.50
ACTIVATION RESIDENCY	\$500.00	COMMUNITY SUCCESS INITIATIVE	\$25.00
KITE’S NEST	\$425.00	EQUALITY FOR FLATBUSH	\$25.00
NATIONAL BAIL FUND	\$397.10	I RUN WITH MAUD	\$397.10
VENMO MATCHING	\$352.25	EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE	\$352.25
G.L.I.T.S.	\$350.00	NETWORK FOR GOOD	\$20.60
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER	\$275.00	BLACK YOUTH PROJECT	\$16.50
MINNESOTA FREEDOM FUND	\$217.25	BROOKLYN BAIL FUND	\$10.00
ROLLING GROCER	\$199.88	CHANGE.ORG	\$10.00
ENTRY LEVEL LEADERSHIP	\$100.00		

– 3% Commitment

We've always believed in redistributing resources, in all forms, and we've always thought that as a business, transparency is our strongest tool for accountability. This year, we took a step back to consider how we could formalize our redistribution efforts.

We received feedback from organizers and non-profit leaders that, while one-off donations in emergencies and heightened times of need are certainly important, what makes a bigger impact is sustained, recurring donations that these organizations can count on. If they know they have money coming in every month, they can draw up budgets, make bigger plans, and create structures to support the systematic change that we all know is needed.

That's why this year, we made a commitment to donate 3% of our yearly profit in the form of sustained, monthly recurring donations to three different organizations. We decided it was important to channel our efforts in three distinct directions - on a national level, on a local level, and on a timely, need-based level. These organizations change yearly.

LOCAL

Kite's Nest

A Hudson-based "center for liberatory education" for young people in Hudson and the surrounding areas. They provide daytime and after school classes, camps, and leadership programs focusing on social justice and environmental leadership as well as organizing and employment skills. They also focus on accessibility to these amazing programs for all families, regardless of income. We at MINNA have seen first hand the role Kite's Nest plays in nurturing the and empowering the young people in our community.

NATIONAL

National Bail Fund

Provides support to over 60 community-led bail and bond funds working to end pretrial and immigration detentions and combat the money bail system. We love this organization because of its flexibility and ability to funnel resources directly to the communities and people in need.

ROTATING

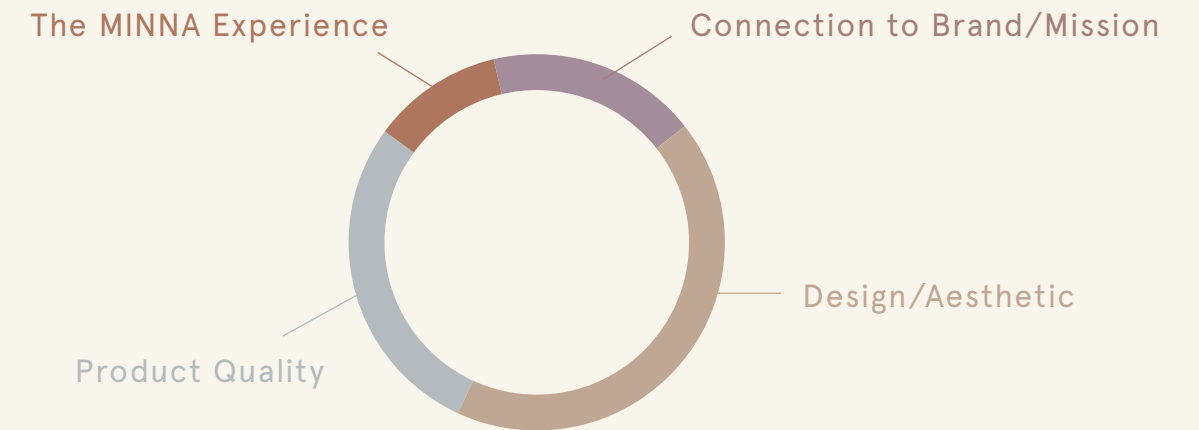
G.L.I.T.S.

An organization focused on the health and human rights of transgender sex workers. They provide countless services including around the clock crisis support, health care and resilience education and referrals, and housing, including plans to create their own housing facility to provide long-term safety and shelter. They fight to end the stigmatization, criminalization, and cycle of disenfranchisement faced by the trans and trans sex worker community.

05 Customers



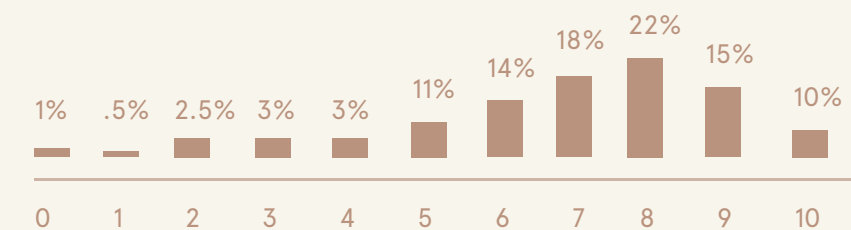
Where Do Customers Gather Value from MINNA Products



Why Do Customers Shop at MINNA?



On a Scale of 1-10:
How informed are customers of the MINNA brand and production ethos?



– Customer Survey

We truly value our relationship with our customers. Their insights help guide how we think about our collections. We always enjoy hearing from our customers, which is why this year we sent out a customer survey to our mailing list. We got 360 responses to the survey which asked a range of questions – from customer experience to dream MINNA product. As we continue to grow and further nurture our relationship with our customers, we look forward to sending out a customer survey each year to just check in and learn from the greater MINNA community.

We asked our customers how they would describe MINNA to their best friend:

“Quality products with excellent ethos.”

“MINNA is a company that is doing good and teaching its customers how to live an intentional, thoughtful, and curated lifestyle.”

“MINNA has everything you could want in the exact colors they were looking for.”



06 Environment

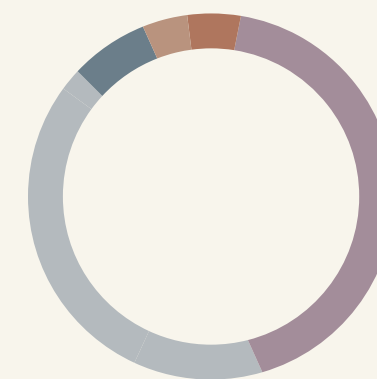


– Sustainability Principles

At MINNA's founding, "ethical" meant building trust, paying fairly, respecting workers rights, and treating everyone we worked with with the utmost respect. "Sustainability" meant creating stable relationships, consistent orders, and using natural materials. We're now broadening our horizons in both aspects and actively identifying what we do well, what we could do better, and what we should probably change altogether.

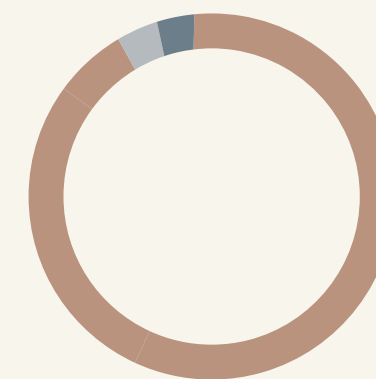
We recognize that conversations around sustainability are privileged. We work in a lot of different regions throughout South America and see sustainability play out in different ways. What we have observed is that conversations and approaches to sustainability can't be cookie cutter - it really depends on the region, the needs of the communities, and what kind of climate they are living in. Which is why, our approach to sustainability is interactive and a path of continual improvement.

Materials



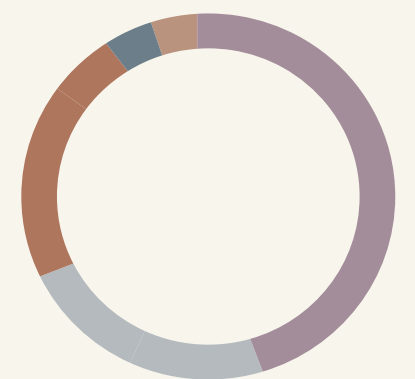
44% Wool
49% Cotton
1% Alpaca
4% Jute
2% Palm

Cotton



90% Conventional
5% GOTS Certified
5% Organic

Dyes



26% Natural
48% Non-Toxic Certified
21% Oeko-Tex Certified
2% GOTS Certified
3% Undyed



— Continual Improvement

Evolve

We believe there is great power in learning and evolving. As we grow, we continue to look at our process and think of ways we can do things better - from how we source and produce to how we package and ship.

Collaborate

We believe no one business alone can address any one systemic issue. These processes need to be collaborative which is why we believe in being transparent about how we approach each aspect of our business, including our work towards sustainability.

Innovate

We are constantly thinking of ways to minimize our waste. Most of our products are square which means they don't produce much material waste; and when we do, we save it and turn it into other products.



— Packaging

We've always limited our packaging to simple hang tags and light tissue paper - no plastics! We do not use polybags when shipping our products, unless a wholesale account requires it and even then we re-purpose the plastic bags that our inserts might come in.

Packing Boxes

- ✓ Over 80% recycled materials.

Biodegradable Packing Tape

Made without plastics reinforcements, allows for curbside recycling and home composting.

- ✓ Plastic Free
- ✓ Responsible Forestry
- ✓ Recycled Materials
- ✓ Alternative Inks

Tissue Paper

- ✓ Acid free paper
- ✓ FSC certified paper
- ✓ Soy based inks.

Stickers

- ✓ Acid free paper
- ✓ FSC certified paper
- ✓ Soy based inks.

– Supply Chain Roadmap

In 2020 we transitioned our cotton production in Peru to 100% GOTS certified cotton. We've put together a comprehensive roadmap for structuring incremental supply chain material improvement. We hope by 2023 we will be able to transition all of our conventional cotton to 100% organic. We are open to working non-certified organic farmers because we don't see an expensive certification process as the end all for sustainability improvements.

- Evaluate and define existing product properties.
- Collect data for each of the product properties.
- Determine a timeline to improve compliance around documenting and tracking the data collected.
- Select a single property to accelerate.
- Embark on due diligence and research each property for acceleration.
- Begin process for upgrading materials.
- Stabilization and expansion of the upgrade.
- Select another workshop or material and manage expansion of the supply chain upgrade using the same methodology.
- Embed methodology in the design process.



— Next Steps

Supply Chain Traceability

Cotton: Strive for organic cotton across regions by 2023.

We are open to working with a non-certified supplier

Pillow Inserts: Find a recycled or organic option by Q2 2022.

Wool: Ensure traceability and animal safe farms across regions by 2023.

B-Corp

Complete the evaluation process and become a B-Corp certified business.

Diversity

Setting and achieving representation benchmarks for our team as well as the brands we carry.

Product & Source Reduction

Evaluate product assortment, sources, and simplify product offering as a way to reduce carbon footprint.

For more information reach out to:
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2020 Impact Report compiled with the support of our Equity and Social Impact Advisor, Manpreet Kalra. Illustrations by Julien Posture. Photography by George Underwood, Autumn Jordan, Skye Parrott, and Sara Berks.





MINNA

2020 Impact Report

www.minna-goods.com