TOO MUCH CLOTHING. NOT ENOUGH JUSTICE.
Based in both Ghana and the USA, The Or Foundation operates at the intersection of environmental justice, education and fashion development. The emphasis of our work is to catalyze a Justice-led Circular Economy in Accra, home to Kantamanto Market, the world’s largest reuse hub.

Since 2016 our research has brought to light the realities of the secondhand trade in Ghana. This has helped to shape a conversation internationally and locally on the future of circular fashion strategies.

In 2021, delayed a year from our initial timeline due to the impacts of COVID-19, we began to implement a multi-year organizational strategy of holistic programs addressing the underlying causes and effects of young women and girls working under inhumane conditions as kayayei (head porters) in Kantamanto Market, the debt crisis faced by retailers and remanufacturers in Kantamanto’s ecosystem and fostering local solutions to fashion’s waste crisis made manifest in the ecosystem surrounding Kantamanto Market. This report provides a description on those major undertakings and offers a financial snapshot of the year.
Organizational Growth

2021 was a year of growth for The Or Foundation. We expanded our team from four people at the end of 2020 to 15 people (six full-time and nine part-time) at the end of 2021, including three apprentices working with us in our lab in Accra who formerly worked as kayayei in Kantamanto market.

The Team

Members of The Or Foundation team and community from left to right include Nasiba, who is a participant in our Chiropractic Research and Treatment Program, Chloe, programs manager, Sammy, community engagement manager, Nabia, programs assistant and translator, Paul, material R&D coordinator, Huzeima, apprentice in the No More Fast Fashion Lab, Branson, co-founder and producer, Liz, co-founder & director, Faiza, apprentice with our Mabilgu Program, Al Fattah, programs assistant & photographer, Nirvana, programs assistant, Joshua, project coordinator, and Linda, international outreach & development coordinator. Not pictured here are Mary, Hubaida, and Ayesha, apprentices in the No More Fast Fashion Lab, and Julius, graphic design and digital technician. This photo was taken by long-time supporter Charlie. We also work with a team of local cinematographers and students to support research and documentation, including Enoch, Daniel, Richard and Kingsley.
We also grew our organization financially. In 2020 our total cash income was US $91,373, of which we spent US $52,283. In 2021 our total cash income was $270,926 of which we spent US $242,669. We carried over US $39,124 from 2020 into 2021 and ended 2021 with US $67,381. In 2021 we also benefited from $12,958 of in-kind contributions, including insurance payments, web hosting, travel expenses, software, and in-kind payment support for a team member, adding to a total cash and in-kind expenditure of $255,627.

This 300% increase in revenue and nearly 500% increase in expenditures made 2021 our largest financial year in our organizational history.
Where did our $270,926 of revenue come from in 2021?

$213,615 in Public Support

In April, 2021 we organized a major fundraising push that included our Too Much Not Enough Raffle with amazing brand partners and individual sponsors. Throughout the year we received online donations from 997 individuals with an average donation value of US $74, totalling $83,811. We ended 2021 with 28 monthly donors. We joined a multi-party collaboration with The Biomimicry Institute and an array of other organizations with principal funding from the Laudes Foundation to examine decomposition pathways for textile waste and to support our ongoing work in Accra. This project represented a relatively small part of our revenue in 2021, but we expect it to expand throughout the two and a half year grant project period. We also received support from numerous brand partnerships throughout the year, including with Collina Strada, Thousand Fell, One Essentials, For Days, Vestiaire Collective and Bestseller Foundation. We are especially thankful to Atmos for their catalytic support.

$56,350 in Program Service

We consulted with multiple companies to help steer their sustainability strategy. We also gave several sponsored presentations in both corporate settings and in public events as part of our educational mission. This revenue, derived from our work fostering relationships with fashion beyond the role of consumers and catalyzing a justice-led circular economy, was directed back into our organizational work on the ground in Ghana and used to directly support Kantamanto retailers, tailors and kayayei.
How did we spend $242,669 in 2021?

The chart of expenses by program class includes in-kind expenditures. US and Ghana General Operations classes both offer support across all other program classes, including through our time as a team.

Many of our expenditures cut across program classes. For instance, some activities conducted under the program class Textile Research have also supported work in our No More Fast Fashion Lab. Our financial snapshot does not always represent this nuance, nor does it track the hours our team spent on specific projects.

Due to the rapid fluctuation of Ghana's currency throughout 2021, all numbers in this report are presented in US dollars and our US accounting documents are utilized as the primary data source on an accrual basis. At the close of December 2021, US $17,000 remained in our Ghanaian bank accounts for commitments against ongoing expenses to be paid in early January. This money had been recorded as expenses in our US accounts upon transmitting funds to Ghana and is therefore counted against our 2021 expenses on the basis of our US accounts providing the primary record throughout the year.
Our priority is to transform lives and to regenerate ecosystems in Ghana. We believe that advocacy is an important tool to further that mission because fashion’s exploitative waste crisis will not be solved without shifts in consumer behavior and regulatory policy on a global level. We believe in the power of education, but we are not an advocacy organization. In order to prioritize Justice we must direct the majority of our work toward supporting the communities that have most often been impacted by the colonial legacies and environmental destruction inherent to fashion’s waste crisis.

With this in mind and in order to support tangible impact within the communities whose stories we are privileged to share, we set a ceiling of spending no more than 10% of our organizational bandwidth on producing media and raising awareness outside of the communities where we conduct our programs. Instead of prioritizing the education of the people in global positions of power, who, with all of the available information afforded to them, have still not fixed the problems they have created, our goal is to prioritize sharing knowledge and developing frameworks of advocacy and solidarity within Kantamanto and across fashion supply chains. Education within the Kantamanto ecosystem to contextualize the work of the Kantamanto community within global systems is a key aspect of the work to transform systems.

3% Minimum on Allied Organizations

Regardless of our ability to reach our own fundraising targets we are committed to collective action and to an abundance mindset. Supporting organizations working toward shared goals who may not have access to the same funding sources as we are privileged to access is critical to pushing our work forward as an organization in ways that we could not do on our own and in enacting an inclusive vision of Justice. Through this budgetary ethic we prioritize grassroots organizations with deep histories engaging with marginalized groups, such as the Kayayei Youth Association in Ghana, which was the largest single beneficiary of our support for allied organizations in both 2021 and in 2020. We also support students and our organizational peers in creative arts and community building working towards a shared vision of strengthening solidarity across geographical and socio-economic borders.

For us 3% is a starting point and is coupled with the goal of capacity building within organizations like the Kayayei Youth Association that will enhance their access to other sources of funding and that may ultimately strengthen the infrastructure for larger financial support as our annual budget grows and as allied organizations build relationships directly with donors.
We believe that many of the problems facing our global society, from climate change to gender inequality, could be addressed in large part by supporting wages that allow for team members throughout global supply chains and corporate offices to thrive and to fulfill their personal goals in ways that extend beyond their identities as consumers and producers.

Any organization or business that does not pay at least a living wage is built on a business model of exploitation. But a living wage is only a starting point. As an organization we strive to pay wages that afford more than basic necessities of survival and that support fulfillment as individual members of a larger community. This is not about elevating levels of consumption, rather the intention is to foster the freedom of thought and emotional security to pursue interests beyond those that are commodified.

In 2021 our pay rate for our Accra-based team was calculated using US $6/hour (paid in USD) as a measurement of a fair wage. (This far exceeds Ghana’s minimum wage of $1.80/day.)

We arrived at the pay rate of $6/hour through conversations across our team and our broader community and by comparing purchasing power between the USA and Ghana using the 2020 dollar value and a USA-based pay rate of $18/hour. Backed by our experience operating in both countries and data from international financial institutions, we calculated the Private Consumption Purchasing Power Parity Local Currency Conversion Factor at 2.1 for 2020 (the most recently available data year) to allow for an objective method of comparing USA-based pay with Ghana-based pay in order for pay rates to represent roughly equivalent local purchasing powers across the organization based on the home country of employment. For instance, the conversion factor translates an $18/hour wage in the USA to a Ghanaian equivalent of GHS 37/hour, which was equivalent to roughly $6/hour at the prevailing exchange rate for 2021. Regardless of location, our full-time team receives one month of paid vacation as well as additional paid team breaks outside of personal vacation time.

Fair Wage Employment, as we define it, is also built on the principals of pay equality, maximum pay rates and transparent pay strategies. Everyone on our team is paid the same base hourly rate adjusted for home country of employment regardless of background or position. For team members in management positions we have offered additional incentives such as relocation stipends (within Accra) and equipment purchases. We acknowledge that as our team grows and as individual members of our team grow within the organization our practice of pay equality may evolve in order to recognize commitment to the work within a fair system of compensation.

Finally, but perhaps most importantly to us, we advance pay. This ensures that no one is laboring in debt. This is an important principle considering the number of people in our community who exist hand to mouth, burdened by the unpaid debts of an entire global industry. This is also important considering that many basic services such as electricity, mobile data and water require advanced payment in Ghana.
Colonial Legacy and Internal Accountability

The injustices and inequities of our world do not exist within a vacuum. The many privileges afforded a relatively small number of people often come at the expense of historical and present-day exploitation, colonial trade patterns, slavery, and socio-ecological violence. It is the stance of our organization that reparations should be paid as a method of accounting for these systemic inequities. We cannot call for reparations from others without considering our own complicity in advancing colonialism and white supremacy.

The first way we account for this is by aspiring to redistribute at least 10% of our budget directly to the Kantamanto Community with no strings attached. This is important to ensure that our organizational goals do not assume authority over the community we are privileged to work with. As an organization, we do not want to make decisions for Kantamanto, we want to support Kantamanto retailers, tailors and kayayei in understanding the global context in which they operate and in making decisions for themselves. We do this largely through our Secondhand Solidarity Fund (more below) as well as through financing select project proposals originating within Kantamanto. In 2021 these direct transfers accounted for over 15% of our budget.

The second way we attempt to be accountable to the colonial legacy that underpins our work is by ensuring that the majority of our budget is spent within Ghana, not the USA. Our goal has been to spend 75% of our budget to support operations in Ghana. In 2021 we spent just over 90% of our budget in Ghana.
Colonial Legacy and Internal Accountability

Third, we have developed compensation and term limits for ourselves as the co-founders of The Or Foundation. We are both white, able-bodied people from the USA who graduated university debt-free, coming from different backgrounds but each benefitting from the violently unjust and accumulated privileges of white supremacy, privilege that fuels the systemic inequalities we strive to confront within the global fashion industry.

For more than a decade before 2021 we, Liz and Branson, have attempted to reckon with this reality by not taking a salary and by drawing down our independent financial and technological resources in order to redirect money to support organizational programs and initiatives. This has involved working other jobs and forgoing permanent residence in the USA. We have seen these decisions as core to our mission. We have, however, reached a point in our workload and in our personal finances where continuing in uncompensated positions risks making us ineffective as colleagues among our team. For this reason we began paying ourselves in late 2021 starting at $250 a month and we are working towards a fair wage using the same pay structure described above.

Now that we will be paid members of the team we have also begun to develop an exit plan for ourselves. We aim to eventually phase out of decision making roles within the Ghanaian organization as we become redundant by accompanying a strong team of leaders from different backgrounds into both the operational and strategic roles we currently fill.

Along with supporting a growing team and network of collaborators, a focal point in 2022 is building a broader board of directors and continuing to seek advice from people who carry deep roots within our communities of impact.
my favorite season is the fall of the patriarchy

Photo by Al Fattah
Programs and Operations in 2021

No More Fast Fashion Lab | $40,770.19 + $1200 In-Kind

In 2021 we made an organizational home in Accra, right on the outskirts of Kantamanto. The No More Fast Fashion Lab is a 120sq meter space with “Tro-Tro” letters in the colors of Ghana’s flag reading Reckoning, Recovery, Reparations affixed to the windows. Major expenditures for the space included annual rent of US $13,000, insurance, taxes, utilities and basic improvements, such as electrical rewiring and painting. We also paid for ongoing maintenance needs, janitorial supplies and cleaning. We equipped the lab with an industrial single needle sewing machine, an industrial overlock machine, as well as a custom built textile shredder modeled on open source designs from Precious Plastic. We also purchased health and safety equipment, such as fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and personal protective equipment for machine operation.

At every step we’ve worked to make the lab a showcase of what is possible within a community of makers dedicated to reuse and local manufacturing on a human scale. All furniture in the lab is manufactured within a two mile radius of our location in central Accra and utilizes repurposed scrap materials wherever possible. We’ve paid fair prices with advances for both material and labor costs so that our suppliers are not laboring in debt.

Other expenses included appliances such as a refrigerator, water dispenser and a hotplate, along with supplies and small tools such as thread and scissors.

Programs in the lab support both material innovation and community building. Between September and December 31st of 2021, we hosted five events to engage members of the Kantamanto Community to discuss their future vision for the market and to build bridges between Kantamanto retailers, internet sellers and women working as kayayei. We provide meals and, at times, participation fees to ensure that vulnerable members of our community are able to attend without personal expense. The No More Fast Fashion lab is the principal workspace for The Or Foundation team and for three apprentices (more in 2022) through our Kayayei Apprenticeship Program.

Secondhand Solidarity Fund | $41,084.72

In 2021 we made public our longstanding organizational policy of redistributing speaking and publishing fees with the launch of the Secondhand Solidarity Fund during Secondhand September. Aside from launching the public fund, the majority of our Secondhand Solidarity effort in 2021 was to support victims of the Kantamanto Christmas Fire. We directed US $28,000 directly into fire relief efforts, including $24,000 of direct financial transfers to 200 retailers and tailors – small business owners – who lost everything in the fire. In addition to direct financial grants to individuals, we supported the market community with US $4,000 to upfit three market lanes as part of their rebuilding effort, including widening, flattening and repaving aisles and adding new roofs to help keep clothes and walkways dry in the rain.
Through this work we were able to build out an estimate of the financial damages suffered. Materials and equipment alone amount to more than US $250,000 of losses, not to mention the physical market structure and the lost sales at the busiest time of the year. While our support was far from sufficient to replace everything lost, it was clear that even our individual micro-grants of US $120 were instrumental for the community to get back on their feet.

We offered additional support to market retailers and women working as kayayei for debt relief, hospital bills, rehousing assistance and educational scholarships for young women formerly working as kayayei. When we encountered emergency cases during our Kayayei Chiropractic Research, discussed below, we mobilized resources from the Secondhand Solidarity fund to support additional healthcare and apprenticeship placements.

The gratitude from the community of beneficiaries moves us deeply. As a team we too are ever grateful for the funds from our community of donors, but we know there is so much more to do and we will continue our calls for Global North resale platforms, clothing manufacturers and profitable actors within the secondhand clothing trade to rise to the call for solidarity with the community that manages their waste.

**Kayayei Programming | $23,991.98**

Women working as kayayei head carry loads throughout Ghana’s markets. In Kantamanto these loads are literally backbreaking 55kg bales of secondhand clothing, commoditized by the kilo, for which the women and girls are paid often no more than US $0.30 to carry kilometers at a time. We built on our direct support for kayayei food relief during Accra’s 2020 COVID-19 lockdowns with four overlapping programs. We started the year with a series of photography and storytelling workshops, training a cohort of five young women who worked as kayayei through the art and the science of taking photographs and telling their own stories. Photographs from this series were featured in Display Copy magazine. In early 2021, we also conducted our first Mabilgu (sisterhood) workshop talking about access to healthcare and reproductive rights with 20 young women working as kayayei. We built on this program to launch our apprenticeship placement program, which supported a total of 13 young women in 2021 and more into 2022.

The Mabilgu Apprenticeship Program offers paid apprenticeship placements for women formerly working as kayayei in small businesses around Accra and within our No More Fast Fashion Lab. We complement the six-to-nine month long apprenticeships with additional wrap-around programming such as health care registration and screenings, and our educational workshops on financial literacy and reproductive rights. The apprentices are encouraged to save 1/3 of their pay in order to support their future plans after the apprenticeship. In addition to a stipend that allows for savings, we cover all costs of apprenticeship placements, from supplies to educational fees, which is uncommon in the landscape of apprenticeships across West Africa. By offering such wrap-around support and financial assistance, the women in our program are free to imagine new futures. The first graduate of the program is now working to make and sell soaps, skills she learned during her apprenticeship.
In July of 2021 we began our Kayayei Chiropractic Research program in partnership with Dr. Naa Ashley Dordor and her generous team at Nova Wellness Center in Accra. Through this research program we are studying the causes, conditions and effects – both physiological and socio-psychological – of the kayayei trade. By the end of 2021, we had examined over 50 women and girls out of our target participant group of 100. We believe this will represent the most comprehensive study of head carrying ever conducted. Through x-rays, chiropractic exams and extensive interviews, initial results have made clear the devastating impact that the kayayei trade has on the women and girls performing the dangerous job, especially those carrying the excessively heavy secondhand clothing bales. Dr. Dordor has generously offered follow-up treatment to study participants at a nominal fee that we help cover.

We aim to publish a comprehensive report at the end of the study. In the meantime, initial findings are documented in the video we produced titled The Truth Is Far From Romantic.

The nearly US $24,000 we spent on kayayei programming in 2021 does not include our support for the Kayayei Youth Association or the emergency relief provided through our secondhand solidarity fund.

**Community Engagement | $21,244.07**

Collaborating with partners throughout the Kantamanto ecosystem and around the world from Uganda to the UK, we directly engaged thousands of participants through community dialogues, educational presentations, films, art installations, social media and the pilot of our Kantamanto Ambassadors program.

In January of 2021 we shared the photo series we commissioned with artist Sackitey Tesa called *Heavy are the Clothes on Your Back*. Through this collaboration Sackitey explored the relationship between colonialism, professional dress and secondhand clothing. These photos were also featured by Atmos Magazine in the widely circulated open-letter to the fashion industry penned by co-founder Liz Ricketts titled *This Is Not Your Goldmine, This Is Our Mess*. We followed Sackitey’s photo series with a short video titled *Foos Dwa Mu Akukudam - We Are The Circle Economy*, which presented individual retailers and remanufacturers speaking to the massive scale of reuse underway in Kantamanto, where 25 million garments are recirculated every month.

We presented twice as part of the Slow Factory Open Edu series and included voices from our internal team as well as from our collaborators Bobby and Nikissi of the Vintage or Violence podcast in Uganda, and Daniel Mawuli Quist of DeFortyFive studio.

We developed a series of Instagram posts with Fashion Revolution for Secondhand September that culminated in a live panel organized by us and hosted by Fashion Revolution that engaged Janet Kyerewaa, a Kantamanto Retailer, in conversation with Steven Bethel, a global trader in secondhand goods based in Canada, along with Engineer Solomon Noi, Head of Waste Management for the Accra Metropolitan Assembly, Joanne Brasch from the California Product
Stewardship Council and again Bobby Kolade from Vintage or Violence in Uganda. As per our policy we compensated Janet for her time and also hosted a screening with food and drinks so she could share the experience with her colleagues and friends from within Kantamanto market. We firmly believe that direct representation is important, but it is equally important that these engagements be made accessible to the community that the speaker represents.

Also as part of Secondhand September we released *Wake*, a film produced in collaboration with director and visual poet Kuukua Eshun that utilized only secondhand clothing for its wardrobe. The short film, shot in 2020 and completed in 2021, highlights the common practice within Ghana of sourcing artistic wardrobes from Kantamanto and serves as a call for creatives outside Ghana to begin prioritizing secondhand clothing and other secondhand materials as the primary source of styling for visual projects. As part of Kuukua's advocacy work, the film has been aired on various Ghanaian TV stations.

Teaming up again with artist Sackitey Tesa and Jasmine Nana Opokua Opare-Darko, we installed three artistic renderings of the future of Kantamanto within three different market retailers’ and remanufacturers’ stalls. This marked the first installation of our Secondhand Speculation series that we will continue as a form of art-based urban design and visioning to engage the Kantamanto Community. The inspiration for the installations was found in the numerous recorded conversations between our team, led by Sammy Oteng, and members of the Kantamanto community about their experiences within the market and their hopes for the future. The art installations were accompanied by an open house and series of dialogue sessions on global and local solidarity hosted in the No More Fast Fashion Lab and in the market with tours led by Daniel Mawuli Quist of DeFortyFive and Nutifafa of Upcycled Thrift Ghana.

Collaborating with the California-based not-for-profit Fibershed, we coordinated a live conversation between Abena Agyeiibia, who works as a retailer in Kantamanto Market, and Santa Puac, a member of the Garment Worker Center in Los Angeles. Through this conversation Abena and Santa spoke to the solidarity that exists between the women making and reselling an absurdly excessive amount of clothing for less than a living wage. This event was followed by a community screening per the policy mentioned above.

In 2021 we began to pilot the Kantamanto Ambassador program with market retailers and remanufacturers as a way of facilitating community engagement beyond the individuals that we are able to connect with directly. This peer mentorship and education program seeks to disseminate information and support community organizing efforts within the market ecosystem. We are growing this effort in 2022.

As part of our on-going community engagement efforts, we continued to document elements of our research and work in order to share the knowledge that we gain. We purchased professional audio/visual production equipment to serve as resources for young Accra-based freelance filmmakers and photographers involved in documenting our work and the efforts of the Kantamanto Market community as the largest reuse hub in the world.
We continued our research through the Dead White Man’s Clothes project diving deep into Kantamanto Market and the Our Long Recovery project understanding and documenting the socio-ecological impact of clothing waste as it manifests in Accra.

As part of this work and to support our partnership with The Biomimicry Institute (details below) we launched The Or Foundation Beach Monitoring Team to track and document ocean textile “tentacles” washing ashore along seven kilometers of Accra’s beaches. Between late October and the end 2021 our team of nine monitors and two community coordinators counted over 400 “tentacles.” The most frequently spotted brands were M&S, H&M, Nike, Adidas, Primark, Gildan and Fruit of the Loom.

We also surveyed over 3000 garments leaving Kantamanto Market as Waste in 2021. This process involved sifting through each garment by hand and recording details, requiring hundreds of hours from our team and community in Kantamanto. Our initial findings made up part of our Waste Landscape Report that we compiled in early 2022 for our partnership with The Biomimicry Institute. This work remains ongoing and a full report will be published later in 2022.

In addition to these efforts, we conducted material R&D to explore methods of transforming textiles through our No More Fast Fashion Lab and initiatives supported through our consulting work with companies interested in extending the life of textiles.

We contributed financially and through in-kind strategic and professional support, including accounting services, report writing and auditing to the Kayayei Youth Association (KYA). We also supported the Sustainable Fashion Initiative financially and offered website hosting for Skate Nation Ghana. In addition we gave just over US $1000 in solidarity with garment worker rights organizations. We also made a small grant to the Kpone Landfill Wastepickers Association here in Ghana and we paid members of The Board of Fashion Ghana to build on the work we supported with the Sustainable Fashion Initiative in 2020 to examine the practice of unpaid internships within the fashion industry.

In tandem with our direct kayayei programming, our work in support of the Kayayei Youth Association is integral to the shared mission of finding alternatives for young women and girls working as kayayei in Accra’s markets. The KYA has long operated from a position of emergency response, taking women to the hospital, helping find families of lost or deceased women, navigating the police system to make claims against sexual abusers, and supporting food relief in moments of crisis. Since 2019, we have provided financial assistance to the KYA to perform many of these emergency tasks. Our goal with ongoing support of the Kayayei Youth Association is to develop capacity within the KYA to engage in structurally transformative programs toward the long-range vision of ending the exploitative conditions that give rise to the socio-cultural, economic and to the extent possible climatic pressures that push and pull women and girls into the dangerous trade.
Ghana General Operations | $62,062.68 + $5650 In-Kind

Our general operations in Ghana were our largest expenditure by program class. We spent $43,780 to pay our team and independent contractors directly supporting our work in Ghana. This represents roughly 7,300 hours worked by our full-time and part-time team members in Ghana, not including the work of self-funding team members and others paid through the USA who spent considerable time in Ghana over the course of 2021, bringing our total hours worked in Ghana as a team to well over 10,000. As a team we spent our time working across our array of initiatives.

Our general operations budget in Ghana also included travel from and within Ghana for numerous team members to support our programs, along with technological support for laptops, internet, cellphone data and other tools and equipment for program execution, along with organizational filing fees, regulatory expenses, banking charges in Ghana, and other related costs of operation.

USA General Operations | $27,348.00 + $5036 In-Kind

Our US General Operations budget supported a paid research fellow for part of the year to continue a deep investigation of the global secondhand clothing trade, along with support for materials development and the collection of materials for remanufacturing and experimentation. We also ran Collectofus 2.0, offering micro-grants to emerging designers to make a garment for a stranger they met through social media. While these expenses cross-over with several of our programs, we differentiate their focus in the US from initiatives predominantly focused in Ghana.

Our USA General Operations covered the majority of our fundraising work, including expenses related to our “Too Much Clothing. Not Enough Justice. Raffle.” In addition, we built a new organizational website, https://theor.org. Beyond our websites, our US General Operations budget also included support for software and services such as Adobe Creative Cloud and Dropbox, research subscriptions to trade publications and news outlets, along with other technological resources that supported our work in both Ghana and the USA. We also hired an accounting firm to facilitate bookkeeping, regulatory filings and payroll in the USA. Other expenses in the USA included insurance, health benefits and banking fees.

The total salaries paid for 2021 to co-founders Liz and Branson who support both USA and Ghana operations were $1650 each in addition to limited travel expenses and insurance. The salary for co-founders is expected to grow in 2022 as noted above in our ethics section.
We joined a partnership chaired by The Biomimicry Institute and including HKRITA, Yale University, the Metabolic Institute and University of Ghana - Legon to pilot decomposition pathways for textile waste. The Or Foundation is the implementing partner in Accra. The project straddles many of our existing initiatives and offers support for an ecological toxicology study of textile waste within the fragile coastal ecosystem of Accra.

More than 20 articles, books, podcast episodes, documentaries, TV and major online video segments were released in 2021 featuring our work and the work of the Kantamanto Community, including coverage in Korea, Australia, France and the USA, indicating a significant shift in the global conversation and awareness around secondhand clothing driven in large part by our research and initiatives within Kantamanto. While media does not always lead to direct action on the immediate socio-ecological disaster caused by fashion’s waste crisis, we are pleased to note that a segment on France 5 Sur Le Front, featuring The Or Foundation, helped garner over 43,000 signatures on a petition for France to change its Extended Producer Responsibility laws in order to pass money on to the Kantamanto Community to help clean up the waste caused by clothes ‘donated’ in France. This effort is ongoing. Shifting EPR policy to include financial transfers following clothes to Ghana is a key element of our strategic agenda and we are working with allies throughout Ghana, Europe and the USA to make it a reality. As noted in our ethics section, we aim for any future media coverage to deliver greater impact.
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