



## Global Luxury and Management Students: “Transparency on production process crucial for future success of luxury footwear brands”

*Millennial and Generation Z consumers expect premium footwear brands to be sustainable, authentic, unique and durable*

**Waalwijk, the Netherlands, 23 May 2018** - Transparent communication about the entire production process is of crucial importance for a successful future for premium and luxury footwear brands. This is one of the key conclusions of 42 students from Global Luxury and Management (GLAM) at the North Carolina State University after a consumer and competitor research project on the future of footwear. The students conducted a Sustainability in Luxury Course to identify and define the current mood of sustainability in the premium and luxury footwear markets. For a full semester, the students worked on client research for Stahl, the world market leader in surface treatment and coating solutions for flexible materials. They presented their findings during a four days on-site training in Waalwijk, the Netherlands, where Stahl is headquartered.

### **Transparency and sustainability**

Millennials and Gen Z expect more and more from footwear brands nowadays. Transparency and innovation are key, and this new generation is looking for authenticity, uniqueness, durability, and they value transparent communication about the entire production process and supply chain. They also want to wear shoes that have not harmed the environment, or violated human or animal rights during their manufacturing process. Young consumers are also expecting brands to give back to society, e.g. by donating a percentage of their profit to charity.

Michael Costello, Director of Sustainability at Stahl: “We are constantly challenged by our clients in the luxury segment, and we welcome it as a great opportunity. This is why we have partnered up with NC State University, to help us think differently about the footwear industry and supply chain and to better understand the needs and values of Gen Z and Millennials when it comes to footwear. It is great to see that these generations are prioritizing sustainability in the production process and supply chain. We are inspired by their ideas and aspirations.”



[Watch](#) the video: GLAM Students about Sustainability

### **Valuable partnership**

By visiting Stahl, the students learned how luxury brands have to consider every supplier in the chain very carefully, to be sure of their environmental footprint, and whether measures are in place to reduce it. They also got insight into the way the company operates within the global supply chain. These graduate students are preparing to launch their careers across a range of luxury sectors and will now be able to bring the knowledge gained at Stahl into these and future positions. Being aware of Stahl's innovative resources and products will be important as they excel in their careers.

Dr. Kristie McGowan, Director, NC State University Global Luxury and Management program:  
*"The Sustainability in Luxury Course provides students with a fundamental understanding of a range of sustainability-related topics and the juxtaposition between profitability and being socially and ethically responsible. Through our partnership with Stahl, they could get access to unprecedented, hands-on luxury industry expertise. The students are now able to evolve their projects with this expertise and the knowledge shared by Stahl, which is very valuable for them."*

[Read more](#) about the students' client research for Stahl on our website.



### **About Stahl**

Stahl is the world market leader in surface treatment and coating solutions for flexible materials. We are active in differentiated high-margin niches, providing technology driven solutions and a unique service model for premium applications. Our innovative products give the ultimate level of appeal, functionality, durability and comfort, while reducing environmental impact. Although they do not realize it, hundreds of millions of people around the world touch and use Stahl products every day.

### **About the NC State University Global Luxury and Management program**

The NC State University Global Luxury and Management program is a unique dual degree graduate program in partnership with SKEMA Business School in Paris, France. Founded in 2012, it is the only full time luxury master's program in the Americas and the only dual degree American-French luxury master's program in the world. The students are passionate about the luxury industry and are preparing for careers in all three luxury sectors, including personal, experiential and transportation luxury. The Global Luxury and Management program is an immersive, one year accelerated master's program. Students spend the Fall semester in Raleigh, NC, USA and the Spring semester in Paris, France followed by work experience and the completion of a master's thesis. Following completion of the Global Luxury and Management program, students earn a Master of Management with a concentration in Global Luxury Management from NC State University and a Master of Science in Global Luxury Management from SKEMA Business School.

### **Note for the editor**

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