

## THE INNOVATION JOURNEY

Eija-Liisa Mäkinen has established a sustainable fashion business Kiedo Ltd., located in Kylmäkoski, that manufactures and sells leather belts and custom leather jackets - made in Finland from start to finish. A commitment to circular economy, along with a wish to empower women to be more confident in their own bodies are the cornerstones of Eija's business.



She wants to make long-lasting, versatile products, while aiming at zero waste. After giving birth to her children, a will to start living more ecologically arose in Eija. Her previous work in clothing industry had left her disillusioned about fast fashion. Eija started work as a salesperson for

a sustainable clothing company. During this time, she met with a lot of women in need for a variable, sustainably made belt. After discovering that no one was making such belts, Eija decided to develop one on her own. In 2019, she collaborated with Salmiak Studio, a small company that uses recycled leather, to make a prototype for the belt. In 2020, she starts making belts on preorder only, and is met with strong demand. The same year, Kiedo Ltd. is established. Kiedo belts are made from surplus leather and vegetable tanned, domestic reindeer leather. Use of recycled leather had to be dropped due to poor availability. Surplus leather from the belt manufacturing is made into earrings. For

the packaging of the jewelry products, Eija uses innovative biodegradable boxes made by Toijala Korukotelo. In 2023, she expanded the production to custom-made leather jackets, for which she has a Showroom in Toijala.

## THE INNOVATION IMPACT

The manufacturing of Kiedo's products gives work for six local, rural small businesses. The products of Kiedo have been granted the Key Flag Symbol (Avainlippu) as a sign of Finnish manufacturing. Eija collaborates actively with other small, sustainable businesses. Passionate about promoting domestic manufacturing, she was involved in establishing Suomikki association for responsible fashion businesses that manufacture their products in Finland and thus support Finnish labour and self-sufficiency. Many members happen to also be rural women. Suomikki increases the visibility of and networking between the brands by a joint web platform and by organizing pop up events.



## USEFUL LINKS

<https://www.kiedo.fi/>  
[https://www.instagram.com/kiedo\\_finland/](https://www.instagram.com/kiedo_finland/)  
[https://www.facebook.com/kiedofinland/?locale=fi\\_FI](https://www.facebook.com/kiedofinland/?locale=fi_FI)  
<https://www.kiedo.fi/blogs/kiedoitsesihyvaan>  
<https://suomikki.fi/>