

AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS GROWTH FUND BACKS PIONEERING AUSSIE COMPANY AT THE GLOBAL FOREFRONT OF SUN PROTECTION

MELBOURNE, 22 December 2023 - The Australian Business Growth Fund (ABGF) has today announced its latest investment into Solbari, a company pioneering the production of clothing, sun hats and accessories that protects the skin from the harsh Australian sun.

Established in Melbourne in 2014, Solbari was born out of a shared passion for health and a commitment to address the growing concerns around sun exposure.

As a specialist sun protection brand, all Solbari products undergo rigorous testing to ensure it is Ultra Protection Factor (UPF) 50+ and the company has heavily invested in products that not only meet but exceed international standards for UV protection.

In under ten years, Solbari has built an enviable and loyal customer base of more than 300,000 from over 160 countries, who buy everything from swimwear to sun hats to more formal jackets and trousers. Now, Solbari is poised for even greater success with a \$10 million investment injection from the Australian Business Growth Fund (ABGF).

With ABGF's investment, Solbari will continue its local and global expansion. This includes growing its wholesale market presence through specialist outdoor retailers such as Paddy Pallin, continuing to build international presence expansion with focus in the US, Canada, UK and New Zealand, adopting partnerships with corporate Australia and targeting a younger audience.

"ABGF's support will ensure our journey as a global leader in sun protection continues, further enabling our mission to empower people to live a sun smart life. ABGF's strategic insights and networks, coupled with a deep understanding of our industry, will be instrumental in our next phase of growth," said Ms Young.

After moving to Australia over ten years ago, Solbari founder and CEO Johanna Young was shocked to find so many people being diagnosed with skin cancer, a highly preventable health issue in a country renowned for its sunny weather and outdoor lifestyle.

When her husband was confronted with his own risk of skin cancer, Ms Young was motivated to make a positive difference. Emboldened by her personal experience she quit her job working in finance to embark on a journey to redefine sun protection in Australia.

Young felt compelled to act when she uncovered that the best form of protection against skin cancer isn't just found in a bottle but rather hanging in your closet. Ms Young identified a gap in the market - the need for sun protective garments that were not only stylish but also light and breathable.

Solbari has achieved rapid revenue growth, growing from 10 employees to 25 in the last three years. As the company accelerates growth, it has remained rooted in its values of innovation, quality, and customer empowerment.

"Investing in Solbari was particularly compelling to ABGF due to its specialisation in sun-protective offerings focused on addressing a customer cohort with health concerns- the products are not considered as discretionary spending but rather essential items," said Ghazaleh Lyari, co-head of investments at ABGF.

"Moreover, the versatility of this business model positions it with a diverse potential for growth, opening the door to strategic partnerships that include retailers, corporates with stringent Occupational Health and Safety requirements and organisations whose employees work outdoors, such as council workers, construction workers, sports clubs, and educators."

The Australian Business Growth is Australia's only purpose-built growth capital fund dedicated to backing Australian SMEs' growth aspirations, with initial investments of \$5m - \$15m. ABGF has taken a \$10 million

stake which will support Solbari's ambitious growth plans through expanding its go-to-market strategies and reaching new markets.

This partnership brings ABGF's total investments into Australian businesses to \$153 million.

-ENDS-

ABOUT ABGF: ABGF is Australia's only purpose-built growth capital fund dedicated to the SME sector. ABGF is dedicated to investing in Australian entrepreneurs, disruptors and growth-oriented businesses to unlock economic benefits for all Australians. They have over \$500 million of capital to deploy and have already invested over \$150 million into companies that are shaking up Australian industries to solve some of the country's biggest challenges. Their unique public-private partnership model, facilitated by a powerful alliance between the Federal Government and six leading banks, bridges a critical gap in the market, between venture capital and private equity.

ABOUT SOLBARI: Founded, designed, tried, and tested under the powerful Australian sun, Solbari is a B Corp Certified world-leading sun protection brand. With loyal customers in over 160 countries, Solbari offers a range of UPF50+ sun protective clothing, hats and accessories that empower people to live a sun smart life. All Solbari fabrics have been independently tested and rated UPF50+ by the Australian Government, who impose the most stringent safety standards in the world. Solbari fabrics are recommended by the Skin Cancer Foundation based in the US. Having experienced explosive growth since launching almost ten years ago, in 2023 Solbari was ranked 18th in the Australian Financial Review's Fast Global list, and 82nd on the Financial Times' High-Growth Companies Asia-Pacific 2023 list. Solbari is a proud member of the United Nations Global Compact initiative - a voluntary leadership platform for the development, implementation, and disclosure of responsible business practices.