

# Upfront

## **BoF** Beyond Surface-Level Sustainability: Humanscale Eliminates Harmful Chemicals

Humanscale is unwavering in its efforts to eliminate Red List chemicals from its products. As part of their comprehensive Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy, their 2022 milestone marks the removal of halogenated flame retardants (HFRs) in all Humanscale-designed products, reinforcing their dedication to expelling harmful substances.

Humanscale has consistently brought industry issues to light including the norm of using stain-resistant coatings on textiles. These coatings contain troubling ingredients such as Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAs) known to cause health problems, reduced immunity, and specific cancers. Humanscale's investigations into these toxic coatings revealed that while textiles endured 150,000 double rubs in the Wyzenbeek Abrasion Test (a textile durability test), the stain-resistant layer showed degradation after just 5,000 double rubs. This lack of longevity, combined with PFAs' health risks, prompted concerns about where the eroding coating might go, potentially becoming breathable dust, adhering to clothes, or even being ingested.

The team chose to prioritize consumers' health and abandon these coatings entirely. They channeled their efforts into crafting high-quality textiles that are intrinsically resistant to wear, eliminating the need for potentially harmful treatments. Offerings like the Path Chair encapsulate this ethos—sustainability married to uncompromised durability. **BoF**