COMMISSIONED PIECE · DELIVERY PACK

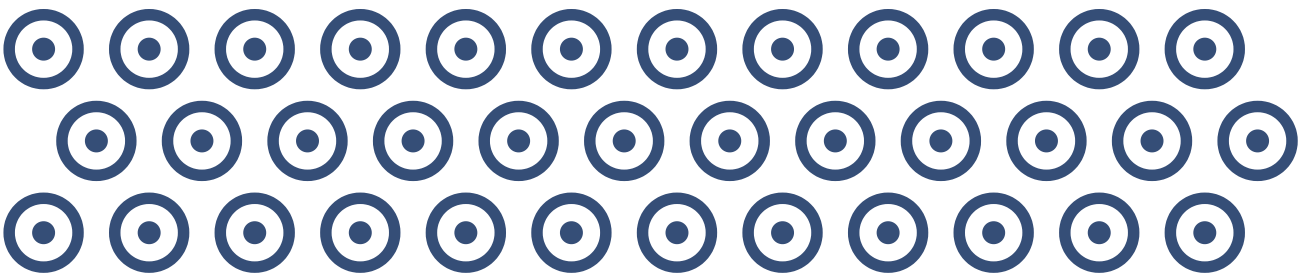
The blue comes from the air

"Our story" for the Indigo House Adire website and blog · 1,029 words

Client	Mrs Adunni Fashola, Indigo House Adire, Abeokuta
Writer	Tolu Bankole, freelance writer, Lagos
Edited with	Bisi Ogunleye (second reader)
Delivered	Thursday 22 October 2026 · version 3 (final, approved)

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A model made by Skillnaija for the Professional Writing course. Indigo House Adire, Mrs Fashola, her family and staff, the interview and the orders are fictional, written for the course's case study. Study it; don't copy it. Your client, your reporting and your words must be your own.

What the client asked for, agreed in writing

Agreed by WhatsApp and email on Monday 5 October 2026, after a 20-minute call. One page, so both sides can check the work against it.

The job	An “Our story” profile of Indigo House for the new website, reused as the first blog post and in the press kit.
The readers	Lagos boutique buyers; Nigerians at home and abroad ordering aso ebi; schools and companies buying gifts. Most read on a phone.
What it must do	Make a stranger trust that the cloth is really made by hand in Abeokuta, understand why it costs what it costs and takes the time it takes, and know how to order.
Length	900 to 1,100 words, with a headline, a short standfirst, subheads and an ordering section.
Tone	Warm, proud and plain. “Like Mrs Fashola talking to a good customer in the yard.” No “vibrant tapestry”, no “nestled”.
Must include	How the cloth is made at Indigo House; the people; Mama Abike; ordering, lead times and care.
Must avoid	Calling the cloth “100% natural” (most is synthetic indigo); any award or certificate the business does not hold; staff surnames; prices (they change).
Approvals	Mrs Fashola approves every quote and every number before publication. Staff approve their own quotes.
Dates	Interview Thu 8 Oct · visit Sat 10 Oct · first draft Thu 15 Oct · final Thu 22 Oct.
Fee and terms	₦60,000: half before the interview, half on approval. Two rounds of changes included; more at ₦10,000 a round. Indigo House may use the text on its site, blog, press kit and social pages. Tolu may show it in her portfolio after it is published.
Delivered as	The final text in a Google Doc and as plain text for the website; three headline options, an SEO title and description, a two-sentence summary and four social posts.

How the fee was set: about two days’ work (prepare, interview, visit, two drafts, the social set and two rounds of changes) at Tolu’s day rate, plus the trip from Lagos. It is the course’s example, not a market rate; rates vary widely.

The interview and the visit

Fictional notes, written for the course. Real notes record a real person: keep the recording private, and ask before you quote.

PHONE INTERVIEW · THU 8 OCT · 47 MIN

Mrs Adunni Fashola. Recorded with her permission (asked on the recording at 0:00). **Q** = typed word for word from the recording; everything else is my summary.

02:10 Grandmother, Mama Abike, sold adire at Itoku "from before I was born until she died in 1999". School holidays tying for her. **Q** "and getting my hand slapped when the ties were loose."

06:30 Primary-school teacher 2001 to 2009 (8 yrs). Started dyeing at weekends **2004**, two drums, mother's backyard, sold to other teachers. Left teaching 2009: weekend orders paid more than salary.

11:05 **Q** "The blue comes from the air. The vat gives you green. The air finishes the work. That is why we dip, open, wait, and dip again."

21:40 Starch paste. **Q** "If it is too light, it runs. If it is too thick, it cracks in the sun and the blue goes into the cracks." Some customers ask for the cracks.

26:15 Most cloth: synthetic indigo (steady, affordable). Elu line: leaves pounded, dried into balls, fermented; to order only. **Q** "I will not call synthetic natural to sell you a wrapper. If you want the old way, ask for Elu, and give me time."

31:50 Aso ebi 2025, Ibadan. Bride's mother worried about matching. All dyed in one week, same vats, swatch book. **Q** "Hand-dyed cloth is like a family. They look alike. No two are the same. I tell customers that before they pay, not after."

38:20 Trained "over a hundred". *How do you know?* Register since 2012: will ask Dapo to count. **Q** "Mama Abike did not keep it to herself. Why should I?"

~~**42:00** NOT FOR USE (she said "off the record"): a cotton supplier problem in 2024.~~

WORKSHOP VISIT · SAT 10 OCT · 2 P.M. TO 6.30 P.M.

What I saw myself, written on the spot.

Walled compound, short walk from Itoku market. **11 blue plastic drums** on the back wall (counted twice). Long table for wax and starch. Washing lines across the yard.

Two old clay pots in the corner: Mama Abike's. Dapo: "Nobody uses them. Nobody moves them."

Cloth out of the vat: **yellowish green, like an unripe orange**. Turned blue on the line in about **1 min 20 s** (timed on my phone).

Kemi: tying 11 years; a wrapper of small circles "about two days". **Q** "It is like opening a gift you wrapped yourself." Darkest blue: "ten dips, sometimes twelve".

Seun and Habeeb: wax table, cut their own stamps from foam. Wax boiled off after dyeing.

Who makes the cloth: Mrs F + six women + Seun + Habeeb = **9**. Dapo (son) runs WhatsApp and the site, Mon to Sat.

6 p.m.: last cloths off the line. Kemi, hands blue to the wrist: **Q** "It will wash off by Sunday. By Monday it will be blue again."

Kemi, Seun and Habeeb happy to be named, **first names only**.

QUESTIONS I TOOK IN (8 OF 14)

1. What did you do the year before you started dyeing?
2. Walk me through one wrapper, from white cloth to packed.
3. What goes wrong most often? What did it cost you last time?
4. What do customers misunderstand about adire?
5. Tell me about an order that frightened you.
6. What do you use: natural indigo, synthetic or both? Why?
7. Who taught you, and who have you taught?
8. What should a customer never be told after they pay?

Where every fact came from, and how I checked it

SOURCES

1. Phone interview with Mrs Adunni Fashola, Thursday 8 October 2026, 47 minutes, recorded with permission.
2. Visit to the Indigo House workshop, Abeokuta, Saturday 10 October 2026, 2 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.: observation, and short conversations with Kemi, Seun and Habeeb.
3. Dapo Fashola: the 2025 order book (invoice and delivery note for the Ibadan order) and the training register (photo of the latest page).
4. WhatsApp follow-ups with Mrs Fashola, 13 October (dates, numbers) and 20 October (approval of every quote and number).
5. Indigo House care card, packed with every order.
6. Background reading before the interview, used only to prepare questions: general reference articles on adire and on indigo dyeing. Nothing in the piece rests on them alone.

FACT-CHECK LOG

CLAIM IN THE PIECE	SOURCE	HOW I CHECKED	
Started in 2004 with two drums in her mother's backyard	1	Confirmed on WhatsApp, 13 Oct	✓
Taught for eight years; left the classroom in 2009	1	Asked for the years: 2001 to 2009	✓
Mama Abike sold adire at Itoku market "for most of her life"	1	Family account; attributed, wording approved	✓
Eleven drums; two clay pots that nobody moves	2	Counted twice; Dapo on the pots	✓
Nine people make the cloth	2, 3	List of names from Dapo	✓
Kemi: eleven years; about two days for one wrapper; ten dips or more	2	Her own estimate; attributed to her	✓
Green cloth turns blue "within a minute or two"	2	Timed: 1 min 20 s	✓
Every quotation	1, 2	Typed from the recording or notes; approved 20 Oct	✓
Mostly synthetic indigo; Elu line to order only	1, 2	Asked twice; wording approved	✓
Ibadan, 2025, 280 yards, one week, two days early	1, 3	Invoice and delivery note; family not named	✓
64 people trained since 2012	3	Register counted. She first said "over a hundred"	changed
Lead times: 2 to 3 working days; 3 to 6 weeks	3, 4	Order book; approved	✓
Care advice	5	Copied from the card; approved	✓

Rule I work to: if I can't say where a fact came from, it does not go in. Round numbers get checked hardest.

First draft to final: the opening, with tracked changes

Draft 1 (15 October) was 1,240 words. This is its opening as Bisi Ogunleye and I marked it up in Suggesting mode, kept here as a before-and-after. ~~Red, struck through~~ = cut. Green, underlined = added.

~~Nestled in the ancient city of Abeokuta, Indigo House Adire is a vibrant celebration of Yoruba heritage.~~ [1] When the cloth first comes out of the dye, it is not blue. It comes out a wet, yellowish green, the colour of an unripe orange. ~~Founded by the passionate Mrs Adunni Fashola over 20 years ago,~~ [2] ~~the brand creates stunning, high-quality hand-dyed fabrics that blend tradition with modern style.~~ [3] ~~In today's fast-paced world of mass-produced fashion, every piece tells a unique story.~~ [4]

"The blue comes from the air," says Adunni Fashola, who has run Indigo House Adire since 2004. ~~Mrs Fashola, who learned the art from her grandmother, now employs a team of over 10 skilled artisans~~ [5] ~~and has trained more than 100 young people.~~ [6] [Team moved to the yard scene; trainees to "Passing it on": 64 people since 2012.]

1. **Bisi:** "Nestled", "vibrant celebration": these fit any business in any town. Open with something only we saw.
2. **Tolu:** She started in 2004. "Since 2004" is exact; "over 20 years" is a guess.
3. **Bisi:** Adjectives are the client praising herself. Show the work; the three methods do it.
4. **Bisi:** Which story? Tell one: the aso ebi order.
5. **Tolu:** Wrong. Nine people make the cloth (list from Dapo), and "artisans" is a word nobody in the yard uses.
6. **Tolu:** The register says 64 since 2012. Use the number we can show.

WHAT ELSE CHANGED BETWEEN DRAFTS

- **Cut** a 180-word history of adire in Yorubaland. True, but readers can find it anywhere; it kept them from Indigo House.
- **Moved** ordering details out of the story into a short list at the end, so a buyer can find them in two seconds.
- **Client change 1:** Mrs Fashola asked to say "modern dyes" instead of "synthetic indigo". I explained the brief's rule against misleading claims and showed how the Elu section makes the honesty a strength. She kept "synthetic".
- **Client change 2:** add who answers WhatsApp, and on which days. Added.
- **Last pass:** read aloud end to end; every name, number and quote checked against pages 3 and 4; spellings of Itoku, aso ebi and Elu confirmed with Dapo.

THE AI TEST: DRAFT 2 AGAINST THREE AI VERSIONS OF THE SAME BRIEF

TEST	BEST AI VERSION	MY DRAFT 2	
Facts true and sourced	Invented: founded 1992, "award-winning"	Every fact in the log	✓
Specific	"Stunning, timeless pieces"	Green cloth turning blue; eleven drums	✓
Real voices	None	Mrs Fashola and Kemi, from the recording	✓
Fits the brief and reader	"100% natural"; no ordering details	Ordering, waiting times, aso ebi	✓
Structure for the purpose	Tighter than my draft 1	Fixed in draft 2: history cut, ordering list	✓
A voice of its own	Fits any business	"I will not call synthetic natural..."	✓
Clean, original, honest	Stock phrases	Three passes; AI use stated	✓

OUR STORY

The blue comes from the air

At Indigo House in Abeokuta, nine people turn plain white cotton into adire by hand. Adunni Fashola learned the craft from her grandmother. This is how her workshop makes it, and what to expect when you order.

By Tolu Bankole · Indigo House Adire, Abeokuta

When the cloth first comes out of the dye, it is not blue.

It comes out a wet, yellowish green, the colour of an unripe orange. Kemi lifts it from the drum with both hands, lets the dye run back in, and opens it out on the line. Then everyone in the yard watches. Within a minute or two the green darkens, and the cloth turns blue in front of you.

"The blue comes from the air," says Adunni Fashola, who has run Indigo House Adire since 2004. "The vat gives you green. The air finishes the work. That is why we dip, open, wait, and dip again." For the deepest blue, Kemi repeats it ten times or more.

WHERE IT STARTED

Mrs Fashola's grandmother, Mama Abike, sold adire at Itoku market in Abeokuta for most of her life. Her granddaughter spent school holidays tying cloth for her, "and getting my hand slapped when the ties were loose."

She did not plan to follow her. She trained as a primary-school teacher and taught for eight years. In 2004 she started dyeing at weekends, with two drums in her mother's backyard, and sold to the other teachers. By 2009 the weekend orders were paying more than her salary, and she left the classroom.

Today Indigo House works from a walled compound a short walk from Itoku market. Eleven blue plastic drums stand along the back wall. There is a long table for wax and starch, and washing lines cross the yard. In one corner sit two old clay dye pots that belonged to Mama Abike. Nobody uses them. Nobody is allowed to move them, either.

THREE WAYS TO KEEP THE BLUE OUT

Adire is a resist-dyed cloth. You stop the dye from reaching parts of the fabric, and the pattern is whatever the dye could not touch. Indigo House does it in three ways.

Tied. The cloth is pinched into small points and bound tightly with raffia or thread, and each tie leaves a ring. Kemi, who has tied for Indigo House for eleven years, says a wrapper covered in small circles takes her about two days. Untying is her favourite part. "It is like opening a gift you wrapped yourself."

Starch. A paste of cassava starch is cooked, then painted on by hand with a thin stick or a feather, or pressed through a cut metal stencil. Where the starch sits, the blue cannot enter. The paste is the hard part, Mrs Fashola says. "If it is too light, it runs. If it is too thick, it cracks in the sun and the blue goes into the cracks." Some customers now ask for those fine crackle lines on purpose.

Wax. Melted candle wax is stamped or brushed on, the cloth is dyed, and the wax is boiled off afterwards. Wax gives sharper edges than starch and lets the workshop add other colours. This is the work of Seun and Habeeb at the long table, who cut their own stamps from foam.

NOT ALL INDIGO IS THE SAME

Here is something many sellers will not say plainly. Most of the cloth Indigo House makes is dyed with synthetic indigo. It holds its colour well, it is steady from one batch to the next, and it keeps prices within reach of the people who buy it.

A smaller line, which Mrs Fashola calls Elu, is dyed the way her grandmother dyed: with indigo from the leaves of the elu plant, pounded, dried into balls and fermented in a vat. It is slower and less predictable, and it is made to order only. “I will not call synthetic natural to sell you a wrapper,” she says. “If you want the old way, ask for Elu, and give me time.”

WHY YOUR TWO PIECES WILL NOT BE TWINS

Hand-dyed cloth varies. The weather changes how fast the cloth dries. A strong vat on Monday is a tired one by Friday. One tie is a little tighter than the next.

That matters most for aso ebi. In 2025 a family in Ibadan ordered 280 yards for a wedding, and the bride’s mother was worried the cloth would not match. Mrs Fashola dyed the whole order in one week from the same vats. She kept a strip from every batch in a swatch book and checked each piece against it before it was packed. The order arrived two days early.

“Hand-dyed cloth is like a family,” she says. “They look alike. No two are the same. I tell customers that before they pay, not after.”

PASSING IT ON

Since 2012 Mrs Fashola has kept a register of everyone she has trained: 64 people so far, most of them young women from Abeokuta. Some now work at Indigo House. Others run small dye yards of their own. She does not count them as competition. “Mama Abike did not keep it to herself,” she says. “Why should I?”

At six in the evening the last cloths come off the line. Kemi’s hands are blue to the wrist. “It will wash off by Sunday,” she says, and laughs. “By Monday it will be blue again.”

ORDERING FROM INDIGO HOUSE

- Ready pieces, in two-yard and four-yard lengths, are posted from Abeokuta within two to three working days of payment, anywhere in Nigeria.
- Custom orders, including aso ebi, take three to six weeks, depending on how much you need. Order early, and ask for a swatch first.
- Elu pieces, dyed with natural indigo, are made to order only. Ask for the current waiting time.
- To order, message Indigo House on WhatsApp or use the order form on this site. Dapo Fashola, Mrs Fashola’s son, answers messages from Monday to Saturday.

Caring for your adire. Wash it alone for the first few washes, inside out, in cold water with mild soap, and dry it in the shade. A little blue in the first washes is normal for indigo.

1,029 words, headline and standfirst included. Approved by Mrs Fashola, 20 October 2026.

HEADLINE OPTIONS

1. **The blue comes from the air** · chosen for the website: it is the moment a reader remembers.
2. How nine people in Abeokuta make adire by hand
3. Two drums in a backyard: the story of Indigo House

SEO TITLE (52 CHARACTERS)

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How we make adire by hand in Abeokuta | Indigo House
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META DESCRIPTION (135 CHARACTERS)

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Tied, starch and wax adire, dyed by hand in Abeokuta since 2004. Meet the people of Indigo House and see what to expect when you order.
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TWO-SENTENCE SUMMARY

Adunni Fashola has dyed adire in Abeokuta since 2004, a craft she learned from her grandmother. Read how her workshop ties, starches and waxes cloth by hand, why no two pieces are twins, and how to order.

INSTAGRAM CAPTION

> It comes out of the vat green. In a minute or two, the air turns it blue. Our story is now on the website: how Kemi, Seun, Habeeb and the team make every piece by hand in Abeokuta, why we tell you which indigo we use, and how to order aso ebi without stress. Link in bio.

WHATSAPP BROADCAST

> Good morning! Our new website page tells the Indigo House story, from two drums in a backyard in 2004 to the workshop today. Planning aso ebi? Read the part about matching colours before you order: [link]

FACEBOOK AND LINKEDIN

> Adire is a resist-dyed cloth: the pattern is wherever the dye could not reach. Here is how Indigo House in Abeokuta does it by hand, three ways, and why its owner will not call synthetic indigo natural. [link]

X (UNDER 280 CHARACTERS)

> At Indigo House in Abeokuta, the cloth comes out of the vat green and turns blue in the air. How nine people make adire by hand: [link]

AI use. I used an AI assistant to suggest interview questions from the brief, which I rewrote (8 of the 14 I took in started there); to write three versions of the brief for the AI test, scored against my draft and then set aside; and to flag long sentences in draft 2, where I accepted 4 of its 11 suggestions. All the reporting, quotes, facts and words are mine. No AI-written sentence is in the final piece, and nothing private from the interview was typed into an AI tool.

PERMISSIONS

Mrs Fashola approved every quote and number on WhatsApp, 20 October. Kemi, Seun and Habeeb agreed to be named, first names only, and approved their own quotes. The Ibadan family is not named. Nothing said off the record is used.

DELIVERY NOTE SENT WITH THE FINAL

> Dear Mrs Fashola, here is the final “Our story” (1,029 words), with the plain-text version for Dapo to paste into the website, three headline options and the social posts. Everything is as you approved on Tuesday. The second half of the fee (₦30,000) is now due. Thank you for the visit. Tolu