

D3.2

Analyses of the "Fashion Sprint for Change"

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1. Introduction

1.1 Fashion for Change Summary

The Fashion for Change project aims to accelerate and scale up SMEs, designers and start-ups in the fashion sector to help them become more sustainable and turn their business models circular. The consortium involving 5 partners (Civitta Eesti AS, Estonian Academy of Arts, Ecopreneur, Katalista Ventures, Singleton Group) from 3 countries (Estonia, Lithuania and Belgium) is built to combine the expertise of experienced players of the sustainable fashion, business support and innovation management in circular economy and fashion.

The project consists of the following activities and phases:

1. building a circular fashion hub and defining the capacity needs;
2. methodology development for the circular fashion Growth Programme “Fashion for Change”;
3. implementation of the Growth Programme.

The project selected 35 most promising SMEs, designers and start-ups at different stages of the fashion value chain who presented their ideas at Fashion Sprint. As a result, 25 ideas were selected to join the Growth Programme accompanied with financial support of 10 000 EUR per team.

The programme includes circular fashion, business and design development training through lectures, workshops, team mentoring and study visits. 5 outstanding teams out of 25 will be awarded with additional 5000 EUR to increase their investment readiness – investor meetups will be organised and additional business support will be provided to revise the business plan.

As a part of the project, the Fashion For Change Growth Programme will be promoted amongst the main stakeholders (SMEs, startups and designers) to recruit them to participate in the project activities as well as to seek synergies with other supporting stakeholders in the industry and to raise general awareness around the project.

1.2 D3.2 Fashion Sprint analysis Summary

This deliverable presents the outcomes and feedback analysis of the Fashion Sprint for Change pre-hackathon and hackathon activities (from now on Fashion Sprint). Fashion Sprint was a part of WP3 Growth Programme and marked a first step in the Growth Programme - support programme for circular fashion designers, SMEs, and startups. The aim of the event was to select the top 25 partnerships for the Growth Programme.

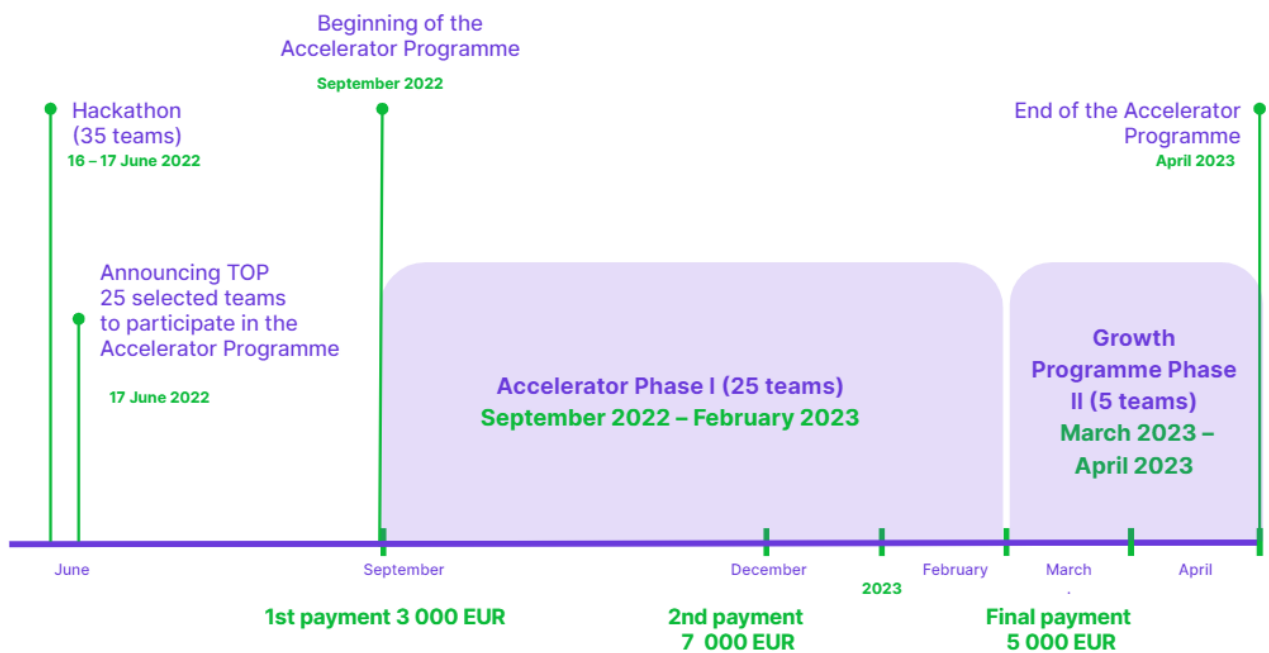


Illustration: Fashion For Change Growth programme timeline

With the goal to provide an overview of the event outcomes, this document outlines:

- references to key performance indicators (KPIs)
- final set up description (format and agenda)
- feedback analysis
- further needs and input to the following Growth Programme

In addition, the document also provides an overview of challenges met during the task execution.

2. Objective and KPIs

The main objective of the Fashion Sprint was to support 35 partnerships in developing their circular fashion project from idea level to MVP (minimum viable product) level. The Fashion Sprint activities were set up in 3 phases; and to select the TOP 25 partnerships to continue in the Fashion for Change Growth Programme.

- 1) **Online Pre-hackathon** was organised to onboard the transnational partnerships to the Fashion Sprint activities, provide support for team building for the newly formed partnerships, assist with any administrative issues the teams might still experience and to help better define the circular fashion ideas that the partnership will start working on during hackathon and Growth Programme.
- 2) **Hybrid hackathon** was organised where partnerships worked intensively for 48-hours with their circular fashion projects together with mentors and experts. Partnerships either worked online or physically from the Vilnius event venue.
- 3) **Online pitching** was organised to allow all 35 partnerships to pitch their projects. All teams pitched online in front of the jury and audience present in the Vilnius event venue. The pitching event was streamed online to a wider audience.

Performance Indicator	Description	Fashion Sprint Outcome
35 transnational partnerships	35 transnational partnerships have been formed and they are ready for participating in the Fashion Sprint activities. All 35 partnerships invited to the Fashion Sprint meet the eligibility criteria.	35 transnational partnerships were formed for the Fashion Sprint activities. Fashion For Change team organised a matchmaking event and assisted individually every team who was not able to find transnational partnerships themselves. One team was still not able to find a suitable partner and therefore a motivated team from the waiting list was invited to the Fashion Sprint instead.
1-2 Fashion Sprint hackathon events	The 35 chosen ideas will be invited to take part in a hackathon-type event. If needed, 2 Fashion Sprints will be held where partnerships will be split into 2 groups according to their ideas. The event will culminate with final pitching in front of the expert jury.	Fashion For Change organised 2 Fashion Sprint events - online pre-hackathon and hybrid hackathon. During the hackathon partnerships were split into 3 streams according to their ideas: digital solutions, brands and materials. At the end, 1 final pitching was held online, industry representatives and potential investors were invited as an audience and pitching was streamed to a wider audience.
100 participants at the hackathon	At least 100 participants to the hackathon events. To encourage	The online pre-hackathon event had 17 teams participating.

	participation 100 hackathon participants' costs will be partially covered. KV would book tickets and/or accommodation up to 130 EUR/participant.	Hybrid hackathon has 35 teams participating in total (30 teams online and 12 people from 5 teams physically). More than 130 SME, designer, startup representatives and industry experts participated online. In total there were approximately 150 participants at the Fashion SPrint.
Audience, engagement and awareness raising	The Fashion Sprint will mentor the applicants and help them shape their business ideas in order to compete at the final pitching in from the jury.	At the hackathon 21 mentors were involved and 21 experts were included in the jury panel. Industry representatives were invited to participate physically at the Fashion Sprint. As of 04.07.2022 the online stream video has been viewed 220 times .

Table: KPIs and outcomes

Overall, all the set KPIs were met and Fashion Sprint activities are considered successful. Based on the pitching competition results 25 best transnational partnerships were selected by the expert jury to continue in the Fashion For Change Growth Programme.

3. Final set up of the Fashion Sprint

3.1. Format and final agenda of Fashion Sprint pre-hackathon

In order to onboard the 35 pre-selected teams on the hackathon format, answer the inquiries, find the needs of the teams and address them accordingly, Fashion Sprint pre-hackathon event was organised online on the 27th of May 2022. The participation was voluntary, allowing teams to decide themselves whether they need support at this stage. There were 17 teams participating in the online pre-hackathon event.

During the event, participants were on-boarded on the upcoming Fashion Sprint hackathon structure and goals, as well as reminded about the timeline of the project. The major part of the event was used for the Questions and Answers session. Certain themes emerged that teams were interested in knowing more details about: 1) funding; 2) evaluation criteria during the Fashion Sprint hackathon; 3) online/offline participation; 4) preparation and requirements for the teams.

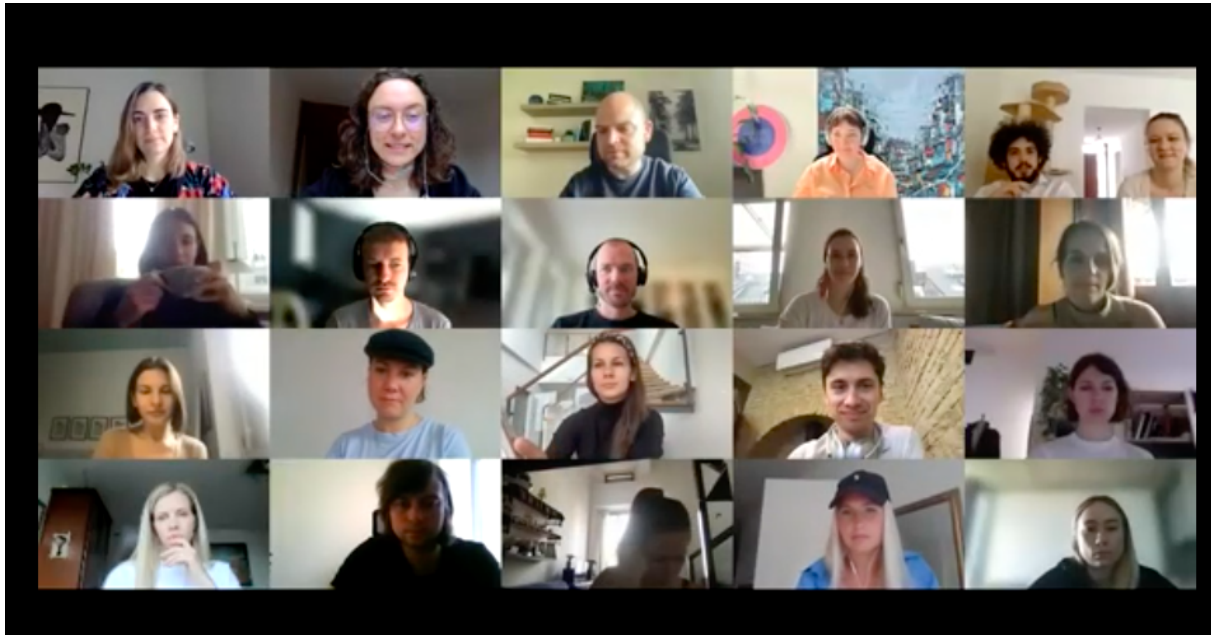


Illustration: Pre-hackathon onboarding event online

During this event, teams also were asked to identify their needs and what kind of support they were looking to receive during the Fashion Sprint hackathon event, marketing, partnerships, business development being the most prominent themes.

After the event, all 35 teams received the pre-hackathon event material.

3.2 Format and final agenda of Fashion Sprint hackathon

Fashion Sprint hackathon was set up in hybrid format (see Annex for photos) to allow for transnational teams from all over Europe to collaborate and work together. Each partnership chose either to participate on-site in Vilnius with accommodation fully covered or participate via Zoom.

In total, 12 people from 5 teams attended the Fashion Sprint hackathon event physically in Vilnius. The other 30 teams joined the event online. All activities (teams' introductions, mentoring sessions, workshops, pitching sessions etc.) were designed in such a way that participants online would have seamless experience participating in them and taking all knowledge and resources needed. Additionally, the Discord channel was created for all Fashion for Change teams in order to provide any support needed on the spot.

For transparency and equality reasons, the final pitching competition was held fully online -all teams pitched using Zoom. Pitching was live streamed to a wider audience ([available here](#)).

PART 1			PART 2		
Start GMT+3	Duration	Topic	Start GMT+3	Duration	Topic
10:00	15	Opening			
 10:15	25	Keynote by the expert	 15:00	60	Individual work/mentoring upon request
 10:40	25	Keynote by the expert	 16:00	60	3 parallel workshops
11:05	10	Break	 17:00	120	Mentoring
11:15	10	Objectives & structure	19:00	45	Checkout
11:25	45	Team introductions	 19:45	210	Individual work
12:10	20	Team building exercise			
 12:30	30	Work in team starts			
 13:00	60	Mentoring			
14:00	60	Lunch break			

Illustration: Day 1 agenda






PART 1			PART 2		
Start GMT+3	Duration	Topic	Start GMT+3	Duration	Topic
10:00	30	Energizer	 14:10	70	Pitching semifinals (3 min. pitch + 3min. Q&A)
10:30	15	Intro to the day	15:20	60	Break
 10:45	30	Presenting pitching	16:20	10	Prepare to the finals
11:15	10	Break	16:30	10	Intro to the finals
 11:25	120	Prepare for pitching/mentoring	 16:40	30	Pitching finals part I
13:25	45	Lunch	17:10	15	Break
			 17:25	30	Pitching finals part II
			18:00	20	Closing the hackathon

Illustration: Day 2 agenda

Fashion Sprint 2 day agenda was put together keeping in mind the variety of teams participation (digital solutions, brands, materials). Each participant had a freedom to select the workshops and keynotes that they wanted to participate

in. Activities were voluntary to accommodate the busy schedule of participating companies.

3.3. Mentoring

The Fashion For Change mentor pool for the Fashion Sprint event included 21 expert mentors.

- Partnerships choosing the mentors.** Prior to the hackathon event, the organisers team were pre-scouting the best experts in the industry who could contribute with their knowledge and expertise. Different approaches were used: some mentors were outsourced from the Fashion for Change Consortium organisations, some mentors were reached out through the well-established networks while others were 'cold' or new contacts, yet still decided to onboard because they considered the Fashion for Change project to be impactful. The organisers attempted to invite experts with diverse backgrounds and geographical locations as well. A healthy ratio of experts from fashion, business development and investments were achieved. No further obligations, beyond the mentoring in the hackathon, were made.
- Mentoring on fashion, circularity and business development, investment.** During Day 1 of Fashion Sprint Hackathon, teams had an opportunity to meet up to 3 mentors and leading experts working in fashion industry, circularity and business development. Each mentorship session lasted for 30 min. and teams were invited to choose the mentors themselves. Some of the expertise topics were as follows: circular design and product development; marketing and brand building; customer engagement; circular and sustainable business models; impact measurement, investment readiness, B2B and B2C business development; product building and other. In total, 80 mentoring sessions were organised during Day 1.

Mentors	EEST	13:00-13:30	14:00-14:30	14:30-15:00	15:00-15:30	15:30-16:00	16:00-16:30	16:30-17:00	17:00-17:30	17:30-18:00	18:00-18:30
Tirza Brems	MAKE LAND	Cultu	BioFluff	tex.tracer							
Jaana Päeva	The Swapshop		MAKE LAND								
Sigita Žvirblytė	Menddie	Tex Tracer	FixThatShirt	TEXTORAS							
Emilija Kerpiūtė			Our Pocket Hero	Melina Bucher	ask quinn	British Alpaca Fashion	Cultu	Leblu Design			
Andra Bagdonaitė									Tildebra	P2lab	Melina Bucher
Elena Salamandis-Aljosiene	The Rewear Company	BioFluff	Ask quinn	MAKE-LAND		Open Studios					
Erika Paulē	Leblu Design	05 Studio	The Swapshop		RecoMended	Modus Circulum	Tildebra	Agogic / RecoMended	Julia G Escriba	ODSS (live)	
Markus Vihma			Melina Bucher	Agogic / RecoMended	Menddie				Open Studios	Our Pocket Hero	
Piret Puppert	tex.tracer	Our Pocket Hero			Candour.Digital	RecoMended					
Harri Tallinn			Menddie?	Synaerchi		COSHI					
Veeli Oeselig									Modus Circulum	Manufy	
Olga Duka	05 Studio	Open Studios	COSHI	RecoMended	Julia G Escriba	The Rewear Company					
Riina Öun	British Alpaca Fashion	MAKE LAND									
Daria Shepetko	Candour.Digital	Modus Circulum	manufy	The Rewear Company	Agogic / RecoMended	Our Pocket Hero					
Milda Savickienė	Julia G Escriba	ask quinn									
Lisa Lang					Manufy	TEXTORAS	05 Studio	British Alpaca Fashion	ask quinn		
Ieva Zubavičiūtė											
Arthur ten Wolde	FixThatShirt	Melina Bucher	Candour.Digital	Salvi Row	Synaerchi	Cultu				p2lab CANCELED	

Illustration: Example of the mentoring booking sessions.

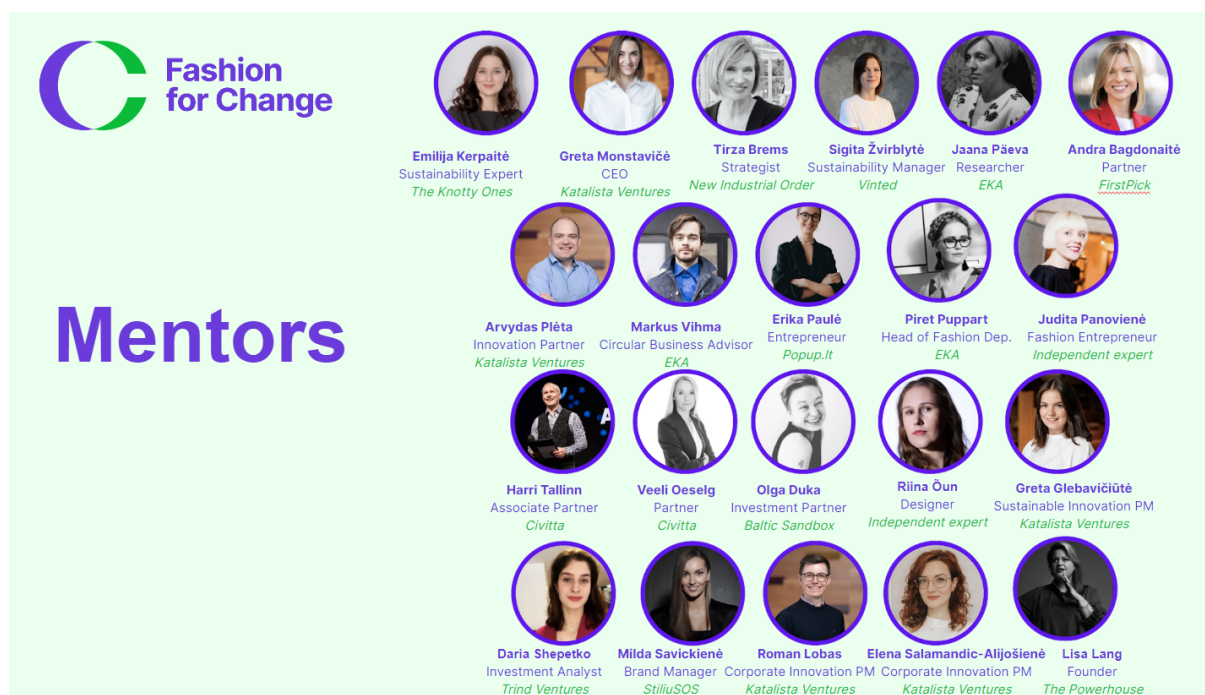


Illustration: Fashion Sprint mentors

- Mentoring on pitching.** During Day 2 of Fashion Sprint Hackathon, each team had 1 mentoring session to help them to prepare their pitches and be ready to answer the jury questions. The pitching mentors were pre-assigned from Katalista Ventures. Mentors helped to shape the presentations, answered teams' questions and gave candid feedback on how to improve the pitches. Each session lasted for 30 min. and, in total, 34 mentoring sessions on pitching were organised during Day 2.

3.4. Jury and evaluation

The Fashion For Change jury pool for the Fashion Sprint event included 21 experts from different geographical locations (Estonia, Lithuania, UK, Spain, Poland, Germany) who had different sets of skills and expertise, including marketing, business development, circularity, product development, impact creation, investments to name just a few.

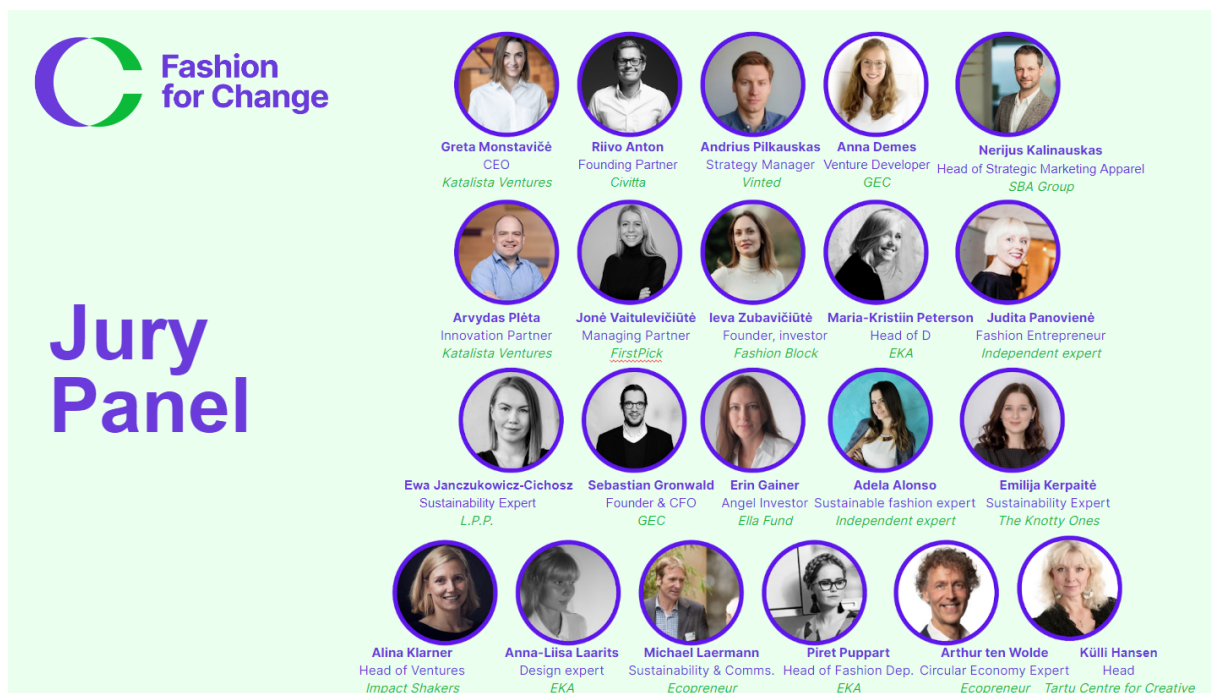


Illustration: Fashion Sprint jury panel

- Streams and jury size for streams.** In order to assess all 35 teams on equal terms and as transparently as possible, participants were divided into 3 different types of streams, depending on their project specifics. The streams were as follow: 1) digital products' (2 streams in total) stream for teams who were developing digital solutions, usually working with B2B segment; 2) brands' (2 streams in total) stream for teams who were developing or designing physical products, usually introducing new fashion items into the market; 3) materials' (1 stream in total) stream for teams who were working with material innovation, usually introducing the materials made from alternative sources.

Each team was informed about their assigned stream in advance. Simultaneously, different teams were pitching in 5 different streams. Each of the 5 streams had the pre-assigned moderator from the organisers. Moderators helped to track the time and provided any technical or other assistance needed during the pitches.

In each stream, there were 4 to 5 jury members who were evaluating the pitches. The dynamics were as follows: each stream had one member from Fashion for Change project consortium, at least one expert from fashion and/or circularity, one expert from business development and one expert from investments. Such diversity helped in assessing the teams' and project's potential from various angles.

Stream 2: digital products				
Description: this stream will have solutions that help other brands to close their loops. Solutions are digital, with no physical product creation.				
	Jury 1 (Consortium member)	Jury 2 (Industry Leader)	Jury 3 (Business, investm	Jury 4 (Business, investment)
Name	Arvydas Pleta	Nerjus Kalinauskas	Jone Vaituleviciute	Ieva Zubaviciute
Organization	Katalista Ventures	SBA Group	FirstPick	Angel investor, founder
Role	Innovation Partner	Head of Strategic Marketing Apparel	Managing partner, Investor	Fashion block
Stream 2 facilitator from the Consortium:	Egle Dobilaite (KV)			

Illustration: Example of the stream structure.

- Evaluation principles.** All jury members were on-boarded on the pitching and evaluation process before the finals started and received their personal evaluation grid and score board. During the pitches, jury members were expected to ask questions to the teams as well as provide their valuable feedback and insights. Firstly, the experts were evaluating the teams individually while listening to their pitches. After the pitches, all 4-5 jury members from the same stream had 1 hour discussion to compare the results, had a discussion about the teams and finalise the winners. All teams, no matter the stream they were assigned to, were evaluated following 4 criteria: 1) scalability; 2) market fit; 3) team; 4) positive impact.

Team name:		FixThatShirt	Z.W.A.F.M.	ODSS	Open Studios	Menddie	Ask Quinn	Manufy
EVALUATION CRITERIA:	DESCRIPTION:							
Scalability	Is the solution scalable? Is the business model scalable? Does the startup have a potential to enter large markets?	6 ▾	4 ▾	3 ▾	5 ▾	4 ▾	6 ▾	4 ▾
Market fit	Is the solution/project creating value for the market? Is the market is big enough? Is the solution is solving customer pain points?	8 ▾	6 ▾	3 ▾	8 ▾	7 ▾	7 ▾	7 ▾
Team	Does the team have the necessary technical and business skills to be successful? Does the team have entrepreneurial drive? Is the team is ready to pivot if necessary?	7 ▾	4 ▾	3 ▾	7 ▾	7 ▾	6 ▾	8 ▾
Positive Impact	How much of the positive impact on People, Planet and Profit does the startup have? Is the impact is locked in the business model? Is the impact of the startup scalable?	9 ▾	5 ▾	3 ▾	9 ▾	7 ▾	7 ▾	9 ▾
ALL points:		30	19	12	29	25	26	28

Illustration: Example of the evaluation grid and assessment score table.

3.5. Results

Pitching event and jury evaluation resulted with TOP 25 selected amongst the 35 teams that participated at the Fashion Sprint.

The 25 selected teams who continue in the Growth Programme in September 2022 are:

The Rewear Company

Tex Tracer

Candour.Digital

Ecodicta

Textoras

Modus Circulum

FixThatShirt

Open Studios

Menddie

Ask Quinn

Manufy

Cuitu

One Essentials

Tildebra

Melina Mucher

Swapshop

Salubata

Our Pocket Hero

Agogic

Julia G Escriba

Biofluff

COSH!

Lebiu Design

British Alpaca Company

MAKE-LAND

The first phase of the Growth Programme for the TOP 25 will last for 6 months and will be accompanied by a financial support of 10 000 euros. For the second phase, 5 teams will be selected and additional 5000 euros of financial support will be given for the teams to increase their investment readiness.

4. Feedback analysis



4.1. Participant feedback

Feedback from the Fashion Sprint participants was gathered using a Google Forms questionnaire. To understand the target groups' satisfaction with the event, the Customer Satisfaction Score (CSS) was used with a scale of satisfaction (1-poor, 2-fair, 3-average, 4-good, 5-excellent). 40% of the participating teams answered the feedback survey (14 teams).

Participants satisfaction was assessed in 5 categories:

1. Satisfaction with the organisation of the event (CSS - 4.5)
2. Relevance of the topics and themes (CSS - 4.4)
3. Quality of the keynote speakers (CSS - 4.4)
4. Quality of the workshops (CSS 4.2)
5. Overall satisfaction with the event (CSS - 4.7)

Every category received an average satisfaction score above 4, which indicates a very high satisfaction with the event organisation, content, speakers and workshops.

Overall satisfaction with the event was rated with a high average score of 4.7, ten participants indicated that the event was Excellent and four thought the event was Good.

In addition to the CSS, participants were asked various questions regarding their idea development, challenges solved and assistance received during the Fashion Sprint. Results are summarised below:

- 9 participants confirmed that the main challenge they were able to solve during the event was developing a high quality pitch deck and pitching to different audiences with confidence. As the main aim of Fashion Sprint was to prepare the teams for final pitching to select the TOP 25, the outcome can be considered successful.
- The main highlights for all of the participants who answered the survey were mentoring sessions with Fashion For Change mentors, both expert mentoring and pitch coaching. Keynote regarding pitching and developing pitch deck was also considered one of the event highlights.

The programme organising team will take the participant feedback into account when planning and implementing the Fashion For Change Growth Programme.



4.2. Expert feedback

Feedback from the Fashion Sprint mentors and experts was gathered using a Google Forms questionnaire. Similarly to the participants feedback analysis, CSS was used to understand the satisfaction with the event. 26% (11 out of 42 mentors, speakers and jury members) of the experts and mentors answered the feedback questionnaire.

Experts and mentors satisfaction was assessed in 6 categories:

1. Satisfaction with the organisation of the event (CSS - 4.9)
2. Relevance of the topics and themes (CSS -4.8)
3. Quality of the keynote speakers (CSS - 4.6)
4. Quality of the workshops (CSS - 4.6)
5. Level and motivation of the teams (CSS - 4.2)
6. Overall satisfaction with the event (CSS - 4.7)

Every category received an average satisfaction score above 4, which indicates a very high satisfaction with the event organisation, content, speakers, workshops and the level of teams.

Overall satisfaction with the event received an average CSS of 4.7. Eight experts said that the event was Excellent, one said it was Good, one said it was Average and 1 did not indicate an answer to this question.

In addition to the CSS, experts and mentors were asked various questions to describe the highlights of the event, offer their expert opinion about any improvement that can be made and on what further support to offer for the participating teams during the Growth Programme. Answers are summarised below:

- Multiple experts who answered the form were pleasantly surprised by the level and motivation of the participating teams. Experts considered the ideas and solutions interesting and engagement high for both - online and offline teams
- Multiple experts felt that the hybrid event was organised very well. As an improvement opportunity the mentors and experts mentioned minor technical elements regarding Zoom and Discord

The programme organising team will take the participant feedback into account when planning and implementing the Fashion For Change Growth Programme.



4.3. Organiser feedback

The Fashion Sprint was organised by the Katalista Ventures team with hands-on support by the other consortium partner Civitta, Ecopreneur.eu and Estonian Academy of Arts. Feedback from the organising teams was collected using open-ended questions and unstructured discussions. The summary is presented in the table below.

Positive reflections	Possible improvements
The location, ideal for blended meetings, best I ever saw	Wifi stability
Overall, super organised with on-site and online seamlessly merged	reserve a bit more time for lunch and networking during the day
Diverse pool of jury members as well as mentors - could cover different topics; made evaluation better as well	go out for dinner in town with the team in the evening of day 1

Teams division into 5 different streams during semi-finals: was easier to manage pitches; give attention to each team; manage time	give more mentoring sessions on pitches preparation
All top final teams were pitching online, no matter if they were in Vilnius or not	teams should have been coached more on how to approach mentors; to be maximum prepared for the meetings
Intro by teams during day 1	
Using Discord - communication was easier, teams were engaged; issues were addressed quickly	
Great feedback from teams regarding prepared mentors; advices from investors	
Energetic highly positive mood	

Table: organiser feedback

The organising team of the Fashion Sprint will be in close contact with the organising team of Growth Programme activity to ensure knowledge and experience share. Suggested improvements will be kept in mind and implemented where possible when organising the next event (Growth Programme kick off in September).

5. Further needs and input for the Growth Programme

Fashion Sprint participant, expert and organiser feedback analysis provides input for organising the following events and selection activities/topics for the Growth Programme.

Furthermore, participants and experts both were questioned regarding the further needs of the participating partnerships to reach their circularity goals.

Based on the feedback analysis the following recommendations for the Growth Programme can be made:

- Networking with peers.** Participants would appreciate more peer-to-peer networking opportunities and cross team learning opportunities. Growth Programme will include activities that allow for physical and/or virtual networking, experience and knowledge sharing between participating teams. The networking platform set up in Discord for Fashion Sprint will remain open for the participants to keep connecting. Discord will likely be used for the duration of the Growth Programme and beyond if feasible.

- **Regular sessions.** Participants feel that most beneficial for their development and for putting together a roadmap would be regular sessions with mentors and investors. Fashion For Change Growth Programme foresees weekly chief mentoring and topic mentoring for all teams together with creating an individual development plan for each partnership in collaboration with mentors and experts. Selected TOP 5 will get a chance to meet and pitch for investors.
- **Business model development.** Further knowledge regarding building a circular business model is needed by the participants. Fashion for Change Growth Programme focuses on three core topics: Circularity and Sustainability; Product and service development and Business mentoring.
- **Further mentoring and training.** Recommended topics (by the Fashion Sprint experts and mentors) for the growth programme: financial model, financial support, business model and business mentorship, circularity mentorship, introductions to the ecosystem players and potential partners, resources and contacts, investment readiness, testing ideas with real customers.

Recommendations presented in this paragraph will be communicated to the Growth Programme lead at Growth Programme preparation meeting.

6. Challenges met during execution

Despite the successfully held Fashion Sprint hackathon event, there are a couple of challenges that could assist as learning opportunities in similar events. Acknowledging these challenges might also help to perform and adjust the Growth Programme to the maximum.

- **Give more time to participants for deciding their online/physical event attendance.** Due to the complexity of the participants - different geographical locations and transnational partnerships - the list of top 35 teams was finalised only by the end of May, when the organisers were assured that all the teams had their transnational partners. This made it difficult to inform teams in advance regarding their physical/online attendance of the event. Teams had appr. 3 weeks to prepare and most of them chose to attend the event online due to other obligations. Ideally, teams should have at least 2 months in advance to plan their travelling and schedules. Teams that attended the event physically, were asked to identify whether they need their accommodation costs to be covered by

the project. 6 people indicated such a need and their accommodation was covered.

- **Mentors engagement and workflow management.** As this hackathon involved 21 mentors from various industries and geographies, it also posed certain challenges. Depending on the mentors expertise and skills, teams were asked to book them in advance. All the required tools were provided. However, some mentors were more popular than others, which resulted in intense meetings with no to short breaks. Hence, mentors should have been provided with longer slots for breaks in between the sessions. Additionally, mentors received all the information about the event a week in advance but it could have been beneficial to send the information about specific teams they'll be meeting 2 days prior the event. In the context of this hackathon, mentors received team-related information 1 day in advance. This was due to the fact that teams were still booking the mentors almost till the last day before the hackathon.
- **Clearly determine the deadlines for the participants.** The teams had quite many call to actions prior to the event, e.g. notify their physical/online attendance, mentors and workshops booking to name a few. Some teams were late to provide the required information or were changing it a couple of times. This made it difficult for the organisers to move on to the other steps of the process. Hence, teams should have received more strict deadlines as well as get constant reminders. All information was sent in advance but should have been sent even earlier to allow the teams to adjust and get familiar with the details.
- **Onboarding teams on the mentoring sessions with instructions.** All teams selected the mentors they would like to meet, however, some teams lacked preparation and were not fully ready to take the most out of meeting the mentors. The practice has shown that some of the teams came to the sessions unprepared to ask questions or advice. They have presented their product/service but didn't have clear goals for what they would like to get out of the mentoring. They should have been onboarded in a greater detail on how to benefit from meeting the mentors. A brief question manual might be helpful as well.
- **Hybrid format of the event.** While all the teams, both those present online and physically in Vilnius, were involved in the full agenda and activities, it was challenging at times to ensure this seamless transition. Due to the high number of participants - mentors, jury, experts, teams, in some occasions participants needed to wait until they were sent to their designated zoom meeting or session. Some teams were late to meet the mentors, last minute reminders just prior to the session might have helped.

Annex: Photos of the hybrid set up of the event



Photo: Online pitching with presentation in front of the live and virtual audience



Photo: Online pitching in front of the live and virtual audience



Photo: On-site pitching in front of live and online audience



Photo: hybrid Fireside Chat format

A fireside chat is an informal, yet structured dialogue between a speaker and a moderator, who focuses on adding a casual tone to the conversation while providing massive value to the audience.

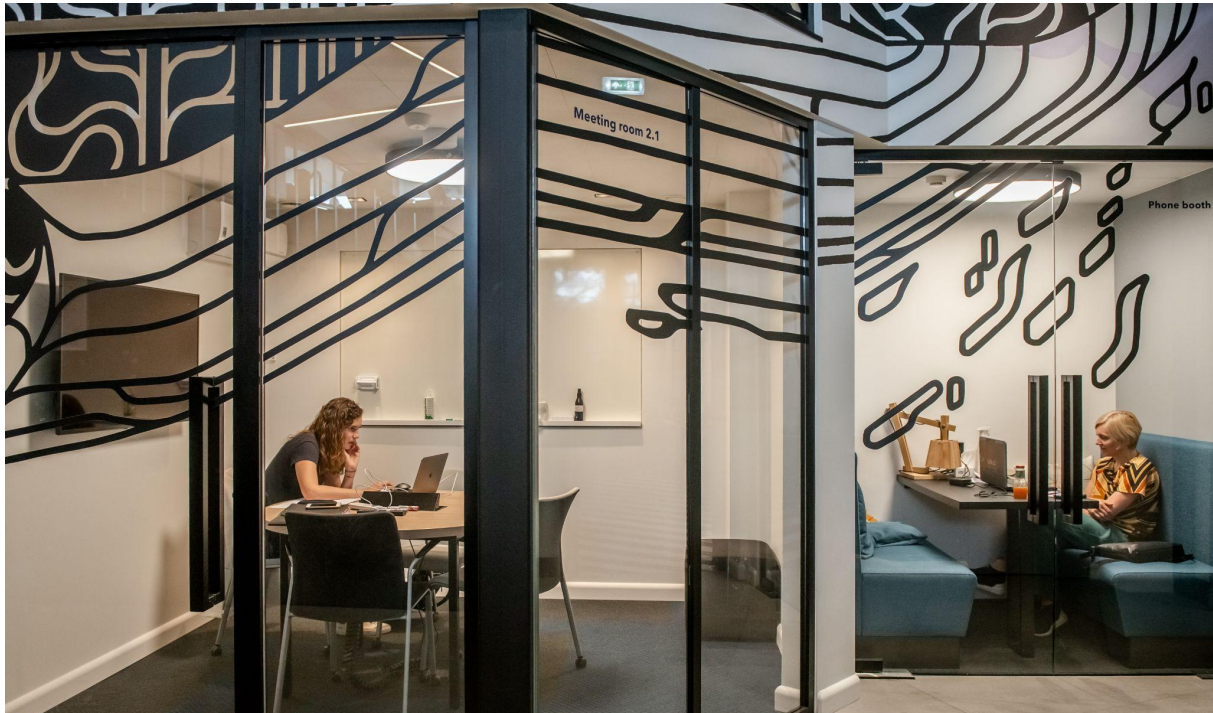


Photo: left - onsite participant receiving online mentoring, right - onsite mentor giving mentoring to online team.



Photo: Online and onsite participants group photo