

D4.2

Dissemination and Communication Activities Interim Report (M1 - 18)



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Abstract	As part of WP4, this interim report summarises the communications and dissemination activities carried out during the first half (M1 – M18) of the project.

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Table of contents

1. Executive Summary	4
2. Introduction	4
2.1. The Fashion for Change Project	4
2.2. Purpose of the Report	5
3. Communications and Dissemination Strategy	6
4. Communication Tools	7
4.1. Internal Communication	7
4.2 External Communication	8
4.2.1 Visual Identity	8
4.2.2 Website	10
4.2.3 Social Media	12
4.2.4 Press Releases	13
4.2.5 Newsletters	13
4.2.6 Events	14
5. Outcome	14
5.1 Strategic dissemination and communication plan	16
5.2 Website	16
5.3 Social Media	16
5.4 Newsletters	18
5.5 Events	19
6. Conclusions and Outlook	19
6.1 Conclusions	19
6.2 Outlook	20
7. Consortium Partners	21
8. Annexes	23
Annexe 1: Newsletters	23
Annexe 2: Events	25
9. References	28

1. Executive Summary



The main objective of Work Package (WP) 4 “Dissemination and Exploitation” is to maximise the impact of the Fashion for Change project. It aims to do so by promoting small and medium size enterprises (SMEs), designers and start-ups along with their innovative ideas and initiatives and ensure the sustainability of the overall project by sharing its results with a wider audience of stakeholders and decision makers from the European textiles and fashion industry, including investors and policymakers. One of the main KPIs of WP4 include the promotion of the project, its actors and outcomes to a minimum of 100 000 stakeholders.

Dissemination and communication activities follow the “Strategic Dissemination and Communication Plan”¹ drafted at the outset of the project under D4.1. They are being carried out in two phases, according to the objectives of the project:

Phase #1 (M1 – 18) of the project covered by this interim report was a preparatory phase to put in place all necessary communication tools to promote the virtual Knowledge Hub and mobilise companies for the Fashion Sprint Open call and Hackathon event. From the consortium’s perspective, these objectives were widely accomplished.

Going forward, phase #2 (M19 – 36) will be centred around the Fashion for Change Growth Programme, its activities, participants and outcomes, providing a maximum level of transparency and added value to all stakeholders that are taking an interest.

2. Introduction

2.1. The Fashion for Change Project



The Fashion for Change project aims to support SMEs, designers and start-ups from the fashion industry with design, implementation and upscaling of circular businesses ventures. The main goal is to accelerate the uptake of circular and sustainable business models within the fashion industry.

The project consortium consists of five partners from Estonia, Lithuania and Belgium including Civitta Eesti AS, the Estonian Academy of Arts, Singleton, Katalista Ventures and the European Sustainable Business Federation (Ecopreneur.eu). These partners combine expertise in sustainable design and fashion, support for SMEs and start-ups, innovation management, circular business models, and related EU policies. See section 7 (‘Consortium Partners’) for further information.

The 3-year Fashion for Change project consists of the establishment of an online Knowledge Hub, an open call to qualify 25 transnational teams and a Growth Programme to support these teams with their business projects and ideas. Within the Fashion for Change Growth Programme, 25 transnational partnerships from at least two EU or other COSME countries were selected during a “Fashion Sprint” hackathon in M18. Going forward, these partnerships will receive practical support with their circular ventures in terms of capacity building, access to networks, personal training and financial support. Participating parties will be introduced to a wider audience to create awareness about their innovative venture and to promote the viability of circular fashion among consumers and key decision-makers from the fashion industry, including policy makers and potential investors.

Finally, there will be a report with recommendations for both regulatory and practical measures to ensure the replicability and sustainability of the project. By sharing all insights and best practices on the virtual Knowledge Hub, Fashion for Change aims to extend the positive impact of the project to a wider community beyond the project’s official timeframe.

2.2. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this deliverable (D4.2) is to provide an interim status report about the communication activities under WP4 “Dissemination and Exploitation”. WP4 aims to maximise the impact of the project by (1) disseminating project results, (2) promoting the hub actors (SMEs, designers and start-ups), initiatives, innovative ideas and tools to the wider public, fashion industry, investors and policy makers and (3) ensuring the sustainability of the Fashion for Change project.

Dissemination and exploitation activities are being rolled out in two phases, according to the objectives of the project:

Phase 1: Initiation and recruitment (M1 - M18)

Phase 2: Acceleration and exploitation (M18 - M36)

Phase #1 was a preparatory phase to put in place all necessary communication tools to promote the virtual Knowledge Hub and mobilise companies for the Fashion Sprint open call and hackathon.

Communication efforts in phase #2 will focus on the Growth Programme and its related activities and outcomes, while featuring its 25 participating teams. It prepares the ground for long-term impact and exploitation of results.

The present interim report outlines the communication and dissemination activities of the 1st phase (M1 - M18).

3. Communications and Dissemination Strategy



The dissemination and communication of the project follows a “Strategic Dissemination and Communication Plan” (D4.1) drafted at the outset of the project, taking into consideration the allocated time and budget along with the skills and means of the consortium members.

More specifically, the “Strategic Dissemination and Communications Plan” defines

- the objectives of the Fashion for Change communication and dissemination strategy,
- the project’s identity (branding) and materials that support the dissemination activities,
- the target audiences and key messages,
- the main channels for reaching target audiences,
- the planned communication and dissemination activities, including an indicative timeline for their implementation, and
- references to key performance indicators (KPIs).

The plan is being reviewed and adjusted according to the monitoring of respective activities. Communication activities aim to create awareness and thereby directly or indirectly accelerate the uptake of innovation to increase the application of circular and sustainable business models within the fashion industry, depending on the target groups. These consist primarily of textiles and fashion designers, SMEs and start-up companies, in accordance with the objective of WP4. Secondary target audiences are decision makers and multipliers such as industry experts, policy makers, investors and the media, followed by consumers and the general public.

The implementation of the communications strategy is foreseen in two phases.

Phase #1 (M1 - M18) focused on the development of the Fashion for Change communication channels and brand awareness. The first nine months were used to put in place all the necessary communication channels, tools and materials which were used in the following nine months (M10 – 18) to create awareness among key audiences for the project in general and the open call for the Growth Programme in particular.

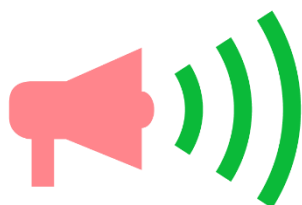
Phase #2 (M19 – M36) will concentrate on the Growth Programme and the dissemination of the project’s learnings, results and recommendations.

More specifically, in the first phase, the following tasks have been implemented:

- 1) Design, implementation and promotion of the Fashion for Change website and Knowledge Hub and its content
- 2) Dissemination of the WP1 “Stakeholder Mapping” report and its results
- 3) Promotion of the Fashion for Change Open call, Self-Assessment Tool and Accelerator Programme
- 4) Promotion of events, especially the Matchmaking and “Fashion Sprint” hackathon events
- 5) Preparation of phase #2: Coverage of the Growth Programme, promotion of the transnational partnerships and dissemination of results

The design of the strategy was completed in M3 with the delivery and approval of D4.1 by EASME.

4. Communication Tools



4.1. Internal Communication

An international consortium of five partners from three different countries asked for the implementation of an efficient internal communications system. To that end, the team established a “Project and Quality Management Plan” (D5.1) with a specific section on “Internal Communication” that outlines the content, format, frequency, audience and expected results of communication between the project partners.

To efficiently collaborate on the planning, creation and dissemination of content, the consortium established a “Communications Taskforce” (CTF) in M13 consisting of one representative per partner. The task force has been meeting on a bi-monthly basis until M16 and once a month as from M17.

To produce and disseminate content for the project’s social media channels and website in a timely and effective fashion, the CTF defined an internal procedure and common collaboration tools. For instant communication and matters of urgency, it also established a WhatsApp group as an additional internal communications channel. By making best use of regular meetings on Zoom and shared documents on Google Drive, the team was able to manage its communications and dissemination activities in an effective way.

4.2 External Communication

As outlined in the “Strategic Dissemination and Communication Plan”, communication about Fashion for Change primarily draws on its own created media channels like the project website, social media platforms, events and newsletters and to some minor extent on the social media channels and newsletters of the five consortium partners. Consortium partners' own networks were mainly utilized by individually scouting potential participants for the Open Call (designers, fashion and textile startups, SMEs and disseminating Open Call to suitable third parties in partners networks (universities, associations, accelerators etc.) for further communication.

4.2.1 Visual Identity

To establish a high level of recognition and awareness among the target audience, the consortium set out by developing a corporate visual identity (CVI) for the Fashion for Change project drawing on Tallinn-based subcontractor StúdioStúdio². The design and implementation of the CVI included the following steps and actions:

Step#1: M1-M4

- Determination of the key target audience and core messages
- Definition of brand design principles, colour schemes and fonts
- Design of typography-based Fashion for Change logo, wordmark, and letter mark “C,” denoting “change,” but also, for example, “circularity,” as the most recognizable element of the Fashion for Change brand (M3 - M4).

Step #2: M5 – M6

- Design of pictograms, charts, graphs and media templates for both printed and digital communication, including social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn) and GoogleDocs and GoogleSlides
- Selection of brand-specific images

Step #3: M7 – M8

- Drafting of CVI Guidelines with detailed instructions for the consortium to ensure the use of visual materials in a consistent way (M7 - M8).

The CVI was created according to the objectives of Fashion for Change with a reference to circularity and the need for change in the fashion industry. It intended to be minimalistic and sustainable by minimising energy consumption and hence CO₂ emissions from loading large images and data-intensive media files.

The final CVI guidelines and visual artwork were adopted and first applied on the fashionforchange.eu website in M8. Since then, StúdioStúdio kept supervising the compliance of communication activities according to the CVI guidelines and assisting in the production of marketing materials to warrant the consistency of the project's brand identity.

The set of visual artwork includes the following items:

- Fashion for Change logo with lettermark, submark, wordmark and EU-funding tagline
- Design templates with guidelines (font type, font size, colour scheme, element hierarchy)
- Graphic elements (pictograms, photo bank/gallery, templates and backgrounds/templates for social media posts);
- Templates for reports, presentations, one-pagers and visuals for news items and social media posts
- Digital poster templates (event banners, name tags, fact sheets)
- Social media templates (Instagram posts, Facebook event cover photo, LinkedIn cover photo)
- Email signature template

Website, newsletter etc

Always remain consistent to the visual identity principles of Fashion for Change – use the intended colours, header images, typefaces etc described in this visual identity guide.

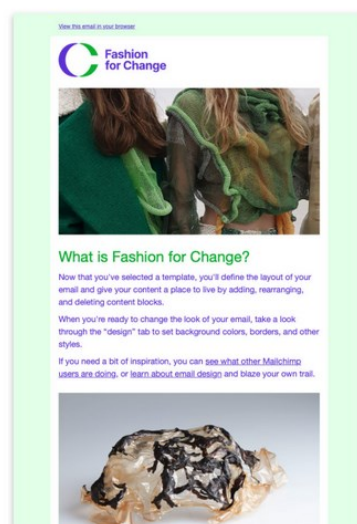
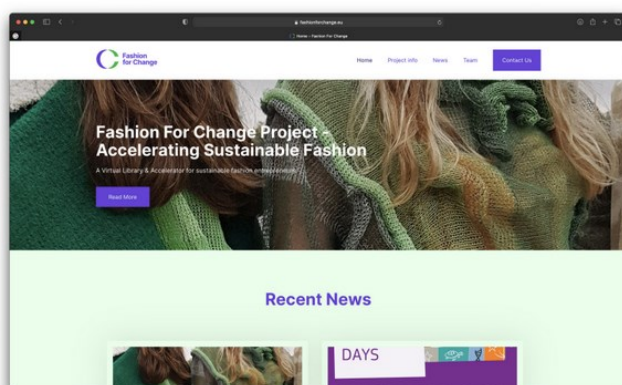


Illustration 1. CVI Guidelines (extract)

4.2.2 Website

In accordance with the communications strategy, the Fashion for Change website³ is designed as a central hub for all online traffic coming from social media sites Instagram⁴, LinkedIn⁵, Facebook⁶ and Twitter⁷, the email newsletter and search engine queries.

The website was launched in M7, followed by the Knowledge Hub⁸ section in M10 and the release of the Self-Assessment Tool⁹ plugin in M13.

The Fashion for Change homepage is fed by news posted on its social media channels in real-time. A form at the bottom of the website allows visitors to subscribe to the Fashion for Change newsletter, connect to its social media channels and submit an email.

The website displays the main menu with the categories “Project Info,” “Knowledge Hub,” “Events,” “News,” “Contact Us” with “Accelerator Programme” highlighted. Visitors can call up additional information about the project’s goals and objectives, timeline, actors, service proposal, and interim results from the main menu. The “Knowledge Hub” section is an entry point to connect to the “Community” and gain insights about the “Impact,” “Learnings,” and “Resources” gathered during the project.

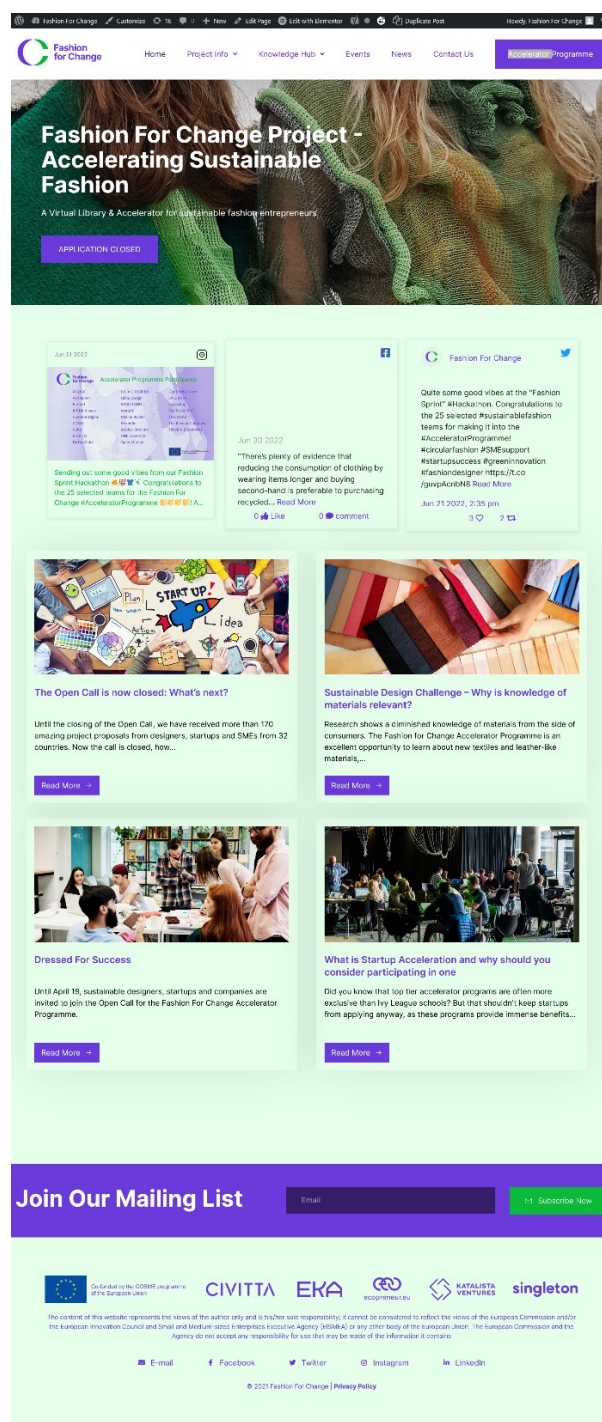


Illustration 2. Fashion For Change homepage

The Knowledge Hub is the centrepiece of the website. Designed as a virtual community platform, it directs stakeholders to useful contacts and resources. The “Events” and “News” sections keep them informed about the project’s milestones, products and insights. Above all, the “Events” section was the entry point for start-ups and their transnational partnerships to apply for participation in the Fashion for Change public call and growth programme.

As part of the Knowledge Hub, the self-assessment tool helps evaluate a company's sustainability performance and identify areas for improvement. To this end, participants of the Fashion for Change Growth Programme are committed to register on the Knowledge Hub to carry out an evaluation of their proper business venture or project.

Self-assessment results are stored in the database and are user specific. This means that once self-assessment has been carried out, users can access and see the last two results. Results are presented by radar graphs and can be printed and saved for further reference.

From a technical perspective, the designers of the Fashion for Change website accomplished the design of data structures, working with data presentation, design, and layout, creating business logic in the backend for storing and getting data from the database. Also, a significant part of the work included a feedback module for enabling users to add content to the Knowledge Hub themselves. The feedback module also features both a scoring and a comment function with an underlying data validation system to be used by the administrator to easily process and publish new content.

To help administrators with this task, consortium partner Singleton created a content management manual. On the homepage of the website, they integrated social media feeds from Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, along with plugins for Mailchimp and Google Analytics with out-of-the-box features. Data for these features are accessed via the corresponding API-s. Singleton took care of getting access to these API-s by setting up developer accounts and acquiring access tokens.

The domain registration, web hosting, and e-mail servers are handled by Singleton and provided by the web hosting provider Dreamhost¹⁰. Messages sent to the info@fashionforchange.eu email account and through the contact form of the Fashion for Change project website are forwarded to the email account of the communications task leader automatically. Through easy access to the WordPress content management system, the Fashion for Change project website can be updated by the project team with relevant information.

In terms of content, the number of news items published on the website during the preparatory phase (M1 - M9) was two per month on average. With the release of the first deliverables like the “Map of Sustainable Fashion Actors and Initiatives” (D1.1)¹¹, the report “Analyses of the Challenges, Needs and Existing Solutions”¹² (D1.3) and the Initial Virtual Knowledge Hub (D1.4), the number of posts doubled to one post per week across all existing communications channels.

4.2.3 Social Media

To create awareness among key stakeholders for the Fashion for Change project, the consortium established four social media accounts at the outset of the project:

- Facebook – to address the general public
- Instagram – to engage with fashion designers, influencers
- LinkedIn – to reach corporate businesses, existing network partners and potential investors
- Twitter – platform to involve policymakers and the media

In addition, a LinkedIn Group called “Sustainable Fashion Change Makers”¹³ was created to serve as a forum for public interaction.

To gain visibility and traction on these channels, the communications team identified a list of 20 influencers that were contacted personally through instant messaging, asking them to follow Fashion for Change and share its messages. While half of them followed our request, the other half proved to be less reactive as they did not see a commercial benefit in promoting the project.

To ensure the widest possible reach, the consortium partners’ proper social media channels have been used for sharing content. Content management and sharing was simplified by giving all partners’ communication specialists access to project owned accounts and providing guidelines for social media content creation and posting.

With a total of 57 137, the consortium’s follower base on social media is humble but diverse, including entrepreneurs (Civitta, Katalista Ventures, Singleton), students (Estonian Academy of Arts, Singleton), professionals (Academy of Arts, Ecopreneur), potential investors (Katalista Ventures) and policymakers (Academy of Arts, Ecopreneur).

CONSORTIUM PARTNER	FACEBOOK	LINKEDIN	INSTAGRAM	TWITTER
Civitta	8 979	13 479	587	299
Estonian Academy of Arts	13 536	4 076	9 658	204
Ecopreneur.eu	1 026	839	50	2 421
Katalista Ventures	460	788	N/A	148
Singleton	456	388	307	N/A
Total Followers:	24 457	19 570	10 602	3 072

Table 1. Consortium partners’ follower base in social media (M18)

As all partners have a different follower base and strategy for their own channels, consortium partners remained independent in their choice which project related content to share with their proper contacts and networks. This applies to all channels, social media and beyond.

Shared channels were used to gain the interest of third parties from target audiences and to indirectly extend the project reach beyond the audiences of the consortium. The

use of shared media includes cross-posting and reposting third party content via project channels (mainly social media and website). For example, from the start, the consortium has been collaborating with their COSME peer projects “S For Fashion”¹⁴, “CircularInnoBooster”¹⁵ and “Small But Perfect”¹⁶ by sharing news via social media and on the “NexTextileGenerationEU”¹⁷ website hosted by “CircularInnoBooster”.

4.2.4 Press Releases

In addition to social media posts and articles published on the Fashion for Change website and in newsletter, the communications plan suggested the dissemination of news content to manually established media distribution lists including news hubs like Newswire, eReleases or PR Web.

Investigations by the communications team however showed that relevant media outlets were not prepared to publish this information free of charge but in the form of an advertorial against a fee, which the project had not foreseen any budget for.

For this reason, it was decided to continue with our dissemination efforts through our own communication channels and those of our partners. For further information, see section 6.1 (“Conclusions”).

4.2.5 Newsletters

Newsletters include various news items about project activities, actors and outcomes. Sent to subscribers with a dedicated interest in the project only, newsletters are a useful tool to inform stakeholders that are less active on social media but prefer email instead. Readers are directed to the project website with additional information and references to relevant actors and resources.

With the support of Singleton, the communications team set up a newsletter template on the email marketing platform Mailchimp¹⁸ based on the Fashion for Change visual identity guidelines. Mailchimp is an online marketing automation platform and email marketing service for managing mailing lists and creating email marketing campaigns. To build a GDPR-compliant subscriber list, the Fashion for Change project website displays a subscription form and button on all pages. By the end of the reporting period, the Fashion for Change newsletter counted 233 subscribers.

The communications plan suggests the dissemination of four newsletters over the course of project implementation with the following focus:

- 1) Preparation of the Growth Programme: upcoming events, available materials, collaborations with established circular fashion actors
- 2) Opening of the Open Call, information and results about events and support activities held, upcoming activities
- 3) Results of the Hackathon and information about the upcoming Growth Programme, developments of the Knowledge Hub
- 4) Report on the results of the Growth Programme, experience stories of the participants, sustainability and replication actions

Rather than releasing two newsletters, the communications team decided to build up the subscriber base before sending a first more comprehensive newsletter designed to promote the Open Call of the Growth Programme to potential candidates across Europe.

4.2.6 Events

During the reporting period the consortium organised four one recruitment events, one recruitment webinar, one design hackathon, two growth program study visits and investor meetups. The specific objective of events differs according to the stage of the project, but the general objective remains the same – providing networking opportunities, personal connections and peer-to-peer learning to the stakeholders. In case of continued travel restrictions, the events will be organised online.

Events organised by the consortium play an important part in creating trust in the objectives of the project and the promises given to the expected participants. Events also give an opportunity to monitor and register interested parties, proposing them to sign up to receive project news, giving an opportunity to engage them in other project activities and/or dissemination.

In phase #1, the main goal of the recruitment events and webinar was to inform stakeholders about the Knowledge Hub on the project website and make them apply for the Open Call of the design hackathon and Fashion for Change Growth Programme. Indirectly, these events also served the purpose of increasing the general awareness around sustainable fashion players, including business accelerators for circular fashion.

In phase #2, the main goal of the design hackathon, the study visits and investor meetups that are arranged as a part of the Growth Program is about peer-to-peer learning and capacity-building. Indirectly, the events and the promotion of transnational projects will help raise awareness about sustainable entrepreneurship and circular business models in the fashion industry.

5. Outcome



One of the main objectives of the Fashion for Change project is to warrant its impact through effective communication and dissemination. Over the course of the project, it aims to reach 100 000 stakeholders through social media, promote the innovative ideas featured by the transnational teams of the Growth Programme, and (c) produce an exploitation strategy and toolkit for a wider stakeholder audience.

The below table gives an overview of the actions performed to pursue these objectives in the first half of the project (M1 – M18) including their respective key performance indicators (KPIs) and quantifiable results:

OBJECTIVES/KPIs (M1 -36)	ACTIONS PERFORMED (THRU M18)	RESULTS (THRU M18)
Generate 10 000 visits/views on the project website (M1 – M36)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation and launch of project website in M7 • Publication of “Mapping” Report (D1.1) and “Analyses of the Challenges, Needs and Existing Solutions” Report (D1.3) in M7 • Creation and launch of a “Virtual Knowledge Hub” in M10 • Launch of Self-Assessment Tool in M13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 664 page views from 1911 unique visitors on project website • 465 online reports downloaded • 266 company profiles registered on Virtual Knowledge Hub • Self-Assessment Tool page visited 613 times
Reach 100 000 stakeholders through social media to get 100 registrations for the Open Call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of strategic dissemination and communication plan (D4.1) in M3 • Creation of visuals and support materials (T4.3) as from M4 • Launch of 4 social media channels (T4.2) in M5 • Creation of project website (T4.2) in M7 • Launch of “Sustainable Changemakers” LinkedIn group in M7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 social media channels reaching a total of 239 377 stakeholders • 170 applications from 32 countries gathered
Distribute 4 newsletters reaching a total of 4 000 stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of newsletter template in M6 • Dissemination of first newsletter with 7 articles in M14 • Dissemination of newsletter content by third parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletter #1 sent to 233 subscribers • 200 000 views by subscribers of 16 third party newsletters <p>(see Annexe 1 “Newsletters”)</p>
Organise 3 networking activities, workshops and events to recruit participants for the Growth Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of own events • Promotion of external events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 456 stakeholders signed up for 4 project events • 5 870 stakeholders attending 9 external events <p>(see Annexe 2 “Events”)</p>

Table 2. Overview of expected and achieved results

5.1 Strategic dissemination and communication plan

The strategic dissemination and communication plan and guidelines proved to be useful for keeping the project focused on its main goals and objectives. The plan enabled the communications team to target and reach key stakeholders from the EU textiles and fashion industry.

The activities performed according to the communications and dissemination plan resulted in a high level of visibility and outreach with stakeholders from the fashion industry. This impact resulted in a high number of interactions, collaboration and – ultimately – participation in the open call for the Fashion for Change Growth Programme scheduled for the second half of the project.

A strong online presence enabled the consortium to reach out to many stakeholders, carry out mapping activities (WP1), share information about the open call, and effectively promote activities and events.

5.2 Website

The project's social media channels and website, especially the virtual Knowledge Hub provide young entrepreneurs from the fashion industry the chance to access useful resources and contacts to get orientation and build know-how.

The content provided on the virtual Knowledge Hub, like the “Mapping” report (D1.3) released in M7, helps participants of the Fashion for Change Growth Programme - and stakeholders from the fashion industry in general - identify useful resources and solutions to overcome typical challenges of establishing or running fashion businesses with sustainability at the heart.

It also facilitated the matchmaking of applicants and the formation of transnational teams for the Fashion for Change Growth Programme.

Within the current reporting period, the Knowledge Hub has been gathering 141 company profiles from sustainable start-ups, SMEs and fashion designers, and another 125 profiles of organisations providing useful resources. The “Mapping” report was downloaded 465 times.

Due to social media posts displayed on the project's homepage, articles published in the news sections and content added to the Knowledge Hub, the number of visitors of the Fashion for Change website has been growing continuously from 381 unique visits in M9 to 8 684 by the end of M18.

5.3 Social Media

As expected, social media proved to be essential for reaching and mobilising SMEs, fashion designers and start-ups as the primary target audience to participate in the open call for the Fashion for Change accelerator programme. Due to an average of two posts

and tweets released through social media per week, the number of subscribers, followers, and connections has been constantly increasing. On LinkedIn, the “Sustainable Fashion Change Makers” group counted a total of 80 members, a number which eventually will grow when moderated more intensively in the 2nd phase of the project.

By M18, the four Fashion for Change proper social media channels had a total of 956 followers, including 423 on LinkedIn, 92 on Facebook, 316 on Instagram and 125 on Twitter. From the 195 social media posts published during the current reporting period, 174 were disseminated through Fashion for Change’s own social media channels and the channels of our consortium partners (CV: 7, EP: 9, KV: 5, EKA: 7).

The vast majority (83%) of these posts were designed to promote the open call for the Fashion for Change Growth Programme. Eight social media posts with elevated popularity scores, most of them featuring video or animated content, were promoted (“boosted”) on Facebook and Instagram through paid advertising. With a total of 325,000 paid impressions, this tactic proved to be highly effective.

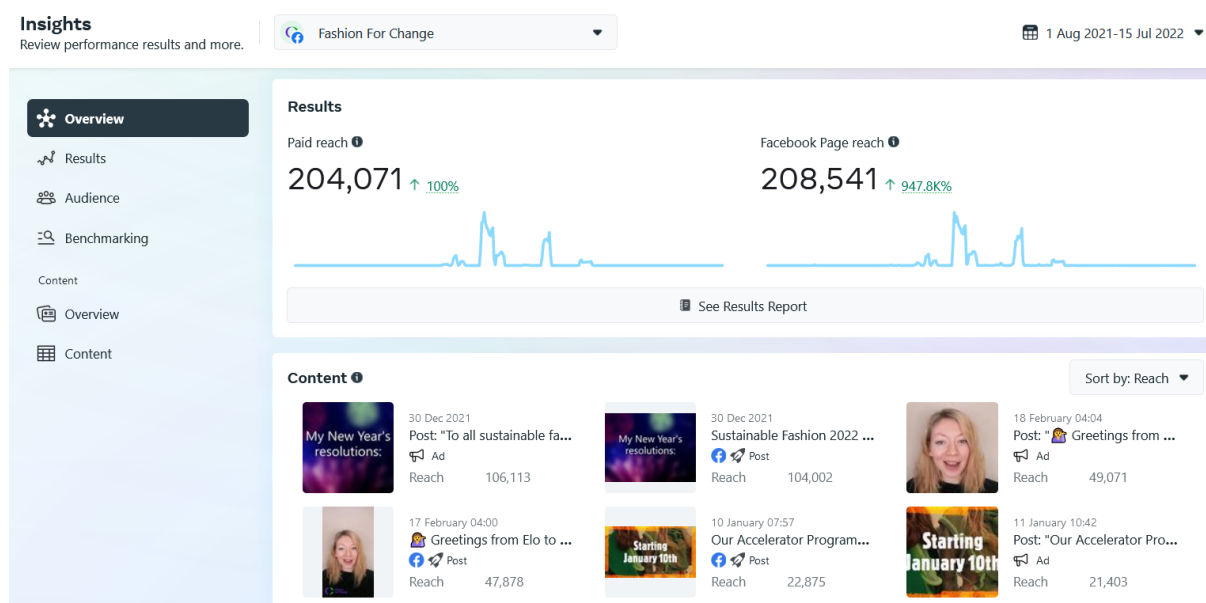


Illustration 3. Paid advertising results on Facebook

In addition, several 3rd parties shared posts through their proper social media channels, including Riga Fashion Week, the Tartu Centre for Creative Industries, and the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Forum (ECESP), to name only a few.

All posts were combined either with an image, a video or an animation. To emphasise the interpersonal character of the project and the empathetic approach in our communications, three videos were produced featuring a staff member acting as a human face of the Fashion for Change project.

Involving third parties through shared content and tagging on social media turned out to be an effective tactic to extend the project’s reach beyond the consortium’s proper channels to a wider pan-European audience.

As a result, the number of people reached through posts from all social media channels hit the project's 100 000 benchmark on January 7 (M12). By M18, this number more than doubled to 239 377, with 208 541 people reached through Facebook alone.

5.4 Newsletters

The first of the four newsletters planned for the project was published in M14 and contained seven articles¹⁹. The purpose of the first edition was to highlight the previous deliverables of the project, including the Knowledge Hub, Self-Assessment Tool and D1.3 "Mapping" report, with the objective to spur participation in the open call of the Fashion for Change Growth Programme ("Now it's time to join the Open Call") and related info sessions and matchmaking events.

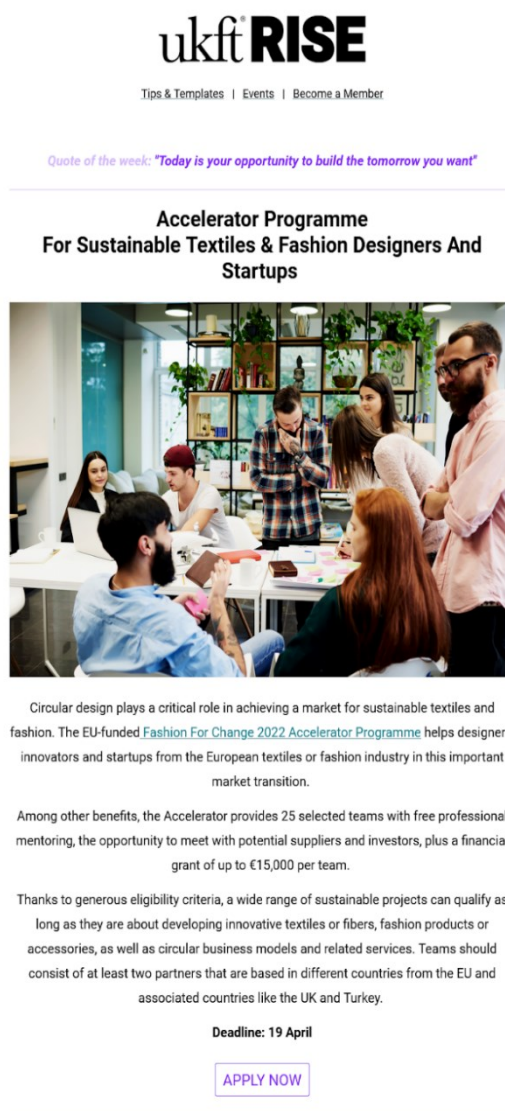
The Open Call was widely promoted in 16 other newsletters by consortium partners and 3rd parties including

- the United Nations Environmental Programme,
- the World Resources Institute,
- the Creatives Unite Hub,
- the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP),
- NexTextileEU,
- UK Rise, and
- WRAP.

Third parties were contacted individually by email, asking them to share the news content in their respective newsletters.

Within the consortium, Katalista Ventures do not have a newsletter at their disposal to share project-specific news items. EKA, on the other hand, decided to fully focus their efforts on identifying potential candidates for the Open Call without making use of their newsletter.

Annexe 1 provides a full overview of all the newsletters used. Combined dissemination activities resulted in a total estimated reach of 200 000 stakeholders.



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**Accelerator Programme
For Sustainable Textiles & Fashion Designers And
Startups**

Circular design plays a critical role in achieving a market for sustainable textiles and fashion. The EU-funded [Fashion For Change 2022 Accelerator Programme](#) helps designers, innovators and startups from the European textiles or fashion industry in this important market transition.

Among other benefits, the Accelerator provides 25 selected teams with free professional mentoring, the opportunity to meet with potential suppliers and investors, plus a financial grant of up to €15,000 per team.

Thanks to generous eligibility criteria, a wide range of sustainable projects can qualify as long as they are about developing innovative textiles or fibers, fashion products or accessories, as well as circular business models and related services. Teams should consist of at least two partners that are based in different countries from the EU and associated countries like the UK and Turkey.

Deadline: 19 April

[APPLY NOW](#)

Illustration 4. Example: Coverage in UK Rise Newsletter (May 2022 edition)

5.5 Events

With the goal to reach and mobilise a maximum number of participants for the Open Call and Growth Programme, the consortium organised an online “Questions & Answers” (Q &A) session and Matchmaking event for a total of 56 participants in M14. In addition, during M18 a Fashion Sprint hybrid event was organised to select the TOP 25 teams to get full access to the accelerator programme. The Fashion Sprint attracted a total of 142 contacts and was a huge success. As outlined above, these events were promoted intensively through communications activities through various channels, and especially social media.

In addition, the consortium participated in 11 online and in-person events organised by 3rd parties, primarily to network and promote the Fashion for Change project among key stakeholders, including Textile ETP (M5), Riga Fashion Week (M10), Responsible Fashion Series (M10), and a NexTextile EU webinar together with our three COSME sister projects (M12).

Through both project and third-party events, the consortium reached a total of 6326 stakeholders from the European textiles and fashion industry. Find an overview in Annexe 2.

6. Conclusions and Outlook



6.1 Conclusions

The goal of WP4 is to assure the impact of the Fashion for Change project through the communication and exploitation of results. This demands an effective promotion of the Knowledge Hub, the growth programme and the transnational projects featured therein.

In the first half of the project (M1 – 18), communication activities aimed at making SMEs, designers, and start-ups from the textiles industry aware of the Fashion for Change project in general and the open call for the “Fashion Sprint” hackathon and growth programme in particular.

Major milestones reached during this period include (1) the design of a communication and dissemination plan, which forms the basis of the project’s continuous dissemination activities, (2) the publication and of the Fashion for Change website and Knowledge Hub, (3) the establishment of four social media channels on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, and (4) the successful promotion of the Open Call, “Fashion Sprint” hackathon and accelerator programme, which resulted in the achievement of the objectives set for this timeframe.

To reach this outcome, communication and dissemination on social media with posts that direct to the Fashion for Change website as a central “hub” proved to be most effective. Experience showed that the quality of content published through these

channels in terms of relevance, creativity and regularity is critical for reaching the target audience and developing a solid follower base. Posts carrying animated content or videos, especially those featuring a representative as the “human face” of the Fashion for Change project, typically performed best. “Boosted” through paid advertising on Facebook and Instagram, content in this format achieved the highest reach, interaction and impact at an international level.

Regarding multipliers, the communications team came to the conclusion that influencers on social media typically are not interested in supporting initiatives without a commercial product and a limited follower base like Fashion For Change because from their perspective sharing content would not provide them a commercial benefit.

A similar conclusion accounts for media outlets when it comes to press releases: While the strategic dissemination and communication plan (T4.1) suggested the dissemination of project-related news content through online media, these commercial platforms were reluctant to publish our information free of charge.

As the project had not foreseen a specific budget for advertorials, dissemination of news content had to rely mostly on proper communication channels and those of our partners. In practice, consortium members found it more effective to ask their personal contacts rather than commercial providers to disseminate relevant project news to their respective networks.

For future projects, however, we recommend foreseeing a certain part of the communications budget for paid advertising on media platforms and social media, including influencers, to achieve an even broader outreach and impact of communication and dissemination activities.

6.2 Outlook

In the next phase of the project (M19 – 36), communications will focus primarily on the Fashion for Change Growth Programme, featuring its transnational projects and actors, activities and results. Communication and dissemination activities will aim to produce a maximum level of transparency and impact by sharing insights to a broad range of stakeholders on a regular basis.

To ensure the exploitation of project results within and beyond the project’s timeframe, the consortium will aim to produce and disseminate relevant content to a well-targeted audience from the fashion industry and decision makers from policy and finance. To this end, the effective use of social media and the Fashion Change website as a central hub of information and gateway to the Knowledge Hub will remain key.

In addition to social media posts and new website content, three more newsletters will be distributed to an ever-growing subscriber base in the second half of the project to highlight the Fashion for Change Growth Programme, outcome and final recommendations.

7. Consortium Partners

Civitta, Estonia

CIVITTA is a leading management consultancy across the Baltics and Eastern Europe, with the headquarters in Estonia. CIVITTA provides management consulting and data analytics services to corporations, start-ups, SMEs, governments and NGOs. CIVITTA helps companies to challenge their own industries by becoming more innovative, efficient and dynamic. Areas of expertise are entrepreneurship support, market analyses, business planning, innovation management, commercialization and public tender consultancy services to the SMEs, designers and start-ups, mentoring and coaching and managing investor programmes.

Ecopreneur.eu, Belgium

Ecopreneur.eu is the European Sustainable Business Federation of currently six national associations representing about 3000 sustainable companies – mostly SMEs. It is the European voice of green small and medium sized enterprises driving the transition towards a circular economy. A member of the Coordination Group of the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform, Ecopreneur.eu is the only international business organisation in Brussels committed to ambitious measures, rules and regulations for a low-carbon circular economy. Ecopreneur.eu and its members bring concrete experience from pioneering companies into the political debate, show best practice examples and represent the needs of green SMEs in a credible way.

Estonian Academy of Arts, Estonia

Estonian Academy of Arts (EKA) is the leading university in Estonia in the fields of Fine Arts, Design, and Architecture. With 200+ staff members and around 1.200 students, its practice-based Fashion, Textile, and Accessory Design curricula have a specific focus on design for sustainability. EKA has previously been involved in the development of EcoDesign Audit – a diagnostic tool for SMEs to assess their eco-design capabilities – as well as a teaching resource repository to further contribute to the sustainable transformation of (fashion) design education.

Katalista Ventures, Lithuania

Katalista Ventures is the first Baltic triple top line accelerator and fund for start-ups and organisations aiming to achieve their potential while bringing a positive impact on People, Planet, and Profit. Since 2017, Katalista Ventures collaborates with companies, governmental institutions and NGOs globally to build capacity in the sustainability ecosystem, provide sustainable innovation advisory, and help develop resilience with a triple top line business model. Its portfolio consists of high-impact start-ups focused on developing solutions to global grand challenges and sustainable development goals.

Singleton, Estonia

Singleton is an Estonian software and product development company focused on small but fast-growing businesses. Singleton's expertise lies in providing a dedicated and customised approach for developing companies' ideas to Minimum Viable Products and further to world class products. For that they combine a lean approach with the latest technology. Singleton's competencies are product and process design, software consultancy, product development, business development, business and software analysis and strategy consulting.

8. Annexes

Annexe 1: Newsletters

PARTNERS' NEWSLETTERS OVERVIEW

Newsletter sender	Sender type	Scope (national, international, other)	Purpose	Link	Publication month	Audience number (reach)
Civitta Newsletter	Consortium member (owned)	International	Informing proper networks about launch of project website and Knowledge Hub	n/a	M11	423
Civitta Newsletter	Consortium member (owned)	International	Open Call promotion	n/a	M13	411
Civitta Inno International Newsletter	Consortium member (owned)	International	Open Call promotion	n/a	M16	440
UK Rise Newsletter	Partner (3rd party)	International	Open Call promotion	https://tinyurl.com/24dmjtp7	M16	10145
WRAP UK	Partner (3rd party)	Global	Open Call promotion	https://mailchi.mp/wrap/textiles2030-8681?e=c9049f4a2b	M16	21835
United Nations Environmental Programme	Partner (3rd party)	Global	Open Call promotion	https://mailchi.mp/20a6f51270cd/unep-textiles-newsletter-march-2022	M16	610
World Resources Institute	Partner (3rd party)	Global	Open Call promotion	https://www.linkedin.com/posts/stientje-vanvelldhoven_mentoring-circularfashion-startups-activity-6911622201074925568-ulxD?utm_source=linkedin_share&utm_medium=member_desktop_web	M16	109.472
Creatives Unite Hub	Partner (3rd party)	International	Open Call promotion	https://creativesunite.eu/fashion-for-change-accelerator-programme/	M16	43900
CenTexBel Herewear	Partner (3rd party)	National (Belgium)	Open Call promotion	https://creativesunite.eu/fashion-for-change-accelerator-programme/	M16	4564
European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP) 02/22	Partner (3rd party)	International	Open Call promotion	https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/financing/fashion-change-accelerator-programme	M16	6596

European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP), 03/22	Partner (3rd party)	International	Open Call promotion	https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/news-and-events/all-news/accelerator-programme-sustainable-textile-and-fashion-designers-applications-open-until-19-april	M16	6596
NexTextileEU 03/22 newsletter	Partner (3rd party)	International	Open Call promotion	https://nexttextilegeneration.eu/fashion-for-change-launches-accelerator-programme	M16	4191
Ecopreneur.eu 01/22 Newsletter	Consortium member (owned)	International	Open Call promotion	https://mailchi.mp/21f6ac21cc61/your-participation-link-for-the-annual-member-conference-on-june-13434705?e=42939f5a92	M16	980
Ecopreneur.eu 03/22 Newsletter	Consortium member (owned)	International	Open Call promotion	https://mailchi.mp/21f6ac21cc61/your-participation-link-for-the-annual-member-conference-on-june-13434705?e=%5bUNIQID	M16	981
BNW 02/11 Newsletter	Partner (3rd party)	National (Germany)	Open Call promotion	https://www.bnw-bundesverband.de/blog/2022/02/01/open-call-fashion-for-change/	M16	1567
Ecopreneur.eu 06/22 Newsletter	Consortium member (owned)	International	Growth Programme promotion	https://mailchi.mp/fac44bb0c88f/your-eu-policy-and-projects-update-june2022	M18	985

Annexe 2: Events

EXTERNAL EVENTS OVERVIEW

Event name	Event scope (national, international, other)	Participation type (participant, organizer, other)	Partners involved	Approx. event date	Location	Notes on how F4C will or could be represented during the event	Audience number	Audience (numbers breakdown: policymakers, robot producers, civil society, etc.)	Link
Who's Next	international	Participant, representing F4C*, talent scouting	CE, EKA	01.09.2021	France, Paris	scouting for participants, visibility created with FfC logo tote bags, synergies and networking.	117	Industry, companies	https://whosnext.com/
Riga FW	regional (Baltics)	Participant, representing F4C, talent scouting	CE	Oktober 2021	Riga, Latvia	scouting for participants, Ffc brand visibility created by booth with Fashion For Change logo and presentation slides	2320	media, industry professionals	https://www.rfw.lv/lv/schedule
Textile ETP	international	Presenter, promoting F4C	EP	Mai 2021	Online	Presentation of project to stakeholder community	75	companies, industry professionals, policy makers, representatives of peer projects	https://textile-platform.hubspotpagebuilder.com/eu-cascade-funding-sustainable-fashion
Circular Textiles	international	Presenter, promoting F4C	EP	Mai 2021	Online	Presentation of project to stakeholder community	58	companies, industry professionals, policy makers, representatives of peer projects	https://www.eugreenweek.eu/partner-events/circoax-circularinnobooster-circular-economy-textile-sector
Responsible Fashion Series	national (Belgium)	Participant, representing F4C, talent scouting	EP	Oktober 2021	Antwerp, Belgium	scouting for participants, 1-1 promotion of F4C project	120	designers, start-ups, investors, academia	https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/conferences/responsible-fashion/programme/
Prospex workshop on textiles	international	Presenter, promoting F4C	EP	Juni 2021	Online	Presentation of project to stakeholder community	87	companies, industry professionals, policy makers, representatives of peer projects	https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC125110

NexTextile EU	international	Presenter, promoting F4C	EP, KV	December 2021	Online	Presentation of project to stakeholder community Jury member and pitch evaluation, talent scouting and introducing the project to community	60	Designers, Start-ups, policy makers, representatives of peer projects	http://registrations.nexttextilegeneration.eu/
EKA pitching	national (Estonia)	Jury member, talent scouting	KV	December 2021	Tallin, Estonia	Jury member and pitch evaluation, talent scouting and introducing the project to community	30	Designers, small brands, expert jury	
Tuleviku mood, Tartu Loomemajan duskeskus	national (Estonia)	Jury member	CE	März 2022	Tartu, Estonia	Jury member and pitch evaluation, networking	68	startups/designers, mentors and industry experts	https://tartu.ee/et/uudised/loomehakatoni-tulevikumood-kutsutakse-osalema

* F4C =
Fashion For
Change

OWN EVENTS OVERVIEW

Event Name	Purpose	Notes about the event	Event date	Audience number	Audience type
Q&A Workshop	Open Call support	Interactive online event	03.03.2022	18	startup/designers/SMEs
Matchmaking Event	Matchmaking	Informative presentation and networking session for finding partnerships	24.03.2022	38	startup/designers/SMEs + support organizations
Pre-Hackathon	Hackathon preparation	Informative session and presentation on how to prepare for the hackathon with Q&A session	27.05.2022	30	members of pre-selected 35 teams
Fashion Sprint Hackathon	Selection of 25 finalists	Hybrid in person/online event in Vilnius	16.-17.06.2022	142	35 selected startup/designers/SMEs + support organizations

9. References

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- ³ <https://mailchimp.com/>
- ⁴ <https://www.instagram.com/fashionforchange.eu/>
- ⁵ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/fashionforchangeeu/>
- ⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/FashionForChangeEU>
- ⁷ <https://twitter.com/fashionchangeeu>
- ⁸ <https://www.fashionforchange.eu/knowledge-hub/community/>
- ⁹ <https://www.fashionforchange.eu/knowledge-hub/your-impact/>
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