D1.3
FASHION-TECH JOB PROFILES PORTFOLIO

FUTURE JOB ROLES IN FASHION-TECH + HUMAN RESOURCE GUIDELINES + FUTURE RECRUITMENT TOOLS

FTalliance

FTALLIANCE
Weaving Universities and Companies to Co-create
Fashion-Tech Future Talents

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D1.3 FASHION-TECH JOB PROFILES PORTFOLIO
Future Job Roles in Fashion-Tech + Human Resouce Guidelines + Future recruitment Tools

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current landscape of Fashion-Tech shows an integration between fashion and tech sectors. On all levels, new business models are being introduced especially around revenue streams, and improved sustainability and circularity. Notably, insights reveal that Fashion-Tech when integrated across the full breadth of the supply chain leverages data to create smarter and more sustainable products and services whilst also having the potential to increase sales. This report features 8 job profiles/roles and associated skills/competences extrapolated from the 8 future job families (with 50 job roles) identified by the project and listed below:

- Interdisciplinary
- Design
- Omnichannel and E-commerce
- Sustainability
- Product Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Data Analysis, Management and Governance
- Policy Making
- Manufacturing

The fashion industry is in a state of flux, and companies do not know where the digitalisation of processes is heading and thus what competences they will need for the future. Furthermore, Fashion-Tech skills are seen as constantly emerging and growing, therefore upskilling and training employees with new skills is recognised as part of an ongoing digital transformation. In this dynamic landscape, lifelong learning and training, via short courses (delivered by HEIs/Universities) or internal training, will become key and universities and companies will need to work more closely together to optimize the education of young talent, recruitment and staff training possibilities.

Yet companies need to focus on the human factor here and avoid implementing technology just for the sake of it. Hence it is important to build meaningful connections to engage staff, especially 'conventionally trained' designers who often need first to be convinced of the opportunities and benefits using digital tools can bring when designing. Joint Research & Development between universities and companies, although not commonly a current practice, is highlighted as important for future innovations especially around smart textiles and biodegradable materials where the polluting effects of fashion can be reduced. Internship programs and company residencies for students and graduates were posited as useful ways to co-create and co-explore these new shared directions.

Today's Fashion-Tech landscape poses new HR recruitment challenges to companies to attract future Fashion-Tech talent with the right skillsets. The Fashion-Tech industry is asking for a variety of new skillsets as the 8 job profiles/roles outlined reveal. In terms of skills, some companies offer internal digital training to their employees; others underline the importance of applicants having the right mind-set and mix of soft skills – being entrepreneurial, open to change, a team player etc., as a means to reflect their potential. In certain companies, particularly larger ones Fashion-Tech incubators and start-ups are leading digital processes and upskilling, infiltrating the business and influencing future direction. Although there are new ways of selecting the right candidate such as hackathons, bootcamps and project-based internships, the interview (live or virtual), based on a portfolio and CV is still be seen as the best way to assess a candidate. These might include several group-based assessment opportunities for the evaluation of candidates such as the completion of a problem-solving brief; presenting to a group; a group interview and sometimes an additional small one-day assignment to help assess a candidate's soft skills in relation to others more deeply. 'Stay near to the talent pool' was the clear advice Fashion-Tech employers who understand that their collaborations with HEIs via industry projects allow them to assess students before they graduate. Regarding competences and skill sets it was highlighted that preserving traditional technical skills and know-how, such as product processing techniques; quality control techniques; materials development; technical drawing and 2D pattern making are still essential. Organizational and soft skills related to both traditional and new technologies such as 3D design process are essential to enable cross-fertilizations to drive Fashion-Tech innovation along with sustainability and circularity improvements. Soft skills associated with team working and facilitation of interdisciplinary international collaborations are important as well as soft skills such as empathy; flexibility; being constructive in negotiations trying to understand and weigh up different perspectives and problems. To measure these new skills the following recommendations have been made in chapter 3.5.

Portfolios should no longer only highlight collections or other final products but emphasize more the process and the conceptual thinking. Students need to consider in what way they can better pitch their ideas, demonstrate skills and present their work to highlight their entrepreneurial mind-set and fresh innovative ideas. On the critical subject of Equity Diversity and Inclusion, companies are recognising the importance to future success of a diverse workforce. Furthermore, that there is no one-size-fits all solution to attracting and recruiting future talent but that it is important to actively welcome applicants with a diverse background, demonstrating the organisation's value, to establish a more varied workforce.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EDI	*Equity Diversity and Inclusion*
HTML	*Hypertext Markup Language*
QA	*Quality Assurance*
ROI	*Return On Investment*
SQL	*Structured Query Language*
UX DESIGNER	*User Experience Designer*
B2B	*Business-to-Business*
B2C	*Business-to-Consumer*
AI	*Artificial Intelligence*
HR	*Human Resources*
LCF	*London College of Fashion*
CAD	*Computer Aided Design*
CAM	*Computer Aided Manufacture*
KPI	*Key Performance Indicator*
SME	*Small or Medium-Sized Enterprise*
UI DESIGNER	*User Interface Design*
A/B TESTING	*A User Experience Research Methodology to test two variants*
API	*Application Programming Interface*
CI/CD	*Continuous Intergration/Continuous Delivery*
DataOps	*Data Operations*
MLOps	*Machine Learning Operations*
RFP	*Request for Proposal*
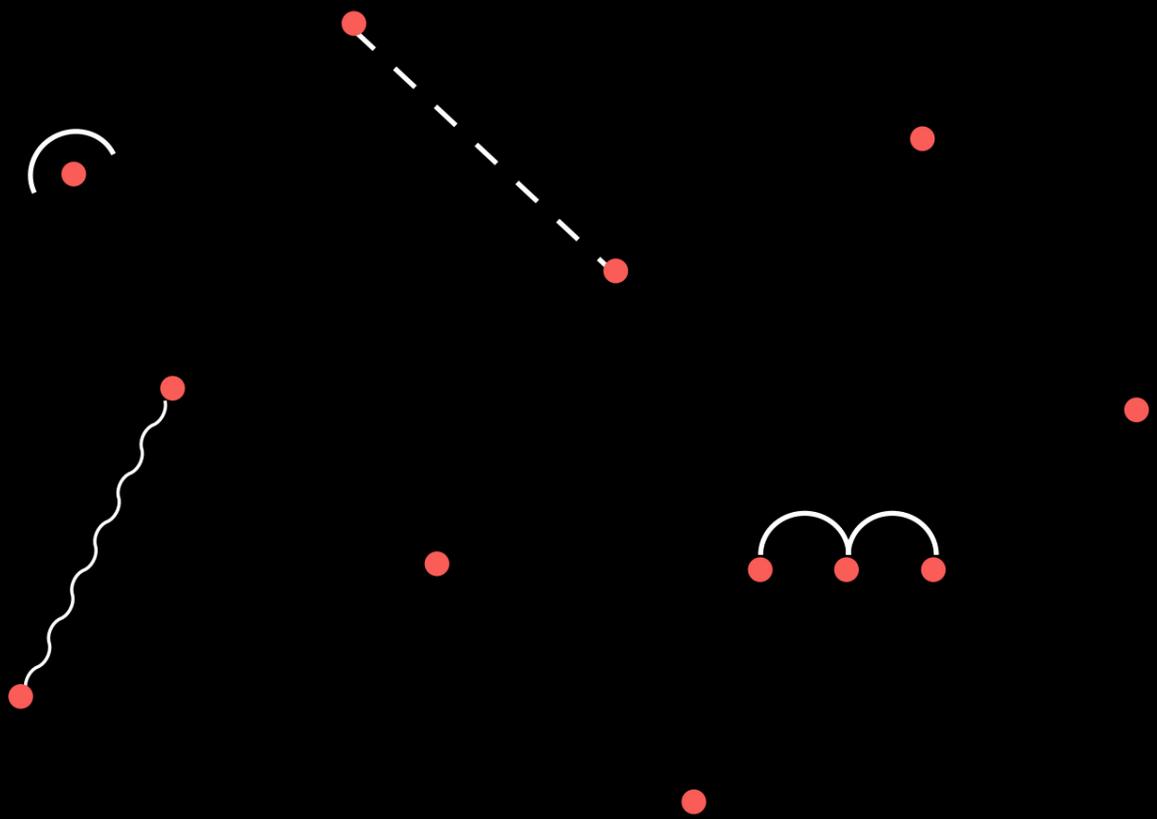
1. INTRODUCTON

1.INTRODUCTION

This report connects to recruitment tools and processes linked to the Fashion-Tech landscape and describes current and future/emergent transformational scenarios in the sector.

It features 8 job profiles/roles and associated skills/competences extrapolated from the 8 future job families identified by the project and listed below:

1. Interdisciplinary
2. Design
3. Omnichannel and E-commerce
4. Sustainability
5. Product Innovation and Entrepreneurship
6. Data Analysis, Management and Governance
7. Policy Making
8. Manufacturing

Furthermore, findings and sector-specific HR guidelines gleaned from dedicated recruitment workshops are shared on approaches to attracting, assessing and hiring the right future Fashion-Tech talent.

1.1 The current state of Fashion-Tech in companies

The current landscape of Fashion-Tech shows an integration between fashion and tech sectors which is resulting in a systemic shift in the fashion industry towards 3 future directions (see 'Future directions in Fashion-Tech' and 'Transformations required in Fashion-Tech' further below).

On all levels, new business models are being introduced especially around revenue streams, and improved sustainability and circularity. Notably, insights reveal that Fashion-Tech when integrated across the full breadth of the supply chain leverages data to create smarter and more sustainable products and services whilst also having the potential to increase sales.

In larger companies, Fashion-Tech incubators and start-ups are leading on digitalisation and innovation within the industry as they infiltrate and influence standard business practices with their disruptive solutions. This in turn influences processes of upskilling within a company. In terms of creating sustainable product solutions, the fashion designer equipped with 3D design skills, in addition to the more traditional skills of the discipline, is considered a current and future Fashion-Tech requirement. Moreover, there is an emerging focus on technical innovations for textiles and product development such as biomaterials and/or a circular approach linked to sustainable production and more ethical and responsible consumption.

1.2 Future Directions in Fashion-Tech

Future directions in Fashion-Tech highlight a more fundamental 3D transformation for B2C and B2B experience. For example, the entire digitising of the design and development process will enable new types of customer experience in the future using technologies such as holograms, AI and 3D printing. Furthermore, this will allow for new design processes incorporating interactive technologies such as digital avatars, digital prototyping, programmable models and patterns and data w/ AI enabled design to become more embedded throughout the sector. On the level of future revenue streams the three most promising areas identified for Fashion-Tech are the ones based on the potential for capturing value from sustainable and circular business practices such as subscription-based revenue streams; new eco-system/platform enabled revenue streams, and revenue streams based on selling data.

1.3 Transformations Required in Fashion-Tech

Firstly, collaboration and interdisciplinary skills have been identified and prioritised as important enablers of transformative change since they allow flexible teams of different disciplinary knowledge/expertise to be assembled and re-assembled as required. Secondly, e-commerce is considered a growth area within Fashion-Tech leapfrogging the retail sector towards the realm of digital retail. This means that current roles may be lost and/or need to be repurposed into roles incorporating a 3D awareness to re-imagine the buying space, visual merchandising and design in a virtual sense. Thirdly, e-commerce will usher in new business models for new ecosystem/platform enabled revenues activating 'mega-revenue' streams, including value capture based on selling data and subscriptions. These new directions are generating job roles requiring skills such as data collection, interpretation and analysis together with an ability to evaluate and capitalise on user experience. Additionally, the implementation of new technologies to transform production processes within the textile industry needs to ensure an informed awareness of environmental and societal impact potentials is integrated – sustainable knowledge is key.

1.4 New/emergent Fashion-Tech roles and skills in 8 job families

The findings gathered from all focus groups and interactive study visits **yielded a list of more than 50 new and emergent job roles and associated skills distributed across 8 job families.** In a workshop held 24th May 2021, organised by LCF Graduate Futures, the consortium partners selected the most essential/recognised jobs within each job family. These are highlighted and discussed below.
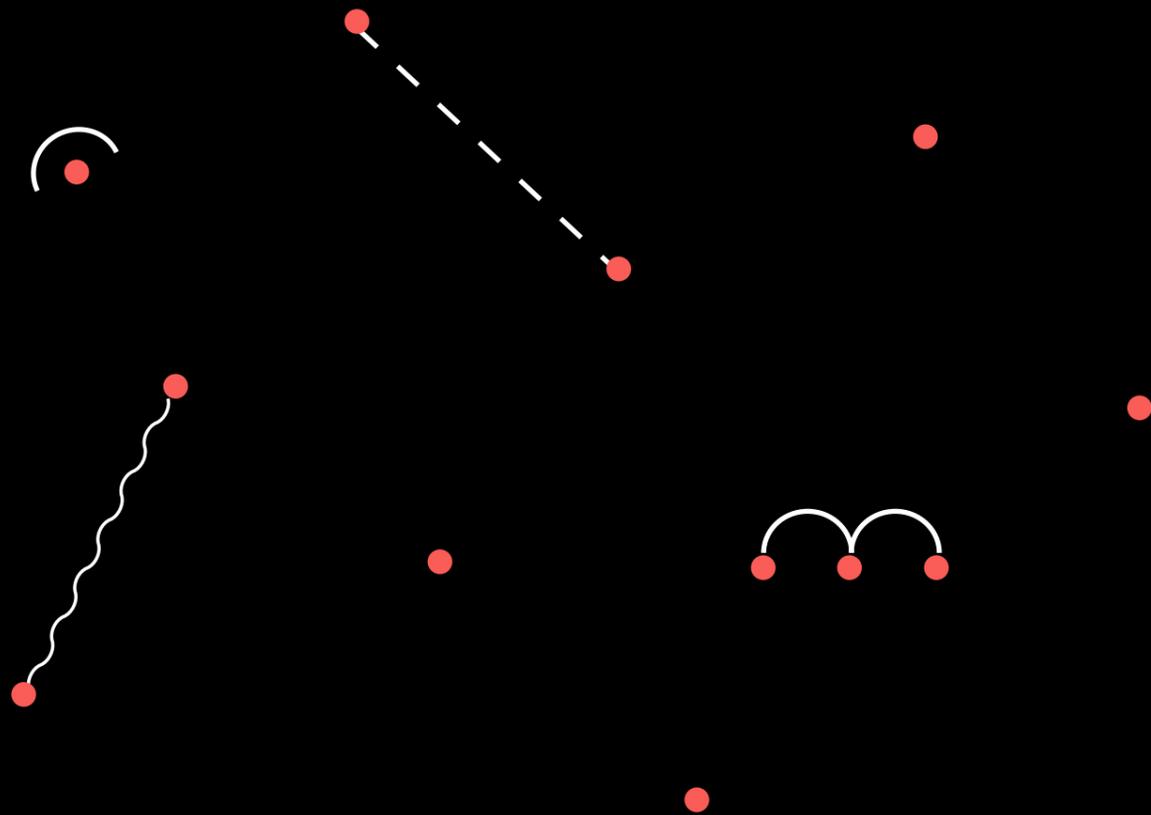
2. THE 8 FUTURE JOB ROLES IN FASHION-TECH

2. THE 8 FUTURE JOB ROLES IN FASHION TECH

The first important roles addressed are those requiring interdisciplinary skills to integrate knowledge and experience from more than one field and create links within teams or bridges between roles. Interdisciplinary skills refer to an ability to adopt a collaborative approach of working across disciplines and between sectors, clients and suppliers. Agile approaches are highlighted as essential to facilitate interdisciplinary working practices within organisational structures. These include assembling temporary cross-disciplinary project-based teams with shared goals/ objectives to work on a specific task or solve a particular issue.

2.1 INTERDISCIPLINARY SKILLS AND ROLES

INNOVATION MANAGER The role of an Innovation Manager is deemed essential to advancing the Fashion-Tech sector. This is someone who possesses interdisciplinary skills and an ability to oversee all staff competences, and to strategise, ideate, setup and monitor a programme relating to innovation within a company. They have an entrepreneurial mindset and can build meaningful connections to activate the formation of high-performance teams. Fundamental to the role of Innovation Manager is the ability to get staff on board and to change mind-sets. Essentially, they are a translator, someone who can build the necessary bridges between competences and stakeholders rendering new business models or revenue streams, connected to product or service for example, and turning a smart idea into a scalable business. To enable start-ups to be successful within a company an Innovation Manager is required to have an in depth understanding of the business process to be able to endorse speculative evolution and disruptive models where the outcome is difficult to anticipate/not yet known.

INNOVATION MANAGER

INNOVATION MANAGER

THE POSITION

An entrepreneurial and experienced leader, who, together with the Vice-Principal of Research and Innovation and the team reporting into this role, can envision the future of Fashion-Tech, develop new initiatives, and lead on the creation of innovative and disruptive new business models. The focus of this varied and dynamic role will be on managing the strategy for business model innovation; helping the company to navigate technology and consumer shifts to identify new opportunities; being an evangelist of the business model innovation process; setting up and leading project teams and always adopting a results and data driven approach.

Able to manage your time effectively between strategy and execution, you will possess the ability to shift gears as is necessary and to work across the end-to-end business model innovation process. Excellent in collaborating with senior stakeholders across the company to set innovation north stars, you will manage the portfolio strategy to ensure there is a pipeline of high-quality projects, and coach teams on best practice innovation techniques and approaches.

RESPONSIBILITIES / REQUIREMENTS

- at least 8-10 years of working experience in an international business environment and a minimum of 5 years in innovation
- hands-on experience validating and creating new ventures with tangible return on investment (ROI)
- (experience) leading projects through a business model innovation process
- understands and is familiar with working with innovation methodologies such as lean start-up and customer development
- experience working on adjacent and transformational innovation projects
- able to articulate and strike the balance between strategy and execution
- experience in building and leading high performing teams
- curious, humble and has a strong ability to collaborate cross-functionally to drive results
- thrives in ambiguity and are not afraid to challenge the status quo
- experience in mentoring people and coaching teams
- able to work in a high-performance environment and set high quality standards through your own work
- develop and deliver impactful, relevant training to employees and suppliers including design and delivery of training, toolkits and webinars
- work cross-departmentally to develop an annual sustainability report
- 3+ years' experience in the sustainability sector, fashion or lifestyle industry.
- strong knowledge of product supply chains and current sustainability topics and issues
- experience in third party sustainability standards and certification
- a good understanding of linking the benefits of sustainability and ethical trade to the commercials of a business

OTHER SKILLS/COMPETENCES REQUIRED

Technical planning, understanding technical documents, collaboration skills/people manager, customer testing and product end-to-end cycle, communication skills, creative problem solving, working behind the scenes, strong communication, presentation, time management, multitasking digital marketing, accessibility, knowledge of digital platforms, strategist and ideator, innovator, enterprising, proactive, research and interpretation skillsets.

OTHER ROLES WITHIN THIS JOB FAMILY

- Chief Technology Officer
- Digital Product Manager
- Innovation Manager
- Creative Technologist
- Digital Knowledge Manager
- Transformation Specialist
- Transformation Manager
- Growth Lead
- Engineer
- Designer
- Job Teacher/ Facilitator

UX (USER EXPERIENCE) DESIGNER

2.2 DESIGN SKILLS AND ROLES

Future fashion design roles with 3D skills centred on user experience are considered essential, especially because they enable a better interaction between other areas of the business. However, traditional fashion skills remain important with an increased need for material and textile knowledge especially in the area of sustainability ranging from an understanding of zero waste pattern cutting working within circular teams to developing new sustainable business models. To make a successful digital change an inclusion and training of all professionals involved in the supply chain is required as the digital transformation requires a paradigm shift where adoption of new tools and skills is needed. The development of a digital supply chain makes collaboration key across different teams. The building of meaningful connections within and across these teams and within the company is important. A positive result of a digital supply chain is therefore that it brings back collaboration across different teams – pattern cutting, design and 3D development and places a renewed focus on craft and design. Moving forward the fashion industry will transform from a push market into a 'on demand' market where the consumer (experience) plays an important role.

UX (USER EXPERIENCE) DESIGNER

Essential will be the UX Designer who incorporates user experience into design and design processes, sales, advanced manufacturing etc., where made-to-measure will become key to the future of Fashion-Tech.
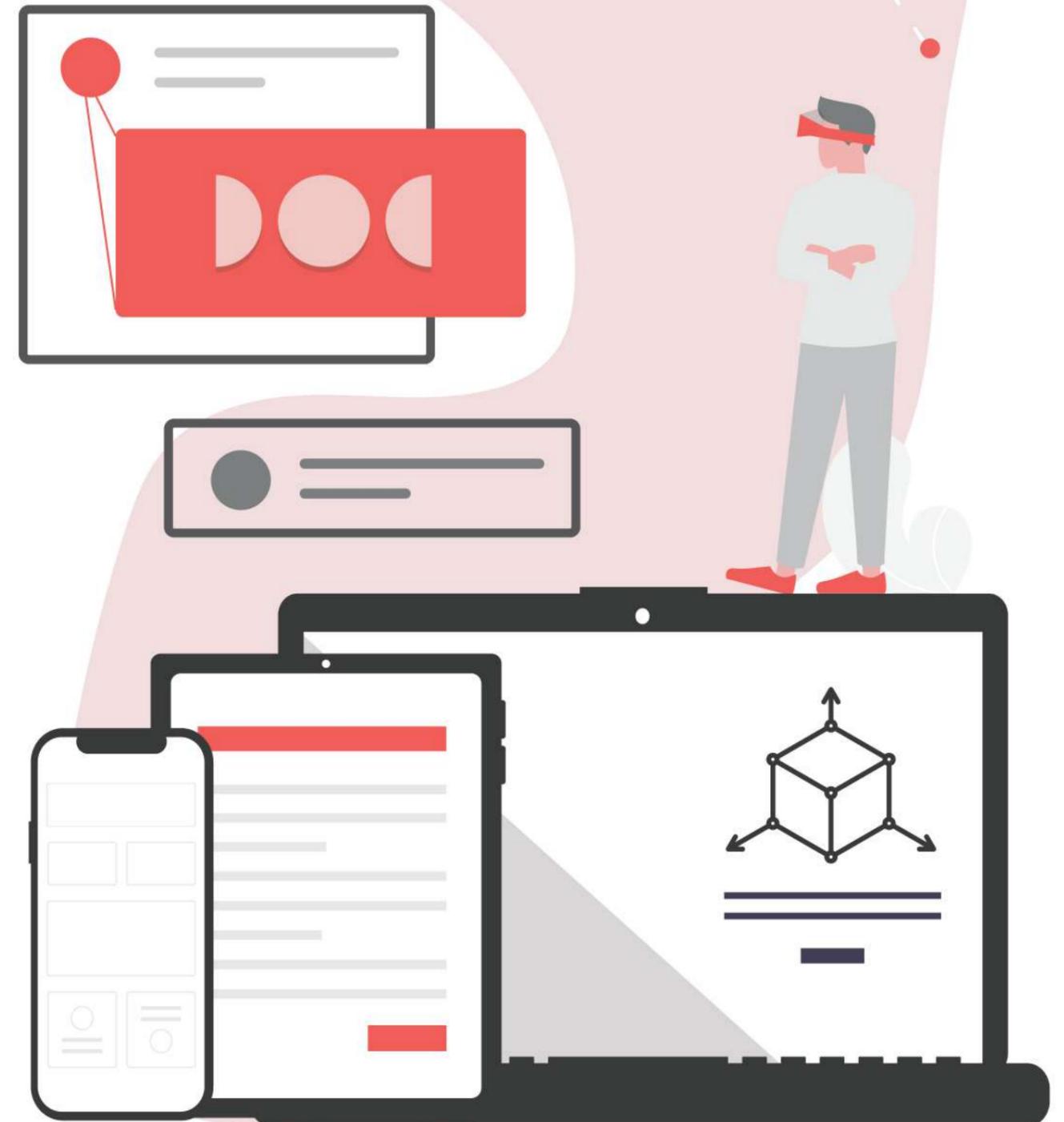
UX (USER EXPERIENCE) DESIGNER

THE POSITION

A UX Designer handles the full spectrum of users' impressions of and interactions with the brand. Duties may vary dependent on the type and size of company you work for. The ability to create accessible, aesthetically appealing and meaningful products and applications utilising a mix of traditional and 3D skills is crucial in this role. The UX Designer will be involved in the design of 'on demand' products and services for specific target groups and end users and will need to understand the motivations for product and service design. Being able to work collaboratively with other members of the team and the wider business to ensure that products and services meet client needs is essential. It is important to bring this role in line with sustainability and zero material waste.

RESPONSIBILITIES / REQUIREMENTS

- propose and sketch out a range of visual concepts both on paper and using software applications
- create user personas, user journeys and site maps
- translate concepts into wireframes, prototypes and user flows using specialist software tools such as Axure, InVision, Marvel, OmniGraffle, Visio and Sketch, as well as the Adobe product suite
- work on cross-platform applications to develop user experiences covering mobile phones, tablets and computers
- work collaboratively with other designers, product design and development teams, business analysts, engineers and project managers
- run workshops for clients and internal stakeholders
- work with the research team to plan and conduct remote and on-site user research and us ability testing with real users to ensure the end-product design provides users with the optimum experience in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and engagement
- identify areas for improvement
- redesign websites to make them more responsive
- redesign or create mobile apps that are easy to use nd configured appropriately for smartphones and tablets
- keep up to date with technological innovations and new tools
- ensure design standards, guidelines and best practices are adhered to
- oversee research and insight projects to understand user needs
- ensure that all colleagues in the organisation have an understanding of UX design practices and priorities

OTHER SKILLS/COMPETENCES REQUIRED

Has an understanding of colour theory and psychology of colour and possesses design skills. Is computer, CAD/CAM literate with mathematic skills and digital knowledge. Has an ability to work with manufacturers, is able to translate a design from 2D to 3D, knowledge across multiple areas of the fit processing, adaptive, communicative understanding of AI architecture, engineering and digital design. Can demonstrate an ability to work to deadlines, and innovative thinking.

OTHER ROLES WITHIN THIS JOB FAMILY

- Colour Designer
- Industrial Designer (modelling 3D)
- 3D Modelling Specialist
- 3D Modelling Lead
- 3D and Visualisation Expert
- Virtual 3D Imaging (updated from photographer)
- Avatar/Human Body Specialist
- Fit Specialist, AI Designer
- AR/VR Expert, Holographic Specialist
- Digital Product Tester
- 3D Pattern Maker
- Pattern Programmer / Designer
- Zero Waste Pattern Maker / Designer

2.3 OMNICHANNEL AND E-COMMERCE SKILLS AND ROLES

Over the next years, Omnichannel and E-commerce will only accelerate resulting in an increasing importance of digital storytelling within the customer experience of the digital product. Developments in avatar and digital body fitting will enable a personalised e-commerce experience. As a result, roles associated with the management of digital experience will become increasingly important.

DIGITAL EXPERIENCE MANAGER
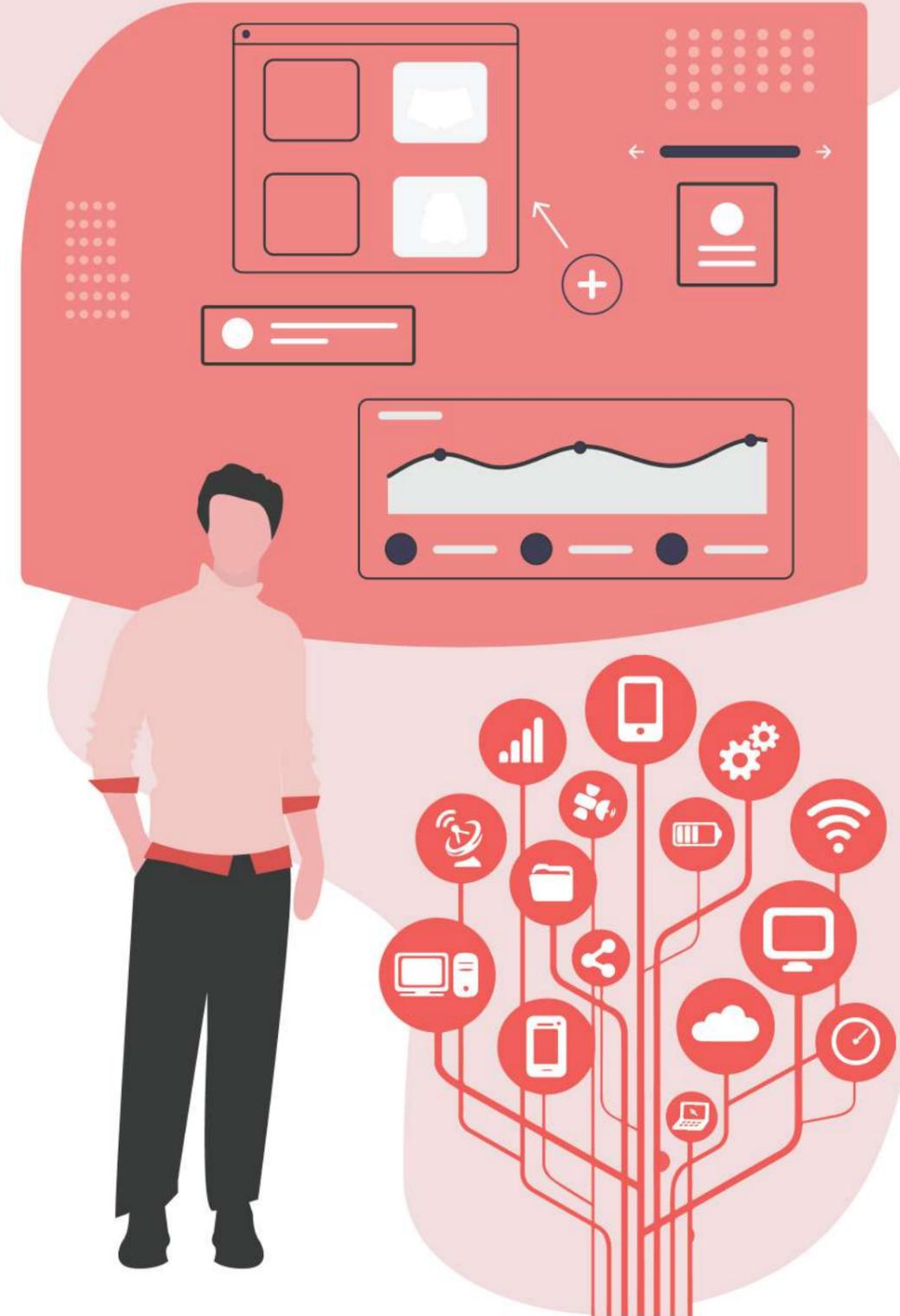
DIGITAL EXPERIENCE MANAGER

THE POSITION

The Digital Experience Manager is responsible for developing a successful customer experience on a company's website or mobile applications.
They evaluate website traffic, sales figures, and conduct research to determine the customers' needs and how best to meet them. Digital Experience Managers need to have a strong understanding of a company's customers to be able to translate this knowledge into a digital experience solution that has impact and is transformative.

RESPONSIBILITIES / REQUIREMENTS

- designing the mechanics of websites or applications, including the visual design and navigation panes with an understanding where the channels design and engagement should be
- responsible for the storytelling, create storyboards or process flowcharts to aid in content design.
- a thorough understanding of the customer's experience when using an online platform
- collaborating with e-commerce personnel to streamline sales processes and working with graphic design personnel on the visual appearance of a site
- conducting tests to ensure all content features are functional, as well as analyzing traffic patterns once the website or applications are live
- degree in digital marketing, communications and marketing
- excellent technical abilities and skills to utilize programs like Photoshop and Final Cut Pro Suite for web, mobile devices, and tablet design
- background in programming languages such as SQL (Structured Query Language) and HTML (Hypertext Markup Language)
- in addition to technical abilities, a strong understanding of digital marketing principles is required, such as lead generation and search engine optimization
- effective communication skills in order to develop successful campaigns

OTHER SKILLS/ COMPETENCES REQUIRED

Ability in Adobe Design software and coding. Is target driven and customer facing and can demonstrate excellent customer service, web development skills, design and communications management. Is entrepreneurial, has sales experience; user experience; is virtually adapted and can exploit the virtual space.

OTHER ROLES WITHIN THIS JOB FAMILY

- Expert in 3D E-commerce/
- Digital Experience
- User Experience Designer
- Digital Experience Manager
- Customer Experience Designer
- Customer Success Managers
- Vendor Integration Specialist
- Co-creation Platform Manager
- Personal Tailor/ Virtual Seller

SUSTAINABILITY LEAD

2.4 SUSTAINABILITY AND CIRCULARITY SKILLS AND ROLES

More and more there is an understanding that adapting Fashion-Tech on all levels can contribute to sustainable and circular solutions. One of the big problems facing the Fashion-Tech sector is the diversity in sustainable policies, requirements and certifications. Therefore, specific expertise is needed to understand and translate these different policies in a unified way that meets different clients and policy-makers expectations. Moreover, that ensures these policies and certifications can be successfully implemented and integrated into the complex production system and supply networks. In addition, more focus on circularity approaches and a circular economy/closed-cycle system, which will cause a paradigm shift is required particularly in education. This involves new visions, creative approaches and new business models that recognise the 'value of waste' and respects the resource regeneration principles. Furthermore, a deep understanding of different (sustainable) policies and certifications and the streamlining of these, together with knowledge of higher product cost implications is required before sustainability can become integrally implemented in the supply chain. A strong focus on technical innovations, digital innovations for textiles and product development to support advanced sustainable production and consumption was identified here.

SUSTAINABILITY LEAD

THE POSITION

The Sustainability Lead in a company is able to develop and deliver the sustainability strategy and initiatives both internal and external to that company. They can demonstrate an ability to own the platform to influence and maintain real change across the brand. Furthermore, they have the ability to work alongside key stakeholders (internal and external) to set ambitious targets for every area of the business and provide critical support to all departments to meet targets and successfully achieve goals.

RESPONSIBILITIES / REQUIREMENTS

- keep abreast of industry best practice and changes in legislation, working with relevant departments to implement necessary changes
- manage the administration and execution of ethical programmes including the assessment of audits and development of corrective action plans
- liaise with the Product Development team to ensure rospective and new suppliers ethical and environmental status align with expectations
- feed into regular supplier reviews to ensure sustainability is always on the agenda
- identify opportunities for environmental and ethical improvement in supply chain and develop relevant sustainability goals and initiatives alongside the relevant teams based on business priorities. Ensure these goals and initiatives are well researched, measured and reported on
- work closely with the Brand and Marketing team to build our profile within the sustainability sphere and ensure all communications are clear, transparent and free of greenwashing
- develop polices and guidance for both internal and external use including; human rights, raw material sourcing and traceability, zero waste, circularity. Ensure alignment across the company
- support our wider community engagement activities
- represent with external partners
- develop and deliver impactful, relevant training to employees and suppliers including design and delivery of training, toolkits and webinars
- work cross-departmentally to develop an annual sustainability report
- 3+ years' experience in the sustainability sector, fashion or lifestyle industry.
- strong knowledge of product supply chains and current sustainability topics and issues
- experience in third party sustainability standards and certification
- a good understanding of linking the benefits of sustainability and ethical trade to the commercials of a business
- excellent ability to analyse, interpret and present data and experience working with large and complex data sets
- strong project management experience
- excellent communication and presentation skills, written and verbal with the ability to create and manage communication content for multiple audiences and the confidence to deliver to board level and external stakeholders
- experience in sustainability reporting
- experience of visiting factories a plus
- strong communication and leadership skills with the ability to interact effectively at all levels across a business and their stakeholders
- ability to work collaboratively to drive results and outcomes
- excellent organisational and time management skills (including the ability to prioritise and multi-task and handle time-sensitive deadlines in a complex, fast-paced environment)
- a natural innovator, able to problem solve and provide solutions to unique sustainability issues
- responsible for the overall development, implementation and evolution of the Sustainability Strategy

OTHER SKILLS/ COMPETENCES REQUIRED

Communicative and encouraging - needs to ensure team fully embrace sustainable working, AI analysis reports, trends analysis, best and worst sellers of KPI, data protection knowledge, combination of design skills, materials knowledge and users experience, product lifecycle, knowledge in waste removal and reduction knowledge, Materials/Fabric knowledge / policy awareness, Block Chain, Traceability, Evaluation. Sourcing expert, financially astute (profit margin/ mark ups, costs and sales, Science based skills, renewable energy and well researched on materials.

OTHER ROLES WITHIN THIS JOB FAMILY

- Circular Design Pattern Expert
- Chemical Designer (scientists)
- Chemical Engineer
- Green Fabric Sourcer
- Fabric Component Designer, Material Researcher
- Material Innovation Manager / Ecosystem Innovation Manager of Components
- Eco-fabrics Designer

2.5 PRODUCT INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS / ROLES

With the growth of incubator and start-up programmes, sometimes operating within a big company, entrepreneurial and innovation management skills and roles are needed, such as leading with a visionary approach, pitching and developing nuanced ideas. Micro and small companies tend to have a more 'agile approach' with multiple and overlapping roles taking place in an interdisciplinary studio/lab environment. Interestingly, although large companies obviously have many more departments, they are made up of 'SME types' of departments – each exploring a specific Fashion-Tech focus/product embodied by expertise. The way in which micro and small companies work and are structured, parallel the entrepreneurial approach found in incubators and start-ups, which exist as separate entities within large companies.

DIGITAL PRODUCT MANAGER

DIGITAL PRODUCT MANAGER

THE POSITION

The Digital Product Manager is responsible for supporting the Digital Product Management team by defining, analysing, creating and maintaining product and feature documentation, as well as assisting with system releases and general product testing. The position actively involves sustaining the product roadmap and work across multiple products. This individual collaborates closely with stakeholders to identify, define, and design solutions to improve the customer experience and drive innovation efficiency forward. They work with product designers, software engineers and Quality Assurance (QA) to translate visions into solutions that will drive business results. The role requires cross-functional working with technology and business teams to ensure effective execution of strategy and roadmap. It involves concepts of meta-design which extend beyond traditional research and product development skills to include systems thinking skills.

RESPONSIBILITIES / REQUIREMENTS

- implements online product vision for specific eCommerce, site focus areas, such as, Search, Browse/Navigation, Checkout, Content/ Services for all brands
- conducts user research and usability studies to understand how customers are interacting with the product and develop enhancements based on the results/ analysis
- works closely with ecommerce operational teams to support and enhance workflow processes and maximize the potential of existing product capabilities
- facilitates new product development and feature roadmap from planning to implementation by collaborating with cross-functional teams, including IT, Marketing, eCommerce, Customer Service, Merchandising, Analytics/Testing and Legal
- collaborates with Product Design team on wireframes and UI designs that support the product requirements
- ensures the backlog is groomed and prioritized according to the overall strategy as well as the product roadmap
- conveys product requirements by creating effective user stories, functional requirements, wireframes and/or mock-ups
- authors business cases based on opportunities identified through company, competitor, and market analysis
- synthesizes user feedback and KPIs to drive future product decisions
- works with product team to ensure successful cross-platform integration of initiatives when required

- collaborates with other members of the Product team to conduct research
- coordinates with leads to ensure features are being built according to spec
- conducts competitive and data driven analysis and industry research to identify gaps and opportunities that will further inform the product roadmap
- provides guidance to lower-level roles on the team
- 5+ years Digital, Systems Analyst, Product ownership or Project Management experience
- strong knowledge of industry best practices and competitive landscape
- experience in all phases of the web development life cycle, with familiarity with the Agile methodology
- understand of online marketing principles, including but not limited to conversion optimization, cross- and upsell, audience segmentation, A/B testing, merchandising, web analytics etc
- ability to plan, coordinate and support multiple projects of various complexities
- must have the ability to work in a fast pace environment and react to situations as they arise in the appropriate manner
- ability to work independently or in a team environment and effectively meet project deliverables on time
- superior verbal and written communication skills are required

OTHER SKILLS/ COMPETENCES REQUIRED

Project management, problem solving and analysis skills, software flexibility, process driven and with an understanding of how working methods and systems feed into each other, responsive. Possess an overview of the bigger picture and is a creative strategic conceptual thinker. Has skills of team management; negotiation; project management; innovation. Capacity for experimentation and development; storytelling; users testing customer experience; supply chain planning and is a business thinker.

OTHER ROLES WITHIN THIS JOB FAMILY

- Roles within Product Design could evolve into Systems Designer and Innovation Manager (working with product development teams).

2.6 DATA ANALYSIS, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE SKILLS AND ROLES

D ata Analysis and Management and Governance skills and roles are becoming increasing important to the future landscape of Fashion-Tech. Some emergent Fashion-Tech roles will require knowledge in digital law related to data security, regulations and data protection. Data analyst roles also need to prioritise understanding and insights related to the Fashion-Tech sector. Specific opportunities will involve data analysts working directly with AI experts and software developers to produce zero waste patterns for products based on user data.

DATA SCIENTIST

● DATA SCIENTIST

THE POSITION

To become a Data Scientist requires a strong technical background and/or experience in dealing with large datasets. This is someone who is a highly intelligent self-starter, able to work independently and with a strong attention to detail.

RESPONSIBILITIES / REQUIREMENTS

- working in a cross functional team, alongside machine learning scientists, engineers, product owners and non-technical stakeholders, creating new and improving internal and external facing data products
- driving measurable impact across the business through advanced analytics and statistical analysis
- working out where the most value is and helping set up frameworks for evaluating algorithmic improvements
- presenting data and insights in new and innovative ways using data visualisation tools and storytelling
- keeping up with relevant state-of-the-art research, taking part in reading groups alongside other scientists, with the opportunity to create novel prototypes for the business, and publish at top conferences
- a degree in Computer Science, Physics, Mathematics, Data Analitics or a similar quantitative subject
- a solid understanding of statistics (hypothesis testing, regressions, random variables, inference)
- comfortable with presenting back to technical and non-technical stakeholders through effective data visualisation and building of reporting frameworks

- Experience accessing and combining data from multiple sources and building data pipelines, including a good knowledge of SQL
- comfortable working in a Python data science tech stack (e.g. pandas, NumPy, scikit-learn, PySpark, PyMC3, Dash, Plotly)
- the ability to work collaboratively and proactively in a fast-paced environment alongside both scientists, engineers, design, product development and marketing stakeholders
- a 'hackers' mentality, comfortable using open-source technologies
- experience in using advanced statistical methods to solve problems. This can either be through academic projects and publications, or experience analysing and solving problems within industry
- a basic knowledge of software development lifecycles, engineering, and machine learning practices (Data pipelines, API workflows, CI/CD deployments, DataOps, MLOps) Coding Python

OTHER SKILLS/ COMPETENCES REQUIRED

Possess an ability to work in a fast-paced environment for real time data processing, able to draw conclusions quickly; excellent administration and communication skills; data visualisation; problem solving. An influencer of Data Analysts and Policy Makers. Able to translate digital language into a visual output.

OTHER ROLES WITHIN THIS JOB FAMILY

- Concrete roles are Data Scientist (process automation, product creation), Data Analyst, Artificial Intelligence Expert, Software Developer.

2.7 POLICYMAKING SKILLS AND ROLES

Policy experts at governmental, national and corporate levels will become key in shaping policies that facilitate business model innovation and collaboration between industry partners and between different teams within organisations and connect to sustainable policies. Influencer roles connected to policy making were highlighted as an important part of Fashion-Tech's future.

LOBBYST
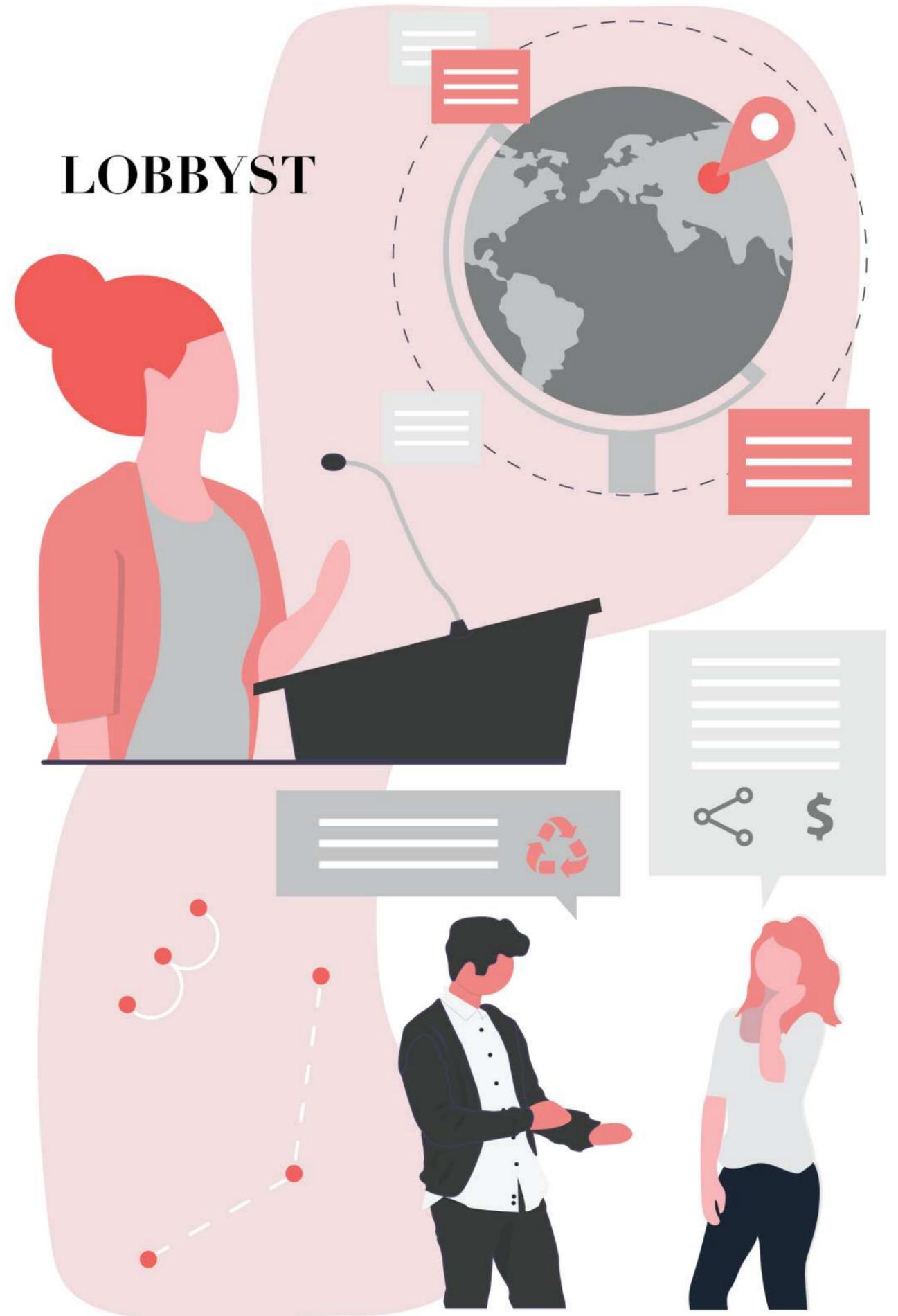
● LOBBYST

THE POSITION

A lobbyist is a specialist with strong communication skills who persuades legislators to vote on public policy in favor of their clients' interests.
A lobbyist should possess strong communication and analytical skills, be aware of current news events and legislative activities and maintain a highly organized work environment. The ability to be persuasive and at times aggressive is essential, as is the ability to build and maintain strong relationships. The successful candidate should also be able to manage high levels of stress and meet critical deadlines. Creativity, having good judgment and taking initiative are also important in this role.

RESPONSIBILITIES / REQUIREMENTS

- being able to have a deep understanding of the company's need in active legislation
- strong communication skills to reinforce clients' position on the issues at hand
- expertise to analyse and translate different policies and bring them together in a unified approach that meets diversity of clients and policy-makers expectations
- being able to develop and to implement and align policies and certifications that work across complex production system and supply chain
- data insights, processing and analysis
- previous experience and a network of contacts with policymakers and other members of public office
- scheduling and facilitating meetings with legislators on behalf of the client, responding to regulatory inquiries and testifying at public hearings
- There are no educational requirements, however many lobbyists have a college education and a bachelor's degree in political science or communications

OTHER SKILLS/ COMPETENCES REQUIRED

Analytical; storytelling; communication; leadership; lobbyist and networking skills.

OTHER ROLES WITHIN THIS JOB FAMILY

- Policy Influencer.

MICROFACTORY MANAGER

2.8 MANUFACTURING SKILLS AND ROLES

There is future potential within the Fashion-Tech landscape for micro-manufacturing and local supply chains, resulting in new manufacturing skills and roles. Micro-manufacturing using 3D printing technologies would improve internal production processes.

● MICRO FACTORY MANAGER

THE POSITION

The Micro Factory Manager works with cutting-edge technologies and has the potential to develop a wide range of new skills on the job. This is a hands-on consulting practitioner with good knowledge in a broad range of Manufacturing and Operations aspects from implementation of improvement programs/ projects, good practices for an operational excellence culture, to reporting systems.

RESPONSIBILITIES / REQUIREMENTS

- helps target and deliver value through the digital transformation of their core Manufacturing and Operations processes
- leads on and defines opportunities that create tangible value - including leading current state assessments, identifying opportunities to increase efficiency, and developing solutions, business case and journey plan to achieve the right value led outcomes for the client
- designs future ways of working - operating models, business functions and processes, and technology, whilst working closely with business and technology strategists, process owners and subject matter experts
- leverages digital technologies to enable clients' future-state business capabilities and drive targeted business outcomes
- develops enduring, trust-based relationships with people at all career levels, both professionally and personally, internally, and externally
- uses data and analytics to drive decision making, implement new ways of working and change operational behaviours
- provides points of view on key industry challenges and trends and present an impetus for change in industry context
- creates thought leadership, points of view and white papers on Optimizing and Digitizing the lifecycle of production assets and workforce
- supports the development and refinement of offerings and collateral to support/promote sales and origination (overviews, case studies, account planning, marketing information)
- supports the sales process from origination to successful closing (including offering fine tuning, solution shaping, proposal preparation, client presentations)
- leads client innovation workshops and use a human-centered approach to solve problems, frame opportunities and achieve innovation through collaboration and co-creation
- is able to analyse clients' strategy, operating vision, business imperatives and capabilities

- has in-depth experience with Manufacturing and Operations transformation and process redesign methods
- possesses knowledge of existing, new and emerging digital technologies and being able to practically apply them across Manufacturing and Operation processes
- has knowledge in all aspects of designing and constructing end-to-end Manufacturing and Operations business processes, functions and organizational structures
- ability to create original concepts and theories for improving growth and efficiency through digital Manufacturing and Operations transformation
- a self-starter with demonstrated ability to work creatively and analytically in a problem-solving environment
- collaborates with client stakeholders to identify and prioritizing value opportunities and develop digital Manufacturing and Operations transformation roadmaps
- can develop the business case, solution architecture, and implementation roadmap for clients' transformation journeys
- has worked in (consulting) team delivery and project / team leading roles, with a track record of managing and delivering projects successfully on time and on budget
- has professional experience in business development support, RFP response and consulting services sales
- excellent leadership, communication (written and oral) and interpersonal skills
- proven ability to work creatively and analytically in a problem-solving environment
- knowledge and understanding of different types of business and operating models (existing, new, emerging and hybrid)
- comprehensive knowledge of facilitation and organization change management
- strong analytical and conceptual skills; ability to create original concepts and theories for a variety of projects
- experience leading multi-disciplinary, high-performance work teams

OTHER SKILLS/ COMPETENCES REQUIRED

Entrepreneurial; team builder; project manager; process and outcomes focused; design and innovation oriented; strong organisation skills and computer skills.

OTHER ROLES WITHIN THIS JOB FAMILY

- Head of Technology (Engineering) and 3D Printing Specialist.
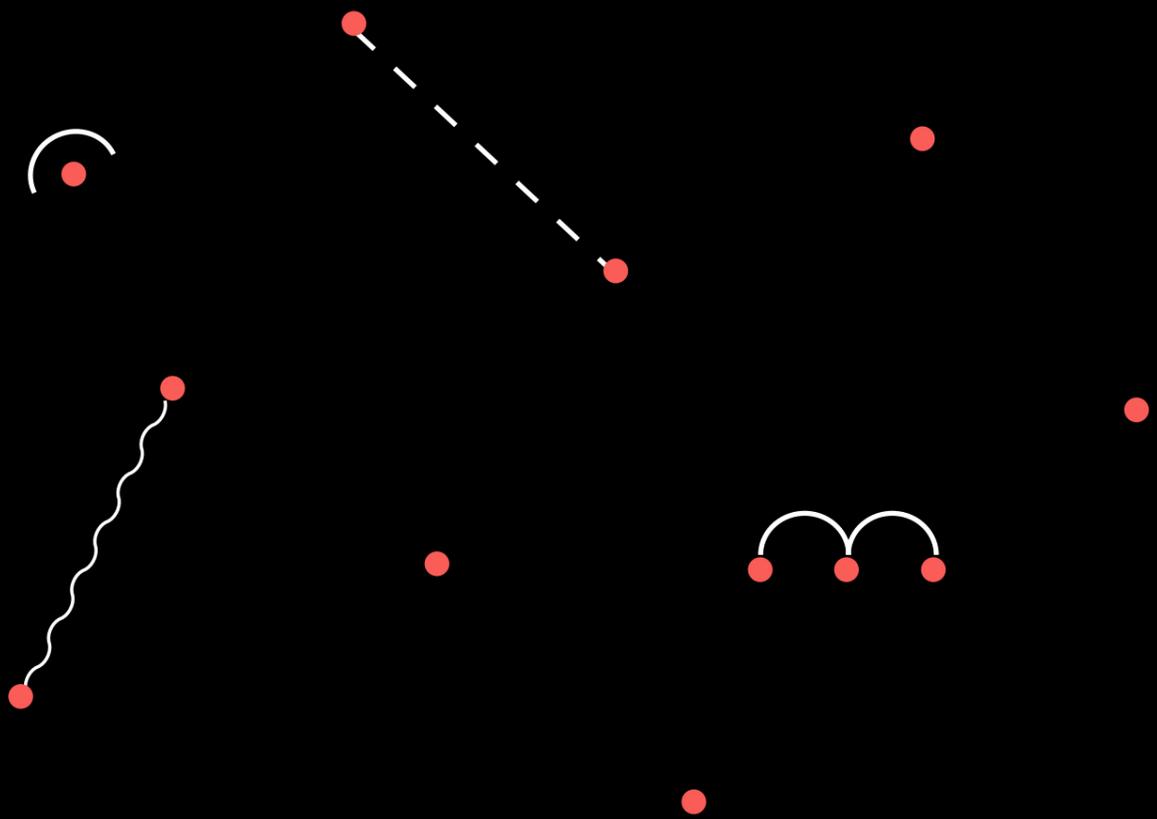
3. HUMAN RESOURCES AND FUTURE RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

3.HUMAN RESOURCES AND FUTURE RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

The virtual mobilities activities across the FTalliance partners have highlighted and confirmed the evolution of current Fashion-Tech roles and an eagerness for sustainability through innovation and integrated technology. Moreover, they have prioritised the need for an interdisciplinary approach to open up the siloed departments for enhanced knowledge sharing and collaboration from a multiplicity of perspectives. In the near future Fashion-Tech will grow even more across a range of roles and areas and be a point for leadership for the business.

The fashion industry is in a state of flux, and companies do not know where the digitalisation of processes is heading and thus what competences they will need for the future. Furthermore, Fashion-Tech skills are seen as constantly emerging and growing, therefore upskilling and training employees with new skills is recognised as part of an ongoing digital transformation. In this dynamic landscape, lifelong learning and training, via short courses (delivered by HEIs/universities) or internal training, will become key and universities and companies will need to work more closely together to optimize the education of young talent, recruitment and staff training possibilities.

Yet companies need to **focus on the human factor** here and avoid implementing technology just for the sake of it. Hence it is important to build meaningful connections to engage staff, especially 'conventionally trained' designers who often need first to be convinced of the opportunities and benefits using digital tools can bring when designing. For example, a mix and match of traditional expertise with new technologies and cross-disciplinary know how will enable the creation of new fabrics, treatment and techniques. While collaborations with manufacturers is key to the development of new machinery for automated production processes. **Important to also note here is that the digital transition is a work in progress; one needs to learn to understand best practices; the new revenue models; the time savings, and new roles and adopt the habits and practices required.**

Lastly, joint Research & Development between universities and companies, although not commonly a current practice, is highlighted as important for future innovations especially around smart textiles and biodegradable materials where the polluting effects of fashion can be reduced. Internship programs and company residencies for students and graduates were posited as useful ways to co-create and co-explore these new shared directions.

3.1 HR Challenges and Fashion-Tech talent recruitment

Today's Fashion-Tech landscape poses new challenges to companies to attract future Fashion-Tech talent with the right skillsets. The Fashion-Tech industry is asking for a variety of new skillsets as the 8 job profiles/roles outlined above reveal.

For example, being trained as a fashion designer or pattern cutter seems no longer to be enough to satisfy industry-specific requirements or to understand the digital product development process, rather specific digital skills and knowledge are also required. In terms of skills, some companies offer internal digital training to their employees; others underline the importance of applicants having the right mind-set and mix of soft skills – being entrepreneurial, open to change, a team player etc., as a means to reflect their potential.

In certain companies, particularly larger ones Fashion-Tech incubators and start-ups are leading digital processes and upskilling, infiltrating the business and influencing future direction.
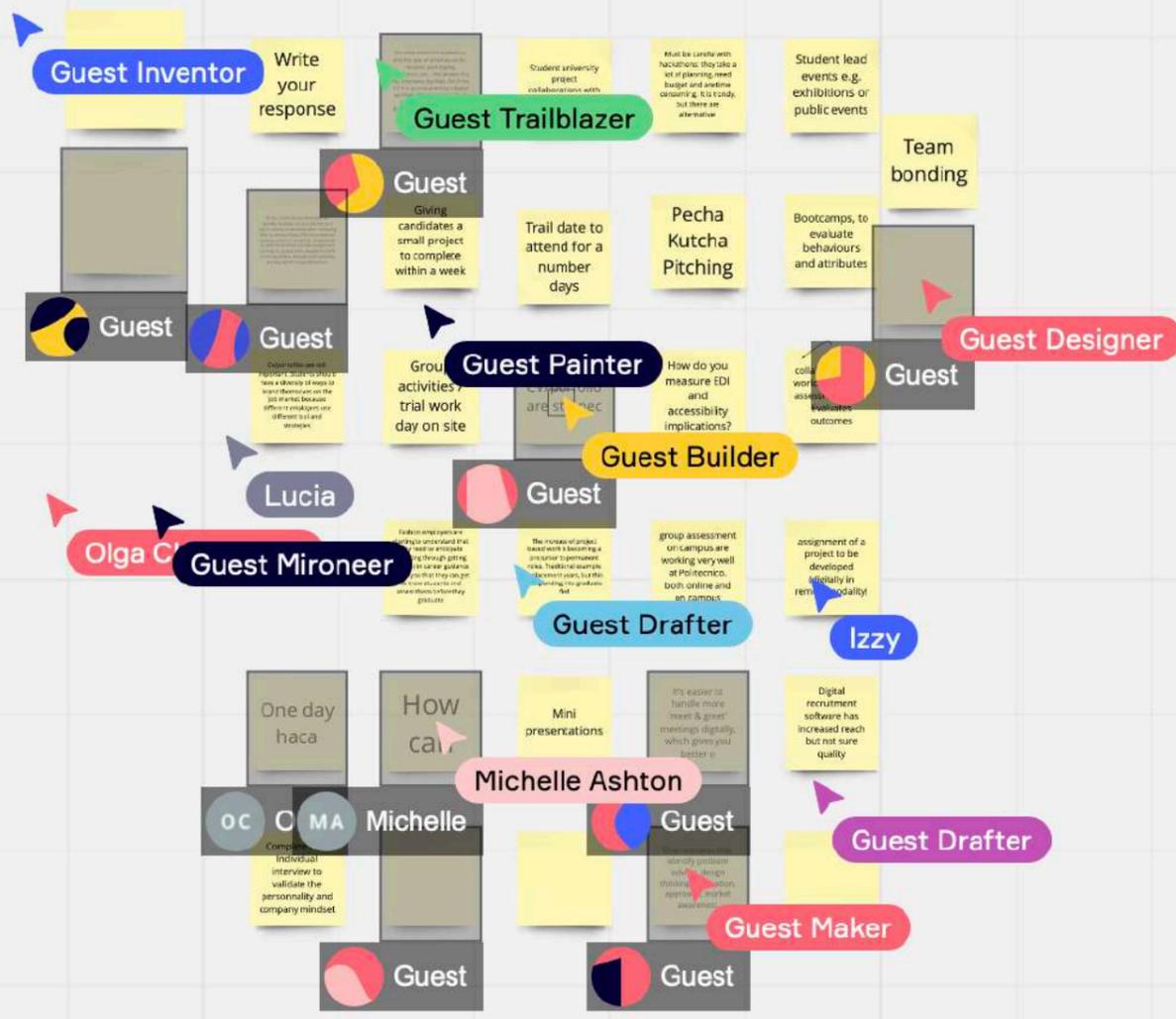
3.2 Skill sets assessment and screening candidates

The LCF Graduate Futures team held a second 'Future Recruitment Workshop' for HR representatives across the consortium on 25th May 2021 to explore ways to navigate such challenges. The focus for this workshop was on recruitment tools and techniques and related to the 8 identified job families and associated roles. The aim of the workshop was to seek HR specific insights and intelligence on how to attract, assess and recruit future Fashion-Tech talent. This was a brainstorming session centred on future recruitment and recruitment practices. The intention of this provocation-driven workshop was to initiate and capture dialogue.

3.3 Interviews with extras

Issues discussed in the provocation-driven workshop related to traditional modes of assessment such as the CV and portfolio, and how these might be transformed, versus newer ways of selecting the right candidate such as hackathons, bootcamps and project-based internships. Ideas and current company practices were inputted to MIRO boards in real-time (see figure 1).

> Whilst these revealed the interview (in person or virtual) still to be the best way to assess a candidate, a variety of other practices were also promoted to ensure the right person is hired. These included several group-based assessment opportunities for the evaluation of candidates such as the completion of a problem-solving brief; presenting to a group; a group interview and sometimes an additional small one-day assignment to help assess a candidate's soft skills in relation to others more deeply.

In some instances (Grado Zero Innovation), built-in project-based traineeships within interdisciplinary teams afforded a longer-term assessment of an individual's suitability for the company. Our discussions also revealed the importance of being very clear on how

Figure 1. Miro Board content, responses to provocation questions, Future Recruitment Workshop, 25 May 2021.

the company works to recruiting well. Are there for example multiple projects underway at the same time involving a diverse range of tasks, and what types of working methods can be expected. The workshop participants noted that usually, the reaction of the candidate will reveal if they are comfortable with this. The use of the 'why?' question to further interrogate a candidate at interview was also promoted.

'Stay near to the talent pool' was the clear resounding message from Fashion-Tech employers who understand that their collaborations with HEIs via industry projects allow them to assess students before they graduate.

Networking events and open days with HEIs represent another way for early exploration of talent. Vice versa, trial group assessment led by real company HRs helps students to self-assess on a set of skills and this represents a fundamental tool in the process of future recruitment.

3.4 The pandemic/COVID-19

Feedback also highlighted that the pandemic/Covid-19 has ushered in new recruitment processes such as the digital interview, which has allowed for a more global approach to recruitment – alumni working anywhere can very easily be assessed. It has made panels confident with a digital interview using online assessment tasks as a tool.

3.5 Competences and skill sets

Regarding competences and skill sets it was highlighted that preserving traditional technical skills and know-how, such as product processing techniques; quality control techniques; materials development; technical drawing and 2D pattern making are still essential.

It is important to notice that future young professionals will have more knowledge in innovative techniques but will need upskilling with traditional technical processing techniques. In the near future the acquisition of innovative technical skills such as those connected to 3D designing and pattern making, new wearable technologies, robotics and automatization, AI etc., will become essential. However, having the right digital skills is not always critical at the point of recruitment.

What is more important is that candidates have a 3D mind-set and are open to learn new and different software. Moreover, having an entrepreneurial mind-set, being flexible, adaptable and open to change is essential. Furthermore, recruitment focus is changing from being experienced to having potential and the interest is centred on recruiting those who can grow the company.

Organizational and soft skills related to both traditional and new technologies such as 3D design process are essential to enable cross-fertilizations to drive Fashion-Tech innovation along with sustainability and circularity improvements.

Soft skills associated with team working and facilitation of interdisciplinary international collaborations are important as well as soft skills such as empathy; flexibility; being constructive in negotiations trying to understand and weigh up different perspectives and problems.

To measure these new skills the following recommendations have been made:

- ask candidates at the interview to give concrete examples or situations, problems they have run in to find out how they approach these

- ask for examples where they have been able to demonstrate the skills

- ask the applicant the most unpleasant situation in his previous job and how he/she handled the issue

- look at professional networks such as LinkedIn to see CV, portfolio and 'candidate' links

- use talent tests like Gallup (https://www.gallup.com/home..aspx) to unlock the true potential of your people to create a complementary team.

- monitor and coach newly appointed candidates settling in and evaluate which areas they perform well in and where is their performances is weak/er

- during the interview explicitly ask candidates to share their soft skills and to what extend they have experience working in a team. Also ask what role/s in a team they have fulfilled and what soft skills they would like to develop further. This normally reveals whether they are self-reflective or not enough

- ask the candidate where they see themselves in 5 to 10 years. This shows what kind of positions they aspire to having in the future

- check references from previous employers / group activities to see interactions and roles taken up within a group

3.6 Recommendations for students

Portfolios should no longer only highlight collections or other final products but emphasize more the process and the conceptual thinking. Students need to consider in what way they can better pitch their ideas, demonstrate skills and present their work to highlight their entrepreneurial mind-set and fresh innovative ideas.

Moreover, the design process and approach (both visually and descriptively in writing/annotations) should be included in the portfolio, visuals (photo/videos) of the final work are not enough. A digital video explaining the candidate's background as well as how they can create innovations is an asset. Furthermore, since attitude and mentality are key skills - student have to find out more about values, cultures and ambitions of the brand and compare their own background, skillsets and ambitions with the brand values and the job (assess what is the common ground, what are the goals of the company etc). Candidates need to demonstrate an ability to actively listen; show curiosity; be authentic and have a good level of citizenship; cultural engagement and critical awareness and be able to evidence this.

3.7 Guidelines for (inclusive) job descriptions

The digitalisation of the fashion industry across online sales, digital product development and business models is a very complicated and disruptive process. Companies are making progress, but do not always know where the digital pilots and experiments will land and what kind of jobs and structures they will need in the future.

For the recruitment process it is therefore important to try to be as clear as possible in the job description of the role and responsibilities. Describe the purpose of the role, duties, working relationships, work environment, person specification, what kind of person the company wants to attract (skills and soft skills), what kind of values they are looking to promote e.g. Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI [see further below]).

In addition, the context of the role within the organisation and its strategic setting is essential – what sits alongside the role; what are the core company values etc.

3.8 Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

On the critical subject of Equity Diversity and Inclusion, companies are recognising the importance to future success of a diverse workforce. Furthermore, that there is no one-size-fits all solution to attracting and recruiting future talent but that it is important to actively welcome applicants with a diverse background, demonstrating the organisation's value, to establish a more varied workforce. Companies do need to make sure the description is written in an inclusive language and should ask diverse employees within the organisation to read the job description to check for unconscious bias. The wording of the Job Description can influence the type of candidates you attract for example, using gendered language – feminine or masculine or gender-neutral language will alter who a company attracts.

3.9 Podcast interviews

The aim of the 5 podcast interviews was to produce a resource for visitors to the FTalliance website (students, tutors, careers advisors, companies plus other interested parties) on a cross section of FTalliance partner company (micro, medium and large) insights/feedback on recruitment processes they use to attract and assess future talent. The emphasis of the podcast was placed on both the current Fashion-Tech landscape and potential future job roles in Fashion-Tech in order to gain deeper richer insights into Fashion-Tech and recruitment processes in relation to: 1) the new challenges posed to companies to attract future Fashion-Tech talent with the right skillsets; 2) the required balance of traditional craft skills and digital skills; 3) the importance of soft skills, team players, entrepreneurial skills and the question of how we assess these skills. These are the things that surfaced from the previously mentioned workshops with HR as the issues that required further interrogation.

In advance of the podcast interviews, participating companies/individuals were sent a Participant Information/Consent Form explaining the context and purpose of the podcasts and any particular requirements together with a list of 10 lead questions .

The 5 podcast interviews featuring Decathlon, Pauline van Dongen, Centexbel, Grado Zero Innovation and Stentle are on the FTalliance website: See links.
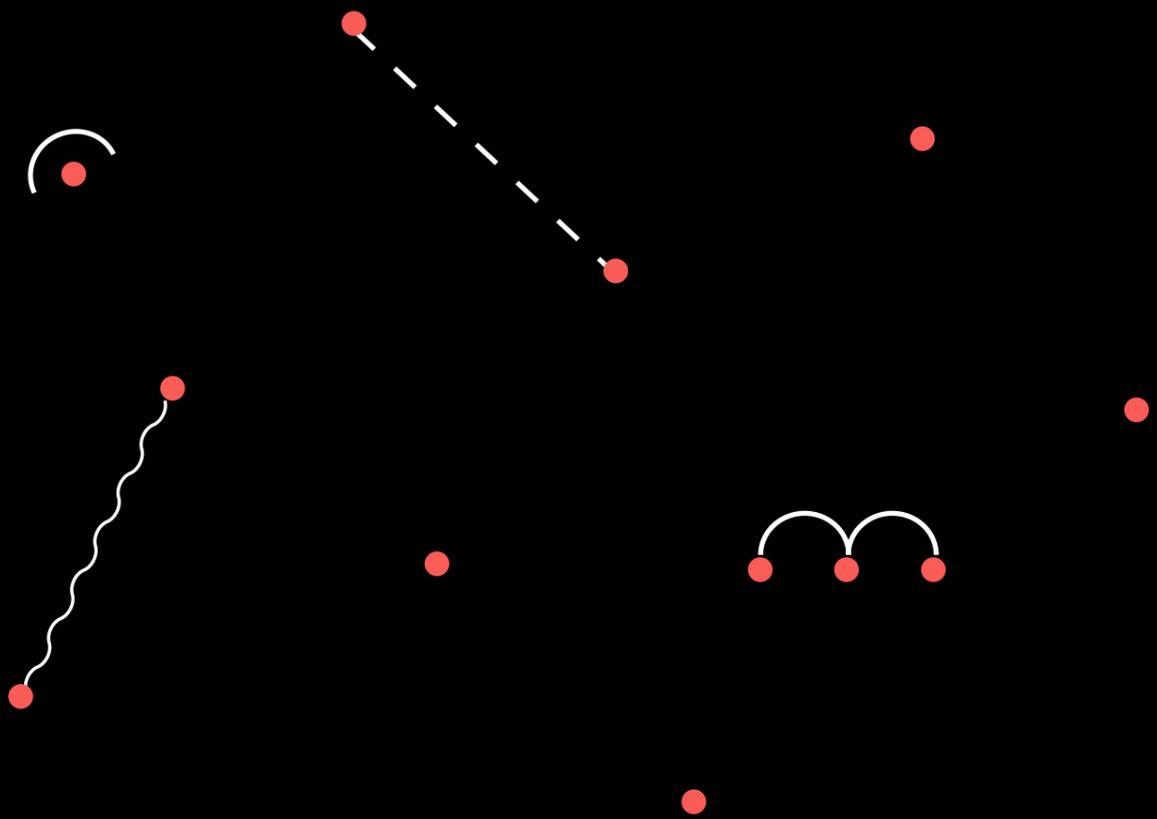
4. LINKS AND REFERENCES

4. LINKS AND REFERENCES

Deliverables

D1.1 Integrated industry relevant Fashion-Tech Curriculum Model
Link:
https://fashiontechalliance.eu/images/reports-and-publications/D11_Integrated_
industry_relevant_Fashion-Tech_Curriculum_Model_V3.pdf

D1.2 Report on Staff Learning Mobilities
Link:
https://fashiontechalliance.eu/images/reports-and-publications/D12_Report_on_staff_
learning_mobilities.pdf

Podcast Interviews on Fashion-Tech Recruitment Processes
Link:
https://fashiontechalliance.eu/en/open-resources/podcasts
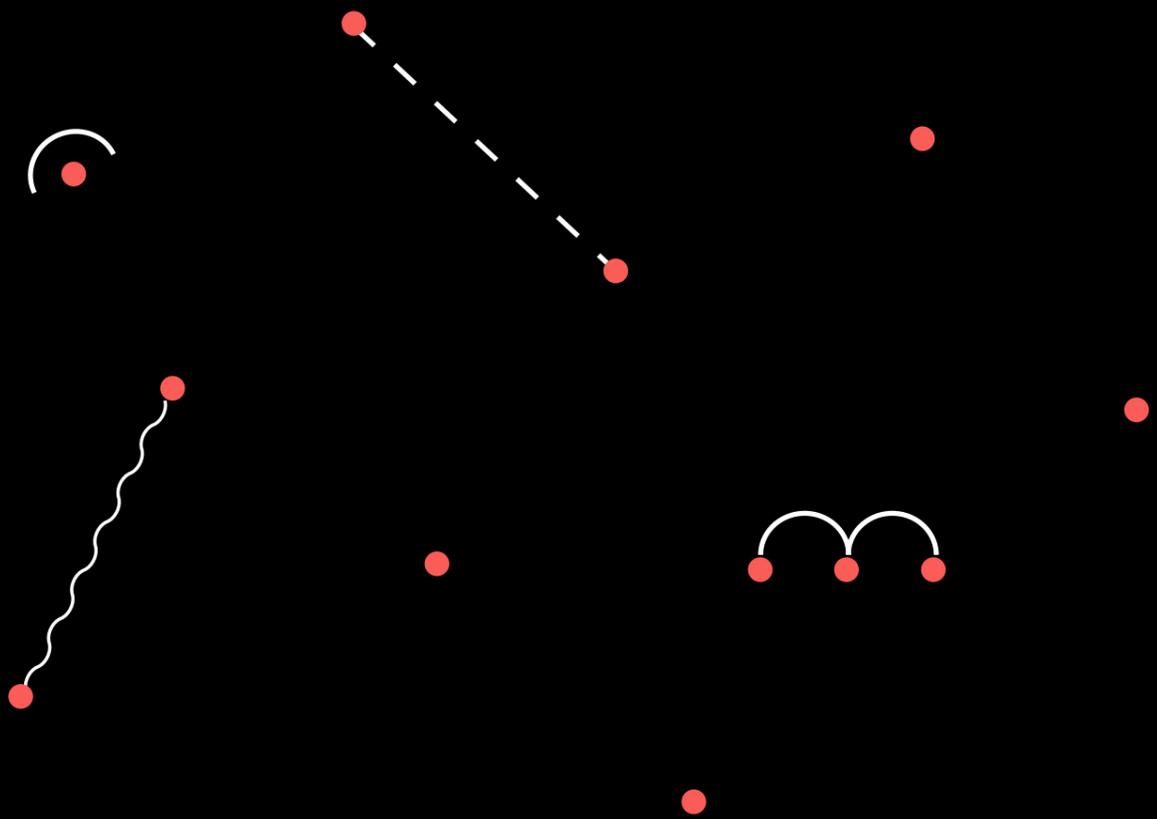
5. APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Project Title: FTalliance: Weaving Universities and Companies to Co-create Fashion-Tech Future Talents

Theme: Fashion-Tech and Recruitment Processes – the tools and techniques assessing and recruiting future talent – 4 Podcasts

Project/Work Package Lead: London College of Fashion (LCF), University of the Arts London (UAL)

Contact email addresses: j.teunissen@arts.ac.uk and m.danjoux@arts.ac.uk

Dear XXXX,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in an (online) podcast interview relating to the future of recruitment in Fashion-Tech, the tools and techniques for accessing and recruiting future talent.

As you are aware, FTalliance is a 3-year academia-industries partnership aimed at facilitating the exchange, flow of knowledge and co-creation within the Fashion-Tech sector to boost students' employability and innovation potential.

The purpose of FTalliance is to ensure ongoing innovation in the European Fashion-Tech sector by providing emerging talents with relevant skills and know-how to enter the jobs market. For further information on the project please visit: https://fashiontechalliance.eu/en/

Our academia-industry knowledge exchanges to date have highlighted that:

- The integration between fashion and tech sectors has enabled a systemic shift in the fashion industry **towards new business models, revenue streams, and improved sustainability and circularity.**

- Fashion-Tech when integrated across the full breadth of the supply chain **leverages data to create smarter and more sustainable products and services.**

- In larger companies, **Fashion-Tech incubators and start-ups** are leading digital processes and upskilling, influencing and infiltrating within the business.

- The fashion **designer having 3D design skills** is considered a current and future Fashion-Tech requirement.

- The focus on **technical innovations for textiles and product development, is linked to sustainable production and consumption.**

The FTalliance consortium with participating Human Resources representatives have to date provided a first insight into current HR practices and policies (via a series of focus groups [early 2020]; interactive study visits [early 2021] and workshops [May 2021]). Our report D1.1 Integrated Industry Relevant Fashion-Tech Curriculum Model (2021) detailing focus group research findings highlights that digitalisation of the fashion industry is generating a huge amount of new job roles (more than fifty) with different skills and competences. Specifically, it identifies 8 new and emergent job families -– together with associated roles; skills and competences (role specific and soft skills) that enable transformative change (see attached summary report 'Future Job Roles in Fashion-Tech'). Moreover, what surfaced from our exchanges was the need to further interrogate: 1) the new challenges posed to companies to attract future Fashion-Tech talent with the right skillsets; 2) the required balance of traditional craft skills and digital skills; 3) the importance of soft skills, team players, entrepreneurial skills and the question of how we

assess these skills.

The emphasis of the podcast will be placed on both the current Fashion-Tech landscape and potential future job roles in Fashion-Tech as we seek to gain deeper richer insights into Fashion-Tech and recruitment processes in relation to these 3 key areas.

Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before signing.

Why have you been approached?

We invite FTalliance industry project partners exclusively to participate in our co-created research. The aim of the podcasts is to receive a cross section of FT alliance partner company (micro, medium and large) insights/feedback on what is required in terms of recruitment/ recruitment processes.

You have been approached as one of the FTalliance consortium company partners and as someone we believe can provide expert insights on Fashion-Tech and recruitment processes and the tools and techniques for assessing and recruiting future talent specific to your company.

What will I be required to do?

You will be required to participate in an online podcast interview of approximately 40 minutes in duration.

Here you will be asked to provide answers to a series of leading questions which we will provide a minimum of 5 days in advance of the interview.

These questions will be 'open' and responsive in nature and aim to seek information on existing recruitment tools and practices utilised by your company/in the sector to identify and assess future talent in the field of Fashion-Tech.

Additionally, we will seek to understand your plans/vision for possible future recruitment scenarios in a dynamically shifting Fashion-Tech landscape, where new mixes of skills,

abilities and potentials are required from future talent, and your means of assessing these. Note: To conduct the podcasts we will be using the Riverside FM platform. We will provide you with a link to this on the day of the podcast. You will need to use Chrome as your computer browser to access this. Specific timings relating to set up will be communicated to you via email by the hosts, José Teunissen and/or Michèle Danjoux.

You will also need to ensure a good internet connection and a quiet space is available to you for the duration of the interview/recording process.

Finally, we require you to use a wired headset with inbuilt microphone (Bluetooth should not be used as the connection can be unstable) to achieve a quality recording.

What are the possible risks or disadvantages?

That we ask you to share insights and information from your company that are sensitive and/or currently not in the public domain. That you prefer not to have these featured on the FTalliance website.

What are the benefits associated with participation?

Your participation will contribute to a deeper understanding of how new Fashion-Tech job roles have an effect on the current recruitment tools and strategies of companies. The podcast will be helpful for: 1) students and Careers Services of Higher Education Institutions and 2) Human Resources in companies to understand what the challenges are and what kinds of new practices can be implemented to adequately assess future Fashion-Tech talent.

What will happen to the information I provide?

The podcast will feature on the FTalliance website and thus will be shared publicly. The typical audience will be students and their tutors together with Careers/HR from Higher Education Institutions across Europe and Internationally. The podcast will be produced to a high standard together with our Audio Visual team at LCF, UAL. We will involve you in the editing process to ensure you are satisfied with the outcome. At this point you will

also have the opportunity to request that any aspects of the recording you prefer not to share publicly are removed from the recording.

The recording will be held securely with the Audio Visual team at LCF, UAL.

What are my rights as a participant?

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time
- The right to request that any recording cease
- The right to have any data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
- The right to be de-identified in any photographs intended for public publication, before the point of publication
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

Whom should I contact if I have any questions?

José Teunissen (j.teunissen@arts.ac.uk) and Michèle Danjoux (m.danjoux@arts.ac.uk)

CONSENT TEMPLATE

1.   I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet

2.   I agree to participate in the research project as described

3.   I agree to the items checked below:

☐ to be interviewed
☐ that my voice will be audio recorded

4.   I acknowledge that:

(a)   The project is for the purpose of research and part of the FTalliance agreement.
(b)   The privacy of the company information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
(c)   The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study will be published after an editing process which will involve me. The podcast will identify me and my role providing I consent to this.

Participant's Consent

Participant   Date:
(Signature)

You should retain a copy of this form for your records after you have signed.

APPENDIX 2

PODCAST QUESTIONS

The 10 questions for the podcasts listed below, were prepared utilising insights generated at the 'Future Recruitment' workshop on scoping out recruitment tools & future job descriptions held 25 May:

1) You/your company

To start with, could you please give a short introduction to yourself and your company? What is the size of the company? What are the core values of your company? How are Fashion-Tech and innovation related to the strategy of your company?

2) Human Resources and Recruitment Strategies

How is HR embedded into your company? How does HR/ the company normally recruit? What particular kinds of recruitment systems and processes do you have in place? How much time do you allocate to the standard interview process?

3) Fashion-Tech Challenges and Talent Solutions

Today's Fashion-Tech landscape poses new challenges to companies to attract future Fashion-Tech talent with the right skillsets. Our FTalliance partners inform us of a variety of other less standard practices they utilise to ensure the right person is hired such as organising hackathons; pecha kucha as a presentation method for applicants; group interviews; bootcamps; providing a brief with a real-life challenge as part of an interactive group process for applicants or built-in traineeships for example.

More specifically then: How are you currently recruiting designers and Fashion-Tech talent i.e. what kinds of interview and candidate assessment processes does your com-

pany use to ensure you hire the right kind of talent for Fashion-Tech roles? Do you seek responses to specific situations? What techniques do you use to delve deeper? How can you assess whether candidates share the same beliefs and values as your organisation whilst also offering a certain diversity through their experiences?

4) The Pandemic/Covid-19

Feedback from our partners has also highlighted that the pandemic/Covid 19 has ushered in new recruitment processes such as the digital interview.

What has your company learnt from the shift to online/digital recruitment methods and what have you adopted as best practice/s during the pandemic? Will you retain some of these online modes of recruitment post pandemic?

5) Skillsets and Screening Candidates

The Fashion-Tech industry is asking for a variety of new skillsets. For example, being trained as a fashion designer or pattern cutter seems no longer to be enough to satisfy industry-specific requirements or to understand the digital product development process – specific digital skills and knowledge are required.

How important is it for your company that Fashion-Tech candidates have the right mix of skills ¬– traditional craft and digital skills? How do you assess these?

In terms of skills some companies offer internal digital training to their employees; others underline the importance of applicants having the right mind-set and mix of soft skills – being entrepreneurial, open to change, a team player etc., as a means to reflect their potential.

6) Internal Training and Development

What is your stance here regarding internal training and the importance of soft skills and creativity? What other qualities, soft skills and potentials interest you in an applicant beyond those specific to the role? And how do you assess and attract the right candidates with these soft skills and competencies?

7) Fashion-Tech Incubators

In certain companies, particularly larger ones Fashion-Tech incubators and start-ups are leading digital processes and upskilling, infiltrating the business and influencing future direction.
How is Fashion-Tech and innovation/R&D embedded into your company? Has this altered the conventional company structure, staff development or staff policy?

8) Support for students

Do you have any ideas how students can better pitch their ideas, demonstrate skills and present their work to specifically communicate their entrepreneurial mind-set and fresh innovative ideas?

9) The Future

The whole industry is in a state of flux, and companies do not know where the digitalisation of processes is heading and thus what competences they will need for the future. When writing future Job descriptions for Fashion-Tech recruitment what will be important/ essential to capture in your opinion to attract future talent?

10) Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Finally, on the critical subject of Equity Diversity and Inclusion, companies are recognising the importance to future success of a diverse workforce. Furthermore, that there is no one-size-fits all solution to attracting and recruiting future talent.

How are you proactively working to firstly champion diversity and inclusion in the job descriptions you write? Secondly, to provide equitable processes for all applicants to ensure they are evaluated in a way that excludes any form of bias.

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