

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCIES OR HACKATHONS? FUTURE RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES IN FASHION-TECH

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Abstract

Today's Fashion-Tech landscape is in a state of flux and companies do not necessarily know the solution. As such, this poses new challenges to companies to attract future Fashion-Tech talent with the right skillsets to ensure ongoing innovation in the European Fashion-Tech sector within an increasingly digital future. Moreover, the Fashion-Tech industry is asking for a variety of *new* skillsets as well as identifying *new* job profiles/roles. In terms of skills development, 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 suitability and potential. In certain companies, particularly larger ones Fashion-Tech incubators and start-ups are leading digital processes and upskilling, infiltrating the business, activating change and influencing future direction.

Furthermore, Fashion-Tech skills are seen as constantly emerging and growing, therefore upskilling and training employees with new skills is recognised as an integral 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 optimise the education and recruitment of young talent and staff training possibilities. One of the aims of the FT- alliance, Erasmus+ funded, 3-year academia-industries partnership (2020-2023) has been to facilitate this exchange/flow of knowledge and co-creation within the Fashion-Tech sector to boost students' employability and innovation potential. Online 'Future Recruitment Workshops' were held for HR representatives as well as in depth podcast interviews with Fashion-Tech companies across the consortium to explore ways to navigate such challenges. The emphasis was placed on *future* job roles and centred on 8 job families and their associated skills – subject specific and soft skills, previously identified in our research. Insights were captured in Miro. The focus for these workshops was on *recruitment tools and techniques* and the aim was to seek HR specific insights and intelligence on how companies attract, assess and recruit future Fashion-Tech talent. This paper will share findings and recommendations of this research.