

IFFTI EXCHANGE INITIATIVE 2024 REPORT



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IFFTI EXCHANGE INITIATIVE 2024 REPORT

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AMD, Faculty of Design, Fresenius University of Applied Science, Germany

Hosting Institution

KNUST, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana

Established in 1968, the Department of Industrial Art is mandated to train high-level manpower to manage the country's industries and institutions in the areas of Ceramics, Metal Product Design, Textiles and Fashion Design. A unique addition is the Integrated Indigenous Art which focuses on integration of indigenous concepts, materials and techniques aimed at expanding and developing the frontiers of indigenous technology for sustainable development of the Art and Craft industry.

The Department currently runs a number of undergraduates (UG) and postgraduates (PG) programmes in the Applied Art and Sciences in the sections.

In Fashion Design Undergraduate Programme:

- Bachelor of Science (BSc) Fashion Design

Postgraduate Programmes:

- Master of Philosophy (MPhil) Fashion Design Technology
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Fashion Design Technology

The Faculty at the moment operates from two sites on the beautiful KNUST campus characterized by green lawns and pockets of rich forest nestled in between University buildings. The studios are adequately equipped to help offer appropriate hands-on training with assistance from well qualified technicians most of whom have had industrial experience and are well-versed in the transfer of competencies necessary for practice.



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AMD, Faculty of Design, Fresenius University of Applied Sciences

Founded in 1848 by Carl Remigius Fresenius and with its roots in the Fresenius Chemical Laboratory, Hochschule Fresenius University of Applied Sciences looks upon a tradition of privately financed education in Germany that goes back more than 170 years.

Fresenius University is a private, state recognized and accredited university.

Fresenius University of Applied Sciences comprises the faculties of Chemistry & Biology, Economics & Media, Health & Social Affairs, Design.

AMD Akademie Mode & Design is the Faculty of Design and includes the Fashion School and the Design School, with locations in Düsseldorf, Wiesbaden, Munich, Hamburg and Berlin.

Our accredited degree programs in the fields of design, fashion, interior design, communication and industry-specific management are part of its educational offering.

Since 2016, AMD Akademie Mode & Design has been a full member of the International Foundation of Fashion Technology Institutes (IFFTI). This makes the faculty part of a global network of leading universities in the fashion industry in the fields of design, technology and fashion.

We appreciate the regular exchange within the network, the sharing of best practice experiences and the resulting university cooperation.

Our international network currently comprises 15 partner universities in 10 countries.



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Visit September 17th, 2024 to September 27th, 2024

Introduction

First of all, I would like to express my greatest gratitude for **IFFTI** to make it possible to visit **KNUST, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology** in Ghana.

The goal of the IFFTI Exchange Initiative is to facilitate the transfer of research and knowledge between IFFTI member institutions.

I am very thankful for the opportunity to meet members of the faculty during a short-term visit in Ghana, to share perspectives and learn about different approaches of fashion education from the colleagues of KNUST.

The IFFTI Exchange Initiative fosters the opportunity to start collaborations between universities.

Project idea and advance preparation for the visit

My motivation for submitting the project idea for the visit of KNUST was an opportunity to get to know the academic staff and to start the discussion among the involved academic personnel in the field of fashion and technology.

Before the trip started it was necessary to set up several online meetings to give each other an introduction and an insight into both universities aiming at getting a better understanding of the respective educational approach in fashion design.

For the preparation of the meeting in September we arranged an online presentation at the end of July to showcase a selection final works of our fashion design students from different semesters in order to get a better mutual understanding of how we work.

The online meetings provided a solid foundation for engaging in a more in-depth discussion to exchange ideas on common topics for a joint virtual workshop in the summer semester of 2025.

The joint workshop will be held online addressing undergraduate fashion design students from both institutions and includes practical concepts as well as theoretical approaches of intercultural understanding.

The overall project will be supported by academic tutors on both sides.

This project will be a valuable transfer of knowledge regarding fashion education.

The collaboration is intended to lead to intercultural understanding and exchange on several levels within both universities and their bodies.

The briefing as well as further ideas and details of the project were defined during the personal visit in September 2024.



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VISIT OF CAMPUS KNUST, KUMASI

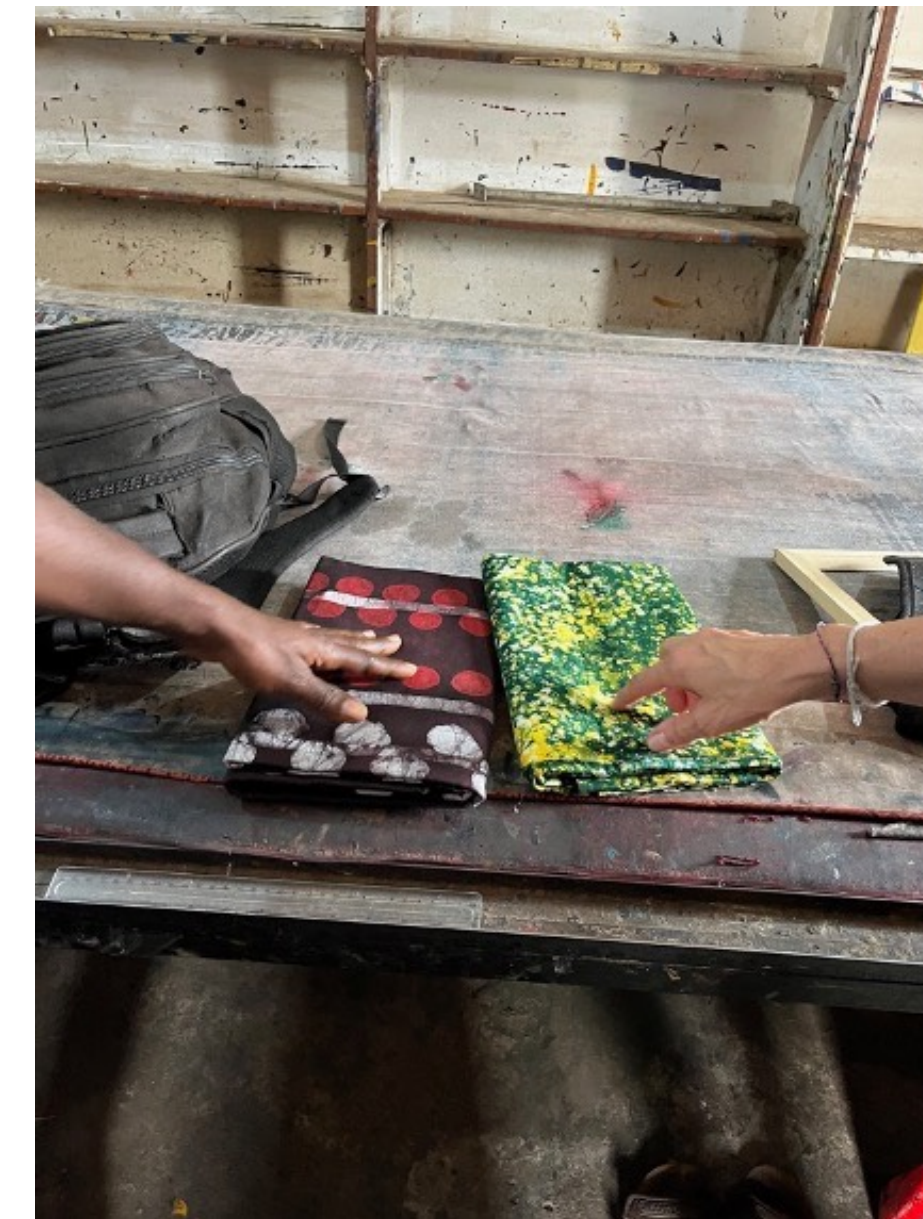
Visiting the Campus KNUST, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi.



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VISIT OF CAMPUS KNUST, KUMASI

I had the opportunity to visit the campus of the Faculty of Art and to meet the Dean of the Faculty of Art, Prof. Karî'kachä Seid'ou (PhD.) He gave me a tour of the campus and I was able to visit the screen-printing workshops, artist studios and weaving studios.



VISIT OF CAMPUS KNUST, KUMASI

Visiting of the weaving studios.



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VISIT OF CAMPUS KNUST, KUMASI

During the next meeting I had the chance to meet international dean Professor Daniel Addai Duah and to introduce our institutions and current activities. We discussed further steps to foster student and staff mobility for our collaboration.

I was honored to sign the international guestbook of partners.

At the next meeting, I met with Head of Department Industrial Art Prof. Ebenezer Kofi Howard and we took the time to discuss the upcoming workshop as well as future collaboration opportunities between our universities.

In addition, I had the opportunity to briefly attend a feedback session on presentations by PhD students from the industrial art department.



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VISIT OF KENTE MUSEUM, BONWIRE

Activities

For the content development of our intercultural workshop it was essential to become familiar with the traditional country specific craftsmanship techniques.

I wanted to focus my research on craftsmanship techniques with symbolic meaning, therefore I visited various workshops which conduct Kente and Adinkra techniques, to understand its application as well as the symbolism of its patterns and colors. I visited various places in Ghana where those techniques are practised.



VISIT OF KENTE MUSEUM, BONWIRE

In addition, we made a trip to the museum and workshop in Bonwire, where I was introduced to the world of Kente weaving.

The visit covered, on one hand, the exhibition of high-quality Kente fabrics with their various symbolisms and on the other hand diverse uses for special occasions.

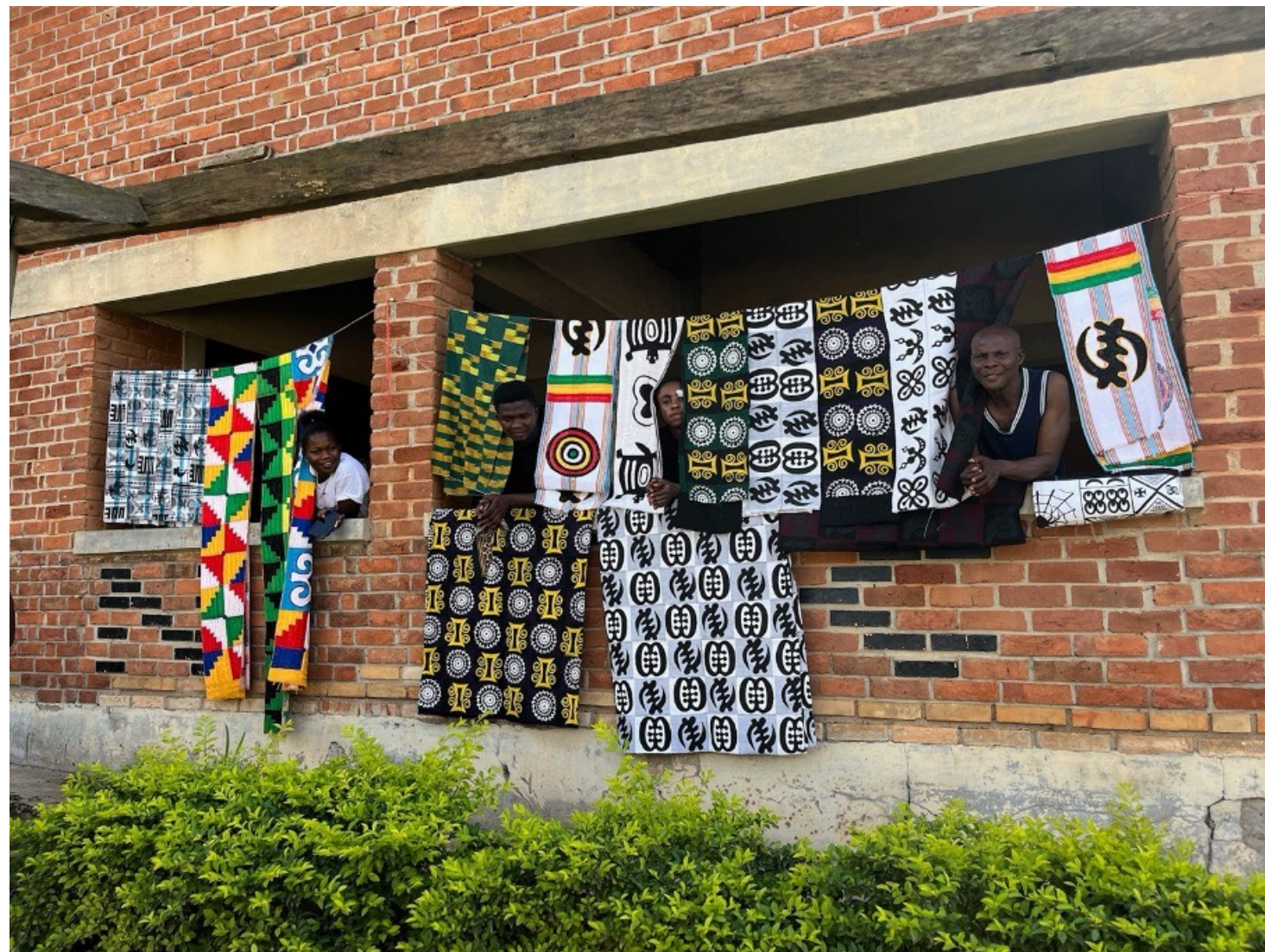
I also had the opportunity to try weaving on the loom myself.



VISIT OF ADINKRA VILLAGE, NTONSO

The next research visit was to the Adinkra Village in Ntonso, where I had a chance to learn about the meaning of symbols, the production of printing paste and how to apply the prints myself.

I felt very honored to be allowed to practice the embroidery technique used for scarves, which is traditionally reserved exclusively for tribal chiefs.



VISIT OF KENTE WORKSHOPS, VOLTA REGION

During my later travels to the Volta Region, I was very privileged to visit the Kente production site Tafi- Abuife and accompany 20 weavers in their work, allowing me to delve even deeper into the application of Kente techniques.



VISIT OF KENTE WORKSHOPS, VOLTA REGION

In Kpetoe an occasion arised to meet and interview a tailor who employs Kente fabrics and sews the traditional Fugu costumes. It was a very valuable and profound experience to learn about and apply the craftsmanship techniques, but especially to meet the weavers and artisans, which provided a better understanding of their cultural background.



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Project idea and execution

We, meaning the following participants and I, organised an extensive meeting with the aim of conceptualizing and organising a virtual workshop in April 2025 for our fashion design students.

Participants of the meeting:

Prof. Ebenezer Kofi Howard
Eunice Owusu-Antwi
Dr. Akosua Amankwah
Miss Josphine Opoku
Benjamin Kwablah Asinyo



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FACULTY EXCHANGE CONFERENCE

Project idea and execution

The result of our inspiring discussion was that the aim of the joint workshop is to gain a better intercultural understanding.

We will give an insight and a deeper understanding of symbols, pattern and craftsmanship techniques in both countries and a focus on cutting techniques as well.

We defined the structure and the content of online lessons, which will be conducted by tutors of both universities.

The conceptualization and design should draw on research into Ghanaian and German symbols, patterns, craft techniques, individual derivations of textile heritage and their meaning and symbolism today as well as cutting techniques respectively.

The focus is on the experimental transformation and translation of historical references into an innovative design piece.



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CONCLUSION AND FURTHER STEPS

It was of great benefit to have face-to-face meetings with the faculty staff and to gain valuable insights into fashion education in Ghana as well as local craftsmanship.

The lively exchange between all participants will allow us to conduct an intercultural workshop.

Opportunities and advantages for students:

Fostering understanding of different cultures and heritage.

Practicing of inspiring and enriching craftsmanship.

Acknowledgement of the work of weavers and tailors.

Discussing options how the results of the first workshop can be shown on a digital platform and through additional physical presentations.

Further options are the expansion of this collaboration by a successive workshop in September 2025 and to enable the mobility of academics and students.



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THANKS

I would like to thank KNUST, international dean Professor Daniel Addai Duah and Professor Karî'kachä Seid'ou (PhD.) dean of the Faculty of Art, Prof. Karî'kachä Seid'ou (PhD.) for the enriching experience and express my heartfelt gratitude for my Ghanaian colleagues, Head of Department Industrial Art Prof. Ebenezer Kofi Howard, Dr. Akosua Amankwah, Miss Josephine Opoku, Benjamin Kwablah Asinyo and Eunice Owusu-Antwi, who played a crucial role in organising our gathering and provided precious insights into their educational practice as well as their rich cultural heritage and local craftsmanship.



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