

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

EIT Culture & Creativity's Expert Trainers and
Coaches for the SME Fashion Adaptor
programme



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1. EIT CULTURE & CREATIVITY – BACKGROUND INFORMATION

EIT Culture & Creativity is the institutional partnership dedicated to helping European cultural and creative sectors and industries (CCSI) to become more sustainable, resilient, and competitive.

Launched in 2023 by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, an EU body, we provide access to funding, knowledge, and tailored support. As part of the largest European innovation network, we build lasting connections between research, industry, academia, and cultural institutions.

Our vision is to fundamentally strengthen the CCSI as a vital force for transformation—economically, socially, and environmentally.

Our mission is to drive responsible growth in and beyond the CCSI through innovation, education, business creation, and societal transformation.

Our first focus is on five key areas: architecture, gaming, fashion, audio-visual, and media. We support innovators every step of the way to scale their ideas, translate innovation into impact, and redefine what entrepreneurship means today.

We are present across 30 countries, with our HQ in Cologne, and Regional Hubs in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Bologna, Helsinki, Košice, and Vienna — building a powerful ecosystem that transcends silos, sectors and localization.

We believe that culture and creativity are not luxuries, but constitute a critical infrastructure for resilience, renewal, and economic growth. Whether you are a creative innovator, a company, a university, a research center, a cultural institution, an investor, a policymaker, a civic leader or someone on a learning journey, we invite you to join us in imaging desirable futures for Europe.

Find out more at www.eit-culture-creativity.eu.



2. THE TRANSFORMATION AREA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

One of EIT Culture & Creativity pillars of programmes and initiative is – besides education, innovation, and business creation – societal transformation through CCSI, e.g. the synergy with the New European Bauhaus Initiative of the European Commission being the most prominent example.

The Transformation Initiatives of EIT Culture & Creativity operate activities to reimagine and innovate the local and regional frameworks that shape the innovation capacity, competitiveness, growth, and transformation of cultural and creative ecosystems, supporting e.g.:

- The further development of the NEB Academy and of the NEB Lighthouse Programmes
- SMEs in fashion to adopt to NEB principles and transition their practices to circular ones
- Supporting transformative policy-making practices and processes
- Resilience of companies and public institutions in and through CCSI.

Driven by the values shared by the NEB of inclusion, beauty, and sustainability, and inspired by the ethos of experimentation, it forges pathways to a better future by addressing the challenges of today's structures and exploring radical new possibilities to innovate and systemically transform the CCSI ecosystem.

This area's work is based on design for systemic transformation, where every action considers its ripple effects across the ecosystem, especially sectors, disciplines, and networks, which usually are working silos, thus missing the capacities of its interconnectedness and knowledge triangle integration.

By blending business and non-profit approaches, EIT Culture & Creativity ensures that culture and creativity have the space and mandate to be catalysts for social cohesion, resilience, and transformative change.

2.2 PROGRAMME: FASHION ADAPTOR

The SME Fashion Adaptor 2025 is a structured programme built around four key pillars; Capital, Quality, Globality, and Material Innovation, providing practical frameworks, case studies, and interactive exercises. It will guide fashion brands through the transition from conventional production models to circular, resource-conscious operations. Aiming to take a step towards the EU 2030 Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles.



The Programme will combine strategic mentoring and coaching, specific training, peer-to-peer collaborations, and use of a digital circular tool. The digital tool will be a central component of the programme. Through hands-on exercises, the selected participants will input their real data into the tool, to visualize their impact and set measurable improvement goals. The tool will provide to the SMEs insightful benchmarks, industry comparisons, and scenario planning, helping brands understand how small shifts in production, material choices, and supply chain strategies can lead to significant change.

Upon completing the Fashion Adaptor 2025, participating SMEs will develop:

- A **roadmap** for transitioning toward long-lasting, repairable and circular solutions;
- The ability to **communicate impact transparently**, building trust with consumers and regulators;
- A **clear strategy** for circular transformation, respecting planetary boundaries that covers;
- A set of metrics and tangible **data-driven goals**;
- A structured business model.

By integrating sustainability into core business models, selected SMEs will establish measurable progress, ensuring that change is both actionable and scalable.

The Fashion Adaptor programme envisions to enable SMEs in:

- Tracking their production footprint, measuring the scale of production, material sourcing, and supply chain emissions.
- Assessing durability and repairability, logging product lifespan, customer repair behaviors, and material degradation rates.
- Quantifying circularity efforts, monitoring the percentage of recycled or upcycled materials used, and analyzing waste reduction strategies.
- Evaluating the localization potential, mapping supply chain dependencies and exploring opportunities for regional sourcing and manufacturing.

The objectives of the Fashion Adaptor programme will be refined upon the final selection of the SME participating in the Fashion Adaptor 2025.

On the longer term and upon the final selection of the SMEs and the acceptance of the next Business Plan 2026-2028, EIT Culture & Creativity will design programmes to ensure knowledge and accessibility to SME for:



- Circular Design and Business Model Innovation: How fashion businesses can pivot to circular practices and innovate their business models for sustainability.
- Supply Chain Transparency: Solutions to improve traceability, with a focus on Digital Product Passports.
- EU Regulatory Compliance: Helping SMEs (listed and non-listed) understand and comply with EU sustainability regulations.

These courses will be designed to equip businesses with the skills and knowledge to achieve long-term sustainability. Courses are expected to be released starting from 2026 and will capitalise on the needs and business challenges identified and tackled during this first phase 2025 of the Adaptor Programme.

3. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST: ROLES AND SCOPE

3.1. SCOPE

The Transformation Area is looking for a pool of experts in the fashion industry with a strong background in sustainability and circularity processes to support and articulate the training programme offered to ambitious SMEs selected for the Fashion Adaptor. The experts will have the possibility to collaborate as: trainer or coaches.

3.2 THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE FASHION ADAPTOR PROGRAMME

3.2.1. The profile

Within the Fashion Adaptor Programme the Transformation Team is looking for:

- Trainers
- Coaches & Mentors in business development respecting planetary boundaries

The professionals expressing their interest in being a trainer or a coach & mentor should have a deep knowledge and understanding of the Fashion Industry and its challenges regarding sustainability and more specifically, transitioning towards circularity.

The professionals demonstrate:

- Solid experience in business support for European SMEs for the CCSI, preferably in the fashion industry



- Deep knowledge and understanding of sustainability goals and current challenges for the fashion industry
- Knowledge of SMEs ecosystems and fashion industry

The selected professionals will contribute to articulate **approx. 10 weeks-programme** aiming to cover key focus areas:

- **Responsible Strategy** – Reducing waste and avoiding overproduction through thoughtful design and planning.
- **Data-Driven Targets** – Setting measurable goals for improving materials and supply chain sustainability.
- **Transformation Roadmap** – Planning for collections that prioritize circularity, durability, reparability, long-term use, social impact and just transformation.
- **Transparent Impact Communication** – Building trust through clear, honest reporting of sustainability outcomes to consumers and regulators.
- **Peer learning session** through collaborative discussions.

Within this programme every participant will benefit from **10 mentor sessions**, designed to provide:

- Expert guidance from mentors with deep industry knowledge.
- Personalised feedback on specific challenges and opportunities.

3.2.2. Requirements

Applicants for Fashion Adaptor are required to comply with the following criteria to be included in the pool of Experts:

- A Master's degree relevant for the topic
- Minimum of 7 years of relevant professional experience in academia, research, and/or business
- Proven track record of experience in sustainability, circularity and new business models
- Fluency in English (written and verbal)
- Experience in designing and organising efficient working sessions with digital circularity tools

The experts selected will be requested to be available from September 15th until the end of the programme, the details of the engagement will be communicated when the selected experts will receive his/her appointment. The Transformation team will provide them information on the



participants, and they will be in charge of preparing the material, facilitate working groups and track the progress of the SMEs selected.

3.2.3. Application Form

The professionals interested in supporting EIT CC Transformation Area are requested to submit the following information via the application form:

- A Europass CV of maximum 3 pages
- Please provide an annex with the list of:
 - Coaching / mentoring / training sessions on Fashion & Sustainability (preferably circularity), as well as the methodologies and tools
 - Processes where you have supported businesses and preferably SME to structure and support their development / business model, highlighting the achievements.
 - Experience in designing and organising efficient working sessions with digital circularity tools.
- A one-page document explaining how your involvement will drive impact in this programme.



4. HOW TO APPLY

4.1. ONLINE APPLICATION FORM

Fill in the following online form and upload the requested document:

[Express your interest here](#)

Please note that uncomplete applications will be disregarded.

Note that EIT Culture & Creativity will retain your data during a period of 3 years, this pool of experts in Transformation will be used on a regular basis to select the most relevant professional depending on the need of every programme.

4.2. EVALUATION CRITERIA

After the deadline, all applications received will be evaluated with a set of criteria. Please note that application that do not include the requested list of documents as specified in the paragraph “3. Role and Scope”, and/or not in English, will not be evaluated.

Every application will be evaluated applying the 4-eyes principles and considering the below criteria:

Criteria	Details
Professional experience	Aligned with the requirements.
Relevant Background Experience with the programme requirement	Experience in the selected roles.
Fashion & Circularity Expertise	Proven experience (education background, research work, professional background) in Fashion & Circularity.

4.3. REGISTRATION AND ASSIGNMENT PROCESS

The registration will be valid for 36 months from the date of application.

Please note that registration alone does not guarantee selection for an assignment. However, full registration is mandatory to be eligible for future selections. If you are selected for a specific assignment, EIT Culture & Creativity staff will contact you to confirm your suitability and availability.

Prior to any work assignment you will be issued guidelines covering a description of the tasks, duration, location (remote/physical), total remuneration, and reimbursement/payment methods. Before applying, please make sure you have read the Code of Conduct of EIT Culture & Creativity.

Personal data will be processed in accordance with Regulation No. 2018/1725.

4.4. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

EIT Culture & Creativity will pay a service fee as per the table below:

Type	Task	Fee	Unit	Type of unit
Meeting	Onboarding and briefing	75	1	Hour
Delivery work	Delivering session / training including summary work and next actions	150	1	Hour
Preparatory work	Preparing and reviewing SMEs context, challenges and prior achievements	100	1	Hour

EIT CC shall pay the selected individual for their work, or part(s) thereof, within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the invoice acceptance.

Invoices shall be paid electronically by EIT CC to the banking institution/account number provided by the external expert.

EIT CC reserves the right to refuse to provide financial contribution in case of non- performance or poor performance of the work and/or breach of any substantial obligations, including the obligation of confidentiality, and the no conflict of interest declaration.

EIT CC reserves the right to refuse to contribute for any report or other deliverable required by the appointment letter that is submitted beyond the date specified in the appointment letter.

EIT CC reserves the right to recover any payment made to Expert who has breached the obligations arising from the declarations of confidentiality and no conflict of interest.



4.6. DATA PROTECTION DISCLAIMER

Your personal data will be processed with utmost care by the EIT Culture & Creativity GmbH or its subsidiaries. The said processing will allow us to manage the recruitment of the expressions of interest, selection of framework expert evaluators and rapporteurs, and more specifically:

- to enable you to submit your application and CV to apply for a specific call,
- to match your details with the potential assignments related with a specific call and to eventually contact you,
- to retain your details and notify you about future opportunities similar to the specific role for which you have contacted us,
- to answer your enquiries.
- You can exercise your data protection rights, writing to hiring@eit-culture-creativity.eu.

You may find further information in the full GDPR Compliance privacy note for applicants available here: **GDPR Compliant Privacy Notice**