

**EXPERIENCE OF MOTIVATING STUDENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF
STARTUP PROJECTS**

Platform 5.

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**SUCCESSFUL EDUCATIONAL METHODS TO FOSTER SUSTAINABLE
EDUCATION**

ABSTRACT

This study examines hackathons as effective educational formats for fostering sustainability competencies in the fashion and textile sector. Through an analysis of a three-day fashion hackathon in Athens, case studies based on the mentoring of two early-stage circular startups, the research shows how participants learn, collaborate and translate sustainability principles into concrete, actionable concepts. A qualitative and inductive methodology was applied, using structured observation, visual and process documentation, reflective mentor notes and two case studies. These findings show that hackathon-based education combined with structured mentoring can jointly improve the capacity to advance sustainable fashion practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

Innovative and interdisciplinary educational practices remain essential and are becoming increasingly important for the evolution of successful sustainable practices in the fashion industry and related fields. In this framework, hackathons, living labs (Bakarn, 2015) and other intensive co-creative (Leminen, 2019) formats represent an exceptional opportunity to dynamically unite theory, policy and practice in a highly condensed, yet dynamic learning environment. This study examines the Athens Fashion Hackathon as a real-life educational intervention that aims to promote circular thinking, encourage the testing of new business models and foster collaboration between different actors in the fashion ecosystem.

The aim of the survey is to examine how hackathon-based formats and mentoring procedures can serve as the most effective teaching methods for

sustainability education. The research primarily addresses these points: How do participants learn and co-create during a three-day fashion hackathon? How does interdisciplinary collaboration influence the design of solutions? And how does mentoring help transform ideas into more robust and sustainably oriented startup concepts?

2. METHODOLOGY

The research methods are designed to analyze the activities of a real hackathon, experiences of mentoring startups and observation of interdisciplinary collaboration processes. Due to the nature of the collected data and the need for an in-depth understanding of dynamic, short-term, but intensive processes, a qualitative methodology is applied. As an inductive method, the research builds conclusions based on real activities and empirical observations, rather than previously established hypotheses. Since the results of the hackathon cannot be predicted in advance, a series of analytical steps are followed that support the openness of the process and the gradual derivation of conclusions.

Reference

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