CEEPUS

#TASA network

Green Hackathon
Sustainability & Fashion Industry

Corvinus University of Budapest
1-3 June, 2025

CORVINUS UNIVERSITY of BUDAPEST

About Hackathon

The event is dedicated to finding innovative and practical solutions that make the fashion industry more sustainable, transparent, and socially responsible. The fashion sector is one of the most resource-intensive industries globally, contributing significantly to water consumption, chemical pollution, CO_2 emissions, microplastic contamination, and textile waste. Moreover, fast fashion has made these impacts worse through overproduction and rapid consumption cycles, while persistent social challenges, such as unsafe working conditions and low wages, disproportionately affect workers in low-income countries. Addressing these issues is essential not only for environmental and social sustainability but also for fostering consumer trust and ensuring long-term business viability.

The challenge invites student teams of four to develop research-based solutions that can address either business-side or consumer-side sustainability issues. Teams may choose to innovate business models for local fashion companies—such as repair, rental, resale, or supply chain improvements—or to design interventions that influence consumer behaviour toward more sustainable purchasing practices. Over the course of the competition, participants will conduct research, analyse findings, and present solutions that are innovative, financially viable, scalable, and grounded in evidence. The ultimate goal is to develop practical approaches that can transform current systems, mitigate environmental and social impacts, and support a sustainable future for the fashion industry.

Overview

The fashion industry is widely recognised for its severe environmental and social impacts. High water use, toxic dye pollution, and growing CO_2 emissions make it one of the most resource-intensive global sectors (Niinimäki et al., 2020). Cotton farming can require up to 10,000 litres of water per kilogram, while textile dyeing generates about 20% of global industrial water pollution (Kant, 2012). The rise of polyester has further increased dependence on fossil fuels and contributed to microplastic pollution (De Falco et al., 2019).

The rise of fast fashion, based on a linear „take – make—dispose" model, has accelerated these problems through overproduction and rapid consumption cycles. Garment production has doubled since 2000, yet clothes are worn fewer times, leading to escalating textile waste (McKinsey, 2016). Social issues are equally pressing: long hours, unsafe conditions, and wages far below living standards remain widespread across supply chains (Labowitz & Baumann-Pauly, 2015). These impacts disproportionately affect workers in low-income countries, reinforcing global inequalities (Bick et al., 2018).

To tackle these problems, both businesses and consumers have begun to improve and demand more. Promising solutions include slow fashion, which emphasises durability, fewer purchases, and higher-quality production (Fletcher, 2010), as well as other sustainable business models such as resale, repair, rental, and local production, which also help reduce waste and extend product lifecycles (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2021). Consumers also require more transparency (in supply chain, product information) and often see through the greenwashing messaging of big companies.

Hackathon Challenge: Reimagining the Future of Sustainable Fashion

In response to these challenges, this Hackathon calls on you to design practical, creative, and research-based solutions that make fashion more sustainable, transparent, and economically viable. Your team may choose one of two options (A or B), each addressing a critical part of the system.

OPTION A: BUSINESS MODEL INNOVATION

Please collaborate with a local fashion business in your country to redesign a part of their sustainability strategy.

1. Select a sustainable fashion business (small- or medium-sized)
2. Analyse based on available information how they currently tackle environmental and social challenges.
3. Interview a founder or team member (attach interview guide + summary).
4. Propose 1-2 innovative solutions, such as:
    - new business models (repair, rental, resale, upcycling),
    - supply chain or logistics improvements,
    - transparent communication or conscious marketing tools.
5. Show how your idea helps the business and how it can be scaled or replicated elsewhere to make a change.

OPTION B: CONSUMER INSIGHTS & BEHAVIOUR

Investigate how to encourage consumers, especially young people, to shop for clothing/fashion items more sustainably.

1. Create and run a short survey (min. 100 respondents).
2. Identify key expectations and barriers (e.g., price, trust, style, knowledge)
3. Based on findings + research, design 1-2 innovative solutions that can encourage consumers to shop clothing more sustainably, such as
    - transparent communication campaigns,
    - digital tools for sustainable shopping,
    - strategies/platforms to promote repair, resale, or longer garment use.
4. Explain how your idea supports businesses and can be scaled and adapted to other markets.

General requirements

In both cases, the solutions should be innovative, financially viable, scalable and grounded in research (interview/survey). To participate in the competition, each team must present their work in a PDF document and a presentation.

Detailed requirements regarding the PDF document:

- The document must contain an introduction, short literature review (maximum 3 pages), methodology, results and conclusion, with 10-16 pages + reference list + annex (survey/interview guide)
- We are planning a publication; therefore, the length must be strictly adhered to.
- The team name and names of all participants must be clearly stated.
- The introduction should include a well-structured problem statement and, in the end, a clearly stated solution to this problem.
- In the methodology part, please describe in detail your chosen method.
- An explanation of how the solution adapts to different environments (ensuring your solution is scalable/adaptable.
- The use of images is allowed (provided sources are properly cited).
- The text must be written in grammatically correct English, clear and easy to understand.
- We are attaching a template and kindly ask you to prepare the document based on this.

DETAILED REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE PRESENTATION:

Format: PowerPoint presentation
Language: English
Duration: 8 minutes presentation + 10-minute Q&A
Presenters: every team member

Evaluation

The total score is 100 points. Option A and Option B are evaluated using the same criteria. The submissions and presentations will be evaluated by the mentor instructors of the participating teams.

I. EVALUATION CRITERIA — WRITTEN SUBMISSION (50 POINTS)

1. Problem definition and relevance (5 points)
2. Literature review (5 points)
3. Research design and methodology (5 points)
4. Analysis and use of research results (10 points)
5. Innovation and quality of the proposed solution (10 points)
6. Feasibility and scalability (10 points)
7. Compliance with formal requirements (length, structure, references, language quality) (5 points)

II. EVALUATION CRITERIA — ORAL PRESENTATION (50 POINTS)

1. Structure and clarity of presentation (10 points)
2. Content quality and consistency (10 points)
3. Innovation and impact of the solution (10 points)
4. Presentation skills and team performance (10 points)
5. Responses to questions and critical thinking (10 points)

! In the case of late submission, 1 point will be deducted per day for the written/oral scores.

Timeline

1. Application on the following link until 29 January 2026: click here.
2. Notification of the selected teams of four members (8 teams can be accepted) via email until 30 January 2026
3. Application for a CEEPUS scholarship (https://www.ceepus.info/) until 31 January 2026
4. Submission of the paper until 11 May 2026: krisztina.keller@uni-corvinus.hu and petra.berenyi@uni-corvinus.hu
5. Submission of the presentation until 25th May 2026: krisztina.keller@uni-corvinus.hu and petra.berenyi@uni-corvinus.hu
6. Competition: 1-3 June 2026
   Location: Corvinus University of Budapest,
   Gellért Campus, Mányoki út 9, 1118 Budapest, Hungary
   Detailed program: later

By submitting an application, participants acknowledge and consent to the taking of photographs and video recordings of them during the competition, which may be used for official communication and promotional purposes related to the event.

INFORMATION

Corvinus University of Budapest

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How to Apply for CEEPUS Mobility (via ceepus.info)

1. Go to www.ceepus.info and create an account (if you do not have one yet).
2. Start a new application in the CEEPUS system.
3. The mobility will take place within the #TASA network.
   → Please make sure to select #TASA as the network in your application.
4. When choosing the type of mobility, select “Short Term Excursion.”
5. Fill in all required personal and mobility details and submit your application.

Scholarship Information

- The CEEPUS scholarship provided by the Hungarian National CEEPUS Office is 47,500 HUF (approximately 120 EUR).
- The scholarship will be paid after your arrival, either on the day you arrive or within the following days.
- In the weeks before the mobility, we will contact all participants to collect bank account details, which are necessary for transferring the scholarship.
- Your home country’s National CEEPUS Office may also offer travel support.
  → Please ask your institutional CEEPUS coordinator for details, as this varies by country.
- If you need any assistance during the application process, please feel free to contact us at petra.berenyi@uni-corvinus.hu.

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Bibliography

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De Falco, F., Di Pace, E., Cocca, M., & Avella, M. (2019). The contribution of washing processes of synthetic clothes to microplastic pollution. Scientific Reports, 9, 6633.

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Niinimäki, K., Peters, G., Dahlbo, H., Perry, P., Rissanen, T., & Gwilt, A. (2020). The environmental price of fast fashion. Nature Reviews Earth & Environment, 1(4), 189–200.