

Press release

May 2018

FASHIONSUSTAIN: Thinking outside the box

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A new design thinking format for the Berlin fashion scene: launched by Messe Frankfurt, the so-called THINKATHON ran alongside the recent FASHIONSUSTAIN.BERLIN conference. It set an example for a collaborative and progressive approach to business and resulted in success with four, very innovative, potential new solutions which the sponsors of the challenge, Zalando and Fashion Council Germany, now have the exclusive opportunity to implement.

The themes of sustainability, innovations and technological progress were right at the heart of interdisciplinary dialogue and progressive business thinking, as over 48 hours a group of leading international experts from a wide range of disciplines took part in this first THINKATHON. The protagonists saw themselves as a 'taskforce'. Their challenge and that of the THINKATHON was not only to introduce a radically direct and open approach to design thinking in the European textile sector, but also immediately following the two-day conclave to present their four concrete proposals for the sustainable future of the fashion and textile sector. This THINKATHON took place alongside the conference double-header of FASHIONSUSTAIN and #FashionTech, as part of the recently held Berlin Fashion Week.

Organised by Sourcebook.eu on behalf of Messe Frankfurt and conceived by the RIFT.berlin Thinktank, the THINKATHON gave the 28 participants from twelve European, Asian and North-American countries the task of solving two so-called design challenges. These were set by Zalando as an industry partner and by Fashion Council Germany. The task set by Zalando focussed on the challenges of a multi-label retailer: 'How can we create an intelligent system to reveal hidden efforts to promote sustainability such as non-certified, fair trade or the payment of living wages?' In contrast, the challenge set by Fashion Council Germany addressed the initial phase of product development: 'How can we innovate education and mentoring so that designers apply new, sustainable technologies?'

To address these questions, the protagonists – a multidisciplinary mix of unconventional thinkers, researchers, designers, technologists, companies and political decision makers – were divided into four teams. Under the supervision of two coaches the teams developed their own,

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individual solutions to the problems, yet at the same time worked towards a common, super-ordinate aim: to co-create a sustainable future for the fashion industry.

Each of the four groups made a pitch as a team to present their results and proposed solutions with the event being held in the auditorium and also providing the finale to the FASHIONSUSTAIN conference. Two teams addressed the 'Zalando Challenge' and with a solution they called the 'Fashion Sustainability Circle' they presented a user-experience (UX) focussed, holistic labelling system for sustainability themes in the fashion industry, to include materials, production, logistics and after-life and a 'supplier-partnership platform' designed to promote reciprocal trust between brands, suppliers and consumers by making the relevant sustainability criteria in textile supplier chains transparent.

The other two teams focussed on the challenge set by Fashion Council Germany and presented the following concepts: 'Free Blues' is the idea of creating a powerful education platform to enable knowledge transfer along the whole value-adding chain, whilst at the same time supporting ambitious and talented designers. Given the name 'Curated Exchange Platform', it is an integrated programme designed to incorporate an online platform and physical matchmaking initiatives to help design students and doctoral students achieve sustainability targets using state-of-the-art technologies and digital tools.

Once the pitch had been made, the rights to the detailed presentation documents and their content were transferred exclusively to the two parties who had set the challenge, for them to test whether and in what form the idea can be applied to their business.

International trend forecasters, designers, business experts and decision makers from the sport, fashion and textile sector along with successful entrepreneurs from Berlin's dynamic start-up scene were all involved in this interdisciplinary dialogue about the future of the fashion and textile sector when it premiered in January as part of the innovative **FASHIONSUSTAIN.BERLIN** conference format and the THINKATHON which ran alongside it. Organised as part of the recently held Fashion Week Berlin and incorporated within the successful industrial trade fairs of the Greenshowroom and Ethical Fashion Show Berlin, the THINKATHON, FASHIONSUSTAIN and the #Fashiontech conference, which was organised by the Premium Group, transformed Berlin's Kraftwerk centre into Europe's biggest hub for sourcing textiles sustainably in the future. Another 'Thinkathon' will take place during the next Berlin Fashion Week. It will feature new challenges and again be incorporated into the FASHIONSUSTAIN conference format.

Additional press releases, photographs and videos of the conference and 'Thinkathon' can be found at:

<https://fashionsustain.messefrankfurt.com/berlin/en/press-material.html>

FashionSustainBerlin
Berlin, 17 January 2018

Background information

FASHIONSUSTAIN

Leading fashion and textile companies are including more and more sustainable aspects in their corporate and assortment strategies. At the new FashionSustain conference during the Fashion Week Berlin, leading players from the fashion sector spotlight current potential for development and trends and enter into a future-oriented, interactive dialogue revolving around the question of how sustainable technologies are likely to change the athleisure, outdoor, sport and performance markets. The conference is embedded in two events – the Greenshowroom and Ethical Fashion Show Berlin – which form Europe's biggest platform for sustainable fashion. FashionSustain, Greenshowroom and the EthicalFashion Show Berlin are organised by Messe Frankfurt, one of the world's biggest fair and exhibition companies.

THINKATHON

The THINKATHON brings together forward thinkers from different sectors to combine their respective knowledge and expertise and find innovative solutions to a specific problem within a limited time frame. Held alongside the FASHIONSUSTAIN and FASHIONTECH conference double-header, interdisciplinary teams are set specific, sector-based tasks and a design thinking challenge. With Zalando and the Fashion Council Germany in mentoring roles, the THINKATHON brings researchers and consultants together with designers, technicians, start-ups and MA students. They work in small groups to answer questions proposed by forward thinking companies and respond to industry initiatives on the future of fashion and textiles. Their solutions are based on multidisciplinary cooperation and deal with sustainable, technological practices and innovations as applied to the business world.

Videos, photos and additional information:

www.fashionsustain.messefrankfurt.com
www.facebook.com/FashionSustain
www.instagram.com/Fashionsustain.berlin/
www.twitter.com/fashion_sustain

www.greenshowroom.com
www.facebook.com/greenshowroom
www.youtube.com/greenshowroom
www.instagram.com/greenshowroom

www.ethicalfashionshowberlin.com
www.facebook.com/ethicalfashionshowberlin
www.youtube.com/EFSBerlin
www.instagram.com/ethicalfashionshowberlin

Information about the textile fairs of Messe Frankfurt around the world:
www.texpertise-network.com

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Background information on Messe Frankfurt

Messe Frankfurt is the world's largest trade fair, congress and event organiser with its own exhibition grounds. With over 2,500 employees at some 30 locations, the company generates annual sales of around €661* million. Thanks to its far-reaching ties with the relevant sectors and to its international sales network, the Group looks after the business interests of its customers effectively. A comprehensive range of services – both onsite and online – ensures that customers worldwide enjoy consistently high quality and flexibility when planning, organising and running their events. The wide range of services includes renting exhibition grounds, trade fair construction and marketing, personnel and food services.

With its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, the company is owned by the City of Frankfurt (60 percent) and the State of Hesse (40 percent). * preliminary figures for 2017

For more information, please visit our website at:

www.messefrankfurt.com | www.congressfrankfurt.de | www.festhalle.de