



Figure 1. Third TexUnité Transnational Project Meeting held at the Department of Textiles, Graphic Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

3rd TexUnité Transnational Project Meeting and 1st Dissemination Event

The University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, successfully hosted two major TexUnité events on September 18-19, 2025: the 3rd TexUnité transnational project meeting (TPM) and the 1st dissemination event (Figure 1).

On September 18, the 3rd TexUnité TPM took place in a hybrid format, combining in-person participation at the Department of Textiles, Graphic Arts and Design at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering, with online attendance via Zoom. The meeting was chaired by the project coordinator, Prof. Dr. Anne-Marie Grundmeier. During the opening session, participants were welcomed by the Head of Department, Assistant Prof. Dr. Jure Ahtik, the Vice-Dean, Prof. Dr. Andrej Demšar, and the Slovenian project team coordinator, Prof. Dr. Matejka Bizjak.

Prof. Dr. Anne-Marie Grundmeier provided a comprehensive update on project developments, outlining the process of completed pilot projects and the schedule of upcoming Service-Learning (SL) seminars involving student projects and virtual exchanges. By the end of the spring semester 2025, fourteen seminars had been held, covering didactic and methodological approaches and featuring presentations and materials designed for self-learning as open educational resources (OER). The meeting then focused on dissemination activities, encouraging all consortium members to contribute through project presentations and publications on relevant research topics.

Four pilot seminars were successfully conducted in spring 2025. Each was implemented through tandem partnerships and integrated SL projects.

University of Education Freiburg, Germany: In collaboration with teacher training students from the bachelor seminar *Fashion and Fashion Market*, a comprehensive guide for the *Future Fashion Walk in Freiburg* was developed. Promoting sustainable fashion and shopping practices, this guide offers an alternative to fast fashion by featuring selected sustainable stores in Freiburg alongside background information on sustainable fashion. Based on interviews with shop owners, the students authored the accompanying articles. The guide, available in English and German, will be published on the project's main website and social media platforms.

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia: The tandem partner project *Ljubljana Fashion Walk* was developed and implemented with undergraduate design students. While participants reported the experience as highly engaging, both project leaders noted that it was demanding due to the practical workload exceeding the originally planned project hours.

University of Applied Sciences Albstadt-Sigmaringen, Germany: This project was integrated into the students' industry semester, during which they collaborated with the inclusive hoodie manufacturer *wasni* in Esslingen, Germany, where people with and without disabilities produce hoodies, and partnered with an influencer to promote the initiative.

Ege University, Turkey: As the tandem partner, Ege University students produced gloves and scarves made from recycled polyester and cotton yarns to learn about sustainable materials and knitting processes. The finished products were donated to individuals at *Down Kafe*, a social café in Izmir that employs people with Down syndrome. Both project leaders reported that the experience was meaningful and rewarding for the students involved.

After a short break for informal exchange, the current status of the draft of the stocktaking report was presented. The report is expected to be finalised by December 2025. Prof. Grundmeier also shared the results of an online survey conducted via Google Forms. The survey identified key strengths, including the project's clear structure, balanced pacing and workload, effective teaching and facilitation methods, expert involvement, positive group atmosphere, and the absence of major technical issues during implementation. Areas for improvement included enhancing cross-cultural engagement and providing more opportunities for informal networking, such as virtual coffee breaks or small breakout-room discussions.



Figure 2. TexUnite consortium at the Ljubljana Roman wall.

Next, three tandems comprising six partner universities presented their project concepts for the winter semester 2025/2026. The University of Education Freiburg will launch a project entitled *Creating textile objects for people with special needs through creative recycling* in collaboration with the Gheorghe Asachi Technical University of Iași, which will run a parallel project titled *Art therapy for people with autism through creative recycling and upcycling of textiles*. The University of Applied Sciences Albstadt-Sigmaringen will conduct its project *Upcycling in collaboration with people with handicaps*, supported by the stakeholder NGO *Lebenshilfe*, in tandem with Trakia University Stara Zagora, Bulgaria, which will implement the project *Wearable arts: shibori, weaving, painting, reusing of clothes together with schoolchildren with social needs*. The third tandem involves the University of Ljubljana with the project *Weaving for a better world crafting sustainability* and Ege University in Izmir with the project *Sustainable braiding with children*.

While the consortium members found the projects highly promising, they also recognised potential challenges regarding student communication, as many participants have limited proficiency in English. Drawing on previous positive experiences, they suggested that students prepare and share mind maps about their hobbies and interests as an effective icebreaker and tool for fostering communication.

The project coordinator, Prof. Grundmeier, presented the results of the pre- and post-tests conducted for the pilot seminars. Analysis of the post-test responses indicated that, overall, students from different universities developed more positive attitude toward sustainable textiles and fashion after participating in the seminars. These findings suggest that the seminars effectively enhanced students' awareness of their ability to contribute to sustainability. Overall, student feedback demonstrated a strong enthusiasm for SL and included valuable suggestions for making future experiences even more impactful and inclusive. Consequently, the pilot projects were deemed successful, providing an excellent foundation for the upcoming semesters.

The consortium members expressed satisfaction with the productive working day, after which they were briefed on the agenda for the first dissemination event, scheduled for the following day. The meeting concluded with an intercultural exchange among the on-site participants.



Figure 3. Presentation of the project partners, the main objectives, and outcomes of the project at the 1st dissemination event in Ljubljana.

On 19 September 2025, the 1st dissemination event was held at the same location in a hybrid format, with 114 participants from seven countries in attendance. After welcome remarks from faculty leadership representatives and an overview of the event agenda, all project partners gave brief self-introductions. The project coordinator then presented the main objectives and outcomes of the TexUnite project (Figure 3).

Following a short discussion and networking break, Prof. Grundmeier gave a presentation entitled *Service Learning as a Tool for Sustainability and Its Orientation in Textile and Fashion Education*, which was followed by an engaging discussion.

The completed pilot projects were then presented once again – this time to a broader audience. Prof. Manuela Bräuning from the University of Applied Sciences Albstadt-Sigmaringen, Germany, introduced the project in which students collaborated with the inclusive hoodie manufacturer *wasni*. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Ertekin from Ege University then gave the next presentation as the tandem partner on the cooperation with *Down Kafe*. Nadine Kitzlinger, from the University of Education Freiburg, Germany, presented the Future Fashion Walk in Freiburg. The SL project presentations concluded with a lively discussion on the challenges of virtual exchange among students. The participants shared ideas for overcoming language barriers – such as forming small international student groups to encourage communication – and discussed effective technical solutions to support successful online collaboration.

Afterward, the University of Ljubljana presented their project, led by Prof. Dr. Matejka Bizjak, during a fashion walk through Ljubljana. This was followed by visits to selected sustainable fashion stores and a guided tour of the city's historic old town, culminating in an intercultural gathering that closed the event on an inspiring and collaborative note.

TexUnite consortium, September 2025