



## **Shemakes network**

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# Deliverable

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# Executive Summary

This deliverable reports on the expansion of the shemakes network in the second phase of the project, reflects on the lessons learnt from this expansion, and outlines the priority strategies for its sustainability.

The call for 12 new Transfer Labs proved to be highly successful, with 85 applications, 67 of which were above the threshold score (12/20). Not only was the call carefully designed and promoted in our networks - Fablabs and TCBL - but, as it focussed on empowering women in the fashion and textile sector through technology and community-based innovation practices, with a possible subcontract to develop themselves along these roles, it attracted unexpectedly high interest. In parallel, support to the Transfer Labs was provided through 'experience transfer agents', namely the twelve Ambassadors, and 'knowledge transfer agents' namely the Gurus. Ambassadors were profiled and selected from the participants in workshops and events of Phase 1 to provide their experience to peers in Transfer Labs, while Gurus were experts from the initial Core Labs who helped Transfer Labs and Ambassadors in developing their activities.

There were three major stages in the expansion of the network: a) familiarising the Transfer Labs with the objectives of shemakes.eu and the outputs from Phase 1 and defining the Phase 2 activities; b) carrying out the activities, with the full support of Ambassadors and Gurus, and c) documenting in the open tool kit and reflecting on the achievements of the project and strategies for sustainability of the network.

What was important to discover was that four areas provided satisfaction: a) intertwined 'collaboration and network', network growing through collaboration and collaboration getting deeper with more confidence into the network; b) possibility of 'diversity and empowerment', again tightly woven together, as diverse points of views would stimulate more options; c) 'activities' were numerous, allowed in-depth learning and engagement, and opened a lot of doors for innovation; and d) 'meetings and events', as essential meeting points of the expanded network online and common creation of the experience face-to-face.

During this expansion phase to the Transfer Labs, the Learning Paths (WP2) and the Innovation Services (WP3) were all renamed as 'activities' and grouped into four families: a) 'Community Engagement', to connect the labs deeper with their local stakeholders and to create confidence with the network that allowed the joint development of activities; b) 'Curiosity and Discovery Learning Paths', dedicated to children, teens, and students, aimed at raising awareness of tech and engineer-based innovation stereotypically perceived as 'male', and make them accessible to



everyone; c) 'lab-to-lab projects' demonstrating the synergy and power of the collaborative, exploratory, and diversity mindsets of the labs, catalysed by the wool sector, where the shemakes projects demonstrated that a stereotypically female (and undervalued) sector could become a worthy and valued one; and finally d) 'innovation path' and 'business engagement' were reunited, as their progression integrated common steps, even though for different targets - design of one's future as freelancers or job-seekers on the one hand, and creation of business, on the other.

These four families of activities are all possible entry points to the shemakes ecosystem, depending on the context and maturity of the labs, even though a new lab would most likely benefit from starting with Community Engagement, locally with their stakeholders and internationally with the shemakes labs.

In this context, the strategies to further develop shemakes after the end of the project are three: a) maintain the key outputs of shemakes - the toolkit, the network and the website, b) continue to develop the shemakes gender vision, and c) extend the application of shemakes - to the development of the wool sector among others, and with active learning experimentations.

shemakes succeeded in documenting all its activities in an *open-source toolkit* on github. This allows any new lab to choose, from a structured 'menu', activities that can be adapted to the local context and needs, follow the step-by-step the documentation and templates, and grow to the point where they themselves can design and document new activities to be added to the open-source portfolio, all with the help of the network's Gurus and Ambassadors when needed, guided by co-founders of this repository.

The *network of shemakes labs* is a second fundamental legacy of the project. Each of the current labs is given the opportunity to join the TCBL Association, an extensive network of varied communities. The shemakes network will contribute, with its focused gender perspective, to deeply transform the T&C sector into a socially responsible one, with alternative business models that allow to transition from quantity and low costs to quality, value and respect all along the value chain.

The third asset of the shemakes network is the *project identity* that was collectively created and embedded in all the work done, contributing to the strength and energy of the project. This identity will be maintained under the above-mentioned TCBL umbrella, with the existing database of visuals and graphics - under CC licences.

Beyond the maintenance of its existing assets, the legacy of shemakes.eu includes a 'gender vision' that is active and pragmatic, starting with five key values, developed into activities - co-designed and co-operated - and reaching out to the broad



range of labs' target participants. As was shown in the project, local contexts and cultures influence the maturity of individual labs regarding the gender issue. To this end, a Shemakes Club will be formed connecting the TCBL and Fabricademy networks, to maintain the shemakes identity and gender focus. The seeds that have been sown can thus continue to grow, leading to the development of Gender Equality and Development Plans in all countries, efficiently implemented and monitored.

Finally, the strategy to allow for shemakes post project development and sustainability draws on the energy of the network to continue exploring the wool sector in greater depth. This is an iconic sector, stereotypically traditional, home - based and low-value, that shemakes has demonstrated can become innovative, systemic, and high value, under the leadership of women bringing alternative thinking to the transformation process. Beyond wool, other areas of the European textile and clothing sector could be led by gender-concerned people along this path of revitalisation, relocalisation, and development of alternative business models, such as hemp or linen.

Active learning is also a key issue to continue developing, as alternatives to standard academic curricula or pre-packed technical training, in order to develop multi-specialist and transdisciplinary competences and make them recognised as important skills for the future.



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# 1. Introduction

Deliverable 1.2, *shemakes network*, is the final deliverable of *WPI Opportunity ecosystem*. Deliverable 1.1, *shemakes Vision* provided the framework to develop the innovation ecosystem within *shemakes*. It proposed a *Gender Vision* together with an *Innovation Strategy* that were tested and reflected upon throughout the project. This document instead outlines the conditions for the *shemakes* community to be sustainable and to continue developing the energy, growing the network and feeding the range of open-source and documented activities that have been developed during the timeframe of the project.

After this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 describes the methodology adopted to grow the community of labs mid-project from 6 to 18, covering 16 European Member States and Associated Countries. This was attained through a call for new labs to receive subcontracts, as well as the selection of Gurus and Ambassadors as the human drivers of knowledge transfer and know-how, all structured by a collectively agreed timeline for the development of the community.

Chapter 3 outlines insights gained from this expansion and the transfer processes that, beyond the outcomes of the activities themselves (detailed in the deliverables of WPs 2 and 3), are based on how the vision and the innovation ecosystem were put into practice and the lessons coming from this.

Finally, chapter 4 draws recommendations on how to sustain the *shemakes* ecosystem based on the development of a systemic logic that is the foundation for future opportunities for women. This chapter also refers to the future development of the *shemakes* network through the existing *Fabricademy* and *TCBL* “parent” networks and the identification of interventions to support the development of this ecosystem to serve the more general purpose of a sustainable and equitable T&C sector.



## 2. Network Expansion

One of the main objectives of shemakes.eu was to validate the transferability of the methods and tools developed in the first phase of activities by expanding the network, considering organic growth to be an essential feature of the shemakes ecosystem.

Following this strategy, a selection of twelve (12) Transfer Labs was organised in the second phase of the project to expand the shemakes network in at least eleven (11) additional countries, including EU members and Associated Countries not already covered by the shemakes consortium.

At the end of this selection, each of the six “Core Labs” was responsible to provide subcontract funding to two Transfer Labs. Each new “Transfer Lab” was allocated to two of the activities developed in the first phase, with the mentoring support of the relevant Core Lab.

### 2.1. Selection of the Transfer Labs

The selection of the new Transfer Labs was coordinated by IAAC and CEDECS-TCBL, using both the Fabricademy and TCBL networks to reach out to potential applicants, which in such a process should aim for a number in the order of at least three times the final target (i.e. minimum 36 applications).

The methodology adopted consisted of an open call for applications, with a Q&A session for all candidates, a timing and geographical scope for applications, an application form with eligibility criteria and a selection process based on selection criteria. This methodology is detailed in the following subsections.

#### The open call

The call<sup>1</sup> promoted the opportunity to develop activities to help bridge the gender and innovation gap in the textile and clothing industry, with the major following message “Get funding for your community activities that empower women in the fashion and textile sector”.

The detailed description of the call outlined the benefits of becoming part of the shemakes project, the most important of which were listed as follows.

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<sup>1</sup> [Call for Transfer Labs](#)



- Receive funds that will cover the purchase of materials, tools, and small equipment to conduct relevant activities at your lab.
- Learn from and connect with shemakes "Gurus" from the six partner labs.
- Collaborate with one of shemakes "Ambassadors" who will travel to your lab and help develop activities for your community.
- Co-design innovation by and for women in the Textile and Clothing sector.
- Test innovation in real environments, with non-profit associations and like-minded businesses.

Secondary benefits included:

- Get access to the knowledge generated by the community.
- Use shemakes platform services (open toolkit and communication).
- Showcase your collaborative work on the shemakes platform.
- Gain access to the combined networks of Fabricademy and TCBL and participate in their events.
- Develop synergies with other members in the network for future funds and collaborations.

## Timing and geographical scope

The call was opened on November 1, 2021, hoping for at least 36 applications. In order to secure a higher number, the deadline was extended from November 30 to December 5, 2021. Altogether, the call was open for five full weeks.

A Q&A session was held on 22 November 2021, to clarify any questions or issues that candidates might raise.

To match with a core KPI of the H2020 Call that the shemakes project addresses - "presence in at least 16 European Member States or Associated Countries" (of which the project consortium already covered 5) - the call included a list of countries that were eligible for grants in the H2020 programme<sup>2</sup>.

## Application form and eligibility criteria

Each applicant was considered eligible if in compliance with the following criteria:

- Interest in/working in the fashion and textile sector.
- At least one year of experience in one of the following areas of fashion and textile expertise: Electronics & Wearables, Bio-textiles, Recycling and circularity, Entrepreneurship & Management, Manufacturing, Design.

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<sup>2</sup> [List of countries eligible for funding](#)



- Facilities and skills to conduct workshops on fashion and textiles and/or have machines to produce fashion and textile artefacts.
- At least one member of staff who could coordinate the transfer of activities with the mentor lab and the task expert during the time planned.
- Location in one of the eligible countries.

The results of the call went far beyond expectations with a total of 85 applications received from 31 different countries around the world, from Austria to the United States.

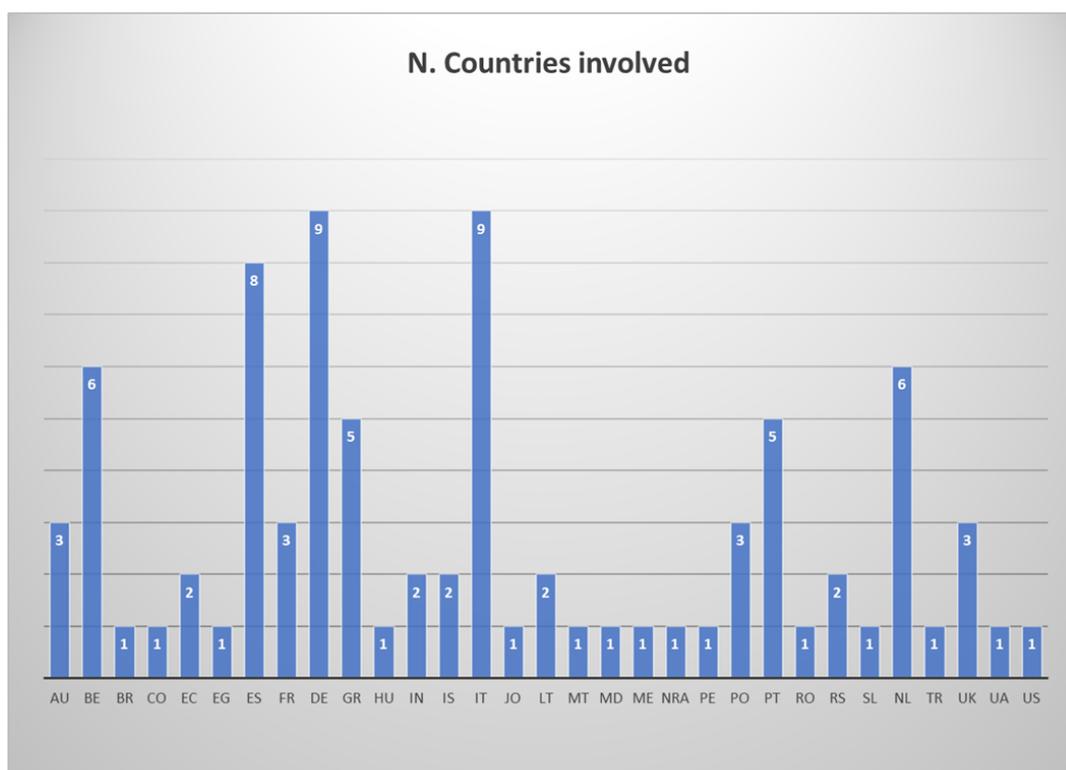


Figure 1. Number of countries involved in the call.

Each application was compiled through an online form created with the Typeform software, and each candidate was also required to complete a Declaration of Honour and a Financial Declaration<sup>3</sup>. A question in the application form on “preference for activities” allowed to know in advance which shemakes activities they preferred to conduct. As shown in the figure below, 15 chose the “Curiosity” path, 15 the “Discovery” path, 19 the “Innovation” path, 16 “Community Engagement”, 6 the “Lab to Lab project”, and 14 chose “Business Engagement”. This result represented a balance of interests that allowed us to distribute activities among the Transfer Labs as planned.

<sup>3</sup> See Annex 2



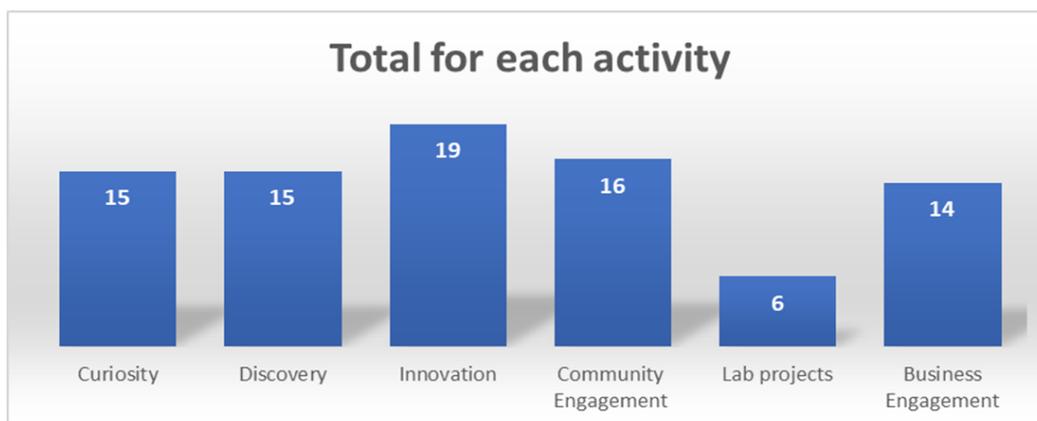


Figure 2. Shemakes activity preferences.

## Selection process and criteria

Each eligible application form was evaluated by three (3) representatives of the shemakes consortium, with the selection of evaluators for each proposal based on the following rules:

- No evaluator should come from the same country as the applicant.
- One (1) evaluator shall be staff of a sponsoring partner, called “SU referent”, that a candidate could choose from among the six (6) initial shemakes Labs.
- Two (2) evaluators shall be staff partners selected randomly, through a procedure that aimed to ensure the maximum variety in the composition of the set of three. One was selected from among the remaining five (5) lab partners and the other from among the non-lab members of consortium (excluding Flod): Matrix, Tavistock, and TCBL.

The evaluation forms were prepared and individually sent to each of the three evaluators for a given candidate by Marco Cusenza of the coordinating Team.

The evaluation was individual and not shared with others. Each evaluator had to rate the proposal according to the four selection criteria that correspond to the key sections of the Application Form:

- **infrastructure and network:** The kind of infrastructure that the transfer lab could use to conduct shemakes activities e.g. space, machinery etc. and how they describe the type of network and community they were part of.
- **Knowledge and experience:** The number of teachers and moderators and their experience with the potential targets of the shemakes activities (girls and women looking to learn about the textile sector).
- **Action plans for the shemakes targets:** Any ideas for programmes benefitting the future target groups, in terms of “themes” (e.g. e-textiles,

coding, engineering, using DIY prints etc) or in terms of “targets” (e.g. specific action plans for different age groups or varied stakeholders).

- **Gender and innovation vision:** Their expression of a gender and innovation vision that they would apply to the activities they would conduct in the transfer phase.

Each of the above selection criteria was evaluated on a scale of 1-5, resulting in a maximum of 20 points for each Application Form.

The typical Excel format for the evaluation is shown in the figure below:

N.	SU Referent	TCBL			IAAC		WAAG		ONLF		LEON		MAKE		REDU		TIG		MATR	Scoring average
		Fred	Jesse	Marco	Nat	Marion	Cecilia	Ista	Cristina	Shannon	Nuria	Cesareo	Victor	Name	Andreaa	Elvys	Kerstin	Joe	Adriana	
1	LEON				3						3								3	3,00
2	IAAC					5			4								4			4,33
3	IAAC	3			5		5													4,33
4	IAAC	4				5						5								4,67
5	LEON	2						4			5									3,67
6	IAAC				2									4						2,00
7	REDU						3							3					3,4	3,13
8	IAAC					4	3										4			3,67

Figure 3. Sample section of the excel grid.

The figure shows: the number representing the candidate in the first column (we have removed all the applicant’s names to anonymize the figure for this deliverable); the shemakes referent in column two; the partners involved in the evaluation with the team members in the next columns; and, in the last column, the scoring average. Each white cell showed to the evaluators where to put their assessment. The minimum threshold to pass the first step was an average of 12/20 with no score of 0-1 for any of the criteria.

Most of the 85 candidates received a good score, as was highlighted by the scoring average of 14,05/20. Moreover, among all the applications evaluated, 67 crossed the threshold of 12/20, 16 received a score between 8 and 12/20, and only 2 applications received a score below 7. The figure below shows the scoring frequencies:



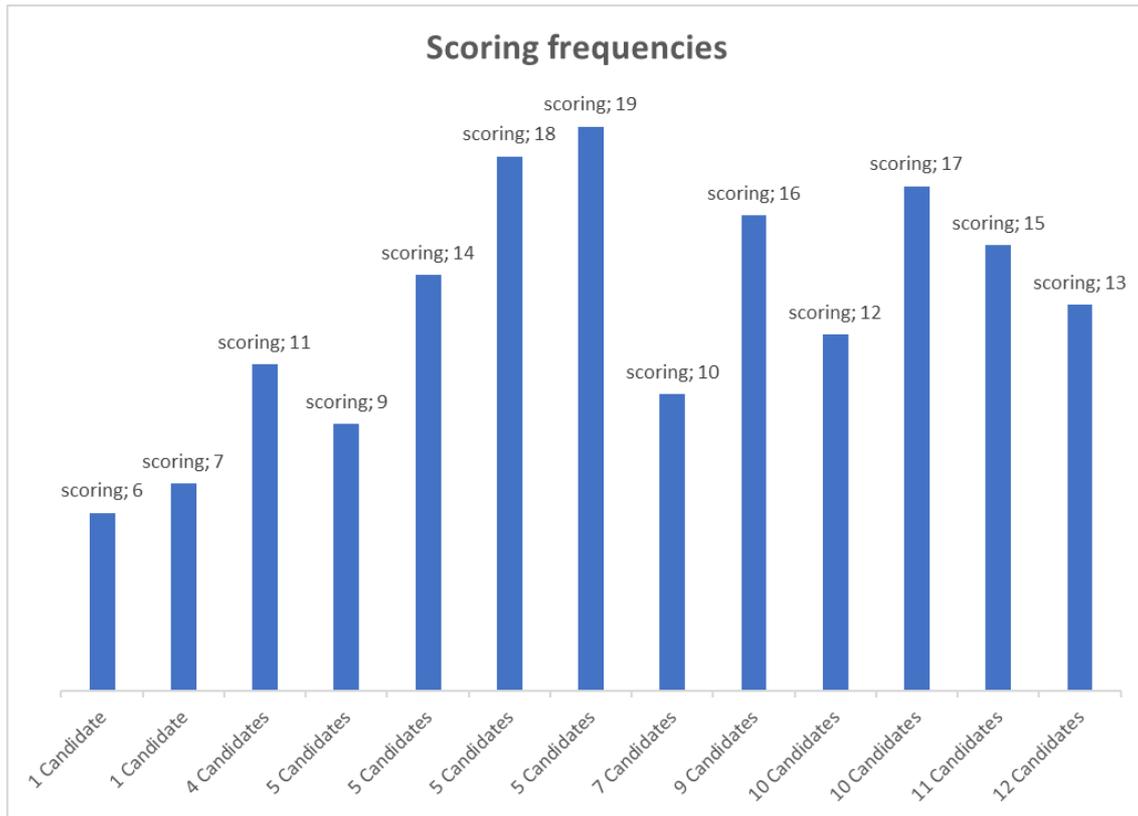


Figure 4. Scoring frequencies.

The selection process was defined in two separate meetings. The first was held on 10 December 2021, and a final meeting on 15 December 2021. In both meetings all the evaluators took into account the need to balance the three constraints: highest scores, the different countries to be represented, and the candidates' expertise in activities suitable with the objectives of the network expansion (WP2 learning paths and WP3 Innovation services).

After the evaluation the final list of the successful applicants is as follows.

- Center for Circular Design (UK)
- Decode Fabrication Laboratory (Greece)
- FarmLab.at (Austria)
- Green Fabric (Belgium)
- The Icelandic Textile Center (Iceland)
- Lottozero (Italy)
- RogLab (Slovenia)
- Le Textile Lab (France)
- Textile Prototyping Lab (Germany)
- Viva Lab (Portugal)
- VIVISTOP Užupis (Lithuania)

- ZIPHOUSE Design Hub (Moldova)

In recognition of the unsuccessful labs that had scored above 7/20, and given the high quality of the applications, the consortium planned to give the possibility to become part of the TCBL network in the future, if they wish to participate in future calls regarding gender and innovation issues or related to shemakes future activities and networks.

## 2.2. Contractual obligations

Once the selection process was completed, two shemakes activities, main and secondary, were allocated to each selected Transfer Lab. Each activity carried out by a Transfer lab was linked to one of the six shemakes paths: Curiosity; Discovery; Innovation; Community engagement; Lab to Lab; Business engagement. The Transfer Labs were asked to confirm their availability to join the shemakes network and participate in the activities assigned to them.

The shemakes team then provided a draft agreement tailored to the legal status of each transfer lab, the relevant national legislation, and the shemakes activities that the Transfer Labs were to be engaged in. A generic description of each activity and the objectives connected to it were provided to each transfer lab, allowing the Transfer Labs to design their own activity path in detail, within the limits of the purpose of the call.

Each transfer lab signed the legal and financial agreement with the shemakes lab leading the major type of activities to which it was assigned, which meant that each shemakes partner lab was responsible for two Transfer Labs.

Each agreement had the following common characteristics:

**Duration:**

*“The agreement shall enter into force on the date when the last of the two parties signs and will last until the conclusion of the shemakes.eu project, currently set at December 31st, 2022”*

**Remuneration:**

*“For the activities to be carried out in execution of this subcontract, the Subcontractor is awarded a payment of total Euro 15.000,00 inclusive of VAT where applicable”*



#### Payment arrangements:

*“Prepayment: Euro 7.500,00 after 30 days from the signature of this agreement; Final payment: Euro 7.500,00 after acceptance of the final technical implementation report by the shemakes.eu consortium”*

#### Ethical guidelines<sup>4</sup>

The contract includes provisions to ensure responsible research and experimentation procedures and Data management.

## 2.3. Allocation of Transfer Labs to Gurus and Ambassadors

### Assignment of “Gurus”

Each transfer lab was provided a “Guru” for each activity, major and secondary. The “Guru” figure was the task leader during phase one and an expert advisor with an inspirational leadership and changemaker background. This role provided support to the relevant Transfer Labs for the elaboration and performing of its activities in that task (see more details on Gurus and Ambassadors in Deliverable 4.3, *Reputation: Final Report*). Following is the list of “Gurus”:

- Anastasia Pistofidou (IAAC), for Lab-to-lab Project
- Nuria Robles (LEON), for Curiosity Path
- Cristina Olivotto (ONL’FAIT), for Discovery Path
- Cecilia Raspanti (WAAG), for Lab-to-lab Project
- Beatriz Sandini (WAAG), for Innovation Path
- Andreea Sofronea (REDU), for Community Engagement
- Victor Senave (MAKESENSE), for Business Engagement

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<sup>4</sup> See Annex 1 for the complete Ethical guidelines



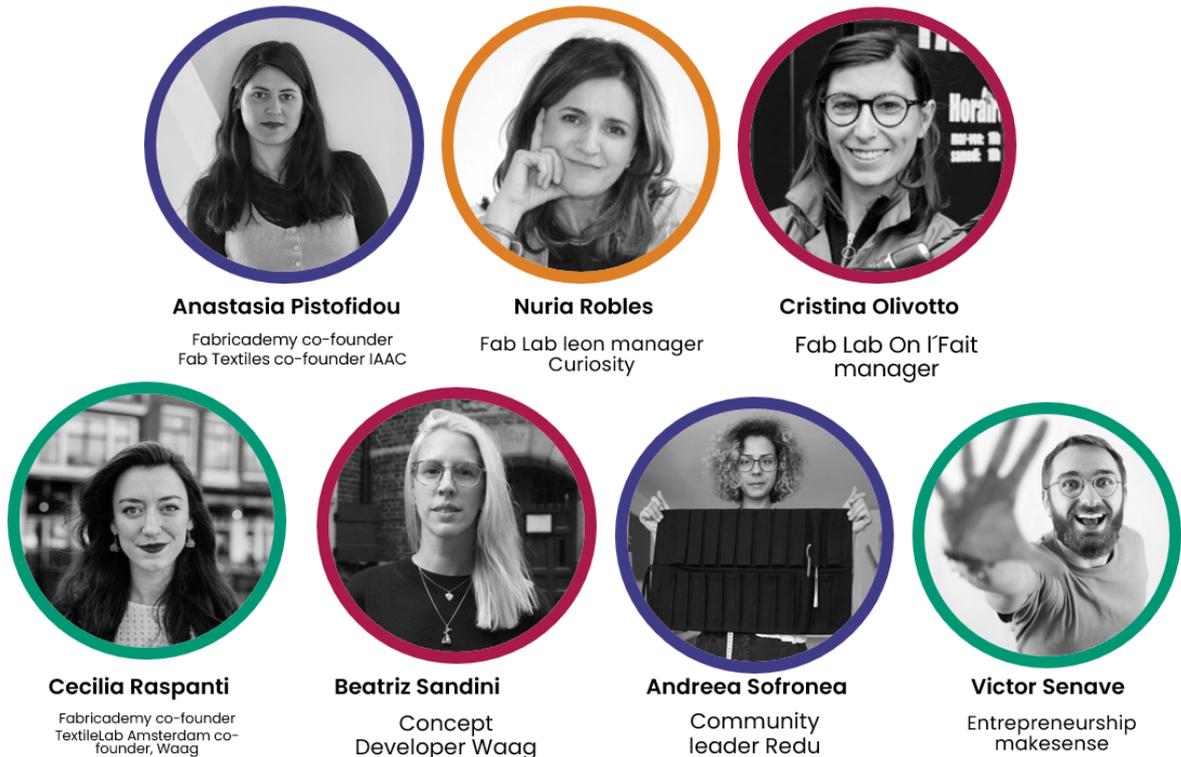


Figure 5. The shemakes Gurus.

## Call for “Ambassadors”

In parallel with the call for the twelve (12) Transfer Labs, shemakes.eu launched a call for the selection of twelve (12) “Ambassadors”<sup>5</sup>. These figures were people who had participated in shemakes activities during phase one and who felt to have undertaken a path of personal growth and wanted to help others do the same.

In addition, the selected twelve people had the possibility to travel to the assigned transfer lab, to share their knowledge peer-to-peer, helping to design new workshop ideas with the expertise they gained during their participation in shemakes activities in phase one. In the call, the benefits were listed as follows:

- Opportunity to travel to transfer Labs.
- Access to the transfer lab for a period of 1-2 weeks.
- Participation in Learning Path activities (WP2).
- Participation in Innovation engagements (WP3).
- Contribution to mentoring activities via their transfer of experience of Phase 1 (WP4).
- Cross-collaboration in designing new activities.
- Participation to networking through access to mentoring platforms e.g. Spot.

<sup>5</sup> [Call for shemakes Ambassadors](#)

- Visibility in the media of Shemakes.eu.
- Possibility to participate in shemakes events linked to Fabricademy/ Fab Foundation (e.g. Fab conference) or TCBL (shemakes final conference).

### The selection process and the selection criteria

The call was a success with 64 applications received from people aged 8 to 64. The evaluation was made by 10 evaluators in 6 initial labs and the selection was based on a series of criteria that included their positive personal experience of shemakes workshops, their vision or mission regarding gender and innovation, and their skills or teaching competences. Each selected “Ambassador” was assigned to a Transfer Lab based on geographical location and the specific impact and contribution that each Ambassador could give to their specific Transfer Lab<sup>6</sup>.

The twelve “Ambassadors” with the linked Transfer Labs were:

- Carla<sup>7</sup> (VivaLab)
- Irene Caretti (FarmLab.at)
- Yushing Eng (ZipHouse)
- Alexandra Florea (RogLab)
- Petra Garajova (Icelandic Textile Center)
- Marilena Georgantzi (Centre for Circular Design)
- Tasnim Hussain (Textile Prototyping Lab)
- Camille Le Gal (Le Textile Lab)
- Lucía<sup>8</sup> (Decode)
- Jessica Stanley (Lottozero)
- Diane Wakim (GreenFabric)
- Andrea Wolf-Simone (Vivistop)

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<sup>6</sup> For more information please refer to D4.3

<sup>7</sup> Surname omitted because she is a minor

<sup>8</sup> Surname omitted because she is a minor



# 3. Insights from the expansion process

## 3.1. Transfer process design

The shemakes expansion process from the Core Labs of Phase 1 to include the Transfer Labs in Phase 2 was jointly coordinated by TCBL with WP2 and WP3 leaders IAAC and Waag and further developed on the go as the activities unfolded, from January to September 2022.

Milestone meetings of the consortium with the twelve Transfer Labs and Ambassadors were set up at the beginning of their activities, every 2 weeks from mid-January through mid-March, then in June and in September 2022.

The early meetings were dedicated to the launch of Phase 2, namely:

- A kick - off meeting for all labs participating in the network, including a presentation of the project's objectives and the activities carried out in Phase 1 that could be replicated in Phase 2 - using the documentation available in the open tool kit - followed by a Q&A session;
- A gender vision workshop to make the shemakes values more explicit and allow Transfer Labs to activate them in the new activities they would develop to adapt to the needs of their local community.
- A presentation of the communication and dissemination strategy and tools, through graphics and kits available for the promotion of Transfer Lab activities, do's and don'ts for photos, videos and texts (especially when children were involved) and a summary of the various functions of central communication vs local promotion.

In this early period, task meetings were progressively held distinctly from the milestone meetings. This allowed task leaders in the role of Gurus to work in greater depth with their four Transfer Labs (two for which the activity was major and two for which the activity was secondary) and the relevant Ambassadors. For the Curiosity Path, these task meetings took place when the young Ambassadors were available, i.e. after school. For other activities, one-to-one sessions could be organised when necessary.

Additional meetings with the Ambassadors were organised by Matrix as the leader of WP4 and task 4.4 - Ambassadors.



- Some were dedicated to the Ambassadors' journey with the Transfer Labs, reported in "sketchbooks" and in video or blog testimonials.
- Others were planned to create a specific online community, such as the "gift weaving challenge".

Finally, at the end of Phase 2, milestone meetings resumed on two occasions:

- A detailed presentation of all activities conducted by Transfer Labs was organised online in June and July 2022.
- A collaborative reflection on Phase 2 was organised as an in-person meeting after the summer period, in Florence in September 2022. For the first time, the whole network had the opportunity to gather face to face and debrief on the process used with Transfer Labs. During this workshop, that process was made explicit through an artefact - a tapestry - that was collectively weaved and shown later at the final conference in Amsterdam in December 2022.

During Phase 2, the Ethics Check Report was presented to the consortium (7 March 2022). The report identified points to be further developed, especially as concerned the safeguarding of children, data management procedures, and the involvement of non-European countries. Clarifications and improvements were provided, first in April and then in May, although this process had an impact on the timely delivery of some of the activities in the Curiosity path.

## 3.2. General reflection on the transfer process

A general reflection on the transfer process was designed, jointly with Tavistock, as a collaborative workshop during the Florence meeting, including the making of the tapestry. The details of this workshop are to be found in Deliverable 5.2, *Evaluation final report* and in Deliverable 6.3, *Communication final report*. These sessions also helped gather reflections that are described in Deliverable 2.3 *Learning paths: final report* and 3.3 *Innovation services: final report*.

The key areas for reflection were: collaboration and network building, diversity and empowerment, activities, and meetings and events.

- **Collaboration and network building** was perceived as working very well, as connections were following a *magic virtuous circle* between all partners through activities and meetings. However, it was proposed to take more time to get to know everyone in the network - Transfer Labs, Gurus, Ambassadors, and Partners - right from the start, preferably offline, as the growth of the network was very rapid, from 10 to 22 Partners and from 0 to 12 Ambassadors.



- **Diversity and empowerment** in the progressive discovery of the importance of gender. As mentioned above, the high percentage of women in the textile & clothing sector spontaneously tended to hide the gender issue, leading one to think: “Gender? We are all women in textiles”. Avoidance of the issue was linked to the shemakes’ network itself, with women somehow *privileged* as they were able to decide for themselves. The different cultural contexts, ranging from high to low gender equality index countries where ‘*Women in general have or don’t have choices*’, also played a role. The major benefit of shemakes was to signal how this stereotype could be embedded in our collective mindset and to progressively transform this invisible issue into a visible one.
- **Activities.** The process was designed to be collaborative and agile, allowing Transfer Labs to develop their activities step by step. However, as mentioned above, Phase 2 unfolded in a short period of time – 6 months for the activities followed by the time necessary for reflection, documentation and reporting. The consortium slightly underestimated the time necessary for Transfer Labs to get thoroughly familiar with the shemakes project, the three dimensions of vision, practices and targets, and the conceptual frameworks used. This resulted in a lot of activities packed towards the end of the phase, sometimes extended to July.
- **Meetings and events.** A sequence of online meetings initially focussed on quickly launching the activities, task by task, not having enough time as a large group (44 people minimum) to gather more regularly for general Q&A and reflection. This was one of the reasons that the coordinating team decided to organise the Florence meeting in September.

### 3.3. Navigating the ecosystem

The growth of the network from Phase 1 to Phase 2 also provided insights on the operational structure that was initially presented in the DoA and the possible journeys that future labs could envisage when joining the shemakes network.

Throughout the project and with the integration of a larger network, we had time to reflect upon and refine our approach and some of our categories. The three-pillar approach that combined Learning paths, Innovation services and Reputation management, all linked together, was transformed during the shemakes research. The Learning paths and Innovation services were re-named ‘Activities’ and divided into four families that allowed varied entry points and journeys. Reputation



management, which we prefer to simply call “role models”, focussed on the Gurus and Ambassadors as the ‘human factor’ for effective ecosystem development .

## Four families of activities boosting the value of women innovators

### Community engagement

The Transfer Labs were selected partly on their ability to connect with local, regional or international networks. With this in mind, community engagement activities were dedicated to make the gender and innovation issues more visible in these networks. Depending on the context, this ranged from providing information (to raise awareness), to writing up a Gender Equality Plan (and co-creating the local gender equality policy). The targets were external to the labs, following the quadruple helix map of academia, industry, society, and policy makers.

### Curiosity (for children 8-18) and Discovery (for young women 18-25)

- *Curiosity* was the most unfamiliar activity in this ecosystem. Younger girls (8-13) were attracted to innovation. By doing tech activities with their hands (e.g. e-monsters) in fun and cool contexts in order to realise an accessory they would be proud of, they felt equal to boys. Older girls (14-18) were attracted to innovation that was more in line with their need to express their creativity (e.g. music and dancing shoes), and worked in smaller peer groups or even as individuals.
- *Discovery* encompassed the largest range of activities, as if all potentials were suddenly open to these young women, in open labs where they could test several different machines, and in longer workshop formats (often a full week). Mixing creativity with innovation was key here, as opposed to traditional training that is either creativity dominant (academic) or tech dominant (vocational). Shemakes discovery activities helped students become aware of the ‘academic bubble’ that does not really prepare students to address the gender issues they face in their future work world.
- *Both activities* required external stakeholders to engage participants, in fun and after-school activities (for Curiosity) and in accredited workshops with longer formats, sometimes even leading to ECTS credits when partnering with Accademia (for Discovery). Both also required technology and science experts to lead the activities.



## Lab-to-lab project

This activity targeted the labs themselves to explore a new theme – wool – on the basis of an innovation model that was collaboratively designed. It led to three projects: ‘sustainable design’, ‘open-source tool making’, and ‘mapping wool territorial districts’. Here, labs were at the same time experts (with past experience in STEM) and explorers, creating new shared knowledge on wool from scattered pieces and aggregated research. Looking back on the progress attained by the end of the project provided a lot of satisfaction. The gender issue was both traditional and modern, wool being historically carded and spun at home by women. Wool in the cultural stereotype is very much linked to tradition-women-home. Innovation explored collectively – mapping wool districts, making open-source machines, and intervening on wool with bio dyes – made participants realise that they could work on a very traditional theme and yet be very innovative. They were surprised to go beyond their internal cultural stereotypes, and people around them were surprised as well: “Oh, you make machines? You know all of this about wool?”

## Innovation path and business engagement.

Both activities were dedicated to future innovators, perceived as ‘two sides of the same coin’:

- The *innovation path* was for women ‘lost in innovation’ in the textile and clothing sector. They needed a clearer idea of how and where they could become innovative after a classic academic curriculum, as Fabricademy alumni, or even in professional re-training. They were most often looking for freelance opportunities.
- *Business engagement* was for women ‘immersed in innovation’. They had ideas, prototypes, or experience in developing a business. They needed personalised mentorship and training for the knowledge gaps they had, ranging from technical skills to people skills.
- *In both cases*, what was required was a one-on-one approach from business and innovation savvy generalists or specialists connected to networks that would enable the development of the new career or business. Specific issues on financing and being taken seriously by the business community, were all part of the gender angle.

This revised operational structure allowed Transfer Labs to enter into shemakes activities from varied entry points, depending on their existing knowledge base and their desire to develop new areas of competence.



## Role models to support the activity booster

Ambassadors and Gurus played a key role in supporting the growth of this ecosystem, together with the Advisory Board itself – two of which were also selected as Transfer Labs – that was helpful as a strategic partner to exchange ideas on what shemakes was doing well, could do better, and could do in the future.

WP4, initially conceived of in terms of “Reputation management,” quickly became the generator of personal relations between Gurus, Ambassadors, and Transfer Labs.

This human connection made it easier for Transfer Labs to dare to try new activities (as opposed to the natural fear of doing something new), receive support on how to do them, and gain confidence in what they had achieved.

Gurus transferred their acquired expertise, while open to new needs requiring new solutions, while Ambassadors transferred their personal experience from Phase 1, allowing for horizontal and co-creative dialogue with Transfer Labs. Both Gurus and Ambassadors were sensitive to the needs of the new labs, while reassuring them and encouraging them to overcome their fears.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See Donald W. Winnicott, “The good-enough mother”, 1953.



# 4. Strategies for post-project network development

Since its inception, the Shemakes project has consisted of a blend of TCBL and Fabricademy, the two initiatives that inspired its approach and provided the background knowledge, infrastructure, and methodologies within which to work. It has thus always been natural to consider TCBL, together with Fabricademy, as the main vehicles for the sustainability of results, providing the institutional and governance framework within which each of the main elements of the Shemakes system can be maintained and developed after the period of EU funding.

On the other hand, Shemakes as an “ecosystem demonstrator” needs to ensure not only the long-term survival of the project’s single “exploitable results” or outputs, but equally that of the systemic connections between them and the community dimension of innovation. The operational structure of this ecosystem as described in the previous chapter emerged in the course of the project, identifying specific entry points into the ecosystem: community engagement, “stem activities” for targets starting from children, research between labs and innovation/business development (the latter being two sides of the same coin), all driven by the shared gender vision going all the way from values to activities to targets. Navigation among these entry points and families of activities is what allows labs to grow, expanding their excellence for the benefit of all stakeholders, including networks, companies, and participants.

In this context, this organic ecosystem map provides the framework within which the single “exploitable results” can continue to interact, enrich their contents, and grow. These dynamics are driven by the shemakes vision and energy, building on a new awareness of the power of “welcoming differences”. Ensuring that this magic continues to live and grow implies first maintaining the single outputs alive and, on that foundation, striking the right balance between the focus on gender and the broader vision of a more desirable system of production.

## 4.1. Maintaining the outputs alive

The provisions currently foreseen for the main outputs concern a) the Shemakes toolkit and other documentation of activities, b) the network of Shemakes labs, and c) the Shemakes website and social media.



## Shemakes toolkit and other documentation

The shemakes Open toolkit is the repository for all education and activity modules developed in the project. It is currently managed through Github, allowing the contents to be publicly visible while limiting editing access (updating, adding new elements, etc.) to members of a specific team. Github is a freely available Open Source platform, meaning that there are no costs associated with hosting and server maintenance. All contents have been produced under the CC BY SA licence and are freely available. There are thus no issues for the long-term availability of the content produced during the project.

It is in the nature and method of shemakes however that this material a) is delivered with the support of people who can advise on how to put it into practice and b) be continuously updated and enhanced as its usage evolves. To manage these processes, a “Shemakes Club” will be established as an open community of individuals belonging to either the TCBL or Fabricademy networks, led by what has been affectionately dubbed the “Github Gang” of Anastasia Pistofidou, Cecilia Raspanti and Nuria Robles. The Shemakes Club will also include a shortlist of Gurus, particularly at ease with Github, who will maintain the open tool kit and help new labs, new Gurus and new Ambassadors to be trained. Word templates successfully tested in the project will be used for labs to propose new modules or specifications, which can then be uploaded by one of the Github Gang.

The dynamic growth of the toolkit requires a financial return for at least a part of the operations through funding for new educational activities using and enriching the toolkit. The minimum base for this will be provided by the continued activities of Fabricademy, which manages the delivery of educational activities through a range of business models adapted to the structures of those delivering it. Additional income can then be provided through use of the toolkit in other contexts, e.g. TCBL labs carrying out activities for private companies or in new EU-funded projects.

To promote its use, a teaser has been produced to communicate the importance of the toolkit in supporting the replication and development of learning modules to promote the empowerment of girls and women, available at these links:

<https://fb.watch/hA9ebP0KHe/> for Facebook and

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CmeWnbMKZc9/> for Instagram.

## Shemakes Labs network

The network of shemakes Labs includes the 6 Core Labs (shemakes partners), the 12 Transfer Labs brought into the network through the Open Call (shemakes subcontractors), and finally the 67 Labs external to the project whose applications



were above the lower threshold of 7 but could not receive the project subcontract due to limitations of geography and budget. The TCBL Association will consider all these Labs to have passed the TCBL accreditation procedure, having already met the three main criteria: a) activity in the textile and clothing sector, b) interest in actively participating in collaborative innovation and c) alignment with the TCBL values, of which the shemakes values can be considered an evolution.

As appropriate for the needed institutionalisation process, a TCBL Lab is formally a member of the TCBL Association with the right to participate in the General Meeting, vote on resolutions and to elect members of the Management Board, etc. In addition, each TCBL Lab is represented by one or more persons who may or may not be the legal representative but who actively participate and carry out activities, who will need to agree to e.g. the handling of their personal data.

To this end, the TCBL Agreement has been drawn up to be signed by each active individual for a given Lab having passed the accreditation procedure. The Agreement, structured according to the TCBL values, incorporates aspects such as a Non-Disclosure Agreement and consent for personal data, photos and videos, as well as commitments to abide by ethically sound practices. The Agreement also constitutes the formal request on behalf of the Lab's institutional entity (at least one legal representative must sign) to become a member of the TCBL Association and pay the yearly fee (currently € 25,00 for a Lab, due as of the year following the end of the shemakes project).

As stated above, all shemakes Labs are considered to have successfully completed the accreditation procedure for TCBL and will therefore be invited as of 1 January 2023 to sign the TCBL Agreement and thus become an effective member of the TCBL Association. Within the TCBL Association, the Shemakes Club will have a visible space, with a descriptive section on the website together with the Shemakes logo appearing on the profiles of all Club members.

## **Shemakes website and social media**

As TCBL is the umbrella organisation charged with carrying forward the outcomes of the shemakes project, elements of the shemakes website are being integrated into the website [tcbl.eu](http://tcbl.eu).

In preparation for this, the TCBL website has been re-designed for its own transition from the TCBL project to the TCBL Association and has specifically used the latest release of Drupal in order to be easily compatible with relevant modules developed for the [shemakes.eu](http://shemakes.eu) website.



In particular, the directory developed for shemakes, with categories for people, labs and companies, space for affiliation or project logos, minimal structured fields and maximum creative space, is an element we intend to bring into the TCBL website in order to continue the shemakes network and its activities. The presentation of shemakes values and methods will be used to enrich the definition and presentation of the TCBL values. Direct links will be provided to the shemakes website for specific elements such as partner profiles, project deliverables, etc.

The Shemakes website as it appears on December 31st, 2022, will, in accordance with the Grant Agreement, be maintained as is through December 31st 2027. Any new significant contents (events, blog posts and news) will be uploaded on the TCBL website.

Shemakes social media channels will also remain online without any significant updates after the project ends. Some posts may be created in collaboration with TCBL Association posts (“cross-posting”) in the case of specific events and news as managed by the Shemakes Club, or to convey relevant news from the EC such as the launch of the planned “Manifesto for gender-inclusive STE(A)M education and careers” in February 2023.

## **4.2. Developing the shemakes Gender Perspective**

A core goal of shemakes has been to work towards gender equality in the textile and clothing sector, as expressed in the core value “Welcoming differences”. The shemakes activities, inspired by this goal, explored new ways of collaborating, working, learning and producing value that touch on a broad range of sectors and contribute to form a vision for society as a whole, beyond the specific gender issue.

On the other hand, it is the focus on gender that has driven engagement and provided motivation and energy throughout the project. The gender focus thus needs to be maintained through the reinforcement of the shemakes identity within the TCBL network – one of the main reasons for the constitution of the Shemakes Club and the maintenance of the shemakes logo on personal and Lab profiles.

More generally, the shemakes gender perspective is at the core of its ecosystem approach. The gender focus is what creates the connections in the journey through the range of activities – community building, learning modules, lab-to-lab research, innovation/business ventures – with women’s role models and voices as the human catalyst of the whole ecosystem.

The Shemakes Club thus has the mission of carrying forward community building at both the local and network levels. At the local level, labs will continue to engage with



communities including citizens, the education system, and the textile and clothing industry, raising awareness and contributing to concrete initiatives such as company-specific and community GEPs. At the network level, active participation will be promoted in gender relevant online and hybrid events and in relation to gender and innovation angles to the textile and clothing sector within Fabricademy events, TCBL Days in November, and workshops throughout the year. Shemakes Club sessions will be held online once every three months (in coherence with the calendars of external events e.g. Women and Girls Day in Science) to carry forward specific themes but also to foster the role of the Club as a place for needs and solutions, questions and answers.

In addition to keeping the gender issues alive and bringing the gender perspective to bear in a range of networks and contexts, the shemakes network can also continue its role as a research vehicle, an environment through which to better understand gender dynamics. The project has in fact identified several research issues, in particular as regards the “gender data gap”, or the lack of sufficient data specifically related to the gender dimension. Work is needed to improve access to disaggregated data and statistics on the mainstream workforce in the European textile and clothing sector, beyond entrepreneurs, leaders and prize-winners. This includes the ability of the shemakes network to monitor the long-term impact of the ecosystem on participants.

### **4.3. Extending the scope of the Shemakes vision**

As mentioned above, shemakes needs to balance the further development of the gender perspective with the extended application of the broader shemakes vision in practice. This includes, first and foremost, continued development of two specific strands explored within the project: wool and natural fibres, and active education.

#### **Wool and natural fibres**

The lab-to-lab wool project raised significant interest in participants as both exploring several interconnected dimensions of the role and women as well as an important avenue for sustainable fashion in Europe. Research questions identified in the activities to date to carry forward include: How to continue the mapping of wool ecosystems? How to re-value wool through the combination of art, science, and machine? How to best use wool waste? How to re-localize the wool value chain in their farm territories? How can wool practices be extended to other fibres or even further afar fields?



This strand of research can find support from a range of funding instruments promoting the circular economy, rural development, sustainable industry, etc. and is a good example of how the gender dimension can be brought into mainstream research methodologies.

## **Active education**

The specific Shemakes focus on learning, with different age groups and in different contexts including vocational, academic, and transversal targets, also raised questions to be addressed in future research: How to prolong modules designed for children and teens into adult modules (or how to ensure continuity of education)? How to reflect on education tips developed for children to enrich adult modules? How to design and map modules for all targets (children, adults, all) on shemakes themes? How to develop shemakes modules mixing technology training, open source and maker cultures in academic institutions? How to address new generations of students looking for alternative training approaches? How to maintain and/or expand open documentation?

These questions have given rise to a specific initiative currently being developed within the TCBL Association that aims to bring together members involved in learning from different angles: universities, vocational and technical training centres, lifelong learning and on-the-job training, learning technologies, and learning platforms and resources. As they are explored further, different avenues to continue this work can include: shared resources (starting from the Shemakes toolkit), coordinated PhD initiatives, coordinated research activities, etc. Specific initiatives can be funded through e.g. Marie Curie, Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, or Horizon Widera programs..



# Document information

## Revision History

Revision	Date	Author	partner	Description
V 0.1	02.11.2022	Marco Cusenza, Frédérique Thureau	TCBL	First draft and table of contents
V 0.2	12.12.2022	Marco Cusenza, Jesse Marsh, Frédérique Thureau	TCBL	Full draft for review
V 0.3	22.12.2022	All reviewers	IAAC, WAAG, FLOD	Reviewer comments
V 1.0	28.12.2022	Marco Cusenza, Jesse Marsh, Frédérique Thureau	TCBL	Incorporation of reviewer comments, final version for submission

## Statement of Originality

This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation, or both.

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# Annex 1: Ethical guidelines

## Ethics Guidelines For Transfer Labs agreements<sup>[1]</sup>

Annex to Subcontract Agreement No..... dated ....., signed between .....

### **1 Responsible research and experimentation procedures**

- 1.1. All human beings playing the role of research and experimentation subjects should be handled with respect and care.
- 1.2. Their health, safety and welfare should not be compromised.
- 1.3. No discrimination based on age, gender, culture, religion, ethnic origin and social class of research and experimentation subjects will be accepted.
- 1.4. Participation in the research and experimentation activities can only be voluntary.
- 1.5. Informed consent protocols should be activated on the basis of adequate and appropriate information, treating personal information with highest possible confidentiality, avoiding unnecessary deception, and using the obtained information only for the purpose of the investigation.

### **2 Data management**

- 2.1. All primary and secondary data should be stored in a secure and accessible form.
- 2.2. All personal data of sensitive nature (i.e., concerning health status, or political opinions, or sexual preferences, etc.) should be anonymised or pseudonymised at the place and time of collection.
- 2.3. Original data gathered during the research and experimentation should be documented and archived for at least 5 years, and preferably 10 years.
- 2.4. Gathered data should be placed at the disposal of the shemakes.eu consortium members who may want to replicate the activity or elaborate on its findings.
- 2.5. The above principles and guidelines should be extended to all people at various title engaged in the activities mentioned by the contract.



3. The Parties agree to implement a data processing that complies with the requirements of the current legal framework in relation to data processing and with the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).

4. The Parties agree, in relation to the Company Personal Data and the activities described in the Annex 1 of this agreement, to implement appropriate technical and organizational measures to ensure a level of security appropriate to the ethical risks, including, as appropriate, the measures referred to in Article 32(1) of the GDPR.

5. The following special provisions apply to comply with the informed consent procedures adopted by the shemakes.eu project. In particular:

- if children are involved, consent (and assent, when applicable) of legal representatives shall be acquired previous to any engagement in Beneficiary activities linked to this agreement
- Upon initial expression of interest in participation through an on-line registration form, consent templates for the different age groups will be provided for signature, scan and transmission by the relevant parent or legal representative as a condition for confirmation of participation.
- Consent is also required for specific activities such as photos, videos, travel, etc. Recruitment/invitations will be done in a non-discriminatory manner, only based on "first come, first served" principles in case of participation in workshops and labs and on professional capacity and curricula in the case of event facilitators.

Any deviations from the above principle and guidelines may lead to the suspension or the resolution of the contract.

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<sup>[1]</sup> This document was written by Marco Cusenza and Francesco Molinari, respectively DPO and Ethics advisor for the shemakes project. Neither of them is responsible for the inappropriate use of these guidelines.



# Annex 2: Declaration of Honour and Financial declaration



Opportunity Ecosystems Bridging the Gender Gap

## DECLARATION OF HONOUR and FINANCIAL DECLARATION for applicant (DoH & FD)

*To be printed by the applicant, filled out, printed on their own letterhead,  
and signed by the legal representative (on paper).  
Scanned PDF should be then uploaded through the online application form.*

I, the undersigned, representing the following entity:

**[insert full official name]**

**[insert full official address]**

**[insert VAT registration number]**

**hereby certify**

that (subject to the additional declarations below):

1. The information provided in the application form is correct and complete.
2. The information concerning the legal status in the shemakes.eu Call application documents for my organisation is correct and complete.
3. My organisation undertakes to comply<sup>1</sup> with the eligibility criteria set out in the shemakes.eu Call document.
4. My organisation:
  - Is committed to participate in the shemakes call
  - has stable and sufficient resources of funding to maintain its activity until the end of 2022
  - will have the necessary resources needed to implement the actions proposed, provided the grant requested is approved and paid according to the terms of the contract that will be signed.
  - for research activities: undertakes to observe the highest standards of ethical principles and research integrity and confirms that the work is free of plagiarism

<sup>1</sup> From now and during the duration of the activities



My organisation:

- is NOT subject to any administrative sanctions (i.e. exclusion or financial penalty decision)<sup>2</sup>

My organisation (or people with unlimited liability for debts)

- is NOT in bankrupt, in liquidation, in legal proceedings, cessation of activity or other similar situations according to their national law and regulation<sup>3</sup>
- in breach of social security or tax obligations

My organization (or people having power of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or people who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant):

- is NOT sentenced for corruption, fraud, or who participated in a criminal organisation or any other illicit activities
- guilty of grave professional misconduct<sup>4</sup>
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant agreement or grant decision
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95
- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin (including creation of another entity with this purpose).
- is NOT having made false statements or that having concealed information for this call
- is aware that false declarations may lead to rejection, suspension, termination or reduction of the subcontract and to administrative sanctions (i.e. financial penalties and/or exclusion from all future EU procurement contracts, grants, prizes and expert contracts

<sup>2</sup> See Article 136(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 ('EU Financial Regulation') (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1).

<sup>3</sup> See Articles 136(1) and 141(1) EU Financial Regulation

<sup>4</sup> Professional misconduct includes: violation of ethical standards of the profession, wrongful conduct with impact on professional credibility, false declarations/misrepresentation of information, participation in a cartel or other agreement distorting competition, violation of IPR, attempting to influence decision-making processes or obtain confidential information from public authorities to gain an advantage.



**and acknowledge**

that:

1. The application form will be gathered and evaluated to the shemakes.eu team according to the submission and evaluation mechanism as described in the application procedures published on the shemakes.eu website
2. Personal data submitted or otherwise collected by the shemakes.eu project will be subject to the Privacy Statements published on the shemakes.eu website.
3. The subcontract will be signed and managed electronically, and submitted to the shemakes team according to the requested mechanism as described in the application procedures published on the shemakes website

**SIGNATURE**

For the Applicant:

-----  
*[First name / Last name / function]*

-----  
*[signature]*

-----  
*[date]*

*[stamp]*

