

# TOOL 7 - LEARNING THROUGH RESEARCH



## MODULAR

The tool can be combined with most other tools in the toolkit, with suggestions to mix and match the tool with tools 2 (Research), 4, 6 and 9.

## TIME DURATION

The suggested time for the students will be dependent on the research projects and the roles the students will play. It can be assumed that the average time will be 3-6 months.

The time duration for the teacher is recommended at 2-3 supervision sessions, and depending on the students need for support during the research projects.

## THE BRIEF

Learning through research should be implemented as an individual work to give students the opportunity to analyse and immerse in questions and problems related to the field of fashion-tech. The work should be carried out as a field study, where students work with academia and industry stakeholders, such as researchers from higher education institutions (HEI), and other external partners, such as research centres and companies. The aim is to give the students a practical and professional application, through collaboration and coordination with internal or external partners, aligned with a tutor from their HEI.

Learning through research can be implemented through the following options:

### INDIVIDUALLY DESIGNED FIELD STUDY

The students can create an individual field study plan, where they are in charge of identifying a research problem and carrying out a research project with a clear time plan. The work should be carried out independently, with regular meetings with a tutor planned throughout to ensure that the student has a clear understanding of the chosen topic. Furthermore, that their problematisation is founded on current research, as well as of interest to the stakeholders of the fashion-tech field.

### RESEARCH ASSISTANT INTERNSHIP

The students can be involved in the research projects carried out at your respective universities, where they are recommended to take a research assistant internship, if they are thinking about an academic career. The students should be given specific tasks to take responsibility and gain fieldwork experience. The students can also be directed to research centres, where the students

## AUDIENCE

Suggested audience for the tool is BA students in their last year or MA students. In order to gain experience and knowledge at a research institute it is advantageous to have background knowledge in the field of textiles as in the scope of the different research projects there will not be the time to go into basics.

## RESOURCES

- [Interactive map](#)
- hand-outs found in Tool 9

and their contact persons to the project should together define the specifics of the project, including time plans and sub-goals.

## COMPANY INTERNSHIP

Students are responsible for finding and negotiating their internship positions, that should consist of 8 weeks of qualified work tasks. The work carried out should be planned, analysed and the results written up to a report.

## GUIDELINES FOR THE TEACHER

- Spread awareness of this tool to every academic and research staff member to ensure a wide implementation of the tool, by also integrating research into their teaching (e.g. through designing assignments that are focused on current research projects and activities, such as writing grant applications, giving presentations, peer reviewing, etc.)
- Define a strategic implementation plan
- Explain the acquired transferable soft skills the students will acquire through research, to encourage them to approach different research projects and career paths
- Collaborate with industry to allow students to connect with the workplace through work placements, internships, volunteering programmes or collaborative projects (turn to the interactive map for contacts of stakeholders of the field, or use existing networks).
- Further aspects that are relevant and specific to each student's chosen research project
  - the requirements and expectations of each organisation during the project
  - the support, supervising and mentoring to be provided to the student by the organisation and the tutor
  - the outcomes for the graduate research student and how they can be linked into their degree
  - a timeline for the activity to occur.
  - an intellectual property agreement if applicable
  - confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements

## GUIDELINES FOR THE TEACHER AND THE STUDENT

- Designing the field study project
  - Talk to your professors, who work in the field you are interested in
  - Look for research projects at your university's website and other information sources
  - Contact relevant companies/industry for research interest
- Topic
  - Identify the topic as the main area of the research

- Problem
  - Identify the nature of the research problem, related to commercial outcomes (company internship) or specific projects/roles a research assistant could undertake (research assistant internship, individual field study)
  - The problem should then be developed into a project with the relevant university academic supervisor and the student.
- Theoretical framework/perspective
  - What theoretical framework/perspective are you grounding your research work upon?
- Empirical material
  - How will the empirical material be collected?
- Method
  - What is the research design and methods used on your study?
- Format of final report
  - Conference article – individual field study
  - Journal article – research assistant internship
  - White paper report – company internship
- Time plan
  - Should be required for individual field study as it requires more independent work from the student.

## RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

### PLANNING SEMINAR

Carry out a seminar where the students are required to prepare a plan for their research project, adapted to the template for managing activities provided in Tool 9.

### RESEARCH SEMINARS

If applicable, recommend the students to participate in research seminars organised by the academic and research staff at your institution. Attending research seminars will provide the students with an overview of current research, and what are the success factors and challenges related to research projects. As the tool can allow for student placements in a variety of institutions, the seminars can be held using online tools to integrate blended learning by implementing Tool 8.

### BLOG/LEARNING JOURNAL

Require students to publish blog posts related to their research project, based on their learning journal using the template provided in tool 9. The blog will facilitate the collection of written material for the final report, and allow for peer evaluation and feedback.

### PRESENTATION SEMINAR

A final seminar where students are required to present their research project to inform fellow students on their chosen topic and project. The seminar allows students to receive peer feedback, where the self-evaluation template can be adapted to the seminar for peer evaluation. Furthermore,

the seminar encourages the acquisition of communication skills, that are required in real-life work situations.

## WRITTEN REPORT

The report should be presented in different formats: a conference paper, a journal article or a white paper report, depending on the chosen research project.