


Figure 1. TexUnite consortium members at the fourth Transnational Project Meeting, Kuşadası, Türkiye, 26 October 2026.

# 4th TexUnite Transnational Project Meeting and 2nd Dissemination Event

Ege University, Türkiye, hosted the fourth TexUnite Transnational Project Meeting (TPM) on 26 October 2026 alongside the 17th International Izmir Textile and Apparel Symposium (IITAS 2026). The hybrid meeting brought together 20 consortium members from the six partner universities, with colleagues participating both on-site and online.

The meeting was chaired by Prof. Dr. Mustafa Ertekin of Ege University. Project coordinator Prof. Dr. Anne-Marie Grundmeier opened the discussion, and Prof. Dr. Zümrüt Bahadir Ünal, Head of the Textile Engineering Department at Ege University and Chair of the IITAS 2026 Organising Committee, welcomed the international partners.

Discussions centred on the implementation of service-learning (SL) projects, international virtual exchange (VE), the development of reusable educational resources and the dissemination of TexUnite outcomes beyond the partner universities.

## Service Learning Across Partner Universities

During the meeting, the partners exchanged updates on SL initiatives that connect academic textile and fashion education with community engagement. The winter semester of 2026/27 brings together two international tandems with complementary sustainability themes.

Table 1. Presentations of SL Projects of the Winter Term 202/27.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Albstadt-Sigmaringen University ASU (Germany)**<br>Exploring immersive approaches to presenting textile and industrial heritage through cooperation with the Cultural History Collection in Kornwestheim. | **Trakia University (Bulgaria)**<br>Introducing young learners to slow-fashion design and sustainable pattern making with attention to durable design and minimising material waste. |
| **Gheorghe Asachi Technical University of Iași (Romania)**<br>Repurposing knitted production waste through digital knitting design and practical upcycling activities with college pupils. | **University of Education Freiburg (Germany)**<br>Investigating opportunities for clothing reuse, donation, and repair with a local second-hand initiative and preparing a digital guide for the community. |



Figure 2. Partner discussions during TPM No. 4, hosted by Ege University at IITAS 2026.

## Connecting Students Through Virtual Exchange

Each of these SL projects is connected with one partner university through VE. The international tandems will enable students to compare sustainability practices, share experiences across national and disciplinary contexts, and gain international experiences. In the winter term of 2026/27, the tandems connect their work on cultural heritage and slow fashion, as well as on knitwear upcycling and clothing reuse.

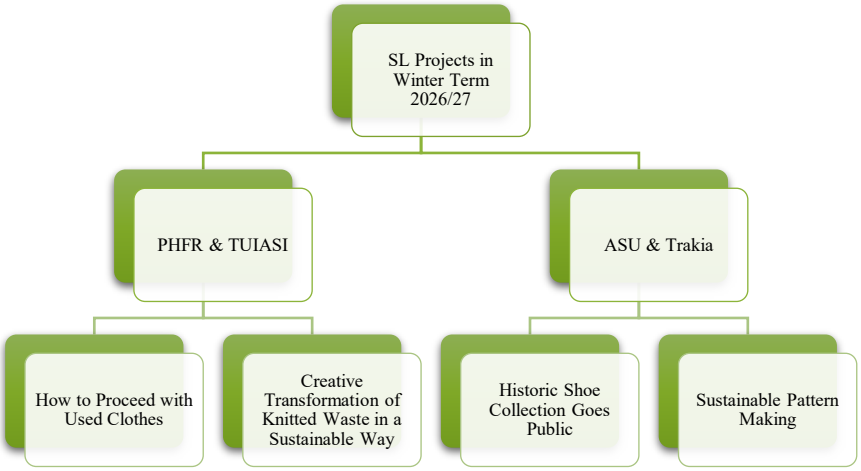



Figure 3. VE Tandems in Winter Term 2026/27.

## Making Sustainability Education Accessible

A central aim of the TexUnite project is to publish the teaching and learning materials developed in the project as open educational resources (OER) to make them accessible to the public. Accordingly, a key focus of the TPM was planning the transition from TexUnite's project-based teaching outputs to openly licensed OER. These OER document SL activities and VE to support educators in adapting innovative sustainability-oriented approaches for their own teaching.

One of the platforms on which the TexUnite project's OER are published is Zentrales Repositorium für Open Educational Resources [Central Repository for Open Educational Resources] (ZOERR), an open educational resources repository. Project introductions, presentations, and teaching and learning materials are being organised as connected resources so that other educators can find and use them. The platform enables access to materials in English and the languages of the partner countries.

Ege University also introduced EPALE, the European Platform for Adult Learning, as an additional communication channel for sharing TexUnite experiences and helping interested educators discover the original resources published on ZOERR. Starting from November 2026, TexUnite will also be represented at EPALE.

## TexUnite at IITAS 2026

The TexUnite project was represented at the 17th International Izmir Textile and Apparel Symposium (IITAS 2026), held in Kuşadası from 26 to 28 October 2026. The symposium focused the theme "Beyond the Bridge: Harmony of Tradition and Innovation". Four contributions from the TexUnite team provided the audience with project-based experiences and insights into SL and VE in sustainability-oriented textile higher education. The audience consisted of textile researchers, educators, students, and industry representatives.







## Prof. Dr. Anne-Marie Grundmeier

27 October 2026

Service Learning and Virtual Exchange: Fostering Sustainability in Fashion and Textile Education

## Maleika Anna Schmidbleicher

27 October 2026

Enhancing Service-Learning Projects in Fashion and Textile Education Through Virtual Exchange







## Prof. Dr. Mirela Blaga

28 October 2026

Changes in Student Attitudes Towards Sustainability in Textiles Following Participation in the TexUnite Project

## Prof. Dr. Andrej Demšar

28 October 2026

Service-Learning Project with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community in Slovenia

Figure 4. Presentations of SL projects at the IITAS 2026 by project partners.

## Continuing the Exchange

The TPM and the IITAS provided an opportunity for the TexUnite partners to share approaches to sustainable textile and fashion higher education, connect classroom learning with community needs, and discuss the wider use of project outcomes. TexUnite continues to bring together practical skills, social engagement, and international collaboration in higher education.

Explore TexUnite resources:

Project website: https://texunite.eu/

OER on ZOERR: https://www.zoerr.de/edu-sharing/components/search?q=texunite

TexUnite consortium, October 2026