



## Digital FabLab: Making the Best of AR's Added Value in Footwear Production Training

Last month, the international consortium of the Erasmus+ Digital FabLab had the opportunity to meet face-to-face in Politecnico Calzaturiero, Italy, to assess the project outcomes and next steps on the development of an innovative methodology of learning by doing in footwear production through the use of Augmented Reality (AR). In this occasion, the partners from Belgium, Cyprus, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, and Spain focused on the Joint Virtual Shoe FabLab and corresponding content in AR.

The footwear industry is constantly looking for innovative ways to capture and retain the younger generation of employees in the sector. In this occasion, a group of footwear education providers with an IT education expert want to use one of the latest technologies such as AR to digitally transform the training of footwear manufacturing while at the same time attract more students to footwear careers. In this way, the Digital FabLab project plans to bring together a revolutionary digital strategy based on a Joint digital course, a Joint Virtual Shoe FabLab and correspondent footwear related contents in AR, and a joint methodology on training/teaching/coaching for training itineraries based on AR.

Partners discussed how to deliver and structure contents, each with its specific innovative digital tool, as well as the interface of the Virtual Shoe FabLab. They agree on the use of the BlippAR because it counts with functions providing an interactive and stimulating experience for students learning footwear design and production. It is expected that in two months the English version of the FabLab will be available for testing.

In addition, participants interchanged the first thoughts on what should include the guidelines for trainers and teachers for the correct use of training innovative digital tools such as AR contents. Project partners have also started to develop a list of stakeholders that will most benefit from these outcomes, namely companies, education providers, unemployed people or others looking for a future in the footwear sector. A dissemination strategy will ensure that anybody interested has the opportunity to sign up to this initiative.

To conclude, learning-by-doing is essential to acquire the right skills to facilitate the transition from education into the working world and be able to quickly produce quality footwear. By using the interaction and experimentation of AR into training curricula of footwear manufacturing, teachers and trainers in footwear production studies can enhance classroom experiences, teach new skills and, most importantly, inspire students.

Stay tuned for more information and updates at [www.digitalfablab.eu](http://www.digitalfablab.eu) .