

Wired For Innovation – Fashion Design and Electronics in Student Workshops

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Bringing together fashion design and electronics allows designers to create garments that do things they have never done before: to sense the wearer, and the environment, to dynamically change and to be digitally connected. However, these creative riches are hard to realise, as there is a large distance between the disciplines, making it challenging to marry the two. In this paper, we share our experience of teaching a 7-10 day workshop on Electronic Fashion, which has been given annually since 2010 (with a hiatus for COVID) to either third-year undergraduates, final-year undergraduates or master fashion design students. Over these 14 years, we have evolved an approach that addresses many of the challenges and enables teams of students to engage with electronics and technical experts to realise their creations. In this talk, we will discuss our approach, and the electronic materials used, together with insights and pitfalls. Finally, we would like to convey that the benefit of such workshops goes well beyond gaining a measure of technical skills; specifically, it gives students the confidence to use new technologies and extend their creative reach.

Keywords: Digital, Fashion Design, Electronics, Workshops, Connected Apparel