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iNDiViDUALS Studio is the AMFI - Amsterdam Fashion Institute - brand established in 2006. Each semester a collective of 3rd and 4th year Design, Business & Development and Branding students combine their skills in a reality education program. Providing a creative framework that encourages dialogues, iNDiViDUALS seeks to challenge and question the status quo across the interconnected world of fashion, creating space for future innovation.

iNDiViDUALS is an initiative of AMFI - Amsterdam Fashion Institute and the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences.

# iNDiVi DUALS STUDIO

**AMFI**  
AMSTERDAM FASHION INSTITUTE

IDA TEKLA HVASS-WARMING



### **1. Where and when did you study abroad?**

I attended Amsterdam Fashion Institute, AUAS, during the Spring semester of 2023.

### **2. What KEA program did you attend at the time?**

I studied Jewellery, Technology and Business at KEA during the 6th semester exchange course.

### **3. What classes did you take during your semester abroad? Please briefly explain what each class was about.**

During my semester abroad I attended the iNDiViDUALS Studio specialization program at AMFI. This course differentiates itself from other courses in many ways. iNDiViDUALS is an interdisciplinary semester and a fashion consultancy company. You work within 3 dimensions consisting of Branding, Design and Business & Development (management). I worked within the management team and had a creative role called the Wicky Wacko Manager. During iNDiViDUALS you do not attend classes, yet you have meetings and guidance with your coaches. It is a company that you work within, therefore coaching is the only kind of teaching you receive from the teachers.

The goal is to work as a fashion company in collaboration with a business partner, where you together design a clothing collection. You will be working in the process of idea generating and researching to the production of the rental pieces and creating a launching fashion show.

One of the main focuses at iNDiViDUALS is to not only have an industry perspective but to have a perspective on the industry, in order to change the future. The course pushes the students to rethink the fashion industry and how things are normally done, therefore the collaborative partners are usually also responsible, sustainable, or innovative within creativity.

Link to the iNDiViDUALS website for more information and clarification: <https://www.individualsatamfi.nl/>



## ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

### **1. How helpful was the receiving school in the process of choosing classes and settling you in?**

I originally applied and was accepted to study Fashion Business and Strategy, but before the semester started I received an invitation to attend the iNDiViDUALS course instead. I was recommended to accept as it is a unique opportunity to be offered a spot here. It was hard for me to understand what iNDiViDUALS was since there is not much information about this program at hand. The one who helped me the most with my questions about classes was our International Coordinator at KEA, Hanne Vang.

### **2. What classes/study experiences did you find the most rewarding? Why?**

Since I did not have any classes, it is hard to answer this question. Every guidance we received was important since it is difficult for a group of students to work together in a new environment with tasks that they have never experienced before. It was important to attend and be active in all weekly guidance and meetings, otherwise, you could fall behind fast.

### **3. What classes/study experiences did you find least relevant or least valuable to you? Why?**

None. Every coaching and meeting was important for students to keep up with iNDiViDUALS since it is an extremely busy and stressful course to attend. Therefore all help offered by the coaches was crucial.

### **4. What classes would you advise other KEA students going to the receiving school to choose or not to choose?**

If you are choosing to accept your invitation to iNDiViDUALS, you should be prepared to work hard and work every day of the week. This course is rewarding in the end, but extremely difficult to be part of when looking at the workload and personal life balance. We were advised to work from 9 to 5 Monday to Friday but ended up working till 9 in the evenings and during our weekends as well. Various students from the class were dealing with burnout and stress symptoms during the semester, which was caused by the structure of iNDiViDUALS. If you want to study in Amsterdam in the hope of having spare time and being a tourist, I recommend studying one of the normal courses available.

## PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

### **How was the application process?**

The application process was manageable. Everything needed to send as part of the application was clear and easy to navigate in.

#### **a. What did KEA help you with?**

Whenever I had questions about deadlines or details, KEA and Hanne Vang were good at replying with responses and advice quickly and made sure that the application went as smoothly as possible. I had some questions about the different aspects and received support and guidance when necessary.

Besides receiving help from KEA, Natalie Brandt was also really helpful to answer any questions about AMFI and the information they needed for the application process.

### **1. Did you have any practical difficulties settling down in at your destination?**

I did not have any difficulties settling down in Amsterdam. It was easy finding an apartment through Liven De Key, but the room that I was offered had a lease that ended two weeks before the semester did.

#### **a. How helpful was the receiving school in this process?**

We were 5 students from our iNDiV study that had to move out of Prinsengracht two weeks before the semester ended. Together we contacted AMFI for help regarding accommodation and if they could help in any way. We did not receive help whatsoever, but only the advice to look for hostels or Airbnb's outside of the city. The situation was extremely stressful since we did not know the city or had any contacts regarding apartments. The situation was unacceptable, since it is hard, especially for exchange students, to find accommodation that is available and affordable in Amsterdam.

### **2. Where did you live?**

I lived at Prinsengracht in central Amsterdam.

#### **a. Was it difficult to find accommodation?**

It was not difficult finding accommodation in Amsterdam. Through Liven De Key you have multiple offers, but remember to search for apartments in a reasonable time, otherwise, you will have shorter lease periods or live further outside of the city. I paid 528 euros pr. month in rent.

### **3. What kind of expenses did you have in general?**

#### **a. Did you spend more or less money than you budgeted with?**

I ended up spending more money than budgeted since Amsterdam is somewhat of an expensive city to live in. When you live in a new city and want to explore and experience it, it is more expensive than what I expected. It is therefore a good idea to apply for multiple grants before departure.

### **4. What kind of income did you have during your exchange?**

#### **a. Did you receive SU and/or Erasmus**

I received both SU and Erasmus during my exchange.

#### **b. Did you apply for any grants and did you receive any?**

I applied for multiple grants before departure but unfortunately did not receive any. I found it difficult to find grants related to my trip and education, and the ones that I found I did not receive any reply. I would recommend that you spend more time finding grants when going to Amsterdam since you will end up spending more than usual.

