Invitation to Submit an Expression of Interest (EOI)
Please note that this commission is subject to a successful grant application.

Costume Designer / Lead Artist – Tawd Valley Selkie Costume Commission

Issued by: Positive Placemakers CIC
Location: Skelmersdale, West Lancashire
Commission Fee: £13,500 (subject to grant funding success)
Deadline: 30th September 2026

Magic of the Tawd 2027–2030 celebrates Skelmersdale's creativity, heritage and ecological wonder. Positive Placemakers CIC invites Expressions of Interest from an experienced **Costume Designer / Lead Artist** to design and create the **Tawd Valley Selkie costume**, a flagship character who will lead evidence gathering, ecological storytelling and community engagement throughout the programme.

The Selkie will appear in two forms:

- **Day to Day Selkie Cloak** – created between February–May 2027 for early community engagement.
- **Majestic Selkie Costume** – completed by October 2027 for the Magic of the Tawd Lantern Festival.

This commission blends **ecology, heritage, costume design, community co-creation and performance**, rooted entirely in the textures, species, waterways and folklore of **Tawd Valley Park**.

Overview of the Commission

1) Design & Creation of the Tawd Valley Selkie Costume

Purpose

To design and fabricate two high-quality, durable, performative costumes inspired by Tawd Valley Park's ecology, waterways, species, textures, colours, heritage and folklore.

Key Responsibilities

- Develop two costume forms:
    - **Day to Day Selkie Cloak (Feb–May 2027)**
    - **Majestic Selkie Costume (completed by Oct 2027)**
- Ensure that the costumes are informed by ecological heritage of the Tawd Valley Park.
- Collaborate with the Creative Writer/Storyteller to ensure costume aligns with the evolving Selkie narrative.
- Facilitate **community co-creation sessions** to gather textures, motifs, materials and symbolic elements.
- Integrate community-generated design assets into the final costume.
- Produce design sketches, material samples and a final costume specification.
- Create durable, weather-appropriate costumes suitable for outdoor performance.
- Attend key project meetings and the Magic of the Tawd launch event.

Outputs

- **Day to Day Selkie Cloak (February -May 2027)**
- **Majestical Selkie Costume (October 2027)**
- Design sketches, material samples and technical notes (for exhibition)
- Community-generated design assets
- Documentation of co-creation sessions

General Expectations Across All Elements

- Planning, collaboration and creative development time
- Attendance at key project meetings
- Commitment to inclusive, accessible and community-centred practice
- High-quality costume design, fabrication and finishing

Fee Structure – Commission Value (£13,500)

Below is the revised, cost-balanced breakdown with the apprenticeship removed and co-creation retained.

1) Research, Design & Development – £3,000

- Ecology walks, heritage research (2 days) – £600
- Design development, sketches, materials testing (4 days) – £1,200
- Collaboration with Creative Writer/Storyteller (1 day) – £300
- Co-creation planning (3 days) – £900

2) Community Co-Creation Delivery – £2,400

- 3 community hub sessions – £900
- 2 library sessions – £600
- 2 targeted inclusion group sessions – £600
- Collation of community assets – £300

3) Costume Fabrication – £6,000

- **Day to Day Selkie Cloak (Feb–May)**
  - Materials + 3 fabrication days – £1,500
- **Majestical Selkie Costume (completed by Oct)**
  - Materials + 7 fabrication days – £4,500

4) Project Meetings, Launch Event & Documentation – £1,100

- Project meetings (2 days) – £600
- Magic of the Tawd launch event – £300
- Documentation, photography, design notes – £200

Total Commission Value: £13,500

How to Submit Your Expression of Interest

Please submit an EOI (maximum 2 pages) including:

- Name, contact details, website/portfolio
- Short biography
- Examples of previous costume design, fabrication or creative work
- Experience working with communities, young people or co-creation
- Your approach to ecological, heritage-based or site-specific design
- Why Magic of the Tawd interests you
- Any initial ideas or inspirations
- Availability between **February – October 2027**

Submission Deadline: 28th September 2027
EOIs should be sent to: Helen Juste Positive Placemakers CIC
helen.juste@positiveplacemakers.org.uk

Next Steps

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an informal conversation with the project team. Final selection will be based on experience, approach, and alignment with the project's values of creativity, inclusion, environmental stewardship and local pride.

Magic of the Tawd 2027 – Selkie Costume Commission Summary

- Two costumes: Day to Day Cloak (May 2027) & Majestical Costume (Oct 2027)

- Ecological and heritage inspiration from Tawd Valley Park
- Community co-creation sessions across hubs, library and targeted groups
- Collaboration with Creative Writer/Storyteller and wider project team
- Delivery includes Making of the Magic of the Tawd Event and Lantern Festival
- EOI deadline: 28th September 2027
- Contact: Helen Juste