

**Interweaving Threads Residency:
Scotland and Norway through Dress**

Residency in 2026 for artists, designers and makers based in Scotland and Norway



PROGRAMME INFORMATION & APPLICATION GUIDELINES

**Residency Dates: 6 April - 3 May (Museum Centre of Hordaland - MUHO, Norway)
and 11 – 31 May (Cove Park, Scotland) 2026**

Application Deadline: Monday 5 January, 5.00pm GMT

Summary

This residency is a unique opportunity for artists, designers and makers to engage with ideas circulating around traditional dress, fashion and textiles. Key concepts are heritage, diversity and identity. It is hoped that it will stimulate and open new avenues of research and exploration within the artist's own work, relevant to their own practices and concerns. It is intended that studying traditional dress, fashion and textiles in both Norway and Scotland should be a focus of the residency, and that the resources available through the study of collections and archives will lead to new ideas and areas of interest - culminating in a tangible design, ideally for exhibition and display on a mannequin.

The recipients will be offered fully-funded research and production- focused residencies with supported access in Scotland at Cove Park and in Norway at MUHO to archive collections that are both national and regional. They shall also be offered the opportunity to share their work via informal events in both countries.

Two residencies will be awarded: one to an artist based in Scotland, and one to an artist based in Norway. Both recipients will be awarded a three-week residency at Cove Park and three weeks in Norway at the Museum Centre of Hordaland (MUHO). The residencies will run from between 6 April - 3 May and 11 - 31 May 2026.

The residencies are fully funded, and recipients will receive a fee of £750 per week, travel expenses, and materials allowances. Where possible, slow-travel is encouraged.

Key Points

- The residencies at MUHO will run from 3 April - 3 May 2026.
- The residencies at Cove Park will run from 11 - 31 May 2026.
- Artists, designers and makers based in Scotland and Norway are welcome to apply and may include dress designers and costume artists.
- The residents will receive a fee of £750 per week, plus a travel allowance and a research/materials allowance. Whilst in Norway they will also receive an allowance per week.
- The chosen artists will be invited to take part in a seminar in Autumn 2026.
- The chosen artists will be asked to exhibit their finished or evolving work in Scotland and / or Norway in 2026.
- We encourage you to undertake your journey in the most environmentally sustainable way possible. For example, via slow travel.

Introduction

This residency is developed in collaboration with the Norwegian Institute of Folk Costume (NBF), Cove Park and the Museum of Hordaland (MUHO). It is supported by Arts and Culture Norway and follows on from a two-day dress display and seminar that took place at Custom Lane in Edinburgh in October 2025. This event brought together artists, designers, academics and art professionals based in Scotland and Norway to muse, debate and discuss projects, difficulties and visions of Norwegian and Scottish traditional textiles and dress.

In early 2026, two residencies will be awarded to two textile artists, designers and makers based in Scotland and Norway. These are fully funded and offer the opportunity for supported research including access to the stores of the NBF and the National Museums of Scotland as well as other collections and workshops in Scotland and Norway. It also offers support for the development of new work (a design or concept for a mannequin around the subject of traditional dress and textiles) which will be displayed in Scotland and Norway in Autumn 2026. Ideally the pieces made will build on some of the key themes and findings that arose during the seminar in Edinburgh in October 2025 (see below).

Aims & Structure

The year-long project *Interweaving: Scotland and Norway through Dress* (Autumn 2025 – Autumn 2026) aims to bring together Norwegian and Scottish specialists working in the fields of textile and dress (makers, designers, artists, academics, designers, arts professionals). It intends to strengthen existing Norwegian and Scottish expertise in the sector and lead to exchanges in the field of research and making in both the UK and Norway. The project, of which a display and seminar held in Edinburgh in October 2025 was part, falls approximately 25 years after the touring exhibition on Norwegian folk dress and Bunader, Crowns and Roses, which opened at the National Museum of Scotland. It also coincides with a touring exhibition on folk dress in Norway, *Skakke Folkedrakt*, originally held at the National Museum of Norway, and a touring exhibition on Tartan, which was originally held at the V&A Dundee (see below).

With these three exhibitions in mind, and used as background material, this new project further questions the significance of dress, craftsmanship and identity at a time when questions – and tensions – around fast fashion and sustainability, consumerism, mass production, AI, multiculturalism, diversity, gender, and globalisation have significantly impacted the way in which Norwegians and Scots look at traditional and historic dress, use it, make it and preserve it.

The residency will bring together two practitioners working in the field of dress, fashion and textiles to spend time in Scotland and Norway. They will research and collaborate around the subject and themes mentioned above. Ultimately, they will elaborate these concepts further through the production of new designs and a display of pieces intended for a mannequin. Key concepts are heritage, diversity and identity.

In Autumn 2026 they will also participate in a second seminar and display of their work, scheduled to take place in Norway.

The Importance of Traditional Dress and Costume in Norway and Scotland

In Norway, and in Scotland, traditional dress functions as a catalyst for memories, and in turn ideas of identity. Whether this pertains to fashion, traditional customs or revitalised practices, dress concerns us all as a significant marker of identity. Moreover, textiles are tactile and tempting to feel and touch, their patterns and colours tell tales from distant civilisations, and they awake emotion and sensitivity. The same repeated pattern, such as plaid, exists in several parts of the world thereby creating curiosity, recognition or stories. As the seminar in Edinburgh as well as the exhibitions *Tartan* and *Skakke Folkedrakt* showed, allowing craftspeople to present their work in intimate dialogue with artists and cultural historians, innovative perspectives and ideas may emerge. These thoughts might be both provocative and inspiring.

Traditional clothing can have great symbolic value and create strong feelings of belonging, as well as exclusion, shame, anger, angst and fear. Volatility sometimes makes conversations difficult. With perspectives and theories of art, however, a layer of abstraction may be added that provides the artists and their public to explore these issues more freely.

Designers may use cultural heritage as their source of inspiration. In return, they can further contribute to the field of cultural heritage with a deepened and more nuanced understanding of the past with contemporary constructions.

When it comes to dress, textiles and heritage in Scotland and Norway, the presentations at Custom Lane sought to unearth what unites and divides wearers and makers. It was clear that both Scottish and Norwegian dress and textiles are regional, rooted in local folklore and a visual language with obvious or hidden messages. They are connected to the landscape, farming and rural topography, may be made by highly skilled workers and influenced by political or social contexts, and may be used for dancing and ceremonies – be that a christening or wedding. They are handed down through generations, are valuable and expensive. But, in more recent times, so too are they made abroad, produced by a machine, detached from their original source and makers: in both Norway and in Scotland we find that skills and craftsmanship are being lost and forgotten.

It was also shown that there are significant differences. Tartan and Scottish dress remain connected to conflict, war, divisions, clans and the military. Aspects of Scottish dress, such as the kilt, tartan and sporran have become items of fashion, featured on the catwalk by some of the biggest fashion houses operating today. This is not necessarily the same for Norwegian dress, which remains complicated and a largely misunderstood or unknown phenomenon outside of Scandinavia. Additionally, kilts are predominantly linked to men, whereas the Bunad is associated with both men and women. Norwegian dress is highly intricate – involving white headdresses, colourful embroidery, silver jewellery and an array of bodice, skirt and shirt styles. Their design are complicated, yet immediately tell us about regional practices, historic trade routes, international fashions, farming practices and a woman's marital status. A dress from Setesdal, for instance, will be discernibly different to that from Telemark or Hardanger.

This residency, to be held in in 2026, and the resulting designs, intends to further tease out some of the key themes that concern Norway and Scotland and that were raised at the seminar in October 2025.

Partner Organisations: Roles & Overview

Working together, the project partners will offer a range of resources and support. Cove Park will provide one-month residencies including private accommodation and workspace, and the facilities, connections (such as access to the Collections Centre for the National Museums of Scotland, and the Edinburgh Kiltmakers Academy, and the V&A Dundee) and support required for research and the development of new work. The Norwegian Institute for Bunad and Folk Costume, and MUHO will offer supported access to their own archives and access to its extensive network of partners in Norway, such as the Folk Museum in Oslo and other museums, archives and makers based in Hordaland, Norway.

Cove Park

Cove Park is an international residency based on an outstanding 50-acre rural site in Argyll on Scotland's west coast. We host local, national, and international artists and creative practitioners working in all art forms and at every career stage. Cove Park provides the facilities, support, and care required for the development of new ideas and projects, collaborations, and interdisciplinary practice. Residents stay on site in private accommodation with access to private studios, communal work and meeting spaces, and a library. We host up to 12 residents at any one time, offering every resident the opportunity to meet and work alongside individuals and collaborative groups from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. We organise informal peer-to-peer events to promote discussion, the exchange of ideas and experiences, and the development of new connections.

Norwegian Institute for Bunad and Folk Costume

The Norwegian Institute of Bunad and Folk Costume (NBF) is a national centre of expertise specialising in the documentation, research and dissemination of bunads and folk costumes. NBF has an advisory body, the Bunad and Folk Costume Council, which is appointed by the Ministry of Culture. The goal is to promote knowledge about bunads and folk costumes as expressions of cultural identity and about their use and production. Thanks to fieldwork conducted throughout Norway, a comprehensive archive containing folk costume registrations, photographs, patterns and sketches as well as records of traditional materials from different districts has been accumulated. Bunad wearers and makers can seek advice on using, dressing, sewing techniques and customising. Advisory activities also extend to bunad reconstruction or revision projects.

MUHO / Museumssenteret i Hordaland

MUHO is a museum for living cultural, natural, and industrial heritage, and a competence centre for conservation and care for historic buildings in Vestland. We are located in Salhus outside Bergen, Norway, and on the nearby islands of Lygra, Radøy and Osterøy. MUHO provides engaging education and active management of a great variety of collections. We do not simply tell a story, but use knowledge about techniques and processes to show, teach and carry out work as it was traditionally done in local crafts, industry, and farming. Through authentic cultural environments and landscapes in Nordhordland and Bergen, we connect knowledge from the past to the challenges of the present. MUHO's unique competence centres offer advice on building and collection care, and conservation of various materials.

Arts and Culture Norway

Arts and Culture Norway is the main governmental operator for the implementation of Norwegian cultural policy. Arts and Culture Norway functions as an advisory body to the central government and public sector on cultural affairs. Arts and Culture Norway is fully financed by the Ministry of Culture and Equality.

National Museums of Scotland Collection Centre

The National Museums Collection Centre in Granton, Edinburgh is a specialist facility where collections are cared for and researched. The Centre holds millions of objects and specimens and is a hub for cutting-edge research and innovation, training and teaching, as well as the preparation of collections for exhibition, loan, and tour. The work carried out and facilitated includes research, scientific analysis, conservation, and digitisation.

Exhibitions Referenced

Skakke Folkedrakter / Queer Folk Dress: National Museum of Norway and Touring

Skakke Folkedrakter / Queer Folk Dress is a touring exhibition project that has been developed in collaboration with, among others, the Norwegian Institute for Bunad and Folk Costume as well as several museums and individual contributors from various fields in the arts and crafts field . The project is an initiative of the National Museum of Norway. In it, several contemporary artists have been invited to explore and challenge folk costume traditions, identity, and craft heritage. They have created their own expressions through photography, weaving, beadwork, porcelain, installations, and instruments. The result is both a tribute and a rebellion – in an exhibition where folk costumes, be it the bunad or the kofte, are not primarily garments, but symbols and ideas that shape our time, our self-understanding, our relationships with others, our quest for acceptance and inclusion, or our history. Between now and the 22nd of February 2026 the exhibition can be seen in Oslo at the Oslo Museum.

Tartan: V&A Dundee

Tartan, the first major exhibition in Scotland for 30 years to focus solely on the iconic textile and pattern, opened at Dundee's V&A Museum in 2023. The show, which is now touring, features more than 300 objects including items from the worlds of fashion, architecture, graphic design, film, performance and art. Inspired by Jonathan Faiers' book Tartan, the exhibition gathers objects from more than 100 international lenders. They include items of high fashion by and Alexander McQueen, fabric found in a Highland peat bog which is likely to be the oldest tartan ever discovered in Scotland, and amateur footage from 1938 showing weaver Willie Meikle at work on his handloom.



How to Apply

Applications can be submitted via the online [Application Form](#).

This must include:

- Your name and contact details.
- A statement (no more than 500 words) briefly describing your current work and the reasons for your interest in this residency. Visual presentations of ideas for the residency also welcome.
- Your CV, including the names and contact details of two professional referees (please note we will only contact your referees if your application is shortlisted for interview).
- Please submit documentation of recent work.

This may include:

- Up to 6 images.
- Film or video work should be submitted on a showreel (if longer than 5 minutes, please include relevant time codes that amount to 5 minutes) uploaded to YouTube or Vimeo, with the link provided in the application.

We can accept submissions in audio or video formats if this is preferable to a written application. If you have a disability, please tell us if there are any reasonable adjustments to the application process that would be of assistance to you.

Selection Criteria & Process

Selection for interview will be based on the following criteria:

- Your knowledge of, and experience with, textile arts and crafts.
- The creative strength of your work and ideas.
- Your need for a period of research and development and your reasons for applying to this specific programme.
- Your interest in working alongside other designers and artists and creating new connections in Scotland and in Norway.

Applications will be short-listed for interview by Cove Park in collaboration with representatives from the project partners. The interview panel will include Camilla Rossing (Director, Norwegian Institute for Bunad and Folk Costume), Dr Kitty Corbet Milward (Art Historian), Alexia Holt (Director, Cove Park) and Maja Musum (Curator and Anthropologist).

We are particularly interested in applications from underrepresented communities, including people who are Black/from the African diaspora or people of colour; trans, non-binary and/or LGBTQIA+; disabled, D/deaf, neurodiverse, and/or chronically ill; women and/or 'working class'; and all those who have been historically underrepresented and systematically excluded within the cultural sector. We will acknowledge receipt of your application as soon as it is received. This acknowledgement will include a link to our anonymous Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion monitoring form for completion and we would be grateful for your time with this. If you do not receive this acknowledgement, please contact Cove Park directly to confirm receipt of your application.

Timeframe

19 December 2025: Last day for any questions about the application and programme.

5 January 2026 (5pm GMT): Application deadline.

Week commencing 5 January 2026: Applicants will be notified of the application outcome.

Week commencing 12 January 2026: Interviews will be held via Zoom.

19 January 2026: Fellowships announced.

Personal Data

Please note, we will store applications electronically for one year. The data contained within your application will not be used for any purpose other than short-listing, running, and evaluating the programme. We will not share your details with any third parties without obtaining permission from you to do so.

For further information please contact:

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