Norfolk rPET Fashion Design Challenge: Putting Recycled Plastic on the Catwalk!

Calling all fashionistas… Could you create a garment from fabric made from recycled plastic bottles? If so, and you study or live in Norfolk, we need you!

The Norfolk Waste Partnership has partnered with the plastics recycling charity RECOUP®, Marks and Spencer, and RPC to run the first ever Norfolk rPET Fashion Design Challenge Competition. The Norfolk Waste Partnership wants to encourage people to ‘Recycle for Norfolk’ by sorting their plastic bottles, pots, tubs, trays and punnets at home and placing them clean, dry and loose in household recycling bins.

The Fashion Design Challenge Competition will showcase how quality plastics can be recycled and transformed into clothing and other things with the help of great design!

The challenge calls for Norfolk-based creatives aged 16-34 to design an outfit made from textile which was previously plastic bottles. The fabric will be supplied by RECOUP to 10 finalists to create their garment(s) and bring their design to life. The finalists will then be given the opportunity to showcase their designs in public at a Fashion Show at the One Planet Norwich festival on Saturday 9 June 2018.

Think you’re up to the challenge? Please find all the competition criteria below. Note: closing date is 9am Monday 30 April 2018

Good luck!

Who can enter?

To be eligible to enter, you must be aged between 16-34 as of Monday 19 March 2018 and be a student or resident in Norfolk. You must have access to suitable tools and equipment which will enable you to construct your outfit.

A briefing session will be held locally on Thursday 10 May when finalists can collect their recycled fabric and haberdashery required to make their garment. All finalists must also be available Saturday 9 June to showcase their outfits at the One Planet Norwich Festival held at The Forum.
What’s involved?

The competition will take place in two stages:

Stage 1: The first stage is an open call for submissions. Anyone who meets the entry criteria may put together a submission of no more than two sides of A4 (or one side of A3) describing how they would creatively fulfil the design brief. The submission must include a sketch/image of your design, along with any text that may support your idea and must be in digital format.

The closing date for submissions is 9am on Monday 30 April 2018, after which ten finalists will be selected. To enter, please complete the online form at: www.recyclefornorfolk.com/fashionchallenge and don’t forget to upload your entry at the same time.

Stage 2: The ten chosen finalists will be notified by Tuesday 8 May 2018. Finalists will then be given the details of their design briefing meeting which will take place on Thursday 10 May 2018. Finalists will have the opportunity to construct their designs from the recycled textiles supplied by RECOUP. These designs will be shown to the public during three mini-catwalk shows as part of Norwich City Council’s One Planet Norwich Festival, at The Forum, Norwich on Saturday 9 June. They will also be on public display as part of the Festival on Sunday 10 June 2018.

Design Brief:
The purpose of the design competition is twofold:
- The first is to highlight the escalating problem of post-consumer plastic waste, and to encourage effective recycling of plastic products.
- The second is to highlight the challenge to design a more sustainable fashion industry, which requires innovative solutions for circularity. These include the need to consider sustainability at the design stage, notably with regards to sourcing and producing raw materials.

We are looking for designers to push the boundaries of their own creative thinking and practice to design a commercially viable and fashion-forward outfit, from textiles which have been produced from recycled post-consumer plastic waste. The ten finalists selected to realise their designs will be given six metres of recycled textiles (at a width of 1500 mm), plus a budget of £40 for haberdashery, provided by Norfolk Waste Partnership, from which to produce their final outfits.

Your initial submission and subsequent realised designs will be judged on the basis of:
1. Innovation
2. Effective implementation of sustainable design principles
3. Commerciality and Marketability

We are looking for designs that are aesthetically interesting, that are practical and appealing to wear, that make the most efficient and creative use of the materials available, and that demonstrate that the designer has considered and implemented sustainable design strategies.
Design Notes (Some starting points)
The design challenge centres on sustainable design; design which embeds principles of sustainability at every stage, from concept to end-of-life. The winning design will provide evidence that the designer has implemented sustainable design strategies in their approach. Here are some other starting points, to consider.

Drape and Silhouette
We will be looking for designers to make best use of the qualities of the fabric they are allocated; we will be impressed by designs which work with the properties of the recycled textile for best effect.

The Textile
The textile which will be awarded will be a Life Recycled Polyester - 78% Polyester/22% Elastane mix. Designs will need to be suitable for stretch fabric. The fabric can be washed at 40 degrees. The fabric conforms with BS EN ISO 6330. The fabric weight is 285 g/m² lin.

Design for Disassembly
We will be paying attention for designers who consider the end-of-life of their garment(s) at the design stage; this could involve considering use of pattern-cutting techniques or careful choice of fixings, finishes and fastenings, aimed at maximising potential for deconstruction and reconstruction at a later stage.

Fastenings and finishes
Each of the ten finalists will be allocated a grant of £40 to spend on haberdashery - this might include threads, fastenings, fabric for toiles, etc. As the competition is centred around reducing waste and reframing waste as a resource, we will look favourably upon entrants who reuse or repurpose materials to carry out their design process; such as integrating fastenings removed from second-hand clothing items rather than buying new, for example.

Zero-Waste
We will be interested to see designs which use the entire width of the fabric, thus eliminating pre-consumer waste from the design process.

Commercial viability
We will be looking for designs which are desirable and practical to wear and produce, and that could appeal to a broad range of potential customers. Designs do not have to be based on current or upcoming fashion trends but should have market appeal.

Clothing as Conversation
We will be interested in designs that explore the relationship between garment and wearer and allow for a degree of adaptation or personalisation. This could be via styling the garment(s) or pattern cutting techniques which allow for simple adjustment and adaptation.
Key Dates for your Diaries:

**Monday 19 March:** Competition opens, initial call for submissions

**Monday 30 April (by 9am):** Submissions close

**Tuesday 8 May:** Ten finalists notified.

**Thursday 10 May - Locations TBC:** Briefing Session for finalists and raw materials allocated. Please ensure you bring any form of Photographic ID (this can include Student Cards) If you are under 18, we will also ask you for a signed parental/carer consent at the briefing meeting.

**Saturday 9 June:** Garments ready for the Fashion Show. Designers attend One Planet Norwich Festival at The Forum, Norwich. Arrival at 9am.

**Sunday 10 June:** Designed garment will be on static display at One Planet Norwich Festival. Attendance of designer is optional.

**Sunday 10 June:** Garments will be available to collect at 4pm on from the Forum in Norwich. Alternatively, if you are unable to collect your garment, arrangements can be made to return via post. Please note, this will be done so at the designers’ risk, and RECOUP and Norfolk Waste Partnership accept no responsibility for lost garments.

**Competition Rules**

- Finalists will be chosen from the design entries by a panel of judges to create their designs. The judges’ decision will be final.
- Designers will be awarded 6 metres of recycled textiles in total, to construct their design.
- Designs must be constructed from the recycled textiles provided.
- Designs may consist of one garment or a series of garments to collectively form one outfit, but they must all be constructed from the total fabric allocation of 6 metres of recycled PET fabric.
- Designers may produce one outfit only. If the overall design integrates more than one piece or garment, the pieces must all work together to be worn as one outfit.
- No visible part of the design may be constructed from any other fabric than the recycled PET fabric provided, nor can any integral part of the design be made from other materials. Designers may, however, use other fabrics or materials for decoration or embellishment, non-visible linings, facings, etc. These materials must be purchased from the £40 haberdashery budget and we would encourage designers to consider materials and processes with sustainability in mind.
- The design must be for an outfit to be worn by an adult. Unfortunately, we cannot accept or show designs for children’s clothing.
- Designs may be created for an adult of any body shape, size or gender. However, we would encourage you to consider designing for as broad a market appeal as possible.
- Regarding designs with very specific requirements for showing on the body or on static display, designers may also be required to source their own model for the catwalk shows as part of One Planet Norwich on Saturday 9 June 2018.
The Fashion Show:
- Designers will have the option to model their own garment, source their own model, or request a model be provided for them. In case of the latter, whilst we will make every effort to do so, we cannot guarantee to cater for preferences for models as part of the show.
- Hair and make-up will be consistent for each model in the show. Designers may make reasonable requests for specific hair and make-up designs for their models. These requests will be facilitated by the fashion show coordinator if possible but cannot be guaranteed.
- Designers may provide specific items or accessories for their models such as shoes, underwear, or jewellery, according to the requirements of creating a cohesive ‘look’. We would encourage you to embed sustainability in all your choices here. Budget will not be allocated for accessories or other items, but the £40 haberdashery and sundries budget may be used to create these if desired.

The Small Print/T&Cs:
- By entering the Norfolk Fashion Design challenge, you agree:
  - That you consent to the use of your image and name by RECOUP, Norfolk Waste Partnership and Pledge4Plastics for promotional purposes.
  - That if selected as a finalist, you will produce your final garment from the recycled textile provided. Drop off/post or bring with on the day? Finalists who fail to complete their garment, unless this is for extenuating circumstances beyond the designer’s control, will be required to reimburse RECOUP for the materials used.
  - That you will attend the One Planet Norwich Festival on Saturday 9 June 2018 to take part in fashion shows at 11am, 1pm and 3pm.
  - That you will make your designs available on Sunday 10 June for display at the One Planet Norwich Festival.
  - That you consent to your designs being photographed and the imagery used by RECOUP, Norfolk Waste Partnership and Pledge4Plastics for promotional purposes.
  - All finalists will be asked to sign a disclaimer stating that all garments have been designed and made by the entrant.

For entrants under the age of 18 years of age, we require the parent/carer’s consent parts of the entry form to be completed. This includes photographic consent.

For competition queries please e-mail enquiry@recoup.org or telephone during office hours 01733 390021.

*RECyling of Used Plastics Limited (RECOUP) is a member-based charity and leading authority providing expertise and guidance across the plastics recycling value chain. We are committed to effectively and collaboratively delivering sustainable, circular and practical solutions for plastic resources both in the UK and world-wide.*