



TERMS OF REFERENCE
ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN EDINBURGH
ARTS WORKING GROUP

INTRODUCTION

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) is a world-leading botanical institute delivering innovative plant science and conservation programmes, maintaining and developing internationally important botanical collections, providing specialist learning and training and offering a first class visitor attraction.

The Mission of RBGE is to **explore, conserve and explain the world of plants for a better future**. The RBGE Public Engagement programme embraces a broad range of exhibitions and events related to the arts with the primary aim of engaging more people with the world of plant science, gardens and conservation and to increase the number of visitors to the Garden.

In October 2016 RBGE Board of Trustees decided that Inverleith House, one of RBGE's exhibition venues, would no longer be dedicated to a contemporary art exhibitions programme in an effort to minimise exposure to financial risk and to focus resources on core objectives. In reaching this decision the Board gave careful consideration to the Report "a Future for Inverleith House", the purpose of which was to make recommendations on how a programme of contemporary arts exhibition might be maintained and developed, addressing audience development, public engagement and financial sustainability. The Board noted that Inverleith House had built up an excellent reputation as a contemporary art gallery. However, it was the view of the Board that the financial model proposed in the Report was high risk, required further financial investment and included untested assumptions. They further agreed that in the challenging financial climate it was no longer appropriate for RBGE to invest significant core resources into the operation of a dedicated contemporary art gallery within the Edinburgh gardens. Although the Board did not accept the central recommendation of the Report, a number of options for making Inverleith House more relevant to and integrated with the overall work of the Garden were considered to warrant further investigation.

The Regius Keeper was tasked to review the future use of Inverleith House, to include initiatives for income generation. Following discussions between RBGE, the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland it has been agreed to establish a short life Working Group to advise the RBGE Board on the strategic direction of its programme for arts and cultural engagement across RBGE that would include, but not be restricted to, exhibition making at Inverleith House. The Group is to be convened by an independent Chair and is tasked with establishing a clear strategic direction, to allow for the development of an arts programme that would align with and amplify the core mission of RBGE and that would be achievable and sustainable within the current financial climate.

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1. Role

The role of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) Arts Working Group (the Group) is to advise the RBGE Board of Trustees on the strategic direction of the RBGE arts programme.

2. Outcome

An arts component to the RBGE Public Engagement Programme that:

- Is high quality, inclusive and inspires and delights a diverse range of visitors.
- Is aligned to and seeks to amplify the mission of RBGE to *Explore, Conserve and Explain the World of Plants for a Better Future*.
- Is holistic in its vision, integrated within and responsive to the various aspects and facets of RBGE's functions and operations.
- Is financially sustainable, allowing RBGE to build longer term financial alliances and strategic partnerships that will generate resilience and underpin the future development of the programme.
- Responds to relevant documents such as Creative Scotland's Arts Strategy, Visual Arts Sector Review, the Future for Inverleith House Report and RBGE Corporate Strategy, amongst others.

3. Output

A written report to the RBGE Board of Trustees on 28 June 2017 that:

- Proposes a high level strategic direction for an RBGE arts programme.
- Connects RBGE with potential funders and other partners.
- Benchmarks RBGE's arts programme with other botanic gardens and similar organisations.

A verbal update to the RBGE Board of Trustees on 27 February 2017, and a written interim report by 31 March. The latter report will set out the draft vision and direction for a programme, the second phase of the Group's work will look at how this can be achieved.

4. Assumptions

- "Arts" in the context of these Terms of Reference is broad ranging and includes performance, media, digital, contemporary, historical, decorative, design, poetry, literature and visual arts.
- Botanical art will remain a significant element of RBGE's education, science and exhibition programme.
- "RBGE" includes all four gardens – Edinburgh, Dawyck, Logan and Benmore.
- Inverleith House will continue to be available (but not exclusive to) exhibitions and other art related activity.
- Staffing issues are a matter for the RBGE Board and Executive and are outwith the remit of the Group, although RBGE will provide advice on any core resources and assets that may be available to support a future arts programme.

5. Term

These Terms of Reference are effective from 19 January 2017 and continue until 28 June 2017.

6. Membership

Membership will be agreed between the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Creative Scotland and the Chair of the Working Group.

- The Group will be chaired by Professor Chris Breward.
- Members will include representation from:
 - Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (Regius Keeper or representative)
 - Creative Scotland (Chief Executive or representative)
 - Friends of RBGE
- and local, national and international expertise (although not necessarily exclusively) from the following areas/disciplines:
 - Leadership and management of collection(s)
 - Education and creative learning
 - Art/Science interface
 - A suitable mix of performing, media, digital, contemporary, historical, decorative, design and visual arts
 - Commercial/funding

7. Conduct of the Group

- It is envisaged that the Group will come together for three physical meetings of two to three hours at RBGE (20A Inverleith Row, Edinburgh).
- Consultation with relevant RBGE Staff, Trustees and experts in the fields of arts and science will be an important part of the Group's work and will be conducted by members of the Group and the Secretariat as agreed at the initial meeting.
- A meeting quorum will be two thirds of full members of the Group. Participation in the meeting by video conferencing is acceptable:
 - Decisions are made by consensus (ie members are satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice). If not possible, the Group Chair makes final decision
- Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided by the Secretariat; this includes preparing agendas and supporting papers.
- The recorded information of the Group is subject to the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.
- Group members must respect the status of confidential issues they read and discuss, and will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.
- Group members must be open and responsive in their conduct and are required to use their knowledge, expertise and experience to develop the report(s) to the RBGE Board
- Members should identify and promptly declare any conflicts of interest with matters discussed by the Group, and to absent themselves from any discussion when there is a conflict

8. Administration and Resources:

- Member costs (non-remunerative but cover travel expenses).
- Secretariat support will be provided by the Head of Visual Arts, Creative Scotland and Head of Public Engagement and Exhibitions Officer from RBGE.
- The Group's administrative support will be provided by RBGE.
- Meeting facilities provided by RBGE.
- A small budget of £4,000 will be available to support the Group (funded by Creative Scotland and RBGE). Expenditure will require the authorisation of the Regius Keeper and the Chair.

9. Amendment, Modification or Variation

These Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and Creative Scotland.

10. Communications

- RBGE will lead on communications, keeping all relevant partners and stakeholders up to date.
- The Group, with RBGE support, will develop a Communications plan that covers communication around announcing the chair and aims of the group and a communications approach to publishing the final report.

Simon Milne
Regius Keeper
18 January 2017