

Curator – Dawyck Botanic Garden

Job Description

Purpose

To curate the living collection of plants at Dawyck, managing the development and presentation of the garden to the highest horticultural standard. To lead, manage and motivate the gardens team, working collaboratively across departments to deliver RBGE strategy goals and a great visitor experience.

Collection curation, horticulture and visitor experience

- Care and cultivation of the Living Collection as set out in the RBGE Living Collection Policy and relevant management and strategic plans, including exemplary plant records management.
- Maintain the highest standards of presentation, horticulture, and biosecurity in the gardens, adapting to climate change, and driving sustainable garden management practices, including decarbonisation, zero peat use and chemical use reduction.
- Work collaboratively with science teams to deliver the ambitions of RBGE science and conservation programmes, such as the International Conifer Conservation Programme.
- Work collaboratively with the Visitor Welcome and Admissions team to deliver a great customer service culture.
- Work collaboratively with public engagement and arts teams to ensure interpretation and exhibitions are current and well-presented. Lead on delivery of gardens tours, talks and events on site.

Operational management, health and safety

- Lead the overall site operations, acting as immediate point of contact/reference for all teams including garden, café, cleaning and visitor welcome. Ensure on-call cover is in place for when the site is closed to the public, including winter shutdown.
- Ensure administration needs are met between teams on site, including public, business and booking enquiries.
- Lead on recruitment, deployment, development and management of gardens staff, apprentices, students, and volunteers, including national and international fieldwork opportunities.
- Ensure health and safety compliance for visitors and staff on site. This includes implementing and updating RBGE safe working systems and ensuring staff training and health surveillance needs are met.
- Work closely and collaboratively with other teams, including estates, commercial, public engagement and science, to ensure that targets for maintenance, income generation and information provision are met.
- Project management of significant gardens projects, and/or inputting into larger project management processes.
- Management and oversight of contractors on site, ensuring compliance and visitor safety needs are met, and where possible ensuring quality and value of work.

Strategy, finance, and planning

- Budget holder with responsibility for creation and management of annual departmental budgets, including procurement compliance working with RBGE finance team.
- Lead on the ongoing development and delivery of gardens plans and policies, inputting into and reporting on RBGE strategies and organisation delivery plans.

Organisational leadership and external representation

- Be an active member of the RBGE Senior Leadership Team, representing the Dawyck Garden and enabling cross divisional opportunities.
- Build and maintain good relationships with neighbours, supporter groups, and local stakeholders, including donor family members and Dawyck House.
- Represent RBGE Dawyck on local tourism and community groups where relevant and of value.
- Representing RBGE on external stakeholder groups and to the media, acting as an ambassador for the organisation and the individual gardens in the UK and internationally.

Person Specification

Essential Skills

- Proven experience of working in a scientific plant collection within a botanic garden landscape including an exceptional knowledge of; curatorial policies and procedures, garden management plans, collection management systems and plant health biosecurity requirements.
- Proven management experience of supervising horticultural staff, students, and volunteers.
- Excellent communication and digital skills including the ability to disseminate key RBGE messages through tours, presentations, and all other available media formats.
- Proven project management skills including experience of planning, managing, and completing horticultural works and related projects;
- Good working plant knowledge, particularly of temperate plants including herbaceous, shrubs including Rhododendrons and trees as cultivated in a scientific botanic garden living collection.
- Exceptional knowledge and understanding of current horticultural practices and collections management systems, and an understanding of the role of Botanic Gardens in plant conservation.
- Exceptional knowledge and understanding of health and safety legislation in the workplace particularly; Risk Assessment, COSHH assessment and accident recording systems.
- National Certificate, SVQ Level 3 in a relevant horticultural field or equivalent number of years' experience
- Diploma in Horticulture
- Valid UK Driver's License

Desirable

- Experience in line management or team leadership.
- Relevant qualification in community engagement, education or heritage.