

## Deputy Curator – Edinburgh

### Recruitment Pack - 2024

*“All life depends on plants. They sustain whole ecosystems, feed us, keep us healthy, stimulate our minds, and nurture our wellbeing. And yet, the Earth’s rich diversity of plant life is rapidly disappearing. At a time when 40% of the world’s plant species are at risk from extinction our work is more important than ever.”*

Simon Milne MBE FRSE  
Regius Keeper, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

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# Who we are

The vision of Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) is to build a positive future for plants, people and the planet. Our mission is to explore, conserve and explain the world of plants.

Our priority is to tackle the biodiversity crisis and the climate emergency at a local, regional and national level.

Established in 1670, RBGE is one of the world's leading botanic gardens, engaged in science, horticulture, learning and the arts. The four gardens across Scotland – Benmore, Logan, Dawyck and Edinburgh - attract more than 1 million visitors per year, and host approximately 13,500 species, outdoors and under glass. We cultivate plants from more than 150 countries and the impact of our work reaches more than 40 countries around the world, as well as local communities across Scotland. We help build conservation horticulture skills and capacity in many different countries.

Collections management and horticulture is changing, as we embrace a more holistic attitude to our landscape management. This means being more attuned to benefitting biodiversity as a whole and being more reactive to the immediate impacts of our changing climate, adopting nature-based solutions and thinking. We adopt rigorous biosecurity protocols in our collections management, we are peat free, and our chemical use is minimal. At RBGE, the horticulture teams work closely and collaboratively with science, learning, estates and other teams.

As a registered Scottish charity, the RBGE is funded principally by the Scottish Government – but as an organisation, we are very much global in our reach. We are also accelerating our ability to scale our own income from activities, many of which are carried out in the gardens, as well as in locations across Scotland and beyond.

More details on our plans can be found at:

[www.rbge.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are/corporate-information/](http://www.rbge.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are/corporate-information/)

# Who you are



You will have a passion for horticulture and plant conservation, alongside broad and deep experience of working in a botanical collection or garden at supervisory level. You will excel at maintaining and developing a living collection to meet the needs of conservation, research, and education programmes, for inspiring and delighting visitors, and developing income.

You are someone who embraces a holistic and flexible approach to horticulture and collections management, balancing the aims of biodiversity enrichment, climate change adaptation, threatened species conservation, biosecurity, and world-class presentation standards to maintain our position as a world leading garden.

You are a great communicator, resilient and pragmatic, patient and skilled in relationship and team building, financially astute, and able to juggle sometimes competing demands from various stakeholders across the organisation. You will help lead and maintain a culture of excellence in current and future horticultural practices and customer service.

A team player and inspirational leader, you will be a champion for horticulture, as a subject and a career, taking pride in the welfare, inclusivity and development of your team and inspiring the next generation of potential leaders.



# Job description

## Purpose

The Deputy Curator of the Edinburgh Garden reports to the Curator of the Living Collections and is responsible for leading on key elements of the curation of the living collection of plants in the Edinburgh Garden. This includes the planning, management, development, and presentation of the garden to the highest horticultural standard. Also, to lead and motivate the gardens team in Edinburgh, working collaboratively across departments to develop and deliver RBGE strategy goals and a great visitor experience.

## Main Duties:

### Collection curation, horticulture, and visitor experience

- Continuously improve the quality of the Living Collection, through the implementation of the RBGE Living Collection Policy and other organisation plans, including exemplary plant records management.
- Lead and inspire teams to reach the highest standards of presentation, horticulture, and biosecurity, adapting to climate change, and driving sustainable garden management practices, including decarbonisation, zero peat use, nature-based solutions, and chemical use reduction.
- Co-lead overall garden planning and improvement, reporting on, and leading on the delivery of Garden Management plans.

- Take direct leadership responsibility for one area of the Edinburgh Garden, for example herbaceous, alpine, glasshouses, or arboriculture.
- Play a leadership role in delivering the horticultural elements of the Biomes Programme.
- Work collaboratively with Science, Learning and Engagement teams to deliver the ambitions of RBGE Science, Learning, and conservation programmes, such as Plants with Purpose, Nature Recovery Fund, and the International Conifer Conservation Programme.
- Build a customer service culture in the horticulture teams, driving a great visitor experience in the gardens.
- Work collaboratively with the Visitor Welcome, Engagement, and Commercial teams, to deliver a great customer service culture and support for events and functions on site.

### Operational management, health, and safety

- Share leadership of the over-all garden operations, taking full responsibility for one designated garden area. Help deploy and lead 50+ staff and volunteers, apprenticeships, and students, including line management responsibility as appropriate.
- Play a leadership role in the recruitment, deployment, development and management of gardens staff, apprentices, students, and volunteers.

# Job description

- Play a leadership role in identifying and delivering national and international consultancy and fieldwork opportunities, working closely with commercial, learning and science teams to maximise profitability and impact.
- 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.
- Lead on the continual improvement of biosecurity protocols, including Plant Healthy accreditation, and improving awareness across the whole organisation and with external contractors.
- Lead on making strategic improvements in adapting the gardens to climate change and sustainable management, including peat-free, nature-based solutions, reduced chemical use, decarbonising, and improving waste management.
- Work closely and collaboratively with other teams, including Resources and Planning, Commercial, Learning and Engagement, Development and Communications, 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.

- Lead the management and oversight of contractors on site for horticulture and landscape operations, ensuring compliance and visitor safety needs are met, and where possible ensuring quality and value of work.

## Strategy, finance, and planning

- Lead the ongoing development and delivery of horticulture policies and gardens plans, ensuring compatibility with other RBGE plans. Input into and report on RBGE-wide strategies and organisation delivery plans.
- Budget management accountability and input into annual budget plans, helping to ensure that capital investment requirements are identified, business cases prepared, and correct procurement procedures followed, as part of RBGE's corporate planning process.
- Work collaboratively with the Development team and supporter groups to maintain a good working relationship and ongoing support.
- Work in partnership with the Estates and Technology Services team on delivery of projects that impact the horticultural elements of the garden and lead the delivery of dedicated horticultural development projects.

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## Organisational leadership and representation

- Deputise for the Curator of The Living Collections and the Director of Horticulture and Visitor Experience as and when required.
- Build and maintain good relationships with neighbours, supporter groups, and local stakeholders.
- Represent RBGE on external stakeholder groups, acting as an ambassador for the organisation and the individual gardens in the UK and internationally.



# Skills, knowledge and experience



- Proven management experience within a botanic garden, or equivalent, landscape including an excellent knowledge of curatorial policies and procedures, garden management plans, collection management systems and plant health biosecurity requirements.
- Excellent communication, project management and digital skills.
- Good working plant knowledge, particularly of glasshouse and temperate plants.
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of health and safety legislation in the workplace particularly; Risk Assessment, COSHH assessment and accident recording systems.
- Ideally educated to degree level, or with equivalent experience.



# Pay and benefits

We offer a generous employment package:

- Salary £45,712 to £50,980 (subject to skills and experience)
- Membership of the civil service defined benefit pension scheme
- 25 days holiday, increasing to 30 days after 5 years of service, with the option to buy additional holiday
- 11.5 days of public and privilege holidays annually
- Discounts in our shop, restaurants, and cafes
- A range of staff support mechanisms, including an Employee Assistance Scheme
- A range of family-friendly options to support work-life balance, including flexible working arrangements, enhanced contractual maternity, paternity, adoption, and shared parental leave, and career breaks.
- Relocation allowance available if required

Our [benefits brochure](#) gives much more information on the benefits available to colleagues



# How to apply



To apply email [recruitment@rbge.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@rbge.org.uk) with:

- Your CV
- A covering letter outlining the skills, knowledge and experience you'd bring to the role
- A completed equal opportunities questionnaire: [EOQ form](#)

Closing date for applications is Monday 11 November 2024 at 10am GMT and interviews will be held on 18/19 November 2024

For an informal discussion about this role, please contact Gillian Williamson, Business Support Administrator at [gwilliamson@rbge.org.uk](mailto:gwilliamson@rbge.org.uk)

[rbge.org.uk/about-us/working-with-us](https://rbge.org.uk/about-us/working-with-us)



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