



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Appointment of a Trustee of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Briefing pack for applicants

Closing Date: 6 April 2018



Royal Botanic Gardens
Kew



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Ministerial message to candidates

Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

As you will know, Kew's collections, science facilities and gardens are world-class. An institution of that calibre also needs world-class people as part of its leadership team. Kew Gardens is one of London's top visitor attractions and is home to over 40 listed buildings and other structures, including the Palm House, iconic Pagoda and the Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place. This year will also prove to be an historic one for Kew, with the grand re-opening of The Temperate House, The Greatest Glasshouse in the World, after the biggest restoration project in Kew's history.

We are looking for applications from candidates with expertise in science and/or communications to help enhance public understanding of Kew's role as a leading science and conservation organisation. Your skills and experience will help us lead and support RBG Kew, whatever your background, we very much look forward to hearing from you.

Lord Gardiner of Kimble

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity



Defra mission statement

Defra wants Britain to be a great place to live. Our work plays a critical role in the wellbeing of everyone in the country through the creation of healthy environments, a world leading food and farming industry, a thriving rural economy and enhanced protection against floods and animal and plant diseases.

Appointing high-calibre people from diverse backgrounds with relevant skills, knowledge and experience to the boards of our public bodies will help us to ensure that our work is more effective, resilient and accountable.

Equal Opportunities

UK government has a policy of equality of opportunity. We aim to promote equal opportunity policies whereby no one suffers unfair discrimination either directly or indirectly, or harassment, on grounds such as race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or age.

Diversity

We positively welcome applicants from all backgrounds. All public appointments are made on merit following a fair and open competition as regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Disability

We guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. By 'minimum criteria' we mean that you must provide us with evidence in your application which demonstrates that you generally meet the level of competence required for each criterion, as well as meeting any of the qualifications, skills or experience defined as essential. The Cabinet Office is committed to the employment and career development of disabled people (the minimum criteria means the essential competences as set out in the advertisement for the post). To show this we use the Disability Symbol awarded by Jobcentreplus.



Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew mission statement

Unlocking why plants and fungi matter

Kew's mission is to be the global resource for plant and fungal knowledge, building an understanding of the world's plants and fungi upon which all our lives depend.

We use the power of our science and the rich diversity of our gardens and collections to provide knowledge, inspiration and understanding of why plants and fungi matter to everyone.

We want a world where plants and fungi are understood, valued and conserved – because all our lives depend on them.

Objectives

RBG Kew published its corporate strategy in 2016. *Unlocking why plants and fungi matter* sets out how a better understanding of plants and fungi will contribute to solving some of the most critical challenges facing humanity today. In support of its mission Kew has set the following five strategic objectives:

- Our **collections** are curated to excellent standards and are widely used for the benefit of humankind
- Our **science** makes a demonstrable contribution to solving the critical challenges facing humanity today
- We are the world's leading **botanic gardens** where our large and diverse audiences develop their understanding of why plants and fungi matter

- We are valued as the pre-eminent provider of **public education** on plant and fungal science, conservation and horticulture
- We are a **sustainable and dynamic organisation**, making positive global impacts in partnership with others.

Achieving impact

We are embarking on an ambitious period in our history. In order to ensure we keep on track, we will focus on the following priority initiatives:

1. Delivering the Science Strategy and curating the collections
2. Maximising the potential of the gardens
3. Growing commercial income
4. Creating outstanding learning and outreach propositions
5. Engaging the public and key stakeholders and partners in RBG Kew's importance and impact
6. Growing philanthropic support and Friends income
7. Achieving success through our people
8. Improving the built and technological infrastructure

The role and person specification

The Role

To complement its existing skills and knowledge the Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is seeking one new member with demonstrable scientific expertise in a field relevant to RBG Kew's science or expertise in communications. The current Board membership is attached at Annex B.

Members of the Board have corporate responsibility for ensuring that RBG Kew has appropriate practices, procedures and policies to meet its statutory and administrative requirements for the use of public funds. Important responsibilities of Board members include:

- ensuring that high standards of corporate governance are observed at all times;
- establishing the overall strategic direction of the organisation within the policy and resources framework agreed with the Defra Minister;
- holding the Executive to account and supporting them in the delivery of planned results by monitoring performance against agreed strategic

objectives and targets and by ensuring corrective action is taken when necessary;

- ensuring that the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority; within the limits of the Board's delegated authority agreed with Defra and in line with all relevant agreements with Defra, including any conditions relating to the use of public funds; and, notwithstanding the above, complying with the relevant obligations incumbent on trustees of an exempt charity, including independence of decision-making;
- representing the purpose and strategic direction of the organisation to the public and specific stakeholders.

The successful candidate must abide by the Nolan principles of public service (attached at [Annex A](#)).

Time commitment and term of office

The time commitment is 10-12 days each year to attend Board and Committee meetings and associated activities.

The appointment will last for three years with the possibility of reappointment.

Board meetings will be mainly held at Kew Gardens, with some meetings each year at Wakehurst Place.

Remuneration and expenses

The role is unremunerated, but essential expenses comprising travel, accommodation, if required, and subsistence are payable

based on Kew's expenses arrangements, which are set out in Kew's Guidance on Financial Policy and Practice.

Essential criteria

You should demonstrate all of the following:

- An enthusiasm for and genuine interest in the work delivered by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and support of its purpose, values and strategic direction;
- An ability to analyse issues at a strategic level in ways which are impartial, creative and focused on finding solutions;
- An ability to question, challenge constructively and influence decision making within a Board setting in a complex organisation.
- An ability to influence and engage a strong and diverse network of people and organisations and the ability to inspire confidence in stakeholders at all levels.

This recruitment will fill one vacancy on the Board. Successful candidates for this vacancy should also be able to demonstrate expertise in one or both of the following specified areas

- **Scientific expertise in a field relevant to RBG Kew's science:** RBG Kew is primarily a scientific organisation with scientific collections. RBG Kew would benefit from an individual with expertise in scientific collections, big data and/or scientific leadership and fundraising.
- **Public communications expertise:** RBG Kew needs to improve the communication of its scientific and conservation work and building the profile and reputation of the organisation. RBG Kew would benefit from an individual with expertise in journalism, communications or broadcasting.

The recruitment process

The closing date for applications is noon on **6 April 2018**. We expect to have shortlisted by 20 April, with panel interviews on 1 and 8 May.

It is essential that your statement of suitability gives full but concise information relevant to the appointment, clearly demonstrating how you meet each of the [essential criteria](#). Please also specify for which role you are applying.

The Advisory Assessment Panel will consist of Professor Nicola Spence (Chief Plant Health Officer and Deputy Director, Plant and Bee Health, Varieties and Seeds) as chair, Marcus Agius (RBG Kew Chairman) and

Professor Ian Owens (Natural History Museum Director of Science) and Jonathan Drori (Eden Project Trustee) as the independent panel members. At the Shortlist meeting the Panel will assess each application against the essential criteria and decide who to invite for final interview.

Interviews are expected to take place at Kew Gardens and will last for approximately 45 minutes. Further details about the format will be provided to you in advance.

These are Ministerial appointments and all candidates deemed appointable by the Panel will meet with Lord Gardiner before a final decision is made.

How to apply and submit your application

To apply, please send the following to publicappts@defra.gsi.gov.uk quoting reference **APPT 02-18**:

- a CV of no more than two sides of A4;
- a supporting statement of not more than two sides of A4, setting out how you meet the [essential criteria](#) – make sure you refer to the contents of this document;
- e-mail addresses for two referees;
- diversity monitoring form;

- conflicts of interest and political activity monitoring.

If you have any questions about the appointments process please contact Andrew Morris, Public Appointments Team on 020 8026 6562 or: publicappts@defra.gsi.gov.uk

For an informal discussion about the role please contact David Cope, Director of Strategy and External Affairs, Kew on Tel. 07500 100107 or: d.cope@kew.org

Ineligibility criteria

You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- you become bankrupt or make an arrangement with creditors;
- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors;
- you are disqualified from acting as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986;
- you have been convicted of a criminal offence, the conviction not being spent for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (c. 53);
- you become subject to a debt relief order or a bankruptcy restrictions order;
- you fail to declare any conflict of interest.

What is the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew?

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew was founded in 1759. Under the National Heritage Act 1983 the Board of Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBG Kew) was established as a corporate body. RBG Kew is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) and exempt charity, sponsored and regulated by Defra. Eleven Trustees are appointed by the Defra Secretary of State and one by HM the Queen.

RBG Kew has an international reputation for its scientific research into plants and fungi, and for its living and preserved collections which are unique in their global scope and coverage. Its gardens at Kew (Crown land, managed under Ministerial Direction from the Secretary of State) and Wakehurst Place, West Sussex (leased from the National Trust) are enjoyed by two million visitors a year.

As an extensive botanical garden with a large number of nationally important heritage buildings, RBG Kew faces a significant financial challenge in ensuring it can operate as a world class visitor attraction and site of scientific expertise, while maintaining and developing these assets.

RBG Kew has a very broad and diverse range of stakeholders and partners. Kew's scientists work with over 400 partner institutions in 110 countries around the world. Kew engages actively with many UK Government Departments, including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department for International Development, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Kew engages actively with

environmental NGOs, other gardens and horticultural organisations, has a diverse commercial portfolio of partners and customers and foreign governments as well as the Higher Education sector and research institutes. We achieve global impact through positive engagement with this extensive community of stakeholders. For further information about the current role of RBG Kew you may wish to visit the [Kew website](#).

The Board

RBG Kew's functions and powers as a statutory body are derived from the National Heritage Act. As an Executive NDPB, RBG Kew operates at arm's length from Defra, its sponsor Department. The Trustees need to act in the best interests of the charity as well as meeting the obligations of RBG Kew as a public body. Trustees are accountable through Ministers to Parliament for the public money that they spend. Defra's role is one of stewardship, enabling the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to account properly to Parliament for RBG Kew's efficiency and effectiveness, ensuring that RBG Kew is properly managed and that its grant-in-aid is used appropriately and effectively. Each year RBG Kew produces an Operational Plan and its formal Annual Report and Accounts are laid before Parliament.

Board members are Trustees of both an exempt charity and a Non-Departmental Public Body, both regulated and sponsored by Defra. All new Board members will be given appropriate induction.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments

This appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, to ensure that it is made on merit after fair and open competition. More information about the role of the Commissioner and the Governance Code on Public Appointments can be seen at:

<http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578498/governance_code_on_public_appointments_16_12_2016.pdf

For full details of the complaints process for public appointments, please click on the following link which will take you to the Commissioner for Public Appointments website

<http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/contact-us/>

Alternatively please contact the Commissioner's office on 020 7271 0831 for a printed copy.

Data protection

Defra is committed to protect your privacy and to process your personal information in a manner which meets the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Annex A – The seven principles of public life

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Annex B – Current membership of the Board

Marcus Agius (Chairman)
Nick Baird
Professor Liam Dolan
Catherine Dugmore
Sarah Flannigan
Valerie Gooding (Queen's Trustee)
Professor Sue Hartley
Ian Karet
Jantiene Klein Roseboom van der Veer
Michael Lear
Sir Derek Myers
Professor Malcolm Press*

*term will end in 2018

[Trustee biographies](#)



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