



**CANDIDATE PACK**

**DIRECTOR OF LEARNING AND PUBLIC  
ENGAGEMENT**



**RHS**



# WELCOME

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Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Director of Learning and Public Engagement at the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS).

As a charity, we are here to inspire a passion for gardening and growing plants, promote the value of gardens, demonstrate how gardening is good for us and explain the vital role that plants play in our environment. Our horticultural science, gardens and flower shows are recognised around the world. As we face some of the most significant challenges of our times – environmentally, societally and economically – plants will continue to provide solutions and at the RHS, we have an important role to play in enabling communities to thrive and in benefitting our planet.

We will soon be launching a new strategy that will capitalise on a decade of substantial investment in our gardens and facilities, reinforcing our commitment to meeting key sustainability targets, and bringing the benefits of gardening to more people and communities than ever before. One of two new roles on our executive team, this position offers an exciting opportunity to play an influential role in the future of RHS at a pivotal moment of change, working with me and colleagues to broaden our impact and reach at a time when our work is more critical and relevant than ever.

As our Director of Learning and Public Engagement, you will be right at the heart of our new strategy, transforming the way in which we engage with our audiences leading across our professional training and school education programmes, off-site learning activities, community partnerships and developing public engagement opportunities across all our sites and beyond. We are looking for a creative leader who can inspire and integrate a newly formed Group that will extend our reach and impact to new levels. Leading across our education and learning activity, providing opportunities for both professional and amateur gardeners, and all of our Community Outreach activity, taking us far beyond the physical boundaries of our sites to create new and impactful partnerships and develop an ambitious and innovative engagement strategy that harnesses the breadth of what we do.

You will be a strategic thinker who brings deep knowledge and experience of engaging a wide range of professional and public audiences with a strong track record of shaping innovative engagement programmes across a range of platforms. Collaborative in your approach, you will bring the skills to lead through influence across our organisation, bringing people with you internally and externally to build strong and effective partnerships. Already operating at a senior level, you will bring passion and energy with experience of leading and inspiring high performing teams and demonstrate a strong commitment to our work, to our values and to our Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles.

We are actively encouraging applications from people of all backgrounds. If you believe you offer the skills and qualities we are seeking and are motivated by our vision to enrich everyone's life through plants and make the UK a greener and more beautiful place, I very much look forward to hearing from you.

**Clare Matterson**  
**Director General**

## ABOUT US

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**The Royal Horticultural Society is entering an exciting new chapter. Over the past year, we have come to the end of a substantial capital investment programme, welcomed a new Director General, and will be launching a new strategy in May 2023.**

Everything we do is built on the transformational power of gardening and the benefits it brings to people, places and our planet. Known globally for our inspirational Shows and five spectacular gardens, together they welcome over 3 million visitors per year, many from our base of over 625,000 members.

At a time when society is facing profound environmental, societal and economic change, the importance of plants and gardens to making people happier, bringing communities together and enhancing nature has never been greater. Our new strategy will bring the benefits of gardening to more people and communities than ever before, and reinforce our commitment to sustainability and diversity.

Our work is diverse and includes connecting millions of children and adults with nature through the RHS Campaign for School Gardening, through our education programmes in our gardens, working with communities through the Britain in Bloom partnership and NHS hospitals, and developing new community garden programmes. We set the standards in horticultural professional education and ensure it is constantly refreshed through pioneering horticultural science.

As the UK's largest gardening charity at a time of increased interest in gardening and horticulture, there has never been a more exciting moment to be part of our journey.

To find out more, please visit: [RHS - Inspiring everyone to grow / RHS Gardening](#)



## ROLE SUMMARY

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Our ambition is to deliver a step change in the way we connect with the public to build the future of horticulture and open up gardening to anyone anywhere.

At the forefront of delivering our new strategy, your strategic insight and leadership will transform the way in which we engage with our public and professional audiences. You will lead professional training programmes, school education programmes, off-site learning activities, community partnerships, as well as further develop public engagement opportunities across all our sites and beyond. You will work collaboratively with each of the RHS gardens so that education and engagement activity meets strategic goals and is well aligned to local circumstances. With new partnerships in train, new initiatives under development, and opportunities to bring new perspectives and alignment to existing activity, there is huge opportunity to make a real difference.

As a new role at an exciting juncture in the organisation's future, this opportunity will offer variety and the opportunity to significantly impact and reach of our work.



# ROLE DESCRIPTION

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## JOB PURPOSE

As a member of the RHS Leadership Team, the Director of Learning and Public Engagement will set a clear future direction for a creative and ambitious team to make a step change in learning, education and public engagement. Key responsibilities are to:

- Lead the education & learning activity across the lifetime of a gardening journey, providing opportunities for the professional and amateur gardener
- Lead the Community Outreach activity, reaching out beyond our sites to create new partnerships, build on existing partnerships to change the lives of millions
- Develop and coordinate an ambitious and innovative engagement strategy encompassing our work in science, horticulture and art to support current audiences and attract new audiences to gardening
- Operate within a matrix structure with RHS Heads of Site (Gardens) to ensure aligned strategic direction and clear operational delivery across different functions and places.

## STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION

- Set the strategic ambitions for RHS education and learning, outreach and engagement activities, using the new strategy as a launch pad to motivate teams and identify new opportunities
- Working across the organisation, create a range of strategically aligned, ambitious, and clearly defined programmes and initiatives that will engage different publics that attract external funding, encourage new supporter relationships or help to drive commercial revenue
- Create a new strategic framework for public engagement that enables a multi-year plan for coordinated exhibitions, events and activities with a clear purpose and funding plan.
- Work with the Director of Development to identify new opportunities to support existing and new plans for learning and public engagement
- With the Leadership Team, play a key role in setting the strategic direction and culture of the RHS, developing strong relationships with external partners and stakeholders to support delivery of the organisation's strategic aims

## DELIVERY

- Inspire and lead highly motivated and professional teams to deliver outstanding results across:
  - Education and Learning, including education content & standards, RHS Qualifications, Professional training programmes, Education & Learning in Gardens, New Shoots programme & careers and Education advocacy and industry skills.
  - Community Outreach, including programmes & grants, Community gardens & hubs incl. Healing Gardens; Britain in Bloom & It's Your Neighbourhood; Campaign for School Gardening; National Education Nature Parks
  - New public engagement events and interpretation in the RHS Gardens and beyond
- Establish a shared RHS visitor experience charter and, in collaboration with RHS Heads of Site, ensure delivery of exceptional and inspiring content, interpretation, and events that provides an outstanding visitor experience meeting the needs of different audiences
- Working with LT colleagues, ensure programmes are well communicated internally and externally to raise the public profile of RHS work
- Establish and deliver a rigorous approach to activities, from conception and planning to execution, monitoring and evaluation so that progress can be tracked, and impact understood and shared

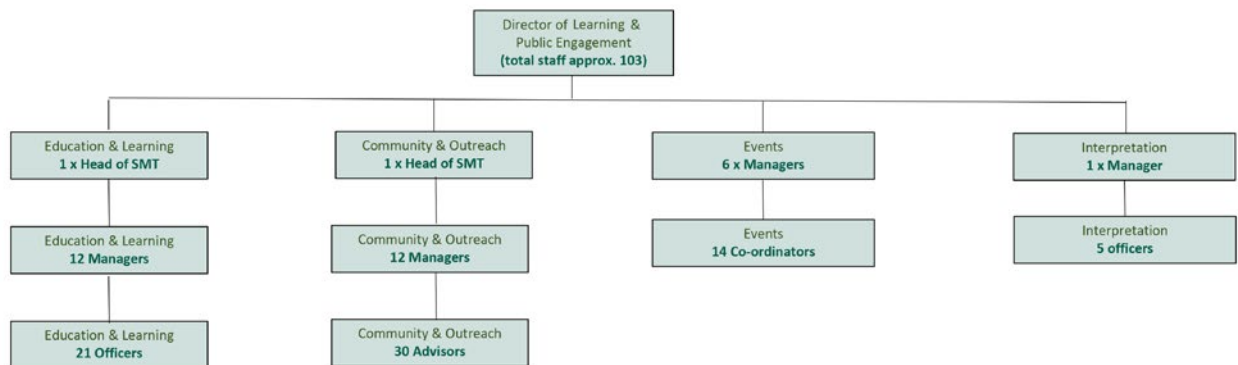
## RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

- Identify and cultivate new relationships that will support delivery of learning and engagement aims, including building new partnerships and supervising funding applications, related planning and deliverables
- Act as an ambassador for RHS' public facing activities amongst a diverse group of internal and external stakeholders, cultivating relationships that enable productive two-way dialogues with future programme users and collaborators
- Champion and advocate for the inclusion of under-represented audiences and voices and encourage a diverse range of perspectives and ideas to flourish in planning of the learning and engagement portfolio

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Lead a strong, professional and competent staff team, providing inspiration and motivation, team and individual development, empowering staff to achieve their full potential, ensuring an inclusive and supportive environment and a strong commitment to collaborative working
- Ensure alignment with RHS financial and operational planning cycles, manage and agree budgets for effective delivery of team objectives, goals and metrics
- Oversee preparation, monitoring, control and delivery of all relevant budgets, setting priorities and making adjustments if necessary
- Contribute to all areas of the RHS's strategic development and operational delivery as a member of the Leadership Team; role model strong leadership behaviours to support and reinforce our behaviour framework and help unlock the organisation's potential.

## PROVISIONAL STRUCTURAL CHART



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

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## KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

- A clear understanding and passion for the RHS mission and purpose
- Extensive knowledge and experience of engaging a wide range of professional and public audiences through education and engagement programmes, with sector specialist skills and innovative thinking around models of learning and participation
- Experience of working with a high degree of collaboration across multiple sites or departments
- Experience of programme development and management with a strong track record of creative and popular public programming across a range of platforms
- Experience of working with culturally and socially diverse audiences and of co-creation and participatory practice in developing engagement programmes would be advantageous
- Demonstrable evidence of building strong partnerships with other organisations
- An experienced people leader and manager with success in creating, leading, inspiring and motivating a high performing, multi-disciplined team and collaborating with a wide range of colleagues and stakeholders operating in a matrix environment

## SKILLS & ABILITIES

- A visionary leader and people manager with the ability to mentor and inspire others to be their best selves
- Extremely strong communication, interpersonal and collaborative skills with the ability to positively engage, partner and collaborate with stakeholders and colleagues, secure buy-in, negotiate, influence, build credibility and represent the RHS at all levels
- A collaborative approach to problem solving, but with ability to make and clearly articulate decisions when required
- The ability to exercise tact, diplomacy, and discretion combined with personal warmth, friendliness, and openness
- Strong financial and commercial acumen with the ability to evaluate opportunities and manage complex budgets
- Self-motivated with the ability to work well under pressure in a busy environment
- Excellent at taking the initiative and spotting opportunities to improve and push the organisation forward

## VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS:

- Shares our commitment to developing a diverse and inclusive organisation that attracts and retains talented employees and volunteers from all sectors of society and is representative of not only the people we currently engage with but those with whom we seek to engage in the future
- High level of integrity, confidentiality and dependability with a genuine commitment to quality
- Flexible and adaptable outlook in approach to work undertaken.
- Calm, friendly and enthusiastic disposition with a positive, can-do attitude, a good sense of humour

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Ability to work some weekends a year immediately prior to key events such as the Chelsea Flower Show
- Ability to travel to other RHS sites around the UK as required, on occasion requiring overnight stay away from home

# TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

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**Contract type:** This is a permanent appointment

**Salary:** circa. £110,0000

**Location:** Based at Vincent Square, London (with regular attendance at RHS Wisley & periodic visits to other RHS sites as required)

**Other benefits:**

The RHS provides a number of great benefits for employees including:

- Hybrid working
- 25 days' holiday (increasing to 28 and 30 with service)
- Pension with employers' contribution that increases up to 10% after 5 years' service.
- Life Assurance and Group Income Protection
- Private Medical Insurance
- Employee Assistance Programme for staff and immediate family
- Interest Free Travel Loan and a Cycle to work scheme
- Focus on provision of Learning & Development opportunities
- Free access to all RHS Gardens and Flower Shows
- Employee discounts at high street retailer and cash back scheme
- 20% discount on RHS Retail
- Discounted food and drink from the catering outlets at the gardens
- Monthly Garden magazine and access to gardening advice

The RHS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk and expects all personnel to share in this commitment. We are an inclusive employer and welcome applicants from all backgrounds.





## HOW TO APPLY

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We hope you will consider making an application. If you have questions about the appointment, please contact Szymon Podgorski at [szymon.podgorski@starfishsearch.com](mailto:szymon.podgorski@starfishsearch.com) and he will be happy to arrange a call with one of our consultants. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/rhc-director-lpe/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the experience and knowledge criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would also complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

<b>Closing date:</b>	Monday 8th May 2023
<b>Preliminary interviews with Starfish:</b>	w/c 22nd May and w/c 29th May 2023
<b>First stage interviews with RHS:</b>	w/c 12th June and w/c 19th June 2023
<b>Second stage interviews with RHS:</b>	w/c 3rd July and w/c 10th July 2023

