



THE ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION

Americans in Alliance with the National Trust of England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Applications Open for 2019 Damaris Horan Prize Fellowship in Peat-free Horticulture Application Deadline April 15, 2019

The Royal Oak Foundation is pleased to announce the 2019 Damaris Horan Prize Fellowship, a residential fellowship with the National Trust of England, Wales & Northern Ireland focused on using plants grown and cultivated without the use of peat. The Horan Fellow will develop solutions to the conservation challenge of peat-free plant supply, while benefitting from a valuable development and learning opportunity.

Established by The Mudge Foundation and named for Royal Oak's Executive Director from 1987 to 2003, the Horan Prize provides training and educational opportunities for individuals with a professional interest in the history, management and conservation of historic landscapes and gardens. The Horan Prize Fellowship provides unique opportunities to learn from the National Trust's extensive resources and expertise.

2019 Fellowship Project: "Peat-free Horticulture in National Trust Gardens"

Since 1999 the National Trust has followed a policy of not using peat in its horticultural activities and of acquiring only plants grown using peat-free growing media. The basis for this position is to directly reduce the unrenewable extraction of peat and to provide an exemplar of, and promotion for, peat-free horticulture.

Peat is industrially extracted from peat bogs causing irreversible damage to one of the most vulnerable nature conservation habitats and historic environments. Healthy peat bogs are crucial carbon 'sinks'; locking away atmospheric carbon as peat. Extracting peat and damaging peatlands releases locked-up carbon which then contributes to rising atmospheric CO₂ levels which in turn speeds up climate change.

Following this peat-free policy has not been without its challenges: the UK's horticultural industry has shown a reluctance to move away from peat use despite sustained Government and NGO encouragement. As a consequence, the availability of plants grown without use of peat in any part of the production chain remains poor. A number of approaches have been adopted to ensure that Trust gardens have adequate access to the range and number of plants they need to replenish their distinctive plant collections. At the specialized end of the scale, the Trust's Plant Conservation Centre in Devon provides a customized propagation service for small numbers of highly significant plants. For large orders of single-species or cultivars, contract growing by commercial suppliers such as Hilliers, Hampshire has proved successful. However, problems remain in sourcing low and medium numbers of plants across a wide range of plants that represents an important and characteristic feature of our gardens and parks.

Study

To investigate and report on the barriers and opportunities for peat-free plant supplies to National Trust Gardens.

Project Activities

1. To carry out a survey of National Trust gardens' plant requirements
2. To carry out a survey of current and potential plant suppliers' attitudes to peat-free production including barriers to peat-free production
3. Investigate options for the Trust including further developing commercial relationships with suppliers and developing in-house plant supply chains
4. Investigate means of improving coordination between gardens in plant production and sourcing
5. Investigate the approaches of other horticultural organisations (RHS, Kew/Wakehurst, RBGE etc.) to consider possible further collaboration in this area
6. Contribute to development of media for communicating the Trust's peat-free policy to members, garden visitors and people purchasing plants at our retail outlets
7. There will also be opportunities to develop technical propagation skills through working at the Plant Conservation Centre

Outcomes

The aim will be to provide an accurate and full assessment of the current situation: from this to identify solutions to using peat-free plant supplies at National Trust gardens, now and into the future.

- To provide evidence and information to direct development of improved plant supply for Trust gardens and parks.
- To develop greater public awareness of the environmental issues associated with horticultural peat consumption and the Trust's role in developing solutions.
- Send a detailed written report about the project and fellowship experience to The Royal Oak Foundation by within 90 days after the completion of the fellowship.

Practical information

- The study is to take place in England for an 8-week period from June through September at the mutual agreement of the Horan recipient and the National Trust.
- The student will be based at the National Trust Headquarters in Hellis. The student will also have periods of study at garden locations across the UK, working Monday to Friday.
- A laptop computer will be provided together with access to reasonable business support.
- Supervision and mentoring will be provided by Simon Toomer, National Specialist for Plant Conservation.
- Bed and breakfast accommodation will be identified for the duration of the study. We will seek out those offering a degree of self-catering.
- Transport will be provided as and when necessary. (The applicant should have a full UK valid/international driving licence).
- There will be the opportunity at weekends for the student to visit heritage and other sites and partake in their own leisure and travel activities.

Summary

This proposal is extremely important and timely given the importance of global climate change and peat bogs role in trapping CO₂, a greenhouse gas. The study will help us identify 'best practice' for near and long term solutions to following a peat-free policy at all National Trust gardens. We believe the findings will be of great interest and value to garden managers in the UK and in educating the public on the benefits of peat-free horticulture in preserving peat bogs.

Benefits to Recipient

- Experience working with specialist National Trust landscape and garden staff.
- Opportunity to liaise with National Trust Gardens and Parks staff on regional and national levels.
- Visits to NT gardens in England.
- There will be the opportunity at weekends for the student to visit heritage and other sites and partake in their own leisure and travel activities.
- A laptop computer will be provided together with access to reasonable business support.

Who Should Apply

Applications are welcome from graduates with Bachelor's or Master's degrees in one of the following areas: landscape design, horticulture, history, art history or environmental studies. Applications are encouraged from individuals with professional experience. Applicants must be citizens or permanent residents of the United States. Applicants will need a valid U.S. driver's license or an international driver's license and be comfortable with driving in the U.K.

- Should have a keen interest in plant propagation and supply, and a desire to learn more about growing media and the alternatives to peat
- be able to work independently within the plant conservation team to a brief
- be able to organise and clearly present information
- be keen to travel widely and meet independent growers and gardens staff across the Trust's properties
- A level of education and qualifications that would be associated with a (junior) professional in horticultural garden management.
- An awareness of both the conservation and commercial aspects of heritage gardens.
- Able to deal with a wide range of individuals, including industry professionals and the public.

Deadline and Work Schedule

The application deadline is **April 15, 2019**. The recipient will be announced by early April, and the Fellowship will take place during a mutually agreed upon eight week period between the months of June and September 2019. A final report will be required within 90 days after the completion of the fellowship.

Fellowship Support

The Fellow will receive a stipend of \$6,000 (paid in three installments), travel subsidy of \$1,500 for international travel, \$1,500 for housing, and local transport provided by the National Trust. The Fellow will be responsible for food and other personal expenses.

For more information visit: <https://www.royal-oak.org/impact/fostering-education/the-damaris-horan-fellowship/>

(2) **Essay**

Please attach a 500 word essay discussing your qualifications and interest in the specific fellowship project and how you believe it will benefit your academic and/or professional development.

(3) References

*Please supply two recommendations from people who are familiar with your work and who are unrelated to you. Letters of recommendation may be e-mailed directly from recommender **April 15, 2019** to bkennedy@royal-oak.org or sent in the mail and sealed with a signature across the envelope seal. Please provide recommenders' contact information below.*

(a)

Ms./Mr./Dr./Prof.	Name	Title/Position		
Institution				
Address		City	State	Zip Code
Telephone		Email		

(b)

Ms./Mr./Dr./Prof.	Name	Title/Position		
Institution				
Address		City	State	Zip Code
Telephone		Email		

(4) Checklist

This checklist will guide you in assembling your application. Please indicate your name on all materials and on the outside of the mailing envelope or carton.

Application Materials (3 copies required)

- Completed, signed Application Form
- Essay
- Resumé or curriculum vitae
- Letters of reference from two individuals—indicate if arriving via e-mail

Other Material (1 copy required)

- Self-addressed, postage paid envelope or Fed-Ex slip for the return of supporting materials
- Non-refundable \$40 application fee, payable to The Royal Oak Foundation.

You will receive a Royal Oak Student/Young Professional Membership (note: this membership is for those 29 and younger, if older than 29, any additional Royal Oak membership fee is waived.)

- An example of applicant's work in his/her field of specialization or interest, such as a research paper or portfolio (maximum size 12" x 18").

Please list items:

(5) Declaration (to be signed by all applicants)

I declare that I am a citizen or permanent resident of the United States. If awarded a fellowship, I shall pursue my work to the full term and I state that all funds given to me by The Royal Oak Foundation will be used solely for my own education and maintenance. I certify that all information provided in support of this application is true and correct.

Signature

Date

(6) Application Deadline April 15, 2019. Email submission is preferred.**If mailing additional materials, send to:**

The Royal Oak Foundation
 20 West 44th Street, Suite 606
 New York, NY 10036
 ATTN: 2019 Damaris Horan Prize Fellowship

Note to all applicants: All material, original and reproduced, is submitted at the owner's risk. **We encourage applicants to submit all materials electronically.** The Royal Oak Foundation does not assume responsibility for any loss or damage while material is in its custody or in transit. Supporting material will be returned only if a self-addressed, stamped envelope or filled out Fed Ex form is included in the application. Other written materials will not be returned.