

Seed Officer

Job Description

JOB TITLE:	Seed Officer (part time)
LOCATION:	Garden Organic, Ryton
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Head of the Heritage Seed Library
HOURS:	21 hours per week
SALARY:	£19,000 pro rata

Background:

Garden Organic, the UK's leading organic growing charity, is dedicated to promoting the many benefits of organic growing for people, plants and communities. Garden Organic's purpose is to get as many people growing organically as possible. Our headquarters is at Ryton Organic Gardens, 5 miles south-east of Coventry, although we support a range of activities and programmes all over the UK and also overseas.

Heritage Seed Library:

Garden Organics Heritage Seed Library (HSL) aims to conserve vegetable varieties that are not widely available and seed is made available through a membership scheme. The collection consists of approximately 800 accessions of mainly European, open-pollinated, vegetable varieties. These varieties have been donated by HSL members, other members of the public, sourced through HSL projects or passed to us by seed companies who are no longer maintaining them. Seed is multiplied by Garden Organics HSL team and by Seed Guardians, who are HSL members who have decided to take on the extra responsibility of growing seed for us. We also train people in the skills of saving seed for themselves.

Overall purpose of the role:

Working as part of the Heritage Seed Library team to maintain a quality collection stock of seeds, assist with planning the production and organising distribution of seed

Main Duties:

1. Maintain the core library seed samples for the HSL collection
2. Work with the Head of the Heritage Seed Library to ensure that there is adequate seed to supply members
3. Co-ordinate seed given to Seed Guardians, isolated site growers and contract growers
4. Oversee quality control of seed stocks – including cleaning, drying and storage requirements, germination rates and pest & disease management.
5. Lead on the pre-accession process and communications for potential new additions to the HSL collection.
6. Assist with the development of the HSL database, including stock management and descriptor information.
7. Be the point of contact with regard to seed requests and enquiries
8. Ensure that a sample of every variety is duplicated in storage at Warwick HRI Genetic Resources Unit
9. Maintain and update stock records of seeds

10. Oversee the cleaning, packaging and distribution of seed
11. Decide on varieties to be listed in the annual Heritage Seed Library catalogue and Orphan's list, in conjunction with the Head of the Heritage Seed Library and Information Officer.
12. Conduct tours and assist in delivering workshops, presentations and events both on and off site.
13. Assist with the growing and characterisation of seed varieties with staff and volunteers as required.
14. Answer emails, telephone calls and enquiries from members, colleagues and the public.

Please note that a driving licence is essential to undertake any travel associated with this position.

It is the nature of work of Garden Organic that tasks and responsibilities are, in many circumstances, unpredictable and varied. All staff are expected to work in a flexible way when the occasion arises where tasks are not specifically covered in the Job Description and have to be undertaken.

Some evening, weekend and bank holiday working may be required on a regular basis.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Experience		
Previous experience of organic vegetable growing	X	
Previous experience of seed saving	X	
Previous experience of managing stock and associated records	X	
Knowledge and Skills		
Excellent written and spoken communications skills	X	
Good interpersonal skills, working with a broad range of people including volunteers	X	
Computer literate – use of Microsoft Office, emails, social media etc.	X	
Knowledge and experience of database operation	X	
Knowledge and understanding of the work of the charity Garden Organic and/or Ryton Gardens	X	
Ability to work as part of a team, to be proactive and to multi-task	X	
An understanding of and commitment to Health & Safety and Safeguarding issues in the workplace		X
Ability to work under own initiative	X	
Good attention to detail	X	
Excellent organisation of information	X	
Full driving licence	X	
Personal qualities		
Positive, flexible, outgoing, lateral thinking, creative	X	
A good team player	X	
Support for Garden Organic's principles and ethos.		X