



The Botanics  
Trading Company  
Limited

# Head of Commercial Services

Botanics Trading Company

Starting salary: £45-50k depending on skills and experience, plus performance-related bonus

“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  
Regius Keeper, RBGE

# Who we are

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) is one of the top four botanic gardens in the world. Founded in 1670, we are home to one of the world's best living collections of plants (currently around 13,500 species), a herbarium of three million preserved specimens and one of the UK's most comprehensive botanical libraries.

Nationally we are a key contributor to Scotland's response to climate change and biodiversity loss, guided by a range of key policies including the Environment Strategy for Scotland 'One Earth. One home. One shared future.' and 'Securing a Green Recovery on a path to Net Zero'. Globally we work collaboratively with partners across the world to ensure the sustainable use of plant biodiversity, and to promote planetary health and a green recovery.

We advance collections-based biodiversity research and education across a wide spectrum of organisms and geographical regions. This range, coupled with our partnerships with government, national and international HE institutions and research institutes, provides an essential platform for tackling some of the world's most pressing environmental challenges.



We are also a leading visitor attraction. Our four gardens: the flagship Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh; Dawyck Botanic Garden in the Scottish Borders; Logan Botanic Garden in Dumfries & Galloway; and Benmore Botanic Garden in Argyll attract around one million visitors annually.

We are now looking towards our next horizon of opportunity by further enhancing our commercial leadership capability through the Botanics Trading Company (BTC), a wholly owned subsidiary of RBGE. We're looking for someone to join us who can add to our expertise in delivering high quality commercial services and significantly increase our income and profitability from commercial services. We see this as being achieved through delivering exceptional catering, events, retail and hospitality experiences across all four gardens, identifying and developing new business opportunities, and supporting us in designing and delivering commercial contracts nationally and internationally.

This is a really exciting opportunity at a time of significant change for RBGE as we further enhance our role as a world leading botanic garden, through investment in BTC and our ability to deliver exceptional visitor experiences and effective nature based solutions to address the biodiversity crisis and climate emergency.



# Who you are

Reporting directly to our Director of Horticulture & Visitor Experience, you'll be someone with a passion for commercial opportunities and a trained eye in seeking them out and delivering results. You'll need to have previous experience in running a successful commercial business, with a proven track record in developing financially sustainable income streams, and experience in leading business development and operational activities at a mid/senior level. You will be an astute operator who understands the concept of exceptional customer care and can deliver high quality services to a wide range of customers. An ability to raise the bar on service standards is crucial alongside a can do attitude and a focus on continuous improvement.

You'll also need to have strong, astute leadership skills to motivate an already high-performing team and have a high degree of skill in cultivating long-term relationships and strategic partnerships. Experience of the development and monitoring of performance against strategies, business plans and budgets will be second nature to you, and you'll be used to acquiring new commercial contracts and building capacity and capability in delivering consultancy services.

On top of that, we'll be looking to you to lead the development of high value commercial bids, proposals and navigating contract negotiations on our behalf, as well as procuring goods and services as and when needed. Previous experience in the tourism industry or third sector would be an advantage, as would an interest in conservation and the environment.



# Job Description

## Purpose

To provide high quality commercial services to significantly increase turnover and profitability from commercial operations through providing exceptional catering, events, retail and hospitality experiences across RBGE's four gardens, identifying and developing business opportunities, and supporting RBGE in designing and delivering commercial contracts nationally and internationally.

## Main Duties

### Innovation and Enterprise

- Provide vision, strategic direction and leadership for RBGE's commercial services function and support the work of other Divisions relating to income generation and visitor operations
- Lead and manage the Botanics Trading Company to maximise the contribution of BTC to RBGE through:
  - i. BTC retail outlets
  - ii. Catering, venue hire, licensing and ticketed public events
  - iii. Visitor welcome and admission services across the four gardens
  - iv. Commercial contracts including corporate sponsorship
- Ensure a high-quality and sustainable visitor attraction through maintaining VisitScotland five-star accreditations, Gold Green Tourism status and building a culture centred on optimising the customer experience in retail, catering and hospitality
- Safeguard the realisation, exploitation and commercialisation of RBGE's intellectual property and know how

### Planning, Finance and Reporting

- Design and deliver a commercial growth plan that recognises the ever-changing needs of society to address and reverse the twin challenges of the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis
- Develop plans, processes and procedures that supports an expedient response to take advantage of emerging commercial opportunities while providing sound oversight and effective delivery of existing operations
- Understand the mechanisms to successfully access funding opportunities through FCDO and SDI partnerships and diplomatic avenues, including the potential of Natural Capital initiatives
- Negotiate appropriate fee rates and ensure risk factors are mitigated, and reputational and ethical issues are considered
- Assume overall responsibility for financial management of the BTC and support Direct Reports in the development of Operational Plans and Budgets as part of RBGE's corporate planning process

- Establish 5-year ambitious financial targets and ensure effective budget management
- Develop and maintain CRM systems to effectively manage and track customer data, standardize sales processes, optimize lead generation, and create reports to improve business performance
- Produce clear and succinct reports, papers and professional input to demonstrate value of developing self-generated income streams in support of RBGE vision, mission and strategy for BTC, Annual Report, quarterly performance reporting, Risk Register, and health and safety.
- Attend meetings of the BTC Board to report on progress against income generation and new income stream targets

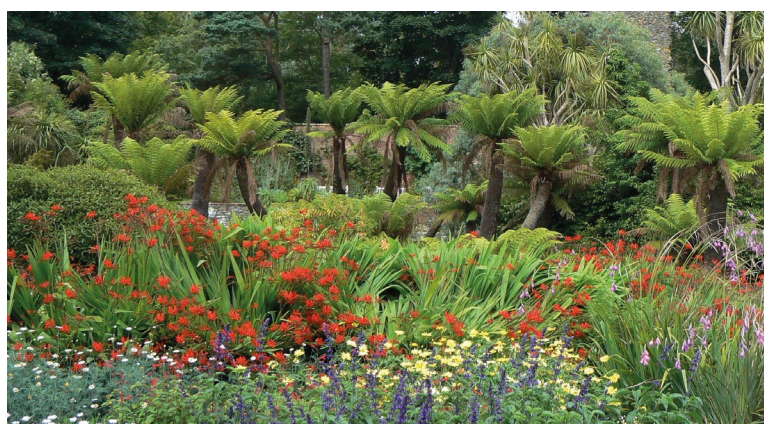
### **Stakeholder Management, Representation and Contracting**

- Actively manage RBGE contracts with appointed contract caterers at all four gardens including executing a joint sales and marketing plan to improve financial performance/contribution and enhance the customer experience
- Represent RBGE at external meetings and events and build the RBGE brand as a leading visitor attraction and provider of commercial services
- Establish, maintain and maximise meaningful commercial relationships and networks within public, private and third sectors locally and internationally

- Acquire new commercial contracts and manage the successful exploitation of ideas that create value at scale in harmony with RBGE's vision and mission
- Support the delivery of complex business development projects involving multiple stakeholders across UK and/or international markets
- Develop MOU's, proposals and bids from seed capital level to high value contracts (£mm)
- Build our profile, capability and capacity as an exporter of consultancy services linked to RBGE strengths
- Represent RBGE at appropriate meetings and industry events/conferences and seek opportunities for presenting to external audiences

### **Team Development**

- Day to day management of BTC line managers
- Ensure the professional development of BTC staff including annual workplans, effective performance appraisals and adoption of a coaching approach
- Other duties as agreed with the Director of Horticulture and Visitor Experience



# Skills, Knowledge & Experience

## Essential

- Strong leadership skills to motivate a high-performing team and to build effective relationships and influence at all levels
- Excellent networking, communication and influencing skills
- High degree of skill in cultivating long-term relationships and strategic partnerships
- Skilled in identifying market opportunities and translating them into viable business propositions
- Excellent income generation capability, financially astute and competent at setting and achieving commercial targets
- Proven track record in developing financially sustainable income streams for charities and working across organisational boundaries
- Experience in leading business development and operational activities at a senior management level in the cultural or tourism sector, academia, industry, or third sector
- Experience of the development and monitoring of strategies, business plans and budgets
- Experience of delivering high quality customer care and demonstrating a service orientated attitude
- Experience in acquiring new commercial contracts and building capacity and capability in delivering consultancy services

- Experience of leading high value commercial bids, proposals and contract negotiations
- Experience in working with multi stakeholder groups on designing and supporting delivery of complex commercial projects
- Experience of procurement of goods and services

## Desirable

- Strong network of tourism and/or business contacts
- Knowledge of or experience in retail, catering, hospitality and events
- Knowledge of how to manage the Scottish and UK international development landscape
- Experience in leveraging the value of IP and know-how
- Experience working with/at Board Level
- A strong interest in conservation and the environment







## Staff benefits

In addition to your salary and bonus scheme the Botanics Trading Company offers a range of benefits to our staff, including:

- generous holiday entitlement
- pension scheme membership
- discounts in our shops, restaurants, and cafes
- free employee assistance scheme

## To apply

Please 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 post
- a completed equal opportunities questionnaire: [EOQ form](#)

**Closing date: Midday Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

Interview date: Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

To arrange an informal discussion about the post, please contact Gillian Williamson at [gwilliamson@rbge.org.uk](mailto:gwilliamson@rbge.org.uk)

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh is a charity registered in Scotland (No SC007983)  
The Botanics Trading Company is a company registered in Scotland (No SC136616)

