



THE ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION

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

2017 Damaris Horan Prize Fellowship in Landscape History

Historic Landscape Report on the visitor experience at National
Trust Gardens





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Applications Open for 2017 Damaris Horan Prize Fellowship in Landscape History

The Royal Oak Foundation is pleased to announce the 2017 Damaris Horan Prize Fellowship, a residential fellowship with the National Trust of England, Wales & Northern Ireland focused on landscape history. 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.

2017 Fellowship Project: "The Gardens as Seen by the Visitor"

Visitor numbers to gardens have increased greatly throughout England and Wales in recent years, at both National Trust and other properties. The National Trust has pursued a marketing strategy to offer gardens to a wider audience; to open many gardens all year round and for greatly increased hours and to use these spaces for crowd pulling functions and events. This strategy has been very successful in its desired aim to increase numbers and also membership. Garden visits are recognised as a major part of the Trust's business activities and there are aspirations to grow this further. However it has now been recognised by both operations and consultancy staff that this success has placed new and significant demands on the maintenance of these gardens. Further to this there is a recognition that the expectations of visitors who come to very busy gardens is sometimes compromised and this needs to be better managed: different audience segments look for different and sometimes conflicting experiences in our gardens. How we successfully deliver a good experience to all who visit is becoming more of a challenge as our gardens fill up.

Study

The Fellow will be tasked with undertaking research into the current situation in highly visited gardens, looking at both the physical nature of the garden and also the experience of visitors to inform recommendations.

Any assessments and research which can be undertaken in the US before departure to the UK will add to the breadth of the study and widen its potential value. NT staff will be looking at some gardens in Europe at the same time and their findings will likewise feed into the final report.

The key areas of activity of this study will be to:

- Pull together existing research and information.
- Review present techniques of managing all year round opening.
- Review the resource and other implications (short, medium & long) of the current trajectory.
- Conduct their own (guided) case study research and analysis at selected garden sites and liaise with industry specialists.
- Consult with organisations and garden managers external to the National Trust to ensure the outcomes are relevant to key industry players

Outcomes

The aim will be to provide an accurate & full assessment of the current situation: from this to identify solutions to issues that arise with presentation and visitor enjoyment in very busy heritage gardens, now and into the future.

- Produce an illustrated written report summarising the main conclusions.
- Identify recommendations to enable an improved performance in presentation and visitor experience.
- A short presentation of their findings to their support team.
- Outcomes to be shared with senior commercial, conservation and operations managers within the National Trust and beyond.
- Send a detailed written report about the project and fellowship experience to the Royal Oak Foundation by November 30, 2017

Practical information

- The study is to take place in England and Wales, for a six to eight week period through the summer of 2017. It is envisaged that this period will include a busy holiday season and Bank Holiday.
- The student will be based at the National Trust Alcester Hub and will also have periods of study at garden locations across the UK, working Monday to Friday.
- A laptop computer (& mobile phone) will be provided together with access to reasonable business support.
- Supervision and mentoring will be provided by Garden Consultants.
- Bed & 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 enormous increase in visitors to National Trust gardens in recent years, as gardens have become more and more popular with the visiting public and due to future increases (projected and targets) in visitor numbers into the future. The study will help us identify 'best practice' for short and medium term technical solutions and interventions as well longer term management and curatorial policy options to make garden visiting more sustainable and good for conservation and visitors experience alike. We believe the findings will be of great interest and value to garden managers in the UK and the US and beyond.

Benefits to Recipient

- Experience working with specialist National Trust staff.
- Opportunity to liaise with National Trust Gardens and Parks staff on regional and national levels.
- Visits to NT gardens in England and Wales.
- 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 (& mobile phone) 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 drivers license and be comfortable with driving in the U.K.

- Should have experience of operating in a major heritage garden together with an understanding of the challenges faced in both the physical management and visitor access of the site.
- A level of education and qualifications that would be associated with a (junior) professional in heritage 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.
- Self-motivated and able to work with little supervision.
- A can do attitude.

Deadline and Work Schedule

The application deadline is **March 30, 2017**. The recipient will be announced by early May, and the Fellowship will take place during a six to eight period in the **Summer season 2017**. An interim report will be required within 6 weeks of the project start date, and the final report will be required no later than **November 30, 2017**.

Fellowship Support

The Fellow will receive a stipend of \$5,000 (paid in three installments), travel subsidy of \$1,500, and the National Trust will provide accommodation and a vehicle for local transport. The Fellow will be responsible for any travel expenses exceeding \$1,500 and for food and other personal expenses.

For more information visit www.royal-oak.org/scholarships

(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 to **March 31, 2017** agoldman@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 \$35 application fee, payable to The Royal Oak Foundation.
You will receive a Royal Oak Student/Young Professional Membership
- 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 June 2, 2014 Please Mail Application Materials To:

The Royal Oak Foundation
20 West 44th Street, Suite 606
New York, NY 10036
ATTN: 2017 Damaris Horan Prize Fellowship

Note to all applicants: All material, original and reproduced, is submitted at the owner's risk. 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.