



**Education Officer**  
**Great Dixter House and Gardens**  
Northiam, near Rye, East Sussex, TN31 6PH.

£23 -£25,000 per annum, 3 year contract  
Closing date 18<sup>th</sup> December

This is an exciting new post funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, designed to expand the role of Great Dixter as a centre of excellence for gardening, environmental, and heritage education.

You will have a strategic, developmental and delivery role, writing an educational and interpretative strategy, producing dynamic programmes for learners of all ages, linking horticulture to biodiversity and sustainability, promoting rural skills and exploring the potential of other creative areas.

You will be involved in setting up new education facilities at Dixter farm, and preparing interpretation for the gardens and historical displays that fit with the organisation's strongly individual ethos.

The post requires a degree, IT fluency, planning skills and experience of a range of learning needs, budget management, and the delivery of educational projects. You must be imaginative and innovative, a good communicator and able to work effectively within a creative team. The role involves occasional weekend and evening work.

Please apply to the address above or by email to [office@greatdixter.co.uk](mailto:office@greatdixter.co.uk) including your CV.

## **GREAT DIXTER CHARITABLE TRUST**

### **Job Description for the post of Education Officer**

**Reports to :** Project and Administrative Director

**Also Accountable to:** Chief Executive Officer, Trustee Board

**Location:** Great Dixter House & Gardens and Dixter Farm

**Terms of Contract :** 3 years full time with the possibility of extension

#### **1.0 Job Summary**

This is an exciting new post designed to expand the role of Great Dixter as a centre of excellence for horticultural, environmental and gardening education.

The education officer will have a strategic, developmental and delivery role, producing dynamic programmes and projects designed to engage learners of all ages. A major focus of the work will be to use Great Dixter as a source of inspiration for existing gardeners and gardeners of the future. As part of this the education officer will link horticulture to key issues of our time including biodiversity and sustainability whilst maintaining Dixter's traditional role in the promotion of rural skills and meadow conservation. The potential of other creative areas will also be explored.

The postholder will be involved in taking Great Dixter forward from its past into the future, setting up new education facilities at Dixter farm in 2010, and preparing an interpretation plan for the gardens and historical displays that fit with the organisation's highly individual style and character and its vibrant horticultural and creative community.

The role involves occasional weekend and evening work when educational activities are arranged for these times.

## **2.0 Main duties and responsibilities:**

### **2.1 Policy and strategy**

To draw up an innovative and inspiring educational strategy for Great Dixter that shows sensitivity to the ethos of the site and builds on previous educational research and policy documents, the final proposal to be agreed by the trustees and sent to the Heritage Lottery Fund by April 2010.

To draw up an interpretation plan in association with the chief executive, gardeners, curator and archivist

To create a safeguarding policy for the site's activities

### **2.2 Developing learning provision**

To investigate and deliver varied methods of education and interpretation in keeping with the character of Great Dixter, encouraging creativity and innovation, whilst taking into account policies relating to curatorial, conservation and environmental issues and in consultation with users.

To oversee the production of interpretative material and co-ordinate curatorial and garden staff in designing, writing and delivering interpretative material including displays, literature and other means, to ensure that learning underpins all aspects of the work at Great Dixter.

To explore opportunities for creative use of ICT including online resources.

To develop the learning space at Dixter farm and explore the potential of the buildings, garden, meadows and woodland as a learning environment, balancing this with other needs of the house and the contemplative space offered by the garden.

To manage educational activities at Great Dixter including the organisation of lectures, short courses, symposia, schools visits and projects, exhibitions and similar events, ensuring that all activities are delivered within a given timescale and budget. Some of these will be income generating and arranged in conjunction with other staff.

To manage a budget for educational activities.

### **2.3 Personnel management**

To recruit, train and manage volunteers involved with the delivery of educational activities at Great Dixter.

To write briefs, commission, manage and supervise the work of freelancers.

To work with staff to create a culture that understands the educational role of gardens and heritage sites.

### **2.4 Sustainable development**

To build and maintain strong partnerships with a range of creative and educational organisations as well as users and potential users, relating to horticulture, the natural and built environment and the arts, so that innovative projects can be developed and delivered to maximise the effectiveness of the educational programme.

To work with colleagues and partner organisations to evaluate and monitor the impact and effectiveness of educational provision, to report on this to the Project/Administrative Director and make changes as appropriate.

To keep up to date with local, regional and national learning research, practice and initiatives and to inform best practice.

To take an active role in investigating and developing funding bids which are relevant to education and the underlying objectives the organisation.

To draw up a continuation strategy for the programme.

### **3.0 Additional information**

At all times the postholder must :

- Uphold the Trust's financial procedures and policies and represent the Great Dixter Charitable Trust in a positive and professional way.

- Assist the health and safety officer with regard to educational and interpretative activities at Great Dixter, undertaking relevant risk assessments, introducing safe ways of working, accident/incident procedures, control measures, work place inspections and other protocols and procedures as required.
- Comply with individual responsibilities in accordance with the work role for health, safety and well being in the work place.
- Be flexible in undertaking the duties and responsibilities attached to the post and, if asked by the Trust, perform other duties on or off the estate, which reasonably correspond to the general character of the post and associated level of responsibility.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **Knowledge**

#### **Essential**

Educated to degree level

Demonstrable knowledge of informative and attractive interpretation that is engaging to different audiences

Understanding of how a wide range of audiences learn and how this can be applied in a heritage/garden setting

Good IT skills and the ability to use Microsoft Office

Understanding of how ICT can be used to deliver an exciting education programme

Legislation relating to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

Understanding of current education policy from early years provision through to life long learning including the National Curriculum

#### **Desirable**

Qualification/background associated with horticulture/the natural environment

Graphic design, experience of Photoshop or other graphic computer programme

### **Experience**

### **Essential**

Strategic planning for and delivery of interpretation and educational activities

Managing within a budget

Project management

Setting up exciting and innovative projects and products

### **Desirable**

Running, or association with, a volunteer programme

Involvement in HLF or other externally funded projects

Experience of a range of partnership working

Using monitoring and evaluation methodology

### **Personal Skills**

#### **Essential**

Good organisational skills and administrative efficiency

Excellent verbal and written communication

Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to involve all audiences

Awareness of customer care

#### **Desirable**

Linguistic skills

### **Aptitudes:**

#### **Essential**

Imaginative and innovative

Ability to think strategically, plan, co-ordinate and deliver projects

Ability to respond to changes and exploit new opportunities

Sensitivity to the ethos of the organisation and the strengths of the site

Ability to work effectively within a creative team and channel input from professionals with other backgrounds