

Royal Botanic Gardens

# Kew

Inspiring futures



**Aisyah Faruk**

### **Tell us about your job**

Country Programme Officer (Caucasus Region).

### **Why is science important in your career?**

Because there's always something to discover or learn, so it feels like you're always growing in your career.

### **What is your average work day like?**

Oh, I never have a typical working day. One day I could be answering emails on budgets and writing reports, another day I could be waiting for a shipment from Georgia packed with seeds of rare and important species. And yet another day, I could be jetting off to Armenia to conduct a workshop and train the next generation of botanists.

### **Did you go to university? If so, what did you study? If not, what did you do after leaving school?**

Yes, my undergraduate degree was in Zoology, then I did my PhD in Biological Science, focusing on frogs in Malaysia!

### **What do you most enjoy about your job?**

I'm really boring, but I love spreadsheets and numbers, so I actually enjoy the reporting side of my job, where I have to make sure the projects are meeting their targets and spending is checked. But I also love working with my partners in the Caucasus, so collaborating with them to start new projects, travelling to see them etc. I also love meeting new people, and you do that a lot in my job!

### **What sort of personality traits do you have that help you in your career?**

Being open, engaging and having good attention to detail. Those have helped me a lot.

### **What helped you get your role at Kew?**

I think it was my willingness to take on challenges and explore new ideas and places. I'm never one to give up easily so being persistent while still being enthusiastic is a must in my job. Plus, you meet so many different people from different backgrounds, and coming from a multicultural country really gave me the edge.

### **What advice would you give to someone considering a career like yours?**

Don't be afraid to try something new and scary, whether that's giving a talk or a job or making contact with someone you think does interesting work. You never know where you might end up. It might not be where you initially thought, but it would be an adventure anyway!

### **What do you want people to know about your work?**

The Caucasus is an amazing region with so much diversity and is the origin of most of the foods we know; apples, pears, wheat etc.

We have a new fruit and nut project with partners in Armenia and Georgia!

### **Want a career that grows?**

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