

Royal Botanic Gardens

Kew

Inspiring futures



Naomi Carvey

Tell us about your job

MSBP Data Warehouse Project Officer.

Why is science important in your career?

Science informs which seeds to collect, where and when to collect them, and how they are processed and stored. Science also underpins information technology and data storage – whenever you use your smartphone, that's science!

What is your average work day like?

I receive seed collections data and queries from around the world and update our database of seed collections. I develop the website and explore new technologies. Sometimes I train other people to manage seed collections data.

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

I did a BA in Anthropology – not related to my current work! I went back to University part-time whilst working full-time in the financial sector and got a MSc in Geographic Information Science which introduced me to working with biological data.

What do you most enjoy about your job?

Firstly, I love just working with data and numbers. Secondly the variety, both in terms of work streams and people and countries I work with. Thirdly the scope to develop my work; I can investigate new ideas and ways of working to help seed conservation worldwide.

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

I'm methodical, organised and curious in my work – if this sounds like you then a career in data management or IT could suit you well. Working with people from a wide variety of countries I also have to be quite flexible and diplomatic to accommodate different ways of working and build successful working relationships worldwide.

What helped you get your role at Kew?

Previous experience of working with large complex datasets and a variety of computer systems gained whilst working in the financial sector. Experience working with biological and geographic data through my MSc in Geographic Information Science.

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

Training is good, but experience can be even better. Pick a topic you love – wildlife, films, sport, whatever, and download some datasets to create statistics and infographics; you can experiment and gain some great transferable skills. Consider making your own website; you can gain skills and a platform to sell yourself to potential employers. Also think about the kind of working environment you'll be best suited to. What motivates you most – interaction with people, prestige, money, travel, the opportunity to innovate? Think about what fits your motivations best – and be honest with yourself!

What do you want people to know about your work?

Kew and science go hand in hand! Kew is a world-leader in horticulture and also at the cutting edge of plant science and conservation.

Kew's Millennium Seed Bank is the largest seed bank of wild species in the world – arguably the most biodiverse place in the universe!

Seed banks provide insurance against the risk of extinction of plants as well a hub to grow knowledge of the amazing flora of our planet and of plants' future and potential.

Want a career that grows?

Build your skills in science, technology, engineering, art and maths to give yourself a chance to blossom in a career like one of these varied and exciting jobs at Kew.

You could make a real difference to the world.

For further information: www.kew.org