

Royal Botanic Gardens

Kew

Inspiring futures



Sarah Gattiker

Tell us about your job

Seed Curation Manager.

Why is science important in your career?

It defines why we do what we do and why it works. It offers opportunity and unlimited potential.

It also creates a common language which is respected and responded to globally.

What is your average work day like?

Seed shipments come in all the time from all over the world. I solve seed quality issues and make decisions about the collections which can require detective work as these seeds may have never been examined before.

I train people in seed conservation and often represent the department at events, as well as communicate with press, partners, trainees, VIP's and education requests.

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

Yes, BSc (Hons) Biological Science. A diverse degree covering the tiny to the large: human genetics and microbiology up to conservation ecology!

What do you most enjoy about your job?

It defines why we do what we do and why it works. It offers opportunity and unlimited potential.

It also creates a common language which is respected and responded to globally.

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

I think I am open minded, positive, chatty, some would say rather specific and detailed!

What helped you get your role at Kew?

I had lab experience, biological knowledge and an ability to learn and analyse data.

I had various conservation volunteer experiences, showing dedication and a passion for the environment. I was also working other roles which added team work, training, patience and an eye for detail!

I was working 1 day at week in the Wakehurst nursery which improved my knowledge and love of plants.

I also had a student job working in a DIY store which taught me a lot about tools, which is helpful when trying to get into seeds!

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

If you want something with a passion, then do not give up! Academic qualifications are not always the most important aspect. If you want something then work for it and be open to opportunities; many will give you skills which you can draw on later. Teamwork, communication skills and a positive personality are all useful to a scientist!

To me a good scientist never gives up; you may change how something is done and invent something new but you keep trying and gaining knowledge along the way.

What do you want people to know about your work?

Seeds are life and hope and we are so lucky to have this globally amazing and important resource at Kew.

People working together with a passion can make a difference locally and globally. The future holds unlimited potential and responsibility.

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