

Royal Botanic Gardens

Kew

**Digitisation Project –
Candidate pack**

Contents

Executive summary

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew	<i>Pages</i>
About RBG Kew	4
Manifesto for Change	4
Kew Science	5
RBG Kew's collections	5
Millennium Seed Bank	6
Global partnerships	6
Organisational structure	7

RBG Kew Science Collection Digitisation Project

	<i>Pages</i>
About the project	8
Staff and reporting structures	9
Further information	13
Employee benefits	13

Executive summary

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBG Kew) is a global resource for plant and fungal knowledge across two major botanic gardens: Kew Gardens (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) near Richmond in London, and Wakehurst in Sussex. We have around 1,100 employees and 500 volunteers – we also have an extensive international network of individual partners and consortia, and our scientific activities span 110 countries worldwide.

Science has always been at the heart of RBG Kew's purpose. Our collections, our people and our partnerships enable us to make an invaluable and highly relevant contribution to some of the biggest issues facing the global population. Our recently launched Science Strategy 2021–2025 provides focus and clarity on RBG Kew's scientific mission and five strategic priorities.

In November 2021, funding was secured to digitise RBG Kew's 8.5 million plant and fungal specimens and create a complete catalogue of our internationally significant collections, making specimen records and images freely available online and accessible to researchers across the globe. The outcome of this project will provide a unique, world-leading resource making accessible data from more than 260 years of scientific exploration, placing them at the centre of efforts to combat urgent global challenges such as habitat degradation, climate change and human health.

In addition, the project will include the implementation of the new Integrated Collections Management System (ICMS) – migrating all collections data on to one system to provide end users ease of access to all the collection data – and the new Data Portal, to provide external access to RBG Kew's collection data making it available to researchers across the globe.

To mobilise the new RBG Kew Science Collection Digitisation Project, we are now looking to appoint key staff who will provide leadership and support to deliver this exciting and unique project.

The appointed staff will have experience in large scale digitisation projects, developing business practises, leading and supporting teams, and ensuring quality control while reaching and where possible exceeding targets.



Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

About RBG Kew

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBG Kew) was founded in 1759, and from its beginnings as a Georgian royal garden it has become a global centre for plant and fungal science, tackling urgent environmental challenges. It has two main botanic garden sites: Kew Gardens in south-west London, which is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and Wakehurst in West Sussex, which is home to Kew's Millennium Seed Bank. We also have a permanent research office in Madagascar, one of the world's biodiversity hotspots.

Manifesto for Change

Earth is the only planet in the universe we know for certain supports life. Yet life on Earth is in crisis. Natural resources are being degraded at a rate unprecedented in human history. As a result, we are living through an age of extinction.

We also face a climate emergency. Actions such as burning fossil fuels and clearing wild lands have released greenhouse gases, disrupting natural climate patterns. In a vicious cycle, damaged ecosystems are less able to absorb emissions and mitigate the worst consequences of climate change.

The next decade will be critical if we are to reverse this environmental devastation. Humanity stands at a crossroads. The future of our planet is in grave jeopardy. Action is needed now to end biodiversity loss and repair our world.

The mission of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is to understand and protect plants and fungi for the wellbeing of people and the future of all life on Earth. Our aspiration is to end the extinction crisis and to help create a world where nature is protected, valued by all and managed sustainably.

Further details can be found at: [Manifesto for Change 2021–2030](#).

Kew Science

Our Science Strategy 2021–2025 identifies our mission **to understand and protect plants and fungi for the wellbeing of people and the future of all life on Earth.**

In partnership with our global network of collaborators, we aim to understand, protect and restore biodiversity at taxonomic, genetic, functional and ecosystem levels, and at all spatial scales. Our expertise will contribute fungal and plant knowledge to partnerships aimed at safeguarding all biodiversity, and our exploration of the useful properties of plants and fungi will provide significant benefits to society.

To fulfil our mission, we will build and share robust scientific evidence, greatly accelerate the identification and naming of fungi and plants, mobilise our collections, expand our training portfolio, enhance the influence of biodiversity considerations in discourse across sectors, and maximise positive impact through working with communities, governments, companies, land managers and other practitioners. We will capitalise on, and further develop, our greatest assets – our collections and expertise – to pursue five key Scientific Priorities: Ecosystem Stewardship; Trait Diversity and Function; Digital Revolution; Accelerated Taxonomy; and Enhanced Partnerships. We will deliver each Priority through three modes of action. In our Science Strategy, we outline our vision and how we will innovate (research and explore), inspire (motivate, train and educate) and influence (engage externally).

Our vision is ambitious; what we can achieve will rely on the experience and resources we already hold, in combination with renewed investment in our world-class science. Underpinning all five Priorities, our living and preserved collections will be further developed to increase the diversity of reference material and data. Our collections are essential for supporting hypothesis-driven research, and our collecting activities will be guided by an analysis of gaps in geographic and taxonomic coverage and their relevance to our Priorities.

Further details can be found at: [Science Strategy 2021–2025](#).

RBG Kew's collections

Spread over our two sites (Kew Gardens and Wakehurst), RBG Kew's scientific collections contain over 8.5 million items, representing over 95 per cent of known flowering plant genera and over 60 per cent of known genera of fungi. They incorporate living and preserved material, seeds, spores and DNA, and between them cover an extraordinary breadth of plant and fungal diversity.

Many of RBG Kew's collections are unique, and together they provide an unrivalled record of plant and fungal diversity in space and time. RBG Kew also has over 300 highly skilled scientists, curators and technicians located in three purpose-built buildings: the Herbarium, the Jodrell Laboratory (both located at Kew) and the Wellcome Trust Millennium Building (located at Wakehurst). The combination of world-class expertise and our collections makes RBG Kew a truly global resource in plant and fungal knowledge. The core purpose of Kew Science stems from a simple but often overlooked truth: all our lives depend on plants.

RBG Kew's collections include:

- More than 7 million herbarium sheets, including 330,000 type specimens that were used to describe new species.
- 1.25 million dried fungal specimens, the largest such collection in the world.
- Nearly 180,000 individual plants from over 30,000 taxa, including 1,300 threatened species in our gardens.
- 50,000 samples of DNA from over 35,000 species of plants in our DNA bank.
- More than 2 billion seeds, from 36,000 species of plants in the Millennium Seed Bank in Wakehurst.

Millennium Seed Bank

The Millennium Seed Bank Partnership is the world's largest *ex situ* plant conservation programme. Through partnerships in more than 80 countries, we focus on banking endangered, endemic and economically valuable species including the wild relatives of crops. They can be used for research, innovation and as the ultimate insurance against species extinction.

Global partnerships

RBG Kew has an extensive international network of individual partners and consortia. Our scientific activities and collaborations span 110 countries worldwide. Much of the fieldwork and sharing of information that RBG Kew undertakes in order to achieve its scientific objectives is dependent on working in partnership with key organisations, individuals and communities in these countries. We also deliver an extensive programme of training and capacity building. Our primary stakeholders are UK and global scientific institutions, governments, research councils, industry, international conservation and development agencies, and the public. RBG Kew is also an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body part-funded by Defra (the UK government's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs). As part of the Defra Network, RBG Kew plays an active role in delivering the department's policy objectives.

Online access to RBG Kew's rich scientific collections data will be increased rapidly through our current Science Strategy initiatives, including digitising the collections and the construction of a Plant and Fungal Tree of Life. The Plants of the World Online Portal (plantsoftheworldonline.org) provides a single point of access for authoritative information about plants, including names, descriptions and distributions. This will ultimately lead to a resource that has global coverage. RBG Kew's other major scientific databases include the Herbarium Catalogue (apps.key.org/herbcat/navigator.do), Seed Information Database (data.kew.org/sid) and DNA Bank (apps.kew.org/dnabank/search).

Organisational structure



RBG Kew Science Collection Digitisation Project

About the project

RBG Kew is currently recruiting staff to work on an exciting and unique project to digitise our 8.5 million plant and fungal specimens and create a complete catalogue of our internationally significant collections, making specimen records and images freely available online and accessible to researchers across the globe.

The outcome of this project will provide a unique, world-leading resource making accessible data from more than 260 years of scientific exploration, placing them at the centre of efforts to combat urgent global challenges such as habitat degradation, climate change and human health.

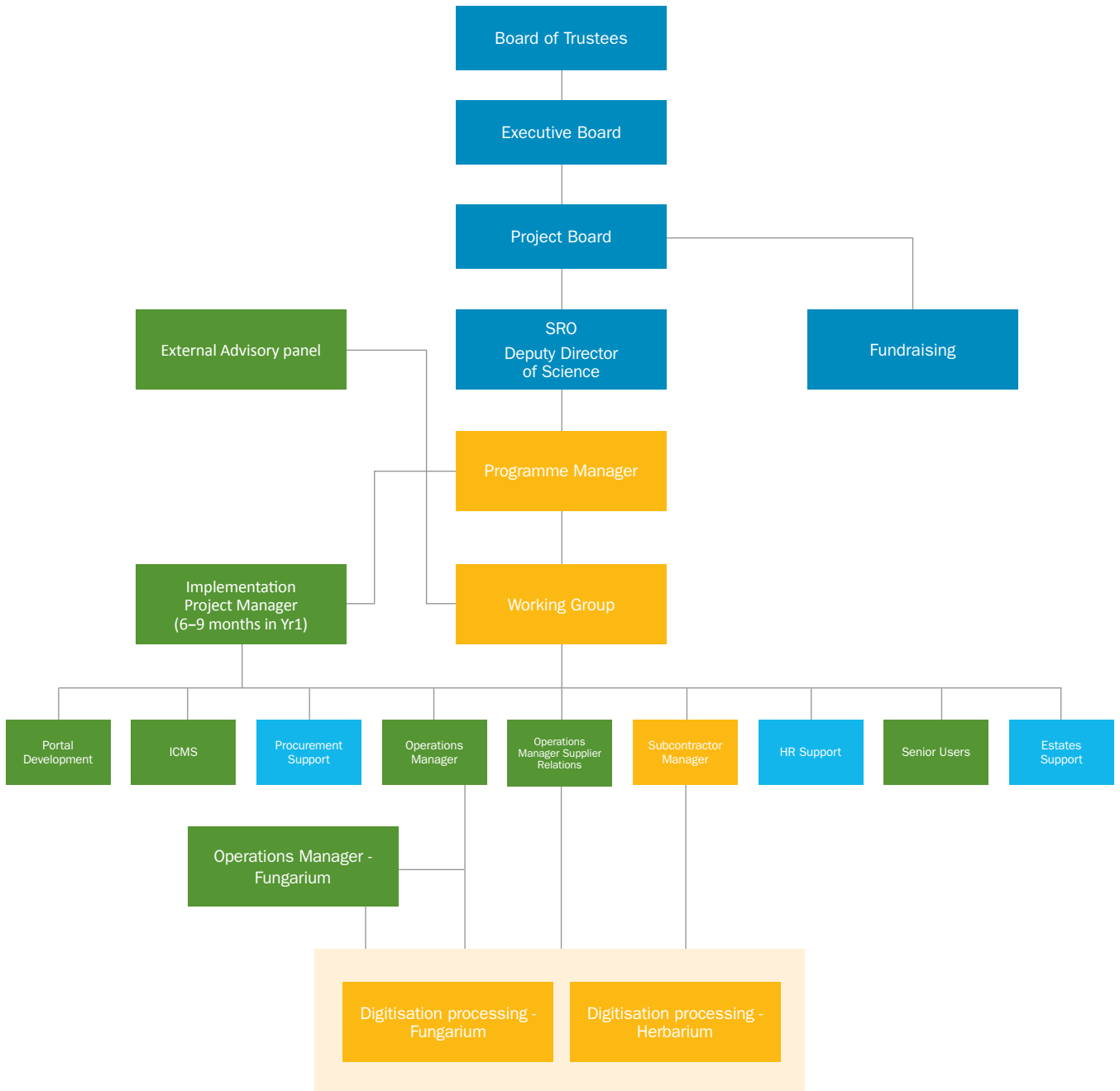
As part of this project, RBG Kew is also recruiting staff to support the implementation of a new Integrated Collections Management System (ICMS) to ensure efficient and effective integrated management of the Science and Living Collections and the data describing them.

The ICMS will allow more efficient tracking of the use of specimens to meet legislative requirements concerning access to genetic resources and benefit sharing, including the Nagoya Protocol of the Convention on Biological Diversity and plant health legislation.



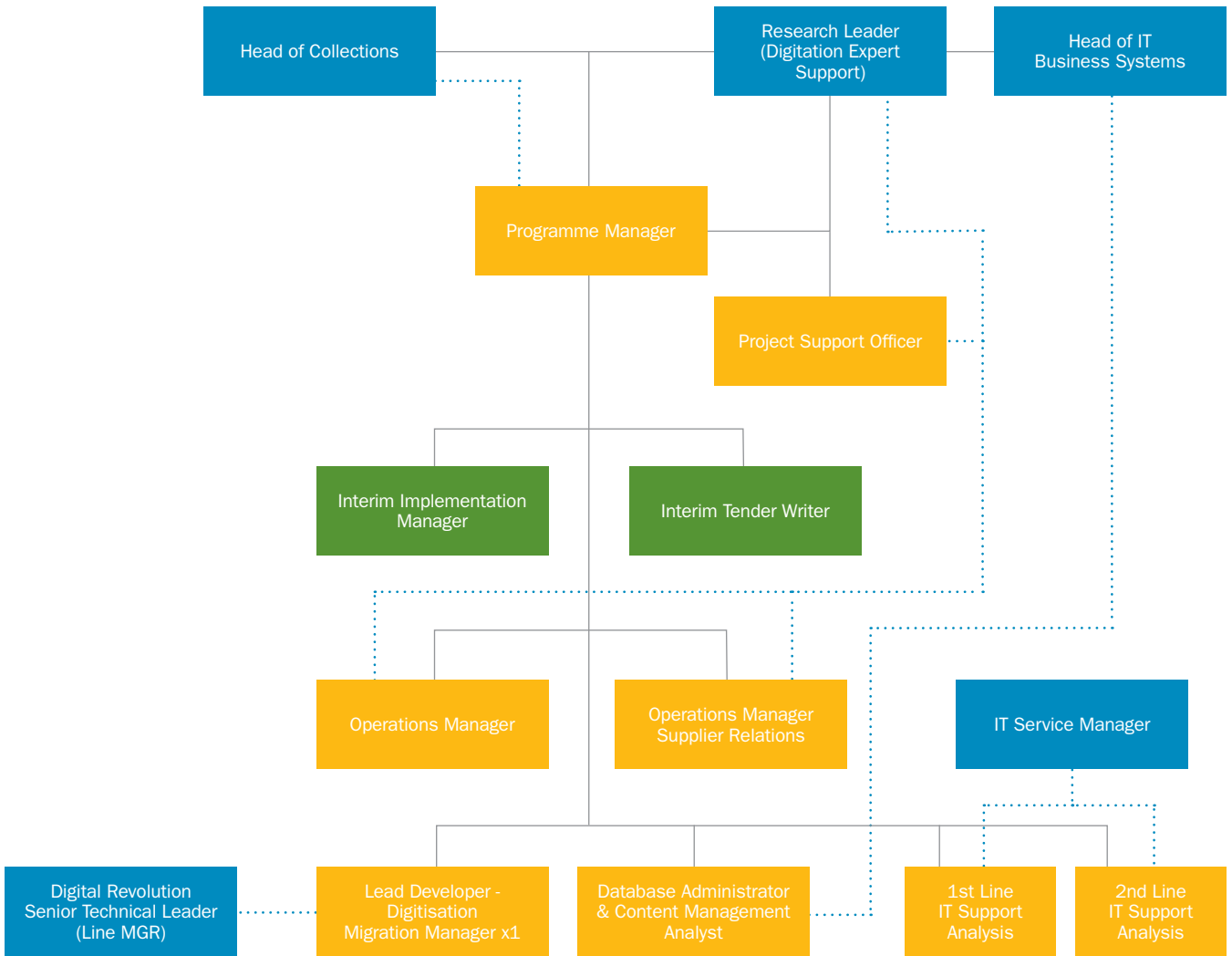
Staff and reporting structures

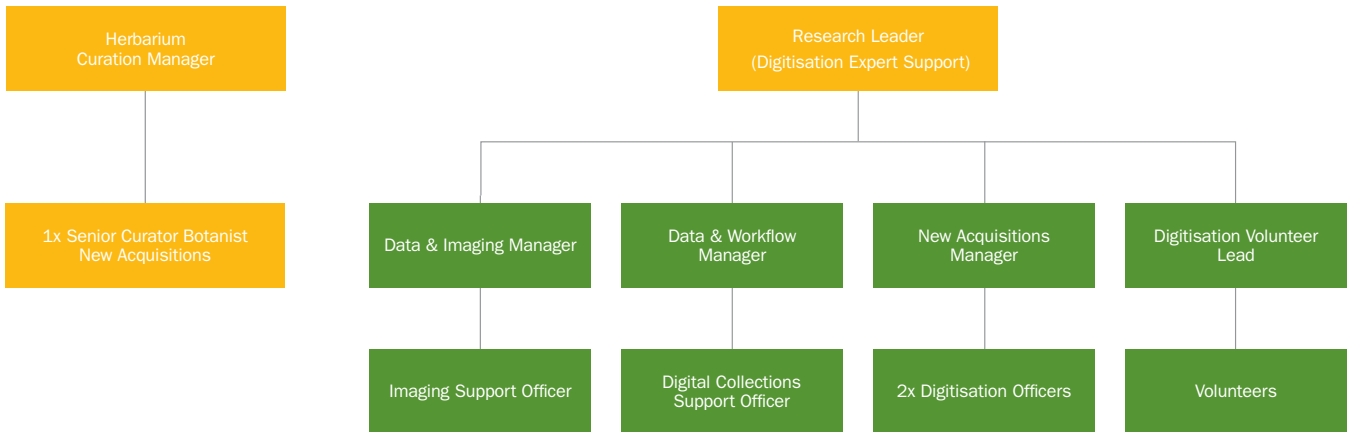
RBG Kew Science Collection Digitisation Project



Digitisation of Herbarium & Fungarium Project

Line Management ———
Reporting ·····

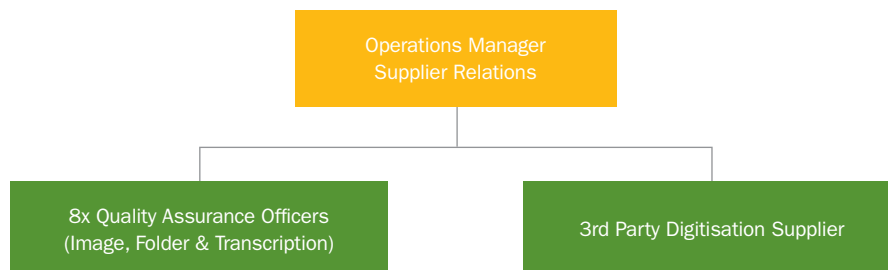




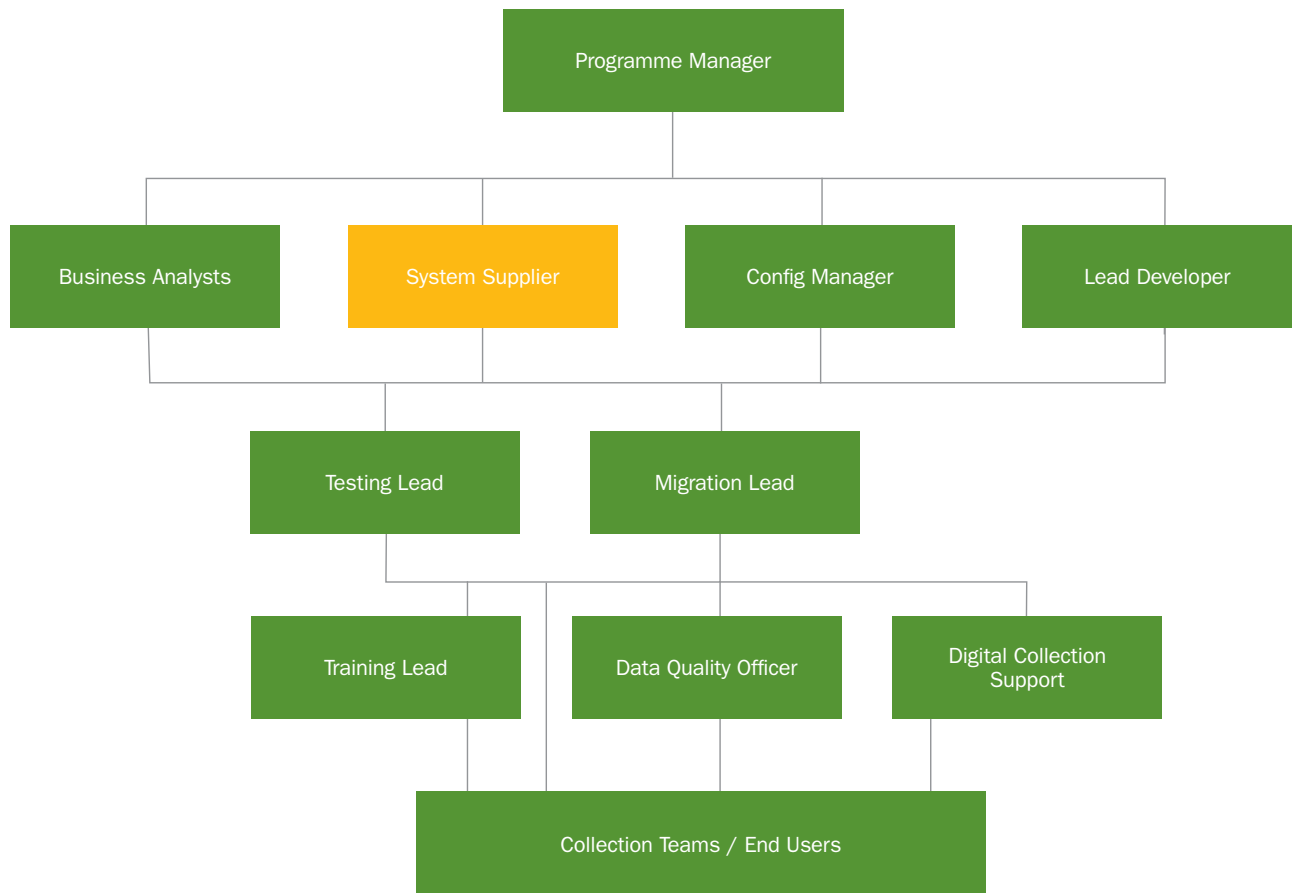
Operations Manager



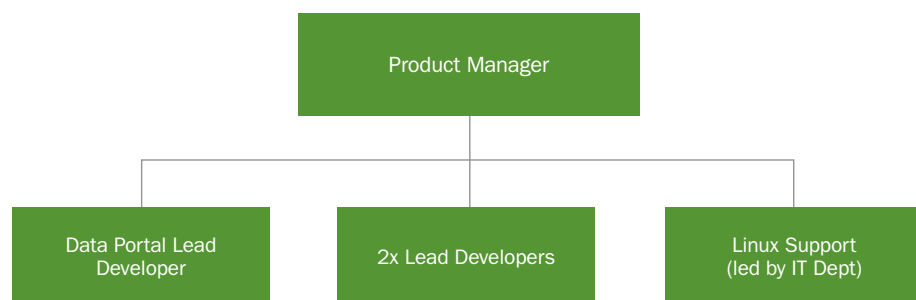
Operations Manager Supplier Relations



ICMS



Data Portal



Further information

For a confidential discussion about any of the roles, please contact: digitisationrecruitment@kew.org

Employee benefits

Annual leave

Entitlement for staff working a full-time standard week (36 hours across five days) is 30 days, excluding bank holidays, on entry – rising to a maximum of 33 days after five years' service. Entitlement for staff who work a non-standard week (e.g. part-time, condensed hours, annualised hours) is calculated in hours on a pro rata basis.

Family friendly

RBG Kew supports its employees in achieving a work-life balance and we have a range of schemes and policies in place to support wellbeing and wider needs:

- Flexi-time system: RBG Kew operates flexible working hours subject to the operational needs of the business and Head of Department agreement.
- Generous and comprehensive family-friendly policies: Maternity, paternity and adoption leave, career breaks.
- Employee Assistance Programme: The Employee Assistance Programme offers advice and counselling via a confidential phone line and an extensive website with help sheets.
- Family pass: RBG Kew Enterprises employees are entitled to free admission to the gardens at Kew and Wakehurst for two accompanying adults and two children on presentation of their staff pass.
- Civil Service Sports Club (CSSC): Employment at Kew provides the opportunity to join CSSC, a not-for-profit organisation aimed at public sector workers positively promoting health and wellbeing in the workplace. CSSC aims to help you to have fun, get active, try out new hobbies or activities and experience the great diversity of the Civil Service. CSSC organises hundreds of events, activities and special offers for you every year.
- Vodafone Advantage scheme: RBG Kew Enterprises employees and up to five of their family and friends are entitled to a discount on any Vodafone tariff.

Pension benefits

RBG Kew offers a Group Personal Pension Scheme through Royal London, with an employer contribution of eight per cent of salary. This is non-contributory unless you decide to make a voluntary contribution as a percentage of salary. If you do decide to make a contribution, RBG Kew will match your contribution up to a further two per cent, making the total possible employer contribution ten per cent.

Training and development

We provide comprehensive and continual training throughout your career, across all levels of the organisation.

Access to flexible benefits portal

All employees have access to a flexible benefits portal, mylifestyle, which allows you to select a number of flexible benefits to suit your lifestyle. Through the website you can also access discounts at hundreds of different retailers.

Season ticket loans

An interest free Season Ticket Loan is available for all employees on permanent and fixed term appointments. The loan is paid back via monthly payments deducted from your salary.

Cycle-to-work scheme

The salary sacrifice cycle-to-work scheme is part of Kew's flexible benefits package and gives you the opportunity to purchase a bike for cycling to work at little over half the normal cost. The scheme is open to all permanent employees and those on fixed term contracts for at least 1 year.

Payroll giving – tax-efficient charitable donations

Payroll giving is part of Kew's flexible benefits package and you could make tax-efficient charitable donations direct from your pay.

Eye care scheme

If you use a computer or other display screen equipment for a significant portion of your job, you are eligible to participate in the eye care scheme. This scheme provides self-service vouchers that can be used as payment for eye tests, and where eligible a free pair of frames or discount from the optician's range.

Free access to museums, galleries and gardens

RBG Kew has arrangements with a wide range of national museums, galleries and gardens that offer free admission to Kew staff members on presentation of a staff pass.

Local business offers

Some local businesses offer discounts to Kew employees.

Discount on items purchased in Kew shops, restaurants and cafés

RBG Kew Enterprises offers a 50 per cent lunch discount across all its restaurants and a 20 per cent discount on retail products.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion is important to us.

A diverse mix of individuals brings a wealth of experience and knowledge, which helps us solve complex problems and achieve our goals.

We want our workforce to be representative and encourage different views and perspectives.

If you apply for a job with Kew, you'll be assessed on the merit of your application, regardless of your age, gender, sexuality, race, religious beliefs, disability, background, or marital/parental status.