

Wethersfield Garden Horticultural Fellowship

Nestled in 1,000 acres of rolling hills in Dutchess County, New York, Wethersfield Estate & Garden is generally considered to be one of the finest examples of Italian Renaissance gardens in the United States. Founded in 1938, Wethersfield is a non-profit organization devoted to the proper stewardship of land, habitat protection, conservation, culture, and the arts. Wethersfield contains a diversity of formal and native-inspired garden spaces that use the latest horticultural knowledge to develop a lasting garden in a changing world. Wethersfield is on the National Register of Historic Places, and won the 2021 New York State Historic Preservation Award for Excellence in Historic Landscape Preservation.

The Wethersfield Fellowship seeks to train the next generation of horticulturalists. This is a 6-8 month position (beginning March or April, flexibility as to scheduling is negotiable) for forty hours a week. The horticultural Fellow reports to the Head Gardener and is treated as part of the garden staff. There are rotating weekend duties, and occasional evening obligations. Housing is available.

Duties:

- The Wethersfield Fellow will learn about ornamental horticulture and apply knowledge to maintain specific areas (including annual beds in a cutting garden, mixed perennial borders, woodland gardens, formal hedges, container displays, and established lawns) and will maintain such areas by planting, weeding, watering, trimming, mowing, mulching, designing, record-keeping, and other tasks.
- The Fellow will learn about greenhouse management, including the propagation of plants by cuttings and seeds, soil preparation for container culture, water and fertilizer programs, and integrated pest management practices.
- The Fellow will rotate work on open weekend days and will be able to conduct garden tours and/or educational programs for members of the community to gain programming and public relations experience. Off site field trips will be taken to other gardens.

Education and Experience:

The qualified applicants have a passion for horticulture. A horticultural education is preferred, and previous training and experience will be considered.

Strong communication skills are desirable. A valid driver's license is required.

Additional Information: Two Fellowships are available for 2026. The hourly rate is \$20/hr, other experience/qualifications will be considered. On-site housing is available. Please send a cover letter and resume to Head Gardener Katharine Barrie at kbarrie@wethersfield.org. Please state your available start and end dates for 2026, and indicate whether housing is required.

Testimonial from David Wheir, Wethersfield Fellow 2024

"The Wethersfield Horticultural Fellowship allowed me to hone superior gardening skills, expanded my practical knowledge in a working historic garden, and exposed me to top tier cultural practices. From the Lord & Burnham greenhouse to Arts & Crafts and formal Italianate gardens, the grounds at Wethersfield provide many opportunities to cultivate fine gardening

skills under the direction and guidance of the knowledgeable and dedicated Horticultural staff. Our time was spent cultivating annuals and perennials for beds and containers, caring for turf, shrubs, and water features, and tending the mature canopy of trees across the estate. The public garden is still a hidden gem and sharing the history of Wethersfield with curious visitors was a special treat. The generous Staff, Horticulture crew, and Community around Wethersfield make it a one of a kind place to be immersed in the history and culture of American gardening. I cannot wait to take this experience and apply it to my career in public horticulture.”

Testimonial from Lauren Hwang-Finkelman, Wethersfield Fellow 2023

“Completing the Wethersfield Senior Horticultural Fellowship helped launch my career in horticulture. It was a great privilege to work closely with staff and gain the hands-on knowledge that is often hard to get while studying horticulture in a classroom setting. One of Wethersfield’s great assets is its multitude of different gardening styles within the Estate; at Wethersfield I gained experience learning how to garden in a Formal Italian Garden, an English Arts and Crafts Garden, a Native Woodland Garden, a Cutting Garden, and Container Gardens. At Wethersfield I always felt supported by my mentors and encouraged to take initiative. I appreciated being made responsible for the Herb Garden, which I renovated during my time there. Thanks to my training at Wethersfield, I was able to acquire a Horticulturist position at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden at the conclusion of my fellowship.”