

Bord Bia Bloom 2026 – Cultivating Talent



Win an Opportunity to Design a Bord Bia Bloom Show Garden

Apply for the 2025 Cultivating Talent initiative

[Cultivating Talent Application Form – Link to Online Application](#)

Deadline: 1pm Wednesday, December 3rd 2025

About Bord Bia Bloom

Owned and organised by [Bord Bia](#), [Bloom](#) is Ireland's favourite festival of horticulture, food, drink, and sustainable living which attracts more than 100,000 visitors each year. The festival takes place across five days of the June bank holiday weekend, spanning a 70-acre site in Dublin's leafy Phoenix Park. The Show Gardens are the top attraction at Bloom with independent research indicating that three-quarters of visitors in 2025 came primarily to see the gardens.

An important showcase of talent

As the centrepiece of Bord Bia Bloom, the Show Gardens provide a space for leading garden designers, landscape architects, horticulturalists, and plantspeople to create spectacular gardens that entertain and inspire the tens of thousands of visitors that attend the festival each day and the many more who follow Bloom on television and online. The gardens are an important showcase of industry talent and many designers who have participated in Bloom have found the experience hugely beneficial to their careers.

Nurturing the next generation

In a bid to support the next generation of garden designers and horticulture professionals, Bord Bia Bloom launched **Cultivating Talent** in 2022. This exciting initiative, now entering its fourth year at Bloom, provides financial support and one-to-one mentoring to an emerging designer, helping them to design and deliver their first Show Garden at the festival.

Joe Eustace, who won the inaugural Cultivating Talent competition in 2023 and who followed this success with medal-winning gardens at Bloom 2024 and 2025, urges other young designers to apply for the programme. "Winning Cultivating Talent was a great experience. I learned so much being on-site and seeing how the experts were approaching their gardens. It allowed me to learn about the importance of producing a set of drawings that can be read and applied to the site, and the key differences between designing a Show Garden versus a client garden, which is where the 1:1 mentorship was invaluable. Going from a regular spectator at Bloom to being involved has given me a huge boost as a designer. I would say to anyone thinking of it, apply, apply, apply!"

Now open for applications

If you are currently working in the industry or embarking on a career in horticulture and if you have the drive, ambition and commitment to bring a garden to Bord Bia Bloom, then we want to hear from you.

This document and the supporting material listed are designed to help guide you through the application process. If you have any further queries, please contact Bord Bia Bloom's Show Gardens and Horticulture Content Manager, [Kerrie Gardiner](#).

Who should apply

Cultivating Talent is open to designers, gardeners and plantspeople who wish to bring their first Show Garden to Bord Bia Bloom in 2026. We are looking for designers who have a strong vision for a theme and design that communicates a unique message or story, whether that is a garden for active retirees, moveable containerised garden for the renting tenant, a circular economy garden, or more... All gardens should be designed with the environment in mind and measures to support biodiversity should be incorporated as standard.

The prize

The winner will be granted the opportunity to design a small Show Garden and will receive funding from Bord Bia Bloom to execute their designs. Along with financial assistance, the successful candidate will also receive mentorship from an award-winning Show Garden designer plus support from Bord Bia Bloom's Show Garden team, led by Kerrie Gardiner, Show Gardens and Horticulture Content Manager.

The winner will also feature in a media campaign leading up to the festival. This is a valuable opportunity to build your career profile, network with peers, and learn from leading designers who have a proven track record in delivering award-winning Show Gardens at Bloom.

How to enter

Applications for the Cultivating Talent 2026 programme must be submitted via this [online form](#) no later than **Wednesday, November 26th, 2025**. To enter you will need:

- A concept brief – max. 1 page
- Sketch proposal – max. 2 pages
- Precedent sheet/mood board – max. 2 pages

You will also be asked to consider the environmental and social impact of your garden and to demonstrate which (if any) elements of the garden can be reused, recycled or returned after the festival.

You are advised to read all supporting information before submitting your application. This includes:

- [Show Garden rules and regulations](#)
- [Key dates and deadlines](#)
- The list of FAQs in this document

Any queries should be submitted to Kerrie Gardiner, Show Gardens and Horticulture Content Manager, via [email](#).

Judging

Applications will be reviewed by Bord Bia Bloom's Gardens Advisory Group which is an independent panel of internationally renowned garden designers, landscape architects,

contractors, horticulturalists, and plantspeople. The panel may request additional information to support your entry during the adjudication process.

What happens then?

The winner will be notified in writing during the week commencing January 5th, 2026 and all applicants will be notified hereafter. The winner will be required to take part in a photoshoot in early spring and an announcement will be released to the media.

Please note, designing and project managing the creation of a Bloom Show Garden is a detailed and lengthy project. Work honing the design and planning the construction and planting will begin in January and continue in the months leading up to Bloom.

The build will commence in mid-May and the winner must be available to work on-site in the Phoenix Park for the two weeks prior to the event. All garden designers must also be present on-site on Bloom's Media Day (May 27th, 2026) and across the following five days of the festival. Before applying, please ensure you have the availability and capacity to commit to this project.

Frequently Asked Questions

What funding is available?

The Cultivating Talent programme funding will be paid via the Bord Bia Bloom funding model. The winner will receive funding for the design and build of the Show Garden in line with *Show Garden Rules & Regulations, Section 16 – Bord Bia Bloom Funding*.

Who will mentor the winner?

Bord Bia Bloom will organise a suitable mentor to assist and guide the winner through the Show Garden design and build process. This mentor will be an award-winning Bord Bia Bloom Show Garden designer with a proven track record in delivering gardens at Bloom. They will be selected based on the proposed style of the winner's design.

Can I enter if I previously worked on another Show Garden at Bloom?

Cultivating Talent is open to candidates who wish to design their first Bord Bia Bloom Show Garden. If you have previously worked as part of a team on another Show Garden you are welcome to apply providing you were not the lead designer on that project.

What size garden can I design?

The Cultivating Talent initiative funds a small Show Garden. The size of small gardens can be either 5m wide x 5m deep or 7m wide x 5m deep.

What drawings do I need to submit?

Please see *Show Garden Rules & Regulations, Section 1 – Application Requirements*.

What height are garden boundaries?

Please see *Show Garden Rules & Regulations, Section 2 – Boundary Treatment*.

Can I excavate?

Please see *Show Garden Rules & Regulations, Section 3 – Excavation*.

What is the design brief?

Please see *Show Garden Rules & Regulations, Section 10 – Design Brief*.

What medals are awarded at Bord Bia Bloom?

Please see *Show Garden Rules & Regulations, Section 11 – Bord Bia Bloom Awards*.

How will funding be processed?

Please see *Show Garden Rules & Regulations, Section 16 – Bord Bia Bloom Funding*.

Are there items that I'm not allowed to have in my garden?

Please see *Show Garden Rules & Regulations, Section 23 – Items Not Allowed* and *Section 24 – Items Requiring Special Permission*.

When does the build start?

Please see [Show Garden Key Dates and Deadlines](#). Please ensure you are available for the key dates set out in the schedule.

Do I need to know the exact design and build cost?

No, however an understanding of costs is beneficial. Please see *Show Garden Application Form, Question 10 – Cost Estimate* which may act as a prompt.

Can I seek further sponsorship or product placement for my garden?

Yes but please note, Bord Bia Bloom will seek to review additional sponsors and product placement.

For additional information please contact:

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