



Creative Fellow Application Pack

This is an opportunity for a creative practitioner to spend time at Plantlife's flagship reserve, Ranscombe Farm, and produce a digital response to the site.

The role is offered as part of the Ranscombe Connect project. It is funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund and delivered in partnership with the Screen South's Accentuate programme.

Further information about the Ranscombe Connect project can be found here: -

[Ranscombe Connect: Community Participation for Wild Plants and Fungi - Plantlife](#)

Purpose

This short fellowship provides an opportunity for a creative practitioner to spend time at Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve - getting to know its rich ecology and history.

Plantlife has ambition to see more people connecting with nature and by hosting this fellowship, hopes to improve its understanding of some of the barriers people face in making that connection.

We want to explore how creativity elicits emotional connections to nature, and how storytelling can be used to imagine new relationships with landscape.

We are looking for an innovative artist ready to share their connection to wild plants and fungi and to join Plantlife's celebration of 20 years working with this unique landscape.

Working in Partnership

Plantlife and Screen South's Accentuate Programme are working in partnership to bring about nature-based opportunities to deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent creative practitioners.

To address the nature crisis, we need a greater diversity of opinions at the table to ensure that more people are empowered to make decisions about their environment.

Working in partnership enables Plantlife and Accentuate to pool expertise and achieve more for both people and nature.

Together we are committed to providing a well-supported experience for the Creative Fellow - prioritising access and inclusion to our most cherished natural spaces.

We're looking for a curious, research-driven artist from any discipline ready to share their passion for nature.

About Plantlife

Plantlife is a charity that works around the world to protect and celebrate wild plants and fungi. Right now, two in every five plant species are at risk of disappearing. This means we are losing biodiversity faster than ever before, and Plantlife's work is more important than it has ever been.

Plantlife helps protect nature by taking practical action, and by working with many different people and organisations. This includes landowners, land managers, governments, community groups and charities. Plantlife also works to inspire and influence others to care for wild plants and fungi.

As the climate and nature crises grow more urgent, Plantlife aims to be a strong global voice for wild plants and fungi. By speaking up and taking action, Plantlife hopes to create long-lasting, positive change for the natural world, for the benefit of everyone.

For more information, please visit -

<https://www.plantlife.org.uk/>

About Accentuate

Screen South's Accentuate Programme creates and delivers projects that break new ground for and with deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people in the cultural sector.

Most recently the Accentuate Programme has been working in partnership with Museums, Digital Creators and Academics, always foregrounding the unique perspectives of deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people, seeing them as vital contributors to our rich cultural ecology.

For more information, please visit -

<https://screensouth.org/accentuate/>

About Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve

Background

Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve is Plantlife's flagship reserve and an Important Plant Area for its arable flowers and this year we are celebrating 20 years of it being in our care.

People have lived and farmed in this landscape for thousands of years, and the reserve helps protect both its natural and historic features. It creates a large, joined up space where wildlife can thrive and where people can enjoy nature in a calm and welcoming environment.

Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve is Plantlife's largest Nature Reserve in England. It covers 660 acres on the North Downs in Kent. The area is quiet and peaceful, and it is a good place for gentle walks and time in nature.

The landscape at Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve includes arable fields, ancient woodland and small areas of chalk grassland. Part of the reserve is within Cobham Woods, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The whole area is part of the [Kent Downs Area National Landscape](#).

Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve is owned jointly by Plantlife and Medway Council and managed by Plantlife in conjunction with a tenant farmer.

Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve - Plantlife

Reserve Ecology

Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve is made up of chalk grassland, arable fields and predominantly ancient woodland. The chalk grassland has many wild plants, including Common Rockrose, Clustered Bellflower and Wild Liquorice. Skylarks nest here, and Common Blue and Marbled White butterflies are often seen in summer.

It is one of the richest sites for arable wildflowers in the UK. The reserve is thought to be home to the last wild population of Corncockle and has the largest population of Broadleaved Cudweed. There are also eleven species of orchid present, including four rare or endangered. The first ever recorded UK sightings of Meadow Clary and Rough Mallow were made at Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve several hundred years ago.

In the woodland, Sessile Oak and Hornbeam grow among Sweet Chestnut coppice. This woodland has been here since at least AD 1600. It forms an important wildlife corridor in North Kent, helping animals and plants move safely through the landscape

Physical Access

This section provides a brief overview of the site.

A Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve Access Pack will be made available to the Creative Fellow during induction, and we will work together to design an experience that works for you.

Reserve Manager: Ben Sweeney

Reserve address: Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve, Sundridge Hill, (A228) Cuxton, Rochester, ME2 1LA

What3words: ///hood.pull.drives

Terrain, Access & Path Quality

- Limited surfaced paths: many routes are muddy, uneven, or steep
- Entrances vary in quality, with some involving tunnels, bridges
- Kissing and squeeze gates at some entrance points restrict mobility-aid access. We recognise that each person's requirements are different, and we will work collaboratively to explore most suitable access points
- Waymarking exists but is sometimes damaged or missing

Facilities

- Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve has an events area, accessible via the main entrance and is marked with a blue star on the site map.
- The event area is not open to the public but would be made available to the fellow
- It includes an activity hub with two small, prefabricated buildings and two accessible compost toilets and accessible parking.
- The access road is a narrow single-track lane
- Other facilities may be available through landscape partners

Public Transport

- Bus stop by the main site entrance on Sundridge Hill
- Cuxton train station is 0.9 km walk from the nearest footpath entrance to Ranscombe

Car Parks

- The main carpark is situated just off Sundridge Hill, though other parking is available.
- Additional accessible parking is available at the event area
- Other parking may be available through landscape partners

The Creative Fellow Brief

Aims

The Creative Fellow is invited to spend time researching Plantlife's flagship reserve through any of the three themes set out on pages 17 - 19 and to produce a digital material response to the site.

As a result of this commission:

- Plantlife and partners will better understand the value of working with artists to explore access and inclusion within natural heritage
- The Creative Fellow will develop an understanding of the unique habitat of Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve

and

- Through the Creative Fellow lens' Ranscombe will be celebrated, valued and protected by the local and online communities

Themes

1) Exploring the Past – Archaeology

Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve has a long human history stretching back thousands of years.

Archaeological discoveries include Palaeolithic flint tools, Mesolithic worked flints, evidence of early cultivation, and historic farm settlements.

Maps dating back to the 17th century show many of the same woodland and field boundaries that exist today.

2) Preserving the Present - Wild Plants

Arable flowers are wild plants that grow in places where the soil is regularly disturbed, such as crop fields, field edges and corners of farmland. Many of these plants grow for just one year at a time. They rely on ploughing or soil disturbance to help their seeds germinate.

These plants are important for wildlife. They provide nectar for bees, butterflies and other pollinators. Their seeds are food for many birds. Because modern farming often uses methods that use fertilisers and reduce soil disturbance or remove these plants, many arable flower species are now under threat.

3) Ensuring the Future – Connecting More People with Nature

Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve is a beautiful place for walks and quiet time in nature. However, not everyone feels able to access or belong in spaces like this. Social, cultural, economic and physical barriers can prevent people from visiting nature reserves or feeling that these places are for them. These barriers can limit people's ability to experience the wellbeing benefits of nature and can also exclude them from conversations about environmental issues.

Through this fellowship we are interested in exploring how more people can feel welcome and connected to Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve. We believe that the stories, knowledge and lived experiences people bring with them are valuable in helping us understand landscapes in new ways. We recognise that many communities have historically been underrepresented in nature spaces and in decision-making about the environment. By listening to a wider range of opinions and experiences, we can develop a richer and more inclusive understanding of the natural world.

We want a future where more people connect with nature so that they feel inspired and empowered to care for wild plants and their habitats. When inclusivity is designed into our work, more people can participate, enjoy natural spaces and feel supported in their own relationship with nature. This approach can strengthen wellbeing, deepen a sense of belonging, and help build a broader movement for protecting nature.

Fellowship Structure

Research and development

You will spend time getting to know Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve: its past, present and future. This might include exploring the habitat, ecology and archaeology. You will also speak with local people about access and inclusion. There will be “touch points” with Plantlife and Accentuate staff to support you in the development of your work. We would like to see a record of your research – perhaps through a sketch book or diary.

Intervention

You will develop a creative response based on what you discovered during your research. This is your chance to follow a line of enquiry and shape your artistic direction.

Material output

You will share the results of your creative work by producing a digital output, which may be used in the Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve 20th Anniversary Celebration and in wider interpretation of the site.

Your creative work should result in a digital output that can be included in a 20th Anniversary celebration film about Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve. This might include photography, audio recordings, short video pieces, digital artwork, spoken word, soundscapes or other digital media. You will be asked to submit a simple proposal and budget.

If your work includes ecological information (for example, details about plants, habitats or wildlife), Plantlife staff will need to check and approve this content before it is shared with the public. This is to make sure all information is accurate and safe for the environment.

Evaluation

You will reflect on the whole process. What you learned, what worked well, and how this experience can help shape more inclusive nature based creative practice in the future.

Access, Inclusion & Support

Plantlife and Accentuate are committed to ensuring that the Creative Fellow is fully supported and that access needs are met throughout the fellowship. We recognise that each person's requirements are different, and we will work collaboratively to create the conditions needed to thrive.

We also acknowledge that due to the physical restrictions and nature of the reserve, we may not be able to provide full access. We will therefore work with the appointed Creative Fellow to find the most appropriate and meaningful way to engage with this residency.

We welcome applications from **deaf, disabled and/or neurodivergent creatives**. However, if British Sign Language interpretation is essential for you to undertake this role, please note that we only have a modest access budget line. It is likely you will need to have your own [Access to Work package](#) in place to provide this support.

- Travel and accommodation costs related to access are included within the access budget
- Flexible scheduling and sensory friendly-site visits can be arranged to support different working styles and comfort levels

- An access rider will be developed with you on appointment, ensuring your needs are clearly understood and planned for from the outset
- We will work in partnership to identify any barriers at the reserve and explore what mitigations or adjustments are possible
- Access to site specific plant, landscape and habitat knowledge will be provided through a Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve Information Pack together with insight from ecologists, community groups, volunteers and historical experts etc.

Criteria

We welcome practitioners from any creative discipline. You may work in photography, audio recordings, short video pieces, digital artwork, spoken word, soundscapes or another form of practice. We open to new / emerging artists and those with experience.

In your application, please demonstrate how you fulfil the following criteria: -

- Interest in nature, especially wild plants and their habitats
- Passion for improving access and inclusion to natural heritage
- New and creative ways of expressing ideas and sharing research
- A curious, question led approach to your work
- Openness to collaboration, and an interest in developing ideas with others
- Clear commitment to sustainable, low impact practice that does not harm wild plants or their habitats

Budget

Budget allows for 11 day's activity based on an industry daily rate of £325. The suggested duration is 6-8 weeks starting in June – when Ranscombe is looking at its best.

It is up to the Creative Fellow how they split their time between the different phases.

Creative Fellow Budget	
ARTIST FEE	£3575
Material output Creative fellow can apply for	up to £750
Access needs , including travel & accommodation	up to £2425

Application Process

Applications will be accepted in any format - written, audio or video. Please upload your documents to a cloud storage service (such as Google Drive, Dropbox, or OneDrive). Include the shared download link in your email to jobs@plantlife.org.uk, ensuring that link permissions are set to 'Anyone with the link can view' so our team can access your files.

Send us around 500 words or a 2-3-minute film outlining how you meet the criteria on page 24, together with three examples of your previous relevant work.

Deadline for applications: 1 May 2026

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by **6 May 2026**.

Interviews will be held on either **12 or 13 May 2026**

To discuss this opportunity further please contact either –

Cass Crocker, Senior Arts and Culture Officer at Plantlife

Cassie.crocker@plantlife.org.uk | 07725 555623

Or

Esther Fox, Accentuate Programme Lead

esther.fox@accentuateuk.org