

# NYBG

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## **The New York Botanical Garden Receives \$1 Million Grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to Support the Environmental Humanities Programs and Outreach of Its Humanities Institute**

April 12 Public Symposium Made Possible by the Grant Explores the Increasingly Diverse Force of Citizen Scientists Locally and Globally, Advancing Knowledge of Nature and Environmental Stewardship

**Bronx, NY**—The New York Botanical Garden has been awarded a \$1 million grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support scholarly studies in the environmental humanities through the public programs, colloquia, and fellowships of its Humanities Institute. NYBG is uniquely positioned to foster scholarship and bring greater public awareness of the relevance of the field of environmental humanities. The three-year grant will allow NYBG's Humanities Institute to continue and expand its fellowship and public program offerings, while seeking new ways to encourage research that brings a humanities dimension to scientific practice. *Nature at Your Doorstep: Celebrating the Public Participant in Research*, a symposium to be held on April 12, 2019, launching Citizen Science Day activities at the Botanical Garden on April 13, is among the Institute's many offerings made possible through the grant.

"We are extremely grateful to The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for its generous support of the Humanities Institute," said Carrie Rebora Barratt, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer and William C. Steere Sr. President of The New York Botanical Garden. "The Institute brings a cultural-historical and social-economic dimension to NYBG's cultivation and conservation of the plant kingdom. It serves as the connective tissue among the Garden's Horticulture, Education, and Science divisions. Its instructive programs strengthen and advance our role as an advocate for plants and the vital role they play in human life."

A division of the Garden's LuEsther T. Mertz Library, the Humanities Institute, which was founded in 2014 with generous support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, has become an influential center for interdisciplinary research and programming in the environmental humanities. The Institute has drawn more than more than 7,500 scholars, students, and members of the public to its programs and developed a rich constellation of regional, national, and international partnerships. By creating programs meant to engage communities and encourage public participation, the Institute brings the importance of plant and human interaction into focus with a goal cultivating a love and greater understanding of the natural world.

NYBG connects many people to plants through public participation, incorporating a unique humanities approach that fosters enthusiasm, and develops research methods for today's multidisciplinary audiences, encouraging all to think critically about global biodiversity. Moderated by Dr. Brian M. Boom, Vice President for Conservation Strategy at NYBG, *Nature at Your Doorstep: Celebrating the Public Participant in Research* will bring together five speakers to discuss various approaches to environmental scholarship. The presenters are: Kerissa Battle, Community Greenways Collaborative; Majora Carter, Director of Sustainable South Bronx and President of Majora Carter Group LLC; Carrie Seltzer, Stakeholder Engagement Strategist, iNaturalist; Sara Tjossem, Senior Lecturer, Center for Science and Society, Columbia University; and Jessica A. Schuler, Director of the Thain Family Forest, The New York Botanical Garden. The symposium will explore the democratization of science, using technology as the equalizer, to engage an increasingly diverse force of citizen scientists in the Bronx, New York, and globally in advancing knowledge of nature and environmental stewardship.

Presented on Friday, April 12, 2019, at 10 a.m., in Ross Hall at The New York Botanical Garden, *Nature at Your Doorstep* is free and open to the public. Reservations are required. Visit <https://www.nybg.org/event/nature-at-your-doorstep/> for more information.

"By initiating conversations and supporting research on today's complex environmental issues of climate change, air pollution, species extinction, urban planning, environmental justice, urban agriculture, and city greening, within a historical and cultural context, the Humanities Institute increases public understanding of these issues and improves decision-making in policy and practice," said Susan Fraser, Thomas J. Hubbard Vice President and Director of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library.

### **About The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation endeavors to strengthen, promote, and, where necessary, defend the contributions of the humanities and the arts to human flourishing and to the well-being of diverse and democratic societies. To this end, it supports exemplary institutions of higher education and culture as they renew and provide access to an invaluable heritage of ambitious, path-breaking work. The Foundation makes grants in five core program areas: Higher Education and Scholarship in the Humanities; Arts and Cultural Heritage; Diversity; Scholarly Communications; and International Higher Education and Strategic Projects.

### **About The New York Botanical Garden**

The New York Botanical Garden is an advocate for the plant kingdom. The Garden pursues its mission through its role as a museum of living plant collections arranged in gardens and landscapes across its National Historic Landmark site; through its comprehensive education programs in horticulture and plant science; and through the wide-ranging research programs of the International Plant Science Center.

The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad or subway. The Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday federal holidays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The best way to enjoy the Garden is with the *All-Garden Pass*, which includes admission to the grounds as well as to seasonal gardens, exhibitions, and attractions such as the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and Tram Tour. For ticket pricing, please check our Web site. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit [nybg.org](http://nybg.org)

The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458

The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. A portion of the Garden's general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.

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