

## **Show Gardens and Engaging Spaces**

Dear Garden Exhibitor,

Following a detailed review of Bloom, it's importance as a horticultural showcase and it's value to the garden design and landscaping industry, we are delighted to announce that bloom 2010 will take place from **3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> June 2010**.

I want to draw your particular attention to three items; garden sizes, funding/sponsorship and the use of locally-sourced plants. In view of the new economic environment in which designers, contractors and suppliers find themselves and having looked closely at best practice in other large garden shows, a new system of garden categories and 'seed' funding will be introduced for next year's show. Please note that this funding is in place for 2010 only. We also want to ensure that Bloom is used to promote plants that are best suited to Irish climatic conditions and/or plants that can be produced locally.

To facilitate the range of requirements, budget and capacity in the market at present, there will be a degree of flexibility permitted in garden sizes as follows:

Garden Categories:

- Small Garden: **5m x 5m up to 5m x 7m**
- Medium Garden: **7m x 9m up to 7m x 12m**
- Large Garden: **10m x 12m up to 10m x 16m**
- Engaging Space: **Sizes and locations open subject to review by the GAG (Garden Advisory Group)**

**The Rationale for this new approach is as follows:**

- Flexibility in garden sizes reflects smaller budgets and schemes currently being undertaken by designers/contractors and DIY gardeners
- The option of using additional space allows designers to utilise additional in-kind resources and lower-cost treatments where appropriate
- This system will benefit designers in the small and medium size categories, allowing for larger gardens within these categories.
- The awards system remains unchanged whereby a 'best in category' may be awarded to each of the four categories: small, medium, large and engaging. There is no overall 'winner' and designs are judged against their brief using agreed criteria; not against each other

**Funding & Sponsorship**

- Bloom will offer 'seed' support ranging from **€50 up to a maximum of €80 per sq metre**, based on certain criteria including GAG approval and the applicant's ability to secure matching funding through sponsorship, product placement, etc.
- This funding will be awarded on a first come first served basis to designs which are approved by the GAG. There will be a cap placed on the number of awards in each category. And the number of gardens will be capped at 25 to ensure a high standard of presentation
- Designers who are granted Bloom funding will not be restricted in acknowledging sponsors, product suppliers, partners, etc. on garden signage, leaflets, catalogue, etc. This makes it more attractive to potential sponsors and partners
- Sponsor/partner space will be allocated directly beside each garden ensuring that there is a clear connection between the garden and the sponsor space. The use of mini marquees is currently under review

## Use of Locally-Sourced Plants

While there is no desire to limit the palette of plants used or in any way to influence design styles or themes, in 2010 the GAG will pay closer attention to the choice and origin of plants used. The reasons are twofold; economic and environmental. Designers are encouraged to use plants that are sourced as locally as is feasible. Where this is successfully addressed the GAG will award additional marks during the judging process

The application forms for 2010 will be available on the bloom website [www.bloominthepark.com](http://www.bloominthepark.com) from 11<sup>th</sup> November. The deadline for application will be **Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2010**. The Garden Advisory Group will be on hand to review applications on submission and feedback will be supplied within a 3 week period from submission. However, design applications will be accepted immediately from 11<sup>th</sup> November and we will endeavour to get feedback to you as quickly as possible. In order to secure your garden site, sponsorship, plants and materials you are encouraged to enter your design as soon as possible

Please note that all applications **must be submitted in full in soft copy** (either by e-mail or on a CD) including scans of all drawings. Hard copy applications will not be considered for bloom 2010. This information will be presented to the Bloom Garden Advisory Group for assessment and will be treated as confidential by the Panel members. Please note that it will not be possible to return application material.

### Important Notes

- Show gardens are categorised by size only and not by style. While this provides more scope to the designer to use his/her space without direction or restriction, it is incumbent on the designer to devise and adhere to clearly discernible design objectives against which the finished garden can be judged
- While The Engaging Spaces category, provides a 'blank canvas' without aesthetic, horticultural or size restrictions they must be constructed in accordance with health & safety guidelines and most importantly, **offer an enhanced outdoor sensory experience**. It is envisaged that these spaces be used for small garden concepts and very large spaces, interactive exhibits, performing arts, play, fun, relaxation, escape, meditation, etc.
- In selecting the designs to be exhibited, the assessors will pay particular attention to interactive features which facilitate maximum visitor involvement. This also applies to Show Gardens
- Where the scheme favours the use of locally-sourced plants the designer should address this issue in the design process
- Applicants with a particular interest in awards should take note the marking criteria (see section 7 of the Show Gardens Regulations)
- Interest in Bloom is high and competition for space in some size categories may arise. Your application will benefit from a well-planned and high quality presentation. Please note that in 2010 we have placed a cap on the overall number of show gardens that will be exhibited
- The Garden Advisory Group (GAG) may reject applications or seek alterations to the design where there is a concern about insufficient budget, health & safety or proposed quality of finish. The GAG reserves the right to reject applications in order to protect the overall standards and reputation of the show, other exhibitors, designers and sponsors
- The GAG reserves the right to withdraw a design from the show at any point up to and including the build-up period, should a major health & safety concern arise or where a major diversion from the brief is undertaken without approval from the GAG
- The provisional garden/space sizes available at Bloom 2010 are shown on the application form. Please note that these may be subject to minor change prior to site allocation

As it is you the bloom designers that make the show a success each year, we are very much looking forward to receiving your applications and progressing plans for the 2010 show gardens at bloom.

Yours sincerely,



**Gary Graham**  
**Bloom Project Leader**  
**Bord Bia**