

# Showcase your skills at Bord Bia Bloom

Garden Design Opportunities

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



**OPW** Oifig na  
nOibreacha Poiblí  
Office of Public Works

May 29<sup>th</sup> - June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2025, Phoenix Park, Dublin

[bordbiabloom.com](http://bordbiabloom.com)

# Design a garden to inspire 100,000 people

**Held over five buzzing days of the June bank holiday weekend each year, Bord Bia Bloom is an annual showcase of the very best of Irish horticulture, food, drink, and sustainable living.**

Our flagship show gardens are the heart and soul of Bloom, bringing some of the most talented garden designers and landscape architects from Ireland and overseas, together with skilled landscapers, growers, and horticulturalists, to create stunning displays that fire the imagination.

As the top visitor attraction each year, and the focal point of media attention, the show gardens are an important platform for industry talent and a cornerstone on which many of Ireland's top designers have built their businesses. We are proud to have witnessed our designers' successes over the years and we are eager to continue to champion their careers - and the careers of emerging designers - in the future.

## We want to hear from you

If you are garden designer or landscape architect with the talent and ambition to create a spectacular garden on a national stage, then we want to hear from you.

This document serves as a guide to the design process, detailing what is involved, the benefits of designing a show garden, and where you can apply to participate. If you feel that the time is not right for you now, but that you would like to be kept informed about Bloom opportunities in future, then please email me at [kerrie.gardiner@bordbiabloom.com](mailto:kerrie.gardiner@bordbiabloom.com) and ask to be added to our notifications list.

For more details on this year's Bloom, and to apply to design a show garden or enter the Cultivating Talent initiative for emerging designers, sponsored by Westland Horticulture, please visit [bordbiabloom.com/participate](https://bordbiabloom.com/participate). The entry deadline is November 26th, 2024.

We look forward to hearing from you.

**Kerrie Gardiner**  
Show Gardens and Horticulture  
Content Manager, Bord Bia Bloom



Robert Moore is pictured in his **Tusla Fostering 'Together We Grow'** show garden, which won the highly coveted People's Choice Award in 2024

# About Bord Bia Bloom: Ireland's favourite festival of flowers, food, and family fun

Over 100,000 visitors attended  
Bord Bia Bloom 2024

## What is Bord Bia Bloom?

Owned and organised by Bord Bia, Bloom is a festival of horticulture, food, drink, and sustainable living which is designed to inspire, educate, entertain, and enthrall our 100,000+ visitors.

## Where and when?

The festival takes place each June bank holiday weekend, spanning a 70-acre site in Dublin's leafy Phoenix Park.

## What is the long-term goal of the festival?

To build on the success of Bord Bia Bloom and cement its position as a world-class, uplifting and innovative horticulture, food and drink experience, with nature and sustainable living at its heart. In doing this, we will meet our responsibility to the planet, to society, and to future generations.

## Who attends Bloom?

Since the first event in 2007, Bord Bia Bloom has grown significantly to welcome 100,000+ visitors annually.



**39%** Male  
**61%** Female



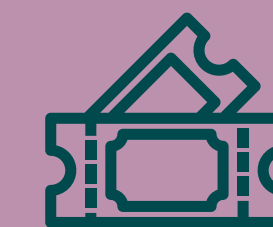
**36%**  
over 55 years of age



**65%**  
under 55 years of age



**77%**  
primarily came to see  
the show gardens



**84%**  
plan to return in 2025

# Bord Bia Bloom is a media-friendly event which attracts huge coverage every year



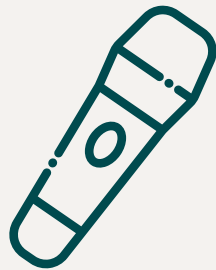
### Print

Volume | 499  
Reach | 46,969,100  
AVE | €1,629,156.66



### Online

Volume | 570  
Reach | 58,178,048  
AVE | €888,653.78



### Broadcast

Volume | 198  
Reach | 16,750,153  
AVE | €248,100.00



Nóra Tombor is pictured during filming of RTÉ's Bloom Special in 2024. Nóra was one of two winners of Bloom's second Cultivating Talent programme, sponsored by Westland Horticulture

# What are the show gardens?

The show gardens and feature gardens are the top attraction at Bord Bia Bloom each year, with over three-quarters of attendees reporting that they are the primary reason they visit the festival.\*

There are between 20 to 23 show gardens and feature gardens on display and the show gardens are split into four categories: Large, Medium, Small, and Concept. Concept gardens are artistic installations or abstract exhibits, while all other gardens are designed to suit residential gardens or balconies. The feature gardens are special garden displays that are not entered into the show gardens' competition.

## The awards

### Show Garden Medals

**Gold**  
Marks: 75+



**Silver Gilt**  
Marks: 65-74



**Silver**  
Marks: 55-64



**Bronze**  
Marks: 45-54



## The judging process

The show gardens are rigorously assessed by an independent panel of expert judges over three days leading up to Bloom. They are judged on the execution of the design brief, the overall impression and design, the construction, and the planting. You can read more about this process and see the list of 2024 judges on our [website](#).

### Show Garden Awards

**Best in Category**  
Large, Medium, Small and Concept

**Best Planting Design**

**Designers' Choice Award**  
(voted by designers)

**Contractors' Award**

**People's Choice Award**  
(voted by visitors)



\* Inside visitor research, June/July 2024

# What are the benefits of designing a show garden?

Designing a show garden at Bord Bia Bloom can be hugely beneficial to your career. As a designer you will gain:

Invaluable experience in designing, planning, and building a prestigious show garden

An opportunity to showcase your talent to over 100,000 consumers plus influential media, brands, charities, and state organisations

A platform to test new ideas and techniques

Top quality photography for use in your portfolio

A chance to network with peers in the industry and work with leading landscapers, nurseries, and suppliers



# What does the process involve?

Designing and project managing the creation of a Bord Bia Bloom show garden is a detailed and lengthy project. This begins with the application process and submissions of initial designs in November. 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 commences in May and all garden designers must also be present on-site on Bloom's media day and across the five days of the festival. Before applying, please ensure you have the availability and capacity to commit to this project.

A list of key dates and deadlines for Bord Bia Bloom 2025 are available [here](#).

## Design

1. Register your interest in becoming a designer →
2. Review sponsors' garden design canvasses →
3. Pitch your design →
4. Receive feedback from the Garden Advisory Group (GAG) →
5. Hone design and written brief

## Planning

6. Source and select plants and materials →
7. Prepare schedule in partnership with contractor →
8. Engage in Bord Bia Bloom's PR campaign

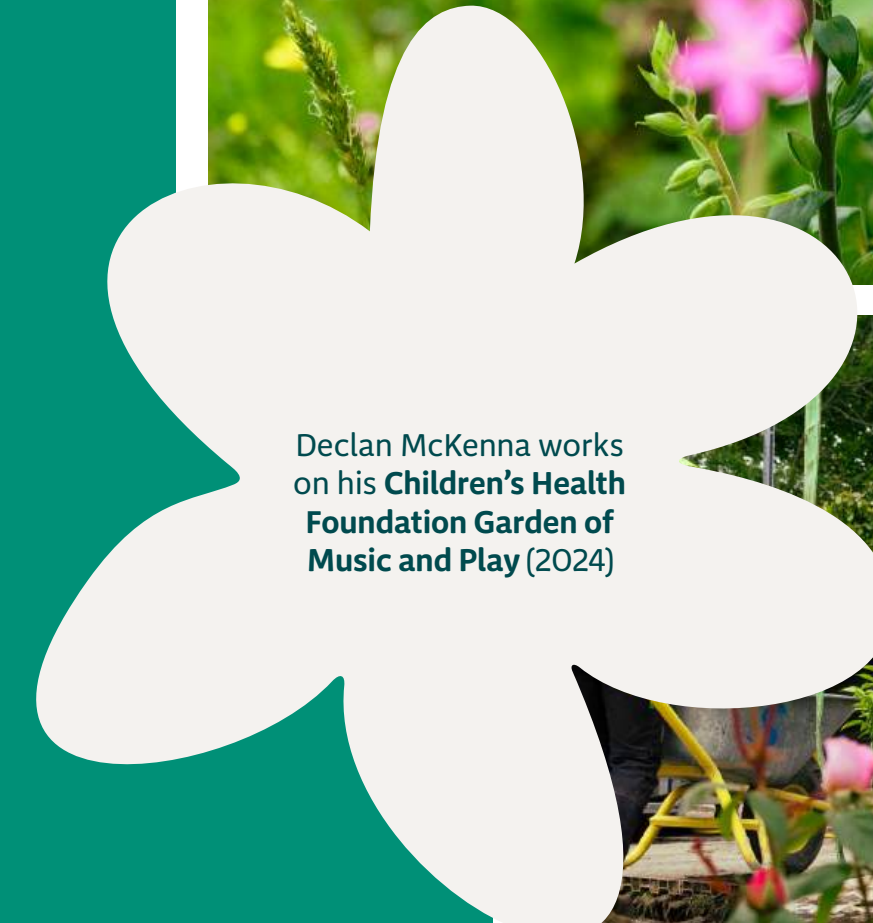
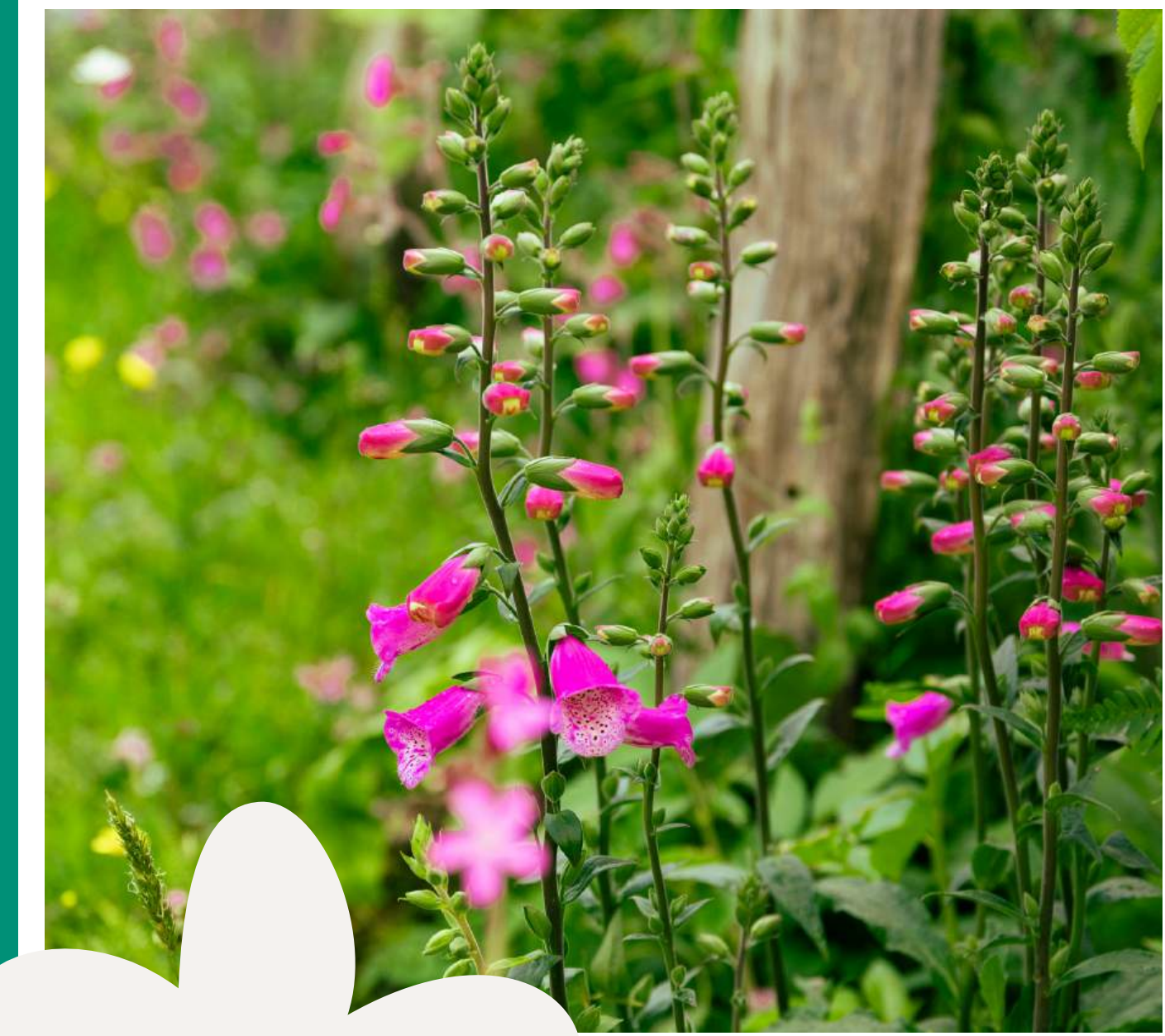
## Delivery

9. Commence build on-site →
10. Prepare garden for judging →
11. Present your garden at Media Day →
12. Engage with visitors and clients over the five days of the festival →
13. Direct garden breakdown post-Bloom and identify elements for relocation

# What do I receive as a designer?

As a show garden designer you will receive the following:


	Any day tickets	Car park passes	Exhibitor wristband - single day	Exhibitor wristband - ALL days	Complimentary 'Evening at Bloom' tickets
 <b>Large Garden</b>	40	2	15	5	2
 <b>Medium Garden</b>	30	2	15	5	2
 <b>Small Garden</b>	20	2	10	5	2



Declan McKenna works on his **Children's Health Foundation Garden of Music and Play** (2024)





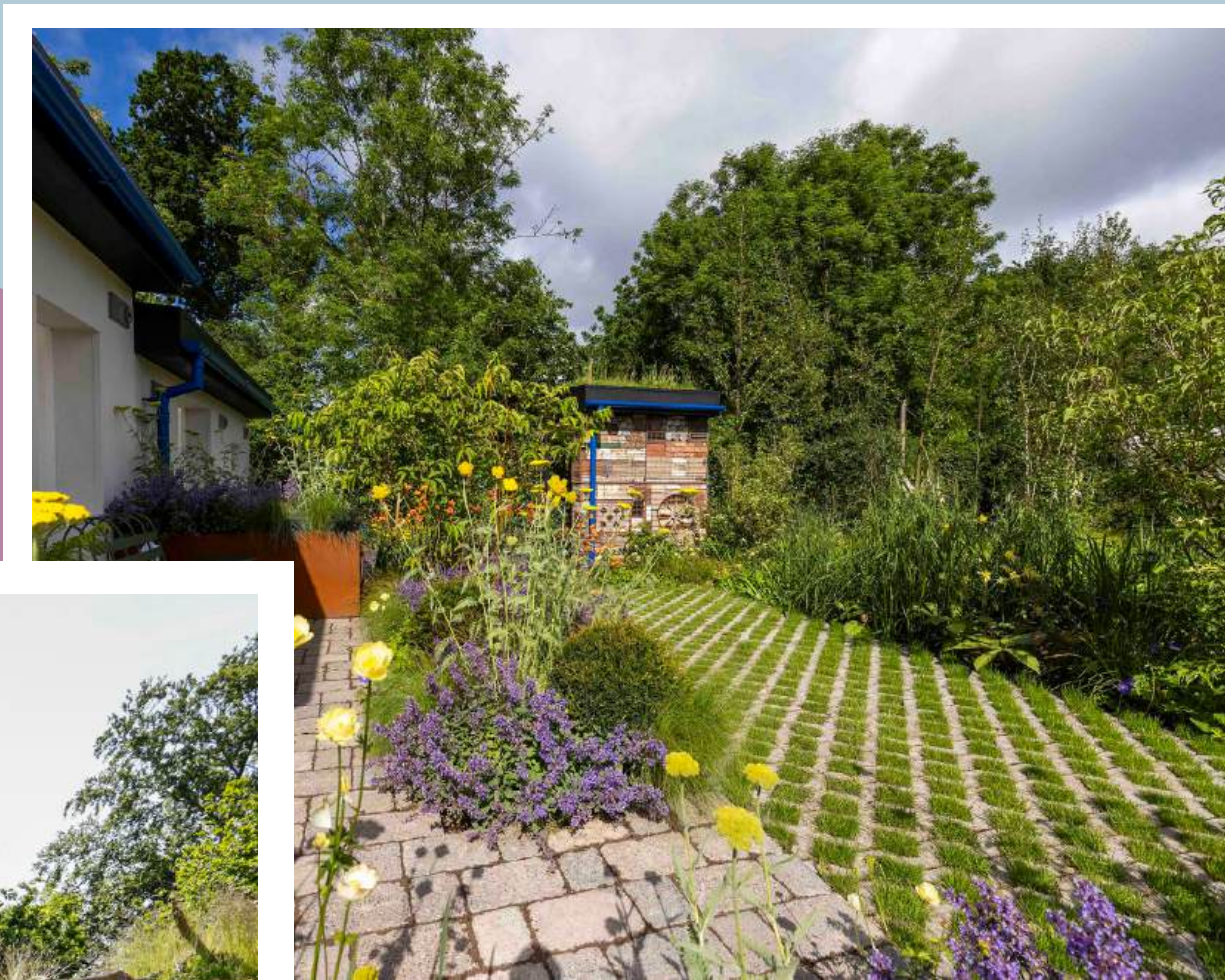
A field of yellow buttercup flowers against a bright sky, with a yellow curved shape on the left containing text.

**What do  
previous designers  
say about Bloom?**

“Bloom has allowed me to test new materials or explore new design areas”



Nicola Haines pictured in **The Shared Spaces Family Garden** which she designed as part of Bord Bia's Easy Steps to Dream Gardens series (2022)



Above: Nicola's **Coming Home to Nature** show garden, sponsored by Fingal County Council (2024)

Left: **Citroën Power of One**, designed by Nicola and sponsored by Citroën Ireland (2023)

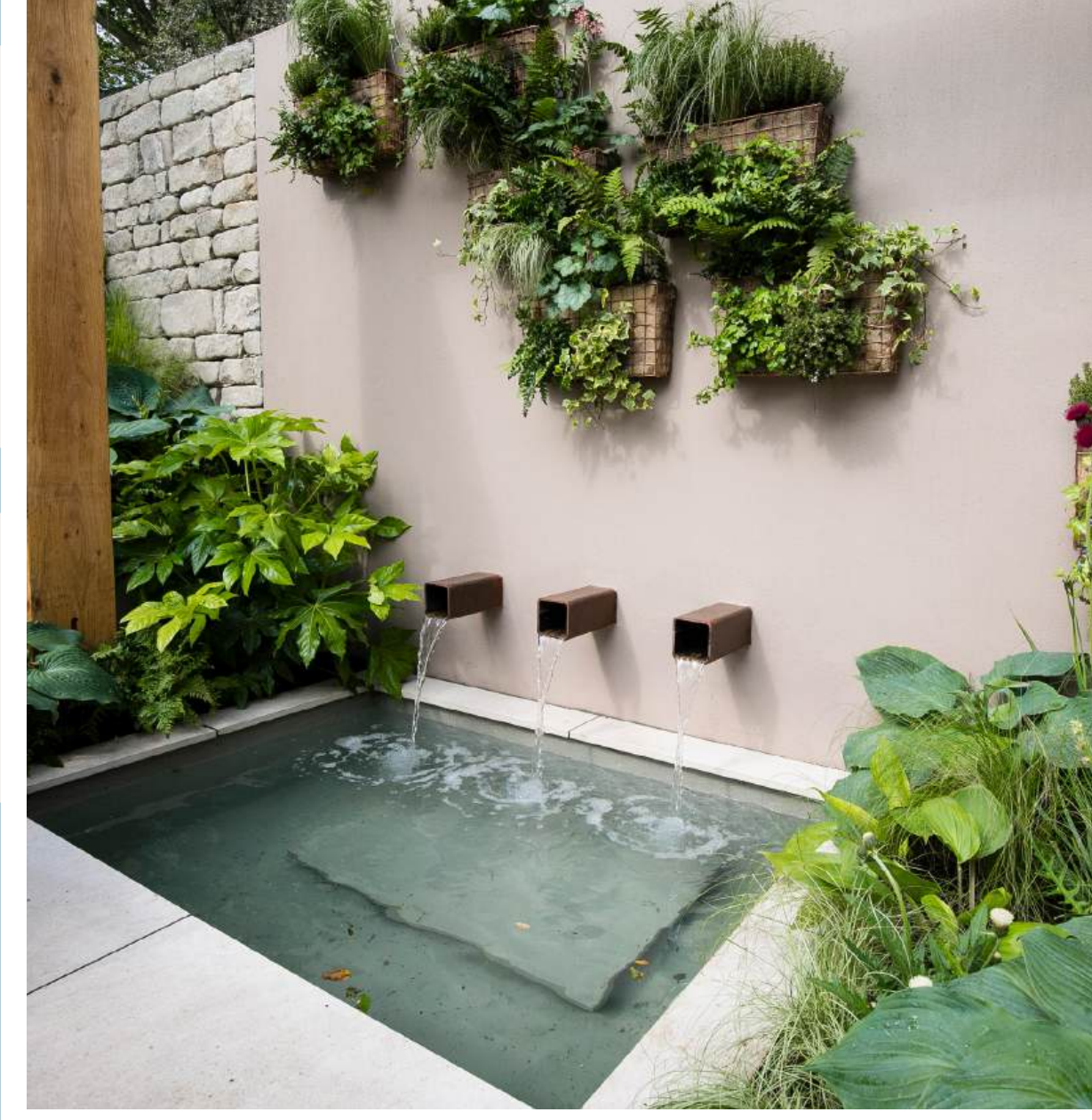


Nicola Haines is a landscape designer and winner of multiple awards at Bord Bia Bloom, including a gold medal and the award for 'Best Large Show Garden' for her 'Coming Home to Nature' show garden, sponsored by Fingal County Council, at Bloom 2024. She explains why designing show gardens is so worthwhile.

“Bord Bia Bloom has allowed me to test new materials or explore new design areas which I might not be able to incorporate into my client work. It also allows you to focus on a theme or concept and justify the time researching it, which can only benefit future garden projects. Bloom is also a wonderful opportunity to meet with the public to see what they are interested in.

You can lead an isolated life as a landscape designer but Bloom provides an opportunity to get together with people who are facing the same challenges as you. It always offers a very social, tremendously supportive and encouraging atmosphere. Ireland is a small country and the fact that we have our own national garden show is something to be celebrated. It allows us to have a voice in the sector and be part of the conversation while getting our name out there.”

“A show garden comes with a lot of hard work, but for me it is the foundation of where I’ve built everything”



Villa Doña Paula, A Matter of Attitude, designed by Alan Rudden and sponsored by Santa Rita Estates (2019)



Savills Urban Oasis Garden, designed by Alan Rudden and sponsored by Savills Ireland (2022)

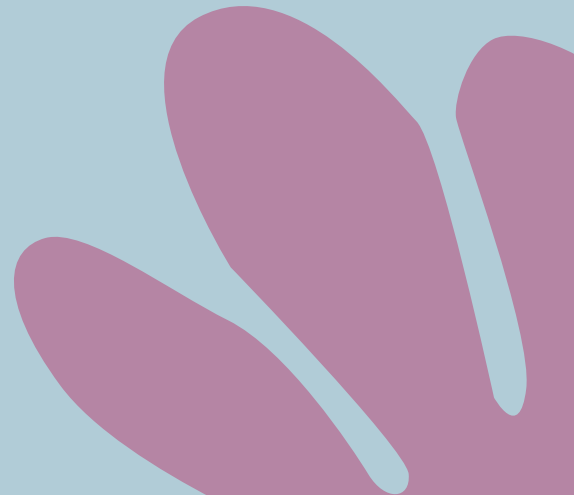


Alan Rudden is a garden designer and horticulturist. He has won numerous awards at Bord Bia Bloom, including seven gold medals. He reveals how Bloom has benefited his business.

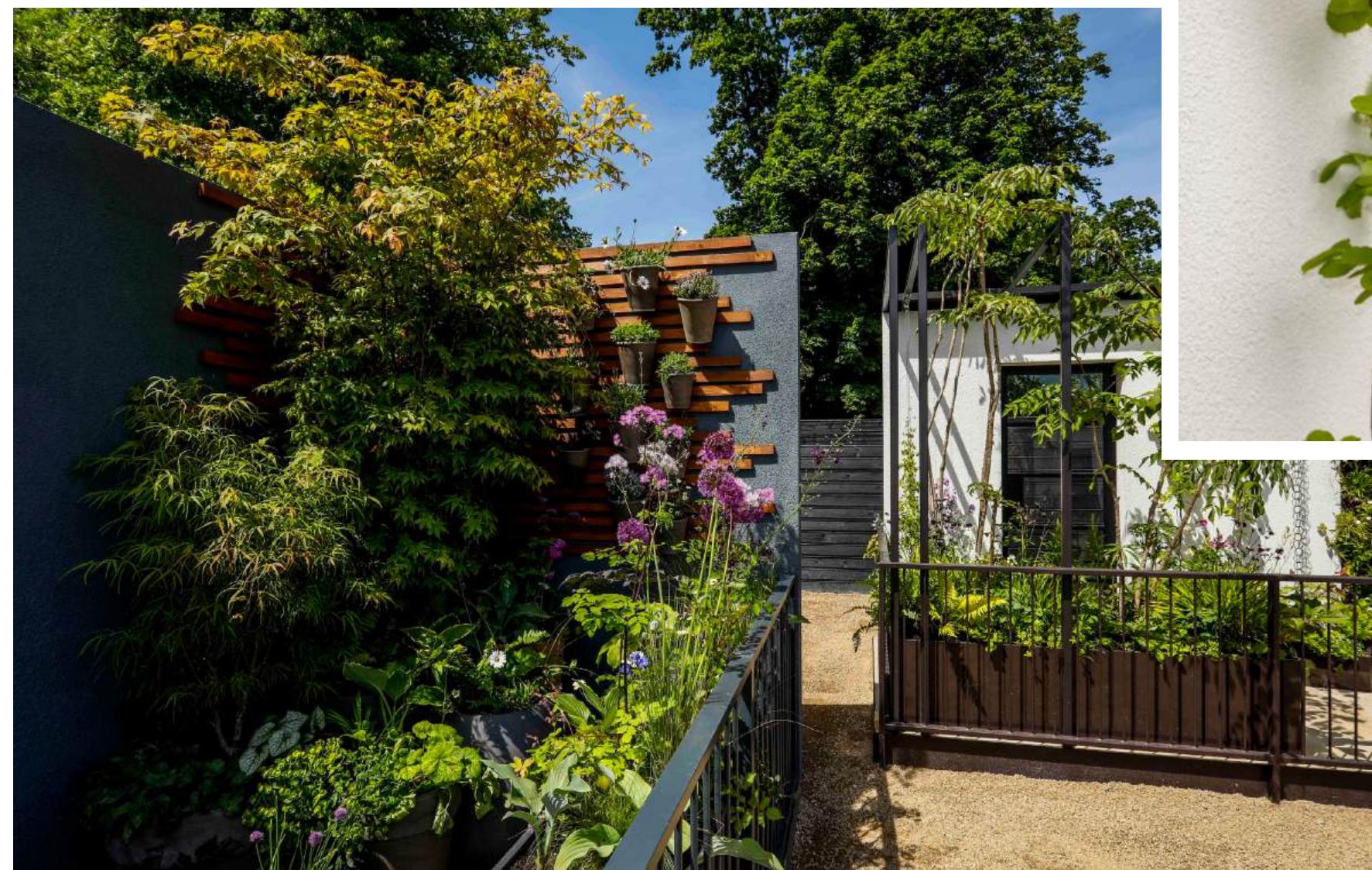
“Bord Bia Bloom is an unbelievable platform. If you have any idea percolating in your head, it gives you the ability to express yourself on a big blank canvas which is not in the real world and so it has no restraints. The whole process is amazing. To be given free rein to be able to express yourself and deliver a design that you want to do... where would you get that exposure or that stage in any other industry? That for me is the big draw at Bloom

There’s no doubt about it, people associate a certain level of quality with Bloom and it definitely adds another string to your bow when building your business profile. You get back what you put into anything. A show garden comes with a lot of hard work, but for me it is the foundation of where I’ve built everything from. The images lend themselves so well to social media platforms such as Instagram and have really helped build our brand. This should be a definite draw for any aspiring designers.”

“Real gardens can take time to mature so having a garden ready to photograph has been very helpful for my portfolio”



**The Forest Balcony Garden,**  
designed by Kathryn Feeley,  
at Bord Bia Bloom 2023



**Kathryn Feeley, who designed her first Bord Bia Bloom show garden in 2022, urges other young designers to consider applying for Bloom.**

“As a new designer, getting an opportunity to design a show garden was such a great experience. Creatively you get the chance to design something exactly how you want it. This gives you an opportunity to explore your own style and show it to prospective clients.

Real gardens can take time to mature so having a garden ready to photograph has been very helpful for my portfolio. It was also the first time I had the chance to meet so many people in the industry. These were the people I had been coming to see at Bord Bia Bloom for years and now here I was in the middle of them! Designing a show garden for Bloom was stressful, exhausting, but utterly unforgettable and I'd thoroughly recommend it to others.”

# I'm interested in designing a show garden, what should I do now?

Applications to design a show garden at Bord Bia Bloom 2025 must be made online no later than **November 26th, 2024**. You will find a number of resources on our website that will help you with your submission. Please make sure to read the rules and regulations before applying.

[Show Garden Design Brief Guide](#)

[Show Garden Application Form Guide](#)

[Show Garden Rules and Regulations](#)

[Online Application Form](#)

## Cultivating Talent

Remember, if you are an emerging designer who has not designed a Bloom show garden previously, you are eligible to apply for our prestigious Cultivating Talent initiative.

This special competition, sponsored by Westland Horticulture, provides funding and mentorship to one Bloom newcomer, helping them to deliver their first show garden at the festival.

The deadline for entering is also November 26th, 2024 and more information is available here:

[Cultivating Talent Brochure](#)

[Cultivating Talent Application Guide](#)

[Online Application Form](#)





## Be part of the success of Bord Bia Bloom

To learn more about designing a prestigious show garden,  
please contact:

**Kerrie Gardiner**

Show Gardens & Horticulture Content Manager

[kerrie.gardiner@bordbiabloom.com](mailto:kerrie.gardiner@bordbiabloom.com)

+353 86 130 4170



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