2022 Residency and Fellowship Handbook
Last Updated: November 2021

Images, left to right, and top to bottom: Jacob Olmedo, fall 2021 Interdisciplinary Residency; Performance by Alexis Elton, summer 2021 Interdisciplinary Residency; Benjamin Heller; summer 2021 Socially-Distanced Residency; Kaitlin Bryson, summer 2021 Interdisciplinary Residency; Brien Beidler, summer 2021 Interdisciplinary Residency
1. Overview

Our residency and fellowship programs are open call opportunities, and are an important way that we can engage with practitioners from around the world. These programs are highly competitive, and applications are carefully vetted by our staff, alumni, and external panels of established professionals working in relevant areas. We intend to provide our residents and fellows time and space to work independently on their creative projects in a supportive environment.

The Oak Spring Garden Foundation was established as a private operating foundation in 2016, and we are only able to give grants to individuals, rather than groups or organizations. In our current form, we focus on hosting most of our programs on-site. Our mission is to perpetuate and share the gifts of Rachel (“Bunny”) Lambert Mellon, including her residence, landscape, garden, farm and the Oak Spring Garden Library. OSGF is dedicated to inspiring and facilitating scholarship and public dialogue on the history and future of plants, including the culture of gardens and landscapes and the importance of plants for human well-being.

OSGF’s residency and fellowship programs were first piloted in 2018. The programs have expanded annually ever since, and we hope to build a lasting relationship with our alumni. After a residency at Oak Spring, alumni are eligible to apply for our annual Alumni Residency.

Please reference this handbook to learn about OSGF’s Residency and Fellowship Programs current policies and programs in 2022. We are continually updating our facilities and programs to best suite participant’s needs, so please know that this information is subject to change. Don’t hesitate to reach out to our staff about any questions or needs that are not addressed here. Oak Spring is a special place to work, explore, and grow, and we hope to build a supportive and convivial environment for our residents and program participants!
2. OSGF Staff

Prior to OSGF, our site was the private residence of Rachel ‘Bunny’ Mellon and Paul Mellon. Many members of our staff were hired by the Mellon family and have been working on this property for decades, which contributes to a powerful, and palpable, legacy on-site. We feel lucky to have a diverse staff, which includes legacy staff who grew up in the surrounding areas, as well as a number of newer staff who moved to the region more recently. Our staff are very welcoming, and are always happy to wave and say “hi” to residents around site! We encourage residents to be friendly to our staff, but also respect their time, as they are usually working on a variety of projects to maintain our facilities for our programs. We hope that residents will be interested to learn about our institutional history and current projects, but our primary concern is to create the conditions in which residents can work independently on their own exceptional projects that we believe can contribute to a deeper understanding of the natural world and humankind’s place in it.

Staff hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00am – 4:00pm
Staff offices: 1776 Loughborough Ln. Upperville, VA 20184

OSGF employees over 60 individuals, including a dedicated maintenance and facilities team, arborist and conservation landscape team, gardeners, farmers, and administrators. For a more complete list of OSGF staff, feel free to take a look at our website. Generally, your will probably interact the most with the following names and faces:

Peter Crane, President
Danielle Eady, Head of Residency and Fellowship Programs
Saskia Poulos, Chef and Organic Farm Assistant
Christine Harris, Farm Manager of the Biocultural Conservation Farm
Ronnie Caison, Head of Hospitality
Tony Willis, Head Librarian
Kathy Olimpi, Assistant to the President
Emily Ellis, Social Media Associate
Stephanie Murdaugh, Staff Accountant
3. Security Team

Sam Liscomb heads our 24/7 armed Security Team and the Security Hut is located on the Little Oak Spring side of our estate. Our Security team primarily protects the rare and valuable collections that are kept on-site. Due to the vast nature of our site, and because our site is not open to the public, the Security Team conduct routine drives around site, and they ensure that our site and residents are safe. They are also available 24/7 to assist with medical or other emergency situations.

The Security Team is given the names and headshots of all residents before they arrive on site. We encourage residents to say hi to Security when they see them around site!

4. Statement on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

As a relatively new organization we are still learning to grapple with the implications of colonization and the corresponding violence that our landscape has borne witness to. We aspire to be a place where all people feel safe, comfortable, and supported as they explore human’s relationship to the natural world.

Residents are selected regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, creed, abilities/disabilities, or socio-economic status. We understand, however, that residents require different degrees and types of support, and our staff are here to help provide this. We encourage honest feedback from residents that will contribute to the experience of current and future residents, as well as the long-term objectives of the program. If you have any concerns or have special requests, please be in touch with the Head of Residency and Fellowship Programs.

5. Resident Expectations

Residents are selected based on their work’s alignment with the OSGF mission, and as such, we hope that residents will find synergies with the other residents or program participants who will be on site. There is no expectation that residents produce a set amount of work during their stay, and we welcome residents to use their unstructured time for inspiration or restoration as need be. We do, however, expect our residents to contribute to the kind, inclusive, and compassionate atmosphere that we strive to uphold on site.

Everyone who lodges at Oak Spring is expected to follow common courtesies and act responsibly. OSGF does not tolerate harassment or discrimination of any kind. If you believe that you are being harassed, bullied or discriminated against or that you have witnessed this kind of behavior in others, please report it to the Head of Residency and Fellowship Programs, and we will strive to make prompt and effective corrective action for any infringements on these rules. OSGF reserves the right to ask any resident who disturbs fellow staff, guests and program participants or does not abide by the following code of conduct outlined to leave immediately.

1. Respect housemates, staff, and other program participants. Harassment will not be tolerated.
2. Respect our neighbors privacy and space.
3. Removal or destruction of OSGF property is prohibited.
4. Please respect the land by staying on roads and trails.
5. The use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol is prohibited at Oak Spring.
6. Firearms are only permitted for the Security Team and registered hunters during hunting season on OSGF property.
7. Smoking is permitted only in designated outdoor areas. Smoking indoors is strictly prohibited.
8. We have a firm no pets policy.
6. Arrivals and Departures

Please arrange to arrive between 1:00pm – 4:00pm on the first day of the program. Residents will arrive at the security hut on the Little Oak Spring side of our estate. You will be met by a security guard, and a program liaison who will escort you to your accommodations. Residents should plan to depart before 12:00pm on the last day of their stay.

Flying into Dulles International Airport: Please be sure to book a flight that will land by 2:00pm, which will ensure that you arrive at OSGF by 4:00pm.

“If you fly into Ronald Regan International Airport, you will need to arrange your own transportation to take you to Dulles International Airport where OSGF staff will arrange a ride for you. OSGF does not offer rides from Ronald Regan International Airport.”

Arriving at Union Station in Washington DC: Please be sure to book a train that will arrive by 1:00pm, which will ensure that you arrive at OSGF by 4:00pm.

Arriving by Car: If you plan to drive to OSGF, please keep in touch with the OSGF staff to let them know if your arrival time changes. We have found that residents who are able to bring a car on-site find that it greatly helps them to navigate our large, rural site. There is abundant parking available on-site, directly next to the accommodations, visual artist studio spaces and most buildings on-site.

Departure Information

Please plan to depart between 7:00am - 12:00pm on the last day of the program. Please be sure to book a flight or train that departs after 10:00am.

7. Accessibility and Transportation

Each of our houses include stairs leading up to the house, stairs to the second floor of the house, and the washing and drying machines are located downstairs in the basement. Residents without a vehicle should anticipate walking or biking 0.75 miles each way to and from their studio space (for visual artists), and to the communal dining space. The library is located about 1.5 miles from the resident accommodations, and visitors who wish to access the library will generally need to walk or bike to the library across hilly terrain or let an OSGF staff person know if they need a ride. Unfortunately, our site and accommodations are not ADA accessible.

We do not require residents to bring a car, but due to our rural location, we find that many residents prefer to bring or rent one. Residents who wish to explore our local area and community, or residents who wish to use the library might especially prefer to have access to a car. All residents will also have access to a bicycle, and most of our residents find that the bicycle greatly helps them navigate our site. Our bikes are maintained in-between residencies, and residents will be responsible for checking the tires for air. We ask that residents always wear a helmet on-site while bicycling.

One weekly optional grocery and supply run will be organized and communicated to residents. An OSGF vehicle will also be available for interested residents with a driver’s license to reserve for short-distance, necessary grocery and supply runs only. There is no public transportation available in our rural location, and it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to schedule an Uber or Lyft ride once you arrive at OSGF.
10. Studios for Visual Artists

Visual artists will be provided a studio space about 0.75 miles from their accommodations. Our studios are refurbished garages or farm buildings with heating and cooling, white walls, overhead lights, and track lights. At this point in time, we do not have any medium specific equipment, such as a printing presses, table saws, kilns, etc. available to residents. The studios do not have sprung floors, and are not soundproofed and noise travels easily between the studios. Please be respectful by wearing headphones when listening to music or podcasts, and refrain from making personal or professional phone calls in the studio space.

Artists will be provided several tables and stools, and 2 art carts. Residents can request specific equipment, such as easels, and we will try to meet these needs. Artists are welcome to hang their work directly on the wall, but they should be sure to bring extra nails or pins if they anticipate hanging a large numbers of work. Each studio has a small tool box that includes a hammer, scissors and a few nails. Unfortunately, there is no wifi in the studio spaces.

8. Meals

One dinner and a few breakfast items, including tea and instant coffee, will be stocked in your accommodations when you arrive. A grocery trip will be arranged for you, and your cohort if applicable, during your first few days on-site. There is no need to arrive on-site with your groceries, unless you have specific dietary needs. The two nearest grocery stores are Food Lion in Marshall, VA and Safeway in Middleburg, VA, both of which are about a 15-minute drive away. The weekly grocery trips will usually be to one of these two stores. Residents who prefer to buy local goods or shop at the farmers markets may wish to bring a car, or talk to the Head of Residency and Fellowship Programs about reserving a car. On Wednesdays during the growing season, May – November, residents will receive a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) half-share from our Biocultural Conservation Farm. This will generally include about five different vegetables, herbs, and when available, fruit. Any other meals that we intend to provide will be communicated to residents about one-month before they arrive on-site. Meals are an important way that residents connect with one another, and with other program participants who might be on site and who are usually participating in programs or projects that relate to the OSGF mission.

9. Visitor and Guest Policy

We strive to create a productive and dedicated environment for residents and fellows to research, explore, and engage with other program participants. We do not allow overnight guests or visitors, as this can distract from a cohesive experience for other residents on-site. Day visits should be requested via email to programs@osgf.org at least 48 hours in advance and all guests should be escorted by a resident at all times. Guests will not be able to tour the library or main residence. Residents wishing to spend the night with friends and family must arrange accommodations off-site. Because we seek to develop a sense of community among participants in most of our programs, we ask that residents...
11. Accommodations

Residents stay in former tenant homes that were originally built in the mid-twentieth century, and recently renovated. Each house has its own unique layout, but similar features. Each home has two-to-three bedrooms with central cooling and heating, and a washer and dryer. Generally, two-to-three people live in each house. Residents should be prepared to live with another resident, who have a different background, or be at a different career stage as themselves. Each bedroom comes with a double or queen-sized bed, a dresser, a desk with a chair, and a lounge chair. All rooms include overhead lights and/or task lighting. Each window has blinds.

You are welcome to bring your own linens and towels however two sets of white linens and towels are provided for each bedroom. Residents are responsible for washing their linens and towels. Should the provided linens or towels become unusable, residents may be asked to compensate for replacements or purchase additional sets for personal use during the remainder of your stay.

Each house has a living room that includes several chairs and/or a couch, and a separate dining area with a table and chairs. The kitchen is fully functional (including refrigerator, dishwasher, oven, electric stove, microwave, pots, pans, dishes, cookware, teapot, coffee maker, and utensils).

Wifi and internet: Due to our rural location, we have a very limited amount of bandwidth in resident houses and there is no wifi available in the artist studios.
12. What to Bring

- Art supplies (for artists)
- Jump/flash drive, extension cords, batteries, books and anything else essential to your research or practice
- Computer, printer, peripherals, cords
- Essential or anticipated medicines
- Casual clothing that can be worn in layers; Upperville experiences all four seasons. Summers can be as warm as 100° Fahrenheit and winters can be as cool as 20° Fahrenheit
- Hats, gloves, scarf etc.
- If you plan to volunteer at the farm, be sure to bring clothes and shoes that can get dirty
- Waterproof shoes
- Binoculars (if you have them, we do have a few on-site that residents may check out)
- Sunscreen and bug spray
- A water bottle
- Slippers or house shoes
- Headphones, especially for visual artists who like to listen to music in the studio

13. Awards

OSGF residency and fellowships are all funded programs, and we intend for the funds associated with each program to cover the majority, if not all, of the expenses associated with attending a residency. We believe in the value of a residency experience, and we hope that granting residents monetary funds will allow them to be fully dedicated to their projects while at OSGF. Awardees are executed as an individual grant, contract or partnership agreement, honorarium, or travel and supplies reimbursement. Travel and supply reimbursements will require that awardees keep and submit all receipts within one-month of their residency program, and they must complete a reimbursement form that they will receive before they arrive at OSGF.

Awardees will be notified of the type of funding they will receive when they receive their initial offer letter, and residents must complete all of the corresponding forms to receive their award. In most cases, residents and fellows are responsible for the travel to and from site, Dulles International Airport, or Union State, all supplies they will need on site, and for the majority of their meals on-site.