

Position: Director of Horticulture and Facilities
Department: Horticulture and Garden Operations
Status: Full-Time, Exempt
Report To: Executive Director

In support of our mission, the Director of Horticulture will provide key leadership in guiding Descanso Gardens through an ongoing period of growth and change. The Director of Horticulture and Facilities is responsible for the direct management of all operations of the physical gardens – horticulture, collections management, landscape design, maintenance, and infrastructure and facilities repairs. This position helps to create and maintain an engaging and exciting living museum through the Gardens’ extensive and diverse horticulture collection and seasonal exhibits. Reporting to the Executive Director, and working closely with senior management and the Board of Trustees, the Director of Horticulture and Facilities contributes to the strategic planning, long range planning, and maintenance of the gardens in order to achieve a beautiful, nuanced, resonant, and richly rewarding garden for the public to enjoy, and for philanthropic funders to enthusiastically support. As a key public face of Descanso Gardens, the Director will build relationships both internally and externally to advance the growth of the gardens.

JOB CLASSIFICATION

This is a key full-time, exempt position.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES include but are not limited to:

The Director of Horticulture and Facilities is responsible for:

- Providing direction and management of gardens, grounds, natural areas, buildings, nursery operations, mechanical shop, irrigation, water bodies, hardscape, arboriculture work, and integrated pest management plan
- Overseeing 21 full-time employees and approximately 75 volunteers
- Training, development, and performance evaluation of paid staff
- Development and management of a \$2.4M horticultural operating and capital budget
- Managing contractors and outsourced horticulture related services
- Collaborating with outside vendors as relates to large scale projects
- Integrating Horticulture and Facilities department into operations, mission, goal, and objectives of entire Garden

Leadership:

- Serve on Gardens’ leadership team; participate in strategic planning and the design and implementation of programs and projects
- Work together with Board of Directors and its committees, donors, volunteers, members, and community at large to represent the horticulture and conservation programs
- Collaborate with Advancement to support fundraising and stewardship initiatives related to horticultural objectives, and with Marketing, to share the Gardens’ accomplishments and aspirations
- Collaborate with Education to support programs for schools, public, volunteers, members, and partners.
- Pursue leadership development and professional advancement locally and nationally
- Provide vision and embrace the mission and culture of the Gardens as it relates to all aspects of our operations
- Create departmental annual plans in line with institutional key strategic priorities

Management:

- Direct, manage, and work with a department of 21 full-time staff and approximately 75 volunteers in garden maintenance, nursery production, plant records, conservation, irrigation, and mechanical maintenance
- Establish annual budget, authorize department expenditures, manage assigned budgets, and provide periodic reports to Chief Financial Officer and Executive Director
- Direct Horticulture and Facilities team in establishing projects and priorities; formulate, design, plan, and oversee the project progress and budget

- Establish and implement aesthetic and horticultural standards to maintain and enhance the gardens and grounds using best practices
- Research and understand history and design of the Gardens, maintain records and files of grounds and horticulture related activities
- Along with Horticulture team, interview, train, mentor, and supervise staff and volunteers
- From time to time, review and collaborate on grant funding requests and ensure appropriate spending and reporting of grant funds

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

- Masters degree in Plant Science field and/or minimum of ten years' experience in horticulture and arboriculture practices and management is required
- Knowledge of native plants and ecosystems
- Understanding of garden design, color theory, horticultural practices, landscape maintenance, public garden operations and function
- Experience working with independent contractors
- Excellent verbal and written communication and interpersonal skills, including effective presentation, negotiation, and problem-solving skills
- Self-starter, creative, persuasive, and goal-oriented
- Organized and detail-oriented
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships within the department and across departments
- Ability to work independently and lead team members effectively
- Experience supervising a diverse staff and volunteer group; ability to collaborate across departments and provide leadership and support as required on special events
- Ability to work a flexible schedule and under deadline pressure

EQUIPMENT USED AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS

This position requires a working knowledge of a full range of industry-related equipment and service vehicles, both manual and machine operated, as well as basic office equipment and computer software. This includes, but is not limited to, operation of manual and gas-powered gardening tools, irrigation systems, string trimmer, mower, gas blower, gas hedger, spray tank, roto-tiller, manual bypass pruners, lopers, hand saw, pole saw, pole pruner, trowels, shovels, pitchforks, rakes, computer, printer, photocopier, and calculator.

This is an outdoor position that requires working in various weather conditions, including working in the sun and, at times, extreme heat. This position requires the ability to carry out daily physical work and to lift and carry up to 50 pounds. This position occasionally requires heavy lifting, but not routinely. It also requires the ability to walk, climb, kneel, bend, stoop, sit, crouch, operate service vehicles, climb ladders, carry and operate standard gardening equipment intermittently throughout the day, and to work in an outdoor environment in various weather conditions for an extended period. Wading in and working with water may also be required.

To Apply: Interested parties may apply by submitting a MS Word or PDF **Letter of Interest and Resume** to jobs@descansogardens.org with DHF1905 in the subject line. Only those meeting the minimum requirements and submitting all required information may be contacted for further inquiry. We will accept Letters of Interest and Resumes until the position is filled.

No phone calls, please.

Descanso Gardens Guild Inc. acknowledges that equal opportunity for all persons is a fundamental human value. Each employee will be considered on the basis of individual ability and merit, without regard to race, color, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, sex, or marital status.