

Executive Director

Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden (CSRG)

A public garden Portland Parks & Recreation calls “one of our city's greatest expressions of pride of place”.

Job Posting

The Portland Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society (ARS) initiated the development of a display and test garden in 1950. Referred to as Shakespeare Island by students at Reed College because of the plays performed there, the roughly five-acre site was abandoned and overgrown with brush and blackberries. 70 years later, Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden comprises a 9.5-acre garden containing a world-renowned collection of rare species and hybrid rhododendrons, azaleas, and other lesser-known ericaceous plants, as well as many companion plants and uncommon trees. Since its inception, the garden has been maintained in partnership with the ARS Portland Chapter and Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) and funded by donations, support from members of the Friends of Crystal Springs, event proceeds, and gatehouse admissions. The mission of the Garden is to provide a refuge of natural and curated beauty, accessible to all members of the community, while providing a welcoming setting for special events and celebrations. Recent enhancements include the new Butterfly Garden—created by garden volunteers to attract butterflies, hummingbirds and beneficial insects—along with the recent re-landscaping of the Jane Martin Memorial Garden, the current favorite site for intimate weddings conducted safely with pandemic standards in mind.

Job Description

The Executive Director is a new position created to give CSRG an overall strategic direction and framework for the future of the Garden. The Executive Director will collaborate with PP&R, serving as the lead on proposals for infrastructure, adherence to botanical significance, and expanding community access to the Garden. The ability to write proposals and secure grant funding is highly desirable.

The Executive Director will oversee the operations of CSRG and manage a team of staff and volunteers, modifying roles and responsibilities as needed to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Our ideal candidate is a visionary with a strong background in non-profit business operations and a passion for horticulture and/or familiarity with the management and operations of a botanical garden.

The applicant’s desired qualities should include organizational skills and a history of leadership along with the ability to effectively communicate. As chief community “ambassador” for the Garden, the Executive Director will connect daily with staff, volunteers and the general public. Financial acumen, and the ability to write and secure grants are preferred. The Executive Director will report to the Board of Directors of the Portland Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society, an Oregon 501c3.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Build a culture of collaboration and communication across all functions and align the various parties around a shared vision for the Garden.
- Collaborate with Portland Parks & Recreation in consulting on design, improvements, and overall horticultural direction of the Garden.
- Coordinate with Portland Parks & Recreation on their services to the Garden, e.g. irrigation, mowing, engineering and geology consulting, permit generation, etc.
- Conduct communication strategies to create effective outreach to the city's diverse communities.
- Identify sources of funding from individuals, companies, foundations and government sources.
- Conduct strategic and operational planning: manage and oversee annual budgets and direct the organization's operational and fiscal function and performance utilizing provided accounting and bookkeeping sources.
- Maintain a balanced fee-based admission policy that includes access to underserved populations.
- Hire, develop, mentor, and retain qualified and engaged staff.
- Recruit volunteers to maintain a level necessary to keep the Garden in excellent condition year-round.
- Communicate regularly with the ARS Portland Chapter Board, providing all relevant information in a timely manner.

Ideal Qualifications

BS or BA with minimum of 5-7 years of experience in organizational leadership in botanical gardens or related environments. Master's degree in a relevant field is preferred.

Excellent communicator & listener

Passion for horticulture and public gardens

Visionary leader with proven fundraising skills

Technologically proficient

Strategic thinker

Motivating and inspirational

Collaborative, courageous

Full-time salaried position; compensation based on qualifications and experience.

Acceptance and review of applications will continue until the position is filled.

The first review date is scheduled for November 1, 2020.

Submit cover letter and resume to pc.ars@outlook.com.