Director of Horticulture

The mission of the Houston Botanic Garden is to enrich life through discovery, education, and conservation of plants and the natural environment. HBG is a recently completed botanic garden that strives to inspire all people to love plants and be good stewards of the natural world. The gardens include a global garden with arid, sub-tropical, and tropical plants; a culinary garden with permanent and seasonal displays; a family garden centered around a lagoon; a woodland event garden; wetlands; and a coastal prairie on a 132-acre site.

The Houston Botanic Garden is seeking a Director of Horticulture to lead the horticulture team in all horticulture initiatives to drive year-round attendance and further HBG’s education and conservation mission. The Director must understand the importance of botanic garden collections, conservation, sustainability, and display strategies to operate a successful public garden. As a new public garden and as HBG plans for Phase II, the Director will lead the efforts in establishing and executing on Houston Botanic Garden’s horticulture priorities and design development. Serving as an organizational leader, this position serves as a member of the Leadership Team, is a key public face of the Garden, is one of the primary stewards of the guest experience at the Garden, and must be an enthusiastic advocate internally and externally for making the Garden beautiful and engaging for others. The Director will work in close collaboration with the entire HBG team and report directly to the President.

The ideal candidate is passionate about HBG’s mission, entrepreneurial, organized, and strategic with deep horticulture experience and plant knowledge. This person must be an innovative and inspiring leader who can delegate, manage, and prioritize responsibilities with clarity and confidence and strong interpersonal and teamwork skills. HBG is looking for a dynamic, forward-thinking individual, who enjoys working in a growing organization, to build on the newly planted gardens to deliver Houston Botanic Garden as a garden leader in national public gardens.

Main Job Responsibilities:

- Establish and maintain high horticulture standards and practices, providing direction, training and motivation for the horticultural staff, interns, and volunteers to guide the development and management of garden displays, landscapes, and nurseries.
- Build a living collection of plants that supports conservation and interpretation to showcase and educate the public on the significance and relevance of the Garden’s collections and research projects.
- Establish and oversee plant records, mapping, and labeling; plant collection policy; and design aesthetic informed by HBG’s master plan, mission, and strategic priorities.
- Accountable for development and management of the horticulture budget, budget monitoring, strategic planning, and horticulture capital projects.
- Work with garden volunteers and Volunteer Coordinator to develop long-term productive relationships and grow the number of horticulture volunteers.
- Oversee irrigation systems and maintenance of horticulture equipment.
- Manage and support overall plant health and soil nutrition strategies for all gardens to include sustainable gardening practices and integrated pest management.
- Collaborate with the Director of Education and Public Programs to identify opportunities for programming and interpretation for the gardens and collections.
- Plan and oversee HBG’s plant production and propagation efforts and nurseries.
- Collaborate with partners locally and nationally to further HBG’s horticulture and collections priorities.
- Develop, maintain, and promote positive and professional relationships with internal staff, volunteers, members, vendors, contractors, media, and the general public.
- Serve as liaison for Board of Directors’ Horticulture Committee.
- Give tours and presentations and provide insight, content, and editorial support for various publications, interpretation, and marketing as needed.
- Represents HBG with supporters, including garden clubs, plant associations, city and county agencies, and others.
- Assist with the production and management of special events.
- Perform additional duties and assume additional responsibilities as delegated by HBG’s President.

Qualifications and Experience Requirements:

- Bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in botany, horticulture, or a related field required
- Minimum of ten years’ relevant experience
- Demonstrated broad knowledge of plants and horticulture with an emphasis on taxa suitable for Houston
- Strong management skills and leadership skills with a desire and ability to succeed in a collaborative and diverse environment
- Prior experience in budgeting; staffing; setting and evaluating financial goals; and strategic planning, implementation, and assessment
- Strong written and oral communication skills to a variety of audiences; listens for clarification when necessary and responds informatively
- Flexibility, ability to prioritize and juggle multiple projects in a start-up environment
- Excellent organizational skills, attention to detail and accuracy
- Integrity and highest standards of ethics and professionalism
- Ability to lift and carry a minimum of 50 lbs., move for long periods of time, and operate standard horticulture machinery
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite
Schedule and Salary:
- Compensation commensurate with experience
- Full-time, exempt position
- Available on weekends and holidays as needed

Benefits: Medical, dental, and vision insurance, retirement savings match, short term disability, long term disability, and life insurance available.

Application Procedure: Interested candidates should send a cover letter and resume to hr@hbg.org. We will contact those candidates who most closely match our requirements. Employment is subject to passing a background check and reference is required.

Thank you for your interest!