



FRIENDS
of Birmingham
Botanical Gardens

Job Opening
Horticulturist – Japanese Garden

The Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens, the nonprofit, mission-driven membership organization that seeks to protect, nurture, and share the wonders of Birmingham Botanical Gardens, seeks a dynamic **Horticulturist – Japanese Garden** to join our dedicated, energetic team. The Japanese Garden is a 7-acre garden with a diverse collection of plants and architectural features including the *torii* that invites visitors down the cherry walk to an authentic *karesansui*, a traditional *Sukiya*-style teahouse and *roji*, and a Hill and Stream stroll garden that leads to a boardwalk through the Bamboo Grove.

This is a hands-on position requiring extensive year-round work in the garden. A successful candidate will bring to the position a solid background in the art and science of horticulture, an eye for detail, a passion for meticulous maintenance, exceptional organizational and communications skills, and the ability to excel working both individually and as a mentor and group leader.

The Horticulturist – Japanese Garden will report to the Director of Gardens Support and will work closely with the Associate Director of Gardens Support, as well as other key Friends staff and volunteers, City of Birmingham staff, and outside experts. This is a full-time position.

Responsibilities – General:

- Perform a full range of horticultural tasks and duties including planting, pruning, watering, fertilizing, mulching, raking, sweeping and the blowing of hardscape surfaces
- Assess garden maintenance needs, establish priorities, and develop work plans and calendars
- Coordinate and lead weekly volunteer workdays and periodic volunteer groups; partner with the Friends' Volunteer Coordinator to recruit, train, and retain volunteers
- Identify and source plants, supplies, and tools; maintain storage areas, tools, and equipment in an orderly state and in good working order
- Supervise and mentor interns; may include conducting specialized classes and workshops or leading field trips
- Develop and maintain appropriate plant records and labels
- Cultivate cordial, professional, and service-oriented relationships with a wide range of stakeholders and partners, including donors, contractors, and various officials
- Be a part of the collective success of the Gardens Support team; forge constructive partnerships with other staff members; foster productive interdepartmental teamwork

- Communicate with Director and Associate Director of Gardens Support regularly and frequently regarding all aspects of work including priorities, needs, planned projects, and budgetary considerations
- Effectively embrace the organizational objectives of providing excellent service and products to our members and visitors; creating an exceptional work environment; and delivering outstanding operational results

Responsibilities – Area of Specialization:

- Research and study the original design intent of the Japanese Garden and its elements; develop a maintenance strategy that is driven by the design intent and long-term vision for the garden
- Embrace opportunities to enhance the experience of visitors to the Japanese Garden through the development of interpretive materials, coordinating garden-specific activities, and encouraging informal interactions
- Champion the Japanese Garden by serving as a resource for programs and events, leading classes and tours, giving lectures, and contributing to print and digital communications
- Seek opportunities to network and expand connections within the horticultural and Japanese Garden fields, including serving as liaison to the North American Japanese Garden Association

Qualifications, Desirable Qualities and Strengths:

- Two- or four-year degree in horticulture or a related field; alternatively, equivalent related experience in a public garden setting
- Knowledge of landscape plants used in the Southeast, including identification, cultivation, and troubleshooting
- Strong work ethic with the ability to work independently and as a team player, set priorities, multitask, and meet deadlines
- Demonstrated passion for gardens and gardening
- Ability to lift 50 lbs., stoop, bend, kneel and conduct strenuous gardening tasks; safely operate vehicles in addition to basic power equipment and tools
- Willing to obtain pesticide/herbicide applicator's license if necessary
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Flexible and willing to support other FBBG activities, a willingness to work weekends and nights as needed and in a variety of weather conditions
- Enjoy working with others in a friendly and courteous manner and possess a sense of humor
- Strong working knowledge of PC applications such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Google
- Enthusiasm for the Friends' mission and readiness to assist beyond this job description

Desirable Knowledge and Experience:

- Familiarity with the principles of Japanese garden design and maintenance techniques
- Familiarity with the traditions, history, and culture of Japan as they relate to gardens
- Knowledge of pruning specific genera present in the Japanese Garden collection such as: cherries, maples, junipers, pines, crabapples, and camellias
- Specific coursework or training in Asian studies or Japanese garden design

About Birmingham Botanical Gardens

A facility of the Birmingham Park and Recreation Board, Birmingham Botanical Gardens is the result of a public/private partnership between the City of Birmingham and the nonprofit Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens.

About the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens

A mission-driven membership organization, the nonprofit Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens seeks to protect, nurture, and share the wonders of Birmingham Botanical Gardens. We are dedicated to serving the Gardens; serving the community; serving our visitors; and inspiring a passion for plants, gardens, and the environment.

For more information, visit *bbgardens.org*.

To Apply:

Please submit letter of interest, resume, and three references **in one pdf** to careers@bbgardens.org. Position will be open until filled.

Thank you for your interest!

Posted on 4/21/23