



Director of Horticulture

[Red Butte Garden and Arboretum](#) is one of the largest botanical gardens in the Intermountain West, a regional center for plant-based science education, conservation and research, and cultural enrichment. As part of a state arboretum that encompasses the University of Utah campus, the Garden cultivates an essential urban forestland of over 2,000 trees in 456 different taxa. The Garden has welcomed guests since 1985 and consists of over 20 acres of developed gardens, and approximately five miles of hiking trails winding through an extensive 80-acre natural area.

Community-funded, the Garden is renowned for its diverse plant collections, themed gardens, and spectacular mountain setting, with over 600,000 springtime blooming bulbs, award-winning horticulture-based educational programs, and an iconic outdoor summer concert series. Guests come to the Garden for a myriad of reasons: to connect with nature, to participate in cultural programs, concerts, and wellness activities, and to attend lectures, classes and workshops. Innovative children's education programs promote environmental sustainability, and educate the next generation of botanists and naturalists, while engaging classes inspire adults to remain lifelong learners.

Red Butte Garden and Arboretum is seeking a Horticulture Director to oversee the comprehensive management and stewardship of its outdoor gardens and natural areas. The horticulture director helps advance our strategic goal of positioning the Garden as an industry leader by elevating the department's expertise, increasing the visibility of its work, and deepening its impact on the field. This role ensures the department operates smoothly and professionally while maintaining a high level of horticulture expertise within the team. The Director will effectively balance and align multiple garden priorities, including maintenance and care, as well as mission-driven and revenue-generating programs and events, while proactively supporting collaboration and minimizing conflicts.

Responsibilities

Leads efforts to position the Garden as a recognized leader in horticulture, amplifying the department's work and impact through professional engagement and other public-facing opportunities. Collaborates across departments to develop communications and programs that elevate the visibility and impact of the Garden's horticulture team.

Manages and oversees all aspects of the Horticulture Department, including the care and maintenance of themed gardens, natural areas, living plant collections, and departmental events and plant sales. Assigns responsibilities and ensures all maintenance and horticulture practices align with industry standards and best practices. Upholds departmental goals, priorities, timelines, and safety protocols while promoting the efficient use of water and other resources. Ensures smooth departmental operations and fosters effective collaboration within the department and with other Garden departments.

Oversees all departmental personnel operations while fostering a positive and growth-oriented work environment. Provides continuous support for staff development through coaching, training, mentoring, goal setting, regular feedback, and performance evaluations.

Promotes a safe work environment by ensuring all tasks are performed safely and that safety concerns are addressed in a timely manner. Ensures compliance with University of Utah Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) policies and procedures. Manages pesticides safely in

accordance with EPA Worker Protection Standard (WPS) and Department of Agriculture regulations.

Ensures the continued relevance of the Garden's living plant collections by guiding and supporting collection goals and objectives, overseeing care and development evaluations, and facilitating future acquisitions.

Maintains Garden aesthetics and design standards by collaborating with administration and key staff to prioritize improvements and establish clear expectations. Ensures new designs align with the Garden's theme, support collection goals, promote sustainability, and encourage the responsible use of resources.

Promotes effective collaboration across all departments to support the successful achievement of Garden priorities. Serves as a professional horticulture resource and may interact with donors and participate on committees or boards with green industry partners. Collaborates with the Red Butte Garden Landscape Architecture and Facilities team to identify, prioritize, and implement necessary maintenance of the Garden's outdoor facilities.

Manages the department budget, prioritizes expenditures, and ensures procurement practices comply with University of Utah requirements, including oversight of an annual personnel budget of \$2.6 million and non-personnel budget exceeding \$500,000. Responsibilities include managing multiple funds and activities, restricted-use funds, and endowment expenditures. Performs monthly budget reconciliations, quarterly expense forecasting, and annual fiscal year budget proposals that prioritize the resources necessary to maintain the Garden at a high level of excellence. Ensures a smooth departmental fiscal year closeout in compliance with University of Utah protocols and timelines.

Oversees the procurement of plant material that aligns with Garden and collection objectives, design and aesthetic standards, water-wise initiatives. Assures state and federal Department of Agriculture protocols and industry curatorial practices are followed. Collaborates with Plant records and Greenhouse staff to track incoming plant material, document garden destinations, and maintain all required records and documentation.

Collaborates on Garden master planning initiatives and future Garden and building design development. Recommends solutions that prioritize Garden and collection objectives, minimize long-term maintenance requirements, and ensure adequate maintenance access. Verifies the accuracy of specified information, including irrigation design and components, subsoil preparation, topsoil and amendment quality, planting specifications, and plant schedules. Assists with project oversight, particularly regarding irrigation system installation, soil and subsoil standards, plant procurement, and installations.

Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree in Horticulture, Botany, related field, or equivalency, plus
- At least 10-12 yrs experience in Horticulture;
- 4-6 years of progressively more responsible management experience;
- Strong knowledge and understanding of horticulture, including knowledge of Latin names, ability to identify major plant genera and species, characteristics and cultural requirements for a wide range of ornamental and native plants suitable for landscapes in the intermountain west;
- Understands best practices and skill sets required to maintain a premier Botanical Garden, including landscape maintenance, water conservation, tree care, pest diagnostics and controls, landscape irrigation, greenhouse production, landscape equipment and tools, etc.;

- Demonstrated success or interest in developing or collaborating on projects that elevate horticultural expertise;
- Knowledge of safe practices and a commitment to ensuring staff work safety;
- Effective interpersonal and personnel management skills; ability to communicate and collaborate effectively in both written and verbal formats;
- A commitment to providing excellent customer service;
- Demonstrated budget management skills and procurement experience (preferably in a university setting);
- Proficient with computers, including Microsoft Office Suite and other software programs;
- Demonstrated knowledge of design principles, concepts and styles;
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail;
- Must possess a valid driver's license.

Preferences

Advanced degree in Horticulture or related field;
Experience working in a public garden or nature center;
Experience in teaching and training others, to both experts and novices;
Experience in writing newsletter articles and/or other written content.

Learn more about the great benefits of working for University of Utah: benefits.utah.edu

Pay Rate Range: \$95,000.00 - \$115,000.00

Application Link: <https://utah.peopleadmin.com/postings/203559>