



CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN



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## EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT

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## ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

The Chicago Botanic Garden, also known as "the Garden", is a world-class botanical garden located in Glencoe, Illinois, just a short distance from downtown Chicago. The Garden is one of the world's great botanic gardens and living museums, known for its stunning collection of landscapes and horticultural displays as well as for its plant conservation, science and education programs. Each year, the Garden has 61,000 members and more than one million visitors experience its beauty.

The Garden is also one of only 25 public gardens accredited by the American Association of museums. Its 28 display gardens and four natural areas cover 385 acres and are uniquely sited on nine islands. The permanent plant collections contain more than 3 million plants representing more than 14,000 taxa. The Garden has 61,000 members—one of the largest memberships of any U.S. botanic garden. Its Lenhardt Library contains 150,000 items, including one of the nation's best collections of rare horticultural and botanical books. The Garden is one of two cultural institutions within the Forest Preserves of Cook County. It is an independent 501(c)(3) organization with an annual operating budget of more than \$60 million, and has 260 full time employees, hundreds of part time employees and more than 600 volunteers.

The Garden's mission is to cultivate the power of plants to sustain and enrich life. The dedicated team of professionals, including horticulturists, scientists, educators, and administrators, work together to achieve this mission. The Garden values diversity, inclusion, and respect for all individuals, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for both staff and visitors. The Garden believes:

- People live better, healthier lives when they can create, care for, and enjoy gardens and green space.
- Beautiful gardens and natural environments are fundamentally important to the mental and physical well-being of all people.
- The future of life on Earth depends on how well humanity understands, values, and protects plants, other wildlife, and the natural habitats that sustain the world.





## 5 STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

- 1 Elevate, leverage, and sustain the beauty of the Garden to ensure that it is a vibrant, thriving cultural institution for future generations.
- 2 Advance the Garden's role as a leading center for learning in plant science and conservation, horticulture, and education, shaping the way individuals and communities value, perceive, and care for the environment.
- 3 Expand the Garden's reach to engage more people in the full breadth and depth of the work.
- 4 Make certain that the staff and processes are capable of meeting the needs of a large, forward-thinking, and evolving organization.
- 5 Grow and diversify revenue to secure a strong financial future.

## ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

The history of the Garden dates back to the late 19th century when the Chicago Horticultural Society was founded in 1890. The society's mission was to promote the study and enjoyment of plants and gardening. Initially, the society did not have a permanent location for its activities, and its members met at various locations in Chicago.

In 1962, the Chicago Horticultural Society entered into a partnership with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to establish a botanical garden. The Forest Preserve District provided land in Glencoe, Illinois, and the Chicago Horticultural Society undertook the development and management of the garden. The chosen site was previously known as the Skokie Marsh and was a wetland area.

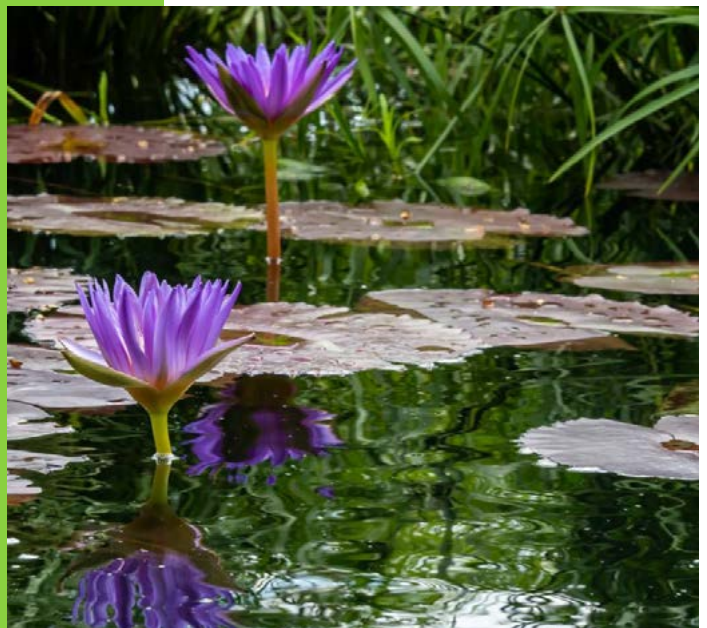
The construction of the Garden began in 1965, and the garden opened to the public in 1972. The design of the garden was led by renowned landscape architect John O. Simonds and his firm. The master plan incorporated various types of gardens, including formal gardens, naturalistic landscapes, display gardens, and research areas.

Over the years, the Garden has expanded and evolved. Today, it encompasses 28 display gardens and four natural areas. These include the English Walled Garden, the Japanese Garden, the Fruit & Vegetable Garden, the Rose Garden, the Native Plant Garden, the Waterfall Garden, and many others. Each garden showcases different plant collections, design styles, and cultural themes.

The Garden is also involved in scientific research, conservation efforts, and educational programs. It conducts research on plant conservation, urban horticulture, and plant biodiversity. The Garden offers a range of educational programs for visitors of all ages, including classes, workshops, lectures, and children's programs.

In addition to its horticultural displays and educational initiatives, the Garden hosts various special events and exhibitions throughout the year. These include flower shows, art exhibitions, outdoor concerts, and holiday displays.

The Garden has become an important cultural and educational institution in the Chicago area. It attracts over one million visitors annually and serves as a source of inspiration, knowledge, and appreciation for plants and the natural world.







## THE POSITION IN BRIEF

The Controller position at the Garden is a key leadership role that reports directly to the Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration/CFO and is responsible for overseeing and managing the financial operations of the organization including accounting, reporting, and business and financial planning processes, including the annual audit process, grant management and compliance, internal controls, policies and procedures, budget and forecasting, endowment, and payroll. The Controller also serves as acting Chief Financial Officer on an as needed basis and supervises the Associate Director, Financial and Grant Accounting functions, and the Senior Payroll Manager.

Grant experience is a crucial aspect of the Controller role due to the significant impact grants have on the organization's operations and programs. The Garden manages 26 federal grants, 14 federal contracts, and six (6) state and local grants. The Garden also manages as many as seven (7) dozen grants from foundations, corporations, and private donors. These diverse funding sources provide \$8.5M in essential funding for various initiatives, including research and conservation projects, educational programs, and horticultural efforts. The ability to effectively manage grants and ensure compliance with funding requirements, maximizes resources, and supports the Garden's mission.



## RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Oversee a team of 6.5 full time equivalent employees responsible for accounting, reporting, and financial planning processes, including annual audits, grant management and compliance, internal controls, policies and procedures, procurement, budgeting, forecasting, endowment, and payroll.
- Direct and supervise the Associate Directors of Financial and Grant Accounting and the Senior Payroll Manager.
- Consistently analyze financial data, and monitor financial performance.
- Develop and prepare the operating budget and financial forecasts, including compliance reporting.
- Manage and ensure compliance with dozens of government, corporate, and foundation grants, including reporting requirements and funding regulations.
- Develop and implement effective financial policies and procedures, including revenue recognition and not-for-profit tax reporting.
- Utilize strong analytical and problem-solving skills to interpret financial data strategically and provide insights for decision-making.
- Anticipate organizational needs; actively work to solve problems and identify organizational risks.





## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate will possess the following qualifications, skills and traits:

- 10 years of progressive accounting and finance experience.
- Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, or business administration; C.P.A. and/or M.B.A. preferred.
- Experience in a complex nonprofit organization that has multiple revenue streams.
- At least three years of grants management experience, including compliance and reporting of government, corporate, and foundation grants; strong knowledge of OMB Uniform Guidance for federal government grants; federal funding award administration; indirect cost recovery procedures; and restricted contribution guidelines and regulations.
- Proficiency in revenue recognition under ASC 606 for exchange transactions and ASU 2018-08 for conditional and unconditional grants and contributions.
- Knowledge of not-for-profit tax reporting requirements, including endowment.
- Exhibit personal qualities of integrity, credibility, and a commitment to the Garden's mission.
- Excellent analytic, organizational, and problem-solving skills that allow for strategic data interpretation versus simple reporting.
- Effectively works with others despite differences of opinion and style, demonstrates the ability to lead multiple teams and functions in a collaborative manner.







## COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND HIRING GUIDELINES

The Garden recently completed a comprehensive compensation and classification study that is currently undergoing implementation. The salary range for this position is competitive and commensurate with the experience and skills required for the role. The Garden supports a hybrid (two remote days/week) remote work environment, however, more onsite attendance may be required during the initial onboarding period, as well as staff training. The Garden also offers a competitive benefit package including paid time off, retirement investment plan and health, dental, vision and life insurance, as well as many other ancillary benefits.

## HOW TO APPLY

Apply online at [www.GovHRUSA.com](http://www.GovHRUSA.com) with your resume, cover letter, and contact information for five professional references to the attention of Heidi Voorhees, President GovHRUSA and Sarah Schillerstrom, Senior Vice-President, GovHRUSA. Applicants will be reviewed as they are received, and the position is open until filled. Questions may be directed to the consultants at GovHRUSA: [HVoorhees@GovHRUSA.com](mailto:HVoorhees@GovHRUSA.com) and [SSchillerstrom@Govhrusa.com](mailto:SSchillerstrom@Govhrusa.com).

The Chicago Botanic Garden is an Equal Opportunity Employer and do not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, status as a veteran, or basis of disability, or any other federal, state, or local protected class. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, the Chicago Botanic Garden does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its programs or activities, including in employment or admissions.



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