

Position Description

Operations & Maintenance Department Director of Horticulture



Hudson River Park Trust

Reports to: Vice President, Operations & Maintenance

Uniformed: Yes

Hours/Week: 37.5

OT and Weekend Hours Required: Yes

FLSA: Exempt

Background:

Hudson River Park is a new 550-acre park located along five miles of the Manhattan waterfront. Legislatively created in 1998, the project includes landscaped public piers, display gardens, heavily used lawns, ecological planting zones, athletic fields, esplanades, docks, public sculpture and other special features.

The park is being designed and built by the Hudson River Park Trust, a public benefit corporation of New York State. In 2010, the park will be roughly 80% complete; it has been designed in various sections to utilize the skill and talent of different design teams to provide unique interests while maintaining a uniform vocabulary of park elements. The Director of Horticulture has principle responsibility for the maintenance and care of all horticultural assets throughout the park.

Job Description:

The Director of Horticulture is a hands-on leadership position requiring a strong combination of horticultural expertise and administrative capabilities. The successful candidate shall serve as the chief horticulturist and will perform a critical role throughout the park, planning and implementing horticultural goals and objectives and directly supervising permanent and seasonal staff members, all in a fast-paced environment. The position reports directly to the Vice President charged with strategic planning and daily oversight of all park operations and maintenance. The Assistant Vice President will also oversee certain aspects relating to resource logistics, quality assurance/quality control and special projects, etc. The Director must be able to work independently, be detail-oriented, be an effective communicator, and at all times provide a good example in terms of quality of work, punctual and regular attendance, and adherence to agency uniform policy.

Specific Tasks & Responsibilities Include:

- **Plant Health Care:** The Director of Horticulture will have overall responsibility for all horticultural assets within the park and must develop and maintain systems for preventive maintenance and appropriate intervention when necessary. Develop and maintain a comprehensive plant health care program for the park's varied

- landscapes and materials [urban tree canopy, specimen trees, understory material (formal, informal, and naturalized/ecological plantings), perennials, annuals, bulbs, groundcovers, turf, etc.]. Design and maintain an integrated plant/pest management (IPM) program to scout for pests and/or diseases, and plan and implement solutions as necessary. Forecast, develop and implement annual goals in accordance with budgets and Trust policies. Create, implement and maintain standard operating procedures that will ensure horticultural assets are maintained at the highest standards while promoting sustainability.
- **Turf Care:** Many of Hudson River Park’s lawns are heavily used and require a proactive maintenance program. The Director must have a strong working knowledge of and interest in turfgrass management, soil composition and nutrient analysis, irrigation, and maintenance processes/cycles.
 - **Park Planning:** The Director will interface closely with the Trust’s design department and outside designers and contractors as new areas of the park are being designed and built. Review plans; assist with plant selection and tagging; accompany design and construction staff on progress inspections and at meetings as necessary; and oversee changes to the planting design that may be necessary over time including selection, sourcing, procurement and installation.
 - **Irrigation:** Hudson River Park currently uses both manual ground hydrants and two types of automated irrigation systems. Most park areas utilize a Tucor “two wire” system comprised of a weather station, software driven controllers and decoders which can be managed intelligently through a remote computer interface. A small sample of park areas currently use conventionally wired systems managed by local controllers. The Director shall manage and maintain all irrigation systems and components thereof to ensure proper water delivery to all horticultural assets.
 - **Staff Management:** The Trust seeks a Director who can inspire and lead internal and contract staff and volunteers by example while also excelling at the administrative aspects of supervision. These include: training; scheduling; issuing, prioritizing and ensuring completion of assignments; recommending the need for and hiring new staff, approving timesheets; conducting performance reviews; overseeing safe work practices; preparing reports as necessary; implementing internal policies and practices; and ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The Director is expected to maintain a positive proactive work ethic and exhibit professionalism at all times and to ensure staff does the same.
 - **Safety:** The Trust places the highest value on the safety of our staff, contractors, volunteers and the general public. The Director shall be responsible for ensuring that staff members are properly trained to operate equipment and perform potentially dangerous tasks safely and for complying with requirements for use of proper personal protective equipment (PPE). Must be able to safely operate tools, vehicles, and specialized equipment.

- **Resource Management:** Forecast horticultural demands and make recommendations to the Vice President regarding cost effectiveness and factors related to performing certain functions internally vs. externally. Where necessary, create and manage bid packages for all outsourced work in consultation with the Vice President in line with agency policies and guidelines. Oversee and manage all outsourced horticultural contracts according to Trust requirements. Maintain an effective inventory system. Instill in staff a respect and responsibility for tools, vehicles, safety equipment and other Trust property.
- **Volunteers:** Create, implement, maintain and coordinate a horticultural volunteer program in consultation with the Vice President.
- **Communications:** Must be proficient in written and verbal communication, and be able to communicate effectively with supervisors, other staff and the general public. The Director must be able to “triage” emergency situations relating to park operations, including communicating appropriate and accurate information to the Trust’s Operations Desk in a timely manner and, if necessary, take immediate to protect staff and the public.
- **Other:** Must be willing and able to perform duties of other divisions/positions as directed or required commensurate with need and incumbent’s level of skill and be available for “stand-by” work on a predetermined basis or emergency response. During the winter, required duties include snow and ice removal and other more general maintenance functions. Shall determine need, specify and purchase horticultural equipment and goods, be accountable for same, and coordinate any special maintenance needs for such equipment with the proper staff.

Education & Experience:

Shall have a four year degree from an accredited institution with a focus in Horticulture, Plant Science, Turfgrass Management, Landscape Architecture, Natural Resources Management, Forestry, other related field, or substantial documented experience may be considered. Shall have 6 - 8 years experience of which at least 4 years should be as a supervisor dealing with personnel, resource and contract management. Candidates with a four year degree as outlined herein will be given preference. Direct experience managing turf is strongly preferred. Must be proficient in MS Word and Excel; competency with PowerPoint Access, and Project, and the ability to read architectural and engineering plans and specifications is beneficial.

Special Requirements:

Shall have a valid driver’s license with a clean history; candidates with a CDL are preferred. Candidates who possess ISA certification, a valid NY State pesticide applicators and/or supervisory license, and who are Certified Landscape Technicians are preferred. Some direct physical labor (lifting, bending, squatting, etc.) is expected.

Compensation:

Depends upon qualifications, excellent benefits package.

Submission Instructions:

Interested applicants are to submit a resume, cover letter, and salary requirements to Ada Chang, Executive Assistant, Operations & Maintenance Department by one of the following means:

E-Mail: achang@hrpt.state.ny.us

Fax: 212.627.9224, Attn: Ada Chang

Postal Mail: Hudson River Park Trust DOH Search
Operations & Maintenance Department
353 West St.
Pier 40, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10014
Attn: Ada Chang, Executive Assistant

NO CALLS PLEASE.