BELLEVUE BOTANICAL GARDEN SOCIETY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Apply now

REPORTS TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SALARY: $120,000 - $140,000 annually, DOE

THE OPPORTUNITY

Step into a leadership role where you can see your work literally bloom. As Executive Director (ED) of the Bellevue Botanical Garden Society (BBGS), you'll provide programming and fundraising in support of one of the nation's premier botanical gardens that inspires nearly a half million visitors annually. Come lead a team of professionals, partnering with a passionate Board, and the City of Bellevue to help shape the next chapter of a beloved community institution. The ED role is a rare opportunity for a mission-driven nonprofit leader to make a lasting impact in the Garden and on the surrounding community.

The Garden

Considered one of the best botanical gardens in the nation, the Bellevue Botanical Garden began its rich history as the humble home of Cal and Harriet Shorts, who committed to sharing the beauty of the land they developed with as many people as possible by bequeathing their home and property to the City of Bellevue in 1981. Opening their doors in 1992, the Garden has since grown to include 53 acres and expanded their exhibits in partnership with community organizations like the Northwest Perennial Alliance, Eastside Fuchsia Society, Washington Native Plant Society, and King County Master Gardners. Today, more than 450,000 visitors from around the globe visit the Garden each year to discover the best plants and gardening practices for healthy Northwest gardens, renew their spirit, delight their senses, and connect with community.

The Society

The Bellevue Botanical Garden Society (BBGS) was formed in 1986 to support the City of Bellevue by cultivating the bond between plants and people, raising funds to support the Garden’s physical growth and development, and providing educational programs and community events. In partnership with the City of Bellevue, BBGS strives to ensure the Shorts’ vision of opening their home to as many people as possible remains a reality, now and well into the future.

To learn more about the Garden’s history click here.

BBGS now seeks their next Executive Director to help usher the Society into the next chapter of inspiring people and building community on the grounds of the beautiful Bellevue Botanical Garden.

THE ROLE

The ED leads the organization with the primary mission of connecting the community to the Garden, through educational programs, visitor services, events, and member engagement.

The ED will join and lead a dedicated team of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees, with direct supervision of the Development Director, Youth & Children's Education Manager, Adult Education Program Manager, Visitor Services Manager, Marketing & Communications Manager, Trillium Store Manager, and contracted accounting and IT services. Leveraging learnings from prior leadership experience, the ED will assess and improve internal systems and processes to ensure staff are fully supported and that BBGS's resources are used efficiently. As the primary ambassador for BBGS, the ED will further relationships with donors and funders and ensure continued collaboration with the City of Bellevue through the City's Garden Director. In partnership with the Board Chair, the ED will continue professionalizing the Board of Directors through timely and consistent communication, coaching and mentorship, and member recruitment.

While each day will be new and exciting, we anticipate the incoming leader will dedicate most of their attention in the following ways:

Organizational Leadership

- Lead the creation and implementation of strategies, policies, and practices in collaboration with the board, staff, and the City of Bellevue to ensure organizational effectiveness.
- Manage a dedicated, passionate, and high-performing team of staff and volunteers. Provide the necessary tools, skills, procedures, and information for optimal performance.
- Own BBGS strategy, goals, and objectives through identifying, creating, gaining board approval, and implementation.
- Hold responsibility for overseeing BBGS' successful partnership with the City of Bellevue and collaborating with the City's Garden Director to optimize resources across both organizations.
- Actively engage in the community to increase awareness of the organization and its mission and represent the Society in all aspects of public and media related activities.

Program and Operational Management

- Oversee and direct all BBGS programs, ensuring mission alignment, effectiveness, and efficiency.
- Provide programs with SMART goals and objectives.
- Keep the Board up to date on the performance, results, and operational conditions of the organization.
- Identify strategic or operational challenges and help craft and present solutions to the Board for consideration.
- Actively participate in and provide staff support for all Board committees.

Financial Management

- Oversee financial systems and controls, ensuring integrity and accuracy.
- Lead annual budgeting process with support of Treasurer and Board President.
- Oversee bookkeeping and revenue procedures and act as primary interface with CPA firm, Financial Advisor, and all financial institutions.
- Review and implement financial policies and procedures.
- Ensure that all financial processes comply with nonprofit regulations and that published reports properly reflect the operating results and financial conditions of BBGS.

Fund Development

- Oversee all fundraising activities, manage systems, and implement tools for success.
- Strategically steward and cultivate major donors.
- Use clear and impactful communications to strengthen relationships and build trust with individual donors, foundations, and corporations.

Human Resources

- Identify and define staffing requirements needed to meet organizational priorities, while keeping within operational and financial constraints.
- Oversee employee hiring, training, performance management, communication, and problem resolution.
- Manage payroll, employee benefits, and all aspects of compensation.
- Ensure policies and procedures are in place to manage paid staff.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPACT

- Collaborate with the Board of Directors, staff, City partners, and other stakeholders to develop and implement a new strategic plan for BBGS. Identify KPIs, and report to the Board on a regular basis on progress toward achieving the goals laid out in the plan.
- Create and implement a new, comprehensive fundraising strategy that will deepen relationships with donors and supporters, diversify the Society's revenue streams, fund the work described in the strategic plan, and ensure long-term financial sustainability.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing and communications plan that effectively promotes BBGS's mission, programs, and impact to a broad audience. Build and strengthen the Society's brand presence across traditional and digital channels, engage current and prospective supporters, and ensure consistent, compelling messaging that reflects the organization's values and advances the goals of the strategic plan.
- While following best practices, work with Board and staff to ensure BBGS has the appropriate systems, policies, procedures and infrastructure in place to support the organization as it continues to grow and evolve.
- Partner with Board leadership to strengthen Board practices, clarify roles, and continue to support the Board in its governance of the organization. Over time, this will likely include helping to identify, recruit, onboard, train, and educate new Board members.

WHAT YOU BRING

We encourage individuals from diverse backgrounds to apply, as your unique experiences can bring valuable perspectives to our team. Candidates will be evaluated on the full range of their lived and learned experience and core competencies, including:

- Demonstrated experience successfully leading a nonprofit organization of similar size and complexity. Horticultural experience is not a requirement.
- Financial acumen: conversant with P&L statements and other financial reports, as well as budget development, management, and reporting.
- The ability to lead effectively both externally and internally. Serving as a visible leader within the Garden and broader community while also supporting staff and organizational operations.
- Strong HR knowledge and people management skills are important, including experience developing equitable staffing structures, transparent employment practices, and policies that align with nonprofit best practices.
- Experience advocating for and investing in employee wellbeing and professional development.
- Demonstrated fundraising and donor development experience. BBGS will benefit from continued diversification of funding sources to support long-term sustainability and growth.
- Strong collaboration and relationship-building skills, particularly the ability to work effectively with City leadership, staff, volunteers, donors, members, and community partners.
- Authentic, transparent, and approachable leadership with strong communication skills, emotional intelligence, and the ability to foster trust, consistency, and a positive organizational culture.

Competencies

- Nonprofit leadership
- People management
- Strategic planning
- Marketing, messaging, branding, & storytelling
- Process improvement and optimization
- Board relations
- Interpersonal communications
- Business rigor
- Communications & media relations
- Public speaking/delivering presentations
- Fundraising & donor relations
- Constructive problem solving
- Mission alignment
- Active listening
- Knowledge of current HR best practices
- Flexibility & adaptability
- Growth mindset
- Change management

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

This is a full-time salaried position requiring a willingness to work some evenings and weekends and occasional travel. The ED role is based in Bellevue, WA and requires regular presence in the office. The salary range is between $120,000 and $140,000, depending on qualifications and experience.

Benefits

The Bellevue Botanic Garden Society offers generous benefits including:

- 100% employer healthcare, dental, and vision plans
- Employer paid life insurance
- A retirement contribution match
- Paid time off

BBGS is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Candidates of color, LGBTQ+ candidates, women, candidates with disabilities, and candidates of all religions and national origins are strongly encouraged to apply.

To Be Considered

If you're excited about this opportunity but don't check every qualification listed, we still want to hear from you and we encourage you to apply.

The position is open until filled. Candidate materials are reviewed on an on-going basis and we encourage you to apply as soon as practical. Initial screening interviews with Valtas will begin by late June. Please include a cover letter (two pages or less) addressed to Board President, Kathryn Carlson, and a resume with your application.

You may direct questions to Ed Rogan at ed@valtasgroup.com, or Chris Cannon at chris@valtasgroup.com.

Apply now