



Job Announcement
Director of Education and Horticulture

About CNPS (California Native Plant Society)

The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) is a statewide non-profit conservation organization (www.cnps.org) founded in 1965, with more than 13,000 members in 35 chapters across California and Baja California Norte, Mexico. The mission of CNPS is to protect California's native plants and their natural habitats, today and into the future, through science, education, stewardship, gardening, and advocacy. Native plants are the foundation of California's globally significant biodiversity. CNPS is meeting this critical moment for biodiversity and climate action by supporting and catalyzing statewide efforts to conserve public lands, save sensitive species and habitats, and create thriving native plant habitats in our urban spaces and wildlands.

Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

At California Native Plant Society, we have a responsibility to address both structural and cultural barriers to experiencing nature and participating in the native plant community. We do so by integrating the values of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) into every facet of our organization and our work. These values inform who we are and how we operate as volunteers, staff, and partners. To learn more about our vision for DEIJ, we welcome you to read our public facing statement and resources [here](#).

Job Summary

The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Education & Horticulture Director leads innovative programs that advance CNPS biodiversity campaigns by connecting people meaningfully with native plants, generating science on the biodiversity benefits of native plant gardening to inform policy advocacy, and collaborating with native plant industry partners to advance shared goals. The director leads a department responsible for guiding and supporting education, community science, horticulture, and restoration programming across CNPS and its 35 chapters. Key projects and initiatives include (and are not limited to): CNPS's Calscape native plant platform, the triennial CNPS Conference (held next in February 2026), coalition-building within the native plant industry, and organization-wide education and community science projects.

The director is a strategic leader, coalition builder, and ambassador for the urban biodiversity campaign., collaborating across CNPS teams, chapters, and a broad network of external partners to integrate native plants into urban landscapes and transform the built environment. The director is also an effective organizational leader who will build and support a cohesive education and horticulture team, foster cross-departmental collaboration, and guide the development of educational tools and engagement practices that empower chapter volunteers to deliver exciting and culturally relevant programming.

The director is part of CNPS's senior leadership team, comprised of three other directors, two senior directors, and the executive director. The director leads a skilled team of eight staff, including two direct reports, in delivering inclusive and accessible programming aligned with CNPS's strategic plan and biodiversity campaigns. This work includes educational programming that engages people in learning about and forming deeper connections with native plants; community science that meets the needs of communities and addresses gaps in biodiversity science; and stewardship activities that promote the responsible use and protection of native plants and their habitats, with a focus on native plant horticulture and habitat restoration.

What You'll Do

Strategic and Campaign Leadership (55%)

- Conduct strategic planning to align Education & Horticulture programming with CNPS's conservation and urban biodiversity campaigns.
- Provide leadership for CNPS's urban biodiversity campaign, including collaboration with public affairs and policy staff, coalition-building with native plant industry partners and cultivating trust-based relationships with Tribal, academic, nonprofit and private sector collaborators.
- Develop concepts to guide discussions on developing a future CNPS Public Education Center.

Organizational Leadership & Project Management (25%)

- Lead annual departmental action planning and budget development.
- Direct the design and implementation of programming in education, community science, horticulture, and restoration.
- Mentor staff, partner with departmental managers to define and track project and staff performance objectives, provide feedback, support professional development, and conduct performance reviews.
- Support the collaborative development and implementation of organization-wide project management processes.
- Establish protocols and lead culture-building to enhance internal collaboration and synergy.
- Strengthen staff and volunteer collaboration to support chapter activities.

Fundraising & Grant Development (10%)

- Collaborate with the Development team and executive director to cultivate partnerships with, and pursue funding from, foundations, organizations, and government agencies.
- Lead grant and contract development and implementation.

Event & Conference Planning, and other responsibilities as directed (10%)

- Provide oversight of planning and implementation of the triennial CNPS Conference (led by the Education and Community Science Manager and supported by an external event planning consultant).
- Support other leadership tasks as directed.

Location

This is a full-time (40 hours per week) hybrid position open to residents of California. The role is based out of the CNPS Sacramento office, with an in-office presence required. In-office presence is currently expected for one day per week to support collaboration, attend director meetings, and participate in departmental programming, trainings, and meetups. This schedule may change periodically based on program needs and partner engagement. To support regular office attendance, we strongly prefer applicants who live or are willing to relocate to within 100 miles of Sacramento, and applicants within 60 miles of the office will receive preference. The role also involves occasional statewide travel to attend meetings and events, facilitate in-person training programs, and transport equipment and supplies. Travel to external sites will be reimbursed.

Physical Requirements

This job can require prolonged sitting and the use of a computer and mouse. It may require participation in field trips on uneven trails with variable grades. These requirements are representative, and reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions.

Additional Information

- Hybrid, full-time position (exempt).
- Standard hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM, with some flexibility.
- Occasional travel throughout California is required.

Who You Are**Strategic Leadership & Campaign Expertise:**

- 8 - 10 years of related professional experience, including 4 - 6 years leading campaign planning and implementation.
- Demonstrated success in leading strategic initiatives and building diverse, cross-sector coalitions at local, regional, and statewide levels.
- Skilled in supporting or leading strategic planning processes and aligning programs with organizational goals.

Project & Organizational Management:

- 4 - 6 years of project management experience, including oversight of large-scale, complex programs.
- Proven ability to develop and manage action plans, program budgets, and performance tracking systems.
- Demonstrated success in managing organizational change and implementing systems that enhance collaboration and operational efficiency.

Education, Community Science, Horticulture, & Restoration:

- Background in education, community science, horticulture, plant or biological sciences, or related fields.
- Proven ability to design and implement inclusive, accessible educational programming.
- Skilled in engaging diverse audiences through culturally relevant science communication and facilitation.
- Experience mentoring volunteers, interns, and junior staff, and supporting capacity-building in community-based organizations.
- Demonstrated familiarity with California native plants and plant communities.

Team Leadership & Collaboration:

- Minimum 4 - 6 years of supervisory experience, with a proven track record of mentoring staff and supporting professional development.
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to lead diverse teams toward shared goals.
- Experience fostering collaboration across departments and engaging volunteer networks.

Technology & Communication:

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with a proven ability to generate ideas and solve problems collaboratively.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office and experienced with hybrid/remote collaboration tools such as Teams, Zoom, and Slack.
- Skilled in using project management platforms - including Microsoft Project, Planner and Asana - to coordinate timelines, track deliverables, and support cross-functional teamwork; capable of training staff and promoting best practices in tool usage

Equity & Values Alignment:

- Demonstrated commitment to advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) in environmental and educational contexts.

- Strong alignment with CNPS's core values of interdependence, stewardship, partnership, and scientific integrity.
- Dedicated to removing barriers to nature education and expanding equitable access to native plant knowledge and experiences.

Nice to Have

While CNPS recognizes that not every individual will exhibit all these characteristics, the successful candidate will possess at least one - and ideally more than one - of the following:

- Graduate degree or higher in a relevant field.
- Experience conducting and publishing research in the natural sciences.
- Understanding of California's conservation challenges and opportunities.
- Knowledge of local organizations and government agencies involved in conservation.
- Experience in marketing, advertising, or public policy.
- Experience and relationships within the native plant and/or seed industry.
- Experience building trust-based relationships with Indigenous partners and communities.
- Familiarity with or prior experience working with CNPS.
- Fluency in more than one language commonly spoken in California.
- Experience managing and motivating distributed or remote teams.

What You'll Get

- **Compensation:** Starting annual compensation between \$105,740 - \$113,949. Reflecting CNPS's commitment to competitive, fair, and transparent compensation, we publish the full potential starting pay ranges for new hires and do not negotiate hiring bonuses.
- **Performance Based Compensation Increases:** Employees may receive up to a 3.8% performance-based annual rate increase.
- **Health Insurance:** 100% coverage of employee premiums for health (Kaiser or Anthem), life, dental, and vision insurance.
- **Retirement Plan:** 401(k) plan with up to 6% matching contributions, available immediately upon employment.
- **Flexible Spending Accounts:** Options for a Flexible Spending Account (FSA), Health Savings Account (HSA), Dependent Care Account (DCA), and Transportation Savings Account (TSA).
- **Paid Leave:** 13 holidays, 12 sick/wellness days, and 15 vacation days.
- **Parental Leave:** 12 weeks of paid parental leave, after one year of employment.
- **Work-from-Home Support:** CNPS-issued laptop, a \$750 home office stipend and a \$60/month telework stipend.
- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Comprehensive support for employees and their families.

- **Professional Development:** Annual budget of \$500 and 32 hours for professional development opportunities.
- **Team Building:** Attendance at annual staff team building and training events.
- **Membership:** Complimentary CNPS Society membership.
- **Bragging Rights:** "Superhero to the Planet" status for your contributions to conservation.

To Apply

To apply, please submit both a cover letter and resume through the [online application portal](#). Be sure to include all relevant professional and personal experiences that align with the position.

As part of the application process, you will be asked to answer several questions designed to help us better understand your skills and experience. At CNPS, we use anonymized screening techniques, which redact identifying information from resumes and cover letters during the initial stages of review. Therefore, your responses to the application questions are especially critical. Please provide thorough answers, even if the information is included in your resume or online profiles. We are targeting a December (2025) start date.

For more details about our hiring process, you can review additional information from the application page.

Applications will be accepted until *October 19, 2025*

Equal Opportunity Policy

CNPS's policy is to afford equal employment opportunity to all persons, regardless of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, marital status, medical condition, military or veteran status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. This policy demonstrates CNPS's commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive environment that values different perspectives and fosters belonging. To better understand the demographic profile of applicants, CNPS requests candidates to fill out the volunteer questionnaire that is part of the application form. Your responses will remain confidential, anonymized, and not shared with the hiring committee. We are committed to building a workplace where employees of all identities feel they belong and are valued for their unique contributions.