



Vancouver Botanical Gardens Association and Simon Fraser University's Institute for Environmental Learning Fellowship 2024 (VBGA Fellowships)

Growing the Potential: Environmental Learning in Botanical Gardens

Now accepting applications for the 2024 VBGA Fellowship program incorporating participatory action research involving environmental education programs located at VanDusen Botanical Garden and Bloedel Conservatory.

Humans are living in the world unsustainably, changing the global climate, overconsuming, while remaining detached from the very ecosystems we are a part of. This is especially true within large urban centres such as Vancouver where for many, meaningful access to natural spaces is made difficult or is constrained by cultural and /or economic factors. Still, botanical gardens such as those managed by the VBGA have a unique opportunity to both develop and implement formal and informal programming to remedy this situation: having locations directly imbedded within the urban fabric of a major city while also benefitting from a wealth of biological and cultural diversity in their living collections.

With the establishment of the VBGA fellowship program (managed by SFU's Institute for Environmental Learning), the VanDusen Gardens and the Bloedel Conservatory have become unique sites for a vibrant and expanding research program which will study the potential and efficacy of using these unique spaces as locations for diverse and inclusive environmental learning. Students proposed for these new graduate fellowships will be experienced or promising researchers enrolled at a BC Postsecondary Institution who wish to undertake community engaged research and work collaboratively with SFU's IEL and the VBGA to formulate a program of participatory action research.

Three fellowships (\$5,000 each) will be competitively awarded to suitably qualified and deserving candidates. **Recipients of the VBGA fellowships will be expected to participate in educational programming at VanDusen Botanical Garden and Bloedel Conservatory while also engaging in the development and implementation of the action research program.** It is anticipated that fellows will spend a minimum of 20 hours per month (on average) from March to December, though the timing of these hours may vary according to variations in scheduled programming and research needs. The fellowships will be supervised by the project lead: Dr. David Zandvliet, director of SFU's Institute for Environmental Learning.

Potential Program/Research Development Opportunities in 2023

- Teaching Garden: A new raised bed garden teaching space coming Summer 2024
- Climate change and botanical gardens
- Citizen science and education
- Biocultural diversity
- Innovative education programs
- Native plants and Indigenous Perspectives, traditional and contemporary ethnobotany and connection to place.

VBGA Educational Programming available to the selected Fellows

- Field trip programs
- Nature Kits
- Pollinator Days
- Camps
- Teacher Professional Development
- Adult Programs
- Family Programs
- Outreach

To apply please send your application to Dr. David Zandvliet at david_zandvliet@sfu.ca .