



Office of Sustainability

4400 University Drive, MSN: 2B9, Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Phone: 703-993-5301; Email: gogreen@gmu.edu

Position Title: Greenhouse and Gardens Coordinator

Supervisor: Doni Nolan, Greenhouse and Gardens Program Manager

Classification: Part-time, hourly wage

Pay: \$12-15 per hour

Work Schedule: 15-30 hours per week, year-round, with occasional weekend and evening work required

Location: Fairfax, Virginia, with flexibility for 1-2 days per week of remote work

The Greenhouse and Gardens program in George Mason University's Office of Sustainability is **hiring a Greenhouse and Gardens Coordinator to support the Innovation Food Forest and the Potomac Heights Vegetable Garden**. This position will support the operations and maintenance of the Innovation Food Forest and the Potomac Heights Vegetable Garden and oversee weekly volunteers for both sites while occasionally supporting the Presidents Park Hydroponic Greenhouse.

About the Greenhouse and Gardens program:

The [Greenhouse and Gardens program](#) is a non-profit, educational effort that maintains three sustainable food production sites: the [Innovation Food Forest](#), the [Potomac Heights Vegetable Garden](#), and the [Presidents Park Hydroponic Greenhouse](#), as well as additional sites. Each year, the program hosts thousands of volunteers, dozens of interns, and numerous special events to teach the community about sustainable agriculture.

The program is supported by four sustainable agriculture experts and led by Doni Nolan, the Greenhouse and Gardens Program Manager. Through multiple sites and a dedicated team, the program provides on-campus, year-round educational opportunities for Mason students and visitors to learn about small-scale, sustainable agriculture operations.

This position will ensure the continued successful operation of the Innovation Food Forest by maintaining outdoor landscapes, leading weekly volunteer shifts, and actively engaging in outreach, partnership building, and research to highlight and improve the program. Occasionally, the Greenhouse and Gardens Coordinator will provide support to the greenhouses on-campus, other sustainable landscaping sites, and sustainability-related events.

The Innovation Food Forest restores the natural cycles, biodiversity, and habitat of a forest while providing sustainable (perennial) food sources for people and wildlife on Mason's Fairfax Campus. It was created in 2013 by Elizabeth Torrens after she was inspired by a Permaculture Design Certification (PDC) course hosted at Mason in 2012. The Office of Sustainability has maintained the Innovation Food Forest since it was created, with the Greenhouse and Gardens program providing ongoing management of the site. In addition, this role will also provide support for a partnership with the Biology Department's Rooftop Greenhouse, also located on the Fairfax Campus, where the team is growing houseplants for retail sales.

The Greenhouse and Gardens Coordinator will help further establish the Greenhouse and Gardens program, and the university, as a national leader in small-scale, sustainable agriculture.

Position Responsibilities:

- **About 70% of the Greenhouse and Gardens Coordinator's time will be spent on-foot, performing the following actions on-campus at outdoor garden sites and greenhouses maintained by the Greenhouse and Gardens program, such as the Innovation Food Forest and Exploratory Hall Rooftop Greenhouse, as needed by:**
 - Educating, mentoring, and instructing volunteers and interns about sustainable agriculture while ensuring the completion of daily tasks
 - Propagating perennials, pulling weeds, pruning shrubs, mulching, and creating sellable goods from products grown on campus to support the program's social entrepreneurship venture
 - Managing outdoor aerobic compost operations, inventory, and shed storage across multiple sites
 - Ensuring proper sanitation and adherence to established safety protocols
- **About 20% of the Greenhouse and Gardens Coordinator's work time will be spent conducting outreach and research, such as:**
 - Solutions-oriented research for efficient plant care and space utilization while also establishing new partnerships and maintaining existing relationships
 - Corresponding with volunteers and interested participants via email, phone, social media, etc.
 - Maintaining work schedules and updating the [Sustainable Sign Ups Volunteer Portal](#) on a regular basis
 - Coordinating with the Office of Sustainability's Education and Outreach team for event planning, promotion, and recruitment
- **About 10% of the Greenhouse and Gardens Coordinator's work time must be spent virtually:**
 - Meeting with Doni and the team for a weekly meeting to discuss scheduling, weekly tasks, overall program performance, and updates
 - In addition, this position will meet with Doni for one-on-one meetings as needed
- **On an occasional basis**, this position will serve as additional staff support for other sites as needed, such as the Presidents Park Hydroponic Greenhouse and the pollinator garden, where they will engage in:
 - Educating, mentoring, and instructing volunteers and interns about sustainable agriculture and ensuring daily tasks are completed
 - Pulling weeds, pruning, propagating, and completing additional site maintenance, as needed

Other reasonable tasks may be assigned in support of the position's responsibilities as the program's operations evolve.

Required and preferred qualifications and application details on the next page.

Qualifications:

Requirements:

- Prior experience in sustainable agriculture, horticulture, or food production
- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Strong organizational skills
- Prior experience coordinating, leading, and training volunteers
- Ability to lift ~50 lbs.

Preferred:

- Prior experience volunteering or interning with the Greenhouse and Gardens program
- Permaculture Design Certification or other related training in horticulture, sustainable agriculture, etc.
- Prior experience with perennial landscaping and garden maintenance
- Prior experience with propagation and/or nursery plants
- Prior experience working remotely
- Prior experience using Microsoft Office Suite, particularly Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Outlook

George Mason University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, committed to promoting inclusion and equity in its community. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability or veteran status, or any characteristic protected by law.

Anticipated Start Date:

We hope the candidate will start as early as possible, ideally by **October 18**, but no later than **November 1**.

Application Requirements:

To apply, please email your resume, cover letter, and regular weekly availability to the manager, Doni Nolan, at dnolan6@gmu.edu by **October 24 for priority consideration**. Applications will be reviewed as they are received until a qualified candidate is hired, so apply early!

Please include "Greenhouse and Gardens Coordinator [- Your Name]" in the subject line and carbon copy the gogreen@gmu.edu email address.

Please include your regular weekly availability and preferred times to meet virtually for a 30-to-60-minute interview from **October 11 to October 29**. Applications that do not follow our requirements may be disqualified as we're searching for organized and detail-oriented candidates.

Application Deadline:

The **priority deadline for application materials is October 24**. Applications will be reviewed as they are received until a qualified candidate is hired.

George Mason University Vaccination Requirements

New hires starting after August 15, 2021, must have received at least one COVID-19 vaccination by their start date, be fully vaccinated within 45 days of their start date, and submit documentary proof unless they have an approved medical or religious exemption by their start date. For updated George Mason University COVID-19 vaccination requirements, please visit [George Mason University Vaccination Requirements](#).

George Mason University Safety Information

Mason's Annual Security and Fire Safety Report is available at <http://police.gmu.edu/annual-security-report/>

About the Office of Sustainability:

The Office of Sustainability uses the strengths of George Mason University – innovation, responsiveness, flexibility, and community strength – to provide leadership in environmental, social, and economic stewardship on Mason's campuses and throughout the local and global communities the institution is part of. The office provides expert guidance and engages in project-focused work advancing Mason towards its commitment to achieve carbon neutrality while actively engaging students and the community in experiential, hands-on learning opportunities through programs like the Patriot Green Fund and the Greenhouse and Gardens. <https://green.gmu.edu/>

About George Mason University:

George Mason University is an innovative, entrepreneurial institution with national distinction in both academics and research. Mason holds a top U.S. News and World Report "Up and Coming" spot for national universities and is recognized for its global appeal and excellence in higher education.

Mason is currently the largest and most diverse university in Virginia with students and faculty from all 50 states and over 135 countries studying in over 200 degree programs at campuses in Arlington, Fairfax and Prince William, as well as at learning locations across the commonwealth. Rooted in Mason's diversity is a campus culture that is both rewarding and exciting, work that is meaningful, and opportunities to both collaborate and create. <https://www2.gmu.edu/>