POSITION PROFILE

President and CEO
Holden Forests & Gardens
Cleveland, Ohio
ABOUT HOLDEN FORESTS & GARDENS

Holden Forests & Gardens (HF&G) is comprised of two of Northeast Ohio’s most important environmental and cultural institutions — the Holden Arboretum and Cleveland Botanical Garden. Together, the two make Holden Forests & Gardens one of the largest public gardens in the United States. Offering distinct arboretum and botanical garden experiences for the public along with a private plant breeding research site, HF&G is like no other public garden in the country.

The Holden Arboretum is a 3,500-acre outdoor museum of trees and woody plants located in rural Kirtland, OH, in Lake and Geauga Counties. The Arboretum campus offers guests the opportunity to wander on miles of hiking trails and around ponds, or to enjoy cultivated display gardens. Its vast territory allows for significant community forestry and conservation work within unique natural areas, as well as scientific research that leverages partnerships with the United States Forest Service (USFS), Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), and nearby universities.

The Cleveland Botanical Garden is located 25 miles west of the Holden Arboretum in the City of Cleveland’s University Circle cultural district. The Garden campus is an urban oasis of curated gardens combined with glasshouse biomes that transport guests to the ecosystems of Costa Rica and Madagascar.

MISSION

Holden Forests & Gardens connects people with the wonder, beauty, and value of trees and plants, to inspire action for healthy communities.

VISION

All communities transformed into vibrant places where trees, plants, and people thrive.
HF&G leverages its two campuses and their different geographies, audiences, identities, and traditions to fulfill its mission and serve over 300,000 guests and 18,000 member households annually. In total, HF&G maintains and cares for more than 17,000 individually tracked trees and plant groupings and over 3,500 objects in its non-living collection and research herbarium. A $16M annual operating budget and endowments totaling $140M support these activities.

HF&G’s core program areas of Research, Conservation, Community Forestry, Horticulture & Collections, Education, Community Engagement and Guest Experience collaborate across both campuses, creating layers of engagement for the most casual visitor or more serious scientist to better connect with and understand the value of trees and plants. HF&G hosts a range of public programming, exhibitions, and special events throughout the year to provide opportunities for people to experience and enjoy nature in ways that attract awareness about and build appreciation for the environment. Based upon its renowned plant collections including Rhododendron, Quercus, Malus, Magnolia, conifers, and Acer, HF&G engages visitors in a range of science and conservation initiatives and provides a variety of educational offerings for all interest levels, including:

**People for Trees**

With a goal of planting 15,000 trees in Northeast Ohio by 2025, this movement engages the community in becoming a partner with HF&G to help to mitigate the effects of climate change by simply planting and caring for a tree. To date, over 9,700 trees have been planted, pledged, or given away with community partners in Northeast Ohio.

**Working Woods**

Working Woods is an award-winning and nationally recognized research and demonstration site focused on stewardship of privately owned woodlands. Recognizing that most of Ohio’s forest is privately owned and that private landowners face a variety of challenges in stewarding their land, Working Woods models sustainable forestry practices for owners and professionals. It is also a research site that explores best practices for helping woodland properties evolve from young, forested land into older, healthy forests as well as the impact climate change will have on our forests. Working Woods is a resource for landowners, natural resource professionals, ODNR, soil and water conservation and park districts, consulting foresters, and more.
Great Lakes Basin Forest Health Collaborative

The GLB FHC connects efforts across federal agencies, conservation groups, researchers, and members of the public who are working together to save our region’s trees from invasive insects and diseases. With a focus on ash, beech, and hemlock, the collaborative identifies trees that are resistant to these threats, so we can breed and replant pest-resistant trees.

Scientific Advancements at the Long Science Center

Based at Long Science Center, the Research department is pioneering the science of plants and trees, conducting nationally recognized research, while fostering the next generation of leaders through its robust internship and graduate student programs. With expertise in basic and applied research in plant breeding, plant physiology, forest ecology, tree pests and diseases, soil ecology, and evolutionary ecology, the staff is improving our fundamental understanding of nature.

Research and Collections at Leach Research Station

Additional research and collections activities occur at the David G. Leach Research Station, a 30-acre facility in Madison, OH, dedicated to the breeding, evaluation, curation, and scholarship of *Rhododendron*. Its gardens contain hybrids developed by HF&G staff as well as local nurseries in Northeast Ohio. The site also houses hundreds of one-of-a-kind rhododendrons developed in HF&G’s breeding program and available for study by staff and external researchers who use the collection to answer questions about plant ecology, physiology, genetics, and climate change.
**Tree Corps**

Tree Corps is an arboriculture workforce development program that provides valuable training and entry-level job placement for Cleveland residents in the tree care industry. Funded by The Cleveland Foundation, the program offers a six-week paid job experience learning key arboriculture skills, engaging in field experiences, and working on tree and land care related to the Cleveland Tree Plan.

**Green Corps**

Through Green Corps, HF&G inspires local teens to consider careers in the green industry. High school students participate in paid internships in a variety of departments throughout the Garden and Arboretum, receiving mentorship, practicing green-industry and non-profit administrative skills, and learning about the benefits of trees and plants. The students emerge from the program better equipped to employ environmentally friendly practices in their communities and future careers.

**Education Programs for All Ages**

Children and adults gain a deeper understanding of the natural world through our formalized pre-K through college programs, specialized classes, immersive tours, and informative lectures. Nearly 26,000 participants benefited from programs such as CLE4SCI, Growing Students in Science, Sprouting Young Scientists (SPYS), field trips, summer camps, adult programs, and more last year.
Along with large-scale special exhibits at both campuses, including the long-running favorite celebration of orchids, HF&G also hosts live events that thoughtfully weave nature-based science and horticultural skill into fun, accessible opportunities for the casual guest to connect with plants and trees. HF&G is growing its audience through significant investments in guest experience programs, including a completely reimagined holiday exhibition debuting at the Cleveland Botanical Garden in 2023. Additionally, both the Holden Arboretum and Cleveland Botanical Garden feature destination attractions, designed to introduce the wonder of plants and trees to all, both near to home and across the globe:

**Murch Canopy Walk and Kalberer Emergent Tower at Holden Arboretum**

The Canopy Walk invites guests to stroll along a 500-foot-long elevated walkway that rises 65 feet above the forest floor, creating a walk amongst the treetops and providing an entirely new perspective on the forest. The Emergent Tower is 120 feet (or approximately 12 stories) tall, which allows for a breathtaking, unrivaled 360-degree view of the surrounding area – all the way to Lake Erie.

**Hershey Children’s Garden at Cleveland Botanical Garden**

One of the first of its kind in the country when it opened in 1999, the Hershey Children’s Garden still serves as a model for children’s gardens around the world. The outdoor garden encourages children to engage in immersive, hand’s-on nature-based activities that help disconnect from technology and discover the wonders of nature.

**The Eleanor Armstrong Smith Glasshouse at the Cleveland Botanical Garden**

The 18,000-square-foot glasshouses became the first of their kind when opened in 2003, focusing on the flora and fauna of two distinct biomes — the spiny desert of Madagascar and the tropical rainforest of Costa Rica. The Madagascar biome features a world-class collection of rare plants and live animals, while butterfly releases in the Costa Rica biome are a frequent highlight.
HOLDEN FORESTS & GARDENS IS GUIDED BY FIVE CORE VALUES IN ADDITION TO AN EMPHASIS ON DEAI:

Clarity of Purpose: The mission drives decision-making. We are passionate advocates for trees and plants and the role of HF&G as a public garden in service to the community.

Curious Minds: We ask courageous questions, keep an open mind, and listen to feedback. We explore new ideas and generate creative solutions. We produce stronger results together than we could produce independently.

Power of Knowledge: We conduct research and assess results to make data-driven and evidence-based decisions. We share our learnings and expertise widely.

Sense of Belonging: We create welcoming and accessible environments. We cultivate relationships and experiences that respect all voices and provide equitable opportunities.

Forward Momentum: We approach our work with a spirit of optimism and desire for continuous improvement. We aim for results that lead the way in our field and enable the organization to grow and flourish in all areas – people, plants, finances, and operations.

HF&G is focused on increasing diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusiveness at every level of the organization in order to make the campuses a welcoming place for staff, Board, volunteers, visitors, supporters, and the surrounding community. HF&G has prioritized DEAI through community engagement in its comprehensive site planning process. To advance that work, HF&G identified and is progressing organizational DEAI goals, including:

- DEAI trainings for staff and board members
- Introducing a $25 family Access membership to improve community access to HF&G
- Increasing BIPOC representation on staff and Board

HF&G values and promotes diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusiveness in its employment practices, board of directors, volunteer program, community partnerships, and programs. We welcome all who are interested to join us in advancing our mission.

For more information on Holden Forests & Gardens, please visit: holdenfg.org

2021 Impact Report
WHAT’S NEXT

After close to a century of impact as separate institutions, the Holden Arboretum and Cleveland Botanical Garden integrated and began doing business as Holden Forests & Gardens in 2014. As HF&G, the organization was restructured as a single management team in 2018, and all human, financial, programmatic assets, and collections were combined to create a dynamic and impactful plant museum spanning multiple campuses and serving the people of northeast Ohio and beyond.

HF&G identified priorities for its future in the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan. The plan centers HF&G’s goal of discovering new ways to leverage its unique assets and resources to expand programming and partnerships, create new community connections, and expand work with and within the many diverse communities the organization serves. HF&G is mid-way through the implementation of the Plan, which outlines five key goals:

1. Build a more engaged, connected, collaborative community presence.
2. Deliver a visitor experience that inspires wonder and highlights the beauty and value of trees and plants.
3. Catalyze action and model solutions for environmental stewardship and climate change.
4. Increase diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusiveness at every level within HF&G.
5. Consistently achieve sustainable financial results that enable growth and capital investment.
Since the Plan’s inception, HF&G has made significant progress in each of the priority areas. Key accomplishments include:

- Achieved accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) in 2021. This was the first time accreditation was awarded to both campuses as a combined organization.
- Completed a comprehensive site plan for both campuses, including long-term visions for buildings and grounds, led by Nelson Byrd Woltz.
- Completed a feasibility study in advance of launching a comprehensive capital campaign.
- Awarded over $1M for forest health and pest research in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy. Holden Arboretum is also slated to receive $335,000 in Congressionally Directed Spending in the 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act, which will support Holden’s Forest Resiliency, Conservation and Canopy Coverage Expansion Project.
- Formed and subsequently expanded the Great Lakes Basin Forest Health Collaborative, including new hemlock breeding program.
- Planted, pledged, or gave away over 9,700 trees toward the People for Trees campaign.
- Opened the Perennial Playspace intergenerational gallery at the Cleveland Botanical Garden.
- Implemented a re-imagined Green Corps program as a campus-based experiential workforce learning internship serving 24 high school students annually.
- Addressed $3.5 million of capital and/or deferred maintenance needs, including a $1.2M land purchase to protect rare and valuable wetlands in the middle of Arboretum natural areas.
- On track to achieve 4-5% compounded annual growth rate on earned and contributed revenue over five years by the end of FY24, after recovering from 20% drop in revenue due to COVID-19 pandemic.
In February 2021, HF&G began master planning for both the Holden Arboretum and Cleveland Botanical Garden by engaging a broad and diverse group of constituents in visioning HF&G’s next decade of impact through the lens of accessibility and equity.

The planning work highlighted the need for a comprehensive campaign to fund the expansion and improvement of facilities and visitor experiences across its two campuses.

The campaign will fund priorities including ADA-accessible paths, four-season trails, and renovated gardens at both campuses; glasshouse renovations and enhanced exhibition spaces at Cleveland Botanical Garden; and enhanced visitor amenities at the Holden Arboretum, including a new visitor center.

Finally, the campaign will build upon a robust endowment that ensures HF&G attracts and retains top talent, the visitor experience remains accessible, research and conservation efforts drive new discoveries, and HF&G sustains healthy collections and a healthy organization.

Holden Forests & Gardens will celebrate its centennial in 2030 and 2031 and seeks a strong, visionary leader to build on its recent successes and leverage momentum to propel the organization forward.
THE OPPORTUNITY

HF&G is currently enjoying its strongest position in its history, and the opportunities for growth and community impact in northeast Ohio and beyond are tremendous. The next leader of HF&G will have the benefit of entering an organization that has engaged in substantial planning work. The next President and CEO will be able to build off this foundation of planning, while also having the opportunity to place their personal stamp on the institution.

The Board of Directors seeks a leader with a passion for the mission of Holden Forests & Gardens and the experience to take the helm of a nationally renowned institution and steer it into the future.

The President and CEO will provide guidance and oversight to ensure the successful implementation of the current strategic plan, working closely with HF&G’s various constituencies. The presence of a highly skilled and experienced senior staff, working together now for almost five years, will allow the new President and CEO the opportunity to implement their vision and creativity from the outset.

Additionally, the President and CEO will add to the substantial financial resources, through philanthropy and earned income, required to realize HF&G’s vision. This includes the execution of a $50 million capital campaign alongside the development of operating and endowment support to sustain and grow HF&G into the future.

The President and CEO will also be tasked with managing the overall operations of HF&G with an eye towards efficiency and collaboration among departments to ensure continuous improvement at all levels of the organization. The President and CEO will work with the staff and the Board to set achievable budgets, develop and implement policies and procedures, and evaluate HF&G’s performance against the strategic goals approved by the Board. The President and CEO will also cultivate a continued culture of excellence and belonging guided by HF&G’s five core values.

The next leader will have the opportunity to build on a strong foundation and bring creative and innovative leadership to future developments such as:

- The planning and building of new facilities and gardens;
- The implementation of expanded programs in conservation, research, education and wellness;
- The securing of large-scale exhibits that both create awareness of HF&G and reinforce its mission;
- Continuing the strategic accumulation of well-documented and relevant plant collections; and
- Engaging and diversifying audiences via collaborations that support the community and HF&G’s programs, exhibits and collections.
KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NEXT PRESIDENT AND CEO INCLUDE:

**Strategic Leadership and Planning:**
- Lead strategic and long-range planning.
- Oversee the effective utilization of resources to advance and support mission-based programs and operations.
- Explore new avenues of expansion and influence, including providing a leadership role in science and research, conservation policy, and collaborations with other institutions in addressing and confronting issues of climate change.
- Lead the Board and staff in identifying and implementing strategic initiatives that expand HF&G’s capacity to serve the residents of Cleveland and the Northeast Ohio region and beyond.
- Facilitate and lead the continued commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

**Ambassadorship and Fundraising:**
- Excite HF&G’s many constituencies with its potential to be one of the most significant public gardens in the world and engage them in the opportunity for excellence.
- Represent HF&G as a leader in horticulture, plant conservation, vocational training in horticulture, lifelong learning, and environmental education.
- Oversee development and fundraising activities to support operations, special projects, endowment growth, membership growth, and capital campaigns.
- Participate actively in philanthropic relations with major donors to secure their support for ongoing mission pursuits, campaigns, and selected initiatives.
- Provide leadership for marketing and communications activities, including public relations, brand, and marketing initiatives.
- Represent HF&G to institutional partners, peer institutions, government entities, professional associations, the media, and the general public.
- Promote HF&G through public speaking, media interviews, writing opinion pieces, social media, and by attending industry events.
- Develop and maintain strategic and collaborative relationships with community members, organizations, and educational institutions. Serve and participate on external committees, Boards, and professional organizations, collaborating with local, regional, national, and international partners.
- Work with elected officials and administrators at the local, state, and national levels.
Governance:

- Exercise best practices in governance and ethics and in all ways that will best serve the mission and goals of the HF&G.
- Serve as primary staff liaison to the Board of Directors, engaging and coordinating with the Board and its committees, and adhering to specific responsibilities and authorities of the President and CEO.

Management, Operational, and Financial Stewardship:

- Responsible for all aspects of the operations of a major, complex institution, including management of a $16 million annual budget encompassing plant collections, facilities, and grounds; scientific research initiatives; learning and engagement programs; finance and administration, including human resources and information technology; visitor operations; retail and events; development and membership; and marketing and communications.
- Lead an organization of 125 full time, 43 part-time, and 105 temporary employees (seasonal workers, interns and workforce development staff including Green Corps, Tree Corps and NOWcorps), as well as 600 volunteers.
- Oversee activities pertaining to annual budget preparation and planning, expense and revenue management, and endowment management, in addition to all business strategy.
- Provide proactive, creative, and effective leadership related to earned revenue, ensuring optimal financial performance of all revenue-generating activities of HF&G including admission, education, special events, retail, restaurant, catering, and facility rental, while reflecting HF&G’s mission and high standards.
- Oversee the successful completion of capital projects on time and within budget. Ensure that all aesthetic and design choices meet HF&G’s standards and style.
- Manage a complex organization with several businesses including visitor attraction, retail, events, rentals, and education programs as well as a wide variety of grant-based programs.
CANDIDATE PROFILE

A Passion for Holden Forests & Gardens' Mission

Fully embracing the mission, the President and CEO will bring a sincere passion for public gardens and arboreta, horticulture, science and conservation and will possess a deep commitment to expanding the influence of HF&G in the Northeast Ohio region and beyond. The ability to embrace and operate in line with HF&G’s core values—clarity of purpose, curious minds, power of knowledge, sense of belonging, and forward momentum—is critical. The President and CEO continually innovates with the goal of helping HF&G to broaden its reach and deepen its impact. The President and CEO leads with sincerity and empathy, honesty and credibility, and the highest levels of personal and professional integrity and ethics.

A Visionary and Strategic Leader

The President and CEO is a visionary, innovative, and strategic leader able to develop and articulate a vision in alignment with the mission for the ongoing advancement of a complex institution. This executive brings proven success leveraging the talents of a high-performing staff and Board to lead strategic planning and guide implementation and evaluation efforts. This leader actively and strategically seeks out partnerships and builds coalitions to advance the mission of the institution and its strategic priorities. The President and CEO must recognize the uniqueness of HF&G’s position as a pillar of leadership in the local community, the Northeast Ohio region, and within its national and global sphere of influence.
A Dynamic Ambassador and Fundraiser

The President and CEO believes in the power of plants to improve the lives of individuals, communities, and the environment. As HF&G’s primary ambassador, the President and CEO is an influential leader, capable of understanding and communicating the value of trees across a wide range of audiences, such as academia, corporate collaborators, legislators, and philanthropists. This leader possesses exceptional interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to build and sustain strong support across a wide range of constituents including staff, Board, donors, volunteers, community members, scientists, academia, and the public. The President and CEO brings a natural inclination to the role for engagement with people to attract new audiences, identify new funding opportunities, and sustain programs and operations. The ideal candidate will inspire trust and confidence and excel at developing strategies to amplify HF&G’s brand and visibility both in the Northeast Ohio region and beyond. The President and CEO will promote the importance of diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion in all areas of HF&G’s work and convey its importance with authenticity, sincerity, and passion.

Institutional Leadership and Business Acumen

The President and CEO is an executive who has operational and financial management experience and the ability to set clear priorities, delegate, and guide investment in and development of people and systems. The ideal candidate has a proven track record of successful planning and oversight of large and complex organizations and will ensure fiduciary responsibility, transparent financial management practices, and accountability. A natural leader, the President and CEO has the ability to inspire staff, Board, volunteers, partners, and donors to work together to achieve new heights for HF&G. The ideal candidate must have a willingness to learn and gain a deeper understanding of the needs of HF&G. The candidate also brings demonstrated success building a culture of collaboration and support, motivating and inspiring others to achieve impact through creativity, fostering teamwork, and leveraging individual strengths to meet organizational goals. The President and CEO possesses the proven track record and ability to leverage the talents of a dynamic staff and provide a productive work environment with professional growth opportunities that result in team cohesion and camaraderie.
ABOUT CLEVELAND

From world-renowned cultural institutions to vibrant neighborhoods, inspired food and beverage offerings, action-packed sports and indie shops and art galleries, engaging experiences can be found around almost every corner in Cleveland. More information about things to do in Cleveland can be found through This is Cleveland.

Over 1.7 million residents call Greater Cleveland home, with the region providing access to Lake Erie’s beautiful shoreline, as well as 150 parks, 35 museums, countless acclaimed restaurants and unique neighborhoods, while maintaining a low cost of living. Known as “The Forest City” among many other nicknames, Cleveland serves as the center of the Cleveland Metroparks nature reserve system. With 55,000 acres of parkland between the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the Cleveland Metroparks (affectionately known as the “Emerald Necklace”) the region offers access to a strong outdoor scene, balanced with the benefits of an urban area.

Designated as a global city by the Globalization and World Cities Research Network, Cleveland is home to several major cultural institutions, including Playhouse Square, the 2nd largest performing arts center in the US, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. University Circle, which includes the Cleveland Botanical Garden, is the cultural epicenter of Cleveland and has more cultural, social and medical institutions in one square mile than anywhere else in the world; it includes the world class Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, The Cleveland Orchestra, Case Western Reserve University, and two world-class health care systems (Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals). Cleveland is also home to the first-ever community foundation, The Cleveland Foundation, founded in 1914.

The city’s major league professional sports teams include the Cleveland Browns, the Cleveland Cavaliers, and the Cleveland Guardians.

Cleveland’s cost of living comes in at roughly 12.11% less than the national average, making it an affordable location for professionals. Find out more about the cost of living by using the Discover Cleveland Cost of Living Calculator linked HERE.
Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience. The salary range for this role is $375,000 - $425,000 with a generous benefits package.
Koya Partners, the executive search firm that specializes in mission-driven search, has been exclusively retained for this engagement. Anne McCarthy, Claire Hunt and Kaley Blaszinski are leading the search. To make recommendations or to express interest in this role please email HFG@koyapartners.com. All nominations, inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

Koya Partners is committed to providing an accessible search process for all, including individuals living with disabilities. If you need assistance expressing interest online or any aspect of the recruitment process, please email HFG@koyapartners.com or NonprofitSearchOps@divsearch.com.

About Koya Partners

Koya Partners, a part of Diversified Search Group, is a leading executive search and strategic advising firm dedicated to connecting exceptionally talented people with mission-driven clients. Our founding philosophy—The Right Person in the Right Place Can Change the World—guides our work as we partner with nonprofits & NGOs, institutions of higher education, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

For more information about Koya Partners, visit www.koyapartners.com.