



Festival Beach

FOOD FOREST

Festival Beach Food Forest Steward - Request for Applications

Background:

The Festival Beach Food Forest (FBFF) is a grassroots pilot project neighboring the Festival Beach Community Garden and RBJ Residential Center in East Austin. We have transformed two-thirds of an acre of City Park land into an edible forest garden where visitors can openly forage and enjoy fresh food on the shores of Lady Bird Lake. Fruits, nuts, vegetables and herbs now flourish in this experimental pilot project to reclaim the public commons. Our mission is to grow edible forest gardens on public land that nourish, educate and inspire.

FBFF is currently managed by volunteer community members, who are organized into four teams: Plant Circle (site stewardship, planting, water, etc), People Circle (community partnerships, communications, volunteer tracking, etc.), Prosper Circle (budgeting, grant management, fundraising, etc.), and Purpose Circle (inter-team communication, long-term and strategic planning, etc.).

Phase 1 of the food forest was approved by the Austin City Council in 2014, and the first groundbreaking and planting of 100 fruit trees occurred in October/November of 2015. Phase 1 is now a robust forest garden stewarded by volunteers in the community.

Austin City Council gave the FBFF team approval to begin installing Phase 2 of the food forest in August of 2021 – this will bring the full acreage of the food forest to around 3 acres. We are currently planning, fundraising, and working with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) on a feasibility study and renewed maintenance agreement before beginning Phase 2.

This Land Steward position will play a significant role in developing Phase II of the food forest and ensuring the continued thriving of Phase I. In 2021, Festival Beach Food Forest was awarded the [Thriving Cities Challenge](#) grant, which is now enabling the FBFF team to hire a part-time community land steward to cultivate climate resilience and food justice in the heart of Austin.

Position Overview:

The Festival Beach Food Forest Land Steward will be responsible for the care and maintenance of our growing plot of City of Austin parkland. They will oversee and organize installations of new plantings and structures, ensuring proper health and integration. They will be accountable for utilizing and following a set monthly budget in order to maintain irrigation, tools and seasonal plant purchases. The Land Steward will also assist in regular work days by identifying needs, creating a volunteer workday plan and acquiring needed supplies. Develop a working knowledge of City of Austin Parks & Recreation guidelines and Community Gardens Program resources.

Responsibilities and Duties:

- **Food Forest:**
 - Maintain & steward existing Food Forests and systems including irrigation, labeling, mapping, mulching, earthwork maintenance, pest & disease identification & management, invasive/pioneer species management, and general monitoring.
 - Replace casualties and gaps in existing Food Forest plantings.
 - Using existing plant lists, create an operating manual for ongoing maintenance of the Food Forest.
 - Manage and coordinate with other team members to achieve comprehensive landscape stewardship, with a focus on training and empowering a robust volunteer base
 - Prune, mulch & otherwise steward ranch's existing fruit trees on regular schedule
- **Site Development:**
 - Help coordinate design & installation of future zones of Food Forest including landscape mapping, Permacultural mapping, community outreach, infrastructure design, plant selection, and well-coordinated installation plan.
 - Planning, (in collaboration with the plant team/site dev. team) and procuring upcoming season planting
 - Work with the City of Austins PARD as owners of the land on future site development
- **Programming:**
 - Plan and lead, or ensure volunteer leadership of, monthly Plant Walk, including introducing the food forest, permaculture, and identifying plants and their uses.
 - Plan and lead, or ensure volunteer leadership of, monthly Second Saturday Community Workdays by identifying needs, creating a volunteer work plan and acquiring needed supplies.
 - Lead occasional harvest workshops on ad hoc basis
 - Assist in planning food forest events and programs.

Qualifications / Experience Required:

- Degree or certification in one or more of the following: permaculture, horticulture, forestry, arboriculture, plant science, landscape design or related field required, or 2-3 years of relevant work experience in a related field.
- Possess a love for fruit trees and perennials, their methods of propagation, planting, pruning, grafting, seeding, and care.
- Passion and penchant for interacting with, educating, and leading community participants, volunteers and staff of varied ages and backgrounds.
- Flexible, willing to work simultaneously on a wide range of tasks/projects and ability to prioritize tasks.
- Exceptional listening and communication skills with sensitivity to cultural communication differences.
- Possess cooperative, service-oriented attitude.
- Must be able to routinely move Food Forest items, weighing up to 25 lbs.
- Proficiency in Google Drive, Microsoft Office and related software.

Preferred:

- Knowledge of native ecology & species and climate specific to Central Texas.
- Certification in permaculture design.
- Well grounded in the cultural history and community of East Austin.
- Experience with food forest and/or nursery management.
- Experience as an agricultural or environmental educator.
- Training in active listening and constructive communication techniques such as Non-Violent Communication, meeting facilitation, etc.

Compensation: \$25-30/hour, averaging 20-30 hours per week, Total compensation of \$32,500

Duration: Dependent; approximately 12-18 months, with possibility of renewal

Reports to: FBFF “Plant Circle” & “Purpose Circle” Leaders

Typical Working Conditions

The Food Forest Steward will work outdoors. There will be exposure to Central Texas conditions including sun, rain and temperatures above 100°F and below 40°F.

Typical Working Hours

A typical week will include 3-4 days of 3-4 hours spent on site with volunteer and community groups. For instance:

- Tuesday morning: 2-3 hours, 1x week
- Wednesday night: 2-3 hours, 1x week
- Thursday morning: 2-3 hours, 1x week
- First Saturday plant walk: 2-3 hours, 1x month
- Second Saturday workday: 3-4 hours, 1x month
- Plant team meeting: 2 hours, 1x month

Remaining weekly hours will involve self-scheduled independent work.

Essential Physical Tasks

Position will require continual walking, standing, stooping, bending, kneeling, reaching, cutting and repetitively lift and carry items up 25 lbs. Tolerate extreme temperatures (especially heat) for 6-10 hours a day; Demonstrate sufficient dexterity to be able to perform the principal responsibilities of the job, including to harvest; to install, position, and move materials; and to manipulate tools and equipment.

Application Process

Fill out the application form linked here; you will need to upload a letter of intent and résumé:
<https://forms.gle/jJZw5B3wP72LWTjS8>

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Apply ASAP and no later than January 31, 2023.

Festival Beach Food Forest is committed to equal employment opportunity regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, language, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or sex expression or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.