



Society Promoting Environmental Conservation
Practical solutions for sustainable cities

School Gardens Program Assistant

Engage and interact with school age children and youth. Help us lead interactive garden/environmental literacy programs, outdoors at elementary and secondary schools!

About the Program: The Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC) is a not-for-profit, charitable organization. Established in 1969 in Vancouver, SPEC is a leader in urban sustainability. Our mission is the environment through programming that reflects education, advocacy and community innovation. For over 16 years, the School Gardens Program has facilitated food and environmental literacy education for K to 12 aiming to **connect children to their food, to each other, to nature and their community**. To learn more about our work, visit our website www.spec.bc.ca/school-gardens

The Program requires energetic volunteers to assist with gardening and food literacy activities for school aged children outdoors, on school grounds or nearby green spaces from mid September to the end of June 2025 with some assistance for summer out-of-school care programming.

Volunteers (supervised by the Program Coordinator) will have an opportunity to build their experience directly engaging with students aged 5 - 18 years while helping to facilitate short interactive activities on topics including organic gardening techniques, pollinators, soil science, beneficial insects and seasonal changes. Volunteers will be provided with resources and tips to support classroom management.

Minimum age: 18+

The Commitment: This is a flexible short term volunteer opportunity. Day time availability is required. However, we ask that volunteers commit a **minimum of 12 shifts** Preference is given to volunteers open to fulfill the shifts for the duration of the program.

Location: Varying locations. The majority of schools are located in Vancouver and accessible by public transportation, rideshare or personal vehicle.

Dates/Times: Monday to Friday. Full day from 8:30 am to 3:10 pm with a 10 min break and 35 min lunch break. Shifts may be cancelled (3 to 24 hours in advance) due to factors such as inclement weather, staff illness or emergency, and or change in a school's schedule. The position starts in either September or early March.

What you will gain:

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Opportunity to develop and enhance the following skills:

- Time management, classroom management - applied practice working with school aged children, patience, learning to work in teams, communication, leadership, problem solving and listening skills, adaptability, conflict management, and developing confidence.
- Making a meaningful contribution for school aged children, to develop healthy eating habits and strengthen their appreciation for the natural world.
- Gardening skills - further improve your skills through practical experience.
- Networking/Reference: A reference or reference letter (after 40 hours of volunteering)

Responsibilities:

Supporting the Program Coordinator with set-up* and clean up (garden supplies/activity areas) for each lesson, some light gardening work (watering, weeding, composting, harvesting, planting), assisting with nature or garden based activities per scheduled session (15-20 minutes) per class/workshop, ensuring student engagement during the lesson - guidance and resources will be provided.

**Some heavy lifting will be required (helping carry, move and organize supplies and activity stations, setting up tables and or tents). Please note that this volunteer opportunity takes place outdoors in all kinds of weather (rain, snow, wind or sun). Please advise if you have any health or physical limitations, allergies or require any additional support.*

Qualifications:

Love of nature, gardening, and engaging young minds!

Some experience working and or volunteering with children ages 5-18 years of age.

Knowledge and experience with organic gardening (garden methods, soil health, beneficial insects). This is a suitable opportunity for individuals in programs focused on education, sustainable agriculture, horticulture, environmental studies, environmental science, forestry or other sustainability programs.

Other Requirements: Volunteers that meet the criteria will be asked to participate in an online interview. Selected applicants must complete a Criminal Record Check.

To Apply: Please email your resume and cover letter to the School Gardens Program Coordinator, Sharlene at sharlene@spec.bc.ca