



VOLUNTEER POSITION: School Gardens Assistant

Do you love working with school aged children and learning about nature, and gardening? Help support 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. Our mission is the environment through programming that reflects education, and community innovation. The SPEC School Gardens Program provides equitable access to food and environmental education for K to 12 schools, especially those in underserved communities. To learn more about our work, visit our website www.spec.bc.ca/school-gardens

Commitment: This is a flexible, short term opportunity for volunteers 17-65+ years. The Program requires energetic volunteers to assist with organic gardening and food education activities for children and youth, outside on school grounds or nearby green spaces from April to the end of June 2026.

Day time availability is required. Volunteers must be available once or twice a month to work a shift throughout the week - 8:30 am to 3:05 pm with a 10 min morning break and 45 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. Online orientation will start in March.

Responsibilities:

A typical day includes up to 5 garden lessons with different grades at their allotted time slot.

Lessons are 45 to 60 minutes each. Primary responsibilities of this position include:

- Set up* and clean up the garden including organizing and putting away supplies.
- Light garden work - watering, weeding, composting, harvesting, planting.
- Engaging children in youth in small group activities on topics ranging from soil, climate adaptation, pollination, insects and seasonal planting.

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



Qualifications:

- Must have previous experience working and or volunteering with children ages 5 -18 years of age (i.e. seasonal day camps, afterschool programs, other educational programs such as music or sports).
- Stamina - the position requires a lot of standing and moving around in all kinds of weather.
- Some knowledge of organic gardening methods - training and resources will be provided.

This is a suitable opportunity for individuals in programs focused on education, sustainable agriculture, horticulture, environmental studies, environmental science, forestry or other sustainability programs.

Location: Vancouver and Richmond. Schools are accessible by public transportation, rideshare or personal vehicle.

Volunteers will develop and enhance the following transferable 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.

Perks:

- Networking/Reference: A reference or reference letter (after 50 hours of volunteering).
- Free seeds, or seedlings, occasional seasonal produce.
- Mentorship and guidance.
- Improved health outcomes - time in nature

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

Other Requirements: Volunteers that meet the criteria will be asked to participate in a brief zoom call. If accepted, applicants must complete a Criminal Record Check (provided and paid for by SPEC).