



Associate Director of Regional Programs (Los Angeles)

POSITION DESCRIPTION

ABOUT GREEN SCHOOLYARDS AMERICA

Green Schoolyards America partners with school districts and public agencies across the U.S. to establish large-scale living schoolyard programs that transform school grounds into ecologically-rich, park-like green spaces. Our goal is to improve children’s health, learning, and happiness while contributing to communities’ ecological and climate resilience. We are working to change the norm for school ground design, use, and management so that all children will have access to the natural world in the places they already visit on a daily basis. We center equity in our work and collaborate with communities that have the greatest need for educational, environmental, health, and open space improvements. Our programs support the living school ground movement, build relationships that help it succeed, and work to embed this perspective in our existing institutions and policy frameworks.

Green Schoolyards America’s work is highly interdisciplinary and sits at the intersection of the environmental, health, education, city planning, and public policy fields. The problems we are trying to solve are larger than any single organization can address alone, so we convene and lead large-scale, collective impact initiatives that align many organizations and institutions to work toward robust, enduring systems change-level solutions. We value the power of the written word and share our ideas through professional presentations and written materials including books, articles, webpages, newsletters, policy guidance, and more.

In 2022, Green Schoolyards America launched the California Schoolyard Forest SystemSM, a partnership between Green Schoolyards America, the California Department of Education (CDE), the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) and Ten Strands. This statewide initiative seeks to increase tree canopy on public school grounds across California to shade and protect PK-12 students from extreme heat and rising temperatures due to climate change. This initiative is a long term effort and will be a focus of our work for years to come.

POSITION SUMMARY

Working with GSA leadership, the Associate Director will support key programs and organizational functions during a time of accelerated growth. In particular, the Associate Director’s role will focus on developing and implementing our strategy to support school districts as they plan, design, implement, manage and operate their green schoolyards and schoolyard forests, first in the Los Angeles area of California and eventually in other regions and states. The Associate Director is an exempt position based in the Los Angeles region that reports to the California State Director.

COMPETENCIES

- Project management. Strong planning, tracking, organizational and management skills; self-motivated to complete work in a timely manner with minimal oversight.
- Collaboration and consensus-building. Ability to work across the organization and with external partners.
- Communication. Strong communicator both verbally and in written form.
- Detail-oriented. Ability to produce high quality work and attention to detail.
- Growth mindset. Ability and interest in learning and developing new skills and knowledge for the role

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

Green Schoolyards America’s Associate Director will be responsible for providing support in the following areas:

Regional Leadership

The Associate Director will play a key role in developing and implementing regional scale programs that support the Schoolyard Forest SystemSM including management of regional staff. This may include the following tasks:

- Build demand for schoolyard forests at school districts in the region
- Grow a network of collaborating partners and supporters
- Gather and build institutional systems that intersect across environmental and education sectors
- Manage regional support staff and consultants

School District Support Management

The Associate Director will assist GSA leadership in developing and deploying strategies and systems to support school districts –initially in the Los Angeles region and ultimately across the state– as they plan, design, build, use, and manage schoolyard forests. This may include the following tasks:

- Develop and implement professional development training series for school districts and other partners
- Convene, organize, and lead communities of practice in person and online
- Develop and share online resource toolkits
- Organize meetings and events including planning and logistics, preparing agendas and presentation materials, and meeting notes and other follow up tasks.
- Assist in the development and delivery of other district support systems such as on-call technical assistance and/or sub-grant programs
- Develop networks and build relationships that support school districts as they implement schoolyard forest programs at scale

Pilot Project Management and Administration

The Associate Director will manage schoolyard forest pilot projects meant to test approaches for planning, designing, building, implementing, using, and maintaining schoolyard forest projects with significant student involvement. This may include the following tasks:

- Develop and manage school district partnerships
- Work with schools and school districts

- Hire and manage consultants and/or staff including providing construction oversight during schoolyard forest installation
- Manage project budgets and schedule
- Document and evaluate pilot projects
- Provide project administrative support including administering consultant contracts

General Organizational Support

The Associate Director will support Green Schoolyards America’s organizational goals and objectives. This may include the following tasks:

- Work with other GSA staff as needed to ensure proper operations of the organization and contribute to and provide strategic thinking and writing for special projects
- In coordination with GSA leadership, work to further the mission of the organization by representing Green Schoolyards America as a spokesperson with agencies, nonprofit partners, and supporters
- In collaboration with GSA leadership, coordinate and support projects across functions, as needed. This can include research, advocacy, fundraising, and operations tasks.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- At least ten years of experience in positions with progressively increasing responsibility
- Experience working with school districts and public agencies to lead initiatives, change systems, advance policies, and/or implement greening projects
- Familiarity with school ground facilities planning, design, and construction processes
- Strong commitment to Green Schoolyards America’s mission and a personal commitment to the environment and children’s well-being
- Passion for engaging in the environmental, education, and health-related issues that are related to the green schoolyard field
- Experience working in the nonprofit and environmental fields
- Excellent written/verbal communication skills and experience with giving public presentations and organizing and leading meetings, webinars, workshops and other events
- Demonstrated ability with Microsoft Office, Keynote, Google Drive, Zoom, and Adobe Creative Suite
- Strong planning, tracking, and organizational skills; self-motivated to complete work in a timely manner with minimal oversight
- Demonstrated commitment to valuing diversity and contributing to an inclusive working and learning environment
- Flexible and collaborative approach, with an aptitude for interpersonal rapport-building, including ability to work in teams in a positive, constructive, and effective manner

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor’s degree from four-year college or university
- Graduate degree or experience in landscape architecture and/or K-12 education

LOCATION

The Associate Director will spend time in the field working with school districts across California. However, we anticipate that much of the initial field work will be in the Los Angeles region, the Central

Valley, and the San Francisco Bay Area. When not in the field, this position is fully remote and much of the work will be conducted from the employee’s home office. The employee will need access to a strong internet connection, and must have a driver’s license and a vehicle to use for travel.

Most of our team is based in California, so it is important to us that all employees overlap on our core hours of 10 am - 4 pm PT, to allow collaboration between team members.

COMPENSATION

This position is full-time and includes health benefits through Green Schoolyards America’s fiscal sponsor, Earth Island Institute. We also provide a generous number of days off (vacation, sick leave) and paid holidays.

- Classification: This is a full-time, salaried, exempt position.
- Salary: Salary Range \$85,000 to \$105,000. Salary is commensurate with experience and takes into account the cost of living where the employee is located.
- Benefits: Health, dental, vision, and life insurance
Home office expense allowance (start up and monthly)
- Paid time off: Holidays, vacation, sick leave

Green Schoolyards America is a fiscally sponsored project of Earth Island Institute. As such, Green Schoolyards America’s Associate Director will be an employee of Earth Island Institute.

Earth Island does not unlawfully discriminate against employees or applicants because of race, color, religion, religious creed, sex (including pregnancy, breastfeeding, childbirth, or related medical conditions), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, military and veteran status, or any other basis protected by state or federal laws, local law, or ordinance.

TO APPLY

If you are interested in being considered for this position, please email your cover letter, resume, and a writing sample to careers@greenschoolyards.org with “Associate Director” in the subject line.

This position is open until filled.