



RESOURCES

TITLE | HIRING CONSIDERATIONS

CATEGORY | Hiring

SUB-CATEGORY | Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

OVERVIEW | This document outlines considerations for hiring garden educators who work in public schools.

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Introduction:

Operating in diverse, urban public schools demands a wide variety of skills and perspectives. Education Outside strived to create an inclusive and diverse staff and cohort of garden educators who had the skills and experience needed to serve the communities we partnered with. The organization was successful in some ways, but also struggled with how best to achieve this aim. There are DEI and HR professionals as well as online articles and tools that can provide in-depth strategies for increasing workplace diversity. This resource outlines our approach and some of the tools we used to create a more informed and inclusive hiring process.

Overview:

The recruitment and hiring process for garden educators at Education Outside was eleven months, beginning in November and ending in September of the following year. This process included the following key steps:

- Position Description**
- Online Application**
- Recruitment**
- Hiring**
- New Hire Placement**
- Data Review**

Position Description:

Before posting the position description, members of the hiring team and/or HR should review it to make sure it accurately reflects the most up to date information, job responsibilities, expectations, and requirements. Job requirements and qualifications should include mindsets and qualities such as an ability to solve problems and handle complexity, and should not be based solely on fixed skills that can be learned through training. In addition, school-specific needs should inform hiring and placement. For example, schools may have a language requirement such as the ability to teach lessons in Spanish.

In the example garden educator position description below, qualifications have been broken into “Basic Eligibility,” “Required Qualifications,” and “Desired Qualifications.” This stratified approach allows more candidates to enter your pool. The required qualifications can be fulfilled by a broad group of candidates and the desired qualifications help define what can be taught or learned.



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Education Outside operated as an AmeriCorps program and therefore the example below includes related language, AmeriCorps-specific requirements, and refers to garden educators as AmeriCorps members or corps members.

Example Garden Educator (AmeriCorps) Position Description:

JOIN THE CORPS

Are you passionate about working with kids, the environment, and making a difference in public schools? Are you excited by the idea of waking up every day to work outdoors in a school garden? Do you believe all students should have the opportunity to practice science and connect with the natural world? Education Outside is looking for individuals like you to join our growing cohort of dedicated instructors in the nation's first ever science and sustainability service corps.

ABOUT US

At Education Outside, we're committed to advancing science in public schools, outdoors. We transform school gardens into living outdoor classrooms, where our instructors teach a standards-based curriculum during the school day. Our goal is to bring hands-on, experiential science and environmental education to every public elementary school student as part of the regular school day.

We currently engage 56 AmeriCorps members who work full-time in 6 Bay Area school districts to bring nature and science directly into the hands of more than 23,000 students.

ABOUT AMERICORPS

AmeriCorps is a national service commitment that meets a community's critical needs in education, safety, health, and the environment. Education Outside partners with AmeriCorps to provide full-time service opportunities in the Bay Area supporting public education. Education Outside AmeriCorps members dedicate 1700 hours of service per term in exchange for leadership and career development, and a living stipend supported by our AmeriCorps grant. AmeriCorps is an exciting opportunity for service-minded individuals who are passionate about education and the nonprofit sector. For more information, please visit www.americorps.gov.

DETAILS

As an Education Outside AmeriCorps member, you are placed at a school for a 10 month service term. Bay Area public school districts are large, ethnically diverse districts with a high percentage of low-income children and many English-language learners. We want our corps members to reflect and support the experiences of the communities we serve. Corps members must be willing to cultivate and practice cultural competence and humility.

The position starts in early-mid August with our annual summer training. Corps members will work at their school site Monday-Thursday, teaching in the outdoor classroom, maintaining the school garden, and leading additional programming such as school-wide sustainability efforts or after-school classes. Fridays are designated for professional development, which includes formal learning workshops offered within three content strands (learning and teaching outdoors, leadership for community engagement, and outdoor classroom design, peer coaching, and administration time. There are occasional extended and weekend hours dedicated to service, schoolyard workdays, and community events.

In addition to serving at your school site, you will also be an active collaborator with your service corps peers as you learn and grow together. You will have a designated program manager to support you in your service and growth.

PROGRAM STRANDS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The AmeriCorps member position focuses on three strands: Learning and Teaching Outdoors, Leadership for Community Engagement, and Outdoor Classroom Design.



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Learning and Teaching Outdoors

Corps members will:

- Prepare for and teach up to 16 garden based science lessons per week
- Create a safe and positive outdoor classroom culture
- Use and adapt the Education Outside curriculum at school site
- Collaborate with teachers to integrate indoor and outdoor learning experiences
- Oversee harvesting, cooking, and eating in the garden with students

Leadership for Community Engagement

Corps members will:

- Act as Education Outside ambassador at school and represent the program effectively
- Create out-of-class opportunities for students to connect to the natural world (e.g after school program, recess activities, student green team, etc.)
- Build strong relationships with community members in order to serve the needs of the school and students
- Act as a liaison between the school community, partner organizations, and Education Outside
- Spread awareness of the program through conversations, presentations, social media, bulletin board displays, etc.
- Support organizational data tracking by collecting and inputting data related to corps member activities

Outdoor Classroom Design

Corps members will:

- Build, maintain, and grow an effective garden classroom
- Collaborate with school community to maintain and improve the school garden
- Plant and maintain perennials
- Plant and maintain an edible garden
- Develop site infrastructure to support learning outcomes

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

AmeriCorps members:

- Report to and collaborate with program manager
- Participate in weekly professional development, including various learning groups with regular commitments
- Meet regularly with school principal and key partners to share updates
- Support volunteers

BASIC ELIGIBILITY

To be considered for an Education Outside AmeriCorps position, you must:

- Be a citizen, national, or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States
- Have a high school diploma/GED
- Be 17 years old or older
- Pass state criminal and FBI background checks
- Be negative for tuberculosis
- Be able and willing to commit to the two-year service term

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- A commitment to Education Outside's mission, vision, and values
- The ability to encounter challenges with a solution mindset and remain optimistic despite setbacks
- An openness to feedback and willingness to be coached
- Ability to build relationships, especially with students ages 5-12
- The ability to use judgement and available resources to make decisions, act, and complete tasks with minimal oversight

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience teaching and leading groups of students (especially ages 5-12) outdoors
- Experience with gardening or farming
- Experience with leadership, including organizing groups of people to achieve a common goal
- Experience living or working in low-income communities
- Experience working with children and adults from diverse backgrounds
- Experience working or volunteering in the public school system
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail
- Strong interpersonal, written, and verbal communication skills
- Ability to be responsive to email, phone calls, and other means of communication
- College degree or equivalent experience
- Competency in Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, or Vietnamese is a plus, but not required

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

Corps members will be responsible for transportation to and from service, including school and professional development sites, as well as occasional trips to our main office, other school sites, or National Day of Service events.

TYPICAL PHYSICAL & MENTAL DEMANDS

Requires prolonged activity with some bending, stooping, and stretching; eye-hand coordination and manual dexterity sufficient to operate garden tools, a keyboard, telephone, photocopier, calculator, and other office equipment. Requires normal range of hearing and eyesight to communicate with students as well as maintain data records. Ability to lift 30lbs. Also requires flexibility to readily adapt to a changing environment.

COMPENSATION

As an AmeriCorps member, you will serve your community through Education Outside and receive a modest living stipend of \$25,000 for each completed 10-month term, as well as health, dental, and vision benefits. Eligible AmeriCorps members can qualify for child care expenses.

Additionally, at the successful completion of your service term, you may be eligible for an education award of approximately \$5,730, to be used for college, trade school, or other educational expenses, including qualified federal loans. (Education awards are only granted twice for serving two AmeriCorps terms. If you have served and received an education award twice, you are not eligible for a third education award.) During your service in AmeriCorps, you may also be eligible for forbearance on outstanding federal student loans. All compensation and benefits received are contingent on AmeriCorps funding.

We strongly encourage local applications as well as applications from people of color and other underrepresented populations.

Online Application

Once the position description is finalized, the online application should be created in order to accurately reflect the role and attract qualified candidates. The application should gather information that will help you understand the kind and quality of candidates you attract and how you attract them. It should also help you understand the diversity (in a broad sense) of your pool of applicants. Application questions should reflect the values of the organization and allow candidates to highlight their mindsets, inherent qualities, and abilities. Below is an adapted example of Education Outside's online application which ends with optional questions that provided insight into our applicant pool.

Example Garden Educator Online Application

1	<p><i>Personal Information [SHORT RESPONSE]</i></p> <p>Name Email Phone Address Country Upload Resume</p>
2	<p><i>How did you hear about us? It's helpful to understand where candidates learned about our organization. If you heard about us through an individual or organization and feel comfortable sharing their name please include it in the "other" section. [MULTIPLE CHOICE]</i></p>
3	<p><i>What aspect(s) of our mission most excite you? Please limit your response to 50 words or less. [SHORT RESPONSE]</i></p>
4	<p><i>How many years have you spent teaching or working with children? [MULTIPLE CHOICE]</i></p> <p>0 (no experience) 1 or fewer 2-3 4 or more</p>
5	<p><i>Education Outside serves elementary students (ages 5-12). Tell us about your experience working with this age group (teaching, leading, or mentoring). If you have no experience with that age group, please tell us about your experience teaching, leading or mentoring adults. Please limit your response to 150 words or less. [SHORT RESPONSE]</i></p>
6	<p><i>How many years have you worked, lived, or volunteered in low income communities? [MULTIPLE CHOICE]</i></p> <p>0 (no experience) 1 or fewer 2-3 4 or more</p>
7	<p><i>As an Education Outside garden educator, you may be placed in a school where the majority of students come from households below or near the poverty line. Tell us about any experiences you have had with low-income communities. If you have not had experiences with low-income communities, please describe what you might consider as you enter such a community. Please limit your response to 150 words or less. [SHORT RESPONSE]</i></p>
8	<p><i>What level of gardening or farming experience do you have? [MULTIPLE CHOICE]</i></p> <p>0 (no experience) 1 (a little) 2 (a fair amount) 4 (a lot)</p>
9	<p><i>Tell us about a time where you had to take the initiative with others to push a project, task, or goal forward. Please limit your response to 150 words or less. [SHORT RESPONSE]</i></p>
10	<p><i>Please tell us about a time that you failed at something and what you learned from that experience. Please limit your response to 150 words or less. [SHORT RESPONSE]</i></p>

11	<p><i>Besides English, do you speak any other languages and if so, at what level? Please note your highest level of proficiency. Beginner: able to share basic greetings and information; Conversational: able to read basic prose and participate in conversation; Fluent: able to speak, read and write in a professional context and would feel comfortable teaching full classes in this language. [MULTIPLE CHOICE]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Spanish - beginner -Spanish - conversational -Spanish - fluent -Mandarin- beginner -Mandarin- conversational -Mandarin- fluent -Cantonese - beginner -Cantonese - conversational -Cantonese - fluent -Vietnamese - beginner -Vietnamese - conversational -Vietnamese - fluent -Other <p>If other, please list and include level: [SHORT RESPONSE]</p>
12	<p><i>We understand that you can't always share the full context of your experience in your resume. Feel free to tell us about any parts of your resume (such as transitions, role changes or travel) that you would like to explain in further detail. Please limit your response to 150 words or less. [SHORT RESPONSE]</i></p>
13	<p><i>In order to better serve our students, we ask garden educators to serve for two consecutive years at their school site (each year lasts 10 months, mid-August to mid-June). Are you able to commit to the full two-year term of service? [YES/NO]</i></p>
14	<p><i>Have you applied to be an Education Outside garden educator before? [YES/NO]</i></p>
15	<p><i>Physical Demands: Are you able to perform the essential functions of the position, either with or without reasonable accommodation? [YES/NO]</i></p>
16	<p><i>If no, describe the functions that cannot be performed and reasonable accommodations needed to perform these tasks. [SHORT RESPONSE]</i></p>
<p>Optional Information This information is used to determine if our equity and inclusion efforts are reaching all segments of the population. Education Outside is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive organization; we strive to attract and retain talented garden educators and leaders in order to effectively serve diverse populations with diverse needs. You can help support our mission by voluntarily providing the following information about yourself. No individual hiring selections are made based on this information. There will be no impact on your application if you choose not to answer any of these questions.</p>	
17	<p><i>(OPTIONAL) What race and/or ethnicity do you identify with?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black or African American Asian Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander White Latinx or Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native Arab or Middle Eastern Multiracial Other Prefer not to disclose

18	(OPTIONAL) <i>Are you a military veteran?</i> [Yes/No]
19	(OPTIONAL) <i>What is your gender identity or what are your pronouns? Please feel free to write “Prefer not to disclose.”</i> [SHORT ANSWER]
20	(OPTIONAL) <i>Do you identify as LGBTQIA?</i> [YES/NO/PREFER NOT TO DISCLOSE]

Recruitment:

Below you will find tips on how to successfully cast a broad net for candidates with regard to email campaigns, social media posts, recruitment fairs, and job board postings.

- Outreach and Posting: In order to recruit a diverse applicant pool, it’s critical to proactively reach out to underrepresented candidate pools through partnership with minority organizations and academic institutions. Identify social media sites, job posting platforms, job fairs that will reach diverse applicants, and points of contact that you can stay in touch with to support hiring efforts. Recommended sites include: TheHBCUFoundation.org, BlackJobs.com, AfricanAmericanCareers.com, diversityjobs.com, OutProNet, PinkJobs.com, iHispano.com, Jopwell, askearn.org.
- Candidate Tracking: Once you’ve begun to partner with minority institutions and post on sites that attract a diverse talent pool, it’s important to keep track of where the candidates that are applying to your posting are coming from to get a sense of what’s working and where there’s room to improve. Using an internal tracking system, like a spreadsheet that identifies from where a candidate applied and basic demographics, is a useful start, and that data review can be enhanced by using job posting tools like Workable, Workday, and Greenhouse, which offer comprehensive analytics on your candidate pool so you can determine which underrepresented groups are not being reached through your recruitment process.
- Language: It’s important to make sure that every stage of the hiring process - job description, application, interview inscripts, offer letter - includes non-biased language so that you aren’t favoring specific populations. Be sure to use gender neutral language such as “you” or “the ideal candidate” or “they/them/their” pronouns instead of “he/she” language.

Hiring:

At Education Outside, the hiring of garden educators was a collaborative process between the HR and program departments. The process consisted of these four steps:

1. Assemble and train an interview committee
2. Review applicants
3. Interview candidates
4. Select candidates

Interview Committee

In order to include varying perspectives throughout the interview process, interview committees should include staff members across the organization. A few practices to consider in creating an interview committee are:

- Ensuring that staff members from different departments are included for varied organizational insights
- Ensuring that the committee is a diverse group of individuals to eliminate bias and include different perspectives
- Ensuring that all members of the hiring committee have an opportunity to review interview materials ahead of time, and are trained in interviewing best practices with special attention paid to eliminating bias, cultural sensitivity, and protected classes (see below)
- Ensuring that candidates are interviewed by a different person for each stage of the interview process to include as many perspectives as possible
- Ensuring that there are designated roles within the hiring committee (i.e. scheduling and communication, candidate tracking, interview debriefs, reference checks, and candidate selection meeting coordination)

- Ensuring that there are points throughout the hiring cycle for the committee to check-in on what is going well and what isn't going well in order to make adjustments as necessary

Applicant Review

To ensure candidate applications are reviewed in an unbiased manner, it's important to create a rubric that each member of the hiring committee uses to evaluate and score applications. Education Outside developed the following rubric based on the position responsibilities and key traits that were proven to be effective over time.

The five key traits were:

- Commitment to mission
- Resilience and perseverance
- Learning / growth mindset
- Ability to build relationships (especially with children)
- Initiative

The following nine descriptors represent the skills and experiences Education Outside found to be *highly desirable, but not necessary* for a candidate to demonstrate. Candidates with these skills and experience are typically more successful and need less support in their role as garden educators.

1. Experience teaching, especially K-5 students
2. Experience gardening or farming
3. Experience working with or living in low-income communities
4. Strong organizational skills
5. Leadership skills
6. Language ability that reflects the languages spoken in our school communities
7. Public school experience
8. Experience in a service or volunteer position
9. Familiarity with the Bay Area and the communities we work with

Application review should be assigned across the interview team to support with capacity so that each member is reviewing roughly the same number of applications, with 1-2 team members as point people to make assignments and track review progress. Applicant review should only begin once the team has aligned on the scoring rubric and traits.

See [Application Review Rubric](#) at the end of this document.

Interviewing

It's important to train your committee on unconscious bias and compliance in interviewing in order to create the best environment possible for candidates and ensure your organization is following HR best practices.

See our short training on [Managing Unconscious Bias & Compliance in Interviewing](#) in the appendix.

Interview Process

Education Outside's interview process consisted of an initial phone interview followed by an in-person or video interview and concluded, most often, with reference checks. Occasionally, a follow-up interview was needed to make final decisions. As mentioned in the training linked above, it's important to follow HR best practices for interviews and be as consistent as possible. Below are examples of Education Outside's interview questions and scripts.

1. **Phone Interview:** Use the phone interview to get a sense of the candidate's experience and interest in the program. Provide information on logistics and the interview process, and hear any questions they have. This is an opportunity to follow-up on anything that was unclear in their application. (30 minutes)

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- Example script and questions:

Opening

Say: Thank you for making the time to speak with us today. This interview will last for 20-30 minutes. This is a chance for us to get to know you beyond your application, and for you to ask us any questions you might have. I'll ask 20 minutes of questions and leave you 5 min at the end. Ready to begin?

Understanding of Position

Question: Based on what you've learned so far about this position, please describe the position and general responsibilities as you understand them.

Follow up: [Use the information below to fill any gaps in knowledge in their description to check for understanding]

{Full time teaching position. Two service terms as an AmeriCorps volunteer. 10 months starts with a two-week intensive training in August and ends in June with 2 months off in summer. Placement in one public elementary school. On site Monday-Thursday, Fridays for training. Primary responsibilities are to teach hands-on science to K-5 students, grow an outdoor classroom, engage your school community}

Enthusiasm for Mission and Vision

Please tell me about the skills and experiences you have that make you excited to work with Education Outside as an Americorps Instructor.

Experience Teaching

Say: {In this role, instructors spend the majority of their time working directly with students. 80% of the time is spent teaching, spending time with students during recess or after school, and preparing lessons.}

Ask: What experiences have you had that have prepared you to work with children and what has been the most meaningful to you about those experiences?

Follow-up: Tell me about experiences you have had that have prepared you to teach and plan lessons.

Follow-up: Tell me about how you developed as a teacher and what skills you gained in that experience.

Follow-up: What were some ways you fostered healthy relationships with your students?

Experience Working with Low-income Communities

Say: {As an AmeriCorps program, we primarily serve schools with 50% or higher free and reduced lunch rates, and we do this work to ensure that all students have the opportunity to explore the world around them regardless of their background. This has led us to work with a wide range of students and communities.}

Ask: Tell me about any experiences that have prepared you for service in low-income communities.

Relationship Building

Say: {Our instructors enter established school communities and we believe that building positive relationships with students, teachers, and parents is key to the success of our work.}

Ask: Tell me about a time you were new to a community. What was your approach to building relationships with members of that community?

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Team Collaboration and Leadership

Tell me about a time you had to work as part of a team to achieve a goal. What was the goal? What was your role?

Follow-up: What was challenging about the experience? What was successful? What would you have done differently, knowing what you know now?

Resilience/Perseverance

Say: {Working in public schools is simultaneously rewarding and challenging. We find that resilience and perseverance are key to success in these environments.}

Tell me about a time when something turned out to be more difficult than you expected. What did you do? How did you respond?

Follow-up: Can you give me an example of a time you stayed positive through a tough situation?

Open ended

Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experience or interest that you haven't been able to yet?

Candidate Questions

Now it's your turn to ask any questions you might have about this position, program or organization.

Conclusion

We're out of time for this interview. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. It was nice to learn more about your experience and interest in the position.

Here are our next steps: We'll be in touch in the next two weeks to let you know where you stand in the process. The next round is a video interview.

2. In-Person or Video Interview: Use the in-person or video interview to get a deeper sense of the candidate's experience and patterns of behavior directly related to the role, responsibilities, and desired skills. This interview emphasizes scenario-based questions. (45 minutes)

- Example script and questions:

Opening

This is a second round interview for the garden educator position. We have 45 minutes. I'll ask questions for the first 35 and turn it over to your questions for the final 10. We'll have you do your model lesson at the end of my questions. We'll conclude with some next steps. I'll be taking notes on my computer. Ready to begin?

Mission Alignment: Goals and Interest in Science

What sparks your interest in teaching science?

Follow up: How does the instructor position fit into your future career goals?

Questions based on previous interviews [Prior to interview write down questions you have for the candidate based on previous interview responses, ask questions at this stage of the interview.]

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Experience Farming or Gardening

Say: {The gardens at our schools come in all different shapes, sizes, and stages of development. Instructors are expected to grow and activate these spaces during their two years of service.}

Ask: Tell me about any experiences that have prepared you to run a garden in a school.

Follow-up: If you don't have a lot of experience, what would you need in order to be prepared?

Follow-up: How would you apply this experience to running a school garden?

Project Experience / Organizational Skills

{Our instructors have a full workload that requires them to thoroughly plan and organize their schedule}

Imagine that you are at your school site. You are finished teaching for the day. You have 3 lessons to prepare for next week, outreach to do in preparation for your weekend workday, a few emails to answer, new plants to water, and a teacher asked you check in after school about your curriculum. How would you prioritize these tasks and stay organized throughout the process?

Feedback/Growth Mindset

Say: {Along with taking personal initiative our instructors work with their program managers and classroom teachers to reflect on their work, receive feedback, and grow in their skills.}

Tell me about a recent time you learned a new skill. What was your process? What was challenging?

Follow-up: Between gardening, teaching, and engaging your community, which one would you need the most support in and what kind of support would you need?

Describe a work environment that felt challenging for you and why.

Relationship Building

Tell me about a time you had to collaborate with someone who had a different communication style than you. What was challenging about that experience? What was a valuable lesson that experience taught you?

Service Mindset

Say: {As an Americorps program, Education Outside instructors work to serve the communities they are working in.}

Tell me about a time that you put the needs of others before your own.

Scenarios

Say: {For our next two questions, I'd like to run through two scenarios. Instructors need to manage full classes of students in the garden. I will read the scenario to you, I am happy to repeat it to you if you want, then I am going to ask you two questions, first what do you see happening in the scenario and then what instructions you would give.}

Scenario 1: Classroom management

{Scenario: You've got a class of 22 kindergarteners in the garden, and they're divided into two stations. 11 students are at your station practicing scientific drawing at the seating circle. The other station is supervised by their teacher but students are spread all over the garden collecting leaves of different shapes. It's time to switch stations - the students with you will join the teacher to collect leaves, and the teacher's students will join your drawing station. It's up to you to make sure the groups complete each activity and switch successfully}

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Ask: First, what do you see happening in this situation and what do you hope to accomplish?

Scenario 2: Behavior management

Say: [We'll move on to the behavior management scenario, again I will read it to you and then ask you the same two questions from above]

{Scenario: You are in the garden teaching a class of 25 second graders about plant parts. The lead teacher for that classroom is also outside with you. Students are in small groups working. You see a student hit another student. You walk over and the student who did the hitting says, "I'm not going to apologize to Zureen for hitting her! It's her fault! GEEZ, why do all the teachers HATE me?"}

Ask: First, what do you see happening in this situation and what do you hope to accomplish?

Model Lesson

{We'll end our scenarios with your prepared model lesson. You will have up to three minutes to present the lesson that you chose. I will be timing you and cue you when you have 1 minute left. I will pretend to be your students. Please let me know when you are ready and I will start the timer.}

Watch for and record: {Lesson should include: (1) Clear lesson preparation (2) Engaging introduction (3) Lesson objectives (4) Tone (5) Clear instructions (6) Next steps}

Follow-up: How comfortable are you speaking in front of a group of kids? What about adults? Strangers? Friends?

Placement

Say: {San Francisco County hosts our biggest cohort of instructors and some of our most established sites. Instructors will have the opportunity to further develop an existing program and garden space in a dense, urban setting. San Mateo County hosts our expansion program in Daly City, South San Francisco and Redwood City. Instructors here have the opportunity to pioneer a new program and contribute to a smaller and developing cohort. Education Outside makes every effort to match AmeriCorps members to schools based on interest, skills, and need.}

Tell me why you are interested in the area you chose.

Candidate Questions: {Now I am going to turn it over to you to ask any questions you have about the position or organization. Record the questions below and answer}

Conclusion

We're out of time for this interview. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. It was nice to learn more about your experience and interest in the position

Here are our next steps:

[OUTLINE NEXT STEPS AND FINAL DECISION DATE].

3. **Reference Checks:** For candidates that you want to move forward with or learn more about, request 2-3 references. References should be those who supervised or worked closely with the candidate.

4. **(Optional) Follow-up Interview:** Conduct a follow-up interview if there are outstanding questions about a candidate's experience or there's a need to further assess fit for the program or a specific site.

Candidate Selection

Once there are enough candidates that have been through the entire process, the interview team should schedule a series of meetings to begin making hiring decisions by comparing interview notes with the application rubric to assess program fit.

New Hire Placement

Placement is a process that requires input from the school community. This process should be updated yearly to ensure that garden educators will be successful at their school site and school communities will receive high quality programming. Education Outside gathered information from both the school and candidates to inform the placement process.

School Survey

In mid-spring, schools and outgoing garden educators were sent a survey with a series of questions regarding school needs and desired candidate qualities. This input helped Education Outside place incoming garden educators with their school sites. Example of questions include:

- Thinking about staff or community members that do well working in your school environment, what 3-5 traits would you like to see in your garden educator?
- Please describe the state of your school garden.
- Do you expect the instructor to teach in a language other than English? Would it be useful to have the ability to communicate in languages besides English in order to communicate with parents?
- Is there anything else we should consider when placing an EO instructor at your site?

Placement Profiles

School and new hire placement profiles should be created to outline the potential strengths and areas of growth of the incoming garden educator and the needs of the school community. Incoming garden educator information should be gathered by the hiring team as they conduct interviews with candidates. This information should then be paired with school profiles.

Once placement profiles have been created for all candidate and school sites, the hiring team should hold a meeting with the larger program team. All school profiles should be displayed in one room. Each candidate should be discussed by the group, first with a short introduction from the last person who interviewed them, followed by the interviewer's initial placement recommendations. The program team should then discuss all possible placement options and record them on the bottom of the candidate profile. This should be done until all candidates have been assigned a school. We recommend finalizing the placement process after all candidates have been hired and confirmed.

Data Review

Each fall, the HR and program teams held a half-day meeting to debrief the hiring process, review application data at a high level, and suggest improvements for the new recruitment and hiring cycle beginning in January. Holding time and space for these debriefs was critical to reflecting on our process and supporting our goal of developing a cohort of garden educators and staff that were representative of the communities we served.

In order to support that goal, we needed to ensure that our recruitment efforts were casting a wide net and our hiring process was as inclusive as possible. Through collecting demographic data from applicants, as a first step, we were able to see the gaps in our recruitment efforts year to year. These trends highlighted how Education Outside should change aspects of recruitment to better reach individuals who were not present in the pipeline. Data also helped us understand where we needed to put more effort and intention to create a more inclusive hiring process. Many of the efforts described in this document were a result of reviewing our application data and making changes to our entire process. Education Outside made much progress, and the data below suggest that Education Outside had continuing work to do to recruit and hire diverse applicants.

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In 2017-2018, we had 173 applicants apply for 41 positions. Application data revealed that 38% of our applicants identified as non-white, 34% were male, non-binary, or preferred not to disclose, and 39% identified as LGBTQIA. Among our hired applicants, 43% identified as non-white, 47% were male, non-binary, or preferred not to disclose, and 38% identified as LGBTQIA.

In 2018-2019, we had 232 applicants apply for 28 positions. Due to Education Outside's closure in 2019, we did not review data from the overall 2018-2019 applicant pool, but we do have data from our hired applicants: 34% of our applicants identified as non-white, 42% were male, non-binary, or preferred not to disclose, and 31% identified as LGBTQIA.

Application Review Rubric

Trait/Skill-Set/Bonus	Definition	Scale/Score	Key Words	Flags/Concerns
Commitment to mission	Enthusiasm for our work, as well as an understanding of the mission of EO and what they would be doing on the job	<p>0 = Demonstrates lack of understanding of the mission, does not mention any keywords</p> <p>1 = Shows some understanding of the mission, though you have some concern they may not fully understand</p> <p>2 = Everything they said aligned with what EO does--you feel confident they understand the mission and are enthusiastic about it</p>	Service, working with kids, science, nature, environmental stewardship, teaching outdoors	Too much of a focus on agriculture/ gardening and/ or healthy-eating/ nutrition / lack of mention of science or EE at all
Resilience / perseverance	The ability to encounter challenges with a solution mindset and remain optimistic despite setbacks	<p>0 = Something they mentioned demonstrates that they lack this trait</p> <p>1 = Some signs that they have this trait, but you are uncertain or have concerns</p> <p>2 = Based on their answer, you are confident that they demonstrate this trait</p>	Flexibility, positivity, adaptability, optimism	
Learning / growth mindset	Openness to feedback and willingness to be coached; belief they can learn and improve	0 = Something they mentioned demonstrates that they lack this trait	Love of learning, improved, learned, made progress, growth, constructive feedback/criticism, mentor/teacher/ supervisor, reflective, goal setting	

Trait/Skill-Set/Bonus	Definition	Scale/Score	Key Words	Flags/Concerns
Learning / growth mindset		1 = Some signs that they have this trait, but you are uncertain or have concerns 2 = Based on their answer, you are confident that they demonstrate this trait		
Ability to build relationships (esp. w/ children)	Seeks to find common ground, listen, and get to know people. Passionate about engaging with students. Seeks opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and peers	0 = Something they mentioned demonstrates that they lack this trait 1 = Some signs that they have this trait, but you are uncertain or have concerns 2 = Based on their answer, you are confident that they demonstrate this trait	Collaborate, listen, approachable, friendly, connect, values community, love kids, asking others questions	Challenge connecting with peers/colleagues who are different based on age, role, etc.
Initiative	The ability to use judgment and available resources to make decisions, act, and complete tasks with minimal oversight. Understands when to seek support	0 = Something they mentioned demonstrates that they lack this trait 1 = Some signs that they have this trait, but you are uncertain or have concerns 2 = Based on their answer, you are confident that they demonstrate this trait	Started, driven, motivated, self-reliant, asked for help, resourceful, independent, lead a group of individuals through a project/ task	We're not just looking for someone who follows through on tasks as expected, but someone who goes above and beyond or overcomes unexpected barriers to success.
Teaching	Experience teaching (esp. K-5), lesson planning, adapting and/or developing curriculum, and creating a positive classroom culture	0 = No experience working with groups of 15+ students, even if there is experience working with kids, or less than 3 months experience	Classroom management, outdoor teaching, lesson planning, behavior management, creating routines, reflection on teaching	Babysitting, tutoring, 1:1 or small group work with students doesn't always translate well

Trait/Skill-Set/Bonus	Definition	Scale/Score	Key Words	Flags/Concerns
Teaching		<p>1 = Some experience working with groups of 15+ kids, but not in a classroom setting and/or not for longer than 5 consecutive months</p> <p>2 = Experience working with groups of 15+ students in a classroom setting for > 5 consecutive month</p>		
Gardening	Maintain and develop an outdoor classroom	<p>0 = Less than one month of experience</p> <p>1 = One to three consecutive months on a farm or in garden</p> <p>2 = Longer than 4 consecutive months.</p>	Volunteer on farm / community garden, love plants, grow food/vegetables, perennials	Interested in farming/gardening more than teaching/working with kids
Low-income	Has an awareness of the differences in privilege in different communities, and some experience working/living in low-income communities that extends beyond short-term volunteer work	<p>0 = Has no experience working within a low-income community, has only volunteered in group organized service or has held a position working with a low-income community for less than 3 consecutive months</p> <p>1 = Has held a position working directly with/within a low-income community for at least three consecutive months</p>	Social justice, increasing equity/ access, under-resourced, underprivileged, inequality, disadvantaged, underserved, service, understand the experience of children in low-income communities, doesn't need to have experience <i>teaching</i> in low-income communities	Short study abroad/ voluntourism, short high school/ college organized volunteering experience, savior complex

Trait/Skill-Set/Bonus	Definition	Scale/Score	Key Words	Flags/Concerns
Organizational skills	Ability to prioritize and juggle multiple projects while staying organized	<p>0 = Something they mentioned demonstrates that they lack this trait</p> <p>1 = Some signs that they have this trait, but you are uncertain or have concerns</p> <p>2 = Based on their answer, you are confident that they demonstrate this trait</p>	Detail oriented, plan ahead, prioritizing/ time management, wearing many hats, schedule, multitask, project management	
Leadership	Ability to organize a group of people around a goal or cause	<p>0 = Something they mentioned demonstrates that they lack this trait</p> <p>1 = Some signs that they have this trait, but you are uncertain or have concerns</p> <p>2 = Based on their answer, you are confident that they demonstrate this trait</p>	Enthusiasm, communication, facilitating groups of adults	
Language ability	Capabilities in the following languages: Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese	<p>0 = Comprehension</p> <p>1 = Conversational fluency</p> <p>2 = Comfort in instructing in this language</p>		
Public schools experience	Experience teaching or working in a public school environment	<p>0 = Has no experience working in schools</p> <p>1 = Has experience working in schools and/or with school faculty/administration for less than 3 consecutive months</p>	Classroom, teachers, teacher's assistant, after school program, para, extracurricular	Google search the school that the applicant has worked in. How similar is it to the ones we work with?

Trait/Skill-Set/Bonus	Definition	Scale/Score	Key Words	Flags/Concerns
Public schools experience		2 = Has experience working in schools and/or with school faculty/administration for more than 3 consecutive months		Short-term or one-off volunteering doesn't always translate.
Service / volunteering experience	Experience being an on-going volunteer; demonstrated commitment to serving others	0 = No service/ volunteer experience, or experience is infrequent (less than 1x a month) and/ or short-term (less than 3 consecutive months) 1 = Service or volunteer experience that is frequent and long-term but not rigorous (20+ hours/ week) 2 = Service/volunteer experience that is frequent, long-term and rigorous	AmeriCorps, lack of financial compensation / ability to think of others	
Bay Area experience	Experience living and/ or working in the Bay Area - familiarity with Bay Area communities	Local / "here" = Sacramento - Santa Cruz 0 = not from here, been here <1 year 1 = 1-4 years 2 = grew up here, lived here longer than 4 years	Local, attended public school and/ or grew up in the Bay Area, shows commitment to being here, demonstrates understanding of current affairs and impact on local residents	
Skills around special areas	Experience working in one of the specified fields that would translate into something a Corps member might do in a school	0 = No demonstration of any skills in these or other relevant special areas	Sustainability, wellness, NGSS	

Trait/Skill-Set/Bonus	Definition	Scale/Score	Key Words	Flags/Concerns
<p>Skills around special areas</p>		<p>1 = Some signs that they have this trait, but you are uncertain of the relevancy/overlap with how it may look within the context of our program</p> <p>2 = Based on their answer, you are confident that they demonstrate this skill and that it would translate well into our context</p>		

INTERVIEW COMMITTEE TRAINING

Managing Unconscious Bias & Compliance in Interviews

~Best Practices~

Agenda:

Interview experience check

Understanding interview compliance

Understanding unconscious bias in interviewing

Tips to keep top of mind

Interview logistics

Q&A

Interview experience check

Creating a Legal Interview Experience: Understanding Compliance

Compliance vs Bias

- Macro: Laws and practices (compliance)
- Micro: Thoughts and actions (bias)

EEOC - Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

- Civil Rights Act 1965
- Discrimination - employment, voting, public accommodations, education
- Protected class - A characteristic of a person which cannot be targeted for discrimination

Protected classes and lawful questions

Federal

- Race
- Color
- National origin
- Religion
- Sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions)
- Disability (Physical or mental)
- Age (40 and older)
- Citizenship Status
- Genetic information

California

- Marital status
- Sexual orientation and identity
- AIDS/HIV
- Medical condition
- Political activities or affiliations
- Military or veteran status
- Status as a victim of domestic violence, assault, or stalking

Avoid asking any questions related to any of these items or commenting on any of these items brought up by the interviewee

What is ok to ask?

EMPLOYMENT INQUIRIES

ACCEPTABLE	SUBJECT	UNACCEPTABLE
Name	NAME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maiden name
Place of residence	RESIDENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions regarding owning or renting.
Statements that hire is subject to verification that applicants meet legal age requirements.	AGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Birth date • Date of attendance/completion of school • Questions which tend to identify applicants over 40
Statements/inquiries regarding verification of legal right to work in the United States.	BIRTHPLACE, CITIZENSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birthplace of applicant or applicant's parents, spouse or other relatives. • Requirements that applicant produce naturalization or alien card prior too employment.
Languages applicant reads, speaks or writes if use of language other than English is relevant to the job for which applicant is applying.	NATIONAL ORIGIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions as to nationality, lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent or parentage of applicant, applicant's spouse, parent or relative.

Creating an Inclusive Interview Experience: Understanding Unconscious Bias

What is Unconscious Bias?

Unconscious bias is the brain's tendency to take mental shortcuts, relying on observed patterns (including cultural stereotypes) to quickly and subconsciously process information.

- Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking Fast and Slow*

Types of Bias

- Similar to me: "This candidate and I have so much common, they'll be perfect!"
- Halo/Horn: One good or bad thing that affects your perception of the candidate as a whole
- Micro-affirmations: e.g Complimenting a candidate with phrases like "your outfit is amazing" activates "a stereotype threat" that statistically has led candidates to do less well during an interview
- Non-verbal: The candidates accent/demeanor/ringtone/background-noise affects your perception of the candidate as a whole
- Cultural noise: Candidates will likely give the most common/accepted answer for the industry, try to listen beyond that 'cultural noise' for the real answer
- What else?

To create a comfortable, inclusive environment for the applicant to speak about their experience, we need to:

Remember to:

- Create comfort - pay attention to tone and body language
- Use neutral language
- Use inclusive pronouns
- Don't commit/make promises
- Be OK with silence
- Let the candidate talk
- Use probing questions as needed ("what did you do next?" "How did you handle that?")
- Stick to interview structure

Avoid:

- Barriers: Volume, lingo, noise, etc. -- try to remove these as much as possible
- Comments with a value: Even if you agree, try to avoid affirming or disagreeing
- Likeness: "This candidate seems really cool, I like them!"

Best Practices: Candidate Experience

Review candidate info (resume, application)

Review interview questions ahead of time

Make sure you have a quiet place to talk on the phone, phone is charged, you have good reception, you have what you need to take notes, you won't be interrupted or distracted, and can find the candidate's number and be ready to start the call on time

Introduce yourself and your role to set a conversational tone

Be sure you can talk about EO and our mission

Know the role and benefits

Know FAQs/Next steps/Who to reach out to for questions

Don't make up an answer to a question if you don't know it- let them know someone will get back to them with the answer

Options for phone interview

- Phone
 - Your personal phone
 - To make a call private dial *67 or #31# before the number, or
 - iPhone: open the Settings app, tap Phone, tap Show My Caller ID, and then toggle the slider to ON.
 - Office phone
 - Conference line
- Skype
 - Your account, or a new account with your work email
- Google Hangouts, “Talk” feature
 - You’ll need to add the candidate to your hangouts from your email, and then instead of messaging them, hit the phone icon
 - You’ll need microphone access, etc. [For more details.](#)

Interview Structure

- Intro: Introduce yourself, Go over steps and timing, how to handle questions
- Info gather: Structured questions
- Info giving: Candidate questions for us
- Conclusion: next steps, thank you
 - Do I hear back? We will respond to candidates with either a NO or yes+next steps in the next week or so
 - Timeline? We are conducting interviews the next couple of weeks and will make final offer in early may
 - If a candidate has questions, they can always email us at _____.
- After the interview: You will fill the scorecard in Workable and move them to the next stage
- We will get back to the candidate with next steps

Mishaps

- **Candidate doesn't answer:** leave a message "Hello this is ___ from Education Outside, calling for our phone interview at (time.) Please go back to the calendar to book a new appointment. If you have any questions, email us at _____. Thank you." Make a note in their profile that they missed their interview.
- **Time-zone/time-confusion:** ask the candidate to book another appointment, and to make sure they convert from PST as appropriate
- Generally speaking, with any situation you can always have the candidate book a new appointment, and/or email us at _____.

Resources

Harvard's Implicit Association Test:

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

Project Implicit is a non-profit organization and international collaboration between researchers who are interested in implicit social cognition - thoughts and feelings outside of conscious awareness and control. The goal of the organization is to educate the public about hidden biases and to provide a "virtual laboratory" for collecting data on the Internet.

Educational video by The Royal Society, the UK national academy of science

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=dVp9Z5k0dEE

Valerie Purdie-Vaughns, Columbia University, on Unintentional Bias

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EzsuWkskU88&list=PLrMqXQ2J_13ubw2OiTy9FdkAYHm_y2lly&index=1

Questions?