

14 Botanic Gardens Awarded Grant to Preserve Global Plant Biodiversity



Feb. 1, 2021 - The Global Genome Initiative for Gardens

Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), and the United States Botanic Garden (USBG) are pleased to announce 14 grants to botanic gardens in 19 countries to collect and conserve plant diversity. The GGI-Gardens Awards Program supports activities to preserve Earth's genomic biodiversity of plants and plant collections maintained at botanic gardens around the world.

The awardees will collect genome-quality plant tissue samples from their living plant collections and preserve them in a network of publicly accessible bioherbaria. DNA and frozen samples will be preserved. Priority was given to awardees that can collect unique families and genera of vascular plants not yet represented in the network.

"This is an exciting opportunity for botanic gardens and our partnership that comes at a critical time for biodiversity genomics," Dr. Morgan Gostel, Director of the GGI-Gardens Awards Program, said. "The collections that will result from this work will foster connections between the genomics community and botanic gardens in an important way and provide a platform for collaboration at the cutting edge of conservation and research."

"BGCI is thrilled to be able to support botanic gardens in their efforts to preserve and understand plant diversity," said Dr. Paul Smith, Secretary General of BGCI. "The collaboration with GGI-Gardens and the United States Botanic Garden, which enables the success of this program."

"This important collaboration will help ensure critical plant genomic information is preserved for future research," said Dr. Saharah Moon Chapotin, Executive Director of the USBG. "As plants across the globe face continued threats like climate change and loss of habitat, finding new ways to preserve plant diversity is key."

A review committee of individuals representing BGCI-US, GGI-Gardens, and USBG evaluated applications from institutions located in 19 countries on the basis of their collection scope and genomic novelty, best practices, policies and biodiversity standards, efficiency, and broader conservation impacts.

The 14 grants, totaling nearly US\$60,000, were made possible by GGI-Gardens and the USBG, and administered through BGCI's Global Botanic Gardens Conservation Initiative. The grants will carry out activities and finalize projects by the end of 2021. More information on the projects implemented through the GGI-Gardens Awards Program will be available throughout the year ahead.

The recipients of the 2020/2021 GGI-Gardens Awards Program grants are:

Institution (Alphabetical)	Country
Atlanta Botanical Garden	United States
Core Facility Botanical Garden, University of Vienna	Austria
Desert Botanical Garden	United States
Inala Jurassic Garden	Australia

Instituto de Pesquisas Jardim Botânico do Rio de Janeiro	Brazil
Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute	India
Kunming Botanical Garden	China
Montgomery Botanical Center	United States
Northwestern University Ecological Park & Botanic Gardens (NUEBG)	Philippines
Royal Botanic Garden	Jordan
San Diego Botanic Garden	United States
The Huntington	United States
Tooro Botanical Gardens	Uganda
Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden, Chinese Academy of Sciences	China

For more information, visit the GGI-Gardens Awards Program website.

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Images are available at: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yf0te1l6agczl85/AADoFgJkglu_9vDES-izJN-Ca?dl=0

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About GGI-Gardens

The Global Genome Initiative (GGI) is a collaborative science-based endeavor to collect the Earth's genomic biodiversity, preserve it in the world's biorepositories, and make it available to researchers everywhere. The Global Genome Initiative aims to capture half of the world's genomic diversity by 2022. www.brit.org/research/

About Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI)

BGCI is the world's largest plant conservation network, comprising more than 600 botanic gardens in over 100 countries. Established in 1987, BGCI is a not-for-profit organization with offices in the UK, US, Singapore, China and Kenya. BGCI's Global Botanic Garden Fund aims to drive plant conservation in botanic gardens with a preference for gardens in developing countries and biodiversity hotspots. www.bgci.org

About United States Botanic Garden

The United States Botanic Garden (USBG) is the oldest continuously operating public Garden in the United States. The Garden informs visitors about the fundamental value and diversity of plants, as well as their aesthetic, cultural, economic, therapeutic, and ecological significance. With over a million visitors annually, the Garden strives to demonstrate and promote sustainable practices. The U.S. Botanic Garden is a living plant museum accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and Botanic Gardens Conservation International. www.usbg.gov

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