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DENVER BOTANIC
GARDENS



THE IDEA CENTER FOR PUBLIC GARDENS™ IS LAUNCHED



The American Public Gardens Association, with support from Denver Botanic Gardens (the Gardens) and the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS), is launching an initiative to teach and inspire inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility (IDEA) initiatives among public gardens that serve communities across North America and beyond.

The IDEA Center for Public Gardens™ (the Center) will fund speakers and trainers at conferences and symposia. It will also offer intensive peer-to-peer cohorts to develop next practices as all cultural institutions strive to be more inclusive and relevant. In 2022, the IDEA Center will develop a pilot cohort of gardens and will help to coordinate speakers and facilitators with the Association. By 2023, a full roster of programming will be offered.

The Center is incubated at Denver Botanic Gardens, which is providing operational funding. Services are supported by an IMLS grant through 2024. The Association provides the essential link between public gardens and the Center, building upon the Association's already significant resource materials and training opportunities. Mae Lin Plummer, a seasoned public garden and business leader, has been hired as the IDEA Center's director. Plummer is also co-chair of the Association's IDEA Committee and has well established links to public gardens across North America.

"We are living in an extraordinary time of increasing awareness, learning and change," states Plummer. "We have the opportunity to create possibilities of serving our communities in exciting and meaningful ways we haven't before. I am thrilled to collaborate with the Association to expand their efforts and commitment to promoting change, and ultimately, do our part to create a more equitable and just world."

"Mae Lin Plummer is the right leader at the right time to amplify our commitment to our members and their IDEA priorities," says Dr. Casey Sclar, executive director of the Association. "We are also thrilled to partner with IMLS and Denver Botanic Gardens to help the IDEA Center establish roots that allow it to thrive for all our future benefit."

Brian Vogt, Denver Botanic Gardens CEO, says "We began our IDEA journey over a decade ago with clear intention: to create gardens and experiences for all people." He adds, "The deeper our work, the more joyful

it became. We know this isn't a project with an end date. It's something profound that changes a culture, outcomes, approaches and worldview."

The Center is supported by IMLS via the National Leadership Grant Award MG-249862-OMS-21.

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About Denver Botanic Gardens: Green inside and out, Denver Botanic Gardens was founded in 1951 and is considered one of the top botanical gardens in the United States and a pioneer in water conservation. Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, the Gardens has a robust living plant collection, natural history collection and art collection along with temporary art exhibitions. The Gardens is a dynamic, 24-acre urban oasis in the heart of the city, offering unforgettable opportunities to flourish with unique garden experiences for the whole family – as well as world-class exhibitions, education and plant conservation research programs. Additional sites extend this experience throughout the Front Range: Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms is a 700-acre native plant refuge with an active farm in Jefferson County; Mount Goliath is a high-altitude trail and interpretive site on the Mount Evans Scenic Byway. The Gardens also manages programming at Plains Conservation Center in Aurora. For more information, visit us online at www.botanicgardens.org.