



Call for Abstracts – 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens

Botanic garden educators from around the world are invited to submit proposals for *BGCI's 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens*, to be held at the University of Warsaw Botanic Garden, Warsaw, Poland from 9 – 14 September 2018. **The deadline for abstract is Sunday 18th March 2018.** Please visit <http://www.ogrod.uw.edu.pl/en/congress2018> to submit your abstract.

About the Congress

Global estimates show that by the year 2050 almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the human population will live in cities. This means that an increasing number of people will not have the opportunity to experience truly natural environments. With huge declines being observed in biodiversity worldwide, we therefore have to find new places for vanishing plants and animals to thrive, we have to bring nature to the city.

Modern day botanic gardens play an important role in conserving biodiversity, but they also provide an essential link to the public, able to promote the importance of the protection and sustainable use of our natural resources. Botanic gardens can therefore act as a bridge between scientific knowledge and the role that society has to play in the protection of our planet. Through social education, botanic gardens can share with city dwellers the unique values of nature, the ways in which we can protect them and how we can utilise nature's resources with care and respect.

In many cities, alongside botanic gardens, there are a growing number of community gardens. These gardens form a new space to explore how we can live in big cities. Organized by local communities, these areas are a way of experiencing nature and biodiversity and they serve as important educational centres for topics such as health and nutrition.

Held in 2018, the 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens "*Bringing nature to the city. Celebrating the 200th anniversary of the University of Warsaw Botanic Garden*" will offer an opportunity for practitioners and theorists from around the world to discuss how we can effectively

provide modern nature education, especially in a big city environment. It will also be an occasion to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the foundation of the University of Warsaw Botanic Garden.

About the University of Warsaw Botanic Garden

University of Warsaw Botanic Garden, a part of the Faculty of Biology, is both one of the oldest and the smallest of all botanic gardens in Poland. As a secluded area within a big city it has a very special character. Located in the vicinity of Royal Park Łazienki and Belvedere Palace is a beautiful historic park harboring extensive collections of Polish and exotic flora.

The garden is arranged by plant collections organized into section themes such as plant systematics, the flora of Polish lowlands and ornamental plants. Especially important to the garden are threatened plant species. The magic atmosphere of the park is enhanced by old majestic trees; some of them, like the European beech or Maidenhair tree (Ginkgo) are 200 years old.

The main focus of the garden's scientific work relates to its primary function, which is the protection of biodiversity. The garden supports activities related to the implementation of the Washington Convention (CITES) directives, which protect endangered plant and animal species that are the subject of international trade. Scientific research encompasses such diverse topics as pollination biology, evolution of plant reproduction systems as well as ethnobotany and synanthropization of plants.

Education is one of the Garden's key tasks. The garden provides a wide range of education activities for schoolchildren, families, adults, seniors and university students. The garden also organizes Train the Trainers workshops for teachers and educators and has published several learning resources. Pollination biology is one of the important themes of the public outreach activities. The garden is developing cooperation with neighbouring institutions including a centre for contemporary art and an urban gardening community. With the launch of the "Big Picnic" project in 2016 there is also a focus on food security issues which includes developing new culinary workshops, a pop-up kitchen in the garden and an educational compost bin.

Congress themes

The 2018 Congress has 7 themes under which we invite abstract proposals. These themes reflect universal priorities botanic garden educators share, regardless of their size, resources, or geographic location. Additional information on these sessions is provided in the *Session Themes* section of this document:

CG = City Gardens

ET = New Educational Tools

WT = Working Together

FE = Supporting Formal Education

NA= Reaching New Audiences

MI = Measuring Impact

EP = Education in Polish Botanic Gardens

Session formats & preparation

Abstract proposals can be submitted in the following format categories: panel session, workshop, roundtable session, World Café. We recommend reviewing the information in this document when planning and preparing your session:

- **Session themes**
- **Session formats**
- **Roles of session participants**

Guidelines on how to submit a session proposal

If you are interested in presenting at the 10th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens please submit an abstract **by Sunday 18th March 2018**.

Your submission should specify at least one of the Congress themes, along with the format of your session. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Sessions will run in the following formats:

- Panel session
- Workshop
- Roundtable session
- World café
- Paper presentation
- Project poster

Delegates are also encouraged to submit their ideas to present using a new session format. Contact us at EducationCongress@bgci.org to discuss your idea for your session.

Each session will last for 1.5 hours. Delegates are encouraged to submit proposals for entire sessions (involving a group of speakers). Presentations should be submitted by the convenor of the session. This is our preference; however we will also accept abstract submissions for individual paper (or poster) presentations. For those individual paper presentations that are accepted, the congress organisers will allocate a session for the presentation to be a part of.

Your abstract should be no more than 300 words and should describe the session you would like to present (unless submitting an individual presentation or a project poster). If your session involves a number of speakers you will need to submit an abstract with a 300 word overview of the session and separate abstracts of 150 words for each speaker's presentation.

Abstracts should be submitted via the conference website, please visit <http://www.ogrod.uw.edu.pl/en/congress2018> for more information. You will need to register with the system to upload an abstract, the system will guide you through the information required.

We intend to notify all those who have submitted an abstract by mid-April. The early bird discount registration rate is available until the end of April.

Session themes

City Gardens

City gardens all over the world have much in common. What do they offer to their audiences? What kind of difficulties do they face, what is specific for such gardens and how do they answer the challenges and advantages of their location in educational programmes?

New Educational Tools

This session is dedicated to practical tools and solutions used in education in botanic gardens – from inexpensive homemade tools to more sophisticated technologies used in education and its evaluation. Presentations should be focused on the design of the tools which might be copied in other gardens

Working Together

Challenges can often arise from the presence of and interaction between different groups of employees within the garden (gardeners, curators, educators, etc.) who may have different backgrounds, perspectives and priorities for their work. This session is dedicated to sharing good practice on developing cooperation and problem solving, with the aim of realizing a garden's mission and ensuring the support and involvement of staff of the garden within educational initiatives. In addition this session will also look at how gardens work outside of their own organisation, building networks to support their work. Botanic gardens have great potential for linking people and organizations – acting as important hubs in the vicinity but there are important challenges that need to be addressed to successfully achieve this.

Supporting Formal Education

How do botanic gardens work with partners that represent formal education systems (schools, teachers etc.)? Do they influence curricula and governmental educational policies? This session is focused on nature based tools, methods, inspirations and innovations in the field of formal education.

Reaching New Audiences

This session focuses on the importance of reaching new audiences and will share case studies of projects that aimed to develop relationships with new audiences, discussing successes and lessons learnt. This will include new and creative ways of working with new audiences, effective ways to reach audiences and important lessons from less successful projects. This session will also look at why some audiences are harder to reach for the botanic garden sector.

Measuring impact

Objective 4 of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation asks that “Education and awareness of plant diversity, its role in sustainable livelihoods and importance to all life on earth is promoted”. The education and public engagement work of botanic gardens should aim to address this objective as well as the Aichi biodiversity targets (specifically target 1) and the Sustainable Development Goals (primarily 4, 11, 12, 13 and 15). But how do we know if we are meeting these aims, what is the impact of the education work that is being delivered and how is this contributing to key issues such as sustainability, climate change and biodiversity conservation? This session will explore the work of educators to address these targets and focus on the ways in which impact can be measured.

Education in Polish Botanic Gardens

The session is dedicated to the challenges Polish botanic gardens face in their educational activity. The session will be held in Polish.

Session formats

Panel Session

In a panel session, the convenor introduces the speakers who then present on a particular topic or theme. A panel session typically includes up to 5 speakers. There will be time for discussion with the participants at the end of the session.

Workshop

This type of session is structured for in-depth exploration of one topic. The session is practical, interactive and actively involves all the participants. The workshop can be a science demonstration, a game, a show or a short training course.

Roundtable Session

This session has an extended number of speakers (from four to 20). Each speaker sits in a roundtable and presents their idea. This is followed by an in-depth discussion on each table. Time is left at the end to bring together all the different ideas discussed in each table. This session also requires a convenor to coordinate how it is run and bring the ideas together.

World café

Participants are seated around tables and a series of conversational rounds begin. At the end the whole group gathers to share outcomes. Here you can find more information on what a World café is and guidelines on how to organise one <http://www.theworldcafe.com/pdfs/cafetogo.pdf>

Project Poster Showcase

This is a showcase of education projects and other public engagement activities each described in a poster format.

Delegates are also encouraged to submit their ideas to present using a new session format. Contact us at EducationCongress@bgci.org to discuss your idea for your session.

Role of session participants

The following guidelines have been drawn up to ensure that everyone involved in each session has a clear idea of what is expected of them.

The Roles:

- Convener
- Presenter

The Convener:

- Is responsible for the content of the session which includes recruiting speakers and ensuring coherence between presentations, without repetition or overlap.
- Is responsible for submitting the session proposal and all other documentation, including speakers' names etc. Once accepted the convener is solely responsible for all online content for the session.
- Is the point of contact between session participants and congress organisers.
- Is in charge of the session and must ensure that all speakers are well briefed, organised and their presentations are uploaded on the congress system.
- May also be a speaker during the session.
- Of panel sessions, world cafes and roundtable discussions are responsible for recruiting all the speakers/hosts for each session.
- Are asked to pay the normal registration fee.

The Presenter:

- Is invited, normally by the convener, to speak about a certain topic.
- Develops their presentation based on the brief provided by the convener about their speech and the content of others in the session.
- Are asked to pay the normal registration fee.