CLEVELAND BOTANICAL GARDEN
TREEHOUSE COMPETITION

DESIGN & BUILD REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Cleveland Botanical Gardens, Cleveland, Ohio
November 10, 2014
Human beings have never been less connected with the natural world around them than they are today.

*Cleveland Botanical Garden* invites design and construction professionals to submit designs for an interactive and innovative Treehouse that will be a cornerstone guest experience at the Botanical Garden’s 2015 summer show. The overall goal of the show is to reconnect guests of all ages to the outdoors through interactive experiences that educate them about the physical, emotional and developmental benefits of staying engaged with outdoor environments. Submitted designs will be reviewed by a jury who will select up to eight (8) submissions to move on with the construction of their Treehouse design and be awarded a stipend of up to $25,000.

**INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to a special Treehouse Design Competition hosted by Cleveland Botanical Garden. This is an open design competition asking design and construction professionals to submit design visions for an interactive and innovative treehouse that will be a cornerstone guest experience at the Botanical Garden’s 2015 summer show. The overall goal of the show is to reconnect guests of all ages to the outdoors through interactive experiences that educate them about the physical, emotional and developmental benefits of staying engaged with outdoor environments. Submitted designs will be reviewed by a jury who will select up to eight (8) submissions to move on with the construction of their Treehouse design and be awarded a stipend of up to $25,000.

Human beings have never been less connected with the natural world around them than they are today. People of all ages constantly replace natural stimulation, imagination and interpersonal interaction with electronic content on their phones, computers and television screens. This correlates with increased incidence in physical and emotional issues afflicting people of all ages. Research shows that “getting up and going outside” can increase the quality of life of a person in a variety of ways, including reducing stress, increasing energy and physical fitness, combatting incidence and severity of depression and aiding in cognitive development.

More than any other age group, children have shown the most dramatic decrease in physical and imaginative engagement outdoors compared to their cohorts in previous generations. For outdoor play during childhood, few images can be more iconic than the treehouse – where man-made creative invention fully integrates with – rather than simply builds over – the surrounding natural world in a way that fosters social interaction, physical play and imaginative engagement. This show will primarily attract family audiences from across Northeast Ohio and surrounding multi-county regions – mainly with children under the age of 12 in the household.

Cleveland Botanical Garden challenges entrants to design, install and eventually uninstall an architecturally innovative treehouse that integrates with a specific outdoor site on the garden’s ground and delivers an interactive, physically engaging experience built around the central theme of imaginative play. Each Treehouse should have some overarching thematic element that can stimulate guests’ imaginations and cognitive ability in some way. This is a broad theme that can encompass ideas ranging from macro-focus to micro-focus such as adventure, cooperation, puzzles or music to name just a few examples. Cleveland Botanical Garden strongly
encourages each design entrant to seek out and pair with a professional building resource prior to submitting their final entry.

In addition, each entry should:

- Be at minimum a physical size so that a child age 12 and under can enjoy a “walk-through” experience
- Have at least one key interactive area that is fully accessible based on ADA guidelines
- Not damage the surrounding botanical environment of the physical site
- Should comply with guidelines listed in “Appendix B”

TREEHOUSE SITES (See Appendix ‘A’)

A total of eight (8) possible outdoor sites at Cleveland Botanical Garden, presenting various sizes and surrounding environments, have been selected as possible locations for Treehouses during the 2015 summer show. A more detailed description of each site is attached to this document as “Appendix A.”

To arrange for a tour of possible sites, please contact Amanda Halmes, Guest Services Manager at ahalmes@cbgarden.org or by phone at 216.707.2806 to reserve a date and time.

JURY PROCESS & EVALUATION CRITERIA

The jury will select up to eight (8) entries from the submissions to move on with construction of their design for the 2015 summer show. Not all sites must be filled by a competition winner. Design and construction stipends will be awarded “up to” certain amounts based on the physical space of each site area, with the final amount being allotted based on the scope of the selected design. See Appendix ‘A’ for the Treehouse sites and their associated stipend amounts which reach up to $25,000. All costs above the stipend awarded for each site must be paid for by the design/construction team.

Only submissions deemed to have met winning-caliber criteria will be selected to move on with the construction of their design for the 2015 summer show. Competition submissions will be judged by a jury comprised of professionals in disciplines that complement the competition’s objectives and challenges. Submissions will be judged on the following criteria:

- Originality
- Creativity
- Adherence to and embracing of the central theme of imaginative play
- Adherence to design guidelines
- Ability of the team to build their Treehouse design
- Accessibility
REGISTRATION

Anyone is welcome to form a design team and submit a design for a treehouse. Partnerships between designers and builders are strongly encouraged. To register a team, please fill out the attached Registration Form and email it to Amanda Halmes, Guest Services Manager at ahalmes@cbgarden.org. Once your registration has been received and processed, a confirmation email will be sent to confirm receipt of your submission.

TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 10, 2014</td>
<td>Competition Announcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 19, 2014</td>
<td>Registration Deadline (no later than 5pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 22, 2015</td>
<td>Submission Deadline (no later than 5pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 10, 2015</td>
<td>Winners Announced</td>
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<tr>
<td>April-May 18, 2015</td>
<td>Treehouse Construction/Installation</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 24-31, 2015</td>
<td>Treehouse Removal</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Entrants are responsible for printing and shipping/delivering their submission packages to Cleveland Botanical Garden, explicitly to the attention of Jen Anderson, Director of Guest Services and Special Exhibits. Each design proposal must include:

- **PRINTED MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS**
  - **DESIGN PRESENTATION BOARD:** One (1) 24”x36” foam core board that illustrates the treehouse design concept.
  - **DESIGN NARRATIVE:** One (1) page narrative which identifies the site you are interested in and provides a summary of the ideas behind your design. (8.5”x11”)
  - **RESUME:** The Resume should illustrate the team is capable of designing and constructing their Treehouse Design; two (2) pages maximum. (8.5”x11”)
  - Please be sure to include your Primary Contact Name on the Design Narrative and Resume.
  - A template PDF and Photoshop file has been provided for your use and to illustrate logo size/placement requirement for the Design Presentation Board.

- **DIGITAL MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS**
  - Compact Disc or USB memory stick containing electronic PDF versions of the 24” x 36” Design Presentation Board at 200 dpi resolution, the Design Narrative and the Resume. **Files submitted electronically must be named:**
    - CBG – (PrimaryContactName) - Presentation Board.jpg
    - CBG – (PrimaryContactName) - Design Narrative.pdf
    - CBG – (PrimaryContactName) - Resume.pdf

All materials must be delivered (shipped or hand delivered) to Cleveland Botanical Gardens no later than January 22nd, 2015 by 5:00pm. All 8.5”x11” physical materials and the Compact Disc / USB should be placed into an envelope and submitted to:

**ATTN: Jen Anderson, Director of Guest Services and Special Exhibits**

Cleveland Botanical Gardens

11030 East Boulevard

Cleveland, Ohio 44106
At the opening of the 2015 summer show, all of the entries will be on public display as part of an exhibit. Because the submissions will be on display, presentation boards must easily lie flat against an easel or wall. Materials submitted will not be returned to the owners at the conclusion of the show.

**RIGHTS RESERVED**

Cleveland Botanical Garden retains the right to utilize any submitted materials for exhibition, publication, and promotional purposes, and without compensation.

Cleveland Botanical Garden reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to negotiate with proponents, to change without notice the request and evaluation process and to waive any informality in submissions whenever same is in the interest of Cleveland Botanical Gardens.

**ABOUT CLEVELAND BOTANICAL GARDEN**

Cleveland Botanical Garden is a 10-acre, ever-changing urban escape where guests find enrichment and inspiration through fabulous gardens, an exotic Glasshouse and enchanting events. Located in the heart of Cleveland’s University Circle neighborhood, the Botanical Garden welcomes 200,000 guests per year and seeks to spark a passion for plants and cultivate an understanding of their vital relationship to people and the environment.

In September 2014, Cleveland Botanical Garden integrated operations with The Holden Arboretum – a 3,600 acre arboretum located 25 miles east of the Botanical Garden in Northeast Ohio’s Lake and Geauga counties.

The new combined entity, which will be the 13th largest public garden in the United States, will do more to educate the world about plants and trees through new and unique research initiatives, educational programs and visitor offerings to be enjoyed in distinctive urban and exurban locations.
### Appendix A – Site Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site #</th>
<th>Location Name</th>
<th>Tree(s)</th>
<th>Stipend</th>
<th>Elevated or Ground</th>
<th>Site Extent Limits</th>
<th>Description and Other Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1     | Secret Garden | none          | Up to $10,000  | Ground (stone pavers) | Approx. 6’ x 9’                        | • Fountain in center can be relocated temporarily.  
• Wall surrounding this alcove is approx. 7’-0” high.                                                |
| 2     | Children’s Garden | Central large tree | Up to $15,000  | Either elevated or ground | Approx. 7’ radius around tree, or on 8’x13’ irregular shaped sand pit. | • Location could be on sand pit or around tree.  
• Area currently used for crafts and other activities, for children aged 3 to 10.                     |
| 3     | Lawn facing Wade Oval Pedestrian Path | Central large tree | Up to $20,000  | Either elevated or ground | Approx. 24’ x 24’, north of tree. | • Large open space of flat lawn.  
• Opportunity for structure to have greater height.                                                    |
| 4     | Lawn facing Wade Oval Drive | Central large tree | Up to $20,000  | Either elevated or ground | Approx. 25’ x 25’                       | • Large open space of flat lawn.  
• Opportunity for structure to have greater height.  
• Located near Kitchen Garden and Butterfly Garden.                                                   |
| 5     | Lawn facing Wade Oval Drive | none          | Up to $15,000  | Either elevated or ground | Approx. 15’ x 15’, near fence         | • To be set back 8’ from fence.  
• Very visible from Wade Oval Drive.  
• Located near Kitchen Garden and Butterfly Garden.                                                   |
| 6     | Ravine at End of Boardwalk | various       | Up to $25,000  | Elevated          | Approx. 15’ x 15’                     | • Opportunity to tie into the elevated boardwalk landing.  
• Heavily wooded space.  
• Possibility to be built for permanent use.                                                            |
| 7     | Ravine along Boardwalk | various       | Up to $25,000  | Either elevated or ground | Approx. 15’ x 15’                     | • Opportunity to tie into the elevated boardwalk.  
• Heavily wooded space.  
• Possibility to be built for permanent use.                                                            |
| 8     | Red Oak Lawn  | Central large tree | Up to $15,000  | Either elevated or ground | Approx. 20’ radius around tree | • Large open space of flat lawn.                                                                      |

**EX.** Existing Treehouse | n/a                  | Existing                       | Fully accessible Treehouse in Children’s Garden |

- Most of the sites have access to utilities including electric and water for use during construction.
- It is preferred, though not required, that the structure be accessible to visitors of all ages and abilities. A minimum of three structures must be fully ADA accessible; ADA accessibility is preferred but not required for the remaining sites. **All visitors should have an accessible experience.**
- Trees may not be damaged in the building of these structures*, and care must be taken to avoid disruption to other plant life and ground structures. Structures may not mechanically attach to trees.
  - *Small trees and shrubs may be removed by the CGB in some instances in order to accommodate structures. Please include these requests in your submission.

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[www.cbgarden.org](http://www.cbgarden.org)
Appendix B - Installation Guidelines and Design Criteria

Our permanent plant collection must be protected during the exhibit. The health and structural integrity of our gardens is vitally important to the mission of Cleveland Botanical Garden (CBG). Winning structures may be free standing or attached to a tree. The following guidelines apply:

1. Installation of nails, hooks, etc. is not allowed.
2. No permanent or invasive devices are allowed to be attached to trees or in planting areas.
3. Nothing which would girdle or rub tree bark may be applied.
4. Use of rope or cabling may only be allowed with some type of protective sling. Must be approved by CBG staff in advance.
5. Pruning of trees or surrounding shrubs, etc. must be approved and performed by CBG staff.
6. Construction and installation must be performed with limited digging, which must be approved in advance by CBG staff.
7. Placement of guide wires must be approved in advance by CBG staff.
8. No painting or staining of the tree is allowed.
9. No parking of heavy equipment underneath trees.
10. In most cases, structures must be built on platforms above ground level in order to protect tree roots.
11. Construction must be done with guest safety in mind at all times.
12. It is the responsibility of the designer/builder teams to adhere to all deadlines for installation, and de-installation.
13. Because designs are site specific, arrangements must be made for site visits in advance.
14. CBG will take all reasonable measures to protect structures, but we are not responsible for any damage due to vandalism, weather, Acts of God, etc.
15. Designers/builders are responsible for all maintenance of the structure during the length of exhibit.
16. The following shall be considered as design criteria for each structure:

- Must be creative, imaginative, and environmentally friendly
- Must be made of weather-resistant materials which will last the run of the exhibit
- Must be engaging for the entire family
- Must be durable, and able to resist heavy use by children and adults
- ADA accessible houses must be created on the ADA accessible sites we have chosen
- Must be safe, and should be designed and built according to Ohio Playground Safety Regulations
- Must be built according to installation criteria
- Structures should be designed and built in a manner which will allow for ease of installation and removal
Appendix C – Team Registration

To register your team, please fill out this form and return it via email or mail to Amanda Halmes, Guest Services Manager at ahalmes@cbgarden.org. Please provide names written as you would like them to appear on any potential promotional materials.

**Primary Contact Information:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Contact Name:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Contact Phone Number:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Contact Email:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Contact Address:</td>
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**Team Contact Information:**

| Company Name(s): |   |
| Team Members: (Name, Company, Email Address) |

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11030 East Boulevard | Cleveland, OH 44106 | TEL: 216.721.1600 | FAX: 216.721.2056 | www.cbgarden.org