



Native Seeds/SEARCH seeks to find, protect, and preserve the seeds of the people of the Greater Southwest so that these arid adapted crops may benefit all peoples and nourish a changing world.

Native Seeds/SEARCH
Seedbank Manager
Fulltime with benefits

Native Seeds/SEARCH is a non-profit that conserves and promotes the food and farming traditions of the Desert Southwest. Our collection of arid-adapted, open-pollinated seeds has cultural roots in over 50 Indigenous and other communities. Specifically, the collection includes many varieties of corn, beans, squash, as well as food and fiber plants traditionally grown by farmers of the Southwest. Each year we regenerate a portion of the seed collection for conservation needs and to distribute to the public. NS/S distributes more than 21,000 free seed packets a year to farmers, seed savers, tribal and community organizations.

Position Summary: The Seedbank Manager will work to ensure the proper care, accessibility, documentation, and health of the seed collection. They will oversee the physical care and regeneration of the collection, help to coordinate seed distribution efforts, and assist with conservation-related activities in the Conservation Center Garden in Tucson.

The ideal candidate should have a solid academic or experiential background in the plant sciences, as well as agricultural experience. They should have strong data management and communications skills and prior experience with Indigenous communities in the US or Mexico. This is a salaried position based at the Tucson Conservation Center that will report to the Executive Director. Wages for this position will be determined by knowledge and experience within the published range.

Key responsibilities of this position:

Care of the Seed Collection

- Monitor the viability of seeds in the collection.
- Maintain a current and accurate inventory of seeds in the collection.
- Maintain the physical organization of the collection to ensure constant accessibility and security.
- Monitor environmental conditions in the seed bank.
- Develop and carry out germination testing protocol for Base Collection of the seed
- Assess the health of seed accessions in the collections and make and carry out recommendations to improve accession health.
- Process newly acquired material and incorporate it into the seed collection.

Seed Distribution

- Oversee regular germination testing of distribution stock to verify seed viability.
- Maintain descriptions and photos of available seed varieties on our website and work closely on the development of the annual Seedlisting catalog.

- Make ongoing and biannual assessments of distribution seed quantities and move varieties from General Distribution to Native Access (and vice versa) as warranted.
- Manage and document the Seed Donation program and assist with Community Seed Grants, Native American Seed Requests, and Rematriation of seeds as needed.

Data Management

- Ensure proper documentation of seed bank activities and the appropriate entry of data in the collection database.
- Assist with the assessment and replacement of the collection database and connected external facing database to improve data integration and accessibility.
- Oversee the ongoing photo-documentation of the seed collection.
- Update Operations Manual as needed
- Ensure proper documentation and security of black box backup samples kept for other organizations in NS/S's Security Backup program

Conservation Growouts

- Maintain a growout list and support seed selection and documentation for regeneration growouts and other farm activities in Tucson and for Partner Farmers
- Maintain relationships and regular contact on growouts with selected partner farmers.
- Oversee processing of freshly harvested seed from growouts and incorporate it into the seed collection.

Communications and Outreach

- Participate in public outreach and education by providing content for the NS/S blog, social media, Seedhead newsletter, educational seminars, and other venues.
- Respond to stakeholder questions about the seed collection and its use.
- Provide reports on seed regeneration and health to the Executive Director and BOD for quarterly meetings and the annual report
- Present at board meetings as appropriate and participate in the Seed Policy Committee meetings

Fundraising and Grants

- Participate and provide input to Conservation grant applications, including researching funding opportunities, writing and editing.
- Support fundraising efforts by representing NS/S at events, plant sales and with donor visits
- Present or meet with Donors or Foundations if needed
- Other duties as assigned

Staff Supervision

- Supervise and provide mentorship for the Seed Distribution Specialist and Seed Conservation Associate in their work
- Provide feedback on an ongoing basis and conduct formal performance reviews at least once a year

- Supervise volunteers and interns as appropriate

Required Qualifications

- Master's Degree (or Bachelor's Degree and 5 years of experience) in plant sciences, agronomy, sustainable agriculture, or other relevant field
- At least five years of experience working directly in the plant sciences and/or agriculture fields
- Experience working with an SQL database or other similar database software
- Experience presenting and delivering presentation and workshops to diverse audiences
- Experience working independently and managing projects to completion
- Prior experience with Indigenous communities in the US or Mexico (experience can be social, familial or educational)
- Strong Microsoft Office skills

Desired Knowledge, Skills & Abilities:

- PhD in in plant sciences, agronomy, sustainable agriculture, or other relevant field
- Prior experience with Indigenous communities in the US Southwest or Northwest Mexico (experience can be social, familial or educational)
- Familiarity with traditional maize varieties from the Southwest and Mexico
- Demonstrated commitment to NS/S's Mission of seed saving and knowledge of gardening
- Bilingual Spanish - English language ability

To Apply

- Please submit a cover letter and CV to: maidenanna@gmail.com
- Salary range: \$52,000 -\$62,000 (depends on experience)

NS/S is an equal opportunity employer and complies with all state and federal laws for fair and lawful hiring. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, or veteran status.