



Education

Missouri Botanical Garden teams with Ohio university on new master's degree

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The Stephen and Peter Sachs Museum at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

By **Diana Barr** - Associate Editor, St. Louis Business Journal
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St. Louis-area graduate students will be able to complete work on a new master's degree through field study at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

The Advanced Inquiry Program master's degree through Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, partners with zoos and community learning institutions across the United States. The Garden is the AIP's first so-called "master institution" that is a dedicated botanical garden, officials said.

Applications are now being accepted for the degree, with the garden's first cohort to begin coursework in summer 2019. Students will work with researchers and join field projects with local conservation and sustainability organizations, designing their own investigations at Missouri Botanical Garden locations.

"This program will change the game for local educators and others interested in conservation in St. Louis in a big way," **Sheila Voss**, vice president of education at the Missouri Botanical Garden, said Monday in a statement. "They'll be joining a network of peers who are embracing global sustainability goals as the framework for local action. Ultimately, this program is about empowering more people to shift their perspectives and their practices in ways that result in greater biodiversity, ecological health and human well-being."

AIP students will have an option to take an Earth Expeditions course, offered through Project Dragonfly, to apply toward their degree. Project Dragonfly, based at Miami University, began as a project funded by the National Science Foundation in the mid-1990s and created the AIP course in 2009.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is one of the St. Louis region's largest nonprofit organizations, with a fiscal 2017 operating budget of \$39.6 million, according to **Business Journal** research.



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