# School Arboretum Toolkit

## Introduction

Arboreta can enhance learning and quality of life for your students, teachers, staff, and community. As an arboretum, your school can become an outdoor classroom, living laboratory, and an inspiration for a greener, healthier, and more beautiful world. Using their arboretum, teachers and staff can partner to develop participatory student learning experiences and citizen science projects. Ultimately, becoming an ArbNet accredited arboretum allows you to be recognized for providing a richer learning experience for your students and earns your school distinction in your community. You can find more on why to create an arboretum at your school here.

This toolkit is meant to guide you through the ArbNet accreditation process, the steps to create a new arboretum, and building your arboretum's capacity to upgrade to a higher level of accreditation. The toolkit contains resources such as ArbNet template documents, as well as, examples of the different elements that make up an arboretum from various ArbNet accredited arboreta, including educational activities and events. Overall, this should give you a more concrete understanding of what you need to create or enhance an arboretum.

## Resources

**Application**
- Level I Sample Application
- Level II Sample Application
- Level III Sample Application
- Level IV Sample Application

**Arboretum Planning**
- Mission statement overview
  - Mission statement examples
  - Mission and vision statement example: PV Woods (Lenape Arboretum & Muhlenberg Woods) of the Perkiomen Valley School District
- Sample arboretum plan
  - Example plan: Crete Public Schools Arboretum

**Tree Inventory & Assessment**
- How to find an arborist (International Society of Arboriculture) - arborists can help not only with tree care, but with tree inventory and identification as well
- Davey Tree Experts

**Tree Care**
- [Sample tree care plan](#)
- [Tree and plant care](#) (The Morton Arboretum)
- [Landscape fact sheets](#) (University of Massachusetts Amherst)
- [How to plant a tree video tutorial](#) (Iowa DNR)
- [Tree pruning video](#) (Purdue University)
- [Protecting Trees During Construction](#) (Colorado State University Extension)

**Labeling & Mapping**
- [Example Label](#)
- [Label Making Comparison Guide](#)
- [Curio XYZ Digital Labeling & Mapping](#)
- [ArcGIS Online Account](#) (Free to make simple maps/digital labels)
- [Google My Maps Digital Labeling & Mapping](#)
- Examples:
  - [Dogwood Elementary School's Mac Post Arboretum](#)
  - [Timothy Christian School Arboretum](#)
  - [Crete Public Schools Arboretum](#)
  - [Highlander Arboretum of Governor Livingston High School](#)

**Sustainability**
- [Sustainability Campus Landscape Guide](#) (Arbor Day Foundation)
- [Sustainability Index for Public Gardens](#) (American Public Gardens Association)

**Educational Resources & Programs**
- [Education & Outreach Presentation](#) (recording on the role of history and hospitality in engaging diverse audiences, building partnerships between students and outdoor spaces, and connecting families through nature play spaces from the [2021 ArbNet Virtual Conference](#))
- [Virtual outreach K-12 bundles](#) (free) (The Morton Arboretum)
  - Scroll down to the "Celebrate Trees! Arbor Day Bundle" for tree-focused activities organized by grade - these can be downloaded for free through Arborversity.
  - [Link to register for free bundles in Arborversity](#) - to access these bundles you must use Arborversity, The Morton Arboretum's virtual education platform - creating an Arborversity account and downloading the activities is all free ([“how to” video](#)).
- [K-12 educational resources and programs](#) (Longwood Gardens)
- [Plant Heroes Program](#) (American Public Gardens Association)
- [Tree Campus K-12 Program](#) (Arbor Day Foundation)
- [Educational tree resources](#) (Arbor Day Foundation)
- [Seed Your Future](#): the movement to promote horticulture and inspire people to pursue careers working with plants
  - [DIY project and activity videos](#)
  - [We Are BLOOM!](#): the movement to improve the world through the power of plants for the target audience of middle school and high school students
    - [We Are BLOOM! YouTube videos](#)
  - [Plant Mash-Up Contest](#) for teachers and youth leaders, including [Lessons & Activities](#)
- [Young Learners Activities](#) (The Purdue Arboretum)
- [iNaturalist Citizen Science - Teacher's Guide](#)
  - [Getting started](#)
  - [Video tutorials](#)
  - [Managing Projects](#)
- [Nature's Notebook Citizen Science - Local Phenology Programs](#)

**Events**
- [iNaturalist Citizen Science - BioBlitz Guide](#)
- [150 Ways to Celebrate Trees on Arbor Day](#) (Arbor Day Foundation)
- Celebrating ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation example: [Moses Brown School Arboretum](#)

**Miscellaneous**
- [Children & Nature Network](#)
- [Dunn School Arboretum Species Descriptions](#)

# Steps to Becoming an ArbNet Accredited Arboretum (Level I)

1. **Complete a Strategic Plan**
   a. A strategic plan defines the purpose and mission of the arboretum, its audience(s), and the types of plants that are grown to achieve that purpose or serve those audiences, provisions for the maintenance and care of the plants, and provisions for the continuing operation of the organization through time with a clear succession plan. Your plan may be written into the university's plan
2. **Governance**
   a. A governing board, a group of people, or authority that is dedicated to the arboretum plan and its continuation beyond the efforts of a single individual. Such an organizational/governance group will affirm fulfillment of standards and authorize participation as an accredited arboretum
3. **Staff**
   a. Employees or volunteers who ensure fulfillment of the arboretum plan and provide for the basic needs of the arboretum collection and functions of the arboretum.(i.e. grounds crew, student interns/volunteers)
4. **Collections**
   a. 25 + species of woody plants and label them or mapped in some way (can be mapped online)
   b. All trees do not need to be labeled, just a selection of 25 species for easy public awareness
5. **Outreach/Education**
   a. Host at least one tree-related event, open to the general public. Some examples:
      i. Arbor Day
      ii. Earth Day with a tree-related event
      iii. Walking Tree Tour
      iv. Tree Planting
      v. Citizen science tree-related activity
      vi. See resources and examples under "Educational Resources & Programs" and "Events" above for more ideas