

2026 Trail Champion Internship Program



Position Title: Trail Champion (*Open to students, graduates, and career changers 18+*)

Reports to: Engagement Manager at Trailkeepers of Oregon

Location: Greater Portland Metro Area, Willamette Valley, Columbia River Gorge, Mt Hood, Oregon Coast (Multiple).

Status: Part-time, hourly (10 hours a week)

Compensation: \$21/hour 16-18 weeks between May and October | Mileage reimbursement

Applications close April 30th. Onboarding expected between May 25th and May 29th.

ABOUT TRAILKEEPERS OF OREGON

Founded in 2007, Trailkeepers of Oregon (TKO) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to protect and enhance the Oregon hiking experience through advocacy, stewardship, outreach, and education. TKO staff and volunteers build, restore, and maintain hiking trails across the state; are actively committed to promoting hikers' interests in Oregon; and promote hiking as an activity that encourages healthy Oregonians and fosters the conservation of public lands. The Youth Trail Champion Program is being operated in collaboration with the BIPOC Nature Network.

ABOUT THE BIPOC NATURE NETWORK

The BIPOC Nature Network was created in the spring of 2024 through the financial support of Metro and the logistical support of the Oregon Trails Coalition. It is a cohort of Outdoor Recreation and Advocacy groups. The primary mission and purpose is to create a space where these leaders and groups can network and collaborate on defining their place in the outdoors. Many of these leaders and groups are sought after for counsel and contributions to a wide range of outdoor recreation groups and trail communities throughout Oregon. Holding space and allocating time for this group empowers them to have a unified voice and presence alongside organizations that have more robust funding, greater visibility, and historic influence on access to opportunities in outdoor recreation. The consultation and collaboration will provide input and oversight to ensure that the Trails Champion Program creates safe and welcoming environments for everyone.

ABOUT THE POSITION

The Trail Champion Internship Program position is a part-time, seasonal position for applicants who are interested in careers in environmental awareness, stewardship, conservation, interpretation, and recreation. Each Trail Champion will be trained in public outreach and education through the TKO Trail Ambassadors Program framework. TKO's Trail Ambassadors serve as a friendly and informative welcome committee for trail users at some of the most popular trailheads across Oregon. The goal of the Trail Ambassador Program is to create a safe and welcoming experience for all trail users by engaging and educating folks on relevant trail and outdoor topics. They will engage with the public at 5 - 10 state parks and national forest trailheads in the Columbia River Gorge, Willamette Valley, Mt Hood, and Portland Metro area around topics such as Leave No Trace, safety, responsible recreation, and promoting outdoor recreation to communities. The primary days and hours for the position will be on weekends, and will be a limited duration of 18 weeks total. Along with the Trail Ambassador training, additional training and certification in First Aid/CPR, Leave No Trace policies, Accessibility Training, and more will be provided.

based on expressed interest. Mileage reimbursement and transportation will be provided. Lack of access to personal transportation will not be a barrier to consideration or participation. This position will work closely with the Engagement Manager, and the local Coordinators for specified areas, with the support of the BIPOC Nature Network.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Host information tables at popular trailheads throughout the Columbia River Gorge, Mt Hood, and Portland Metro area on weekends between May and October.
- Participate in intro hikes before tabling to access trail conditions and features.
- Participate in training and workshops on the trail features, important public safety information, and conditions of trails in the assigned regions.
- Engage in the creation of educational materials on drought, wildfire safety, wildlife and other subjects of interest.
- Provide and track public engagement and education for visitors arriving at the assigned trailheads throughout the region.
- Move and set up equipment weighing up to five pounds per item, including tabling materials, plastic storage bins, folding tables, folding signs, and canopies.
- Ability to present in person or virtually on the Outdoor Recreation Summit in October.

DESIRED QUALITIES

- Interest and/or Experience in working with people from various backgrounds.
- Understanding or willingness to learn about public engagement in outdoor recreation, volunteer management, and public lands management.
- Experience and/or willingness to learn engagement with people from all communities.
- Experience and/or willingness to learn how to work collaboratively.
- Passion for TKO's mission, vision, and values to protect and enhance Oregon's outdoor places.
- Prior experience in trails, outdoor recreation, or education is not necessary for consideration - just a friendly, outgoing approach and willingness to start conversations!

This is an at-will position with short-term funding. The purpose of this position description is to provide information reflecting current practices. This position description does not constitute nor create any contractual agreement, rights, or obligations. This position description may be amended to reflect changing priorities and adjusted funding. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Applicants whose interest aligns with this opportunity will be contacted to schedule a follow-up interview by May 8th. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Tamara Antunes, tamara.antunes@trailkeepersoforegon.org