



One Cool Earth
P.O. Box 150
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

Katharine Rondthaler Krieg
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Job Opening |Playguide: Garden & Nature Guide for Early Learners

Part-time, 2 days a week to 5 days a week

August 19, 2026 – June 4, 2027

Posting Date: April 27, 2026

Pay range: \$22-\$23/hour

Hours per week: 17-30 hours per week

Purpose:

One Cool Earth is San Luis Obispo County's leading garden-based education nonprofit. Founded in 2001, One Cool Earth partners with public schools to provide science based hands-on learning in the outdoor garden classroom. One Cool Earth is currently partnered with 33 public schools across San Luis Obispo County. One Cool Earth also has a garden-based enrichment program for early learners, called the Play Grove! The Play Grove is designed for children ages 3 to 5 to explore their environment through play-based learning. The Play Grove is a nature-based and place-based enrichment program, meaning we use the environment as our guide as we play, grow, create art, and learn together. The Play Grove is open to children weekdays from 8:30am-1pm and runs from August to June.

Position Available:

We are seeking a passionate and dedicated part-time Playguide to join our team and lead outdoor play experiences for young children ages 3-5. Playguides participate as a team to plan and implement nature-led play, exploration, and garden activities carried out at One Cool Earth's headquarter garden in San Luis Obispo. Playguides are expected to be at the Play Grove site from 8:00-1:30 pm Monday through Fridays, plus 2 hours of planning time on Tuesdays. Playguides will report to the Education Director. This position offers a unique opportunity to inspire young minds while immersing them in the wonders of the natural world.

Required Qualifications:

- Have education or training related to working with young children (specifically 3-5 year olds), understanding of child development, play-based philosophy, and garden education
- Current CPR and First Aid certification (or willingness to obtain).
- Proficiency with the entire Google Suite especially Google Docs, Google Sheets and Google Calendar
- Demonstrated communications and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work collaboratively while still being self-directed



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- Able to work with people of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- Flexibility, adaptability, and a positive can-do attitude towards outdoor experiences in all weather conditions.

Preferred Qualifications:

- 6 core semester units in early childhood education/development or appropriate age-level program curriculum
- Have life experience with children, love being with young children, and be curious about their nature and the “whys” of children’s behavior
- Have experience with storytelling, song, and body movement
- Knowledge of gardening basics and interest in learning about plants, animals, tracking (training will be provided, but a love of gardening is a plus!)
- Have experience with program planning and curriculum execution
- Have experience holding safe boundaries, positive discipline and supporting children's emotions
- Have experience interacting supportively with parents and families
- Come with a willingness to participate in growing our organization and a vested interest in the success of the program and the organization

Primary Responsibilities:

Playguide

- Plan and implement developmentally appropriate outdoor activities and experiences for children ages 3-5 years old
- Observe children engaging in play: be present with children and intentional around observing and respecting child-led play, giving children space to facilitate their own play
- Work effectively with other Playguides to coordinate activities and prepare materials
 - Gathering supplies for lessons
 - Setting up play stations as children show interest
 - Facilitating free play
 - Garden snack prep
- Meet once a week with other Playguides to prepare for the upcoming week’s activities (collaborate, brainstorm, share resources)
- Meet once a month (Monday afternoons) with the larger OCE team for professional development
- Meet with Education Director bi-weekly for check-ins



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- Ensure the safety and well-being of all children during outdoor activities, including managing risks associated with outdoor environments and weather conditions.
 - Follow emergency procedures when necessary
- Facilitate group activities, games, and storytelling that promote social-emotional development, teamwork, and communication skills.
- Support children as they work through social problems, practice conflict resolution with children
- Communicate effectively with Lead Playguide and Education Director to meet performance expectations
- Attend all relevant meetings and trainings provided by One Cool Earth

Parent communication:

- Maintain clear communication with parents regarding children's experiences, progress, and any concerns (in person and online communication via Brightwheel)
- Check that children come ready for the day with appropriate gear

Administrative tasks:

- Maintain accurate records and reports
- Assist Lead Playguide during Open House and Tours as needed
- Clean up and maintain the space in an orderly fashion
- Communicate effectively with Lead Playguide to meet performance expectations

Garden Maintenance

- Support maintenance for the Play Grove Garden: planting, weeding, pruning, composting, minor irrigation adjustments and repairs, along with large scale maintenance of the land (olive grove and surrounding area) as needed

Physical Demands: *The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.* The ability to perform normal garden tasks, including digging, carrying, stooping, weeding, reaching, walking on varied terrain, and lifting and carrying materials weighing up to 50 lbs. As this position is mainly outside, the Playguide must be prepared to work in all weather conditions.



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Playguides attend mandatory weekly, 2-hour paid planning sessions on Tuesday afternoons, starting August 25, 2026 through June 4, 2027. A required all-staff training is scheduled for the week of August 10, 2026. Position hours are available contingent upon enrollment.

Learn more about The Play Grove at <https://www.onecoolearth.org/play-grove>

Certificates, Licenses, Registrations: The applicant must possess a valid driver's license, a reliable vehicle with proof of insurance, and be able to pass a background check and TB test.

Compensation & Benefits: This is an 11 month (August-June), part time, hourly position with paid sick time, Optional 401(k) after 1 year; Extensive professional development/ training schedule; 50% off Play Grove Tuition for direct descendants; Garden goodies and snacks to enjoy with young children Be part of a growing, mission-driven team and make a meaningful impact on children's lives.

How to apply: Email your resume, cover letter, and any relevant certifications or credentials to Katharine Rondthaler-Krieg at kathariner@onecoolearth.org. Please include " Playguide Position" in the subject line of your email. Applicants will not be reviewed without a cover letter. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled. We look forward to welcoming a passionate educator to our team!

We strongly encourage applications from Black and Indigenous people and other people of color, people from working-class backgrounds, women, LGBTQIA+ people, and other people of historically excluded identities. **Data shows that women and BIPOC candidates more frequently do not apply to a job because they don't feel that they meet all of the qualifications listed.** If you feel passionate about our efforts and believe that you have the skills to accomplish the job, we want to hear from you!

We are an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.