We invite nominations of and applications by outstanding scientists for the E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professorship in Botanical Studies. Successful candidates will have an active research program that incorporates ecology, evolution, and conservation approaches to understanding plant diversity. The appointment will be made in the UMSL Department of Biology at either the associate or full professor rank. This tenured position was established to enhance the partnership between the University of Missouri–St. Louis and the Missouri Botanical Garden, where the professor will have principal investigator status. This position is one of 36 endowed professorships in the Des Lee Collaborative Vision (https://www.umsl.edu/desleecollaborative/index.html), which are distinct from more traditional academic positions in having a responsibility for community outreach and engagement. Therefore, we seek a broadly interactive colleague who is interested in crossing disciplinary boundaries within science and from science to a broad and diverse community.

The University of Missouri–St. Louis is a leader in partnerships with key institutions in the St. Louis Region, including collaborations with the Missouri Botanical Garden, Saint Louis Zoo, Danforth Plant Science Center, and others. The Missouri Botanical Garden, with more than 45 PhD scientists, has a renowned research program with field sites in 56 countries, an outstanding library, and a world-class herbarium with more than 8 million plant specimens. This partnership also includes collaboration with the Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center (https://www.umsl.edu/hwec/index.html), which promotes research and education in ecology, evolution, and conservation, and participation in the UMSL Biology graduate program that attracts top scholars from around the world.

The Des Lee Endowed Professor in Botanical Studies is expected to pursue an active program of research in botany and oversee a laboratory at the University that facilitates the training of students. Areas of particular interest are ecology, evolution, biodiversity studies, restoration ecology, systematics, geospatial approaches, and/or conservation. The endowed professor will have teaching responsibilities with the Biology undergraduate and graduate programs. In keeping with the Des Lee Collaborative
Vision, the successful candidate will have a demonstrated interest in, and skills relevant to, engaging scholars outside their focused research specialty and in engaging diverse communities outside the academy. Laboratory and office space will be housed at the University along with access to all research facilities at the Missouri Botanical Garden. The position includes an annual budget in support of the collaboration.

Required qualifications:
- A PhD in Biology or a related field
- A productive record of research publications in studies related to plant diversity
- A strong history of research funding
- Demonstrated skills in teaching courses in Biology and mentoring research students

Preferred qualifications:
- A track record of community engagement
- Experience supporting the success of students from a wide range of diverse backgrounds

The application review process will start in mid-February 2024 and will continue until the position is filled. The position will be available beginning Fall 2024, but the start date is negotiable. For full consideration, candidates must provide a cover letter outlining qualifications and interests, detailed curriculum vitae, statement of current and future research plans, and a statement of experience and plans for outreach consistent with the Des Lee Collaborative vision. Questions may be addressed to Dr. Bethany Zolman (zolmanb@umsl.edu). Formal submission of application materials must be done via the University’s website: www.umsl.jobs. Click on the E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professorship in Botanical Studies, and follow the instructions provided. Job posting ID is 50233.

We value the uniqueness of every individual and strive to ensure each person’s success. Contributions from individuals with diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives promote intellectual pluralism and enable us to achieve the excellence that we seek in learning, research and engagement. This commitment makes our university a better place to work, learn and innovate. In your application materials, please discuss your experiences and expertise that support these values and enrich our missions of teaching, research and engagement.