

UBC Sustainability Scholars Program

Application Guide

Summer 2019

Thank you for your interest in the UBC Sustainability Scholars program. This document outlines important program information, eligibility criteria, and the application procedure. Many people find the answers to frequently asked questions helpful. Please review the information outlined below before applying.

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UBC SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

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Program Information

The UBC Sustainability Scholars Program is open to all **full-time graduate** students (including JD students) currently enrolled at UBC.

The summer Sustainability Scholars Program runs for **15 weeks from April 29 to August 12, 2019** and most projects can be completed on a part-time basis over **250 hours**. Please read the project description for exceptions.

The successful candidate commits to:

- Attend a program orientation session within a week of your start date.*
- Work the specified number of project hours (part-time**) between the dates specified on the project description.
- Develop a Project Plan (template will be provided) outlining the tasks to be undertaken, including a list of objectives to be achieved and associated deliverables. The Project Plan is developed in consultation with the successful candidate's mentor from the supervising organization and is due to the UBC Sustainability Scholars Program Manager within two weeks of the project start date.
- Complete the agreed upon deliverables by the project end date specified in the project description.
- Participate in any mandatory workshops, including the end-of-program presentation event(s).
- Complete an exit survey to help us improve the program for the next incoming student cohort.

Successful candidates will be provided with an orientation package outlining further details of the program once they are hired.

* Students on exchange or with a pre-existing commitment may be excused from attending.

**Successful candidates will work directly with their project mentor to determine an appropriate work schedule, including any balance of on- and off-site work hours. Please take note of the time commitment section of the individual project descriptions, which provide an indication of the balance of on- and off-site hours (where applicable) and any preferred work schedules put forward by the supervising organization.

Sustainability Scholars program website:

<https://sustain.ubc.ca/teaching-applied-learning/ubc-sustainability-scholars-program>

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Application Procedure

The online application form will ask the following:

1. Provide your contact information and UBC graduate program details.
2. Review and affirm that you meet the Eligibility Criteria (outlined below).
3. Upload one file containing your cover letter, and resume and the contact information for two references for each position you are applying to.
 - Your resume, cover letter, writing sample and references must be **saved together in one PDF file** in the format: **Project number_Last name_First name.pdf** (e.g., 2019-02_Smith_Jenny.pdf). You can find the project number listed on the Scholars Opportunities web page and in the file name of the pdf version of the job posting.
 - Your cover letter should identify the position you are interested in, and how your background, skills, and experience align with the project objectives and the requirements of the position (maximum one page formatted as a letter).
 - Provide the name and contact details of at least two references—one academic, one professional. (Please list your referees at the end of your resume.)
4. You may apply for **up to three positions**. Each position requires a separate cover letter, resume, and list of references saved together in one PDF file. **You may use the same references for each project.**
5. Details about the application deadline are posted on the website.
6. **NOTE:** If the posting asks for a writing sample, please take it with you to the interview.

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IMPORTANT: Program Eligibility

UBC HR has stipulations that must be met in order for UBC graduate students to be hired into the Scholars program. Please review the list below to confirm your eligibility:

- 1) ENROLLMENT: Must be registered as full-time in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.
- 2) ACADEMIC STANDING: Be in good academic standing, and not on academic probation.
- 3) GRADUATION: A student is no longer considered a student after his/her convocation date. Students who graduate prior to the commencement of the internship period are not eligible.
- 4) AWARDS/FUNDING: Most funding agencies have clearly defined policies regarding additional funding for award recipients. This can include restrictions on the number of hours students can spend on work unrelated to their research. It is the award recipient's responsibility to comply with the rules and regulation of their award/s. Before applying, please confirm your eligibility to work the required hours by checking the guidelines of any graduate student funding you hold.
- 5) SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER: All students, including international students, must have a SIN before they can be paid by UBC. Successful candidates are responsible for ensuring they have a valid SIN prior to the commencement of the internship period.
- 6) INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: In addition to the above, international students must hold a valid student visa in order to work at UBC. Successful candidates are responsible for ensuring they have a valid student visa for the duration of the internship.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is an academic referee, and what is a professional referee?

A: An academic referee could be your supervisor, or another member of your faculty who knows you well and would be able to comment on your academic ability and perhaps personal attributes as well. A professional referee is typically a previous employer for whom you have worked, or someone who supervised your work in some way (this could even be in a volunteer capacity).

Q: What if I don't have a professional referee?

A: Please list the referees that you do have, if you do not have both.

Q: Can my graduate supervisor be my professional referee? I am an international student and do not have any local work experience.

A: The categorisation of your referees can be at your discretion. In addition to your supervisor, if you have any international work experience that you would like to list a referee for, you are also welcome to do so.

Q: Can I submit my referees after the application deadline?

A: Yes. We only contact references if you are the preferred candidate and the mentor intends to hire you. If you are unable to finalise your referees by the application deadline, please bring them with you to the interview.

Q: Do I need to provide two different references with each application?

A: No, you may provide the same referees each time.

Q: When you ask for a reference, do you want a reference letter?

A: If you already have a letter of reference, you are welcome to include it in your application, but you do not need to provide one. Applying to the Scholars Program is not like applying to a graduate program. We want references that we can contact by phone or by email to help determine if you are the right candidate for the job.

Q: Can I still apply if I have limited availability?

A: As each Scholar will need to work around their various other commitments over the term, the work schedule of the successful candidates will be negotiated between each Scholar and their project mentor directly. In the application form there is a place where you can comment on particular limitations on your availability.

Q: I have restrictions on how many hours per week I can work due to scholarships and other funding source. What should I do when I apply?

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- A:** Please indicate your restrictions in your application. If your application is successful, you and your mentor will need to discuss your working hours in due course. Your availability might have an impact on the hiring decision; however, not disclosing relevant information can cause problems after you are selected as a Scholar.
- Q:** **Am I eligible to apply if I am an international student on a study permit that does not allow employment off campus?**
- A:** Yes, a current international graduate student with a valid study permit is eligible to apply. Because the student is hired by UBC to work with the partner organization on the specific project, it is considered employment on campus. If you don't have one yet, please be sure to get your social insurance number by the beginning of March.
- Q:** **I have applied for a UBC graduate program, but have not yet been admitted. Am I eligible to apply?**
- A:** Scholar positions are only open to current UBC graduate (Master and PhD) students. You can apply once you are enrolled and have commenced your program.
- Q:** **Can I provide additional supporting documents in my application?**
- A:** You may provide additional documents electronically, however only a resume, cover letter, and list of references are required. Please ensure these are included in your application document (pdf).
- Q:** **I have been awarded a fellowship/funding which prohibits accepting other funding, am I still eligible?**
- A:** You will be paid \$21 per hour. You will need to contact your other funding source to confirm that this is acceptable.
- Q:** **Are there any requirements about minimum GPA?**
- A:** No. However, there are UBC HR rules around academic standing for student appointments. Potential candidates cannot be on academic probation.
- Q:** **What is the criteria for being a successful applicant?**
- A:** Applicant requirements vary depending on the needs of the project, but generally, we are looking for bright, articulate students who can bring their education, experience, research, and writing skills to the work at hand.
- Q:** **One of the requirements to be eligible for the program is to be in good academic standing. In that sense, do you want the applicants to include in their resume a summary of their grades, or would you check this information afterwards?**
- A:** A student's Academic Standing is only a concern with respect to our Scholars Program if their standing has been changed to *On Academic Probation* or *Failed*—the student is ineligible due to UBC HR rules. You do not need to include your grades on your application.
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Q: Are there any online resources or documents to help me learn about the program?

A: The best way to get a sense of the program is to have a look in the [Projects Library](#). There you will see the array of sustainability projects that students have worked on in the past.

Q: I am a law student, am I eligible to apply to the program?

A: Yes, students doing J.D. (Juris Doctor) studies are welcome to apply to the program.

Q: Who should I address my cover letter to?

A: Please address your cover letter to the UBC Sustainability Scholars Program Manager.

Q: Can I use my project to meet my academic internship requirements?

A: If you are the successful candidate for a Scholars position, your primary obligation is to meet the expectations of the project as outlined by your mentor. If you choose to do more work outside the scope of the project and the hours assigned to it in order to meet course requirements, that would be your choice, but any additional work must not affect the core project requirements in any way. In other words, your course requirements should not drive the project requirements or outcomes.

The UBC Sustainability Scholars program does not directly support students to meet their academic internship requirements, although many former participants in the program have been able to use their project to meet their internship requirements. Unfortunately, we cannot confirm in advance that you would be able to meet your academic requirements through participation in the program.

More questions? Please email sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca

Sustainability Scholars program website:

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Link to project listings and application submission portal

<https://sustain.ubc.ca/teaching-applied-learning/ubc-sustainability-scholars-program/student-opportunities>

Below are some links to useful resources to help you with your resume and cover letter (there are many more online). Some of these resources also provide information on preparing for your interview.

<https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-resources/resumes-cover-letters-curricula-vitae>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/graduate-pathways-success>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/cover-letter-cv-resume-templates-ubc-career-services>

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