

The UBC Sustainability Initiative (USI) is pleased to offer current UBC graduate students the opportunity to work on funded sustainability internship projects. Successful candidates work under the mentorship of a partner organization, and are immersed in real world learning where they can apply their research skills and contribute to advancing organizational sustainability goals.

For more information about the Sustainability Scholars Program and to apply to work on this project, please visit the [Student Opportunities](#) page.

Please review the application guide (PDF) before applying.

Applications close **midnight Monday February 25, 2019.**

Research project title: Researching Health Care Chemicals of Concern

Sustainability Goal or Operations Plan objective

Operational Plan: Support the “Zero Toxicity” objective of minimizing the use of toxic chemicals within the health care system and supporting operations.

Objective: Quantifying, monitoring and reducing the chemicals of concern in construction and maintenance materials, furnishings, cleaning products, and patient care supplies can help reduce exposures to health care staff and patients, thereby minimizing the associated risk of respiratory illness, cancers, reproductive and developmental, hormonal and neurological defects.

Outline scope of project and why it is of value to your organization. Describe how and when the Scholar’s work will be actionable.

- Research chemicals of concern that patients and staff could be exposed to in health care facilities. Include exposures during construction, maintenance and cleaning of facilities, as well as, during patient care and support services such as food operations.
- Refine and expand on an existing chemicals of concern inventory specifically aiming to improve credibility and user ability.
- Create additional practical resources for health care staff that increase awareness of chemicals of concern, including processes and practices that can reduce and/or eliminate exposure to these chemicals.
- Work with health care staff in one or two departments (i.e. Laboratory and Facilities Management) to create a chemicals of concern inventory/baseline and identify opportunities for reduction/elimination and monitoring.
- The project contributes to an existing Lower Mainland Health Organization’s Safer Chemicals Strategy that seeks to improve understanding of current use of chemicals, exposures and risks to staff, patients and the environment, develop an approach to monitoring use of chemicals of concern, and work with key stakeholders on reducing/eliminating purchases of chemicals of concern.
- All project deliverables will help raise awareness about chemicals of concern in health care, engage stakeholders, and start conversations on best ways to monitor usage and eliminate risks.

Deliverables

UBC SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM - Summer 2019

- A final report, containing a summary of completed work with recommendations, complemented by a final presentation to key stakeholders.
- A refined chemicals of concern list, which improves understanding of where chemicals are found in health care facilities, how they are used and in what goods and services they are found, including credible references to toxic substances lists.
- A department specific chemicals of concern list/resource, which identifies materials to avoid and can be used to engage key stakeholders in the safer chemicals strategy. This deliverable is related to the above deliverable and looks at the context of one or two specific departments TBD (i.e. Laboratory and Facilities Management).
- One or more practical resources that help staff reduce risk and exposures to chemicals of concern. These resources will be determined in scope and channel through internal discussions as the internship progresses.
- Digitalization of any interviews undertaken with stakeholders for future referencing.
- Final report or executive summary for the UBC Sustainability Scholars online project library.

Time Commitment

- This project will take approximately **500** hours to complete.
- In consultation with the approved candidate, to determining the appropriate work schedule, the project and associated hours will be completed between May 13, 2019 and August 12, 2019
- The Scholar is to complete hours between 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- Demonstrated experience in occupational health and hygiene, chemicals of concern, and/or health care
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys

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Apply here:

<https://sustain.ubc.ca/student-opportunities>

To learn more about the program here:

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

Read the application guidelines to confirm your eligibility to participate in the program here:

<https://sustain.ubc.ca/student-opportunities>

Contact Karen Taylor at sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca if you have questions.