

UBC Sustainability Scholars Program 2019

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

Public space inclusivity research methods and best practices

Research supports the following City of Vancouver policies -

- Greenest City Action Plan. Specific goal area (s):
 1. **Green Transportation:** Transit should be fast, frequent, reliable, and accessible, and public spaces should be vibrant.
- Healthy City Strategy. Specific goal area (s):
 1. **Cultivating Connections:** Vancouverites are connected and engaged in the places and spaces that matter to us
- Renewable City Action Plan. Specific goal area (s):
 1. **Transportation 2040:** Support vibrant public spaces that encourage a culture of walking, cycling, and social interaction

Outline scope of project and why it is of value to the City of Vancouver and describe how and when the scholar's work will be actionable

The City needs a mechanism to evaluate the "health" of public spaces, to inform management of activities in public spaces, stewardship of public spaces, programming in public spaces, and creation of new public spaces.

Engineering Services' Street Activities branch is responsible for public space research and monitoring Vancouver's public spaces to ensure they are achieving the City's policy goals for public spaces. Vancouver's public spaces host special events, democratic, religious, and political expressions, commercial activities, and informal gatherings and community-building activities. Reviewed research suggests that public space is valuable, in-part because it is useful for so

many different activities, but the Street Activities branch requires scholarly support to help us evaluate the value of public space, and the uses of public space.

This research project's focus is on developing a methodology to evaluate the "health" of public spaces. With this methodology, we can ensure that more public spaces are useful, welcoming, inclusive, and attractive to users. From our research to-date, most visitors and users of public spaces travel to the public space by walking, cycling, transit, wheel-chairing, or a combination thereof. In our professional opinion, "healthy" public spaces attract more visitors, and these visitors usually get to public spaces using transit and active transportation, thereby, this project supports our Greenest City Action Plan goals.

The goal of this project is to summarize and evaluate the latest research methods and develop best practices for measuring and assessing the "health" of Vancouver's public space and evaluate their contributions.

If selected, we would work with a Greenest City Scholar (GCS) to:

1. Develop a review of selected literature and summarize methods to evaluate public spaces. Staff can support literature review with books in staff library, and other recommended readings.
2. Work with staff to review public space literature in the context of Vancouver's of public spaces.
3. Work with staff to develop criteria of a "healthy" public space.
4. Work with staff to develop methodologies to document and evaluate public spaces using these criteria of "healthy" public spaces.
5. (if time allows) Use the developed methodologies to document and evaluate select public spaces, as a "field test," of the GCS's work.

Results from this work would help the Street Activities branch to effectively and consistently monitor Vancouver's public spaces and evaluate proposals for new and emerging activities in public space.

Deliverables

- Annotated bibliography and summary of current public space research methods
- Criteria and methodologies to document and evaluate public spaces (e.g. check-lists, etc.)
- An internal presentation to the Street Activities Branch
- A public facing final report (or executive summary) for the UBC Sustainability Initiative website

Time Commitment

- This project will take **250** hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between ***April 29 and August 12 2019***

- The scholar is to complete hours between 1 and 5 days per week/ approximately 7 to 35 hours per week.

Skill set/background required/preferred

- Excellent research and writing skills.
- Demonstrated interest in public space, GIS analysis, human geography, planning, engineering, or landscape architecture
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Familiarity with qualitative research methodologies and implementation
- Familiarity with quantitative research methodologies and implementation

Applications close **midnight Monday February 25.**

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.