



Job Title: Project Coordinator, Interdisciplinary Applied Research Initiative: Urban Biodiversity in a Changing Climate, SEEDS Sustainability Program

Department: Community Development, Campus + Community Planning, VP External Relations

Position Classification: Researcher/Professional

Position Type: Graduate Research Assistant or Graduate Academic Assistant

Desired Start Date: May 1st, 2019

End Date: April 30th, 2020

Wage: \$21.00

Work Hours: May 2019– April 2020 (approx. 28 hours per week)

Please submit via [UBC Careers Online](#)

Application Deadline: April 22, 2019

Job Description

POSITION SUMMARY:

The [SEEDS \(Social, Ecological, Economic, Development Studies\) Sustainability Program](#), situated within [UBC's Campus + Community Planning Department](#) creates applied research and interdisciplinary partnerships between students, faculty, staff and community to advance sustainability ideas, policies, and practices and creates societal impacts by using the Campus as a Living Laboratory. Projects support the integration of academic and operational work on sustainability, contributing to UBC's academic mission in teaching, learning and research. SEEDS is an internationally recognized [multiple-award-winning](#) program that engages approximately 1,000 UBC students, faculty, staff and community partners, in over 100 applied community-based action research projects annually. Projects are diverse and contribute to the advancement of social, ecological and economic sustainability issues, including 15 different themes. Priority research areas include Biodiversity, Climate Adaptation, Urban Forest Management, Public Realm, Decarbonizing Transportation, Green Buildings, Water Stewardship, Zero Waste, and Wellbeing. Since 2001, SEEDS has engaged over 8,500 students, staff, and faculty across 12 faculties in over 200 courses, advancing the development and implementation of 24 sustainability plans and policies. Projects have resulted in over 1,500 [publicly-accessible research reports](#) informing the development and implementation of UBC's strategic sustainability priorities, while enriching the student learning experience through applied learning in sustainability, and providing faculty with opportunities to integrate sustainability into the classroom.

This role will support the SEEDS Sustainability Program continued success in advancing sustainability ideas, policies and practices, and creating impactful research experiences and partnerships with students, faculty, staff and community partners. Working primarily in interdisciplinary research and partnership coordination, the candidate will play a key role to launch and coordinate a new 2-year collaborative pilot - "*Interdisciplinary Applied Research Initiative: Enhancing Urban Biodiversity in a Changing Climate*". Working with the Faculties of Forestry, Arts and Science, [Campus Biodiversity Initiative: Research & Demonstration \(CBIRD\)](#) and other core partners from across UBC and the region, the initiative will serve as a pilot to develop a new model for interdisciplinary, demand-driven, student-led research on **adaptive urban biodiversity in a changing climate**. Objectives include the: 1) co-creation of undergraduate applied research curricular and co-curricular pathways for faculty and student engagement in interdisciplinary research; 2) launch of an *Interdisciplinary Knowledge Exchange Lab* that convenes faculty, staff, students, and community partners for demand-driven student research focused on biodiversity in a changing climate; and 3) the adoption of an inclusive research design and engagement model that expands underrepresented students' access to applied research opportunities. This new initiative will deliver innovative and impactful research to advance UBC's sustainability priorities, while expanding and enriching undergraduate research and learning experiences in addressing societal issues.



CORE JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

- ❖ Assist in the development and coordination for inclusive, collaborative, and impactful undergraduate research experiences that enhance urban biodiversity in a changing climate in this new *Interdisciplinary Applied Research Initiative*

Specific Duties:

- **Co-creation of action research projects pertaining to biodiversity in a changing climate** through facilitating *Interdisciplinary Knowledge Exchange Workshops* and meetings with a diversity of students, community partners, and faculty members
- Conducting best practice research to inform initiative development
- Mapping curriculum assets of applied research experiences and curriculum pertaining to biodiversity and climate change
- **Coordinating the development of new *curricular* and co-curricular pathways for undergraduate engagement in applied research that pertain to biodiversity in a changing climate**, including the development and implementation of:
 - Scaffolded undergraduate multi-year course series with partner faculties
 - New and strengthened undergraduate courses
 - Student *Interdisciplinary Knowledge Exchange Workshops* to co-create research priorities with community partners and faculty
 - Community-engaged citizen science framework, with opportunities for student-community co-creation and application of biodiversity and climate change knowledge across the region
 - Mechanisms for undergraduate student mentorship opportunities with graduate students doing related research
- **Supporting the development of new teaching tools including:**
 - *Biodiversity in a Changing Climate Resource Toolkit* to support student research and faculty curricular integration
 - Integrated open data portal that contains an inventory of campus data as it pertains to biodiversity of genes, species and ecosystems, and connects with wider citizen science initiatives
- **Piloting an inclusive Research Design and Engagement Model, including the coordination of:**
 - Inclusive engagement practices to inform student-led research team development, research design, data collection and knowledge exchange practices
 - Themed sessions with underrepresented student groups to include: Biodiversity History and Knowledge: Inclusive Recognition Practices; Biodiversity in a Changing Climate: Impacts & Future Directions, and others to be co-identified
- **Supporting knowledge dissemination, exchange, and engagement activities, including supporting:**
 - Research contributions to academic and practitioner bodies of knowledge and action on climate change and biodiversity
 - Research contributions that advance and achieve UBC's growing sustainability goals in current, emerging and future sustainability plans including the Climate Action Plan, Green Building Action Plan, emerging Urban Forest Management Plan, Biodiversity Strategy, Wellbeing Strategy and Inclusion Action Plan
 - End-of year showcase that engages project partners, students, local governments, leading academics, and community leaders to showcase research, share lessons learned, and forge partnerships to advance biodiversity in the region
 - Enhanced local and global biodiversity networks and partnerships through research projects
 - Communication platforms for UBC academics and students involved in biodiversity and climate change research to share student research and job opportunities
 - Compilation of undergraduate interdisciplinary research in a *State of the Campus: Biodiversity in a Changing Climate Report*
- **Designing and administering evaluation tools, and writing progress reports as needed**



ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS:

The successful candidate will report to the Manager of Social, Economic, Ecological Studies (SEEDS) Sustainability Program, Community Development, Campus + Community Planning. Work involves both independent work and within a team environment. The employee will maintain regular contact with the supervisor through weekly meetings, as well as email and telephone, as necessary.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION: All applicants must submit a cover letter, resume, and writing sample.

Qualifications:

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

- Preference for a student enrolled in a Masters Program
- Preferred Degrees/Disciplines: Public Policy, Planning, Architecture and Landscape Architecture, Science/Ecology, Forestry, Geography, Education, Interdisciplinary studies, or related fields
- A genuine commitment in collaborating to solve sustainability issues such as the biodiversity and climate change crisis
- Experience with project coordination
- Experience with demand-driven/community-based action research and/or interdisciplinary research
- Experience with graphic design, developing social media content and other communications is preferred

SKILLS and QUALIFICATIONS:

- Registered graduate student
- Familiarity with a broad range of sustainability practices and research
- Ability to think strategically, creatively, and apply systems perspectives
- Facilitation experience with a diverse stakeholders
- Ability to facilitate interdisciplinary discussions through workshops and meetings
- Excellent communications skills in professional public speaking, presentations and writing
- Excellent organizational skills and strong attention to detail is required
- Experience with performing secondary research and interdisciplinary work
- Experience with developing grant and award applications considered an asset
- Experience with Adobe Creative Suite, graphic design, and basic web and social media skills
- Ability to work well independently with little supervision
- Enthusiastic, personable, professional and diplomatic

Student Learning Components:

TRAINING AND ORIENTATION:

The staff will receive training including an orientation to the physical working space, key tasks and responsibilities, and introductions to various key personnel within the unit, and sustainability practitioners and researchers and partners external to the unit. In addition, the staff will receive mentorship in project management, partnership development, and community-based action research through shadowing opportunities with the SEEDS team. The supervisor will provide ongoing training throughout the role, provide assigned readings and resources to support position onboarding and continuous professional development.

FEEDBACK, SUPPORT & REFLECTION:



Regular weekly meetings will be held to update progress, address any questions, provide *and* receive feedback, ensure professional growth is being developed and provide opportunities for ongoing reflection. At the beginning of the term, performance and learning objectives will be compiled by the student in collaboration with the supervisor, and a corresponding workplan will be developed. Regular interaction with supervisor and other program staff will provide ongoing evaluation and formative feedback regarding performance and progress. Mid-point and end of term opportunities will be provided through meetings and a transition report to enable feedback and reflection.

MENTORSHIP, SUPPORT & NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES:

The staff position involves working closely with several senior and junior level faculty members, senior undergraduate and graduate students from approximately eleven campus faculties and schools, a wide range of operational staff from approximately thirty campus departments, and various external community partners. As a result, effective relationships can be formed and nurtured through collaborative environments that will benefit the individual's connection to various academic and working professionals, internal and external to their area of specialization, and the planning and sustainability research and practitioner fields. Key opportunities for networking will take place through regular multi-stakeholder meetings, events and workshops. Our office is located in the Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability (CIRS), providing opportunities to interact with other professionals including sustainability researchers and practitioners.

WORKPLACE SKILLS, LEARNING, PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- Development of comprehensive skills in project coordination, including project scoping and planning, initiation, facilitation and monitoring, and closing and follow up.
- Experience in project scoping including conducting secondary research and gathering feedback from multiple stakeholders on moderate to complex issues.
- Experience in meeting facilitation, administration and the ability to communicate effectively with different audiences ranging from senior to junior project operational staff and academic faculty clients.
- Enhanced knowledge about current issues in sustainability, ranging from social, economic to ecological aspects including urban biodiversity, climate adaptation, green buildings and wellbeing.
- Experience working with the public and developing interpersonal, communication, public speaking, and presentation skills.
- Professional networking activities with sustainability practitioners across campus and in the region.
- Opportunities to apply skills and learning from the candidate's curricular work will be encouraged.
- Insight and mentorship into working in a professional and busy office environment.
- Further development of effective time management skills by learning how to prioritize tasks, use time efficiently, be well organized and develop workflow management skills.
- Opportunity to explore learning and professional objectives within the position as well as ongoing feedback through regular meetings and scheduled performance reviews.
- Experience using verbal and written communication styles in a professional setting and for a various academic audiences including arts, sciences and professional schools.
- Enhanced leadership and collaboration skills.
- Exposure to and experience within a professional office environment.
- Developing the ability to identify and articulate one's own learning, through reflections, feedback and meetings with team and supervisor.
- Ongoing professional skills development in communication, problem-solving, leadership and project management.