

## 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.**

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### Research project title

BC Energy Step Code Local Government Needs Assessment

### Sustainability Goal or Operations Plan objective

Increase Energy Step Code implementation in BC small/med communities (pop. <75,000)

Long Term Goal: Support the target of 100% of new buildings being net zero energy ready by 2032

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

The Energy Step Code Local Government Needs Assessment will enhance CEA's Energy Step Code Implementation Support project, which will provide individualized and group support to small and medium sized communities in implementing the Energy Step Code through: Staff and Council presentations/workshops, facilitated industry training and engagement events, policy and planning support, regional coordination, and other means. Expanding on the *2019 BC Energy Step Code Local Government Survey* (administered by BC Housing and CEA), the Needs Assessment will provide valuable data to CEA, BC Hydro, the Energy Step Code Council, and others in order to optimize support efforts and resources available to local governments and their stakeholders.

### Activities:

- **Review available data:** Step Code implementation tracker, *2019 BC Energy Step Code Local Government Survey* results, notifications to consult and adoption notifications.
- **Prioritize communities:** Work with CEA staff to develop criteria for creating a prioritized list of small/med communities, focusing on those with notable building permit activity but who have not responded to the BC Housing survey, or where follow-up is needed.
- **Design phone survey(s):** Design survey questions, which will vary depending on community status and history of responding to the BC Housing survey.

- **Conduct phone interviews:** The student will conduct phone interviews on the readiness of small/med local governments to implement the BC Energy Step Code, including level of interest, what they have done, future plans, challenges, support required for the local building industry, and where they would like assistance.
  - This research will significantly expand on the *2019 BC Energy Step Code Local Government Survey* (administered by BC Housing and CEA). As a primary objective, the student will contact communities (especially smaller communities i.e. with a population < 75,000) that did not respond to the survey to find answers to key survey questions. As a secondary objective, they will also contact communities that did respond, for clarification and additional information. Interviews will be conducted with as many local governments as possible. (Note 1: CEA will have finished collecting the raw data for the *2019 BC Energy Step Code Local Government Survey* by March 31, 2019. Note 2: 64 local governments responded to the 2018 survey, and 69 responded to the 2017 survey.)
- **Analyze survey results and report back:** With help from CEA staff, including Megan Lohmann who leads Step Code work in the East Kootenays, the student will then analyse the research to generate actionable insights on how best to assist communities with implementing the BC Energy Step Code. The student will create recommendations on how to help smaller communities make progress, including on what information they will find most pertinent.
- **Engage industry contacts (if time remaining):** The initial interviews with local government staff will identify key local building industry stakeholders, including trades and training institutions. If time remains in the project the student will conduct interviews with these stakeholders, focusing on areas of the province with minimal industry participation in Step Code training.

**Actionize:** CEA will use the information to target communities to join the Step Code peer networks, and for other support such as writing policy tools, helping them build capacity, beginning industry consultation (and submitting notification to ESCC), building industry surveys, coordinating industry training workshops, etc., as part of CEA's 2019/20 Energy Step Code Implementation Support Project. There may also be opportunities for this work to feed back into BC Housing's analysis and report on the *2019 BC Energy Step Code Local Government Survey*

## Deliverables

*Note that a final deliverable (either a full report or, if the report contains confidential information, an executive summary) is required by the end of the program (August 12, 2019). The deliverable will be archived in the online public-facing [Scholars Project Library](#).*

- **Step Code database of BC small communities:** Database or excel file listing key contact names, Step Code implementation status, progress, plans, barriers, and what support they need to progress.
  - The student will build out the database using the Step Code implementation tracker and results from the *2019 BC Energy Step Code Local Government Survey*, and assess for interview potential. CEA has contacts for many of the communities currently silent on Step Code.
- **List of action items and available support** for each community based on data gathered, and reported back to participating communities.
- **Overview recommendations** on how to help smaller communities make progress, including on what information they will find most pertinent and how to package it.
- **Final report:** Summary report for the UBC Sustainability Scholars online project library summarising the master sheet, with analysis including general recommendations on how communities of different types (e.g. region, size, political / staff enthusiasm) should progress. Individual responses will be kept confidential and not made public.

### **Time Commitment**

*Please indicate the total numbers of hours your Scholar will need to complete the project, the completion period (between April 29 and August 12), any critical dates for the project, and the optimal schedule for your Scholar's work.*

- This project will take **250** hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between April 29 and August 12
- The Scholar is to complete approximately 15 hours per week. There will be flexibility regarding the scheduling of these hours.
- The Scholar will attend most or all the Energy Step Code Local Government Peer Networks (large and small communities) and will have the opportunity to present their research at one of these meetings. Dates will be provided in advance.

### **Required/preferred Skills and Background**

- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Statistical analysis
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills
- Community engagement experience
- Familiarity conducting focus group research
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- 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](mailto:sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca) if you have questions.