

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:** Developing a Data-Driven Baseline of Waste Diversion in Health Care

**Sustainability Goal or Operations Plan objective**

*Operations Plan:* Achieve “Zero Waste” in the health care sector.

*Objective:* Adequately measure, report on, and increase waste diversion rates to meet the health authority’s 2020 and 2030 targets.

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

Our current waste diversion initiatives can be grouped into two main categories: Reuse and Recycling. Recycling is the larger of the two groups with 8 distinct recycling streams. Currently we have data for 3 recycling streams and only calculate diversion rates using the data from 2 streams (Blue Bin program and organics). With multiple other recycling streams, it does not reflect the full picture of waste diversion happening at a site.

- Study 1 to 2 acute health care sites in order to create a detailed baseline of how all recycling waste streams are generated and disposed of.
- Aggregate and collate existing data on the recycling streams.
- Research and analyze best practices in health care waste diversion.
- Propose an updated waste diversion rate reflecting all waste streams.
- Recommend methods to quantify and report volumes of recycling being diverted based on learnings. This recommendation should include any challenges or barriers found.
- Explore the feasibility of continuing to report out on updated diversion rates and amplifying the scope to other sites.
- If time remains, scope could be expanded to include looking at different ways of describing the existing dataset besides waste diversion, and analyzing the method that best describes the relationships between the data.

## UBC SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM - Summer 2019

More background information on waste diversion rates and practices can be found in the [2017 Environmental Performance Accountability Report](#).

### Deliverables

- A final waste diversion report, per site, which will detail research undertaken, initial findings, updated diversion rates, and recommendations for the future.
- A final best practices report, which will capture 5 to 10 best waste diversion practices and any possible benchmarking from other health organizations globally.
- Final report for the UBC Sustainability Scholars online project library

### Time Commitment

- This project will take approximately **250** 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.
- Primary office location: 500 – 520 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver.

### Required/preferred Skills and Background

#### Required

- Strong analytical skills: You will be working with large amounts of data: facts, figures, and number crunching. You will need to see through the data and analyze it to find conclusions
- Excel skills: Data is presented in Excel. You must have a strong working knowledge of Excel data sheets, pivot tables, formulas, and other required functions
- Critical thinking: You will look at numbers, trends, and data and come to new conclusions based on the findings
- Attention to detail: Data is precise. You must be vigilant in your analysis to come to correct conclusions
- Math skills: You must have math skills to estimate numerical data and perform calculations
- Communication skills: You will present your findings in a final report which should be clear and easily communicate complex ideas
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented

#### Preferred

- Strong interest in environmental sustainability and zero waste an asset

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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>

**UBC SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM - Summer 2019**

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.