

# SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

## Summer 2020

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 sustainability across the region.

- Visit the [Sustainability Scholars Program website](#) to learn [how the program works](#) and to [apply](#).
- Be sure to review the [application guide](#) to confirm your eligibility before applying.
- **Applications close at midnight on Sunday February 2, 2020.**

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## Research project title: Aligning safer chemicals with patient care in BC health care facilities: Research, development and engagement

### Sustainability Goal or Operations Plan objective

Zero Toxicity Goal: minimize toxic chemicals used by the health care system and supporting operations.

The objective of the research project is to align work undertaken by the Energy & Environmental Sustainability Team (EES) and British Columbia Provincial Nursing Skin and Wound Committee (PNSWC) in support of a reduction of chemicals of concern in patient care supplies and processes. The project will support procurement processes, quantification of chemicals of concern, monitoring and eventual reduction of harmful chemical exposures to health care staff and patients, thereby minimizing the associated risk of respiratory illness, cancers, reproductive, developmental, hormonal and neurological defects.

### Project description

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.

The purpose of the project is to update and expand existing chemical ingredient lists for personal care products and to raise awareness about product choices that are safe to staff, patients and the environment. Key questions the Scholar will research include:

- What chemicals of concern exist in personal care products in BC health care facilities?
- For what purpose are they used?
- What makes them a chemical of concern?
- What are the health and environmental impacts associated with the chemicals of concern?
- What concerns if any exist with eliminating chemicals of concern from personal care products in BC health care facilities?

The research is actionable in the sense that it will help EES and PNSWC develop a collaborative approach to implementing safer chemicals in procurement processes, as well as communicating the importance of safe (free

from harmful chemicals) patient care to diverse stakeholders. The work is valuable to the BC health organizations because it will help integrate environmental sustainability across departments in health care and identify opportunities to support the generation of less waste in patient care.

#### Scope of Work:

- Research (literature review) chemicals of concern that patients and staff could be exposed to during patient care, in particular, related to skin and wound treatments.
- Refine and expand on an existing chemicals of concern ingredient list specifically aiming to improve credibility and applicability.
- 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 to support an inter-departmental conversation around safe chemical exposure for staff and patients.
- 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

- A final report, containing a summary of completed work with recommendations, complemented by a final presentation to key stakeholders.
- A refined chemicals of concern ingredients list that improves usability including sources of information/credible references to toxic substances lists.
- At least 2 other engagement resources (for example a stakeholder analysis, a stakeholder engagement plan or power point slides) to be determined based on findings
- A final report [or Executive Summary] for the UBC Sustainability Scholars online project library.

#### Time Commitment

- This project will take **250** hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between May 4 and August 14, 2020
- The Scholar is to complete hours between Monday and Friday, approximately 16-20 hours (negotiable) per week.

#### Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- 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
- ☒ A strong background in chemistry in order to facilitate understanding of chemicals of concern, their harm on human health and the environment, and reading of CAS numbers would be an asset.

Applications close **midnight Sunday February 2, 2020.**

Apply here: <http://sustain.ubc.ca/scholarsapply>

Contact Karen Taylor at [sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca](mailto:sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca) if you have questions

## Useful Resources

Below are some links to useful resources to help you with your resume and cover letter (there are many more online). Some of these resources also provide information on preparing for your interview.

<https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-resources/resumes-cover-letters-curricula-vitae>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/graduate-pathways-success>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/cover-letter-cv-resume-templates-ubc-career-services>

The Centre for Student Involvement & Careers will host a resume & cover letter webinar tailored for graduate students on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 from 12:00-1:30. Registration will open approximately two weeks before the webinar, and can be accessed at Careers Online.

