

## Fall 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.

*Note: Projects must be completed remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

- 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 September 20, 2020.**

---

## Research to Support the Development of an Inclusive Circular Economy in Greater Vancouver Focused Around Reuse and Repair

### Sustainability Goals

- Good Health and Wellbeing:** to support stable, good quality inclusive circular jobs for marginalized communities and to amplify their voices and leadership in the green economy. Jobs provide a vehicle for social inclusion, sense of purpose, and the resources to support and spend time with family and friends.
- Sustainable Cities and Communities:** to foster resilient, inclusive local economies that are a key component of sustainable cities and communities.
- Responsible Consumption and Production:** to enhance reuse and repair consumption and production, which are key aspects of a low-carbon, resilient circular economy.
- Climate Action:** to enhance “inner circle” sharing, reuse and repair loops that extend the life and use of products and materials and thus minimize embodied carbon needed to produce new goods or recycle/dispose at end- of-life.

### Project description

#### Overview:

The Share Reuse Repair Initiative (SRRI) is preparing a strategy that outlines the opportunity for reuse and repair to be part of a post-pandemic economic reset that is just, resilient, and sustainable. The transition to the circular economy will be labor-intensive, especially in the coming 10 to 20 years, requiring more people to drive its principles of reuse and repair than in the linear economy, where resources are typically wasted and incinerated. By extending the life and use of products and materials, reuse and repair are meaningful climate and waste solutions that also hold strong, yet not well understood, potential to create stable inclusive local jobs for all skill and income levels and for those with barriers to entering the labour market (e.g., new immigrants, hard-to-employ, youth with limited work experience, and otherwise marginalized communities). This Project aims to understand the major

# SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

challenges and opportunities to the growth of inclusive reuse and repair businesses and social enterprises in Greater Vancouver.

## **Purpose of the Project:**

SRRRI would like to explore how to grow the number of inclusive reuse and repair jobs that provide valued goods and services within our local economy. We want to understand best practice examples, the baseline in the region and what opportunities hold the greatest potential for expansion. We want to learn by engaging marginalized communities about how they define an inclusive job and what opportunities could empower and support these communities best. The outcome of this project will inform SRRRI's Post-COVID Economy Recovery Strategy which is being pursued in collaboration with key partners including the Vancouver Economic Commission, Vancity Credit Union, the Recycling Council of British Columbia and MakeWay Charitable Society (formerly TIDESCanada).

## **Scope of Work:**

- Conduct secondary research to identify key principles, promising sectors and best practice examples of reuse and repair innovations that provide inclusive circular jobs in the areas of electronics, household goods & furniture, food, textiles and housing (e.g. building deconstruction). (The Scholar will be provided an initial list of organizations, examples, websites and other resources to review.)
- Interview 7 to 15 key informants, individually or in a group setting via Zoom, to share best practice examples to learn: which best practice examples are viewed as having the greatest potential for development in Greater Vancouver given waste streams, market potential etc; the degree to which these best practice businesses/innovations already exist in Greater Vancouver; the reasons why they may not exist and recommendations for how they might be introduced and/or expanded. SRRRI can recommend key informants from municipal government, businesses and industry associations for these interviews.
- Interview 10 to 15 key informants, individually or in a group setting via Zoom, from marginalized communities or organizations that represent them, to learn: what reuse and repair businesses and activities may already exist in those communities and thus might be expanded; what they would consider to be an inclusive reuse or repair job; and the interest/fit of identified best practice reuse and repair innovations with their cultural values, history, capacity for employment etc. SRRRI can recommend a list of key informants from marginalized communities to interview.
- Recommend reuse and repair innovations that should be introduced and/or expanded in Greater Vancouver, document their environmental and socio-economic benefits, and provide key recommendations to address barriers and seize opportunities to support implementation.

## **Deliverables**

The Scholar will provide the following deliverables:

- A final report, containing a summary of the research, the research methodology, key findings and recommendations with Appendices including a summary of interviews with stakeholders and community members. This report will be an open source SRRRI document and made available to the UBC online Scholars Project Library.
- An Executive Summary that uses straightforward language and some graphic design that could serve as a stand-alone document accessible to decision-makers, elected officials and funders. This will also be posted on SRRRI's website.

# SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- A PowerPoint for presentation of the research project key findings and recommendations to SSRIs Steering Committee and key stakeholders
- Two to five stand-alone 1-page examples that share the story of a best practice business/social enterprise that provides inclusive reuse/repair jobs with some key stats/points about benefits and expansion potential. The 1-pager could also share the best practice through the lens of a specific person working in an inclusive job.

## Time Commitment

- This project will take **250** hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between October 19, 2020 and March 12, 2021
- The Scholar is to complete approximately 12 hours per week of work with mentor check-ins during business hours from 9-5pm Monday to Friday
- The Scholar will be asked to attend two (online) SRRI Steering Committee meetings during business hours for a mid-way check-in (Dec) and to give a final presentation (March) with dates TBD. The Committee includes the Vancouver Economic Commission, Vancity Credit Union, Recycling Council of BC, Recycling Alternative and MakeWay Society with advisors SITRA Finnish Innovation Fund and One Earth Society.
- The Scholar may be asked to attend online meetings with a Project Team that is under development for the SRR Post-COVID Recovery Strategy, which will be during business hours, as relevant and appropriate.

## Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Community engagement experience
- Familiarity conducting key informant interviews and conducting focus group research
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently yet appropriately check-in for guidance & direction
- Project management and organizational skills
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- Design and layout skills (particularly for Executive Summary and 1-page examples)
- Some background in business/economic development/economics and interest in the Circular Economy

Applications close **midnight Sunday September 20, 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.

Resume workshop for prospective Sustainability Scholars: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/resume-workshop-for-prospective-sustainability-scholars-tickets-117422877989>

<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>