

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

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 Project on Justice and Biodiversity: Who Are Cities Supporting Nature for?

Sustainability Goal or Operations Plan objective

Sustainable Cities and Communities: This project will contribute to sustainable cities and communities by identifying actual practices by cities in the overlap between environmental justice and urban nature and presenting their results with practitioners in mind.

Project description

Overview:

The Urban Biodiversity Hub (UBHub) was formed in December of 2016 at the 13th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity in order to help cities around the world to measure and promote their biodiversity and develop and assess biodiversity strategies. We are an international volunteer organization led by a steering committee and expert advisory board that works with municipal and local governments to help them achieve their own biodiversity goals. Most of this activity is coordinated through the UBHub website, which offers a publicly available database of urban biodiversity actions, standards, and resources, as well as the private myHub portal for city partners, which is currently under development.

Our database features thousands of actions for biodiversity taken by and in cities. We know that these actions can often reinforce existing inequities. We are seeking out examples of what is happening in cities to combat the status quo and ensure that the most vulnerable groups are connecting with nature and are reaping the benefits of biophilia. This Scholar would mine both our database and the literature

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to identify these practices and amplify them, identifying best practices and lessons for their implementation in new contexts.

Purpose of the Project:

The Urban Biodiversity Hub supports practitioners in urban biodiversity planning by making it easier for local governments to create and measure their biodiversity strategies. We are seeking a Scholar to highlight how these practitioners are attempting to address environmental justice by connecting vulnerable communities with nature. The outcomes of this project would contribute to the global and local frameworks used to develop strategies for biodiversity conservation by and for local governments and communities.

Scope of Work:

- Summarize current literature regarding theories of justice and nature in the city
- Research current practices and resources for justice initiatives through nature in the city. Identification of representative cities could be aided by the database or the results of the literature search.
- Identify any examples of environmental justice in the current UBHub database, code them with key words accordingly, and add any new resources to the database.
- Develop and implement an online survey for practitioners regarding: (1) current practice, and (2) current interest/needs for resources.
- Conduct follow-up interviews on a case-by-case basis, and gather additional information on examples of interest.
- Write an article in the style of a news article summarizing findings and featuring cases to be featured in our newsletter and website.
- Potential for academic publication, depending on Scholar's interest, rigour of work, and findings

Deliverables

The Scholar will deliver a final report containing a summary of their completed work complemented by a final presentation to key stakeholders. The report should include:

- Summary of findings
- Guidelines for best practices at the city/community level
- Recommendations for UBHub to meet the needs of practitioners in this area
- Write an article in the style of a news article summarizing findings and featuring cases to be featured in our newsletter and website.
- Write a handful of tweets/notices to be issued on our social media pages
- Final report or executive summary for the online Scholars Project Library

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 each week. The specific timing of their work hours is left to their discretion.

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- Our team meets weekly for 1-2 hours and the Scholar may on occasion be requested to join the meetings. The meetings are virtual, but can occur in the early morning or later evening to accommodate the varied time zones of our participants.
- The Scholar will be expected to meet with the designated Mentor for 30 to 60 minute meetings approximately each week at a set time to be determined based on mutual scheduling availability.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

Required:

- Excellent research
- Ability to communicate complex ideas to a broad audience using text and/or graphics
- Ability to work independently
- Project management and organizational skills
- Familiarity with urban environmental justice theory
- Excellent written communication skills

Preferred:

- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Statistical analysis
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills
- Strong analytical skills
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- Ability to conduct research in more than one language or cultural context (i.e. multicultural)

Applications close **midnight Sunday September 20, 2020.**

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

Contact Karen Taylor at sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca if you have questions

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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>