

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 title: Strategy for establishing a working group to support the development of a blockchain solution for international emissions trading

Sustainability Goal or Operations Plan objective

Climate Action

The goal of this project is to create a strategy that outlines steps to build and maintain a United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) working group (“National Parties”) to develop and implement a new blockchain-based solution to operationalize Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. This work will further contribute to Blockchain for Climate Foundation’s overarching objective to connect the national carbon accounts of the world to enable cross-border collaboration in emission reductions.

Project description

Overview:

Blockchain for Climate Foundation (BfCF) is a non-profit organization incorporated as a member-funded society in British Columbia. BfCF is building a blockchain-based platform (“BITMO platform”) to operationalize Article 6 of the Paris Agreement and enable cross-border collaboration on emissions reductions. Since 2018, BfCF has worked in collaboration with diverse stakeholders such as Accenture Canada, Ecotrust Canada, International Emissions Trading Association, RBC Foundation, Red Academy, and York University to develop, refine, and showcase the BITMO platform (currently at the prototype development stage) around the world, including at the 2019 UN Climate Action Summit, New York and UNFCCC COP25, Madrid.

A key step in facilitating the adoption of the solution will be to engage a network of National Parties to continually co-develop and refine it through feedback. Thus, BfCF seeks to create an engagement strategy that we can use to build and maintain an active working group of potential users (i.e., National

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Parties). The individuals targeted will be country representatives from national Ministries of Environment or equivalents responsible for managing countries' national carbon inventories as it pertains to the UNFCCC Paris Agreement.

An essential step for BfCF is to understand the emissions reporting expectations from key members of international governments and receptivity to emerging technologies, as well as to engage them in ways that ensure we are embracing best practices. Following up from our attendance at COP25 in Madrid, we see this is an opportunity for a UBC Sustainability Scholar to build skills, knowledge, and experience related to the formative stages of developing and implementing cutting edge digital technologies (i.e., blockchain) and innovative climate action solutions at the United Nations level. The UBC Sustainability Scholar will work closely with the BfCF core team to develop an engagement strategy to be used to build and maintain a National Parties Working Group as a crucial step in the development and implementation of our solution designed to enable cross-border collaboration on emissions reductions.

The Scholar will seek to answer the following questions

- How are UNFCCC National Parties organized with regards to their national carbon inventories activities and who within such National Parties can help to determine best practices around the emissions reporting process?
- What key challenges can we expect when approaching UNFCCC National Parties to join a working group to inform the development and implementation of a blockchain-based tool for their national carbon inventories?
- What are recommended approaches (e.g., engagement practices, structure/format) to build and maintain a working group of UNFCCC National Parties to provide well-informed feedback to guide the development and implementation of our blockchain-based platform for issuing and exchanging carbon credits compliant with the Paris Agreement?

Purpose of the Project:

The goal of this project is to develop an engagement strategy to be used to build and maintain a National Parties Working Group as a crucial step in the development and implementation of our solution designed to enable cross-border collaboration on emissions reductions. This National Parties Working Group will meet regularly to provide feedback on our solution to ensure its successful adoption and implementation.

Scope of Work:

- Conduct desk-based research on (1) a pre-determined list of approximately 6 to 8 UNFCCC National Parties as it pertains to national carbon inventory activities and technology (e.g., blockchain) adoption, and (2) best practices for building and maintaining working groups involving National Parties or other equivalents (e.g., regional governments)
- Create a strategy for building and maintaining a National Parties Working Group to inform the development and implementation of our new blockchain-based solution designed to enable cross-border collaboration on emissions reductions

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 (March 12, 2021). The deliverable will be archived in the [online public-facing Scholars Project Library](#).

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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:

- A final report (“National Parties Working Group Strategy”) containing an overview of completed work, summary of the data collected and analyzed in the research, key findings from the research, and clear recommendations for engaging National Parties to build and maintain a working group
- An appendix containing or link to all secondary and/or primary data used in the completion of the desk-based research and preparation of the written report
- An Executive Summary of the project for the UBC Sustainability Scholars online project library

Time Commitment

The program runs for 22 weeks from October 19, 2020 to March 12, 2021, during which students work an average of 12 hours per week for a total of 250 hours.

- This project will take **250** hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between October 19, 2020 and March 12, 2021
- The Scholar will have flexible work hours, but will be expected to have regular update meetings with the team between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday

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
- Project management and organizational skills
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- Knowledge of, interest in, and/or experience related to UN Climate Policy and blockchain technologies an asset
- Proficiency in French, Spanish, or Mandarin, an asset

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>