

# 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.**

---

## Research project title: Understanding community resilience and opportunities to provide wellbeing support amidst the climate crisis

### Sustainability Goal or Operations Plan objective

#### Connections to UBC Plans and Policies:

- UBC Strat Plan: People and Places Strategy 3: Thriving Communities
- Okanagan Charter: 1.3—generate thriving communities and a culture of well-being; 2.1 –integrate health, well-being and sustainability in multiple disciplines to develop change agents, among others
- UBC Wellbeing Strategic Framework priorities: Collaborative Leadership and Mental Health and Resilience
- UBC 20-year Sustainability Strategy

**Long Term Goal:** establish clear and actionable links between the existing and future impacts of climate change and the UBC Wellbeing Strategic Framework. Provide early support for the creation of guidelines, resources and programs to support community mental health, resilience and wellbeing amidst the climate crisis.

### Project Description

Building on existing mental health literature and practice, researchers are beginning to explore the varied and intimate links between climate change and mental health, from grief and eco-anxiety to trauma caused by climate-influenced natural disasters. At the same time, climate advocacy and community organizing can have their own mental health impacts. Addressing these disparate but connected mental health concerns within the UBC community will require deliberate planning and capacity building across multiple layers of the university.

The UBC Climate Hub, UBC Wellbeing and the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS UBC) (the project sponsors) are interested in fostering community and providing resources that can advance resilience and wellbeing amidst the unfolding climate crisis. Collectively, we need to create supportive resources for individuals to acknowledge and explore varying and profound emotional responses to climate change, and community spaces that foster resilience and wellbeing.

This project will inform actions and recommendations at UBC by mapping out current research and best practices in addressing mental health impacts and fostering resilience at the community level, with a particular

focus on higher education. Research will be used by campus partners, including UBC Wellbeing and the UBC Climate Hub, to inform both progress towards existing wellbeing support goals and the development of future plans and policies.

### Scope of work

- Review literature and best practices of community resilience initiatives that support communities facing the mental health impacts of climate change and climate-related natural disasters
- Conduct an environmental scan including development of interview questions and consulting with community partners to identify gaps and opportunities in UBC plans and activities to foster community resilience and address climate anxiety
- Collect case studies of best practices around fostering community resilience and addressing climate anxiety
- Provide recommendations in the form of an action plan to guide:
  - short-term efforts to expand support for community members organizing around climate and wellbeing, with an eye to providing tailored support for organizers within marginalized communities.
  - longer-term efforts to support community resilience from UBC in the advent of climate change-caused natural disaster (wildfires, floods, migration).
- Work with UBC Climate Hub, UBC Wellbeing and PICS UBC leadership to design a strategy to embed the results of initial and future research within UBC plans and practices.

### Deliverables

- A final report, containing a summary of completed work with recommendations, complemented by a final presentation to key stakeholders
- Summary report of interviews with community stakeholders
- A short strategic guidance report identifying key opportunities and access points to embed climate and wellbeing into UBC plans and practices; given that the process for embedding into planning vs practice is different, during the mid-term check-in, the researcher and mentor team will collectively determine the balance between the two
- 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
- The Scholar is to complete hours between 8am-4pm, Monday-Friday, approximately 17 hours per week.

### Required/preferred Skills and Background

#### Essential skills:

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Knowledge of health and wellbeing issues, including an understanding of UBC Wellbeing Priority Areas
- Knowledge of climate issues, including an understanding of climate justice and the health outcomes of climate change.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Demonstrated organizational and time management skills.



- Excellent problem solving and project management skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and take initiative.
- Ability to think critically but constructively about ideas.

**Desirable skills, knowledge, and experience:**

- Knowledge of the climate community in Vancouver.
- A good understanding of UBC plans, structures and on campus resources.
- Demonstrated ability to present information visually and a good understanding of a range of creative media.

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.

