

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.

Environmental Racism Story Map: Enhancing Access to Environmental Justice for Racialized and Indigenous Communities in BC

Sustainability Goal or Operations Plan objective

Sustainable Cities and Communities: Enhance access to environmental justice for racialized and Indigenous communities who are disproportionately impacted by polluting industries and unsustainable resource development by developing map-based products and related story-telling tools to inform access to justice programs at West Coast Environmental Law and more broadly create awareness of environmental racism in BC.

Project Overview:

Racialized and Indigenous communities (and other historically marginalized groups) are often disproportionately impacted by pollution and unsustainable resource development. Through the development of a map which charts racialized, Indigenous, and lower income communities, and highlights their proximity to industrial polluters such as toxic waste facilities, landfills, or other environmentally hazardous activities and impactful resource development projects, the Scholar will be able to track the disproportionate impacts of environmental harms on historically marginalized groups in British Columbia (BC). By identifying the environmental racism faced by communities in BC, West Coast Environmental Law will be able to target our environmental legal aid efforts to better support the environmental protection and sustainability of marginalized communities.

Purpose of the Project:

An [environmental racism mapping project](#) has been conducted in Nova Scotia by ENRICH (Environmental Noxiousness, Racial Inequities and Community Health). To our knowledge, no such project has been undertaken to explore the extent of environmental racism in British Columbia. West Coast Environmental Law would like to learn where our work is most needed to support community efforts to defend the health of their land, air and water, thus contributing to a more sustainable British Columbia for all. The completed environmental racism map may also be shared publicly, and thus could also be a resource to

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help other community organizations and environmental non-profit organizations to strategically focus their efforts to work in support of communities who are disproportionately impacted by environmental issues.

Scope of Work:

- Conduct a scan to identify similar mapping exercises that have been completed elsewhere.
- Develop and implement a methodology for the project that may include historical research, compilation of data and map layers from regulatory agencies, working with Statistics Canada data, and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping. In particular, the Scholar will:
 - a) Use available data to identify communities in BC that can be identified as communities of colour, Indigenous communities, or who may be considered a marginalized community based on criteria that the Scholar delineates.
 - b) Use available data (for example the [BC Economic Atlas](#) or the [Environmental Assessment Office project information](#)) to identify industrial polluters such as coal plants, toxic waste facilities, landfills, or other environmentally hazardous activities in BC, as well as proposed large-scale resource development activities that present risks to the communities. The Scholar will be asked to consider how cumulative effects from multiple forms of development can be taken into account and reflected in mapping products.
 - c) Develop an interactive, online map-based product that geographically represents (a) and (b) and a template for entering short “stories” about impacted communities.
- Populate the initial map with stories about past Environmental Dispute Resolution Fund (EDRF) clients that feature Indigenous and racialized communities fighting back to protect the environmental health and sustainability of their home communities, using background information provided by West Coast (e.g. past publications, case files)
- Summarize findings and make recommendations regarding how the outcomes from the project could be used by West Coast Environmental Law’s Access to Justice programs (Legal Aid and EDRF) and other programs to better focus outreach and provide legal support to communities who are disproportionately impacted by environmental issues.
- Time permitting: with West Coast Environmental Law staff, research other stories to highlight and/or conduct interviews (up to 10) to feature stories of resilience within Indigenous and racialized communities fighting back to protect the environmental health and sustainability of their home communities. Being mindful and sensitive to the experience of the interviewees and subject matter, incorporate these stories into the map product.
- Time permitting: provide input to the Communications Team at West Coast Environmental Law in building a communications plan to distribute the story map and related materials to key audiences, and further our efforts to support frontline communities to protect their land, air and water.

Deliverables

The Scholar will deliver:

- A draft approach and methodology for feedback and approval by West Coast
- An interim status report describing the outcomes of their research and analysis (e.g. findings regarding proximity of racialized and indigenous communities to harmful development relative to other communities)

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- A draft environmental racism story map for internal presentation, review and discussion with West Coast staff and project reference group.
- A finalized environmental racism story map suitable for external release and which will permit future addition of community stories.
- A final report, containing a short summary of completed work with recommendations to identify how the environmental racism map can be used to strengthen West Coast's environmental justice goals across our programming
- A West Coast-approved Executive Summary 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 approximately **250** hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between October 19, 2020 and March 12, 2021
- The Scholar is to complete an average of 12 hours per week, specific days and times to be mutually agreed with the student
- The Scholar will be expected to participate in at video-conference meetings of the Reference Group for West Coast's broader Environmental Justice Project and relevant staff at key junctures in the work, such as presenting their proposed methodology for feedback, updating on research outcomes and presenting draft mapping products for feedback (approximately 6-8 hours total). Dates TBD.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Statistical analysis
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Project management and organizational skills
- Familiarity with WordPress, Drupal, or other website content tools
- Strong technical and drafting skills
- GIS training or experience an asset
- Familiarity with benchmarking methods and tools
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys
- Design and layout skills
- Familiarity with Indigenous communities and interest in social justice and environmental justice is preferable
- Experience working with racialized and/or marginalized people is an asset

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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

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>