

# 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.**

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## Research project title: Centering Equity and Affordability in Climate Action Plans, Policies, and Programs (City of Abbotsford)

### Sustainability Goal or Operations Plan objective

Equitable climate leadership

Long Term Goal: Address energy poverty, affordability, and inequity in Canadian communities through the design and delivery of more impactful and inclusive GHG reduction plans, policies, and program

### Project description

The Scholar will use the Canadian Urban Sustainability Practitioners' (CUSP) Energy Poverty and Explorer Tool (guidance and training provided) to increase the City of Abbotsford's understanding of how to address equity and energy affordability through the design and delivery of more impactful and inclusive GHG reduction plans, policies, and programs. Specifically, this project will help to determine targeted program elements and considerations for one or both of advancing building retrofits and electric vehicle strategies.

### Scope of Work:

- Develop, document, and share their understanding of the key characteristics of energy poverty across the City – who is experiencing energy poverty, what appear to be the drivers for their higher incidence of energy poverty, and what other challenges or systemic inequities are these households facing.
- Present these findings to other key departments, and supplement the Scholar's and City climate staff understanding with these cross-department perspectives. Suggestions for colleagues to consult would be those working on public health, building safety, poverty reduction, housing affordability and other social planning topics. These staff may have contacts and more experience working with the groups identified as having higher incidence of energy poverty. In addition to providing a presentation on initial energy poverty findings, Scholars will also interview these colleagues and review their department/division's key strategies and work plans in order to identify any current or proposed initiatives involving households identified with higher incidence of energy poverty. Using this information, the City will be better able to align a retrofit or EV program targeted at reducing greenhouse gases and energy poverty with the work and objectives of other departments having more regular contact with these households and community groups.
- Work with a multi-departmental City team to reach out to people of lived experience via key community partners. Present research findings and groundtruth our understanding of the challenges faced when

experiencing energy poverty. Share potential areas of alignment with other work of these partners. Document feedback/recommendations offered by these partner organizations and individuals of lived experience for reducing high energy cost burdens, increasing inclusivity in the local retrofit or clean energy transition, and delivering on the key priorities/needs of these communities.

- Pool all these insights, present program considerations, opportunities and anticipated benefits for advancing equity and reducing energy poverty through a new program or policy for building energy retrofits and/or electric vehicles. This presentation will serve as a feedback loop to the multidepartment city team and community partners involved earlier in the process and to refine the understanding, findings, and resulting policy and program considerations and recommendations contained in the Scholar's final report.
- The Scholar, working with CUSP staff, will support the delivery of CUSP's three-day annual meeting of members and partners at the beginning of June in Victoria, BC. A face-to-face kickoff meeting among the City, Scholar(s) and CUSP staff will be held during this week. Expenses for travel and accommodation will be reimbursed if incurred.

### Deliverables

- A presentation of initial energy poverty findings to key City departments and stakeholders
- A summary of findings from interviews and review of City department key strategies and work plans to identify initiatives involving households identified with higher incidence of energy poverty
- A final presentation outlining insights, program considerations, opportunities, and anticipated benefits for advancing equity and reducing energy poverty through new program or policy for building energy retrofits and/ or electric vehicles.
- A final report [or Executive Summary] for the UBC Sustainability Scholars online project library.

### Time Commitment

*Please update the completion period if you wish your project to start sooner than the program window of May 4 to August 14. The standard duration of a Scholars internship is 250 hours. If your project requires more time, you may increase the number of hours (up to a maximum of 500hours in total) to be completed during the term of the program. At 500 hours the Scholar will be working on a near full-time basis. Please also use this space to indicate any critical dates for the project, and the optimal schedule for your Scholar's work if known.*

- This project will take **250** hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between **June 1<sup>st</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020**
- The Scholar is to complete hours between 8:30 am and 4:30pm, approximately 25-30 hours per week.
- The Scholar may be required to work on the very occasional early evening (5pm to 9pm) or weekend day.
- The Scholar will be required to attend CUSP's annual meeting in Victoria over three days in the first week of June. Expenses for travel and accommodation will be reimbursed if incurred.

### Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills
- Community engagement experience

- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Ability to speak a language other than English, preferably Punjabi and/or Mandarin or Cantonese
- Ability to relate to, empathize with, and learn from racially, ethnically, and socio-economically diverse communities
- Ability to travel to, and spend time in, the community when required for planning meetings, internal interviews and local engagement, and delivery of interim and final project presentations.

CUSP in partnership with the District of Saanich are also seeking a Scholar to carry out this research in that community. There may be opportunity for the Abbotsford and Saanich Scholars to collaborate.

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.

