

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: Best practice review of circular economy design certification practices and applicability for procurement at the City of Vancouver

Research supports the following policies -

- ☒ Greenest City Action Plan/ Climate Emergency Response Plan: Zero Waste
- ☒ Green Operations
- ☒ Zero Waste 2040: Enhanced City role to influence and support the community choices on product selection while leading by example
- ☒ Vancouver Economic Action Strategy

Scope of project and why it is of value to City

A circular economy is a sustainable alternative to the take-make-waste linear economy (see Ellen MaCarthur Foundation [What IS CE](#)). A circular economy is based on the principles of designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use, and regenerating natural systems. A circular design refers to the design of products and services in ways that support a circular economy. The goal of this project is to complete a global review of leading practices with respect to circular design standards and certification practices and applicability for procurement at the City and more broadly in the community.

Every day products with short life cycles are purchased and discarded at significant cost to consumers and local governments. The possibilities are endless for sharing, repair, re-use and re-purposing of products, equipment and infrastructure; however, in order to grow the circular economy and to help guide procurement policies, industry and governments would benefit from circular design standards, metrics and certification programs.

Over the last few years, large corporations have introduced new international circular economy strategies and programs (see [WBCSD program](#)). Also, international circular standards (see [BS 8001](#)) and measurement frameworks are being developed that will encourage organizations to establish metrics for measuring progress.

Even with promising international efforts, locally the City lacks a mechanism for encouraging circular design and procurement for products, equipment, infrastructure and services for City operations and in the community. A similar challenge existed for environmentally responsible building design until LEED certification was introduced, providing a way for local governments to encourage more environmentally responsible approaches.

This Greenest City Scholar project will research leading practices, interview representative staff at the City responsible for procurement (of products, equipment, infrastructure, and services), and recommend possible ways for the City to encourage more sustainable circular design and procurement, including proposing possible certification programs.

Describe how and when the scholar's work will be actionable

The results of the scholar's work will have the potential to inform changes in City policy and practices, and influence communication and outreach benefiting the Vancouver community. Implementation scope and timing will be dependent on various factors, including senior management buy-in, budget and staff resource availability, and competing priorities. Examples of how the work may be actioned include:

1) *Influence*

- a. Develop messaging to industry, other levels of government and the general public, as appropriate, that the City is supportive of and implementing measures with respect to circular design and procurement practices, policies and certification.

2) *Support*

- a. The findings and recommendations should support ongoing work by Solid Waste Strategic Services Branch staff participating in the Canadian mirror committee to ISO Technical Committee 323 to develop standards in the field of Circular Economy (www.iso.org/committee/7203984.html).
- a. Recognize community excellence in circular design and procurement practices in Vancouver.
- b. Encourage local consumers to consider circularity in the products, equipment, infrastructure and services they purchase.
- c. Encourage economic development through new forms of sharing, repair, and reuse.

3) *Lead By Example*

- a. Expand/evolve the City's existing sustainable and ethical procurement policies and procedures to account for opportunities to support/grow the circular economy.

Deliverables

- A literature review of leading practices from around the world with respect to circular design and procurement policies, practices and certification programs for products, equipment, infrastructure and services (The literature review will inform a set of questions for subsequent interviews).
- Interview notes from meetings with City staff in Procurement, IT, Engineering and Real Estate and Facilities Planning.
- Recommendations based on results of literature reviews and interviews for:
 - applying leading practices within the City of Vancouver, and
 - influencing action within the Vancouver community.
- A public facing final report (or executive summary) for the UBC USI website.

Time Commitment:

- This project will take 250 hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between May 4 and August 14, 2020
- The scholar is to complete work hours between 9 am and 430 pm Monday to Friday approximately 20 hours per week.

Skill set/background required/preferred

- ☒ Excellent research and writing skills
- ☒ Demonstrated interest in sustainable design, standards and/or certification
- ☒ Strong technical writing skills
- ☒ Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- ☒ Experience preparing questions or topic lists for interviews
- ☒ Experience conducting interviews, including note taking, and performing qualitative analysis of interview notes and findings
- ☒ Strong presentation and public speaking skills
- ☒ Strong analytical skills
- ☒ Ability to work independently
- ☒ Demonstrated time management skills
- ☒ Deadline oriented
- ☒ Project management and organizational skills
- ☒ Familiarity with specific software - Excel, Power point
- ☒ Familiarity with benchmarking methods and tools
- ☒ Familiarity with qualitative research methodologies and implementation
- ☒ Familiarity with quantitative research methodologies and implementation
- ☒ Familiarity with behaviour change theories and implementation
- ☒ Familiarity preparing options analysis and feasibility studies



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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.

<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.

