

Summer 2021 Sustainability Scholars Program Internship Opportunity

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 January 31, 2021.

Research project title:

Research on policies, incentives and waste measurement reporting to inform food waste reduction and prevention in business operations

Project Description

Overview:

The measurement of wasted food from Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) sectors is directly related to the realization of Vancouver's Zero Waste 2040 Strategic Plan to:

- Become a leading city in food waste prevention, and
- Identify and pursue options to improve food rescue and redistribution systems

The City's sole data source to assess and estimate changes in Vancouver's ICI organic waste streams is aggregated regional data, which is unable to identify the types of foods being wasted or the specific food business sectors that are producing it.

A common saying in business is, *you can't manage what you can't measure*. Food waste measurement by businesses is known to reduce the incidence of wasted food. Businesses that (1) measure the amount and type of foods being wasted, (2) establish a wasted food baseline and (3) commit to a reduction goal are more likely to make operational changes. Sector averages from aggregated anonymized business data, allows individual businesses to benchmark their progress towards zero waste. Published sector averages and commitments made by food businesses also demonstrate a *new normal* that reinforces operational change.

Purpose of Project:

To review, document and compare regional, national and international government policies and industry incentives that encourage change, and the use of measurement protocols and anonymized progress reporting to report on the change. Policies can be for food or non-food

industries. Incentives and benefits can be governmental or economical, including return on investment or new market opportunities resulting from operational change.

Additionally, to review, document and compare measurement protocols that encourage the collection and submission of anonymized waste or material data from businesses. Measurement protocols can be for wasted food and other waste or material streams.¹

The assessment of policies, incentives and measurement protocols will inform the possible development of the City's own data reporting policies, incentives and protocols for Vancouver food businesses, the results of which will help the City to measure progress towards Zero Waste 2040, advance the need for operational change within businesses, and inform adjustments in zero waste initiatives. The food business audience for these tools of operational change includes grocery retailers; manufacturers and distributors; hotels, restaurants and institutions; and food producers and harvesters.

Scope of Work:

- Undertake a white paper and grey literature review of regional, national and international government policies, government and business incentives that support operational change, and protocols for the submission of anonymized data from businesses.
- Based on literature review findings, write report with supporting appendices that,
 - Highlights relevant case studies and reports.²
 - Identifies criteria and makes comparisons using decision matrices for policies, incentives and measurement protocols
 - Identifies risks and opportunities
 - Recommends individual and/or combined policies and incentives; and protocols for the measurement and reporting of wasted food data from Vancouver businesses.
- Present summary of report to City of Vancouver staff

Deliverables:

The Greenest City Scholar will deliver a final report on completed work including recommendations and appendices. A summary of the final report will be presented to key stakeholders. The report will include,

- A summary of compiled jurisdictional policies, incentives and measurement protocols/platforms regarding waste or material reporting by businesses, using remote research methods.

¹ Wasted food data collection from businesses is a narrow topic. Other waste and material data collection policies, incentives and protocols may be informative.

² Comparison of new policy adoption by large enterprises compared with small and medium sized enterprises (SME) may provide further insights into incentives for operational change.

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- Decision matrices with annotated criteria that compare findings and substantiate recommendations.
- Recommendations to the City on data reporting policies, business incentives and wasted food measurement protocols based on matrices.
- Business case studies showing the rationale behind the adoption of, or resistance to, operational change related to government policy.
- Identification of risks and opportunities pertaining to the City's role in accessing anonymized data from businesses.
- A public facing final report (or executive summary) for the online Scholars Project Library and for use by the Solid Waste Strategic Services Senior Project Manager.
- An online presentation to City staff on report findings.

Time Commitment:

- This project will take 250 hours to complete.
- This project must be completed remotely between May 3 – August 13.
- The scholar is to complete hours between Monday and Friday, 8:00 am and 5:00 pm, approximately 16.5 hours per week, including regularly scheduled meetings using a video conferencing platform.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Demonstrated interest in data and measurement
- Familiarity with benchmarking methods and tools
- Demonstrated interest in Circular Economy an asset
- Demonstrated interest in government policy an asset

Applications close **midnight Sunday January 31, 2021**

Apply here: [Click here to apply](#)

Contact Karen Taylor at sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca if you have questions

Useful Resources

We are holding a special **resume preparation workshop for prospective Scholars** on January 19. [Click here for details and to register.](#)

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>