

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:

Developing a Framework to Measure Social Capital for Climate Action

Background

On November 17th, 2020, Vancouver Council passed the [Climate Emergency Action Plan \(CEAP\)](#) outlining the bold actions that the City will be exploring to increase our efforts to tackle climate change. Responding to the climate emergency, and achieving the necessary emissions reductions, is a challenge that no one person, organization, business, or government can face alone. In this complex context we need to find a way to work together, experiment, learn and scale new solutions.

To that end, now that the plan has been adopted and we are moving into implementation, there is a need to build on lessons learned from the initial Greenest City Action Plan engagement back in 2010, and to continue to build relationships to grow the group of engaged residents and build the movement of people taking action.

Changing the way people move and build is partly defined by policy, but is also significantly impacted by the knowledge, opinions, choices, values, behaviours, and motivations of a large number of people in Vancouver. Studies have shown that places where there is strong social capital actually lead to better emission reduction results than those that lack that social capital. People are more likely to positively receive and act on new or challenging information if they have a trusting relationship with the messenger. This shows that relationships are an important aspect to getting the support and results we need. In this complex context, we need to be able to experiment with approaches rooted in social sciences, since the solutions are—at heart—human and messy.

Project Description

Studies have shown that places with stronger social capital, (measured in bonding, bridging and linking types of social capital), have better emission reduction outcomes and community resiliency. COVID-19 has also shown that having strong community connections is an important part of community resiliency. Cultivating connections is also an important goal in the Healthy City Strategy as it's important to community resiliency and combatting loneliness. As such, there

is a need to better understand the social capital strength in the community in order to identify opportunities for the City of Vancouver to continue to build the kind of social capital, trust and relationships that lead to better collaboration, collective action, community resiliency and a healthy city.

This project aims to develop a framework to measure social capital in Vancouver. The project will build on data available from the Healthy City Strategy and identify other potential metrics of social capital to develop a measurement framework based on the bonding, bridging and linking social capital that is in Vancouver. The project will also help to identify the relationship strengths and opportunities for the City of Vancouver, by neighbourhood and population group where possible, in order to identify opportunities to build social capital, improve inequities, improve community resiliency and build the movement for climate action.

Scope of Work

Objective:

1. Develop a measurement framework for measuring social capital in the City of Vancouver based on gathered research
2. Identify potential sources of data and where possible, collect and gather the data to begin to build a picture of social capital strength in the City of Vancouver
3. Identify opportunities for the City of Vancouver to build social capital, particularly the areas and groups where the City can build stronger relationships in order to build the movement for climate action

Tasks

1. Research (30%)
 - Conduct a literature review of existing research on social capital measurement frameworks and the metrics used.
 - Utilizing the bonding/bridging/linking framework for social capital, identify metrics suitable for the Vancouver context
 - Utilize data from Social Policy collected for the Healthy City Strategy to identify which would be suitable proxy metrics for the framework
2. Framework Development (30%)
 - Develop a framework for measuring social capital based on metrics and data available for Vancouver
3. Data Collection (20%)
 - Where metrics have been identified with data available for Vancouver, collect data where possible
 - Possible scope may include gathering data through interviews from a sampling of Amplifier Network members depending on time
4. Opportunity Analysis (20%)
 - Analyze the data and identify opportunities for the City to strengthen social capital
 - Provide recommendations for next steps for the City of Vancouver

Deliverables

The Scholar will deliver a final report containing a summary of their completed work complemented by a final presentation to key stakeholders. The report should include:

- Summary of the research and a proposed social capital measurement framework, as well as data available in the Vancouver context
- Analysis and recommendations with respect to applying the research to the Vancouver context and identifying opportunities and next steps for the City of Vancouver
- A public-facing final report (or executive summary) for the UBC USI website

The intent is that at the conclusion of the project, the Scholar will have helped to develop a framework for measuring social capital and have completed some analysis of the initial data that will help us understand opportunities to strengthen relationships and build social capital to support climate action for the City of Vancouver, as well as advance the Healthy City Strategy.

Time Commitment

- This project will take 250 hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between May 3 and August 13
- The scholar is to complete hours between 8:30 AM – 5:30 PM, Monday to Friday, approximately 17 hours per week.

Skill set/background required/preferred

- Excellent research and writing skills.
- Demonstrated interest in climate change, climate justice, social justice, movement building, community organizing, psychology, sociology.
- Experience conducting interviews
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Community engagement experience
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Demonstrated time management skills
- Deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- Familiarity with qualitative research methodologies and implementation
- Familiarity with quantitative research methodologies and implementation
- Familiarity with behaviour change theories and implementation
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

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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>