

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:

Exploring Tenant Leadership in Governance of Social and Supportive Housing

Project description:

Tenant and housing advocates have called for increased tenant involvement in governance of both social and supportive housing in recent years. Criticisms of current non-market low-income housing governance models are that they are too rigid and top-down, do not take into account individual residents' needs, minimize tenant autonomy and sense of ownership and self-agency over their housing, and decrease community connection and empowerment. The City of Vancouver's Affordable Housing Programs team are seeking to develop a better understanding of the various approaches to tenant involvement in governance in social and supportive housing projects, and in privately-owned low-income housing.

Tenant governance can include but is not limited to, involvement in funding allocations, repairs and maintenance, building policies, decisions on community investment, and decisions around programming and supports. An early literature review indicates that embedding tenants in the housing governance framework can increase self-agency and well-being by empowering tenants in meaningful ways of self-organizing and decision-making about their homes, building and community. Specifically, City staff are seeking a better understanding of the opportunities, barriers, and best practices that exist in developing tenant-led decision-making groups in social and supportive housing, which could be adapted and adopted for use in the local Vancouver context.

This is a very under-researched area so this project will serve as a starting point for discussion/engagement with housing providers and residents about employing this model in housing governance. Once complete the Scholar's report will be circulated among housing providers and residents for feedback, and a workshop (or series of workshops) will be held to discuss how this could be implemented, first as a pilot project and then more broadly.

The overall outcome is to provide housing service providers/ operators/ social and supportive housing residents with a framework (or frameworks) for involving tenants in leadership in building governance.

Deliverables:

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

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- A literature review on: current approaches to tenant involvement in governance within social and supportive housing.
- Review case studies of tenant governance models within social and supportive housing in Canada and beyond (including opportunities and barriers to the approaches)
- Focused interviews with stakeholders including non-profit operators, social and supportive housing advocates and tenants to understand perceptions, barriers and opportunities for tenant involvement in governance.
- Identification of the systemic and structural barriers to increased tenant leadership or autonomy in governance.
- A set of policy and practice recommendations (for government partners, non-profits and advocates) to improve tenant involvement in governance within existing and future social or supportive housing buildings.
- A final presentation to City staff and key stakeholders on the findings of the report
- A final report or executive summary for the Scholars Program online Project Library

Time Commitment:

- This project will take 250 hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between May 3 and August 13, 2021
- The scholar is to complete hours between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday, approximately 20 hours per week.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills
- Community engagement experience
- Familiarity conducting focus group research
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys

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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>