

Summer 2022 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 30, 2022.

Project Title: Aligning safer chemicals with patient care in BC health-care facilities

Project Background & Overview:

The Energy and Environmental Sustainability (EES) team for the Lower Mainland health organizations has a Materials focus area with the following vision statement: “Choose materials and products that contribute to human and environmental health while avoiding waste and unnecessary chemicals.”

The objective of the research project is to align work undertaken by the EES team and the Provincial Professional Practice Stream Wound Ostomy Continence’s British Columbia Provincial Nursing Skin and Wound Committee (PNSWC) to target a reduction of chemicals of concern in patient care supplies. The project will contribute to embedding environmental sustainability in procurement processes, quantifying chemicals of concern, and monitoring and eventual reduction of harmful chemical exposures to health-care staff and patients, thereby minimizing the associated risks of respiratory illness, cancers, and reproductive, developmental, hormonal and neurological defects.

Project description

The project supports a partnership between PNSWC and EES to improve understanding of current use of chemicals, exposures and risks to staff, patients and the environment. Chemicals of concern used in production of skin care products may have direct global warming potential (GWP), and there is growing evidence that climate change is altering how potentially toxic chemicals impact our health.

The purpose of the project is to update and expand existing chemical ingredient lists for Health Authority procured skin care products using a pre-existing chemical screening framework that categorizes chemicals by hazard and risk assessment. In addition, the Scholar will contribute to creating a process to keep the ingredient list up to date, support current procurement initiatives and raise awareness about product choices that are safe to staff, patients and the environment.

Project scope

In consideration of work undertaken by previous UBC Sustainability Scholars, build on and grow the existing skin care product chemical hazard assessment list and develop and/or implement previous recommendations. Key questions the Scholar will research include:

- What chemicals of concern exist in skin care products in BC health-care facilities?
- For what purpose are they used?
- What makes them a chemical of concern?
- What are the health and environmental impacts associated with the chemicals of concern?

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- How could climate change exacerbate health issues related to the chemicals of concern?
- What concerns if any exist with eliminating this chemical of concern from skin care products in BC health-care facilities?

Scope of work includes:

- Research chemical ingredients of skin care products used in delivery of patient care, for example: cleansers, moisturizers, adhesive remover, barrier film and protectants.
- Update and expand existing chemicals of concern ingredient lists specifically aiming to improve credibility of human health, environmental, and climate impacts, and inclusion in restricted substances/hazard lists.
- Document all credible sources of information on human health and climate and environmental impact per chemical for future reference.
- Define the purpose of each ingredient that was previously researched, as well as the ones researched within this project
- Make recommendations for ranking chemicals in regards to what use in patient care is safe.
- If there is time:
 - Make recommendations for long-term, efficient use of the chemical of concern ingredient lists in procurement processes
 - Support 2022 procurement initiatives with specific research and recommendations
 - Create additional practical resources that support mentors to have inter-departmental conversations around safe chemical exposure for staff and patients for example a stakeholder map, power point presentations, and/or email communications and news stories.

Deliverables

- Updated/refined skin care product chemical list – minimum of 60 chemicals assessed for hazards
- Final version of process guide
- At least one presentation to the Energy and Environmental Sustainability team
- A final report containing a summary of the work completed, including additions/improvements made to the chemical list.
- A final report for the online public-facing Scholars Project Library.

Time Commitment

- This project will take **250*** hours to complete.
- This project must be completed between **May 2 and August 12**.
- The scholar is to complete hours between **Monday and Friday**, approximately **16-20** hours per week.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Experience conducting stakeholder engagement events, including facilitation skills, is an asset
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Project management and organizational skills
- Chemical engineering background would be an asset
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct public/in person surveys

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Applications close **midnight Sunday January 30, 2022**

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>