

## 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.**

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### **Research project title: Exploring how urban street furniture contributes to climate change resiliency and sustainability**

#### **Project Background & Overview:**

Street furniture—including bus shelters, benches, litter cans, automated public toilets, and more—has the ability to shape the urban environment and define a city’s identity. In providing these amenities for the City of Vancouver, there is an opportunity to increase accessibility, livability, safety, and inclusion. The City is now at a unique moment: it will embark on the process to sign a new contract with a vendor to provide street furniture for the next 20 years. Through this contract, multiple thousands of street furniture objects will be provided for the City.

This research project will inform City staff working on this process to a) understand the opportunities for street furniture to increase urban livability in a changing climate, and b) help reduce the carbon footprint of the new furniture. By exploring and comparing the carbon footprint of both existing and innovative materials that could be used, as well as how street furniture itself could enhance urban climate change resiliency, the Scholar will directly influence the built environment for many years to come.

#### **Project description**

This project will investigate sustainability aspects of contemporary street furniture programs, products and materials being deployed in cities, as well as opportunities for street furniture to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Note that the Scholar will be responsible for providing a foundation of research in this topic area to inform the Street Furniture contract renewal process, not for actually designing elements of the street furniture, or developing language for direct inclusion in an RFP or contract. They may, however, make recommendations for these areas based on research insights gained (i.e., the role of this research is advisory rather than prescriptive).

#### **Project scope**

It is expected that the research will primarily be based on desktop research, but will also likely include interviews with staff at other cities who are working on similar programs, as well as furniture manufacturers.

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1. A literature review of how street furniture contributes to climate resilience in cities (for example, providing shade during heat events, cooling or misting, rain protection)
2. A scan of other jurisdictions to find out what they are doing in the way of innovative low carbon footprint street furniture
3. A scan of literature to understand the carbon footprint of recycled plastic lumber and potentially two or three other types of materials that emerge from the early phases of the project
4. Analysis of equity considerations as they relate to climate change adaptation and resiliency in cities

## General

- Propose aspects of sustainability and climate adaptation to be reviewed in the course of this research project in relation to street furniture
- assess the opportunity for street furniture to support climate change resiliency/mitigate the impacts of climate change; assess opportunities for specific products, materials, or design strategies to reduce carbon footprint of the street furniture program

## Role of Street Furniture in Supporting Climate Change Resiliency

- Identify contemporary best practices from other cities for mitigating the effects of climate change, for example using street furniture to provide heating, cooling or shade for people
- Identify innovative opportunities for the City to leverage street furniture design or deployment to increase climate change resiliency. This work should focus on weather patterns that Vancouver would be likely to experience. This can include technologies or furniture types new to Vancouver.

## Carbon Footprint of Street Furniture: Review of Materials & Products

- Identify new or innovative products that cities are using to reduce the carbon footprint of street furniture (for example, use of recycled plastic lumber)
- Assess the life-cycle carbon footprint of these products (for example, including the carbon cost of shipping materials if only made only abroad)

## **Deliverables**

- Mid-point presentation of research insights gained to date
- Final PowerPoint presentation to be presented to City staff and potentially other key stakeholders
- A final report containing a summary of the work completed
- A final report (or executive summary) 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, 2022 and August 12, 2022
- The scholar is to complete hours between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, approximately 17 to 20 hours per week.

## **Required/preferred Skills and Background**

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Ability to work independently
- Project management and organizational skills
- Ability to conduct interviews with individuals at external agencies/organizations
- Ability to assess carbon footprint and other relevant measures of sustainability

# SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

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

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

Contact Karen Taylor at [sustainability.scholars@ubc.ca](mailto: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>