

Fall 2022 Sustainability Scholars Program Internship Opportunity

The UBC Sustainability Hub 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 September 18, 2022.

Project title

Best Practice Research to Understand the Benefits and Risks of Mapping Equity-denied Groups to Inform Municipal Climate Policy

Project Background & Overview:

Climate change effects and municipal climate change policies have differential impacts in communities in different parts of the city. These impacts intersect with other systemic inequities in social, economic and built environments. Mapping the physical locations of equity-denied groups may be one tool that enables stronger equity intentions, processes and outcomes in climate policy.

There are many population groups and categories of people's identities that can be mapped to small areas across the city, particularly those defined in the Canadian Census. Currently in the City of Vancouver, a number of ad-hoc maps and indices have been created by staff in multiple departments, but City staff are exploring whether a centralized dataset with a common definition of equity-denied groups could contribute to centering equity (those aspects of equity that can be mapped using statistical datasets) in implementation of climate policies and programs.

There are nuances that are project/program/hazard specific that will determine who is most impacted or at risk, but the goal of a centralised data set would be to contribute to better ongoing integration of equity into climate policy work. Key considerations include what such a centralised starting data set should include, and how to mitigate against potential harms such maps might cause to already marginalized groups.

To inform the current discussion of the possible development of such a central data resource, City staff are interested to know what has been done elsewhere and found to be effective, particularly as it relates to climate policy work (mitigation and adaptation).

Project description

The City of Vancouver has a clear road map for trying to reduce GHG emissions, but understanding how to do that while also advancing equity is an area where much work remains and information is needed. The City is exploring the creation of a centralized dataset and accompanying map that illustrates how various equity indicators (such as gender identity, racial identity, income, etc.) overlay with climate policy indicators (such as access to transit options, distribution of EV charging, tree canopy, etc.). Prior to developing such a centralized dataset, there's also a need to better understand how this dataset and map could be used to inform and shape policy and to understand potential pitfalls.

This project aims to support the City's climate and equity work through best practice research to:

1. identify examples of how other municipalities or organizations have developed and used similar centralized datasets to inform climate policy
2. utilize those findings to recommend process and standards for staff to follow in developing such a dataset and map.

Project scope

- Compose an overview summary of how bias, racism, homophobia, sexism, and more can show up when mapping equity-denied populations and what potential dangers this presents to marginalized groups. Ideally this summary would draw from climate-specific examples, where possible.
- Review a sampling of 10-12 publicly accessible 'equity maps' that other municipalities or organizations have created and used to inform climate policy to gather information and draw conclusions regarding:
 - How were these maps conceptualised? What are common (or diverging) goals that cities have in producing these maps? What were their intended uses?
 - Are there any particularly compelling examples of maps informing/shaping/impacting climate policy?
 - What indicators were used and what were the data sources for those indicators
 - Mapping equity data automatically presents dangers to marginalised people such as accentuating stereotypes about certain neighbourhoods, visually solidifying "haves" and "have-nots." This work can also leave out forms of marginalisation that the census doesn't ask about, giving census-based data more power over what we hear directly from community. With this in mind, what, if any, adjustments/caveats/language/naming convention/colour conventions etc. do other jurisdictions use to reduce the negative side-effects of this kind of mapping?
- Conduct 2-4 interviews with municipalities or organizations who have developed these maps to understand the methodology used to create them. Provide a high-level overview noting:

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- Are there any common, standard methodologies or approaches apparent? Any noted problems or common challenges?
- Were affected communities involved in the analysis/use/presentation/sense-making of the maps?
- How were the indicators used selected?
- Summarize findings and lessons
- Time permitting: using the findings from above, develop recommendations and a list of draft equity and climate indicators that could form the basis for a map to inform climate mitigation and adaptation projects.

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 best practice research
- Summary of findings from interviews with recommendations for the City of Vancouver to develop a centralized climate and equity dataset and map

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 October 17, 2022 and March 15, 2023.
- The Scholar is to complete their hours between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, approximately 10 to 12 hours per week.
- Regular check-in meetings with the project mentor on a mutually agreed upon schedule.

Required/preferred Skills and Background

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Demonstrated interest in sustainability
- Comfortable working with data, an asset
- Excellent public speaking and presentation skills an asset
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently
- Deadline oriented
- Comfortable interacting with strangers to conduct in-person interviews
- Familiarity with principles of equity in the context of the City of Vancouver's work, an asset
- Comfortable working with and explaining equity data, an asset

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

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

Useful Resources

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>